

Formalising the Undecidability of Higher-Order Unification

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2nd Bachelor Seminar Talk

Timeline



Timeline

G. Huet (1973)

$$PCP \leq U_3$$



Timeline

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$$\text{PCP} \leq \text{U}_3$$

W. Goldfarb (1981)

$$\text{H}_{10} \leq \text{U}_2$$



Timeline

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$$PCP \leq U_3$$

Coq

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Example

$$\lambda xy. fx \stackrel{?}{=} \lambda xy. fy$$



Example

$$\lambda xy. fx \stackrel{?}{=} \lambda xy. fy$$



Example

$$\lambda xy. f x \stackrel{?}{=} \lambda xy. f y$$

Solution

$$\theta f = \lambda_. z$$

$$\theta x = x \quad \text{othw.}$$



Example

$$\lambda xy. fx \stackrel{?}{=} \lambda xy. fy$$

Solution

$$\theta f = \lambda _ . z$$

$$\theta x = x \quad \text{othw.}$$

Proof

$$\lambda xy. (\theta f) x \equiv \lambda xy. z$$

$$\equiv \lambda xy. (\theta f) y$$



Unification — **U**

$$\mathbf{U} (\Gamma \vdash s \stackrel{?}{=} t : A)$$

$$\boxed{\Gamma \vdash s \stackrel{?}{=} t : A}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash s : A \quad \Gamma \vdash t : A}{\Gamma \vdash s \stackrel{?}{=} t : A}$$



Unification — **U**

$$\mathbf{U} (\Gamma \vdash s \stackrel{?}{=} t : A) :=$$
$$\exists \theta \quad s[\theta] \equiv t[\theta]$$

$$\boxed{\Gamma \vdash s \stackrel{?}{=} t : A}$$

$$\boxed{s \equiv t}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash s : A \quad \Gamma \vdash t : A}{\Gamma \vdash s \stackrel{?}{=} t : A}$$

$$\frac{s \triangleright v \quad t \triangleright v}{s \equiv t}$$



Unification — **U**

$$\mathbf{U} (\Gamma \vdash s \stackrel{?}{=} t : A) := \\ \exists \theta \Delta. \Delta \vdash \theta : \Gamma \quad \text{and} \quad s[\theta] \equiv t[\theta]$$

$$\boxed{\Gamma \vdash s \stackrel{?}{=} t : A}$$

$$\boxed{\Delta \vdash \theta : \Gamma}$$

$$\boxed{s \equiv t}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash s : A \quad \Gamma \vdash t : A}{\Gamma \vdash s \stackrel{?}{=} t : A}$$

$$\frac{\forall (x : A) \in \Gamma. \Delta \vdash \theta x : A}{\Delta \vdash \theta : \Gamma}$$

$$\frac{s \triangleright v \quad t \triangleright v}{s \equiv t}$$



*n*th-order Unification — U_n



*n*th-order Unification — \mathbf{U}_n

$$\boxed{\Gamma \vdash s : A}$$

$$\frac{(x : A) \in \Gamma}{\Gamma \vdash x : A}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash s : A \rightarrow B \quad \Gamma \vdash t : A}{\Gamma \vdash s t : B}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma, x : A \vdash s : B}{\Gamma \vdash \lambda x. s : A \rightarrow B}$$



n th-order Unification — \mathbf{U}_n

$$\boxed{\Gamma \vdash s : A}$$
$$\frac{(x : A) \in \Gamma}{\Gamma \vdash x : A} \quad \frac{\Gamma \vdash s : A \rightarrow B \quad \Gamma \vdash t : A}{\Gamma \vdash s t : B}$$
$$\frac{\Gamma, x : A \vdash s : B}{\Gamma \vdash \lambda x. s : A \rightarrow B} \quad \frac{}{\Gamma \vdash c : \mathcal{C} c}$$

for signature $\mathcal{C} : \text{Const} \rightarrow \text{Type}$



n th-order Unification — \mathbf{U}_n

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \boxed{\Gamma \vdash s : A} \\
 \\
 \frac{(x : A) \in \Gamma}{\Gamma \vdash x : A} \qquad \frac{\Gamma \vdash s : A \rightarrow B \quad \Gamma \vdash t : A}{\Gamma \vdash s t : B} \\
 \\
 \frac{\Gamma, x : A \vdash s : B}{\Gamma \vdash \lambda x. s : A \rightarrow B} \qquad \frac{}{\Gamma \vdash c : \mathcal{C} c}
 \end{array}$$

for signature $\mathcal{C} : \text{Const} \rightarrow \text{Type}$

$$\boxed{\text{ord } A}$$

$$\text{ord } \alpha = 1 \qquad \text{ord } (A \rightarrow B) = \max \{ \text{ord } A + 1, \text{ord } B \}$$



n th-order Unification — \mathbf{U}_n

$$\boxed{\Gamma \vdash_n s : A}$$

$$\frac{(x : A) \in \Gamma \quad \text{ord } A \leq n}{\Gamma \vdash_n x : A} \qquad \frac{\Gamma \vdash_n s : A \rightarrow B \quad \Gamma \vdash_n t : A}{\Gamma \vdash_n s t : B}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma, x : A \vdash_n s : B \quad \text{ord } A < n}{\Gamma \vdash_n \lambda x. s : A \rightarrow B} \qquad \frac{\text{ord } (\mathcal{C} c) \leq n}{\Gamma \vdash_n c : \mathcal{C} c}$$

for signature $\mathcal{C} : \text{Const} \rightarrow \text{Type}$

$$\boxed{\text{ord } A}$$

$$\text{ord } \alpha = 1 \qquad \text{ord } (A \rightarrow B) = \max \{ \text{ord } A + 1, \text{ord } B \}$$



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$$\text{PCP} \leq \text{U}_3$$

W. Goldfarb (1981)

$$\text{H}_{10} \leq \text{U}_2$$



Huet — Reduction

$$\mathbf{PCP}(C) \quad \textit{iff} \quad \mathbf{U}_3(f(C))$$



Huet — Reduction Function

$$f [x_1/y_1, \dots, x_n/y_n] :=$$



Huet — Reduction Function

$$f [x_1/y_1, \dots, x_n/y_n] :=$$
$$\lambda uvh. h (x_f \overline{x_1} \cdots \overline{x_n}) (x_f u \cdots u) \stackrel{?}{=} \lambda uvh. h (x_f \overline{y_1} \cdots \overline{y_n}) (u (d u))$$


Huet — Reduction Function

$f [x_1/y_1, \dots, x_n/y_n] :=$

$\lambda uvh. h (x_f \overline{x_1} \cdots \overline{x_n}) (x_f u \cdots u) \stackrel{?}{=} \lambda uvh. h (x_f \overline{y_1} \cdots \overline{y_n}) (u (d u))$



Huet — Reduction Function

$$\lambda uvh. h (x_f \overline{y_1} \cdots \overline{y_n}) (u (d u))$$



Huet — Reduction Function

$$\lambda uvh. h (x_f \overline{y_1} \cdots \overline{y_n}) (u (d u))$$



Huet — List Calculus I

$$\boxed{s \ T}$$

$$s \ \text{nil} = s$$

$$s \ (t :: T) = (s \ T) \ t$$



Huet — List Calculus I

$$\boxed{s T}$$

$$s \text{ nil} = s$$

$$s (t :: T) = (s T) t$$

$$\boxed{S t}$$

$$\text{nil } t = t$$

$$(s :: S) t = s (S t)$$



Huet — List Calculus I

$$\boxed{s T}$$

$$s \text{ nil} = s$$

$$s (t :: T) = (s T) t$$

$$\boxed{S t}$$

$$\text{nil } t = t$$

$$(s :: S) t = s (S t)$$

$$\boxed{\Lambda_X.s}$$

$$\Lambda_{\text{nil}}.s = s$$

$$\Lambda_{x::X}.s = \lambda x. \Lambda_X.s$$



Huet — List Calculus I

$$\boxed{s T}$$

$$s \text{ nil} = s$$

$$s (t :: T) = (s T) t$$

$$\boxed{S t}$$

$$\text{nil } t = t$$

$$(s :: S) t = s (S t)$$

$$\boxed{\Lambda_X.s}$$

$$\Lambda_{\text{nil}}.s = s$$

$$\Lambda_{x::X}.s = \lambda x. \Lambda_X.s$$

$$\boxed{L \rightarrow A}$$

$$\text{nil} \rightarrow A = A$$

$$(B :: L) \rightarrow A = B \rightarrow (L \rightarrow A)$$



Huet — List Calculus II

$$\boxed{\Gamma \vdash S : L}$$

$$\frac{}{\Gamma \vdash \text{nil} : \text{nil}}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash s : A \quad \Gamma \vdash S : L}{\Gamma \vdash s :: S : A :: L}$$



Huet — List Calculus II

$$\boxed{\Gamma \vdash S : L}$$

$$\frac{}{\Gamma \vdash \text{nil} : \text{nil}}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash s : A \quad \Gamma \vdash S : L}{\Gamma \vdash s :: S : A :: L}$$

$$\boxed{S \succ S'}$$

$$\frac{s \succ s'}{s :: S \succ s' :: S}$$

$$\frac{S \succ S'}{s :: S \succ s :: S'}$$



Huet — Busy Work

$$s (T_1 \# T_2) = (s T_2) T_1 \qquad (s T)[\xi] = s[\xi] T[\xi]$$

$$(s T)[\theta] = s[\theta] T[\theta] \qquad \frac{T \succ T'}{s T \succ s T'} \qquad \frac{s \succ s'}{s T \succ s' T}$$

$$\frac{s \succ^* s' \quad T \succ^* T'}{s T \succ^* s' T'} \qquad \frac{s \equiv s' \quad T \equiv T'}{s T \equiv s' T'}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash s : \text{rev } L \rightarrow A \quad \Gamma \vdash T : L}{\Gamma \vdash s T : A}$$

- if normal $(s T)$ then normal s and normal T
- if $\Gamma \vdash s T : B$ then $\Gamma \vdash T : L$, $\Gamma \vdash s : \text{rev } L \rightarrow A$ for some L



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$$\text{PCP} \leq \text{U}_3$$

W. Goldfarb (1981)

$$\text{H}_{10} \leq \text{SU}_2 \leq \text{U}_2$$



Goldfarb — Diophantine Equations

$$e ::= x + y = z \mid x \cdot y = z \mid x = c \quad (c \in \mathbb{N})$$



Goldfarb — Diophantine Equations

$$e ::= x + y = z \mid x \cdot y = z \mid x = c \quad (c \in \mathbb{N})$$

$$\boxed{\sigma \vDash e}$$

$$\sigma \vDash x = c \quad \textit{iff} \quad \sigma x = c$$

$$\sigma \vDash x + y = z \quad \textit{iff} \quad \sigma x + \sigma y = \sigma z$$

$$\sigma \vDash x \cdot y = z \quad \textit{iff} \quad \sigma x \cdot \sigma y = \sigma z$$



Goldfarb — Diophantine Equations

$$e ::= x + y = z \mid x \cdot y = z \mid x = c \quad (c \in \mathbb{N})$$

$$\boxed{\sigma \vDash e}$$

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$$\sigma \vDash x = c \quad \textit{iff} \quad \sigma x = c$$

$$\sigma \vDash x + y = z \quad \textit{iff} \quad \sigma x + \sigma y = \sigma z$$

$$\sigma \vDash x \cdot y = z \quad \textit{iff} \quad \sigma x \cdot \sigma y = \sigma z$$

$$\frac{\forall e \in E. \sigma \vDash e}{\sigma \vDash E}$$



Goldfarb — Diophantine Equations

$$\mathbf{H}_{10}(E) := \exists \sigma. \sigma \vDash E$$

$$e ::= x + y = z \mid x \cdot y = z \mid x = c \quad (c \in \mathbb{N})$$

$$\boxed{\sigma \vDash e}$$

$$\boxed{\sigma \vDash E}$$

$$\sigma \vDash x = c \quad \text{iff} \quad \sigma x = c$$

$$\sigma \vDash x + y = z \quad \text{iff} \quad \sigma x + \sigma y = \sigma z$$

$$\sigma \vDash x \cdot y = z \quad \text{iff} \quad \sigma x \cdot \sigma y = \sigma z$$

$$\frac{\forall e \in E. \sigma \vDash e}{\sigma \vDash E}$$



Goldfarb — Reduction

$$\mathbf{H}_{10}(E) \quad \textit{iff} \quad \mathbf{SU}_2(F(E))$$

Goldfarb — Reduction Function

Constants

$$c ::= a \mid b \mid g$$

Goldfarb — Reduction Function

Constants

$$c ::= a \mid b \mid g$$

$$\mathcal{C} a = \alpha \quad \mathcal{C} b = \alpha$$
$$\mathcal{C} g = \alpha \rightarrow \alpha \rightarrow \alpha$$

Goldfarb — Reduction Function

Constants

$$c ::= a \mid b \mid g$$

$$\mathcal{C} a = \alpha \quad \mathcal{C} b = \alpha$$
$$\mathcal{C} g = \alpha \rightarrow \alpha \rightarrow \alpha$$
$$\boxed{\bar{n} t}$$
$$\bar{0} t = t$$
$$\bar{S}n t = g a (\bar{n} t)$$


Goldfarb — Reduction Function

Constants

$$c ::= a \mid b \mid g$$

$$\mathcal{C} a = \alpha \quad \mathcal{C} b = \alpha$$

$$\mathcal{C} g = \alpha \rightarrow \alpha \rightarrow \alpha$$

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$$\bar{0} t = t$$

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Example $(x = 42) \mapsto$

Goldfarb — Reduction Function

Constants

$$c ::= a \mid b \mid g$$

$$\mathcal{C} a = \alpha \quad \mathcal{C} b = \alpha$$

$$\mathcal{C} g = \alpha \rightarrow \alpha \rightarrow \alpha$$

$$\boxed{\bar{n} t}$$

$$\bar{0} t = t$$

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Example $(x = 42) \mapsto$

$$x (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x a)$$



Goldfarb — Reduction Function

Constants

$$c ::= a \mid b \mid g$$

$$\mathcal{C} a = \alpha \quad \mathcal{C} b = \alpha$$

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$$\boxed{\bar{n} t}$$

$$\bar{0} t = t$$

$$\bar{S}n t = g a (\bar{n} t)$$

Example $(x = 42) \mapsto$

$$x (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x a)$$

$$x a \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{42} a$$



Goldfarb — Multiplication

$$(x \cdot y = z) \mapsto$$



Goldfarb — Multiplication

$$(x \cdot y = z) \mapsto$$

$$x (\bar{1} \mathbf{a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \mathbf{a}) \quad y (\bar{1} \mathbf{a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (y \mathbf{a}) \quad z (\bar{1} \mathbf{a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (z \mathbf{a})$$



Goldfarb — Multiplication

 $(x \cdot y = z) \mapsto$

$$x (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x a) \quad y (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (y a) \quad z (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (z a)$$

$$G a b (g (g (z a)(y b)) a) \stackrel{?}{=} g (g a b)(G (x a) (\bar{1} b) a)$$

$$G b a (g (g (z b)(y a)) a) \stackrel{?}{=} g (g b a)(G (x b) (\bar{1} a) a)$$



Goldfarb — Multiplication

 $(x \cdot y = z) \mapsto$

$$x (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x a) \quad y (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (y a) \quad z (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (z a)$$

$$G a b (g (g (z a)(y b)) a) \stackrel{?}{=} g (g a b)(G (x a) (\bar{1} b) a)$$

$$G b a (g (g (z b)(y a)) a) \stackrel{?}{=} g (g b a)(G (x b) (\bar{1} a) a)$$

Goldfarb — Multiplication

 $(x \cdot y = z) \mapsto$

$$x (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x a) \quad y (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (y a) \quad z (\bar{1} a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (z a)$$

$$G_{xyz} a b (g (g (z a)(y b)) a) \stackrel{?}{=} g (g a b)(G_{xyz} (x a) (\bar{1} b) a)$$

$$G_{xyz} b a (g (g (z b)(y a)) a) \stackrel{?}{=} g (g b a)(G_{xyz} (x b) (\bar{1} a) a)$$

Goldfarb — Assignment $\sigma \rightarrow$ Substitution θ **Substitution**

$$\theta u = \left\{ \right.$$



Goldfarb — Assignment $\sigma \rightarrow$ Substitution θ **Substitution**

$$\theta u = \begin{cases} \lambda z. \overline{\sigma u} z \\ \end{cases} \quad u \in \text{Vars } E$$

Goldfarb — Assignment $\sigma \rightarrow$ Substitution θ **Substitution**

$$\theta u = \begin{cases} \lambda z. \overline{\sigma u} z & u \in \text{Vars } E \\ \lambda w_1 w_2 w_3. \mathbf{g} \ t_0^{\sigma y} (\dots (\mathbf{g} \ t_{\sigma x-1}^{\sigma y} \ w_3)) & u = G_{xyz} \end{cases}$$

where $t_k^m := \mathbf{g} (\overline{k \cdot m} \ w_1) (\overline{k} \ w_2)$



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ

$(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

How many substitutions θ ?



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ $(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

How many substitutions θ ?

$$\theta x = \lambda x. \bar{1} x$$



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ

$(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

How many substitutions θ ?

$$\theta x = \lambda x. \bar{1} x \quad \theta x = \text{g a}$$



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ

$(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

How many substitutions θ ?

$$\theta x = \lambda x. \bar{1} x \quad \theta x = \text{g a} \quad \theta x = \lambda x. (\lambda y. y) (\bar{1} x)$$



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ $(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

How many substitutions θ ?

$$\theta x = \lambda x. \bar{1} x \quad \theta x = \text{g a} \quad \theta x = \lambda x. (\lambda y. y) (\bar{1} x) \quad \dots$$



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ

$(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

How many substitutions θ ?

$$\theta x = s \quad \text{where} \quad s \text{ a} \equiv \bar{1} \text{ a}$$



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ $(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

Algorithm σx

1. Decide $\Sigma n. \theta x \text{ a} \equiv \bar{n} \text{ a}$



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ $(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

Algorithm σx

1. Decide $\Sigma n. \theta x \text{ a} \equiv \bar{n} \text{ a}$ 😞



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ $(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

Algorithm σx

1. Use $\Delta \vdash \theta : \Gamma$ to normalise θx — $\exists s. \theta x \triangleright s$



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ $(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

Algorithm σx

1. Use $\Delta \vdash \theta : \Gamma$ to normalise θx — $\exists s. \theta x \triangleright s$
2. Circumvent elim restriction — $\Sigma s. \theta x \triangleright s$



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ $(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \ a \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \ a \quad \text{and} \quad x \ (\bar{1} \ a) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \ (x \ a)$$

Algorithm σx

1. Use $\Delta \vdash \theta : \Gamma$ to normalise θx — $\exists s. \theta x \triangleright s$
2. Circumvent elim restriction — $\Sigma s. \theta x \triangleright s$
3. Normalise $(s \ a)$ — $s \ a \triangleright t$



Goldfarb — Substitution $\theta \rightarrow$ Assignment σ $(x = 1) \mapsto$

$$x \text{ a} \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} \text{ a} \quad \text{and} \quad x (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \stackrel{?}{=} \bar{1} (x \text{ a})$$

Algorithm σx

1. Use $\Delta \vdash \theta : \Gamma$ to normalise θx — $\exists s. \theta x \triangleright s$
2. Circumvent elim restriction — $\Sigma s. \theta x \triangleright s$
3. Normalise $(s \text{ a})$ — $s \text{ a} \triangleright t$
4. Decide $\Sigma n. t = \bar{n} \text{ a}$



Conclusion



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G. Huet (1973)

$$\text{PCP} \leq \text{U}_3$$



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Conclusion

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Contributions

- Order Typing \vdash_n
- Unified Calculus

W. Goldfarb (1981)

$$\text{H}_{10} \leq \text{U}_2$$

Conclusion

G. Huet (1973)

$$\text{PCP} \leq \text{U}_3$$

Future Work

- Monadic 2nd-order Unification
- Semi-Unification
- System F typeability
- System F inhabitation

Contributions

- Order Typing \vdash_n
- Unified Calculus

W. Goldfarb (1981)

$$\text{H}_{10} \leq \text{U}_2$$

Related Work I



G. Huet.

The undecidability of unification in third order logic.
Information and control, 1973.



W. Goldfarb.

The undecidability of the second-order unification problem.
Theoretical Computer Science, 1981.



Y. Forster, E. Heiter, G. Smolka.

Verification of PCP-Related Computational Reductions in Coq.
International Conference on Theorem Proving, 2018.



W. Farmer.

Simple second-order languages for which unification is undecidable.
Theoretical Computer Science, 1991.



A. Schubert.

Second-order unification and type inference for Church-style polymorphism.
Proceedings of the 25th ACM SIGPLAN-SIGACT symposium on Principles of programming languages, 1998.



J. Levy and M. Veanes.

On the undecidability of second-order unification.
Information and Computation, 2000.



Formalisation

Contents	Spec	Proofs
Preliminaries	250	300
λ -Calculus	300	340
Confluence	110	180
Weak Normalisation	60	100
List Calculus	200	340
Huet	140	420
Goldfarb	380	1000
Total	1440	2680



Set Unification

$$\mathbf{SU}_n \{ \Gamma \vdash_n s_i \stackrel{?}{=} t_i : \alpha \mid 1 \leq i \leq k \} := \\ \exists \theta \Delta. \Delta \vdash \theta : \Gamma \quad \text{and} \quad \forall i. s_i[\theta] \equiv t_i[\theta]$$



$SU_2 \leq U_2$ $\{\Gamma \vdash_2 s_i \stackrel{?}{=} t_i : \alpha \mid 1 \leq i \leq k\} \mapsto$ $\Gamma \vdash_2 g s_1 (\cdots (g s_k a)) \stackrel{?}{=} g t_1 (\cdots (g t_k a)) : \alpha$ **Lemma**

 $g s_1 s_2 \equiv g t_1 t_2 \quad \text{iff} \quad \forall i. s_i \equiv t_i$ 

Goldfarb Reduction — $x \cdot y = z$

$$(G_{xyz} \ a \ b \ (g \ (g \ (z \ a)(y \ b)) \ a)) \stackrel{?}{=} g \ (g \ a \ b)(G_{xyz} \ (x \ a) \ (\bar{1} \ b) \ a)$$

$$(G_{xyz} \ b \ a \ (g \ (g \ (z \ b)(y \ a)) \ a)) \stackrel{?}{=} g \ (g \ b \ a)(G_{xyz} \ (x \ b) \ (\bar{1} \ a) \ a)$$



Goldfarb Reduction — $x \cdot y = z$

$$(G_{xyz} \text{ a b } (g (g (z \text{ a})(y \text{ b})) \text{ a}))[\theta] \equiv g (g \text{ a b})(G_{xyz} (x \text{ a}) (\bar{1} \text{ b}) \text{ a})[\theta]$$

$$(G_{xyz} \text{ b a } (g (g (z \text{ b})(y \text{ a})) \text{ a}))[\theta] \equiv g (g \text{ b a})(G_{xyz} (x \text{ b}) (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \text{ a})[\theta]$$

where

$$\theta x \text{ t} \equiv \bar{m} \text{ t}$$

$$\theta y \text{ t} \equiv \bar{n} \text{ t}$$

$$\theta z \text{ t} \equiv \bar{p} \text{ t}$$



Goldfarb Reduction — $x \cdot y = z$

$$\begin{aligned}(G_{xyz}[\theta] \text{ a b } (g (g (\bar{p} \text{ a})(\bar{n} \text{ b})) \text{ a})) &\equiv g (g \text{ a b})(G_{xyz}[\theta] (\bar{m} \text{ a}) (\bar{1} \text{ b}) \text{ a}) \\(G_{xyz}[\theta] \text{ b a } (g (g (\bar{p} \text{ b})(\bar{n} \text{ a})) \text{ a})) &\equiv g (g \text{ b a})(G_{xyz}[\theta] (\bar{m} \text{ b}) (\bar{1} \text{ a}) \text{ a})\end{aligned}$$

where

$$\theta x \ t \equiv \bar{m} \ t$$

$$\theta y \ t \equiv \bar{n} \ t$$

$$\theta z \ t \equiv \bar{p} \ t$$



Goldfarb Reduction — $x \cdot y = z$

By analysis of θG_{xyz} we have $\theta G_{xyz} \triangleright \lambda w_1 w_2 w_3. u$

$$u[\sigma_1] \equiv g (g a b) (u[\tau_1])$$

$$u[\sigma_2] \equiv g (g b a) (u[\tau_2])$$

	w_1	w_2	w_3
σ_1	a	b	$g (g (\bar{p} a) (\bar{n} b)) a$
σ_2	b	a	$g (g (\bar{p} b) (\bar{n} a)) a$
τ_1	$\bar{m} a$	$\bar{l} b$	a
τ_2	$\bar{m} b$	$\bar{l} a$	a

Goldfarb Redution — $x \cdot y = z$

$$u[\sigma_1] \equiv g (g a b) u[\tau_1]$$

$$u[\sigma_2] \equiv g (g b a) u[\tau_2]$$

Substitutions

	w_1	w_2	w_3
σ_1	a	b	$g (g (\bar{p} a) (\bar{n} b)) a$
σ_2	b	a	$g (g (\bar{p} b) (\bar{n} a)) a$
τ_1	$\bar{m} a$	$\bar{l} b$	a
τ_2	$\bar{m} b$	$\bar{l} a$	a

Goldfarb Redution — $x \cdot y = z$

$$u[\sigma_1] \equiv g \ t_0[\sigma_1] \ u[\tau_1]$$

$$u[\sigma_2] \equiv g \ t_0[\sigma_2] \ u[\tau_2]$$

where $t_k := g \ (\overline{k \cdot m} \ w_1) \ (\overline{k} \ w_2)$

Substitutions

	w_1	w_2	w_3
σ_1	a	b	$g \ (g \ (\overline{p} \ a) \ (\overline{n} \ b)) \ a$
σ_2	b	a	$g \ (g \ (\overline{p} \ b) \ (\overline{n} \ a)) \ a$
τ_1	$\overline{m} \ a$	$\overline{1} \ b$	a
τ_2	$\overline{m} \ b$	$\overline{1} \ a$	a

Goldfarb Redution — $x \cdot y = z$

$$g \ t_0[\sigma_1] \ u'[\sigma_1] \equiv g \ t_0[\sigma_1] \ (g \ t_0[\tau_1] \ u'[\tau_1])$$

$$g \ t_0[\sigma_2] \ u'[\sigma_2] \equiv g \ t_0[\sigma_2] \ (g \ t_0[\tau_2] \ u'[\tau_2])$$

where $t_k := g \ (\overline{k \cdot m} \ w_1) \ (\overline{k} \ w_2)$

Substitutions

	w_1	w_2	w_3
σ_1	a	b	$g \ (g \ (\overline{p} \ a) \ (\overline{n} \ b)) \ a$
σ_2	b	a	$g \ (g \ (\overline{p} \ b) \ (\overline{n} \ a)) \ a$
τ_1	$\overline{m} \ a$	$\overline{1} \ b$	a
τ_2	$\overline{m} \ b$	$\overline{1} \ a$	a

Goldfarb Redution — $x \cdot y = z$

$$g \ t_0[\sigma_1] \ u'[\sigma_1] \equiv g \ t_0[\sigma_1] \ (g \ t_1[\sigma_1] \ u'[\tau_1])$$

$$g \ t_0[\sigma_2] \ u'[\sigma_2] \equiv g \ t_0[\sigma_2] \ (g \ t_1[\sigma_2] \ u'[\tau_2])$$

where $t_k := g \ (\overline{k \cdot m} \ w_1) \ (\overline{k} \ w_2)$

Substitutions

	w_1	w_2	w_3
σ_1	a	b	$g \ (g \ (\overline{p} \ a) \ (\overline{n} \ b)) \ a$
σ_2	b	a	$g \ (g \ (\overline{p} \ b) \ (\overline{n} \ a)) \ a$
τ_1	$\overline{m} \ a$	$\overline{1} \ b$	a
τ_2	$\overline{m} \ b$	$\overline{1} \ a$	a

Lemma

$$t_k[\tau_i] \equiv t_{k+1}[\sigma_i]$$

Goldfarb Redution — $x \cdot y = z$

$$u''[\sigma_1] \equiv g \ t_n[\sigma_1] \ u''[\tau_1]$$

$$u''[\sigma_2] \equiv g \ t_n[\sigma_2] \ u''[\tau_2]$$

where $t_k := g \ (\overline{k \cdot m} \ w_1) \ (\overline{k} \ w_2)$

Substitutions

	w_1	w_2	w_3
σ_1	a	b	$g \ (g \ (\overline{p} \ a) \ (\overline{n} \ b)) \ a$
σ_2	b	a	$g \ (g \ (\overline{p} \ b) \ (\overline{n} \ a)) \ a$
τ_1	$\overline{m} \ a$	$\overline{1} \ b$	a
τ_2	$\overline{m} \ b$	$\overline{1} \ a$	a

Lemma

$$t_k[\tau_i] \equiv t_{k+1}[\sigma_i]$$

Goldfarb Redution — $x \cdot y = z$

$$u''[\sigma_1] \equiv g (g (\overline{n \cdot m} w_1) (\overline{n} w_2))[\sigma_1] \quad u''[\tau_1]$$

$$u''[\sigma_2] \equiv g (g (\overline{n \cdot m} w_1) (\overline{n} w_2))[\sigma_2] \quad u''[\tau_2]$$

where $t_k := g (\overline{k \cdot m} w_1) (\overline{k} w_2)$

Substitutions

	w_1	w_2	w_3
σ_1	a	b	$g (g (\overline{p} a) (\overline{n} b)) a$
σ_2	b	a	$g (g (\overline{p} b) (\overline{n} a)) a$
τ_1	$\overline{m} a$	$\overline{1} b$	a
τ_2	$\overline{m} b$	$\overline{1} a$	a

Lemma

$$t_k[\tau_i] \equiv t_{k+1}[\sigma_i]$$

Goldfarb Redution — $x \cdot y = z$

$$w_3[\sigma_1] \equiv g (g (\overline{n \cdot m} w_1) (\overline{n} w_2))[\sigma_1] \quad w_3[\tau_1]$$

$$w_3[\sigma_2] \equiv g (g (\overline{n \cdot m} w_1) (\overline{n} w_2))[\sigma_2] \quad w_3[\tau_2]$$

where $t_k := g (\overline{k \cdot m} w_1) (\overline{k} w_2)$

Substitutions

	w_1	w_2	w_3
σ_1	a	b	$g (g (\overline{p} a) (\overline{n} b)) a$
σ_2	b	a	$g (g (\overline{p} b) (\overline{n} a)) a$
τ_1	$\overline{m} a$	$\overline{1} b$	a
τ_2	$\overline{m} b$	$\overline{1} a$	a

Lemma

$$t_k[\tau_i] \equiv t_{k+1}[\sigma_i]$$