Strategies for Simple-Typed Higher-Order Unification via λs_e-style of explicit substitution

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Talk's Plan

1. HOU in explicit substitution calculi
2. Unification in the λs_e-style of explicit substitution
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1. HOU in explicit substitution calculi

HOU: Given two simply-typed lambda terms a and b find a *substitution* θ such that
$$\theta(a) =_{\beta\eta} \theta(b)$$

- HOU essential for generalizations of the Robinson's first-order resolution principle.
- HOU applied in
  - Automated (Higher order) reasoning
  - Higher order proof assistants
  - Higher order logic programming

Why *making substitutions explicit* is adequate for reasoning about HOU?

- Substitution is the key operation for HOU.
- *Implicitness* of substitution is the "Achilles heel" of the λ-calculus:
  - β-reduction is given via informal/implicit variable renaming
- Implicit substitution does not provide any formal mechanism for analysing essential computational properties such as
  - time and
  - space complexity

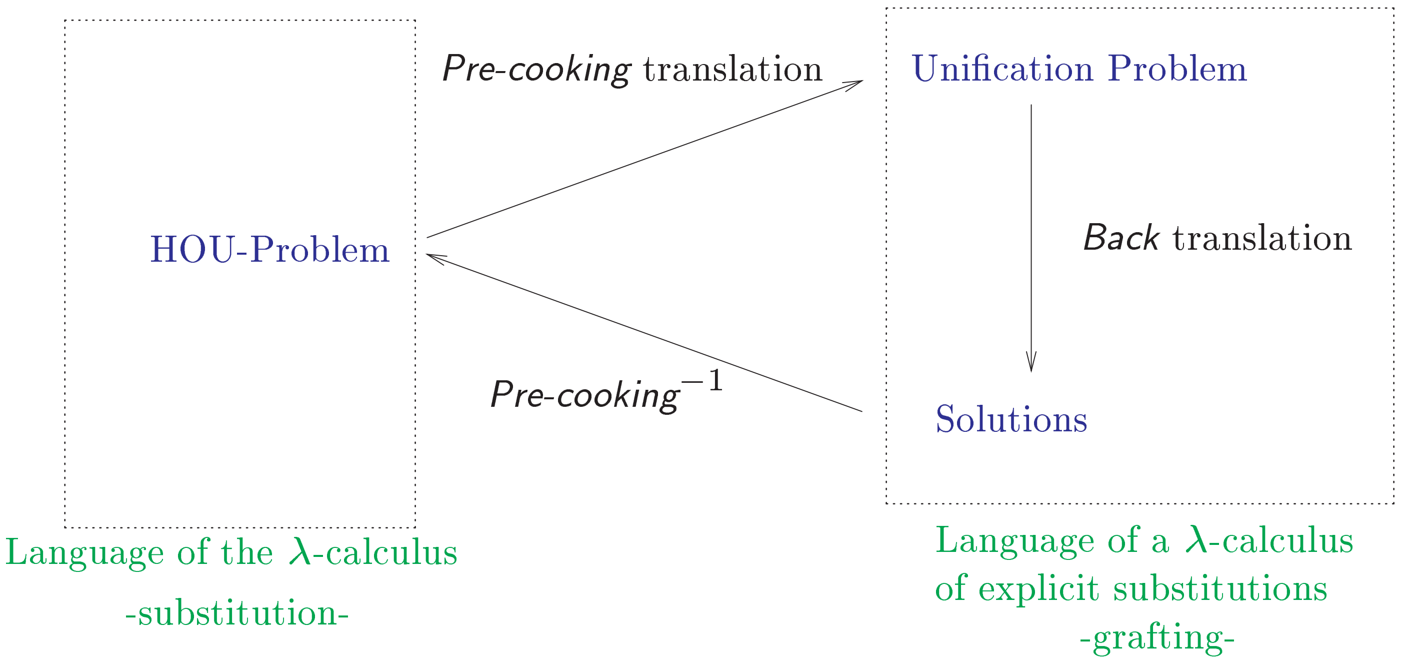
- Terms in de Bruijn notation, $\Lambda_{dB}(\mathcal{X})$: $a ::= \mathbb{N} \mid \mathcal{X} \mid (a\ \ a) \mid \lambda.a$, where $\mathcal{X}$ meta-variables and $\mathbb{N}$ set of de Bruijn indices.

- Higher order *substitution*: $\{X/1\}(\lambda.(1\ \ X)\ \ X) = (\lambda.(1\ \ 2)\ \ 1)$

substitution	$\neq$	*grafting*
$\{X/a\}(\lambda.X)$		$(\lambda.X)\{X/a\}$
$\Vert$		$\Vert$
$\lambda.\{X/a^+\}X$		$\lambda.X\{X/a\}$
$\Vert$		$\Vert$
$\lambda.\underbrace{a^+}_{\text{lift}}$	$\neq$	$\lambda.a$

β-reduction

$$(\lambda.a\ \ b) \to \{1/b\}a$$



- Introduced by G. Dowek, T. Hardin and C. Kirchner using the $\lambda\sigma$-calculus.
- Subsumes Huet's HOU method.

2. Unification in the λs_e-style of explicit substitution

- Terms in λs_e: $a ::= \mathcal{X} \mid \mathbb{N} \mid (a\ \ a) \mid \lambda.a \mid a\sigma^j a \mid \varphi^i_k a$, for $j,\ i \geq 1\,,\ \ k \geq 0$
where $\mathcal{X}$ *meta-variables* and $\mathbb{N}$ set of de Bruijn indices.

- A λs_e-**unification problem** P is: $\left\{ \bigvee_{j\in J} \underbrace{\exists \vec{w}_j \bigwedge_{i\in I_j} s_i =^?_{\lambda s_e} t_i}_{\text{unification system}} \right.$

- A **unifier** of $\underbrace{\exists \vec{w} \bigwedge_{i\in I} s_i =^?_{\lambda s_e} t_i}_{\text{unification system}}$ is a **grafting** σ such that $\boxed{\exists \vec{w} \bigwedge_{i\in I} s_i\sigma = t_i\sigma}$

Example : $(\lambda.(\lambda.(X\ \ 2)\ \ 1)\ \ Y) =^?_{\lambda s_e} (\lambda.(Z\ \ 1)\ \ U)$

$\downarrow\ X, Z : A \rightarrow A;\ Y, U : A$

Normalize $((X\sigma^2 Y)\sigma^1(\varphi^1_0 Y)\ \ \varphi^1_0 Y) =^?_{\lambda s_e} (Z\sigma^1 U\ \ \varphi^1_0 U)$

$\downarrow$

Dec-App $(X\sigma^2 Y)\sigma^1(\varphi^1_0 Y) =^?_{\lambda s_e} Z\sigma^1 U \ \wedge\ \varphi^1_0 Y =^?_{\lambda s_e} \varphi^1_0 U$

$\downarrow$

Dec-φ $(X\sigma^2 Y)\sigma^1(\varphi^1_0 Y) =^?_{\lambda s_e} Z\sigma^1 U \ \wedge\ Y =^?_{\lambda s_e} U$

$\downarrow$

Replace $(X\sigma^2 Y)\sigma^1(\varphi^1_0 Y) =^?_{\lambda s_e} Z\sigma^1 Y \ \wedge\ Y =^?_{\lambda s_e} U$

$\downarrow_*$

Exp-λ + *Replace* $((\lambda.X')\sigma^2 Y)\sigma^1(\varphi^1_0 Y) =^?_{\lambda s_e} (\lambda.Z')\sigma^1 Y \ \wedge\ \begin{cases} Y =^?_{\lambda s_e} U \\ X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.X' \\ Z =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.Z' \end{cases}$

$\downarrow_*$

Normalize + *Dec-λ* $(X'\sigma^3 Y)\sigma^2(\varphi^1_0 Y) =^?_{\lambda s_e} Z'\sigma^2 Y \ \wedge\ \begin{cases} Y =^?_{\lambda s_e} U \\ X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.X' \\ Z =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.Z' \end{cases}$

- *Solved* equations: $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} Y =^?_{\lambda s_e} U \\ X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.X' \\ Z =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.Z' \end{array} \right.$
- *Flex-Flex* equations: $(X'\sigma^3 Y)\sigma^2(\varphi^1_0 Y) =^?_{\lambda s_e} Z'\sigma^2 Y$

} *Solved Forms*

• Solutions: $\{Y/X_1, U/X_1\} \bigcup$ solutions for X and Z given by the *Flex-Flex* equation.

Take, for instance, $\{Y/X_1, U/X_1\} \bigcup \{X/\lambda.\mathtt{n}+1, Z/\lambda.\mathtt{n}\}$ with $n > 2$:
$\underline{(\lambda.(\lambda.(\lambda.\mathtt{n}+1\ \ 2)\ \ 1)\ \ X_1)} \to_\beta (\lambda.(\lambda.\mathtt{n}\ \ 2)\ \ X_1) \to_\beta (\lambda.\mathtt{n}-1\ \ X_1) \to_\beta \underline{\mathtt{n}-2}$
and
$\underline{(\lambda.(\lambda.\mathtt{n}\ \ 1)\ \ X_1)} \to_\beta (\lambda.\mathtt{n}-1\ \ X_1) \to_\beta \underline{\mathtt{n}-2}$

- Correctness: If P reduces to P' then every unifier of P' is a unifier of P.
- Completeness: If P reduces to P' then every unifier of P is a unifier of P'.

Theorem [Correctness and Completeness]

The λs_e-unification rules are correct and complete.

3. Strategies for λs_e-unification

- *Unification replace strategy*:

$$\boxed{\begin{array}{c} \textit{Normalize} \textbf{ or } \textit{Dec-}\lambda \textbf{ or } \textit{Dec-App} \textbf{ or } \textit{App-Fail} \textbf{ or } \textit{Dec-}\sigma \textbf{ or } \sigma\textit{-Fail} \textbf{ or } \\ \textit{Dec-}\varphi \textbf{ or } \varphi\textit{-Fail} \textbf{ or } (\textit{Exp-}\lambda;\ \textit{Replace}) \textbf{ or } (\textit{Exp-App}\ ;\ \textit{Replace}) \end{array}}$$

$(\textit{Exp-}\lambda;\ \textit{Replace}) \equiv \textit{Exp-}\boldsymbol{\lambda}R$ $(\textit{Exp-App};\ \textit{Replace}) \equiv \textit{Exp-AppR}$.

- Unification problems: $P = \langle Q, R \rangle$, where Q non solved and R solved equations.

- For a system $P = \langle Q, R \rangle$ and a λs_e-normalized grafting solution θ of P, we define the **UnifStrat** transformations $\langle Q, R, \theta \rangle \rightarrow^{\mathcal{R}} \langle Q', R', \theta' \rangle$, where $\mathcal{R}$ is a group of rules of the unification replace strategy.

Lemma *UnifStrat* is
- well defined
- finite and
- preserves solutions

Lemma[Construction of solutions]

$$\boxed{\langle Q_0, R_0, \theta_0\rangle \rightarrow^{\mathcal{R}_1} \ldots \rightarrow^{\mathcal{R}_n} \langle Q_n, R_n, \theta_n\rangle}$$

$$\Longrightarrow$$

$$\boxed{\theta_0 =^{var(P_n)}_{\lambda s_e} \theta_n \circ Subst(R_n)}$$

where
- θ_n is a solution of the solved form Q_n
- $Subst(R_n)$ is the canonical grafting associated to the solved equations R_n

Theorem[Completeness of *UnifStrat*] The λs_e-unification rules describe a correct and complete λs_e-unification procedure in the sense that, given a λs_e-unification problem $P = \langle Q, R \rangle$:

1. $P \equiv \bigvee P_i \longrightarrow^n_{\lambda s_e\text{-unification}} P_n \equiv \bigvee P'_i$ and $\exists P'_j$ solved

   $\Longrightarrow$

   P λs_e-unifies and a solution to P is the one constructed for P'_j

2. P has a unifier θ

   $\Longrightarrow$

   $\langle Q, R, \theta \rangle \longrightarrow^n_{UnifStrat} \langle Q_n, R_n, \theta_n \rangle$ and Q_n solved

4. Translations between the pure λ-calculus and the λs_e-calculus

- A unifier of $\lambda.X =_{\beta\eta} \lambda.a$ is not a $\{X/b\}$ such that $b =_{\beta\eta} a$:

$$\{X/b\}(\lambda.X) = \lambda.(\{X/b^+\}X) = \lambda.(X\{X/b^+\}) = \lambda.b^+$$

- The **pre-cooking** of a λ-term in de Bruijn notation into the λs_e-calculus is defined by $\boldsymbol{a_{pc}} = PC(a, 0)$ where $PC(a, n)$ is defined by:

1. $PC(\lambda_B.a, n) = \lambda_B.PC(a, n+1)$
2. $PC((a\ \ b), n) = (PC(a, n)\ \ PC(b, n))$
3. $PC(\mathtt{k}, n) = \mathtt{k}$
4. $PC(X, n) = \begin{cases} \text{if } n = 0 \text{ then } X \\ \text{else } \varphi_0^{n+1} X \end{cases}$

Proposition[Semantics of pre-cooking]

$$\underbrace{(\{X_1/b_1, \ldots , X_p/b_p\}(a))_{pc}}_{\text{Substitution}} = \underbrace{a_{pc}\{X_1/b_{1_{pc}}, \ldots , X_p/b_{p_{pc}}\}}_{\text{Grafting}}$$

Proposition[Correspondence between solutions]

$$\exists N_1,\ldots,N_p \quad \underbrace{\{X_1/N_1,\ldots,X_p/N_p\}}_{\text{substitution}}(a) =_{\beta\eta} \underbrace{\{X_1/N_1,\ldots,X_p/N_p\}}_{\text{substitution}}(b)$$

$$\Longleftrightarrow$$

$$\exists M_1,\ldots,M_p \quad a_{pc}\underbrace{\{X_1/M_1,\ldots,X_p/M_p\}}_{\text{grafting}} =_{\lambda s_e} b_{pc}\underbrace{\{X_1/M_1,\ldots,X_p/M_p\}}_{\text{grafting}}$$

5. A simple example

Problem: $\lambda.(X\ \ 2) =^?_{\beta\eta} \lambda.2, \quad 2 : A, \quad X : A \to A$

$$
\begin{array}{lr}
\lambda.(\varphi_0^2(X)\ \ 2) =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.2 & \to \textit{Dec-}\lambda \\
(\varphi_0^2(X)\ \ 2) =^?_{\lambda s_e} 2 & \to \textit{Exp-}\lambda \\
\exists Y (\varphi_0^2(X)\ \ 2) =^?_{\lambda s_e} 2 \wedge X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.Y & \to \textit{Replace} \\
\exists Y (\varphi_0^2(\lambda.Y)\ \ 2) =^?_{\lambda s_e} 2 \wedge X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.Y & \to \textit{Normalize} \\
\exists Y (\varphi_1^2 Y)\sigma^1 2 =^?_{\lambda s_e} 2 \wedge X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.Y & \to \textit{Exp-app} \\
(\exists Y (\varphi_1^2 Y)\sigma^1 2 =^?_{\lambda s_e} 2 \wedge X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.Y) \wedge (Y =^?_{\lambda s_e} 1 \vee Y =^?_{\lambda s_e} 2) & \to \textit{Replace} \\
((\varphi_1^2 1)\sigma^1 2 =^?_{\lambda s_e} 2 \wedge X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.1) \vee ((\varphi_1^2 2)\sigma^1 2 =^?_{\lambda s_e} 2 \wedge X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.2) & \to \textit{Normalize} \\
(2 =^?_{\lambda s_e} 2 \wedge X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.1) \vee (2 =^?_{\lambda s_e} 2 \wedge X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.2) & \equiv \\
(X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.1) \vee (X =^?_{\lambda s_e} \lambda.2) &
\end{array}
$$

Problem: $\boxed{\lambda.(X\ \ 2) =^?_{\beta\eta} \lambda.2, \quad 2 : A, \quad X : A \to A}$

Solutions: $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \{X/\lambda.1\} \\ \{X/\lambda.2\} \end{array} \right.$

Note that we have:

$$\{X/\lambda.1\}(\lambda.(X\ \ 2)) = \lambda.(\{X/(\lambda.1)^+\}(X)\ \ 2) = \\ \lambda.(\lambda.1^{+1}\ \ 2) = \lambda.(\lambda.1\ \ 2) =_\beta \lambda.2$$

and

$$\{X/\lambda.2\}(\lambda.(X\ \ 2)) = \lambda.(\{X/(\lambda.2)^+\}(X)\ \ 2) = \\ \lambda.(\lambda.2^{+1}\ \ 2) = \lambda.(\lambda.3\ \ 2) =_\beta \lambda.2$$

6. Related work

Our development of the λs_e-HOU was based on the ones of Dowek, Hardin and Kirchner for the $\lambda\sigma$-calculus of explicit substitutions.

One of our motivations was, in the practical setting of HOU, to compare the advantages and disadvantages of the two styles of explicit substitutions. This provides objective facts about that interesting theoretical question.

We think that our method can be adapted for applications in/for systems as the λProlog and ELAN.

Additional facts about the *back* transformation and practical considerations for an eventual implementation are available in Ayala-Rincón & Kamareddine *"On Applying λs_e-Style of Unification for Simply-Typed Higher Order Unification in the Pure λ-Calculus"* at `http://www.cee.hw.ac.uk/ultra/pubs.html`.

7. Future work and Conclusions

To be done:
- Prototype implementation.
- Comparison with the *suspension* calculus.

- $\lambda\sigma$-(HO)Unification and λs_e-(HO)Unification strategies don't differ.
- Pre-cooking (and back) translations in $\lambda\sigma$ and λs_e differ:
  - A simple selection of the scripts for the operators φ and σ in λs_e corresponds to the manipulation of substitution objects in the $\lambda\sigma$-HOU approach.
  - Use of all de Bruijn indices makes our approach simpler.

References

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