An observational proof assistant for higher-dimensional mathematics

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Narya is an experimental interval-free proof assistant for higher-dimensional mathematics.

https://github.com/gwaithimirdain/narya

- Higher observational type theory
- Internally parametric type theory
- Displayed type theory

Outline

1 Dependent type theory

2 Higher observational type theory

3 Some technical details

The core language of Narya is a dependent type theory like those of Rocq, Agda, and Lean.

- Dependent function types $(x:A) \rightarrow B x$ with application f a and abstraction $x \mapsto f x$ (note syntax).
- A universe Type with Type : Type . No universe checking!
- No unification or implicit arguments yet.
- However, verbosity is decreased by bidirectional typechecking:
 - Un-annotated $x \mapsto x$ checks at any type $A \to A$.
 - Un-annotated f a synthesizes B a if f synthesizes $(x:A) \rightarrow B x$ and a checks at A.
 - To write a redex, you must ascribe the function: ((x \mapsto x) : A \rightarrow A) a
- NbE-based typechecker with η -conversion: f \equiv x \mapsto f x

Records

def Σ (A : Type) (B : A \rightarrow Type) : Type := sig (fst : A, snd : B fst)

- An unlabeled tuple like (a, b) checks at any record with the right number of fields (of the right type).
- A labeled tuple like (fst := a, snd := b) checks at any record with fields having those names (and types).
- Fields are projected out with indices or labels, and spaces:

- A projection synthesizes, if the head p synthesizes a record.
- Records satisfy η -conversion: $p \equiv (p .fst, p .snd)$.

Field projections are left-associative like function applications:

f (g a).fld b means ((f (g a)) .fld) b

This is the correct choice when application is juxtaposition. It allows chained method calls without parentheses:

```
object .methodOne x y z
.methodTwo a b
.methodThree c d e
.methodFour
```

Datatypes

```
def List (A : Type) : Type := data [
| nil.
| cons. (x : A) (xs : List A) ]
```

- A constructor like cons. b bs checks at any datatype with that constructor name, if its arguments check correctly.
- Constructors end with . , dually to how fields begin with .
- Numerals 0, 1,...parse to zero., suc. zero., ...
- Matches with recursion, using an ML-like syntax: def len (A : Type) (xs : List A) : N := match xs [| nil. → 0 | cons. _ xs → 1 + len xs]

but with an ending delimiter].

• No termination or positivity checking!

Matches, variables, and contexts

You can match on any (synthesizing) term, not just a variable:

```
def last (A : Type) (xs : List A) : Maybe A

:= match reverse xs [

| nil. \mapsto none.

| cons. x _ \mapsto some. x ]
```

If you do match on a variable, the goal and the context refine:

```
def suc_pred (n : \mathbb{N}) (H : n \neq 0) : suc. (pred n) = n

:= match n [

| zero. \mapsto match H refl [ ]

| suc. k \mapsto refl (suc. k) ]
```

• In the zero. branch, the type of H is $0 \neq 0$.

• In the suc. branch, the goal reduces to suc. k = suc. k.

When matching on a non-variable, you can refine the goal explicitly with match M return $x \mapsto P x$ (and "convoy" the context).

Fancy datatypes

Datatypes can be indexed:

```
def Vec (A : Type) : \mathbb{N} \to \text{Type} := \text{data} [
| nil. : Vec A 0
| cons. (n : \mathbb{N}) (x : A) (xs : Vec A n) : Vec A (n+1) ]
```

Indexed matches refine the goal and context if all indices are distinct variables (more restrictive than Agda --without-K: no unification yet).

Families of definitions can be mutually inductive and/or recursive, including induction-induction and induction-recursion:

```
def ctx : Type ≔ data [
| empty.
| ext. (Γ : ctx) (A : ty Γ) ]
and ty (Γ : ctx) : Type ≔ data [
| base.
| pi. (A : ty Γ) (B : ty (ext. Γ A)) ]
```

Fancy matches

Matches can be deep:

```
def half (n : \mathbb{N}) : \mathbb{N} := match n [
| zero. \mapsto zero.
| suc. zero. \mapsto zero.
| suc. (suc. n) \mapsto suc. (half n) ]
```

Matches can be multiple:

```
def conj (x y : Bool) : Bool := match x, y [
| true., true. \mapsto true.
| true., false. \mapsto false.
| false., _ \mapsto false.]
```

- Both expanded at parse time into sequential matches.
- The programmer controls and can easily see the case tree.
- Exact splits are required.

Codatatypes

Codatatypes are defined using a "self" variable:

```
def Stream (A : Type) : Type := codata [
| s .head : A
| s .tail : Stream A ]
```

```
def M (A : Type) (B : A \rightarrow Type) : Type := codata [
| s .recv : A
| s .send : B (s .recv) \rightarrow M A B ]
```

• Methods of a codatatype are called like fields of a record:

S .Heau S . Laii L	s	.head		s	.tail	b
--------------------	---	-------	--	---	-------	---

- Codatatypes are inhabited by copatterns and corecursion:
 def zeros : Stream N := [
 | .head → 0
 | .tail → zeros]
- No productivity or positivity checking yet!

Canonical types in case trees

A novel feature: canonical types can be defined inside a match.

```
def Covec (A : Type) (n : N) : Type ≔ match n [
| zero. → sig ()
| suc. n → sig (
    car : A,
    cdr : Covec A n) ]
```

Then

- Covec A 0 is a unit type
- Covec A 1 is a record type isomorphic to A
- Covec A 2 is a record type isomorphic to A \times A
- etc.

but they are all canonical and don't reduce to anything.

Mixfix notations

User-defined mixfix notations with precedence and associativity. notation 1 plus : x "+" y ... := plus x y notation 2 times : x "*" y ... := times x y notation 0 ite : "if" b "then" x "else" y := ite b x y

```
notation 1.5 types : \Gamma "\vdash" a "::" A \coloneqq types \Gamma a A
```

notation 3 interp : "[[" M "]]" \coloneqq interp M

- Unicode operators are allowed, delimited by spaces.
- ASCII operators don't require spaces: x+y, x-y, x:A.
- Special built-ins like → , → , := don't require spaces, and have ASCII equivalents -> , |-> , :=.

Namespaces and imports

Uses Yuujinchou by Favonia/RedPRL for namespacing.

• These both define foo.bar, which is in namespace foo:

```
def foo.bar ≔ ...
```

```
section foo ≔
def bar ≔ ...
end
```

- Patch foo by defining new constants starting with foo.
- Import other source files, with a powerful suite of modifiers:

import "file" | in foo renaming bar baz

• Notations are stored in the notations namespace:

import "file1" | except notations import "file2" | union (renaming file2, only notations)

After typechecking a file, a compiled version is written to disk for faster future loading.

Interactive coding and proof

- ProofGeneral Emacs mode allows progressive processing and undoing while working on a source file, like Rocq.
- Can also leave holes ?, view their inferred types and contexts, and fill them later, like Agda.
- Can split in a hole, automatically inserting abstractions, tuples, or comatches based on its type.
- No tactics yet.
- An opinionated automatic formatter reformats files on load and commands when processed interactively (by default), also changing ASCII -> into Unicode -> etc.

Dependent type theory

2 Higher observational type theory

3 Some technical details

First principle of HOTT

For x : A and y : A, we have an identity type Id A x y.

Second principle of HOTT

For x : A, we have a reflexivity term refl x : Id A x x, which synthesizes if x does.

We regard the definition of Id A (and hence also Id (Id A), Id (Id (Id A)) etc.) as part of the definition of A.

Similarly, the definition of refl x is part of the definition of x. For example...

Observational identity types

The type Id (A \times B) p q behaves as if it were defined by

def Id_A×B_p_q : Type ≔ sig (
 fst : Id A (p .fst) (q .fst)
 snd : Id B (p .snd) (q .snd))

This makes it behave almost exactly like Id A (p .fst) (q .fst) \times Id B (p .snd) (q .snd) :

Similarly, reflexivity is defined on each term-former:

refl (a, b)	≡	(refl a,	refl	b)
refl (p .fst)	≡	(refl p)	.fst	
<pre>refl (p .snd)</pre>	≡	(refl p)	.snd	

These compute from left to right. However, since records have η -conversion, it follows that for any $\mathbf{p} : \mathbf{A} \times \mathbf{B}$ we have

refl p
$$\equiv$$
 (refl (p .fst), refl (p .snd))

More observational identity types

• Id (List A) xs ys behaves as if it were defined by

```
\begin{array}{l} \texttt{def Id\_ListA : List A \rightarrow List A \rightarrow Type := data [} \\ \texttt{| nil. : Id\_ListA nil. nil.} \\ \texttt{| cons. : } \{\texttt{x0 x_1 : A} \ (\texttt{x2 : Id A x_0 x_1}) \\ \{\texttt{xs0 xs1 : List A} \ (\texttt{xs2 : Id\_ListA xs0 xs1}) \\ \rightarrow \texttt{Id\_ListA (cons. x_0 xs0) (cons. x_1 xs1) } \end{bmatrix} \end{array}
```

These constructors check at it, and can be matched against. This makes encode-decode proofs marginally simpler.

• Id (Stream A) s t behaves as if it were defined by

```
def Id_StreamA (s t : Stream A) : Type := codata [
| u .head : Id A (s .recv) (t .recv)
| u .tail : Id StreamA (s .tail) (t .tail) ]
```

These destructors apply to it, and can be comatched against. Equality in codatatypes is bisimulation, by definition.

Observational function types

Id (A \rightarrow B) f g behaves as if it were defined to equal

 $\{\texttt{x}_0 \ \texttt{x}_1 : \texttt{A}\} \ (\texttt{x}_2 : \texttt{Id} \ \texttt{A} \ \texttt{x}_0 \ \texttt{x}_1) \ \rightarrow \ \texttt{Id} \ \texttt{B} \ (\texttt{f} \ \texttt{x}_0) \ (\texttt{g} \ \texttt{x}_1) \ .$

This is a little more complicated than the naïvely expected

 $(x:A) \rightarrow Id B (f x) (g x).$

- Once we have transport, we can prove them equivalent.
- The former is required for parametricity (when no transport).
- For f : A \rightarrow B , we get that refl f is "ap", with type

$$\{\mathtt{x}_0 \ \mathtt{x}_1 : \mathtt{A}\}$$
 $(\mathtt{x}_2 : \mathtt{Id} \ \mathtt{A} \ \mathtt{x}_0 \ \mathtt{x}_1) \
ightarrow \ \mathtt{Id} \ \mathtt{B} \ (\mathtt{f} \ \mathtt{x}_0) \ (\mathtt{f} \ \mathtt{x}_1)$.

Third principle of HOTT

All constructions preserve equality, in separately defined ways.

Computation with ap

Supposing a_2 : Id A a_0 a_1 , we have:

refl ((x \mapsto (f x, g x)) : A \rightarrow B \times C) a₂ \equiv (refl f a₂, refl g a₂)

Supposing p_2 : Id (A \times B) p_0 p_1 , we have: refl ((x \mapsto x .fst) : A \times B \rightarrow A) p_2 \equiv p_2 .fst

refl ((x \mapsto x .snd) : A \times B \rightarrow B) p_2 \equiv p_2 .snd

Implemented internally using "higher-dimensional substitutions".

On "definitions" of the universe

Traditional perspective ("meaning explanations" and "lower" OTT)

The universe is inductively defined by type-formers as constructors.

- The Tarski eliminator E1 is (inductive-)recursively defined.
- Id is also recursively defined with clauses for each constructor, e.g. Id $(A \times B) \equiv Id A \times Id B$.
- Justifies type-case, not univalence.

HOTT perspective

The universe is coinductively defined by El and Id as destructors.

- Id is coinductive: Id of a type is another family of types.
- Each type-former is defined corecursively, by specifying E1 (i.e. its intro/elim/...rules) and Id (which are generally other instances of the same type-former).
- Justifies univalence, as we will see...

Bisimulations of types

- Equality in a coinductively defined type is "bisimulation".
- Intuitively, two systems are bisimilar if there is a correspondence between their "states" such that
 - 1 Any state in one system corresponds to some state in the other.
 - 2 The "subsequent behavior" (coinductive destructors) of corresponding pairs of states are also bisimilar, coinductively.

Fourth principle of HOTT

Id Type A B behaves like it consists of bisimulations:

Behavior of Id Type

Introduction

For R : A \rightarrow B \rightarrow Type and Rb : isBisim A B R, we have glue A B R Rb : Id Type A B.

Elimination

Any A_2 : Id Type A_0 A_1 gives rise to:

- Given $a_0 : A_0$ and $a_1 : A_1$, have $A_2 = a_0 = a_1 : Type$.
- Given $a_0 : A_0$, have A_2 .trr $a_0 : A_1$.
- Given $a_0 : A_0$, have A_2 .liftr $a_0 : A_2 a_0$ (A_2 .trr a_0).
- Given $a_1 : A_1$, have A_2 .trl $a_1 : A_0$.
- Given $a_1 : A_1$, have A_2 .liftl $a_1 : A_2$ (A_2 .trl a_1) a_1 .
- Something TBD for "A2 .id"...

Behavior of Id Type

Elimination

```
Any A_2: Id Type A_0 A_1 gives rise to:
```

- Given $a_0 : A_0$ and $a_1 : A_1$, have $A_2 = a_0 = a_1 : Type$.
- trr, liftr, trl, liftl

Computation

```
For a : A and b : B, the type glue A B R Rb a b behaves like
```

```
def glueABR_a_b : Type := sig ( unglue : R a b )
```

and glue A B R Rb .trr etc. compute to the fields of Rb.

Behavior of Id Type

Introduction

For R : A \rightarrow B \rightarrow Type and Rb : isBisim A B R, we have glue A B R Rb : Id Type A B.

Elimination

Any
$$A_2$$
: Id Type A_0 A_1 gives rise to:

- Given $a_0 : A_0$ and $a_1 : A_1$, have $A_2 a_0 a_1 :$ Type.
- trr, liftr, trl, liftl

Consistency

For A: Type with a: A and b: A, we have

Id A a b \equiv refl A a b.

Heterogeneous equality

For
$$B: A \rightarrow Type$$
, if $a_2 : Id A a_0 a_1$ we have
refl $B a_2 : Id Type (B a_0) (B a_1)$.
Thus, for $b_0 : B a_0$ and $b_1 : B a_1$, we have a type
refl $B a_2 b_0 b_1 : Type$

of dependent or heterogeneous equalities.

These figure in Id of dependent records and functions:

• For B:A \rightarrow Type, Id (Σ A B) p q behaves like

```
def Id_ΣAB_p_q: Type ≔ sig (
  fst : Id A (p .fst) (q .fst),
  snd : refl B fst (p .snd) (q .snd))
```

• For B:A \rightarrow Type, Id ((x:A) \rightarrow B x) f g behaves like

 $\{\mathtt{x}_0 \ \mathtt{x}_1 : \mathtt{A}\}$ $(\mathtt{x}_2 : \mathtt{Id} \ \mathtt{A} \ \mathtt{x}_0 \ \mathtt{x}_1) \ \rightarrow \ \mathtt{refl} \ \mathtt{B} \ \mathtt{x}_2$ (f $\mathtt{x}_0) (g \ \mathtt{x}_1)$

Co-univalence

Theorem

If
$$A_2$$
 : Id Type A_0 A_1 , then A_2 .trr : A_0 \rightarrow A_1 and

 \mathtt{A}_2 .trl: \mathtt{A}_1 \rightarrow \mathtt{A}_0 are inverse equivalences.

Proof.

Given
$$a_0 : A_0$$
, have A_2 .liftr $a_0 : A_2 a_0$ (A_2 .trr a_0) and

 A_2 .liftl (A_2 .trr a_0)

: A_2 (A_2 .trl (A_2 .trr a_0)) (A_2 .trr a_0)

Therefore, we have an induced bisimulation between

Id
$$A_0 = a_0 (A_2 .trl (A_2 .trr = a_0))$$
 and
Id $A_1 (A_2 .trr = a_0) (A_2 .trr = a_0)$.

Thus, since refl $(A_2 \cdot trr a_0)$ inhabits the latter, the former is also inhabited. The other direction is dual.

Theorem If $f : A \rightarrow B$ is an equivalence, then (a b \mapsto Id B (f a) b) : A \rightarrow B \rightarrow Type is a bisimulation. Hence we get ua f : Id Type A B.

Main idea of proof.

If f : A \rightarrow B is an equivalence, so is each

refl f $\{a_0\}$ $\{a_1\}$: Id A a_0 $a_1 \rightarrow$ Id B (f a_0) (f a_1)

Therefore, we can use corecursion.

On the *n*-Category Café blog comments, December 2009:

Peter Lumsdaine: ... asking a [space] to be contractible involves arbitrary high dimensions, and I'm not sure what kind of language ... would let you talk about that...a type may have infinitely high non-trivial structure... [but] you can only work with...finite-dimensional approximations.

Me: One way...to talk about contractibility is by coinduction. If A is contractible...(1) A is inhabited, and (2) for any $x, y \in A$, hom_A(x, y) is contractible. Moreover, contractibility is maximal with this property...

Peter Lumsdaine: ... you might well also want to talk about [equivalences] defined coinductively, as... in e.g. [Eugenia] Cheng "An ω -category with all duals is an ω -groupoid".

Then Voevodsky came along and we went on a 15-year detour...

Status of the implementation

- Run narya -hott to get the HOTT implementation.
- Everything I've described so far is implemented except that the fields trr, etc. don't compute.
- Warning: highly in flux, syntax is likely to change.
- Omitting -hott gives an internally parametric type theory, with Id but no trr.
 - Here we can define a notion of "fibrancy" that models HOTT.
 - Everything is proven to compute except trr on the universe.
- Can vary the -arity and -internal-ness of parametricity.
 - "External" unary case is a version of displayed type theory, in which we can define semi-simplicial types (jww Kolomatskaia).
- Eventually -hott will always be on, and other "directions" of parametricity can coexist with it.

Remarks on the implementation

- 27,000 lines of OCaml
- Normalization by evaluation
- Dependently typed programming
 - Intrinsically well-scoped De Bruijn indices
 - Type-level dimensions
- Algebraic effects
- Thanks to Favonia/RedPRL
 - Yuujinchou: imports, scoping
 - Asai: error reporting
 - Algaeff: algebraic effects
 - Bwd: backwards lists

Dependent type theory

2 Higher observational type theory



- 1 The complete type of id in isBisim.
- 2 Something to represent id acting on A_2 : Id Type A_0 A_1 .
- 3 A *lie.

Completing* the definition of bisimulation

Any $R:A \rightarrow B \rightarrow Type$ induces

 $\begin{array}{l} \texttt{refl R}: \left\{ \texttt{a_0} \ \texttt{a_1}:\texttt{A} \right\} \ (\texttt{a_2}:\texttt{Id A} \ \texttt{a_0} \ \texttt{a_1}) \ \left\{ \texttt{b_0} \ \texttt{b_1}:\texttt{B} \right\} \ (\texttt{b_2}:\texttt{Id B} \ \texttt{b_0} \ \texttt{b_1}) \\ \rightarrow \ \texttt{Id Type} \ (\texttt{R} \ \texttt{a_0} \ \texttt{b_0}) \ (\texttt{R} \ \texttt{a_1} \ \texttt{b_1}) \end{array}$

So if we have $a_0 a_1 : A$ and $b_0 b_1 : B$, and also $r_0 : R a_0 b_0$ and $r_1 : R a_1 b_1$, then

(a_2 b_2 \mapsto refl R a_2 b_2 r_0 r_1) : Id A a_0 a_1 \rightarrow Id B b_0 b_1 \rightarrow Type

and this is what appears in the method id of isBisim:

```
\begin{array}{l} \text{def isBisim (A B:Type) (R:A \rightarrow B \rightarrow Type) : Type := codata [} \\ | x .trr:A \rightarrow B \\ | x .liftr:(a:A) \rightarrow R a (x .trr a) \\ | x .trl:B \rightarrow A \\ | x .liftl:(b:B) \rightarrow R (x .trl b) b \\ | x .id:^{*} (a_{0} a_{1}:A) (b_{0} b_{1}:B) (r_{0}:R a_{0} b_{0}) (r_{1}:R a_{1} b_{1}) \\ \rightarrow isBisim (Id A a_{0} a_{1}) (Id B b_{0} b_{1}) \\ (a_{2} b_{2} \mapsto refl R a_{2} b_{2} r_{0} r_{1}) \end{array}
```

Squares

Given A : Type we have Id A : A \rightarrow A \rightarrow Type , thus

 $\begin{array}{l} \mbox{refl} \ (\mbox{Id A}): \{a_{00} \ a_{01}: A\} \ (a_{02}: \mbox{Id A} \ a_{00} \ a_{01}) \\ \{a_{10} \ a_{11}: A\} \ (a_{12}: \mbox{Id A} \ a_{10} \ a_{11}) \\ \rightarrow \ \mbox{Id Type} \ (\mbox{Id A} \ a_{00} \ a_{10}) \ (\mbox{Id A} \ a_{01} \ a_{11}) \end{array}$

So if we have $a_{00} a_{01} a_{02} a_{10} a_{11} a_{12}$ and also a_{20} : Id A $a_{00} a_{10}$ and a_{21} : Id A $a_{01} a_{11}$, we get

refl (Id A) $a_{02} a_{12} a_{20} a_{21}$: Type

whose elements are squares in A :

$$\begin{array}{c} a_{10} \xrightarrow{a_{12}} a_{11} \\ a_{20} \uparrow & a_{22} & \uparrow a_{21} \\ a_{00} \xrightarrow{a_{02}} a_{01} \end{array}$$

refl (Id A) a_{02} a_{12} .trr and so on give left-right box-filling.

Similarly, for
$$A_2$$
 : Id Type A_0 A_1 , we have

$$\begin{array}{l} \texttt{refl} \ ((\texttt{x} \ \texttt{y} \ \mapsto \ \texttt{A}_2 \ \texttt{x} \ \texttt{y}) : \texttt{A}_0 \ \to \ \texttt{A}_1 \ \to \ \texttt{Type}) \\ : \{\texttt{a}_{00} \ \texttt{a}_{01} : \texttt{A}_0\} \ (\texttt{a}_{02} : \texttt{Id} \ \texttt{A}_0 \ \texttt{a}_{00} \ \texttt{a}_{01}) \\ \{\texttt{a}_{10} \ \texttt{a}_{11} : \texttt{A}_1\} \ (\texttt{a}_{12} : \texttt{Id} \ \texttt{A}_1 \ \texttt{a}_{10} \ \texttt{a}_{11}) \\ \to \ \texttt{Id} \ \texttt{Type} \ (\texttt{A}_2 \ \texttt{a}_{00} \ \texttt{a}_{10}) \ (\texttt{A}_2 \ \texttt{a}_{01} \ \texttt{a}_{11}) \end{array}$$

giving types of heterogeneous squares

$$\begin{array}{ccc} a_{10} & \xrightarrow{a_{12}} & a_{11} & (\text{in } A_1) \\ a_{20}:A_2 a_{00} a_{10} & & a_{22} & \uparrow a_{21}:A_2 a_{01} a_{11} \\ a_{00} & \xrightarrow{a_{02}} & a_{01} & (\text{in } A_0) \end{array}$$

with left-right filling. But for " A_2 .id" we want top-bottom filling.

Symmetry

Fifth (and last) principle of HOTT

Every square has an associated symmetric/transposed square:



We define these separately for each construction of squares. They are functorial and coherent, and generalize to heterogeneous squares.

For A_2 : Id Type $A_0 A_1$, the last bisimulation method " A_2 .id" is represented by sym (refl A_2).

(We also have to deal with squares that are heterogeneous in both directions. This is why our definition of isBisim is a *lie, and it leads to a surprisingly deep and beautiful rabbit hole of "higher coinductive types", which I omit today.) Just as in cubical type theory, from top-bottom box-filling and transport we derive Martin-Löf Id-elimination, with typal β -rule:

def J (A: Type) (a: A) (P: (y: A)
$$\rightarrow$$
 Id A a y \rightarrow Type)
(pa: P a (refl a)) (b: A) (p: Id A a b)
: P b p
:= let sq := refl ((y \mapsto Id A a y) : A \rightarrow Type) p in
refl P (sq .trr (refl a))
(sym (sq .liftr (refl a))) .trr pa

def J
$$\beta$$
 (A : Type) (a : A) (P : (y : A) \rightarrow Id A a y \rightarrow Type)
(pa : P a (refl a))
: Id (P a (refl a)) pa (J A a P pa a (refl a))
:= ...