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The Sky is the Limit: Analysing Resource Consumption Over Time Using Skylines

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ABSTRACT
In this paper we present a static analysis for costs of higher-order workflows, where costs are maps from resource types to simple functions over time. We present a type and effect system together with an algorithm that yields safe approximations for the cost functions of programs.

CCS CONCEPTS
• Theory of computation → Program analysis;

KEYWORDS
workflow systems, resource modelling, type and effect systems

ACM Reference Format:

1 INTRODUCTION
Task Oriented Programming (TOP) is a programming paradigm that allows specifying workflows in a declarative way. TOP programs are distributed applications where users work together on the internet. They are built using the four concepts tasks, shared data, generic interaction, and task combinators. There is an implementation of TOP called iTasks [Plasmeijer et al. 2012], which comes as an embedded domain specific language in the pure, lazy functional programming language Clean. A demonstration of the capabilities of iTasks can be found in Lijnse et al. [2012], where it has been used to write a crisis management tool for the Dutch coast guard.

In this paper we focus on tasks and task combinators. We are interested in statically analysing a simplified variant of TOP programs, enriched with costs and durations for basic tasks. In previous work [Klinik et al. 2017] we presented a static analysis for workflows that, given costs for basic tasks, yields a safe approximation of the cost of a whole program. Costs are maps from resource types to numbers, one number for each type of resource a program requires.

In this paper we refine the notion of cost by including time, in the sense that each basic task gets a duration, and its cost refers to this duration. The result of the extended analysis is not a single number, but a function over time. The main contribution of this paper is the development of a two-dimensional cost model suitable for both the dynamic and static semantics (Section 2). We also present a type system (Section 3) and an implementation (Section 4) for the analysis.

1.1 Basic Ideas
We would like to represent the cost of executing tasks by functions over time. Complex tasks are composed of simpler ones, and so should be their cost functions. By combining cost functions of simple tasks using operations that correspond to task composition, we obtain cost functions for complex tasks.

Example 1.1. Consider the two tasks of hosting a birthday party and a wedding, which both require chairs. Let’s say the birthday party requires 20 chairs and takes five hours, while the wedding requires ten chairs and takes ten hours. We visualize these costs over time in diagrams called skylines. The skylines are shown in Figure 1.

Hosting the birthday party first and immediately after it the wedding requires being able to supply 20 chairs for the first five hours and 10 chairs for the hours 5 to 10. The corresponding skyline is shown in Figure 2.
Hosting the birthday party and the wedding at the same time requires 30 chairs for the first five hours, and 10 chairs for the remaining five hours. See Figure 3 (A).

If, for whatever reason, either the wedding or the birthday takes place, then actually either 20 chairs for five hours or 10 chairs for ten hours are used. In order to be prepared for both situations, a host must calculate with 20 chairs for five hours and ten chairs for another five hours. See Figure 3 (B).

In this example, we considered chairs, which are a reusable resource. Combining skylines of consumable resources works differently, because those can only increase and never decrease.

2 SYNTAX AND SEMANTICS

In this section we define the syntax and operational semantics of a programming language to specify workflows.

We consider two kinds of resources, consumables and reusables. Consumable resources are used up when a task that requires them is executed. Reusable resources are claimed exclusively during execution of a task and become available again upon completion.

We assume that it is implicitly understood which resources are consumable and which are reusable.

2.1 A Programming Language for Workflows

Our language is a simplified version of Clean and iTasks. It is a small functional programming language with higher-order functions, non-recursive let-bindings and a fixpoint combinator. Tasks and workflows exist as domain-specific constants and combinators in the language.

\[
e ::= b | i | () | x \mid \text{fn } x.e \mid \text{fix } f.x.e \mid e_1 + e_2 \\
\text{if } e_1 \text{ then } e_2 \text{ else } e_3 \mid \text{let } x = e_1 \text{ in } e_2 \mid e_1 \odot e_2 \\
\text{use } [k.t] e \mid \text{return } e \mid e_1 \& e_2 \mid e_1 \gg e_2 \\
k ::= n u \mid n u + k
\]

The general-purpose part of the language has Boolean and integer constants \( b \) and \( i \), the unit value (\( () \)), program variables \( x \), abstraction, application, if-then-else and let-bindings. The symbol \( \odot \) stands for the usual binary operators for arithmetic, Boolean connectives and comparison. There is a fixpoint combinator \( \text{fix } f.x.e \) that defines recursive functions.

The domain-specific part of the language has a primitive use for basic tasks, and task combinators for sequential and parallel composition. All basic tasks are represented by the use operator, where \( k \) denotes the cost of executing the task, and \( t \) its duration. Costs are given in a polynomial-like syntax where \( n \) is a natural number and \( u \) the unit of a resource. Durations \( t \) are given as non-zero natural numbers. For example the expression "use \( [2S+3B,20]\) 5" may denote a task that uses 2 screwdrivers, 3 bottles of wine, takes 20 minutes to execute, and yields the value 5. Costs, time, and resources are discussed in more detail in Section 2.2.

Expressions of the form \( \text{return } e \) denote tasks that have been executed and return a value \( e \).

There are three combinators for tasks, the parallel combinator (\&) and two variants of sequential composition. The regular bind operator (\( \gg \)) executes its left argument first and passes the resulting value to its right argument as usual. The sequence operator (\( \Rightarrow \)) ignores the value of its left argument and yields the value of its right argument. The sequence operator is useful for example programs where the values of tasks do not matter. We include it in our language for convenience, being well aware that it can easily be defined in terms of bind. Since \( \gg \) and \( \Rightarrow \) have identical cost behavior, we ignore \( \gg \) in the formal parts of this paper for simplicity.

The parallel combinator executes both its arguments simultaneously. In iTasks the result value of parallel composition is a tuple containing the values of both tasks. Our language does not have tuples, a deliberate decision because we want to focus more on side effects than on values. Adding tuples to the language is standard procedure and can be found in any textbook on type systems. We take the liberty of bending the semantics of the parallel combinator a bit to avoid tuples, saving some space in this paper. Both arguments to (\&) and its result are of type task (\( \)).

2.2 A Domain for Representing Costs Over Time

In this section we develop a model for costs over time, suitable for both the dynamic and static semantics.

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Definition 2.1.} \quad \text{(Extended natural numbers)} & \quad \text{The extended natural numbers are the natural numbers with infinity: } \mathbb{N} = \{0, 1, 2, \ldots, \infty\}. \\
\text{The only operations we need are addition and comparison, which are extended with } \infty \text{ in the natural way.} \\
\text{Definition 2.2.} \quad \text{(Time)} & \quad \text{For our purposes, a point in time is an element of } \mathbb{N}. \text{ A duration is a non-zero natural number.} \\
\text{Definition 2.3.} \quad \text{(Skylines)} & \quad \text{The cost over time for a single resource is given by time series } \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}, \text{ called skyline. The set of all skylines is called } \mathbb{S}. \\
\text{Definition 2.4.} \quad \text{(Skyline ordering)} & \quad \text{Skylines are ordered pointwise. Let } r, s \text{ be skylines.} \\
& \quad r \subseteq s \text{ iff } r(t) \subseteq s(t) \text{ for all } t \in \mathbb{N} \\
\text{Definition 2.5.} \quad \text{(Adding skylines)} & \quad \text{The sum of two skylines is defined pointwise.} \\
& \quad (r + s)(t) = r(t) + s(t) \\
\text{Definition 2.6.} \quad \text{(Merging skylines)} & \quad \text{The merge of two skylines (\( \cup \)) is defined as their pointwise maximum.} \\
& \quad (r \cup s)(t) = r(t) \cup s(t)
\end{align*}\]
Appendable skylines require a bit more consideration. Tasks in the branches of a conditional can have different durations. For the overall skyline of a conditional, it is not sufficient to have the maximum length of the branches, as Example 2.7 illustrates.

Example 2.7. The following program has a conditional with two cheap tasks of different length, followed by an expensive task.

```
if True
  then use (1R,2) 0
  else use (1R,4) 0
else use (3R,1) 0
```

A safe prediction must take into account that the spike can happen at time 2 or at time 4, see Figure 4.

The set of possible start times of subsequent tasks grows with nested conditionals and conditionals in sequence. Our analysis keeps track of the earliest and latest times a task can end. All operations on costs must take this interval into account. End intervals are defined in terms of the respective operations on skylines and end intervals.

Definition 2.10. (Appending reusable skylines) To append reusable skylines \( r \) and \( s \), we shift \( s \) to every point where it could start and merge all possibilities. Formally, let \( e \) be the end interval of \( r \).

```
r +\( s = r \cup \{ \text{shift}(s,n) \mid n \in e \} \)
```

Definition 2.11. (Appending reusable skylines) To append consumable skylines \( r \) and \( s \), we bump \( s \) to every point where it could start and merge all possibilities. Formally, let \( e \) be the end interval of \( r \).

```
r +\( s = r \cup \{ \text{bump}(s,n,r(n)) \mid n \in e \} \)
```

Definition 2.12. (Appending consumable skylines) To append consumable skylines \( r \) and \( s \), we bump \( s \) to every point where it could start and merge all possibilities. Formally, let \( e \) be the end interval of \( r \).

```
r +\( s = r \cup \{ \text{bump}(s,n,r(n)) \mid n \in e \} \)
```

Definition 2.13. (Predicted cost) The predicted cost \( \gamma \) of a program is a tuple \((c,e)\) where \( c : U \rightarrow S \) is a family of skylines, one for each resource in \( U \), and \( e \) is an end interval. The end interval must be compatible with the skylines, which means it must end where the longest skyline ends.

```
\langle c_1,e_1 \rangle \equiv \langle c_2,e_2 \rangle \iff e_1 \equiv e_2 \text{ and } s_1 \equiv s_2 \text{ for all skylines in } c_1,c_2.
```

The ordering on end intervals is interval inclusion.

Definition 2.14. (Actual cost) The actual cost of a program uses the same construction as the predicted cost, but the end interval collapses to a single finite point.

Definition 2.15. (Cost ordering) The ordering on costs must respect skylines and end intervals.

```
\langle c_1,e_1 \rangle \equiv \langle c_2,e_2 \rangle \iff e_1 \equiv e_2 \text{ and } s_1 \equiv s_2 \text{ for all skylines in } c_1,c_2.
```

The ordering on end intervals is interval inclusion.

Definition 2.16. (Operations on costs) Operations on costs \( \cup,+,\llhd \) are defined in terms of the respective operations on skylines and end intervals.

\[\langle c_1,c_2 \rangle \equiv \langle c_3,c_4 \rangle \iff c_1 \equiv c_3 \text{ and } c_2 \equiv c_4\]

2.3 Operational Semantics

We split the operational semantics in two parts. Both are small-step structural operational semantics. The general purpose part, denoted by a normal arrow \( \rightarrow \), applies to non-task expressions. The domain specific part of the semantics applies to task expressions. It is denoted by a two-headed arrow \( \Rightarrow \) to emphasize its relation with the bind operator \( \Rightarrow \).

The general purpose semantics relates expressions using rules of the form \( e \rightarrow e' \). The domain specific semantics with rules of the form \((e_1,e_2) \rightarrow (e_1',e_2')\) relates expressions \( e \) while recording the costs \( y \) which are used during reduction. The names of the rules of the semantics are prefixed by \( gs- \) and \( ds- \), which are to be read as “general purpose step” and “domain specific step”.

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The general purpose semantics is given in Figure 6. The domain specific semantics is given in Figure 7.

The general purpose rules implement a call-by-name lambda calculus and should hold no surprises for readers familiar with the subject.

The domain specific rules reduce task expressions while recording resource consumption. The congruence and pure rules in the domain specific semantics specify where reductions can happen. The interesting rules are \([\text{ds-use}], \text{[ds-seq-ret]}, \text{[ds-par-init]},\) and \([\text{ds-par-ret}].\)

The rule \([\text{ds-use}]\) specifies how a basic task is evaluated. The function \(\text{sky}\) creates basic skylines of duration \(d\) for all resources in \(k\), and these skylines are then appended to the costs so-far \(y\). \([\text{ds-seq-ret}]\) sees that the left hand side has terminated and continues with the right hand side. It does not change the costs. \([\text{ds-par-init}]\) creates a process pool for the two tasks, and initializes each with local costs of zero. \([\text{ds-par-ret}]\) applies when both tasks in a process pool have been fully evaluated. The costs of each task have been tracked independently in the local costs \(y_1\) and \(y_2\). The idea is that these tasks run in parallel, so they cannot re-use each others resources. The local costs are added up and appended to the cost so far.

\begin{align*}
[\text{ds-use}] & \quad \langle \text{use} [k, d] e, y \rangle \rightarrow \langle \text{return} e, y + \text{sky}(k, d) \rangle \\
[\text{ds-pure}] & \quad \frac{e \rightarrow e'}{\langle e, y \rangle \rightarrow \langle e', y \rangle} \\
[\text{ds-seq-ret}] & \quad \langle \text{return} e_1 \gg e_2, y \rangle \rightarrow \langle e_2, y \rangle \\
[\text{ds-seq-cong}] & \quad \frac{\langle e_1, y \rangle \rightarrow \langle e_1', y' \rangle}{\langle e_1 \gg e_2, y \rangle \rightarrow \langle e_1', e_2, y' \rangle} \\
[\text{ds-seq-pure}] & \quad \frac{e_1 \rightarrow e_1'}{\langle e_1 \gg e_2, y \rangle \rightarrow \langle e_1', e_2, y' \rangle} \\
[\text{ds-par-init}] & \quad \langle e_1 \& e_2, y \rangle \rightarrow \langle \text{pp}(e_1 \& e_2, \perp, \perp), y \rangle \\
[\text{ds-par-ret}] & \quad \langle \text{return} \langle \perp, \perp \rangle \& \text{return} \langle y_1, y_2 \rangle, y \rangle \rightarrow \langle \text{pp}(\text{return} \langle \perp, \perp \rangle \& \text{return} \langle y_1, y_2 \rangle), y \rangle \rangle \\
[\text{ds-par-cong-l}] & \quad \frac{\langle e_1, y \rangle \rightarrow \langle e_1', y' \rangle}{\langle \text{pp}(e_1 \& e_2, y_1, y_2), y \rangle \rightarrow \langle \text{pp}(e_1', e_2, y_1', y_2), y \rangle} \\
[\text{ds-par-cong-r}] & \quad \text{symmetric} \\
[\text{ds-par-pure-l}] & \quad \frac{\langle e_1 \rightarrow e_1' \rangle}{\langle \text{pp}(e_1 \& e_2, y_1, y_2), y \rangle \rightarrow \langle \text{pp}(e_1', e_2, y_1, y_2), y \rangle} \\
[\text{ds-par-pure-r}] & \quad \text{symmetric}
\end{align*}
We now describe the type system for skylines.

Example 2.19. This example covers the reduction of a program with parallel tasks, illustrating how process pools occur during execution. All three tasks in the program use the same reusable resource R.

\[
(\text{use } [1,1] 0 \gg (\text{use } [1,1] () \& \text{use } [1,2] ()), c_0, 0) \quad (1)
\]

\[
\Rightarrow (\text{return } 0 \gg (\text{use } [1,1] () \& \text{use } [1,2] ()), c_1, 1)
\]

\[
\Rightarrow (\text{pp(use } [1,1] () \& \text{use } [1,2] ()), c_1, 1) \quad (2)
\]

\[
\Rightarrow (\text{pp(return ()} \& \text{use } [1,2] ()), d_1, d_2, c_1, 1)
\]

\[
\Rightarrow (\text{return ()} \& \text{return ()}, d_1, d_2, c_1, 1) \quad (3)
\]

\[
\Rightarrow (\text{return ()} \& \text{return ()}, d_1, d_2, c_1, 3)
\]

The costs of this reduction are shown in Figure 9. In line (1), the first task is executed, creating the skyline c_1. In line (2), a process pool is created to prepare the execution of the parallel tasks. The process pool is initialized with empty initial costs for both tasks. In line (3), both tasks have been executed, with local skylines d_1 and d_2. In the last line, the process pool gets destroyed and the local costs get incorporated into the global cost with the formula c_2 = c_1 \oplus (d_1 + d_2).

3 STATIC SEMANTICS

We now describe the type system for skylines.

3.1 Calculating With Infinity

This section motivates the inclusion of infinite height and length of skylines. At any point during execution of a workflow, the amount of expended resources so far is finite, as is the elapsed time. The static analysis must be able to express that a workflow might have infinite cost or might take infinite time, or both. The following examples illustrate these kinds of situations.

Example 3.1. The following program starts with a constant task, then has a loop that runs n tasks in parallel, and finally ends with a constant task. The analysis cannot know how large the cost of the loop is going to be, so it must estimate it with infinity. The predicted skyline is shown in Figure 10 on the left side. The dashed part of the skyline stands for a cost of infinite height, but finite length.

\[
\text{let } t = \text{use } [1,1] 0 \text{ in}
\]

\[
\text{let loop } = \text{fix } f \text{ n .}
\]

\[
\text{if } (n \leq 1) \text{ then } t \text{ else } t \& f (n-1) \text{ in}
\]

\[
t \gg \text{loop } 5 \text{ t } \gg t
\]

A loop whose length can only be predicted by infinity is one that runs a parametric number of tasks in sequence. The predicted skyline of such a program is shown in Figure 10 on the right side. The dashed part stands for a cost of finite height but infinite length. □

Example 3.2. Loops that require consumable resources often need predicted skylines with both infinite height and length. Consider the following program. It runs a task requiring a consumable resource a given number of times in sequence.

\[
\text{let repeat } = \text{fix } f \text{ n . fn t .}
\]

\[
\text{if } n \leq 0 \text{ then } t \text{ else } t \gg (f (n-1) t) \text{ in}
\]

\[
\text{repeat } 3 \text{ (use } [1,1] 0 )
\]

The cost of this program cannot be statically bounded in height or in length, so the best approximation our analysis can make is a skyline that immediately jumps to infinity and stays there forever. □
3.2 Constraints

Definition 3.3. (Annotations) Annotations are expressions denoting costs. They are used in constraints to describe the cost behavior of programs. Annotations are formed by the following grammar.

\[ \varphi ::= k \mid \beta \mid \varphi_1 \sqcup \varphi_2 \mid \varphi_1 \sqcap \varphi_2 \mid \varphi_1 \oplus \varphi_2 \mid \varphi_1 \odot \varphi_2 \]

\( k \) stands for cost constants together with a duration, like \([2C+3R,5]\). \( \beta \) stands for annotation variables. The operators \( \sqcup, +, \sqcap, \odot \) stand for their respective operations on costs.

Definition 3.4. (Constraints) Our system has two kinds of constraints, subtyping constraints and effect constraints. Constraints are formed by the following grammar.

\[ c ::= \tau_1 <: \tau_2 \mid \beta \sqsupseteq \varphi \]

Constraints of the form \( \tau_1 <: \tau_2 \) are called subtyping constraints, and record the fact that \( \tau_1 \) must be a subtype of \( \tau_2 \). Constraints of the form \( \beta \sqsupseteq \varphi \) are called effect constraints, and mean that the cost of a variable \( \beta \) is above the cost expressed by \( \varphi \).

3.3 The Type System

The type system has type variables \( \alpha \), base types for Booleans, integers, and unit, and two type constructors for functions and tasks. The only annotated types are tasks, where annotations come in the form of annotation variables \( \beta \). Annotation variables are given meaning by the solution of constraint sets. Types are formed by the following grammar.

\[ \tau ::= \alpha \mid \text{bool} \mid \text{int} \mid () \mid \text{task} \beta \tau \mid \tau_1 \rightarrow \tau_2 \]

3.3.1 Polymorphism, Polyvariance and Subtyping. These three techniques allow different types, and therefore different costs, for the same variable in different contexts. Though not strictly necessary for the system to be sound, they increase its precision by preventing poisoning in the following situations. Polymorphism, as in normal Hindley-Milner systems, allows different occurrences of a variable in the body of a let binding to have different types, provided that the type can be generalized. As types can be chosen to fit the context, so can the costs.

Polyvariance is a weak form of polymorphism. It is applicable to let-bound variables, and comes into play when the type of a variable can not be generalized. Polyvariance allows the cost of a task to be increased when a context requires it, without affecting the variable’s type in other contexts.

Subtyping is useful for lambda-bound variables, which are not subject to polymorphism and polyvariance. It also allows the cost of a task to be increased when a context requires it without affecting the type in other contexts. Subtyping comes into play in branches of conditionals and the arguments of function application.

Standard Hindley-Milner type inference works by solving type equality constraints. Equality constraints can be solved as soon as they are discovered, so most algorithms perform unification on the fly, without ever explicitly generating constraint sets. We work with inequality constraints, which can only be solved once all constraints are known. This is why we have to explicitly construct and keep track of constraints during type inference, and solve them at the end in a separate phase.

The general architecture of constraint generation and solving is still the same as in our previous system, so we just provide a brief summary. The actual constraints and their semantics is different, and is discussed in more detail. The system uses type schemes to implement polymorphism, polyvariance and subtyping. Type schemes \( \sigma \) are formed by the following grammar.

\[ \sigma ::= \tau \mid \forall \alpha \beta. C \Rightarrow \tau \]

In a type scheme, \( \alpha \) are bound type variables, \( \beta \) bound annotation variables, and \( C \) is a set of constraints. Type schemes are introduced to the environment \( \Gamma \) by generalization in the \([t\text{-let}]\) rule, and eliminated by instantiation (\( \Rightarrow \)) in the \([t\text{-var}]\) rule.

The typing rules use the entailment relation (\( \Rightarrow \)) for constraints. The entailment relation captures syntactically all relevant semantic aspects of what it means for a constraint set to imply a constraint. The most important rule is set inclusion, that is if \( e \in C \) then \( C \Rightarrow e \). The rules are still the same as in our previous system and not covered here.

The subtyping relation (\( <: \)) is also still the same. Its rules implement full subtyping, with contravariant functions as usual. The most important rule states that subtyping for tasks requires cheaper effects, that is if \( C \Rightarrow \beta_1 \sqsubseteq \beta_2 \) and \( C \Rightarrow \tau_1 <: \tau_2 \) then \( C \Rightarrow \text{task} \beta_1 \tau_1 <: \text{task} \beta_2 \tau_2 \).

3.3.2 Typing Rules. Typing judgements have the form \( C; \Gamma \vdash e : \tau \) where \( C \) is a constraint set, \( \Gamma \) a typing environment, \( e \) an expression and \( \tau \) an annotated type. The typing rules for our annotated type system are given in Figure 11.

The rule scheme \([t\text{-const}]\) gives the corresponding types to pure constants, that is \text{bool} to Boolean constants, \text{int} to integer constants, and the unit type () to the unit value (). \([t\text{-op}]\) is a rule scheme for all pure operators in the language and typechecks them in the natural way. \([t\text{-var}]\) looks up the type scheme of a variable in the environment and instantiates it. \([t\text{-fn}]\) typechecks abstractions in the usual way. The bound variable is put into the environment and the function body is analyzed in this extended environment. \([t\text{-fix}]\) analyzes recursive functions similarly to \([t\text{-fn}]\). The function body is analyzed under the assumption that \( f \) is a function that takes an argument of the type of \( x \). \([t\text{-app}]\), the rule for function application, requires that the type of the actual parameter must be a subtype of the type of the formal parameter. The idea is that a function that expects an expensive argument has enough resources to also deal with a cheaper argument. For base types subtyping reduces to type equality. \([t\text{-if}]\) requires the condition to be Boolean, as usual. The overall type of the conditional must be a supertype of the types of both branches. The idea is that if one branch is more expensive than the other, and the context in which the conditional is used has enough resources for the expensive one, it can also deal with the cheaper one. \([t\text{-let}]\) implements polymorphism and polyvariance. It analyzes the defining expression \( e_x \), generalizes its type, and analyzes the body under the assumption that \( x \) has the generalized type. \([t\text{-let}]\) plays together with \([t\text{-var}]\) to allow every use of \( x \) to have a different type, as far as instantiation allows. \([t\text{-ret}]\) states that an expression of the form \( \text{return} \ e \) is a task that can have any cost. \([t\text{-use}]\) states that basic tasks have the cost as specified in the program. \([t\text{-seq}]\) states that a sequential composition of two tasks has the cost of the right task appended to the cost of the left one. \([t\text{-par}]\) states that the parallel composition of two tasks costs as much as the sum of the two tasks individually. \([t\text{-pp}]\) states how to
calculate the cost of two parallel tasks $e_1$ and $e_2$, whose execution to the current form already costed $y_1$ and $y_2$ respectively. $\beta_1$ and $\beta_2$ are the predicted costs of $e_1$ and $e_2$. The overall predicted cost of the process pool is the sum of the combinations of the actual costs so far and the predicted rest.

**Example 3.5.** This example demonstrates how the system predicts the cost of a simple sequential composition. Consider the following program.

```plaintext
1: if $i > 2$ then $e_1$ else $e_2$
2: $e_3$
3: $e_4$
```

**4 IMPLEMENTATION**

This section describes an algorithm that implements the type system. We implemented the algorithm in Clean, but this paper describes it in an abstract way that ignores many implementation details. The source code, together with example programs and unit tests can be found online\(^1\). The implementation is intended to be a proof-of-concept. No effort has been put into optimization.

The analysis works in three steps. First, there is a modified version of algorithm $W$ that infers types and collects constraints. Second, the subsumption constraint solver decomposes subtype constraints into effect constraints and unifications. Third, and only if the top-level expression is of type $\text{task}$, a worklist algorithm calculates a solution of the effect constraints.

The core of the algorithm for skylines is largely unchanged compared to our previous system. Most of the new code deals with skylines and operations on them. Unification and subsumption constraint solving are unchanged. Algorithm $W$ still works the same, save for the places where it generates constraints about skylines.

\(^1\)https://github.com/ru.nl/mklinik/program-analysis/tree/skylines

**4.1 Algorithm $W$ and Unification**

Unification takes two types and returns a substitution if the types can be unified, and an error otherwise. Figure 14 shows the unification algorithm $\mathcal{U}$. The difference between unification in textbook Hindley-Milner algorithms and our algorithm is that ours has to deal with task types, which carry annotation variables. As such, unification is also applicable to annotation variables. The relevant clauses are in lines (1) and (2) in Figure 14. In line (1), tasks are

![Diagram](https://example.com/diagram.png)
Algorithm \( W \) are such that if \( \Gamma \) is an environment of a function body. \( C \theta \), then \( \beta \in \text{FTV}(\hat{r}) \), Error otherwise.

The clause for abstractions in line (6) are widened using constraints and yields a set of constraints where the variable in each

\[
\begin{align*}
W(\Gamma, \text{True}) &= W(\Gamma, \text{False}) = \langle \text{bool}, [], \emptyset \rangle \\
W(\Gamma, n) &= \langle \text{int}, [], \emptyset \rangle \\
W(\Gamma, x) &= \langle \hat{r}, [], \text{C} \rangle \text{ where } (\hat{r}, \text{C}) = \text{inst}(\Gamma(x)) \\
W(\Gamma, \text{fix } x.e_b) &= \langle \theta_b \alpha \rightarrow \hat{r}_b, \emptyset, C_b \rangle \text{ where } \alpha \text{ fresh} \\
W(\Gamma, \text{let } x = e_x \text{ in } e_b) &= \langle \hat{r}_3, \emptyset, \emptyset, \emptyset, C_x \cup C_b \rangle \quad \text{if } e_x \text{ then } e_x \text{ else } e_b \text{ end} \\
W(\Gamma, \text{let } x = e_x \text{ in } e_b) &= \langle \hat{r}_3, \emptyset, \emptyset, \emptyset, C_x \cup C_b \rangle \quad \text{if } e_x \text{ then } e_x \text{ else } e_b \text{ end} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Figure 15: The general purpose part of algorithm \( W \).

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Definition 4.1. (Widening) The function } \text{widen} \text{ takes a set of constraints and yields a set of constraints where the variable in each subsumption constraint solving is a set of effect constraints } C_e, \text{ a set of unresolved subsumption constraints } C_x, \text{ and a substitution resulting from unification. The resulting effect constraints are widened using the function } \text{widen}. \\
\end{align*}
\]
The clause for let-bindings in line (10) first typechecks the defining expression of \( x \), solves subsumptions as far as possible, and then generalizes the type and constraints resulting from that. The body of the let-binding is then typechecked in an environment where \( x \) maps to its type scheme.

The rest of the algorithm is shown in Figure 16.

The clause in line (11) handles task constants. It generates a constraint that makes sure that the constraint solver takes the cost of the task into account.

The clause for sequential task composition, line (12), looks complex but holds no surprises. The left argument must be a task and the right argument a function that accepts the task’s value. The function must yield a task. The clause generates a constraint that ensures that the cost of the overall expression is the append of the cost of the left and right arguments.

Parallel task composition, line (13), is simpler than sequential composition. Both arguments must be tasks returning unit. The value of the overall expression is a task returning unit. The cost of the overall expression is the sum of the costs of the arguments.

### 4.2 Subsumption Constraint Solving

The subsumption constraint solver is still the same as in our previous system, and not covered in detail here. Subsumption constraint solving happens during and after algorithm ‘\( W' \), and its goal is to decompose subsumption constraints as far as possible to extract effect constraints according to the subtyping rules. The subsumption constraint solver takes as input the constraints that algorithm ‘\( W \)' collects and returns a triple \( (C_e, C_s, \theta) \). \( C_s \) is a set of effect constraints that have been identified by solving subtyping constraints. \( C_e \) is a set of unresolved subsumption constraints. These are only relevant for local solving in the rules for recursive functions and let expressions. The substitution \( \theta \) is the result of all unifications that had to be performed during solving.

### 4.3 Effect Constraint Solving

The effect constraint solver is a translation to functional code of the worklist algorithm found in chapter 6 in Nielson et al. [1999], with one modification. All our skylines start at time 0 in their local coordinate system, and appending them to other skylines shifts them in time. Whether the information content of a single constraint has been fully incorporated into the final solution can no longer be determined by looking at that constraint in isolation. It is therefore not possible to determine whether a constraint has to be evaluated again in the worklist algorithm.

To solve this problem we make use of the fact that in a complete lattice, these two formulations are equivalent: \( x \equiv y \land x \equiv z \iff x \equiv y \lor z \).

**Definition 4.2.** (Combining constraints) Let \( C \) be a constraint set with possibly multiple constraints for each annotation variable \( \beta \). The **combined constraints** \( C' \) have a single constraint for every \( \beta \), such that if

\[
\beta \equiv \varphi_1, \ldots, \beta \equiv \varphi_n \in C
\]

then \( \beta \equiv \varphi_1 \cup \ldots \cup \varphi_n \in C' \).

All constraints for every \( \beta \) are combined into a single constraint.
Our worklist algorithm takes as input the combined constraints of the constraints that algorithm $W$ computes, and returns a solution of them. The algorithm works as follows.

Initially, all constraints are marked as dirty, so they are evaluated at least once. The worklist iteration then starts evaluating dirty constraints one-by-one. After it evaluates a constraint for a variable $\beta$, it compares the value to the value of the previous round. If these two differ, the algorithm has learned something new about $\beta$, and marks all constraints that depend on $\beta$ as dirty. When there are no more dirty constraints, the algorithm terminates.

In every evaluation of a constraint for a variable $\beta$, the algorithm learns everything that is known so-far about $\beta$. This allows the algorithm to decide that it has learned something new about $\beta$ if the value of the constraint is different, even if it is not strictly above the previous value. This is important because as solving progresses, cost spikes tend to wander to the right to their final place. As they move further to the right, they disappear where they have been in the previous iteration. The new iteration is not strictly above the old iteration, yet the algorithm has learned something new.

**Widening**. Widening is the final piece of the puzzle, and the reason why the worklist algorithm always eventually terminates. Widening is a heuristic used by the effect constraint solver to compute solutions with infinity. The inputs to widening are two consecutive iterations of the same constraint. They correspond roughly to loop unrollings. The output of widening is a skyline that is idempotent under further iterations, representing an upper bound to the cost of the loop.

Widening needs to discard information to guarantee termination of the worklist iteration, while retaining enough information for the results to have some value. Widening applies to costs, and as such it must widen skylines and end intervals.

**Definition 4.3.** (Widening of end intervals) $[x_1, y_1] \triangleright [x_2, y_2] = \begin{cases} [x_1, \infty] & \text{if } y_2 > y_1 \\ [x_3, y_1] & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$

The beginning of the end interval of a loop can never decrease, so the worst case is always the beginning of the left argument. If the end of the end interval grows, widening jumps to infinity. □

**Definition 4.4.** (Widening of reusable skylines) Let $s_1$, $s_2$ be two iterations of a reusable skyline $s$.

$$s_1 \triangleright s_2 = \begin{cases} \begin{array}{l} \hline \text{if } s \text{ grows in length but not in height} \\ 0 \rightarrow \infty \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{l} \hline \text{if } s \text{ grows in height but not in length} \\ 0 \rightarrow 1 \rightarrow \infty \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{l} \hline \text{if } s \text{ grows in length and height} \\ 0 \rightarrow 1 \rightarrow \infty \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{l} \hline \text{otherwise} \\ s_1 \rightarrow \infty \end{array} \end{cases}$$

Where $h$ and $l$ are the maximum height and length of $s_1$. We say $s$ grows in length if $s_2$ is longer than $s_1$. Similarly $s$ grows in height if the maximum height of $s_2$ is greater than the maximum height of $s_1$. □

**5 DISCUSSION**

In this section we discuss the analysis results of some example programs.

**Example 5.1.** (Exact predictions) When the control flow of a program does not depend on computations, the predicted cost matches the actual cost exactly, as in the following program.

- let $t_1 = \text{use } [1R, 1] \ 0 \ \text{in}
- let $t_2 = \text{use } [1R + 1C, 2] \ 0 \ \text{in}
- let $t_3 = \text{use } [1R + 1C, 3] \ 0 \ \text{in}
- let $t_4 = \text{use } [1R, 1] \ 0 \ \text{in}

(t_1 \ & t_2) \ & (t_3 \ \triangleright t_4)$

This program is a mix of parallel and sequential compositions. The cost is shown in Figure 17.

**Example 5.2.** (Overapproximation by conditional) The following program demonstrates how the analysis overapproximates costs in both height and length.

- let $t_1 = \text{use } [1R, 1] \ 0 \ \text{in}
- let $t_2 = \text{use } [3R, 2] \ 0 \ \text{in}
- let $t_3 = \text{use } [2R, 1] \ 0 \ \text{in}

(if \text{True then } t_1 \ \text{else } t_2) \ \triangleright t_3$

The overapproximation is caused by a conditional. There is a large cost in the else branch which is not executed, but the analysis must take it into account. Task $t_3$ can start either at time 1 or at time 2, depending on which branch of the conditional is taken. Again, the analysis must anticipate both possibilities, and it does so by using end intervals. The actual cost is $t_1$ followed by $t_3$, which is cheaper and does not take as long as the worst case. Predicted and actual costs are shown in Figure 18.

**Example 5.3.** (Overapproximation by poisoning) Poisoning happens when a variable is used in different contexts, which all influence its cost. There are several techniques in the literature to
reduce poisoning, and we have included a couple of them, namely polymorphism, polyvariance, and subtyping. One source of poisoning that still exists are lambda-bound functions. Consider the following program.

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{let } \text{const } = \text{fn } x . \text{fn } y . x \text{ in} \\
(\text{fn } \text{id} . \text{const } (\text{id } (\text{use } [1R,3] 0)) (\text{id } (\text{use } [3R,3] 0)) \\
(\text{fn } x . x)
\end{array}
\]

The identity function is lambda-bound and used in two different contexts. It is applied to an expensive task and a cheap task. The application to the expensive task is ignored by the function \text{const}, but it still influences the type of \text{id}. The type of \text{id} is not subject to polymorphism, because it is lambda-bound, and polymorphism only applies to let-bound variables. It is also not subject to subtyping, because subtyping only applies to the argument expression in function applications, not the function expression. The type of the identity function here is from expensive task to expensive task, so sending the cheap task through the identity function makes it expensive. Predicted and actual costs of this program are shown in Figure 19.

\textbf{Example 5.4.} (Widening in length) Another source of overapproximation are recursive functions. Consider the following program. The program uses \text{loop} to execute task \text{t1} three times, and then executes task \text{t2}.

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{let } \text{t1 } = \text{use } [1R,1] 0 \text{ in} \\
\text{let } \text{t2 } = \text{use } [2R,1] 0 \text{ in} \\
\text{let } \text{loop } = \text{fix } f . \text{if } (x \leq 1) \\
\text{then } \text{t1} \\
\text{else } \text{t1 } \gg \text{f } (x-1) \text{ in} \\
\text{loop } 3 \gg \text{t2}
\end{array}
\]

Our analysis cannot know how many times the loop will be executed, and has to approximate it with infinity. The analysis does see that \text{t1} is executed at least once. The predicted cost of the expression "\text{loop 3}" is therefore an infinite skyline of height 1, with end interval [1, \infty]. The end interval says that \text{t2} can start as early as time 1, but possibly also at any later time. The predicted and actual costs are shown in Figure 20.

\textbf{Example 5.5.} (Widening in height) The following program executes the task \text{t1} a number of times in parallel.

\[
\text{let } \text{t1 } = \text{use } [1R,1] 0 \text{ in} \\
\text{let } \text{parallel } = \text{fix } f . \text{if } x \leq 1 \\
\text{then } \text{t1} \\
\text{else } \text{t1 } \& \text{f } (x-1) \text{ in} \\
\text{t1 } \gg \text{parallel } 2 \gg \text{t1}
\]

Our analysis cannot know how many times \text{t1} will be executed in parallel, so it has to overapproximate the cost with infinity. It does know that the duration of the parallel will always be 1. The predicted and actual costs are shown in Figure 21.

\textbf{Example 5.6.} (Limitations of the algorithm) There are programs that our implementation cannot handle. For different reasons, the following two programs generate recursive constraints that are missed by widening, therefore causing the effect constraint solver to diverge. The first is a limitation of the type system, the second a limitation of the implementation.

In the following program, recursive constraints are the result of a non-recursive function.

\[
\text{let } \text{iterate2 } = \text{fn } f . \text{fn } x . f (f x) \text{ in} \\
\text{let } \text{twice } = \text{fn } t . t \gg t \text{ in} \\
\text{iterate2 twice } (\text{use } [1R,1] 0)
\]

The function \text{iterate2} iterates its argument \text{f} two times on \text{x}. In the application "\text{f } (f x)" algorithm \text{W} unifies the argument and result types of \text{f}. This results in recursive constraints. The problem here is not that these recursive constraints escape widening, but that they are created in the first place. The two occurrences of \text{f} should have different types, which is not possible because \text{f} is lambda-bound. A solution to this problem would be higher-ranked polymorphism, which comes with its own problems.

Another source of recursive constraints are polymorphic recursive functions that only later get instantiated to task types. Consider the following program.

\[
\text{let } \text{iterate } = \text{fix } f n . \text{fn } g . \text{fn } x . \text{if } n \leq 0 \\
\text{then } x \\
\text{else } f (n-1) g (g x) \text{ in} \\
\text{let } \text{twice } = \text{fn } t . t \gg t \text{ in} \\
\text{iterate2 twice } (\text{use } [1R,1] 0)
\]

The function \text{iterate} iterates its argument \text{g} \text{n}-times on \text{x}. When algorithm \text{W} typechecks \text{iterate}, which is polymorphic, it does not
We have designed and implemented an annotated type system. Widening as we have implemented it can only be applied to effect constraints. The subtyping constraints of iterate are recursive, and when they get instantiated to effect constraints in the call “iterate 2 twice”, we end up with un-widened recursive effect constraints.

A solution to this problem would be to mark subtyping constraints as belonging to recursive functions, so that widening can be applied to them when they become effect constraints.

6 CONCLUSIONS

We have designed and implemented an annotated type system that can predict costs over time of a small iTasks-like workflow calculus. We do not have a correctness proof yet, and given the subtleties of operations on costs we imagine that it is a substantial amount of work. We do have an extensive test suite for the implementation, which includes many hand-crafted examples alongside automatically generated tests using Gast [Koopman et al. 2002]. The correctness of the implementation is tested by running the programs in an interpreter and checking that it never exceeds the prediction.

7 FUTURE WORK

There are a couple of ways to extend the system. One idea is to integrate the analysis into iTasks. At the moment, the analysis is defined on a condensed version of Clean and iTasks, but we would like to make the analysis available to iTasks programmers. This involves hooking into the compiler and supporting language features like data types, pattern matching, and mutual recursion. This line of work also includes integration with Tonic. Tonic [Stutterheim et al. 2014] is a system that can visualize iTasks programs graphically and allows inspecting their progress at run time. In particular we would like to display skylines alongside Tonic diagrams to show predicted costs next to control structure.

Another idea would be to trace points in a skyline back to the places in a program where they may come from. This would be particularly interesting in combination with Tonic. A user could interactively click on a point in a skyline, and the associated tasks in the Tonic diagram are highlighted.

8 RELATED WORK

Our work follows the line of work by Nielson and Nielson, most notably their textbook on program analysis [Nielson et al. 1999], and their papers on polymorphic subtyping [Amtoft et al. 1997; Nielson et al. 1996a,b]. We drew a lot of inspiration for the operational semantics from the paper about the IO monad in Haskell [Peyton-Jones 2001]. There are many papers on program analysis using type and effect systems. The ones that influenced our work are Gedell et al. [2006], the paper about exception analysis by Koot and Hage [2005], the usage analysis by Hage et al. [2007], and the security analysis by Weijers et al. [2014]. The distinction between consumable and reusable resources is common in the field of automated planning [Ghallab et al. 2004]. Works on resource consumption of programs often focus on computational resources, like complexity or memory usage. Two noteworthy papers are Vasconcelos and Hammond [2003] and Jost et al. [2010]. Kersten et al. [2014] have a resource analysis similar in spirit to ours. They focus on energy consumption of hardware components, and their language is imperative with first-order functions. The programming language Clean and the iTasks system, for which our analysis is ultimately designed, are described in the Clean language report [Plasmeijer and van Eekelen 2002] and the paper by Plasmeijer et al. [2012].

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