

CS 4110

# Programming Languages & Logics

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Lecture 17

Definitional Translation & Continuations



# Definitional Translation

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We know how to encode Booleans, conditionals, natural numbers, and recursion in  $\lambda$ -calculus.

Can we define a *real* programming language by translating everything in it into the  $\lambda$ -calculus?

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Can we define a *real* programming language by translating everything in it into the  $\lambda$ -calculus?

In **definitional translation**, we define a denotational semantics where the target is a simpler programming language instead of mathematical objects.

# Multi-Argument $\lambda$ -calculus

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Let's define a version of the  $\lambda$ -calculus that allows functions to take multiple arguments.

$$e ::= x \mid \lambda x_1, \dots, x_n. e \mid e_0 e_1 \dots e_n$$

# Multi-Argument $\lambda$ -calculus

We can define a CBV operational semantics:

$$E ::= [\cdot] \mid v_0 \dots v_{i-1} E e_{i+1} \dots e_n$$

$$\frac{e \rightarrow e'}{E[e] \rightarrow E[e']} \text{CONTEXT}$$

$$\frac{}{(\lambda x_1, \dots, x_n. e_0) v_1 \dots v_n \rightarrow (e_0 \{v_1/x_1\} \{v_2/x_2\} \dots \{v_n/x_n\})} \beta$$

The evaluation contexts ensure that we evaluate multi-argument applications  $e_0 e_1 \dots e_n$  from left to right.

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We can define a translation  $\mathcal{T}[\cdot]$  that takes an expression in the multi-argument  $\lambda$ -calculus and returns an equivalent expression in the pure  $\lambda$ -calculus.

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{T}[x] &\triangleq x \\ \mathcal{T}[\lambda x_1, \dots, x_n. e] &\triangleq \lambda x_1. \dots \lambda x_n. \mathcal{T}[e] \\ \mathcal{T}[e_0 e_1 e_2 \dots e_n] &\triangleq (\dots ((\mathcal{T}[e_0] \mathcal{T}[e_1]) \mathcal{T}[e_2]) \dots \mathcal{T}[e_n])\end{aligned}$$

This translation *curries* the multi-argument  $\lambda$ -calculus.





# Products (Pairs) and Let

## Syntax

$$\begin{aligned} e ::= & x \\ & | \lambda x. e \\ & | e_1 e_2 \\ & | (e_1, e_2) \\ & | \#1 e \\ & | \#2 e \\ & | \text{let } x = e_1 \text{ in } e_2 \end{aligned}$$
$$\begin{aligned} v ::= & \lambda x. e \\ & | (v_1, v_2) \end{aligned}$$

# Products (Pairs) and Let

## Evaluation Contexts

$$\begin{aligned} E ::= & [\cdot] \\ & | E e \\ & | v E \\ & | (E, e) \\ & | (v, E) \\ & | \#1 E \\ & | \#2 E \\ & | \text{let } x = E \text{ in } e_2 \end{aligned}$$

# Products (Pairs) and Let

## Semantics

$$\frac{e \rightarrow e'}{E[e] \rightarrow E[e']}$$

$$\overline{(\lambda x. e) v \rightarrow e\{v/x\}}^{\beta}$$

$$\overline{\#1 (v_1, v_2) \rightarrow v_1}$$

$$\overline{\#2 (v_1, v_2) \rightarrow v_2}$$

$$\overline{\text{let } x = v \text{ in } e \rightarrow e\{v/x\}}$$

# Products (Pairs) and Let

## Translation

$$\mathcal{T}[[x]] = x$$

$$\mathcal{T}[[\lambda x. e]] = \lambda x. \mathcal{T}[[e]]$$

$$\mathcal{T}[[e_1 e_2]] = \mathcal{T}[[e_1]] \mathcal{T}[[e_2]]$$

$$\mathcal{T}[[\lambda (e_1, e_2)]] = (\lambda x. \lambda y. \lambda f. f x y) \mathcal{T}[[e_1]] \mathcal{T}[[e_2]]$$

$$\mathcal{T}[[\#1 e]] = \mathcal{T}[[e]] (\lambda x. \lambda y. x)$$

$$\mathcal{T}[[\#2 e]] = \mathcal{T}[[e]] (\lambda x. \lambda y. y)$$

$$\mathcal{T}[[\text{let } x = e_1 \text{ in } e_2]] = (\lambda x. \mathcal{T}[[e_2]]) \mathcal{T}[[e_1]]$$

# Laziness

Consider the call-by-name  $\lambda$ -calculus...

## Syntax

$$\begin{aligned} e &::= x \\ &| e_1 e_2 \\ &| \lambda x. e \\ v &::= \lambda x. e \end{aligned}$$

## Semantics

$$\frac{e_1 \rightarrow e'_1}{e_1 e_2 \rightarrow e'_1 e_2} \qquad \frac{}{(\lambda x. e_1) e_2 \rightarrow e_1 \{e_2/x\}} \beta$$

# Laziness

## Translation

$$\mathcal{T}[x] = x(\lambda y. y)$$

$$\mathcal{T}[\lambda x. e] = \lambda x. \mathcal{T}[e]$$

$$\mathcal{T}[e_1 e_2] = \mathcal{T}[e_1] (\lambda z. \mathcal{T}[e_2]) \quad z \text{ is not a free variable of } e_2$$

$$\begin{aligned} & \mathcal{T}[(\lambda x. x) ((\lambda y. y) (\lambda z. z))] \\ &= \mathcal{T}[\lambda x. x] \mathcal{T}[(\lambda y. y) (\lambda z. z)] \\ &= (\lambda x. x \text{ IO}) (\lambda a. (\lambda y. y \text{ IO}) \lambda b. [\lambda z. z]) \\ &= \quad \quad \quad (\lambda a. (\lambda y. y \text{ IO}) (\lambda b. \lambda z. z)) \end{aligned}$$

# References

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## Syntax

$$e ::= x$$
$$| \lambda x. e$$
$$| e_0 e_1$$
$$v ::= \lambda x. e$$

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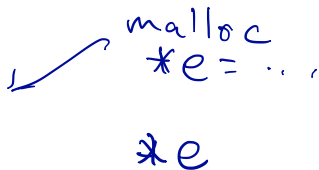
|  $\lambda x. e$

|  $e_0 e_1$

|  $\text{ref } e$

|  $!e$

*malloc*  
*\*e = ...*  
*\*e*



$v ::= \lambda x. e$

# References

## Syntax

$$\begin{aligned} e ::= & x \\ & | \lambda x. e \\ & | e_0 e_1 \\ & | \text{ref } e \\ & | !e \\ & | e_1 := e_2 \end{aligned}$$

\*  $e_1 = e_2$

$$v ::= \lambda x. e$$

# References

## Syntax

$l \in \text{Loc}$

$e ::= x$

|  $\lambda x. e$

|  $e_0 e_1$

|  $\text{ref } e$

|  $!e$

|  $e_1 := e_2$

|  $l$

SURFACE

$v ::= \lambda x. e$

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# References

## Semantics

$\langle \sigma, e \rangle \rightarrow \langle \sigma', e' \rangle \quad \sigma : \text{Loc} \rightarrow \text{Val}$

OLD

$$\frac{\langle \sigma, e \rangle \rightarrow \langle \sigma', e' \rangle}{\langle \sigma, E[e] \rangle \rightarrow \langle \sigma', E[e'] \rangle}$$

$$\frac{}{\langle \sigma, (\lambda x. e) v \rangle \rightarrow \langle \sigma, e\{v/x\} \rangle} \beta$$

$$\frac{l \notin \text{dom}(\sigma)}{\langle \sigma, \text{ref } v \rangle \rightarrow \langle \sigma[l \mapsto v], l \rangle}$$

$$\frac{\sigma(l) = v}{\langle \sigma, !l \rangle \rightarrow \langle \sigma, v \rangle}$$

$$\frac{}{\langle \sigma, l := v \rangle \rightarrow \langle \sigma[l \mapsto v], v \rangle}$$

# References

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## Translation

...left as an exercise to the reader. ;-)

# Adequacy

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How do we know if a translation is correct?

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Every target evaluation should represent a source evaluation...

## Definition (Soundness)

$\forall e \in \mathbf{Exp}_{\text{src}}. \text{ if } \mathcal{T}[[e]] \rightarrow_{\text{trg}}^* v' \text{ then } \exists v. e \rightarrow_{\text{src}}^* v$   
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...and every source evaluation should have a target evaluation:

## Definition (Completeness)

$\forall e \in \mathbf{Exp}_{\text{src}}. \text{ if } e \rightarrow_{\text{src}}^* v \text{ then } \exists v'. \mathcal{T}[[e]] \rightarrow_{\text{trg}}^* v'$   
and  $v'$  equivalent to  $v$

# Continuations

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In the preceding translations, the control structure of the source language was translated directly into the corresponding control structure in the target language.

For example:

$$\mathcal{T}[\lambda x. e] = \lambda x. \mathcal{T}[e]$$

$$\mathcal{T}[e_1 e_2] = \mathcal{T}[e_1] \mathcal{T}[e_2]$$

What can go wrong with this approach?

# Continuations

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- A snippet of code that represents “the rest of the program”
- Can be used directly by programmers...
- ...or in program transformations by a compiler
- Make the control flow of the program explicit
- Also useful for defining the meaning of features like exceptions



# Example

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$$k_3 = \lambda c. k_2 (c + 2)$$

The original expression is equivalent to  $k_3$  1, or:

$$(\lambda c. (\lambda b. (\lambda a. (\lambda v. (\lambda x. x) v) (a + 4)) (b + 3)) (c + 2)) 1$$

## Example (Continued)

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Recall that  $\text{let } x = e \text{ in } e'$  is syntactic sugar for  $(\lambda x. e') e$ .

Hence, we can rewrite the expression with continuations more succinctly as

```
let c = 1 in
let b = c + 2 in
let a = b + 3 in
let v = a + 4 in
( $\lambda x. x$ ) v
```

# CPS Transformation

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We write  $CPS[[e]] k = \dots$  instead of  $CPS[[e]] = \lambda k. \dots$

We assume that the new variables introduced are “fresh.”



# CPS Transformation

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$$CPS[[n]] k = k n$$

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# CPS Transformation

$$\mathit{CPS}\llbracket n \rrbracket k = k n$$

$$\mathit{CPS}\llbracket e_1 + e_2 \rrbracket k = \mathit{CPS}\llbracket e_1 \rrbracket (\lambda n. \mathit{CPS}\llbracket e_2 \rrbracket (\lambda m. k (n + m)))$$

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