

λ Calculus & Computability

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Lecture 20: λ Calculus

Review of the Turing Machine

- Formalism $(Q, \Gamma, \Sigma, \delta, q_{start}, q_{accept}, q_{reject})$
- Abstract Problems
- Language Problems
- Computation
- Computability vs. Decidability

Today we are looking at a completely different formal computation model – the λ -Calculus!

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Calculus

- What is calculus?
 - Calculus is a branch of mathematics that includes the study of limits, derivatives, integrals, and infinite series.
- Examples
 - $d(uv) = u(da) + u(da)$ The product rule
 - $\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{dy}{du} \frac{du}{dx}$ The chain rule

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Real Definition

- Calculus is just a bunch of rules for manipulating symbols.
- People can give meaning to those symbols, but that's not part of the calculus.
- Differential calculus is a bunch of rules for manipulating symbols. There is an interpretation of those symbols corresponds with physics, geometry, etc.

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λ Calculus Formalism (Grammar)

- Key words: λ . () terminals
- term \rightarrow variable
 - (term)
 - λ variable . term
 - term term

Humans can give meaning to those symbols in a way that corresponds to computations.

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λ Calculus Formalism (rules)

- Rules
 - α -reduction (renaming)
 - $\lambda y. M \Rightarrow_{\alpha} \lambda v. (M [y \mapsto v])$
 - where v does not occur in M .
 - β -reduction (substitution)
 - $(\lambda x. M)N \Rightarrow_{\beta} M [x \mapsto N]$

Try Example 1, 2, & 3 on the notes now!

Replace all x 's in M with N

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Free and Bound variables

- In λ Calculus all variables are local to function definitions
- Examples
 - $\lambda x. xy$
 x is bound, while y is free;
 - $(\lambda x. x)(\lambda y. yx)$
 x is bound in the first function, but free in the second function
 - $\lambda x. (\lambda y. yx)$
 x and y are both bound variables. (It can be abbreviated as $\lambda xy. yx$)

Be careful about β -Reduction

- $(\lambda x. M)N \Rightarrow M [x \mapsto N]$

Try Example 4 on the notes now!

Replace all x 's in M with N

If the substitution would bring a free variable of N in an expression where this variable occurs bound, we rename the bound variable before the substitution.

Computing Model for λ Calculus

- **redex**: a term of the form $(\lambda x. M)N$
 Something that can be β -reduced
- An expression is in **normal form** if it contains no redexes (*redices*).
- To evaluate a lambda expression, keep doing reductions until you get to *normal form*.

β -Reduction represents all the computation capability of Lambda calculus.

Another exercise

$(\lambda f. ((\lambda x. f (xx)) (\lambda x. f (xx)))) (\lambda z. z)$

Possible Answer

$(\lambda f. ((\lambda x. f (xx)) (\lambda x. f (xx)))) (\lambda z. z)$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx)) (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx))$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} (\lambda z. z) (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx)) (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx))$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx)) (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx))$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} (\lambda z. z) (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx)) (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx))$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx)) (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx))$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} \dots$

Alternate Answer

$(\lambda f. ((\lambda x. f (xx)) (\lambda x. f (xx)))) (\lambda z. z)$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx)) (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx))$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} (\lambda x. xx) (\lambda x. (\lambda z. z)(xx))$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} (\lambda x. xx) (\lambda x. xx)$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} (\lambda x. xx) (\lambda x. xx)$
 $\rightarrow_{\beta} \dots$

Be Very Afraid!

- Some λ -calculus terms can be β -reduced forever!
- The order in which you choose to do the reductions might change the result!

Take on Faith

- All ways of choosing reductions that reduce a lambda expression to normal form will produce the same normal form (but some might never produce a normal form).
- If we always *apply the outermost lambda first*, we will find the normal form if there is one.
 - This is *normal order reduction* – corresponds to normal order (lazy) evaluation

Alonzo Church (1903~1995)

Lambda Calculus
Church-Turing thesis

If an algorithm (a procedure that terminates) exists then there is an equivalent Turing Machine or applicable λ -function for that algorithm.



Alan M. Turing (1912~1954)



- Turing Machine
- Turing Test
- Head of Hut 8

Advisor:
Alonzo Church

Equivalence in Computability

- λ Calculus \leftrightarrow Turing Machine
 - (1) Everything computable by λ Calculus can be computed using the Turing Machine.
 - (2) Everything computable by the Turing Machine can be computed with λ Calculus.

Simulate λ Calculus with TM

- The initial tape is filled with the initial λ expression
- Finite number of reduction rules can be implemented by the finite state automata in the Turing Machine
- Start the Turing Machine; it either stops – ending with the λ expression on tape in normal form, or continues forever – the β -reductions never ends.