Computable = λ-definable

Theorem. A partial function is computable if and only if it is λ-definable.

We already know that

$$\begin{array}{ll} & \text{Register Machine computable} \\ = & \text{Turing computable} \\ = & \text{partial recursive.} \end{array}$$

Using this, we break the theorem into two parts:

- every partial recursive function is λ-definable
- λ-definable functions are RM computable

Recall:

Representing primitive recursion

If $f \in \mathbb{N}^n \to \mathbb{N}$ is represented by a λ-term F and

$g \in \mathbb{N}^{n+2} \to \mathbb{N}$ is represented by a λ-term G,

we want to show λ-definability of the unique
$h \in \mathbb{N}^{n+1} \to \mathbb{N}$ satisfying $h = \Phi_{f,g}(h)$

where $\Phi_{f,g} \in (\mathbb{N}^{n+1} \to \mathbb{N}) \to (\mathbb{N}^{n+1} \to \mathbb{N})$ is given by

$$\Phi_{f,g}(h)(\vec{a}, a) \triangleq \textit{if } a = 0 \textit{ then } f(\vec{a}) \textit{ else } g(\vec{a}, a-1, h(\vec{a}, a-1))$$

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Strategy:

- show that $\Phi_{f,g}$ is λ-definable;

$\lambda z \vec{x} x . \mathrm{If}(\mathrm{Eq}_0 x)(F\vec{x})(G\vec{x}(\mathrm{Pred}\, x)(z\vec{x}(\mathrm{Pred}\, x)))$

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Strategy:

- show that $\Phi_{f,g}$ is λ-definable;
- show that we can solve
  $X = M\,X$ up to β-conversion in the λ-calculus.

Curry's fixed point combinator $\mathbf{Y}$

$$\mathbf{Y} \triangleq \lambda f.\,(\lambda x.\,f\,(x\,x))\,(\lambda x.\,f\,(x\,x))$$

$$\boxed{\mathbf{Y}\,M =_\beta M\,(\mathbf{Y}\,M)}$$

Origins of Y

Naive set theory	λ calculus
Russell set :	
$R \triangleq \{x \mid \neg(x \in x)\}$	$R \triangleq \lambda x.\ not\,(x\,x)$

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$$\mathbf{Y} \triangleq \lambda f.\,(\lambda x.\,f\,(x\,x))\,(\lambda x.\,f\,(x\,x))$$

satisfies $\mathbf{Y}\,M \quad \rightarrow \quad (\lambda x.\,M\,(x\,x))\,(\lambda x.\,M\,(x\,x))$

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satisfies $\mathbf{Y}\,M \;\to\; (\lambda x.\,M(x\,x))(\lambda x.\,M(x\,x))$
$\to\; M((\lambda x.\,M(x\,x))(\lambda x.\,M(x\,x)))$

hence $\mathbf{Y}\,M \twoheadrightarrow M((\lambda x.\,M(x\,x))(\lambda x.\,M(x\,x))) \twoheadleftarrow M(\mathbf{Y}\,M)$.

So for all λ-terms M we have

$$\boxed{\mathbf{Y}\,M =_\beta M(\mathbf{Y}\,M)}$$

Turing's fixed point combinator

$$\Theta \triangleq A\,A$$

where $A \triangleq \lambda x y.\, y(xxy)$

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$$\twoheadrightarrow M(A\,A\,M)$$

$$= M(\Theta M)$$

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We now know that h can be represented by

$$Y(\lambda z \vec{x} x.\, \mathbf{If}\,(\mathbf{Eq_0}\, x)\,(F\, \vec{x})\,(G\, \vec{x}\,(\mathbf{Pred}\, x)\,(z\, \vec{x}\,(\mathbf{Pred}\, x)))).$$

Representing primitive recursion

Recall that the class **PRIM** of primitive recursive functions is the smallest collection of (total) functions containing the basic functions and closed under the operations of composition and primitive recursion.

Combining the results about λ-definability so far, we have: **every $f \in$ PRIM is λ-definable**.

So for λ-definability of all recursive functions, we just have to consider how to represent minimization. Recall...

Minimization

Given a partial function $f \in \mathbb{N}^{n+1} \rightharpoonup \mathbb{N}$, define $\mu^n f \in \mathbb{N}^n \rightharpoonup \mathbb{N}$ by

$\mu^n f(\vec{x}) \triangleq$ least x such that $f(\vec{x}, x) = 0$ and for each $i = 0, \ldots, x-1$, $f(\vec{x}, i)$ is defined and > 0 (undefined if there is no such x)

So $\mu^n f(\vec{x}) = g(\vec{x}, 0)$ where in general $g(\vec{x}, x)$ satisfies

$g(\vec{x}, x) =$ if $f(\vec{x}, x) = 0$ then x else $g(\vec{x}, x+1)$

Minimization

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$$\mu^n f(\vec{x}) \triangleq \begin{array}{l} \text{least } x \text{ such that } f(\vec{x}, x) = 0 \text{ and} \\ \text{for each } i = 0, \ldots, x-1,\ f(\vec{x}, i) \\ \text{is defined and } > 0 \\ \text{(undefined if there is no such } x\text{)} \end{array}$$

Can express $\mu^n f$ in terms of a fixed point equation:

$\mu^n f(\vec{x}) \equiv g(\vec{x}, 0)$ where g satisfies $\boxed{g = \Psi_f(g)}$

with $\Psi_f \in (\mathbb{N}^{n+1} \rightharpoonup \mathbb{N}) \to (\mathbb{N}^{n+1} \rightharpoonup \mathbb{N})$ defined by

$$\Psi_f(g)(\vec{x}, x) \equiv \mathit{if}\ f(\vec{x}, x) = 0\ \mathit{then}\ x\ \mathit{else}\ g(\vec{x}, x+1)$$

Representing minimization

Suppose $f \in \mathbb{N}^{n+1} \to \mathbb{N}$ (totally defined function) satisfies $\forall \vec{a}\, \exists a\, (f(\vec{a}, a) = 0)$, so that $\mu^n f \in \mathbb{N}^n \to \mathbb{N}$ is totally defined.

Thus for all $\vec{a} \in \mathbb{N}^n$, $\mu^n f(\vec{a}) = g(\vec{a}, 0)$ with $g = \Psi_f(g)$ and $\Psi_f(g)(\vec{a}, a)$ given by
$\mathit{if}\ (f(\vec{a}, a) = 0)\ \mathit{then}\ a\ \mathit{else}\ g(\vec{a}, a+1)$.

So if f is represented by a λ-term F, then $\mu^n f$ is represented by

$$\lambda \vec{x}.\mathbf{Y}(\lambda z\, \vec{x}\, x.\, \mathbf{If}(\mathbf{Eq}_0(F\, \vec{x}\, x))\, x\, (z\, \vec{x}\, (\mathbf{Succ}\, x)))\, \vec{x}\, \underline{0}$$

Recursive implies λ-definable

Fact: every partial recursive $f \in \mathbb{N}^n \rightharpoonup \mathbb{N}$ can be expressed in a standard form as $f = g \circ (\mu^n h)$ for some $g, h \in \mathbf{PRIM}$. (Follows from the proof that computable = partial-recursive.)

Hence every (total) recursive function is λ-definable.

More generally, every partial recursive function is λ-definable, but matching up $\uparrow$ with $\not\exists \beta\mathbf{-nf}$ makes the representations more complicated than for total functions: see [Hindley, J.R. & Seldin, J.P. (CUP, 2008), chapter 4.]

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Theorem. A partial function is computable if and only if it is λ-definable.

We already know that computable = partial recursive $\Rightarrow$ λ-definable.
So it just remains to see that **λ-definable functions are RM computable**. To show this one can

- code λ-terms as numbers (ensuring that operations for constructing and deconstructing terms are given by RM computable functions on codes)
- write a RM interpreter for (normal order) β-reduction.

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Numerical coding of λ-terms

Fix an enumeration $x_0, x_1, x_2, \ldots$ of the set of variables.

For each λ-term M, define $\ulcorner M \urcorner \in \mathbb{N}$ by

$$\ulcorner x_i \urcorner = \ulcorner [0, i] \urcorner$$

$$\ulcorner \lambda x_i . M \urcorner = \ulcorner [1, i, \ulcorner M \urcorner] \urcorner$$

$$\ulcorner M N \urcorner = \ulcorner [2, \ulcorner M \urcorner, \ulcorner N \urcorner] \urcorner$$

(where $\ulcorner [n_0, n_1, \ldots, n_k] \urcorner$ is the numerical coding of lists of numbers from p 43).

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The details are straightforward, if tedious.

Summary

- Formalization of intuitive notion of ALGORITHM in several equivalent ways

- Limitative results: { undecidable problems / uncomputable functions