Java Type Unification with Wildcards

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Overview

Motivation

Extensions of the Java 5.0 type–system

- parameterized types, type variables, type terms, wildcards

  e.g.

  ```
  Vector<? extends AbstractList<? super Integer>>
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- Sometimes principal types in Java 5.0 are *intersection types*, which are not expressible (contradictive of writing re-usable code)

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$\Longrightarrow$ Developing a type–inference–system, which determines principal types

Example: Multiplication of matrices

```
class Matrix extends Vector<Vector<Integer>> {
    Matrix mul(Matrix m) {
        Matrix ret = new Matrix();
        int i = 0;
        while(i <size()) {
            Vector<Integer> v1 = this.elementAt(i);
            Vector<Integer> v2 = new Vector<Integer>();
            int j = 0;
            while(j < v1.size()) {
                int erg = 0;
                int k = 0;
                while(k < v1.size()) {
                    erg = erg + v1.elementAt(k)
                        * m.elementAt(k).elementAt(j); k++; }
                v2.addElement(new Integer(erg)); j++; }
            ret.addElement(v2); i++; }
        return ret; }}
```

System determines the principal typing(s)

```
mul: Matrix → Matrix &
     Matrix → Vector<Vector<Integer>>
     & ... &
     Vector<? extends Vector<? extends Integer>>
                          → Vector<? super Vector<Integer>>
```

Purpose: Typless

```
class Matrix extends Vector<Vector<Integer>> {
    mul(m) {
        ret = new Matrix();
        i = 0;
        while(i <size()) {
            v1 = this.elementAt(i);
            v2 = new Vector<Integer>();
            j = 0;
            while(j < v1.size()) {
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                        * m.elementAt(k).elementAt(j); k++; }
                v2.addElement(new Integer(erg)); j++; }
            ret.addElement(v2); i++; }
        return ret; }}
```

Inheritance hierarchy

extends/implements relation: $\leq$ (declared by the `extends` resp. `implements` declarations

Example: `Stack<x>` $\leq$ `Vector<x>`
(declared by `class Stack<x> extends Vector<x>`)

subtyping relation: $\leq^*$ (ordering of the Java 5.0 type terms)

Example:
`Stack<Vector<Integer>>` $\leq^*$ `Vector<Vector<Integer>>`

Inheritance hierarchy cont.

Definition: Finite closure **FC**($\leq$)

- reflexive and transitive closure of relationships in the subtyping ordering, where in the left hand sides all arguments are type variables.

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(declared by `class Matrix<x> extends Vector<Vector<x>>`)

`myLi<b, a>` $\leq^*$ `List<a>`
(declared by `class myLi<b,a> extends List<a>`)

`myLi<Integer, a>` $\leq^*$ `List<a>` is not an element of the finite closure.

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Lemma

The finite closure is a finite subset of the subtyping relation $\leq^*$.

Wildcards

Subtyping relation: $\texttt{Integer} \leq^* \texttt{Number}$

$\texttt{Stack<a>} \leq^* \texttt{Vector<a>}$

It holds $\texttt{Stack<Integer>} \leq^* \texttt{Vector<Integer>}$

but $\texttt{Stack<Integer>} \not\leq^* \texttt{Vector<Number>}$

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Introduction of wildcards

- $\texttt{Stack<Integer>} \leq^* \texttt{Vector<? extends Number>}$
  `? extends Number`: all subtypes of `Number` are allowed
- $\texttt{Stack<Number>} \leq^* \texttt{Vector<? super Integer>}$
  `? super Intger`: all supertypes of `Integer` are allowed

Abbreviation for wildcard–types

Instead of `A<? extends B>` we write

`A<?B>`

and instead of `C<? super D>` we write

`C<?D>`.

Type Unification problem

For two type terms θ_1 and θ_2 a substitution σ is demanded such that:

$$\sigma(\theta_1) \leq^* \sigma(\theta_2).$$

TEL [Smolka 1989]

- Type system without any restrictions
- Type unification algorithm is incomplete
- Open problem mentioned: infinte chains in the type term ordering
  For `List(a)` $\leq$ `myLi(a,b)` holds:

  `List(a)` $\leq$ `myLi(a,List(a))` $\leq$ `myLi(a,myLi(a,List(a)))` $\leq \ldots$

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  $$\texttt{List(a)} \leq \texttt{myLi(a,List(a))} \leq \texttt{myLi(a,myLi(a,List(a)))} \leq \ldots$$

For $\texttt{nat} \leq \texttt{int}$ holds

$$\{\, \texttt{nat} \lessdot \texttt{a}, \texttt{int} \lessdot \texttt{a} \,\} \Rightarrow \texttt{a} \mapsto \texttt{nat} \Rightarrow \{\, \texttt{int} \lessdot \texttt{nat} \,\} \Rightarrow \textbf{fail}$$

But there is a unifier $\texttt{a} \mapsto \texttt{int}$.

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The algorithm is incomplete even for types without infinite chains

[Hill, Topor 1992]

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- *most general type unifier (mgtu)* defined as an upper bound of different principal type unifiers

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The mgtu of $\{\, \texttt{nat} \lessdot \texttt{a}, \texttt{neg} \lessdot \texttt{a} \,\}$ is $\{\, \texttt{a} \mapsto \texttt{int} \,\}$

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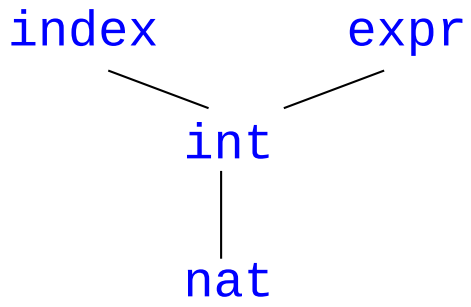

Extension: $\texttt{int} \leq \texttt{index}$ and $\texttt{int} \leq \texttt{expr}$:
There are three unifiers $\texttt{a} \mapsto \texttt{int}$, $\texttt{a} \mapsto \texttt{index}$, and $\texttt{a} \mapsto \texttt{expr}$, but none of them is a mgtu.

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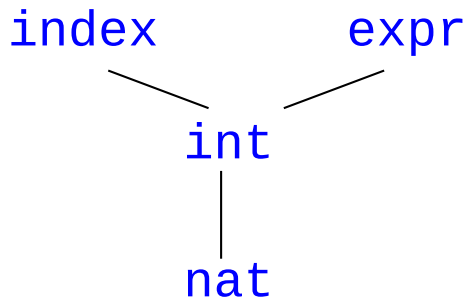

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In general there is no mgtu in the sense of [Hill, Topor 1992].

PROTOS-L [Beierle 1995]

- no subtype relationship between polymorphic type constructors
- type unification algorithm complete
- unification problem indeed not unitary, but finitary
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The algorithm do not work on subtype relationships where the constructors have different arities.

Java type unification [Plümicke 2004, Unif'04, Cork]

- no wildcards
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For $\texttt{myLi<b, a>} \leq \texttt{List<a>}$ and $\{\, \texttt{myLi<Integer, a>} \lessdot \texttt{List<Boolean>} \,\}$ the general unifier

$$\{\, \texttt{a} \mapsto \texttt{Boolean} \,\}$$

is determined.

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the algorithm fails, as indeed $\texttt{Integer} \leq \texttt{Number}$, but subtyping in the arguments is prohibited.

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No infinite chains appears.

Base of Hindley/Milner approach: (Type) unification algorithm [Martelli, Montanari 1982]

(reduce) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, C\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \doteq C\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_n\rangle \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, \theta_1 \doteq \theta'_1, \ldots, \theta_n \doteq \theta'_n \,\}}$$

(erase) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, \theta \doteq \theta' \,\}}{Eq} \quad \theta = \theta'$$

(swap) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, \theta \doteq a \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, a \doteq \theta \,\}} \quad a \in TV$$

(subst) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, a \doteq \theta \,\}}{Eq[a \mapsto \theta] \cup \{\, a \doteq \theta \,\}}$$ a occurs in Eq but not in θ

Type unification algorithm for Java 5.0 type terms without wildcards [Plümicke 2004, Unif'04, Cork]

(adapt)
$$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, D\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \lessdot D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, D'\langle\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m\rangle[a_i \mapsto \theta_i \mid 1 \leqslant i \leqslant n] \lessdot D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}$$

where there are $\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m$ with

- $(D\langle a_1, \ldots, a_n\rangle \leq^* D'\langle\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m\rangle) \in \mathbf{FC}(\leq)$

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(reduce1)
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where

- $C\langle a_1, \ldots, a_n\rangle \leq^* D\langle a_{\pi(1)}, \ldots, a_{\pi(n)}\rangle$
- $\{\, a_1, \ldots, a_n \,\} \subseteq TV$
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(reduce2) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, C\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \doteq C\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_n\rangle \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, \theta_1 \doteq \theta'_1, \ldots, \theta_n \doteq \theta'_n \,\}}$$

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Type unification rules

$$\text{(redUp)}\ \frac{Eq \cup \{\, \theta \lessdot {}^{?}\theta' \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, \theta \lessdot \theta' \,\}} \qquad \text{(redUpLow)}\ \frac{Eq \cup \{\, {}_{?}\theta \lessdot {}^{?}\theta' \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, \theta \lessdot \theta' \,\}} \qquad \text{(redLow)}\ \frac{Eq \cup \{\, {}_{?}\theta \lessdot \theta' \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, \theta \lessdot \theta' \,\}}$$

Wildcards in outermost position

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Wildcards in outermost position

$$\text{(red1)}\ \frac{Eq \cup \{\, C\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \lessdot D\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_n\rangle \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, \theta_{\pi(1)} \lessdot_? \theta'_1, \ldots, \theta_{\pi(n)} \lessdot_? \theta'_n \,\}}$$

Reduce rule for outermost type constructor

where

- $C\langle a_1, \ldots, a_n\rangle \leq^* D\langle a_{\pi(1)}, \ldots, a_{\pi(n)}\rangle$
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$$\text{(redExt)}\ \frac{Eq \cup \{\, X\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \lessdot_? {}_?Y\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_n\rangle \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, \theta_{\pi(1)} \lessdot_? \theta'_1, \ldots, \theta_{\pi(n)} \lessdot_? \theta'_n \,\}}$$

Reduce rule for extends wildcards

where

- ${}_?Y\langle a_{\pi(1)}, \ldots, a_{\pi(n)}\rangle \in$ **grArg**$(\, X\langle a_1, \ldots, a_n\rangle \,)$
- $\{\, a_1, \ldots, a_n \,\} \subseteq BTV$

Type unification rules

(redSup) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{ X\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \lessdot_? {}^?Y\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_n\rangle \}}{Eq \cup \{ \theta'_1 \lessdot_? \theta_{\pi(1)}, \ldots, \theta'_n \lessdot_? \theta_{\pi(n)} \}}$$

where

- ${}^?Y\langle a_{\pi(1)}, \ldots, a_{\pi(n)}\rangle \in \mathbf{grArg}(X\langle a_1, \ldots, a_n\rangle)$
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Reduce rule for super wildcards

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Reduce rule for super wildcards

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(redEq) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{ X\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \lessdot_? X\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_n\rangle \}}{Eq \cup \{ \theta_{\pi(1)} \doteq \theta'_1, \ldots, \theta_{\pi(n)} \doteq \theta'_n \}}$$

Reduce rule for equal type constructors

Type unification rules

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Reduce rule for super wildcards

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Reduce rule for equal type constructors

(reduce2) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{ C\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \doteq C\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_n\rangle \}}{Eq \cup \{ \theta_1 \doteq \theta'_1, \ldots, \theta_n \doteq \theta'_n \}}$$

Original reduce rule

Type unification rules

(adapt)
$$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, D\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \lessdot D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, D'\langle\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m\rangle[a_i \mapsto CC(\theta_i) \mid 1 \leqslant i \leqslant n] \lessdot D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}$$

where there are $\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m$ with — outermost adapt rule

- $(D\langle a_1, \ldots, a_n\rangle \leq^* D'\langle\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m\rangle) \in \mathbf{FC}(\leq)$

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- $(D\langle a_1, \ldots, a_n\rangle \leq^* D'\langle\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m\rangle) \in \mathbf{FC}(\ \leq\ )$

(adaptExt)
$$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, D\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \lessdot_{?\ ?} D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, D'\langle\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m\rangle[a_i \mapsto CC(\theta_i) \mid 1 \leqslant i \leqslant n] \lessdot_{?\ ?} D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}$$

where there are $\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m$ with — adapt rule: extends wildcard

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Type unification rules

(adapt)
$$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, D\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \lessdot D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, D'\langle\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m\rangle[a_i \mapsto CC(\theta_i) \mid 1 \leqslant i \leqslant n] \lessdot D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}$$

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(adaptExt)
$$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, D\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \lessdot_{?\,?} D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, D'\langle\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m\rangle[a_i \mapsto CC(\theta_i) \mid 1 \leqslant i \leqslant n] \lessdot_{?\,?} D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}$$

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(adaptSup)
$$\frac{Eq \cup \{\, D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \lessdot_{?\,}{}^{?} D\langle\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_n\rangle \,\}}{Eq \cup \{\, D'\langle\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m\rangle[a_i \mapsto CC(\theta_i) \mid 1 \leqslant i \leqslant n] \lessdot_{?\,?} D'\langle\theta'_1, \ldots, \theta'_m\rangle \,\}}$$

where there are $\overline{\theta}'_1, \ldots, \overline{\theta}'_m$ with — adapt rule: super wildcard

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Type unification rules

(erase1) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{ \theta \lessdot \theta' \}}{Eq} \quad \theta \leq^* \theta'$$

(erase2) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{ \theta \lessdot_? \theta' \}}{Eq} \quad \theta' \in \mathbf{grArg}(\theta)$$

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(swap) $$\frac{Eq \cup \{ \theta \doteq a \}}{Eq \cup \{ a \doteq \theta \}} \quad \theta \notin BTV,\ a \in BTV$$

(subst) $$\frac{Eq' \cup \{ a \doteq \theta \}}{Eq'[a \mapsto \theta] \cup \{ a \doteq \theta \}} \quad a \text{ occurs in } Eq' \text{ but not in } \theta$$

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7. Summerize all results.

Example

Subtyping relation:

$\texttt{Integer} \leq^* \texttt{Number}$

$\texttt{Stack<a>} \leq^* \texttt{Vector<a>} \leq^* \texttt{AbstractList<a>} \leq^* \texttt{List<a>}$

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$$\{ (\texttt{Stack<a>} \lessdot \texttt{Vector<?Number>}), (\texttt{AbstractList<Integer>} \lessdot \texttt{List<a>}) \}$$

$$\overset{(red1)}{\Longrightarrow} \{ \texttt{a} \lessdot_? {}_?\texttt{Number},\ \texttt{Integer} \lessdot_? \texttt{a} \}$$

$$\overset{2./3./4.}{\Longrightarrow} \{ \{ \texttt{a} \doteq {}_?\texttt{Number}, \texttt{a} \doteq \texttt{Integer} \}, \{ \texttt{a} \doteq {}_?\texttt{Number}, \texttt{a} \doteq {}_?\texttt{Number} \},$$
$$\{ \texttt{a} \doteq {}_?\texttt{Number}, \texttt{a} \doteq {}_?\texttt{Integer} \}, \{ \texttt{a} \doteq {}_?\texttt{Number}, \texttt{a} \doteq {}^?\texttt{Integer} \},$$
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Example cont.

5.*step* (*subst*)

$$\Longrightarrow$$

$$\{\{\mathtt{Integer} \doteq {?}\mathtt{Number}, \mathtt{a} \doteq \mathtt{Integer}\}, \underline{\{{?}\mathtt{Number} \doteq {?}\mathtt{Number}, \mathtt{a} \doteq {?}\mathtt{Number}\}},$$
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$$\overset{(\mathit{erase3})}{\Longrightarrow} \{\{\mathtt{a} \mapsto {?}\mathtt{Number}\}, \{\mathtt{a} \mapsto {?}\mathtt{Integer}\}, \{\mathtt{a} \mapsto \mathtt{Integer}\}\}$$

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Application of the algorithm:

$$\{\, \texttt{List<x>} \lessdot \texttt{List<?List<Integer>>} \,\}$$
$$\overset{(red1)}{\Rightarrow} \{\, \texttt{x} \lessdot_? \texttt{?List<Integer>} \,\}$$
$$\overset{3.step}{\Rightarrow} \{\, \{\, \texttt{x} \mapsto \texttt{List<Integer>} \,\}, \{\, \texttt{x} \mapsto \texttt{?List<Integer>} \,\}, \{\, \texttt{x} \mapsto \texttt{myLi<b, Integer>} \,\}, \{\, \texttt{x} \mapsto \texttt{?myLi<b, Integer>} \,\} \,\}.$$

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Although, there are infinite subtypes of x only a finite number of general unifiers is determined.

All other unifiers are instances of these.

Results

Theorem (Soundness and Completeness)

The type unification algorithm is sound and complete.

Corollary (Finitary)

The type unification of Java 5.0 type terms with wildcards is finitary.

Corollary (Termination)

The type unification algorithm terminates.

The finitary corollary means that the open problem of [Smolka 1989] is solved by our type unification algorithm.

Conclusion and future work

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Future work

- Integration of the extended type unification algorithm into the Java 5.0 type inference algorithm (nearly done)
- Extension of a prolog implementation by the type unification algorithm.