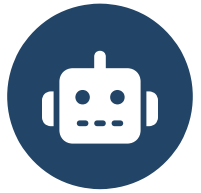


CSC 347 - Concepts of Programming Languages

Tail Recursion

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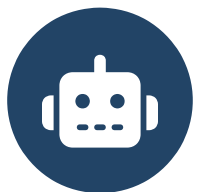
Fibonacci Numbers

➤ In Scala 3 new syntax, implement a recursive function to compute the Fibonacci numbers



```
1 def fibonacci(n: Int): Int = n match
2   case 0 => 0
3   case 1 => 1
4   case _ => fibonacci(n - 1) + fibonacci(n - 2)
```

⚠ Try `fibonacci(30)` and `fibonacci(45)`



Fibonacci Numbers

>_ Make it fast



```
1 def fibonacci(n: Int, memo: mutable.Map[Int, Int] = mutable.Map.empty): Int =  
2   if n <= 0 then return 0  
3   if n == 1 then return 1  
4   if memo.contains(n) then return memo(n)  
5   // Calculate Fibonacci and store in the map  
6   val result = fibonacci(n - 1, memo) + fibonacci(n - 2, memo)  
7   memo(n) = result  
8   result
```

- Applies dynamic programming
- ⚠ Do we need to keep all the numbers ever computed?
- ⚠ Does it truly solve the problem?



Learning Objectives

- ❓ How to get recursive iteration without stack penalty and without recomputing intermediate results?
 - Identify and express tail recursion



Recursion and Stack Limitations

```
1 def sum (xs:List[Int]) : Int = xs match
2   case Nil      => 0
3   case x::rest => x + sum (rest)
4
5 val xs = List(11,21,31)
6 sum (xs)
```

```
sum(11::21::31::Nil)
--> sum(11::21::31::Nil)
--> 11 + sum(21::31::Nil)
--> 11 + (21 + sum(31::Nil))
--> 11 + (21 + (31 + sum(Nil)))
--> 11 + (21 + (31 + 0))
--> 11 + (21 + 31)
--> 11 + 52
--> 63 = (11 + (21 + (31 + 0)))
```

- Summing up left to after the last recursive call returns
- ? How does the stack look like?



Call Stack

- Contains *activation records* (AR) for active calls, also known as *stack frames*
- Changes to call stack
 - AR pushed when a function/method call is made
 - AR popped when a function/method returns
- ? Runtime environments limit size of call stacks?
- Can cause problems with deep recursion
 - Java, Scala: `StackOverflowError`
 - C: stack limits set by operating system



Tail Recursive Calls

Sum of elements in a list computing forward

```
1 def sum (xs:List[Int], z:Int = 0) : Int = xs match
2   case Nil      => z
3   case x::rest => sum (rest, z + x)
```

```
sum(11::21::31::Nil)
--> sum(11::21::31::Nil, 0)
--> sum(21::31::Nil, 11)
--> sum(31::Nil, 32)
--> sum(Nil, 63)
-->
-->
-->
--> 63 = (((0 + 11) + 21) + 31)
```

- All recursive calls are in tail-position
- Result sum computed before recursive call is made, no work left
- ? How is the stack now different?



Tail-Call Optimization: Rewrite to Loop

Tail-recursive

```
1 def sum (xs:List[Int], z:Int = 0) : Int =  
2   xs match  
3     case Nil      => z  
4     case x::rest => sum (rest, z+x)
```

Recursive (mutable)

```
1 def sum (xs: List[Int]) : Int =  
2   var z = 0  
3   def loop (xs: List[Int]) : Int =  
4     xs match  
5       case Nil      => z  
6       case x::rest =>  
7         z = z + x  
8         loop(rest)  
9   end loop  
10  loop(xs)
```

```
1 def sum (xs: List[Int]) : Int =  
2   var z = 0  
3   var l = xs  
4   def loop () : Int =  
5     l match  
6       case Nil      => z  
7       case x::rest =>  
8         z = z + x  
9         l = rest  
10    loop()  
11  end loop  
12  loop()
```

Remove pattern matching

```
1 def sum (xs: List[Int]) : Int =  
2   var z = 0  
3   var l = xs  
4   def loop () : Int =  
5     if l == Nil then z  
6     else  
7       z = z + l.head  
8       l = l.tail  
9       loop()  
10  end loop  
11  loop()
```

Loop (mutable data)

```
1 def sum (xs: List[Int]) : Int =  
2   var z = 0  
3   var l = xs  
4   while l != Nil do  
5     z = z + l.head  
6     l = l.tail  
7   end while  
8   z
```



Tail Call Optimization

- Many compilers implement *tail-call optimization*
 - overwrite existing activation record instead of creating new
- Recursive calls must be *tail-recursive*
- Includes *mutual recursion*
 - `f` calls to `g`, which calls back to `f`



Exercise: Recursive vs. Tail-Recursive Fibonacci

```
1 def fib(n:Int) : Long =  
2   if n <= 1 then n  
3   else fib(n-1) + fib(n-2)
```

- Time complexity
 - $O(2^n)$
- ? How to improve?

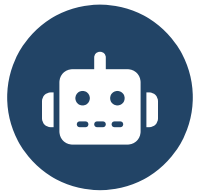
<code>fib(0)</code>	<code>fib(1)</code>	<code>fib(2)</code>	<code>fib(3)</code>
0	1	1	2

- Represent sliding window in result (not tail-recursive!)

```
1 def fib(n:Int) : (Long, Long) =  
2   if n <= 1 then (0, n)  
3   else  
4     val (a, b) = fib(n-1)  
5     (b, a+b)
```

- Represent sliding window in arguments (tail-recursive)

```
1 def fib(n:Int, a:Long=0, b:Long=1) : Long =  
2   if n == 0 then a  
3   else if n == 1 then b  
4   else fib(n-1, b, a+b)
```



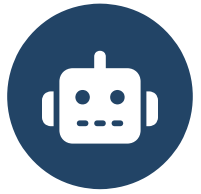
Tail-recursive Fibonacci Numbers

>_ In Scala 3, implement a *tail-recursive* function to compute Fibonacci numbers



```
1 def fibonacci(n: Int): Int =  
2   @tailrec  
3   def fibHelper(n: Int, a: Int, b: Int): Int = n match  
4     case 0 => a  
5     case _ => fibHelper(n - 1, b, a + b)  
6   end fibHelper  
7   fibHelper(n, 0, 1)  
8 end fibonacci
```

- `tailrec` annotation: compiler error if not tail-recursive
- 💡 Specific instructions help generate good code



Continuation Passing

- ❓ Can all functions be made tail-recursive?
- 💡 Continuation passing: add an extra argument for a function to take the "return" value

Tail-recursive accumulator

```
1 def sum (xs:List[Int], z:Int = 0) : Int =  
2   xs match  
3     case Nil      => z  
4     case x::rest => sum (rest, z+x)  
5 end sum  
6  
7 var s = sum(List(1,2,3))
```

Tail-recursive continuation passing

```
1 def sum (xs:List[Int], c:Int=>Unit) : Unit =  
2   xs match  
3     case Nil      => c(0)  
4     case x::rest => sum (rest, y=>c(x+y))  
5 end sum  
6  
7 var s = -1  
8 sum(List(1,2,3), s=_)
```

- Continuation passing is used by compilers of functional languages as an intermediate form (similar to static single assignment in imperative languages)



Summary

- Tail-call optimization
 - avoids the performance penalty of creating activation records
 - overwrites an existing activation record
 - all recursive calls must be in *tail position* (last operation)
 - continuation passing replaces return value with a function that is called upon "return"



Tail-Call Optimization: Rewrite to Loop

Tail-recursive

```
1 def factorial (n:Int) : Int =  
2   @tailrec  
3   def loop (m:Int, result:Int) : Int =  
4     if m > 1 then loop(m-1, m*result)  
5     else result  
6   loop(n,1)
```

Recursive (mutable)

```
1 def factorial (n:Int) : Int =  
2   var result = 1  
3   def loop (m:Int) : Unit =  
4     if m > 1 then  
5       result = result*m  
6       loop(m-1)  
7   loop(n)  
8   result
```

Loop (mutable data)

```
1 def factorial (n:Int) : Int =  
2   val result = 1  
3   var m = n  
4   while m > 1 do  
5     result = result * m  
6     m = m - 1  
7   result
```

```
1 def factorial (n:Int) : Int =  
2   var result = 1  
3   var m = n  
4   def loop () : Unit =  
5     if m > 1 then  
6       result = result*m  
7       m = m-1  
8       loop()  
9   loop()  
10  result
```