

# An overlooked coherence construction for dependent type theory

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# Background

- ▶ **Dependent type theory**: powerful, expressive, natural class of logical systems (e.g. homotopy type theory).
- ▶ Models of DTT: well-developed categorical theory, most aspects satisfactory.
- ▶ However: **coherence** issues still present obstructions, not fully understood.
- ▶ Existing theorems bridge the gap for specific type theories: Hofmann, van den Berg–Garner, ... But: **general theorems lacking**, esp. for intensional type theory.

# Present result

## Theorem (Lumsdaine, Warren)

Let  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  be a comprehension category, such that  $\mathbf{C}$  has finite products and display maps are exponentiable in  $\mathbf{C}$ .

Then there is an associated split comprehension category  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T}_!)$ , with  $\mathcal{T} \simeq \mathcal{T}_!$  as fibrations over  $\mathbf{C}$ ; and if  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  has *weakly stable*  $\Pi$ -types (resp.  $\Sigma$ -types, Id-types, W-types, inductive types, higher inductive types, ...), then  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T}_!)$  may be equipped with *strictly coherent*  $\Pi$ -types (resp.  $\Sigma$ -types, Id-types, etc.)

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- ▶ **Weakly stable** satisfied in natural categorical settings; **split + strictly coherent** allows direct interpretation of syntax.
- ▶ Main hypothesis: the exponentiability.
- ▶ Payoff: no restriction on type theory; result is uniform for all type-constructors (even for individual rules).

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## Definition (Jacobs)

A **comprehension category**  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  is a (Grothendieck) fibration  $p: \mathcal{T} \rightarrow \mathbf{C}$ , together with a functor  $\chi: \mathcal{T} \rightarrow \mathbf{C}^{\rightarrow}$ , such that  $\text{cod} \circ \chi = p$ , and  $\chi$  sends cartesian arrows to pullback squares.

$(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  is **full** if  $\chi$  is full, and **split** (resp. **cloven**) if  $p$  is split (resp. cloven).

- ▶ Idea: see objects of  $\mathbf{C}$  as contexts  $\Gamma$ , objects of  $\mathcal{T}(\Gamma)$  as types  $A$  in context  $\Gamma$ , and  $\chi$  as providing context extension  $\Gamma.A$ .

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- ▶ Comprehension categories abound in nature.
- ▶ Split comprehension categories model the structural core of DTT.
- ▶ (Alternatives: contextual categories; categories with attributes/families; type-categories; etc.)

# Comprehension Categories: example

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- ▶  $\mathcal{T}(X) := [X, V]$ ;
- ▶ re-indexing is precomposition;
- ▶  $\chi$  is disjoint union.

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Moral: **universes** make things stricter, when available.

# Logical structure

## Definition

$(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  has **(+)-types** if for each  $\Gamma \in \mathbf{C}$  and  $A, B \in \mathcal{T}(\Gamma)$ , there is an object  $A + B \in \mathcal{T}(\Gamma)$ , and maps  $\nu_A, \nu_B$ , such that ...

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A split comp. cat.  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  has **strictly coherent** (+)-types (resp.  $\Pi$ -types) if it is equipped with choices of the above data, commuting with the splitting (i.e. with substitution in the ambient context  $\Gamma$ ).



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- ▶ The strictly coherent structure is exactly what's required to model syntactic (+)-types,  $\Pi$ -types, etc.
- ▶ **Sets** has (+)-types and  $\Pi$ -types. For  $V$  suitably closed, **Sets<sub>V</sub>** has strictly coherent (+)-types and  $\Pi$ -types.

# Coherence problem

Splitness and strict coherence of logical structure are **not categorical**: involve equality on objects.

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## Problem (Coherence problem for type theory)

*Given a comp. cat. with some weak logical structure, when can one construct a related (equivalent?) split one, with strict logical structure?*

Expect some kind of stability condition to be needed on the logical structure.

# Coherence for fibrations

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## Proposition (Giraud, Grothendieck)

For any  $\mathbf{C}$ , there is a triple adjunction

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & & (-)_! \\ & \curvearrowright & \searrow \\ \mathbf{Fib}(\mathbf{C}) & & \mathbf{Fib}_{spl}(\mathbf{C}) \\ & \curvearrowleft & \nearrow \\ & & (-)_* \end{array}$$

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and for any  $\mathcal{T} \in \mathbf{Fib}(\mathbf{C})$ , both  $\mathcal{T}_*$  and  $\mathcal{T}_!$  are equivalent to  $\mathcal{T}$  as (non-split) fibrations over  $\mathbf{C}$ .

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The diagram shows a triple adjunction between  $\mathbf{Fib}(\mathbf{C})$  and  $\mathbf{Fib}_{spl}(\mathbf{C})$ . The central object is  $(-)^*$ , which is highlighted with a light yellow background. The top arrow is  $(-)_!$  and the bottom arrow is  $(-)_*$ . Both top and bottom arrows are curved and point from  $\mathbf{Fib}(\mathbf{C})$  to  $\mathbf{Fib}_{spl}(\mathbf{C})$ . The left arrow is  $(-)^*$  and points from  $\mathbf{Fib}_{spl}(\mathbf{C})$  to  $\mathbf{Fib}(\mathbf{C})$ . Vertical arrows labeled  $\perp$  connect the top and bottom curved arrows to the central  $(-)^*$  object.

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Right adjoint  $\mathcal{T}_*$ : “choose re-indexings in advance”.

Left adjoint  $\mathcal{T}_!$ : “put off re-indexing until later”.

# Coherence using right adjoint

## Proposition (Hofmann, 1995)

Suppose  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  is a comprehension category with identity types, satisfying the *reflection rule* (of extensional type theory).

Then  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T}_*)$  is again a comprehension category; and if  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  has  $\Pi$ -types (resp.  $\Sigma$ -types,  $W$ -types, etc.) commuting up to isomorphism with reindexing, then  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T}_*)$  has strictly coherent  $\Pi$ -types ( $\Sigma$ -types, etc.).



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Generally: if a type-constructor is forced by its definition to be **unique up to canonical isomorphism**, or if a term-constructor is forced to be unique, then the constructor will lift to  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T}_*)$ .  
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## Coherence using left adjoint?

An object  $A$  of  $\mathcal{T}_1$  over  $\Gamma \in \mathbf{C}$  consists of objects  $V_A \in \mathbf{C}$ ,  $E_A \in \mathcal{T}(V_A)$ , and a map  $\ulcorner A \urcorner : \Gamma \rightarrow V_A$ .

$$\Gamma \xrightarrow{\ulcorner A \urcorner} V_A \begin{array}{c} E_A \\ \vdots \\ \end{array}$$

Reindexing: pre-composition with  $\ulcorner A \urcorner$ .

### Intuition

- ▶  $A$  is a stand-in for  $\ulcorner A \urcorner^* E_A \in \mathcal{T}(\Gamma)$ ;
- ▶  $(V_A, E_A)$  as **local universe** or **space of names**;
- ▶  $\ulcorner A \urcorner$  as **delayed substitution**.

## Comprehension structure

If  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  is a comprehension category, define comprehension on  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T}_!)$  by re-indexing followed by comprehension in  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$ :

$$\Gamma.A := \Gamma.(\ulcorner A \urcorner^* E_A)$$

So:  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T}_!)$  a split comprehension category, equivalent to  $\mathcal{T}$ .

What about logical structure?

### Example

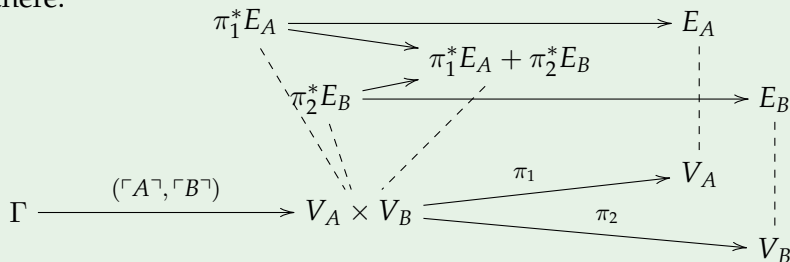
Suppose  $\mathbf{C}$  has  $(+)$ -types. Given  $A, B \in \mathcal{T}_!(\Gamma)$ , how to form  $A + B$ ?

A commutative diagram illustrating the relationship between contexts and types. On the left is the context  $\Gamma$ . Two arrows originate from  $\Gamma$ : an upper arrow labeled  $\ulcorner A \urcorner$  pointing to  $V_A$ , and a lower arrow labeled  $\ulcorner B \urcorner$  pointing to  $V_B$ . From  $V_A$ , a vertical dashed arrow labeled  $E_A$  points upwards. From  $V_B$ , a vertical dashed arrow labeled  $E_B$  points upwards.

# Manipulating universes

## Example

Answer: **change the universe**. Re-index to  $V_A \times V_B$ ; take sum there.



Idea:  $V_A \times V_B$  parametrises “sums of a type from  $V_A$  and a type from  $V_B$ ”.

More precisely:  $V_A \times V_B$  **represents** the data for “(+)-formation with types from  $V_A$  and  $V_B$ ”.

Commutates with re-indexing, since there’s **no interaction with  $\Gamma$** .

# Manipulating universes, 2

## Example

More difficult example:  $\Pi$ -types.

Data for  $\Pi$ -type formation: a type  $A \in \mathcal{T}_1(\Gamma)$ , and a further dependent type  $B \in \mathcal{T}_1(\Gamma.A)$ .

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & & E_B \\ & & \vdots \\ & \xrightarrow{\ulcorner B \urcorner} & V_B \\ \Gamma.(\ulcorner A \urcorner * E_A) & \longrightarrow & E_A \\ \chi_A \downarrow & & \vdots \\ \Gamma & \xrightarrow{\ulcorner A \urcorner} & V_A \end{array}$$

What universe do we reindex to?

What **represents** data like  $(\ulcorner A \urcorner, \ulcorner B \urcorner)$ , i.e. “ $\Pi$ -formation data with types from  $V_A, V_B$ ”?

# Manipulating universes, 2

## Example

Write  $V_A \times V_B$  for exponential in  $\mathbf{C}/V_A$  of  $V_A \times V_B$  by  $V_A.E_A$ .

In internal language:  $V_A \times V_B := [a : V_A, b : V_B^{E_A(a)}]$ .

This represents “ $\Pi$ -formation data with types from  $V_A, V_B$ ”, and carries universal such data  $(\pi_1, \alpha)$ :

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & & E_B \\ & & \vdots \\ & \xrightarrow{\alpha} & V_B \\ (V_A \times V_B)(\pi_1^* E_A) & \longrightarrow & E_A \\ & & \vdots \\ \chi_A \downarrow & & \\ V_A \times V_B & \xrightarrow{\pi_1} & V_A \end{array}$$



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- ▶ take  $E_{\Pi_A B}$  to be the  $\Pi$ -type from  $\mathcal{T}$  of the universal family over  $V_{\Pi_A B}$ , i.e.  $\Pi_{\pi_1^* E_A} \alpha^* E_B$ ;

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Again, commutes strictly with re-indexing, since the  $\Pi$ -type taken in  $\mathcal{T}$  depended only on the universes  $(V_A, E_A), (V_B, E_B)$ .  
No interaction with  $\Gamma$ .

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3. take the new “name” map from  $\Gamma$  to be the map corresponding to the original supplied data over  $\Gamma$ , induced by the universal property of the new universe.

## Manipulating universes, 3

Also need to construct in  $\mathcal{T}_1$  the term-constructors going along with these type-constructors. For each piece of structure, use the same approach as above:

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However: when we use e.g. the  $(+)$ -elimination of  $\mathbf{C}$ , we have re-indexed from  $V_A \times V_B$  to the new universe.

So: need some kind of stability / Beck-Chevalley condition for  $(+)$ -types of  $\mathbf{C}$ .

## Beck-Chevalley conditions

Traditional Beck-Chevalley condition for e.g. coproducts:

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Equivalent for coproducts, since those are unique up to canonical isomorphism, by their universal property.

For constructions with weaker universal properties: second phrasing is what we need.

# Weakly stable constructors

## Definition

$(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  has **weakly stable (+)-types** if for every  $A, B \in \mathcal{T}(\Gamma)$ , there are  $A + B, \nu_1, \nu_2$ , such that for each  $f: \Gamma' \rightarrow \Gamma$ , the re-indexings  $f^*(A + B), f^*\nu_1, f^*\nu_2$  form a (+)-type for  $f^*A, f^*B$ .

Similarly, define weakly stable  $\Pi$ -types, Id-types, etc.: a weakly stable widget for some input data is a widget, all of whose re-indexings are again widgets for the re-indexed data.

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# Coherence using left adjoint

## Theorem (Lumsdaine, Warren)

Let  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  be a comprehension category, such that  $\mathbf{C}$  has finite products and display maps are exponentiable in  $\mathbf{C}$ .

Then  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T}_!)$  is a split comprehension category, with  $\mathcal{T} \simeq \mathcal{T}_!$  as fibrations over  $\mathbf{C}$ ; and if  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T})$  has *weakly stable*  $\Pi$ -types (resp.  $\Sigma$ -types, Id-types, W-types, inductive types, higher inductive types, ...), then  $(\mathbf{C}, \mathcal{T}_!)$  may be equipped with *strictly coherent*  $\Pi$ -types (resp.  $\Sigma$ -types, Id-types, etc.)

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- ▶ Applies to most natural models of intensional type theory (exception: **Top**).
- ▶ Only strong hypothesis: the exponentiability.