A Practical Theory of Language-Integrated Query

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What is the difference between theory and practice?

In theory there is no difference.

But in practice there is.

How does one integrate SQL and a host language?

How does one integrate SQL and a host language?

How does one integrate a Domain-Specific Language and a host language?

Domain-Specific Language (DSL)

Domain-Specific Embedded Language (DSEL)

A functional language is a
Domain-Specific Language
for defining
Domain-Specific Languages

Links



Wadler, Yallop, Lindley, Cooper (Edinburgh)

LINQ



Meijer (C#,VB), Syme (F#)
(Microsoft)



Links



Wadler, Yallop, Lindley, Cooper (Edinburgh)



LINQ





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Meijer (C#,VB), Syme (F#) (Microsoft)





Scylla and Charybdis



Avoid Scylla and Charybdis

Each host query generates one SQL query

Scylla: failure to generate a query (×)

Charybdis: multiple queries, avalanche (av)

Example	F# 2.0	F# 3.0	us
differences	17.6	20.6	18.1
range	×	5.6	2.9
satisfies	2.6	×	2.9
satisfies	4.4	×	4.6
compose	×	×	4.0
$P(t_0)$	2.8	×	3.3
$P(t_1)$	2.7	×	3.0
expertise'	7.2	9.2	8.0
expertise	×	66.7 ^{av}	8.3
xp_0	×	8.3	7.9
xp_1	×	14.7	13.4
xp_2	×	17.9	20.7
xp_3	×	3744.9	3768.6
marks query avalanche.		All time	s in millisecor

Series of examples

Join queries

Abstraction over values (first-order)

Abstraction over predicates (higher-order)

Dynamic generation of queries

Nested intermediate data

Compiling XPath to SQL

Closed quotation vs. open quotation

 $\mathsf{Expr} < A \to B > vs. \; \mathsf{Expr} < A > \to \mathsf{Expr} < B >$

T-LINQ: the theory

Scylla and Charybdis Theorem

P-LINQ: the practice

Measured times comparable

Normalisation a small fraction of time

Part I

Join queries

A database

people

name	age
"Alex"	60
"Bert"	56
"Cora"	33
"Drew"	31
"Edna"	21
"Fred"	60

couples

her	him
"Alex"	"Bert"
"Cora"	"Drew"
"Edna"	"Fred"

A query in SQL

```
select w.name as name, w.age - m.age as diff
from couples as c,
    people as w,
    people as m

where c.her = w.name and c.him = m.name and w.age > m.age
```

name	diff
"Alex"	4
"Cora"	2

A database as data

```
{people =
   [\{name = "Alex" ; age = 60\}; ]
    name = "Bert" ; age = 56;
    name = "Cora"; age = 33;
    name = "Drew"; age = 31;
    {name = "Edna"; age = 21};
    \{name = "Fred" ; age = 60\} \}
couples =
   [ {her = "Alex" ; him = "Bert" };
    {her = "Cora"; him = "Drew"};
    \{her = "Edna"; him = "Fred" \}\}
```

Importing the database (naive)

A query as a comprehension (naive)

```
let differences' : {name : string; diff : int} list =
  for c in db'.couples do
  for w in db'.people do
  for m in db'.people do
  if c.her = w.name && c.him = m.name && w.age > m.age then
  yield {name : w.name; diff : w.age - m.age}
```

differences'

```
[ {name = "Alex"; diff = 4}
{name = "Cora"; diff = 2}]
```

Importing the database (quoted)

A query as a comprehension (quoted)

```
let differences : Expr< {name : string; diff : int} list > =
    <@ for c in (%db).couples do
        for w in (%db).people do
        for m in (%db).people do
        if c.her = w.name && c.him = m.name && w.age > m.age then
        yield {name : w.name; diff : w.age - m.age} @>
```

run(differences)

```
[ {name = "Alex"; diff = 4}
{name = "Cora"; diff = 2}]
```

Running a query

- 1. compute quoted expression
- 2. simplify quoted expression
- 3. translate query to SQL
- 4. execute SQL
- 5. translate answer to host language

Scylla and Charybdis:

Each **run** generates one query if

- A. answer type is flat (bag of record of scalars)
- B. only permitted operations (e.g., no recursion)
- C. only refers to one database

Scala (naive)

```
val differences:
  List[{ val name: String; val diff: Int }] =
  for {
    c <- db.couples
    w <- db.people
    m <- db.people
    if c.her == w.name && c.him == m.name && w.age > m.age
  } yield new Record {
    val name = w.name
    val diff = w.age - m.age
}
```

Scala (quoted)

```
val differences:
    Rep[List[{ val name: String; val diff: Int }]] =
    for {
        c <- db.couples
        w <- db.people
        m <- db.people
        if c.her == w.name && c.him == m.name && w.age > m.age
    } yield new Record {
        val name = w.name
        val diff = w.age - m.age
    }
}
```

Part II

Abstraction, composition, dynamic generation

Abstracting over values

```
let range : Expr< (int, int) \rightarrow Names > = <@ fun(a, b) \rightarrow for w in (%db).people do if a \leq w.age && w.age < b then yield {name : w.name} @> run(<@ (\$range)(30, 40) @>)
```

select w.name as name from people as w where $30 \le w$.age and w.age < 40

Abstracting over a predicate

```
let satisfies : Expr< (int \rightarrow bool) \rightarrow Names > =
     <@ fun(p) \rightarrow for w in (%db).people do
                   if p(w.age) then
                   yield {name : w.name} @>
run(<@ (%satisfies)(fun(x) \rightarrow 30 \leq x && x < 40) @>)
         select w.name as name
         from people as w
         where 30 \le w.age and w.age < 40
```

Datatype of predicates

let t_0 : Predicate = And(Above(30), Below(40))

Dynamically generated queries

```
let rec P(t : Predicate) : Expr < int \rightarrow bool > =

match t with

|Above(a) \rightarrow < @ fun(x) \rightarrow (% lift(a)) \le x @ >
|Below(a) \rightarrow < @ fun(x) \rightarrow x < (% lift(a)) @ >
|And(t, u) \rightarrow < @ fun(x) \rightarrow (% P(t))(x) & & (% P(u))(x) @ >
|Or(t, u) \rightarrow < @ fun(x) \rightarrow (% P(t))(x) | | (% P(u))(x) @ >
|Not(t) \rightarrow < @ fun(x) \rightarrow not((% P(t))(x)) @ >
```

Generating the query

$$P(t_0)$$
 \$\sim <0 fun(x) \$\to (fun(x) \to 30 \le x)(x) && (fun(x) \to x < 40)(x) &> \$\sim <0 fun(x) \to 30 \le x && x < 40 @>\$\$

run(<@ (%satisfies)(%
$$P(t_0)$$
) @>)

select w.name as name from people as w where $30 \le w$.age and w.age < 40

Part III

Nested intermediate data

Flat data

```
{departments =
   [\{dpt = "Product"\};
    {dpt = "Quality"};
    \{dpt = "Research"\};
    \{dpt = "Sales"\}\};
employees =
   [\{dpt = "Product"; emp = "Alex"\}; ]
    {dpt = "Product"; emp = "Bert"};
    \{dpt = "Research"; emp = "Cora"\};
    {dpt = "Research"; emp = "Drew"};
    \{dpt = "Research"; emp = "Edna"\};
    \{dpt = "Sales"; emp = "Fred"\}\};
```

Flat data (continued)

```
tasks =
   [\{emp = "Alex"; tsk = "build"\}; \}]
    \{emp = "Bert"; tsk = "build"\};
    \{emp = "Cora"; tsk = "abstract"\};
    \{emp = "Cora"; tsk = "build"\};
    \{emp = "Cora"; tsk = "design"\};
    \{emp = "Drew"; tsk = "abstract"\};
    \{emp = "Drew"; tsk = "design"\};
    \{emp = "Edna"; tsk = "abstract"\};
    \{emp = "Edna"; tsk = "call"\};
    \{emp = "Edna"; tsk = "design"\};
    \{emp = "Fred"; tsk = "call"\}\}
```

Importing the database

```
\label{type org} \begin{tabular}{ll} type Org = \{departments: \{dpt: string\} \ list; \\ employees: \{dpt: string; emp: string\} \ list; \\ tasks: \{emp: string; tsk: string\} \ list \} \\ \begin{tabular}{ll} let org: Expr<Org> = < @ database("Org") @> \\ \end{tabular}
```

Departments where every employee can do a given task

```
let expertise' : Expr< string \rightarrow {dpt : string} list > =
  <@ fun(u) \rightarrow for d in (% org).departments do
                if not(exists(
                  for e in (%org).employees do
                  if d.dpt = e.dpt && not(exists(
                     for t in (%org).tasks do
                     if e.emp = t.emp && t.tsk = u then yield \{ \} 
                  )) then yield { })
                )) then yield \{dpt = d.dpt\} @>
                run(<@ (%expertise')("abstract") @>)
             [{dpt = "Quality"}; {dpt = "Research"}]
```

Nested data

```
[{dpt = "Product"; employees =
   [{emp = "Alex"; tasks = ["build"]}
   {emp = "Bert"; tasks = ["build"]}]};
 {dpt = "Quality"; employees = []};
{dpt = "Research"; employees =
   [{emp = "Cora"; tasks = ["abstract"; "build"; "design"]};
   {emp = "Drew"; tasks = ["abstract"; "design"]};
   {emp = "Edna"; tasks = ["abstract"; "call"; "design"] } ] };
 {dpt = "Sales"; employees =
   [\{emp = "Fred"; tasks = ["call"]\}]
```

Nested data from flat data

```
type NestedOrg = [{dpt : string; employees :
                       [{emp:string;tasks:[string]}]}]
let nestedOrg : Expr< NestedOrg > =
  <@ for d in (%org).departments do
     yield {dpt = d.dpt; employees =
              for e in (%org).employees do
              if d.dpt = e.dpt then
              yield {emp = e.emp; tasks =
                      for t in (%org).tasks do
                      if e.emp = t.emp then
                      yield t.tsk}}} @>
```

Higher-order queries

```
let any : Expr< (A \text{ list}, A \rightarrow \text{bool}) \rightarrow \text{bool} > =
   <@ fun(xs, p) →
           exists(for x in xs do
                      if p(x) then
                      yield { }) @>
let all : Expr< (A \text{ list}, A \rightarrow \text{bool}) \rightarrow \text{bool} > =
   <@ fun(xs, p) \rightarrow
           not((%any)(xs, fun(x) \rightarrow not(p(x)))) @>
let contains : Expr< (A \text{ list}, A) \rightarrow \text{bool} > =
   <@ fun(xs, u) \rightarrow
           (%any)(xs, fun(x) \rightarrow x = u) @>
```

Departments where every employee can do a given task

Part IV

Compiling XPath to SQL

Part V

Closed quotation vs. open quotation

Dynamically generated queries, revisited

```
let rec P(t : Predicate) : Expr< int \rightarrow bool > =
  match t with
   | Above(a)\rightarrow <@ fun(x) \rightarrow (% lift(a)) \leq x @>
   \mid Below(a) \rightarrow <@ fun(x) \rightarrow x < (%lift(a)) @>
   | And(t, u) \rightarrow <@ fun(x) \rightarrow (%P(t))(x) && (%P(u))(x) @>
                                  VS.
let rec P(t : Predicate)(x : Expr< int >) : Expr< bool > =
   match t with
   | Above(a)\rightarrow <@ (%lift(a)) \leq (%x) @>
   | Below(a) \rightarrow <@ (%x) < (%lift(a)) @>
   | And(t, u) \rightarrow <@ (%P(t)(x)) && (%P(u)(x)) @>
```

Abstracting over a predicate, revisited

```
let satisfies : Expr< (int \rightarrow bool) \rightarrow Names > =
            <@ fun(p) \rightarrow for w in (%db).people do
                           if p(w.age) then
                           yield {name : w.name} @>
                                   VS.
let satisfies(p : Expr< int \rightarrow Expr< bool \rightarrow) : Expr< Names \rightarrow
  <@ for w in (%db).people do
      if (%p(<@ w.age @>)) then
      yield {name : w.name} @>
```



closed quotations

VS.

open quotations

quotations of functions

$$(Expr\)$$

VS.

functions of quotations

$$(Expr\rightarrow Expr\)$$

Part VI

T-LINQ: the theory

Host language

$$\frac{\Gamma, x : A \vdash N : B}{\Gamma \vdash \mathsf{fun}(x) \to N : A \to B}$$

APP

$$rac{\Gamma dash L : A o B}{\Gamma dash L : M : B}$$

SINGLETON

$$\Gamma \vdash M : A$$

$$\Gamma \vdash \mathsf{yield}\ M : A \ \mathsf{list}$$

FOR

$$\Gamma \vdash M : A \text{ list } \Gamma, x : A \vdash N : B \text{ list }$$

$$\Gamma \vdash \text{for } x \text{ in } M \text{ do } N : B \text{ list}$$

QUOTE

$$\frac{\Gamma; \cdot \vdash M : A}{\Gamma \vdash \mathbf{<} \mathbf{@} \ M \ \mathbf{@>} : \mathsf{Expr} \mathbf{<} A >}$$

Run

$$rac{\Gamma dash M : \mathsf{Expr} < T >}{\Gamma dash \mathsf{run}(M) : T}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma, f: A \to B, x: A \vdash N: B}{\Gamma}$$

$$\Gamma \vdash \mathsf{rec}\ f(x) \to N : A \to B$$

Quoted language

FUNQ

$$\Gamma ; \Delta , x : A \vdash N : B$$

$$\Gamma; \Delta \vdash \mathsf{fun}(x) \to N : A \to B$$

APPQ

$$\Gamma; \Delta \vdash L : A \to B$$
 $\Gamma; \Delta \vdash M : A$

$$\Gamma ; \Delta dash M : A$$

$$\Gamma; \Delta \vdash L M : B$$

SINGLETONQ

$$\Gamma; \Delta \vdash M : A$$

$$\Gamma$$
; $\Delta \vdash$ **yield** $M : A$ **list**

ForQ

$$\Gamma; \Delta \vdash M : A$$
 list

$$\Gamma; \Delta \vdash M : A$$
 list $\Gamma; \Delta, x : A \vdash N : B$ list

$$\Gamma$$
; $\Delta \vdash$ for x in M do $N:B$ list

ANTIQUOTE

$$\Gamma \vdash M : \mathsf{Expr} < A >$$

$$\Gamma; \Delta \vdash (%M) : A$$

LIFT

$$\Gamma \vdash M : O$$

$$\Gamma \vdash \mathsf{lift}(M) : \mathsf{Expr} < O >$$

DATABASE

$$\Sigma(\mathsf{db}) = \{ \overline{\ell : T} \}$$

$$\Gamma$$
; $\Delta \vdash \mathsf{database}(\mathsf{db}) : \{\overline{\ell : T}\}$

Normalisation: symbolic evaluation

```
 (\operatorname{fun}(x) \to N) \ M \ \leadsto \ N[x := M]   \{\overline{\ell = M}\}.\ell_i \ \leadsto \ M_i  for x in (\operatorname{yield} M) do N \ \leadsto \ N[x := M]  for y in (\operatorname{for} x \text{ in } L \text{ do } M) \text{ do } N \ \leadsto \ \operatorname{for} x \text{ in } L \text{ do } (\operatorname{for} y \text{ in } M \text{ do } N)  for x in (\operatorname{if} L \operatorname{then} M) \text{ do } N \ \leadsto \ \operatorname{if} L \operatorname{then} (\operatorname{for} x \text{ in } M \text{ do } N)  for x in (L \otimes M) \text{ do } N \ \leadsto \ (\operatorname{for} x \text{ in } L \text{ do } N) \otimes (\operatorname{for} x \text{ in } M \text{ do } N)  if true then M \ \leadsto \ M if false then M \ \leadsto \ []
```

Normalisation: ad hoc rewriting

Theorem (Scylla and Charybdis) If

$$\vdash L : A$$

and A is a table type (list of record of scalars) then

$$L \rightsquigarrow^* M$$
 and $M \hookrightarrow^* N$,

where M and N are in normal form with respect to \rightsquigarrow and \hookrightarrow , and N is isomorphic to an SQL query.

Part VII

P-LINQ: the practice

Example	F# 2.0	F# 3.0	us	(norm)
differences	17.6	20.6	18.1	0.5
range	×	5.6	2.9	0.3
satisfies	2.6	×	2.9	0.3
satisfies	4.4	×	4.6	0.3
compose	×	×	4.0	0.8
$P(t_0)$	2.8	×	3.3	0.3
$P(t_1)$	2.7	×	3.0	0.3
expertise'	7.2	9.2	8.0	0.6
expertise	×	66.7^{av}	8.3	0.9
xp_0	×	8.3	7.9	1.9
xp_1	×	14.7	13.4	1.1
xp_2	×	17.9	20.7	2.2
xp_3	×	3744.9	3768.6	4.4

av marks query avalanche. All times in milliseconds.

Q#	F# 3.0	us	(norm)
Q1	2.0	2.4	0.3
Q2	1.5	1.7	0.2
Q5	1.7	2.1	0.3
Q6	1.7	2.1	0.3
Q7	1.5	1.8	0.2
Q8	$\boxed{2.3}$	2.4	0.2
Q9	2.3	2.7	0.3
Q10	1.4	1.7	0.2
Q11	1.4	1.7	0.2
Q12	4.4	4.9	0.4
Q13	$\boxed{2.5}$	2.9	0.4
Q14	2.5	2.9	0.3

Q#	F# 3.0	us	(norm)
Q15	3.5	4.0	0.5
Q16	3.5	4.0	0.5
Q17	6.2	6.7	0.4
Q18	1.5	1.8	0.2
Q19	1.5	1.8	0.2
Q20	1.5	1.8	0.2
Q21	1.6	1.9	0.3
Q22	1.6	1.9	0.3
Q23	1.6	1.9	0.3
Q24	1.8	2.0	0.3
Q25	1.4	1.6	0.2
Q27	1.8	2.1	0.2

Q#	F# 3.0	us	(norm)
Q29	1.5	1.7	0.2
Q30	1.8	2.0	0.2
Q32	2.7	3.1	0.3
Q33	2.8	3.1	0.3
Q34	3.1	3.6	0.5
Q35	3.1	3.6	0.4
Q36	2.2	2.4	0.2
Q37	1.3	1.6	0.2
Q38	$\boxed{4.2}$	4.9	0.6
Q39	4.2	4.7	0.4
Q40	4.1	4.6	0.4
Q41	6.3	7.3	0.6

Q#	F# 3.0	us	(norm)
Q42	4.7	5.5	0.5
Q43	7.2	6.9	0.7
Q44	$\int 5.4$	6.2	0.7
Q45	2.2	2.6	0.3
Q46	2.3	2.7	0.4
Q47	2.1	2.5	0.3
Q48	2.1	2.5	0.3
Q49	2.4	2.7	0.3
Q50	$\boxed{2.2}$	2.5	0.3
Q51	2.0	2.4	0.3
Q52	6.1	5.9	0.4
Q53	11.9	11.2	0.6

Q#	F# 3.0	us	(norm)
Q54	4.4	4.8	0.4
Q55	$\boxed{5.2}$	5.6	0.4
Q56	4.6	5.1	0.5
Q57	2.5	2.9	0.4
Q58	2.5	2.9	0.4
Q59	3.1	3.6	0.5
Q60	3.6	4.4	0.7

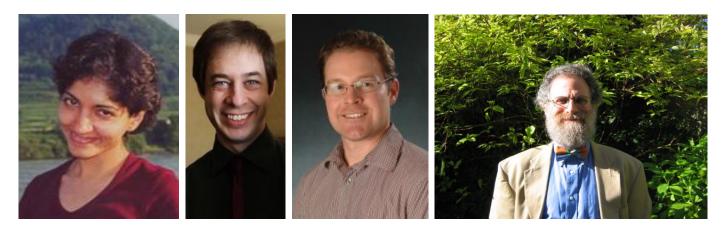
Q#	F# 3.0	us	(norm)
Q61	5.8	6.3	0.3
Q62	$\boxed{5.4}$	5.9	0.2
Q63	3.4	3.8	0.4
Q64	4.3	4.9	0.6
Q65	10.2	10.1	0.4
Q66	8.9	8.7	0.6
Q67	14.7	13.1	1.1

All times in milliseconds.

Part VIII

What else are we up to?

Blame: Integrating static and dynamic typing



Ahmed, Findler, Siek, Wadler

- Well-typed programs can't be blamed, ESOP 2009.
- Threesomes, with and without blame, POPL 2010.
- Blame for all, POPL 2011.
- A plague on both your houses: Allocating blame symmetrically and precisely 2013, to appear.

Links: Web programming without tiers



Wadler, Yallop, Lindley, Cooper

- Links: Web programming without tiers, FMCO 2006.
- The essence of form abstraction, ASPLAS 2008. F# (WebSharper), Haskell (Tupil, Digestive Functors, Happstack, Yesod), Common Lisp, JavaScript, Racket, Scala.
- Idioms are Oblivious, Arrows are Meticulous, Monads are Promiscuous MSFP 2008.
- The arrow calculus, JFP 2010.

ABCD: A Basis for Concurrency and Distribution



Najd, Wadler, Lindley, Morris

- From Session Types to Data Types: A Basis for Concurrency and Distribution, EPSRC 2013–2018.
- Co-PIs: Simon Gay, Glasgow, and Nobuko Yoshida, Imperial. Collaborators: Amazon, Cognizant, OOI, Red Hat, VMWare.
- Propositions as Sessions, ICFP 2012, JFP 2014.
- A practical theory of language-integrated query, ICFP 2013.

Part IX

Conclusion

Series of examples

Join queries

Abstraction over values (first-order)

Abstraction over predicates (higher-order)

Dynamic generation of queries

Nested intermediate data

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Closed quotation vs. open quotation

 $\mathsf{Expr} < A \to B > vs. \; \mathsf{Expr} < A > \to \mathsf{Expr} < B >$

T-LINQ: the theory

Scylla and Charybdis Theorem

P-LINQ: the practice

Measured times comparable

Normalisation a small fraction of time

Good DSLs copy, great DSLs steal

Nikola (Mainland and Morrisett 2010) Feldspar (Axelsson et al. 2010; Axelsson and Svenningsson 2012)

Host	DSEL
a+b	a + b
a < b	a .<. b
if a then b else c	a?(b,c)

DSEL's steal the host's type system.

We steal the host's *type system* and *syntax*, and we provide *normalisation*.

Theory and Practice

T-LINQ:

doesn't cover sorting, grouping, aggregation (work for tomorrow)

P-LINQ:

covers all of LINQ (put it to work today!)

http://fsprojects.github.io/FSharp.Linq.Experimental.ComposableQuery/

What is the difference between theory and practice?

In theory there is no difference.

But in practice there is.

What is the difference between theory and practice?

In theory there is a difference.

But in practice there isn't.