	Announcements
CSCI 334: Principles of Programming Languages	
Lecture 15: Type Inference	
Instructor: Dan Barowy Williams	

Announcements

No class Thursday

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I am out all week; email me if you need anything, but expect delays in my responses

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HW7 solutions

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HW7 solutions

Exam resubmissions: no later than tomorrow

Topics	

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Discuss: Graham / Gabriel readings

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Review alpha normal form

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The importance of technical interviews

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Discuss: Graham / Gabriel readings

Review alpha normal form

The importance of technical interviews

Type checking and type inference

Discussion









(λx.λx.x) (λx.y) **↓**α (λx.λa.a) (λb.y)

Goal: alpha-normal form

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In other words, all variable names are unique.



What is passed in; returned



alphanorm(e: Expr)(b: Set<char>)(r: Map<char, char>)
 : Expr*Set<char>

Note that we want the set of bindings to persist, therefore it is both *passed in* and *out*.

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Note that we want the set of bindings to persist, therefore it is both *passed in* and *out*.

But the set of renamings is *scoped*: it is only passed in.

Algorithm

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Technical Interviews

Read: interview excerpt with Peter Norvig.



Technical Interviews

"One of the interesting things we found, when trying to predict how well somebody we've hired is going to perform when we evaluate them a year or two later, is one of the best indicators of success within the company was getting the worst possible score on one of your interviews."



















Abandon all hope ye who enter here?



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"It's more you want to get a feeling for how this person thinks and how they work together, so do they know the basic ideas? Can they say, "Well, in order to solve this, I need to know A, B, and C," and they start putting it together. And I think you can demonstrate that while still failing on a puzzle. You can say, "Well, here's how I attack this puzzle. Well, I first think about this. Then I do that. Then I do that, but geez, here's this part I don't quite understand." For some people that little part clicks and for some it doesn't. And you can do fine if it doesn't click as long as you've demonstrated the basic competency and fluency in how you think about it."





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Dirty secret: most other CS classes are about that too.

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<u>Takeaways</u>

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- •Technical interviews are a noisy process at best.
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- "Just do good work."

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- This is a "gumption-building" activity.
- It makes nearly all work seem "worth it" because you're not just doing the work; "the real cycle you're working on is a cycle called 'yourself."
- People will inevitably notice your positive, can-do attitude.

Type checking & type inference

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Finally—cool things enabled by the lambda calculus!

```
Type checking
(or, "how does ML know that my expression is wrong?")
```

let f(x:int) : int = "hello" + x

Type checking (or, "how does ML know that my expression is wrong?")

let f(x:int) : int = "hello" + x

let f(x:int) : int = "hello" + x;;

stdin(1,32): error FS0001: The type 'int' does not
match the type 'string'

Type checking step 1: convert into lambda form le

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let f(x:int) : int = "hello" + x

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let f(x:int) : int = "hello" + x

 $f = \lambda x$. "hello " + x convert into λ expression





Type checking

step 2: generate parse tree

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 $f = \lambda x.((+ "hello ") x)$

Type checking

step 2: generate parse tree $f = \lambda x.((+ "hello ") x)$ f has form $\lambda x.((EE)E)$

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f = $\lambda x.((+ "hello") x)$ f has form $\lambda x.((EE)E)$

















notice that we had a typed expression

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what if, instead, we had

let f x = "hello " + x

Type inference notice that we had a typed expression let f(x:int) : int = "hello " + x what if, instead, we had let f x = "hello " + x ?

Hinley-Milner algorithm



J. Roger Hindley



Robin Milner

Hinley-Milner algorithm



J. Roger Hindley

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Robin Milner

Hinley-Milner algorithm



- Hindley and Milner invented algorithm independently.
- Infers types from known data types and operations used.





Robin Milner

Hinley-Milner algorithm

invented algorithm

independently.

data types and

operations used.

called "unification".



J. Roger Hindley



Robin Milner

Hinley-Milner algorithm



J. Roger Hindley

- Hindley and Milner invented algorithm independently.
- Infers types from known data types and operations used.
- Depends on a step called "unification".
- I will demonstrate informal method for unification; works for small examples



Robin Milner

Hinley-Milner algorithm

Has three main phases:

Hinley-Milner algorithm

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1. Assign known types to each subexpression

Hinley-Milner algorithm

Has three main phases:

Assign known types to each subexpression
 Generate type constraints based on rules of λ calculus:

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 - a. Abstraction constraints
 - b. Application constraints

Hinley-Milner algorithm

Has three main phases:

- 1. Assign known types to each subexpression
- 2. Generate type constraints based on rules of λ calculus:

a. Abstraction constraints

b. Application constraints

3. Solve type constraints using unification.









Type inference it is often helpful to have types in tabular form subexpression type	Type inference it is often helpful to have types in tabular form <u>subexpression</u> type +
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$\frac{\text{subexpression}}{+} \text{int} \rightarrow \text{int}$	$\frac{\text{subexpression}}{1} \text{int} \rightarrow \text{int}}_{5}$

it is often helpful to have types in tabular form

subexpression	type
+ 5	int \rightarrow int \rightarrow int int

Type inference

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subexpression	type
+ 5 (+5)	int \rightarrow int \rightarrow int int r
Х	S

Type inference

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subexpression	type	
+	$int \rightarrow int$	\rightarrow int
(+5)	r	
x (+5) x	S	

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subexpression	type
+ 5	int \rightarrow int \rightarrow int int
(+5) x (+5) x	s t



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subexpression	type
+ 5 (+5) x (+5) x (+5) x	int \rightarrow int \rightarrow int int r s t

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subexpression	type
+	int \rightarrow int \rightarrow int
5	int
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λx.((+ 5) x)	u

Type inference

step 2: generate type constraints using λ calculus

Е:	:= x	variable
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- $| \lambda x.E$ abstraction
 - EE function application

Type inference		
step 2: generate typ	be constraints using λ calculus	
E ::= x	variable	
λx.Ε	abstraction	
EE	function application	
Abstraction rule: If the type of $\lambda x \cdot E$ is c, then th	be of x is a and the type of E is b, and the e constraint is $c = a \rightarrow b$.	

Type inference			
step 2: generate type constraints using λ calculus			
E ::= x	variable		
λx.Ε	abstraction		
EE	function application		
<u>Abstraction rule:</u> If the type of x is a and the type of E is b, and the type of $\lambda x \cdot E$ is c, then the constraint is $c = a \rightarrow b$.			
Application rule: If the type of E_1 is a and the type of E_2 is b, and the type of E_1E_2 is c, then the constraint is $a = b \rightarrow c$.			









subexpression	type	constraint
+	int \rightarrow int \rightarrow int	n/a
5	int	n/a
(+5)	r	int \rightarrow int \rightarrow int = int \rightarrow 1
Х	s	n/a
(+5) x	t	$r = s \rightarrow t$
λx.((+ 5) x)	u	

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subexpression	type	constraint	
+	int \rightarrow int \rightarrow int	n/a	
5	int	n/a	
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Х	S	n/a	
(+5) x	t	$r = s \rightarrow t$	
λx.((+ 5) x)	u	$u = s \rightarrow t$	













































