
Contents

Foreword	xi
Preface	xiii
Chapter 1. From Hardware to Software	1
1.1. Computers: a low-level view	1
1.1.1. Information processing	1
1.1.2. Memories	2
1.1.3. CPUs	3
1.1.4. Peripheral devices	7
1.2. Computers: a high-level view	8
1.2.1. Modeling computations	9
1.2.2. High-level languages	9
1.2.3. From source code to executable programs	10
Chapter 2. Introduction to Semantics of Programming Languages	15
2.1. Environment, memory and state	16
2.1.1. Evaluation environment	16
2.1.2. Memory	18
2.1.3. State	20
2.2. Evaluation of expressions	21
2.2.1. Syntax	21
2.2.2. Values	22
2.2.3. Evaluation semantics	24
2.3. Definition and assignment	26
2.3.1. Defining an identifier	26
2.3.2. Assignment	29
2.4. Exercises	31

Chapter 3. Semantics of Functional Features	35
3.1. Syntactic aspects	35
3.1.1. Syntax of a functional kernel	35
3.1.2. Abstract syntax tree	36
3.1.3. Reasoning by induction over expressions	39
3.1.4. Declaration of variables, bound and free variables	39
3.2. Execution semantics: evaluation functions	42
3.2.1. Evaluation errors	42
3.2.2. Values	43
3.2.3. Interpretation of operators	45
3.2.4. Closures	46
3.2.5. Evaluation of expressions	47
3.3. Execution semantics: operational semantics	54
3.3.1. Simple expressions	55
3.3.2. Call-by-value	56
3.3.3. Recursive and mutually recursive functions	60
3.3.4. Call-by-name	61
3.3.5. Call-by-value versus call-by-name	62
3.4. Evaluation functions versus evaluation relations	64
3.4.1. Status of the evaluation function	64
3.4.2. Induction over evaluation trees	65
3.5. Semantic properties	69
3.5.1. Equivalent expressions	69
3.5.2. Equivalent environments	71
3.6. Exercises	71
Chapter 4. Semantics of Imperative Features	77
4.1. Syntax of a kernel of an imperative language	77
4.2. Evaluation of expressions	81
4.3. Evaluation of definitions	86
4.4. Operational semantics	89
4.4.1. Big-step semantics	89
4.4.2. Small-step semantics	93
4.4.3. Expressiveness of operational semantics	95
4.5. Semantic properties	96
4.5.1. Equivalent programs	96
4.5.2. Program termination	98
4.5.3. Determinism of program execution	100
4.5.4. Big steps versus small steps	103
4.6. Procedures	109
4.6.1. Blocks	109
4.6.2. Procedures	112
4.7. Other approaches	118

4.7.1. Denotational semantics	118
4.7.2. Axiomatic semantics, Hoare logic	129
4.8. Exercises	134
Chapter 5. Types	137
5.1. Type checking: when and how?	139
5.1.1. When to verify types?	139
5.1.2. How to verify types?	140
5.2. Informal typing of a program Exp_2	141
5.2.1. A first example	141
5.2.2. Typing a conditional expression	142
5.2.3. Typing without type constraints	142
5.2.4. Polymorphism	143
5.3. Typing rules in Exp_2	143
5.3.1. Types, type schemes and typing environments	143
5.3.2. Generalization, substitution and instantiation	146
5.3.3. Typing rules and typing trees	151
5.4. Type inference algorithm in Exp_2	154
5.4.1. Principal type	154
5.4.2. Sets of constraints and unification	155
5.4.3. Type inference algorithm	159
5.5. Properties	167
5.5.1. Properties of typechecking	167
5.5.2. Properties of the inference algorithm	167
5.6. Typechecking of imperative constructs	168
5.6.1. Type algebra	168
5.6.2. Typing rules	169
5.6.3. Typing polymorphic definitions	171
5.7. Subtyping and overloading	172
5.7.1. Subtyping	173
5.7.2. Overloading	175
Chapter 6. Data Types	179
6.1. Basic types	179
6.1.1. Booleans	179
6.1.2. Integers	181
6.1.3. Characters	186
6.1.4. Floating point numbers	187
6.2. Arrays	191
6.3. Strings	194
6.4. Type definitions	194
6.4.1. Type abbreviations	195
6.4.2. Records	196

6.4.3. Enumerated types	200
6.4.4. Sum types	202
6.5. Generalized conditional	205
6.5.1. C style <code>switch/case</code>	205
6.5.2. Pattern matching	208
6.6. Equality	216
6.6.1. Physical equality	217
6.6.2. Structural equality	218
6.6.3. Equality between functions	220
Chapter 7. Pointers and Memory Management	223
7.1. Addresses and pointers	223
7.2. Endianness	225
7.3. Pointers and arrays	225
7.4. Passing parameters by address	226
7.5. References	229
7.5.1. References in C++	229
7.5.2. References in Java	233
7.6. Memory management	234
7.6.1. Memory allocation	234
7.6.2. Freeing memory	237
7.6.3. Automatic memory management	239
Chapter 8. Exceptions	243
8.1. Errors: notification and propagation	243
8.1.1. Global variable	245
8.1.2. Record definition	245
8.1.3. Passing by address	245
8.1.4. Introducing exceptions	246
8.2. A simple formalization: ML-style exceptions	247
8.2.1. Abstract syntax	247
8.2.2. Values	248
8.2.3. Type algebra	248
8.2.4. Operational semantics	248
8.2.5. Typing	250
8.3. Exceptions in other languages	250
8.3.1. Exceptions in OCaml	251
8.3.2. Exceptions in Python	251
8.3.3. Exceptions in Java	253
8.3.4. Exceptions in C++	254

Conclusion	257
Appendix: Solutions to the Exercises	259
List of Notations	287
Index of Programs	289
References	293
Index	295