Lambda-Definable Order-3 Tree Functions are Well-Quasi-Ordered

Kazuyuki Asada
Tohoku University, Sendai, Japan
asada@riec.tohoku.ac.jp
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8782-2119

Naoki Kobayashi
The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan
koba@is.s.u-tokyo.ac.jp

Abstract

Asada and Kobayashi [ICALP 2017] conjectured a higher-order version of Kruskal's tree theorem, and proved a pumping lemma for higher-order languages modulo the conjecture. The conjecture has been proved up to order-2, which implies that Asada and Kobayashi's pumping lemma holds for order-2 tree languages, but remains open for order-3 or higher. In this paper, we prove a variation of the conjecture for order-3. This is sufficient for proving that a variation of the pumping lemma holds for order-3 tree languages (equivalently, for order-4 word languages).

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1 Introduction

Kruskal's tree theorem [7] says that the homeomorphic embedding relation $\preceq^{\mathrm{he}}$ on finite trees is a well-quasi-ordering, i.e., for every infinite sequence of trees $\pi_0, \pi_1, \pi_2, \ldots$, there exist $i < j$ such that $\pi_i \preceq^{\mathrm{he}} \pi_j$. Here, $\pi \preceq^{\mathrm{he}} \pi'$ means that there exists an embedding of the nodes of π to those of π', preserving the labels and the ancestor/descendant relation. Asada and Kobayashi [2] considered a higher-order version $\preceq^{\mathrm{he}}_{\kappa}$ of $\preceq^{\mathrm{he}}$ on simply-typed λ-terms of type κ, and conjectured that $\preceq^{\mathrm{he}}_{\kappa}$ is also a well-quasi-ordering, for every simple type κ. Under the assumption that the conjecture (which we call AK-conjecture) is true, they proved a pumping lemma for higher-order languages (a la higher-order languages in Damm's IO hierarchy [3]), which says that for any order-k tree grammar that generates an infinite language L, there exists a strictly increasing infinite sequence $\pi_0 \prec^{\mathrm{he}} \pi_1 \prec^{\mathrm{he}} \pi_2 \prec^{\mathrm{he}} \cdots$ such that $\pi_i \in L$ and $|\pi_i| \leq \mathbf{exp}_k(ci + d)$, where $\prec^{\mathrm{he}}$ is the strict version of the homeomorphic embedding, c and d are constants that depend on the grammar, and $\mathbf{exp}_k(x)$ is defined by $\mathbf{exp}_0(x) = x$ and $\mathbf{exp}_{k+1}(x) = 2^{\mathbf{exp}_k(x)}$. The pumping lemma can be used to prove that a certain language does not belong to the class of order-k languages. They also proved that the conjecture is

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true up to order-2 types, and hence also the pumping lemma for order-2 tree languages and (by the correspondence between tree/word languages [1, 3]) order-3 word languages. The AK-conjecture is still open for order-3 or higher.

In the present paper, we consider a variation of the AK-conjecture (which we call nAK-conjecture), where the homeomorphic embedding relation is replaced by $\preceq^{\#}$, defined by $\pi_1 \preceq^{\#} \pi_2$ if and only if, for every tree constructor a, $\#_a(\pi_1) \leq \#_a(\pi_2)$; here $\#_a(\pi)$ denotes the number of occurrences of a in π. The correctness of the nAK-conjecture would imply the following variation of the pumping lemma: for any order-k tree grammar that generates an infinite language L, there exists a strictly increasing infinite sequence $\pi_0 \prec^{\#} \pi_1 \prec^{\#} \pi_2 \prec^{\#} \cdots$ such that $\pi_i \in L$ and $|\pi_i| \leq \mathbf{exp}_k(ci + d)$. We prove that the nAK-conjecture is true for the order-3 case, i.e., that $\preceq^{\#}_{\kappa}$ (the logical relation on simply-typed λ-terms of type κ, obtained from $\preceq^{\#}$) is a well-quasi-ordering for any type κ of order up to 3. The variation of the pumping lemma above is thus obtained for order-3 tree languages and order-4 word languages. To our knowledge, pumping lemmas were known only for tree (word, resp.) languages of order up to 2 (3, resp.) [2].

To prove the order-3 nAK-conjecture, we define a transformation $(\cdot)^{\natural}$ from order-3 λ-terms to order-2 numeric functions (that are also represented by λ-terms), and prove (i) the transformation reflects the quasi-orderings, i.e., $t_1 \preceq^{\#}_{\kappa} t_2$ if ${t_1}^{\natural} \preceq^{\mathbb{N}} {t_2}^{\natural}$ for a certain quasi-ordering $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}$ on numeric functions, and (ii) $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}$ is a well-quasi-ordering.

Related work. We are not aware of directly related work, besides our own previous work [2]. Our reduction from the well-quasi-orderedness of order-3 λ-terms to that of order-2 numeric functions relies on the inexpressiveness of simply-typed λ-terms as (higher-order) tree functions. Zaionc [11, 12, 13] studied the expressive power of simply-typed λ-terms. Pumping lemmas for higher-order languages have been known to be difficult. After Hayashi [5] proved a pumping lemma for indexed languages (i.e. order-2 word languages), it was only in 2017 that a pumping lemma for order-3 word languages was proved [2]. We have further improved the result to obtain a pumping lemma for order-4 word (or, order-3 tree) languages.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 introduces basic definitions. Section 3 explains the nAK-conjecture and the pumping lemma. Section 4 proves the nAK-conjecture up to order-3. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2 Preliminaries

We give basic definitions on λ-terms and quasi-orderings.

2.1 λ-terms and higher-order languages

▶ **Definition 1** (types and terms). The set of *simple types*, ranged over by κ, is given by: $\kappa ::= \mathtt{o} \mid \kappa_1 \to \kappa_2$. The order[1] of a simple type κ, written $\mathtt{order}(\kappa)$ is defined by $\mathtt{order}(\mathtt{o}) = 0$ and $\mathtt{order}(\kappa_1 \to \kappa_2) = \max(\mathtt{order}(\kappa_1) + 1, \mathtt{order}(\kappa_2))$. The type $\mathtt{o}$ describes trees, and $\kappa_1 \to \kappa_2$ describes functions from κ_1 to κ_2. A *(ranked) alphabet* Σ is a map from a finite set of constants (that represent tree constructors) to the set of natural numbers called *arities*. The set of λY^{nd}-*terms*, ranged over by s, t, u, v, is defined by:

$$t ::= x \mid a\, t_1 \cdots t_k \mid t_1\, t_2 \mid \lambda x : \kappa . t \mid Y_\kappa\, t \mid t_1 \oplus t_2$$

[1] For clarity, we use the word *order* for this notion, and *ordering* for relations such as $\leq$, $\preceq^{\mathrm{he}}$, etc.

Here, $x, y, \ldots$ ranges over variables, and a over $\mathit{dom}(\Sigma)$. The term $a\,t_1 \cdots t_k$ (where we require $\Sigma(a) = k$) constructs a tree that has a as the root and (the values of) $t_1, \ldots, t_k$ as children. Y_κ and $\oplus$ represent a fixed-point combinator and a non-deterministic choice, respectively. We often omit the type annotation and just write $\lambda x.t$ and $Y\,t$ for $\lambda x : \kappa.t$ and $Y_\kappa\,t$. A λY^{nd}-term is called: (i) a $\lambda^{\to,\mathrm{nd}}$-*term* if it does not contain Y; (ii) a $\lambda^{\to}$-*term* if it contains neither Y nor $\oplus$; and (iii) an *applicative term* if it contains none of λ-abstractions, Y, and $\oplus$. We often call a $\lambda^{\to}$-term just a *term*. As usual, we identify λY^{nd}-terms up to the α-equivalence, and implicitly apply α-conversions.

A *type environment* Γ is a sequence of type bindings of the form $x : \kappa$ such that Γ contains at most one binding for each variable x. A λY^{nd}-term t has type κ under Γ if $\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t : \kappa$ is derivable from the following typing rules.

$$\frac{}{\Gamma,\, x : \kappa,\, \Gamma' \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} x : \kappa} \qquad \frac{\Sigma(a) = k \qquad \Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t_i : \mathtt{o} \quad (\text{for each } i \in \{1, \ldots, k\})}{\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} a\,t_1 \cdots t_k : \mathtt{o}} \qquad \frac{\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t : \kappa \to \kappa}{\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} Y_\kappa\,t : \kappa}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t_1 : \kappa_2 \to \kappa \qquad \Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t_2 : \kappa_2}{\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t_1\,t_2 : \kappa} \qquad \frac{\Gamma,\, x : \kappa_1 \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t : \kappa_2}{\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} \lambda x : \kappa_1.t : \kappa_1 \to \kappa_2} \qquad \frac{\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t_1 : \mathtt{o} \qquad \Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t_2 : \mathtt{o}}{\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t_1 \oplus t_2 : \mathtt{o}}$$

We consider below only well-typed λY^{nd}-terms. Note that given Γ and t, there exists at most one type κ such that $\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t : \kappa$. We call κ the type of t (with respect to Γ). We often omit "with respect to Γ" if Γ is clear from context. Given a judgment $\Gamma \vdash t : \kappa$, we define $\lambda\Gamma.t$ by: $\lambda\emptyset.t := t$ and $\lambda(\Gamma, x : \kappa').t := \lambda\Gamma.\lambda x.t$. Also we define $\Gamma \to \kappa$ by: $\emptyset \to \kappa := \kappa$ and $(\Gamma, x : \kappa') \to \kappa := \Gamma \to (\kappa' \to \kappa)$; thus we have $\vdash \lambda\Gamma.t : \Gamma \to \kappa$ if $\Gamma \vdash t : \kappa$. Given an alphabet Σ, we write Λ^Σ for the set of $\lambda^{\to}$-terms whose constants are taken from Σ. Also we define $\Lambda^\Sigma_{\Gamma,\kappa} := \{t \in \Lambda^\Sigma \mid \Gamma \vdash t : \kappa\}$ and $\Lambda^\Sigma_\kappa := \Lambda^\Sigma_{\emptyset,\kappa}$.

For a λY^{nd}-term t with a type environment Γ, the *(internal) order* of t (with respect to Γ), written $\mathtt{order}_\Gamma(t)$, is the largest order of the types of subterms of $\lambda\Gamma.t$, and the *external order* of t (with respect to Γ), written $\mathtt{eorder}_\Gamma(t)$, is the order of the type of t with respect to Γ. We often omit Γ when it is clear from context. For example, for $t = (\lambda x : \mathtt{o}.x)\mathtt{e}$, $\mathtt{order}_\emptyset(t) = 1$ and $\mathtt{eorder}_\emptyset(t) = 0$. We define the *size* $|t|$ of a λY^{nd}-term t by: $|x| := 1$, $|a\,t_1 \cdots, t_k| := 1 + |t_1| + \cdots + |t_k|$, $|s\,t| := |s| + |t| + 1$, $|\lambda x.t| := |t| + 1$, $|Y_\kappa\,t| := |t| + 1$ and $|s \oplus t| := |s| + |t| + 1$. We call a λY^{nd}-term t *ground* (with respect to Γ) if $\Gamma \vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t : \mathtt{o}$. We call t a (finite, Σ-ranked) *tree* if t is a ground closed applicative term (consisting of only constants). We write $\mathbf{Tree}_\Sigma$ for the set of Σ-ranked trees, and use the meta-variable π for a tree. We often write $\overrightarrow{\cdot}$ to denote a sequence (possibly with a condition on the range of the sequence in the superscript). For example, $\overrightarrow{t_i}^{i \le m}$ denotes the sequence $t_1, \ldots, t_m$ of terms, and $[\overrightarrow{t_i/x_i}^{i \le m}]$ denotes the substitution $[t_1/x_1, \ldots, t_m/x_m]$.

We sometimes identify a ranked alphabet $\Sigma = \{a_1 \mapsto r_1, \ldots, a_k \mapsto r_k\}$ with the first-order environment $\Sigma = \{a_1 : \mathtt{o}^{r_1} \to \mathtt{o}, \ldots, a_k : \mathtt{o}^{r_k} \to \mathtt{o}\}$ (assuming an arbitrary fixed linear ordering on Σ).

▶ **Definition 2** (reduction and language)**.** The set of *(call-by-name) evaluation contexts* is defined by:

$$E ::= [\,]\,t_1 \cdots t_k \mid a\,\pi_1 \cdots \pi_i\,E\,t_1 \cdots t_k$$

and the *call-by-name reduction* for (possibly open) ground λY^{nd}-terms is defined by:

$$E[(\lambda x.t)t'] \longrightarrow E[t[t'/x]] \qquad E[Y\,t] \longrightarrow E[t\,(Y\,t)] \qquad E[t_1 \oplus t_2] \longrightarrow E[t_i] \quad (i = 1, 2)$$

where $t[t'/x]$ is the usual capture-avoiding substitution. We write $\longrightarrow^*$ for the reflexive transitive closure of $\longrightarrow$. A *call-by-name normal form* is a ground λY^{nd}-term t such that

$t \not\longrightarrow t'$ for any t'. For a ground closed λY^{nd}-term t, we define the *tree language* $\mathcal{L}(t)$ *generated by* t by $\mathcal{L}(t) := \{\pi \mid t \longrightarrow^* \pi\}$. For a ground closed $\lambda^{\to}$-term t, $\mathcal{L}(t)$ is a singleton set $\{\pi\}$; we write $\mathcal{T}(t)$ for such π and call it *the tree of* t.

In the previous paper [2] we stated the pumping lemma for the notion of a *higher-order grammar*; in this paper, following [8, 9], we use only the formalism by λY^{nd}-terms for simplicity. Since there exist well-known order-preserving and language-preserving transformations between higher-order grammars and ground closed λY^{nd}-terms, we obtain corresponding results on higher-order grammars immediately.

The notion of a word can be seen as a special case of that of a tree:

▶ **Definition 3** (word alphabet). We call a ranked alphabet Σ a *word alphabet* if it has a special nullary constant $\mathtt{e}$ and all the other constants have arity 1. For a tree $\pi = a_1(\cdots(a_n\,\mathtt{e})\cdots)$ of a word alphabet, we define $\mathbf{word}(\pi) := a_1 \cdots a_n$, and we define $\mathbf{utree}$ as the inverse function of $\mathbf{word}$, i.e., $\mathbf{utree}(a_1 \cdots a_n) := a_1(\cdots(a_n \mathtt{e}))$. The *word language* generated by a ground closed λY^{nd}-term t over a word alphabet, written $\mathcal{L}_{\mathtt{w}}(t)$, is defined as $\{\mathbf{word}(\pi) \mid \pi \in \mathcal{L}(t)\}$.

A tree language (word language, resp.) over an alphabet (word alphabet, resp.) Σ is called *order-n* if it is generated by some order-n ground closed λY^{nd}-term of Σ; we note that the classes of order-0, order-1, and order-2 word languages coincide with those of regular, context-free, and indexed languages, respectively [10].

2.2 Some quasi-orderings and their logical relation extension

▶ **Definition 4** ((well-)quasi-ordering). A *quasi-ordering* (a.k.a. preorder) on a set A is a binary relation on A that is reflexive and transitive. A *well-quasi-ordering* (*wqo* for short) on a set S is a quasi-ordering $\leq$ on S such that for any infinite sequence $(s_i)_i$ of elements in S there exist j and k such that $j < k$ and $s_j \leq s_k$.

As a general notation, for a quasi-ordering denoted by $\preceq$, we write $\approx$ for the induced equivalence relation (i.e., $x \approx y$ if $x \preceq y$ and $y \preceq x$), and write $\prec$ for the strict version (i.e., $x \prec y$ if $x \preceq y$ and $y \not\preceq x$). Also, for a quasi-ordering denoted by $\leq$, we write $\sim$ for the induced equivalence relation and $<$ for the strict version. We apply these conventions also to notations with superscript/subscript such as $\preceq^a$, $\preceq_b$, $\preceq^a_b$, $\leq^a$, $\leq_b$, and $\leq^a_b$. Further, for any quasi-ordering on the set of trees of a word alphabet, we use the same notation also for the quasi-ordering on the set of words induced through $\mathbf{utree}$.

▶ **Definition 5** (logical relation extension). Let Σ be a ranked alphabet. We call $\leq$ a *base quasi-ordering* (with respect to Σ) if $\leq$ is a quasi-ordering on the set $\Lambda^{\Sigma}_{\mathsf{o}}$ modulo $\beta\eta$-equivalence and every constant in Σ is monotonic on $\leq$. We define the *logical relation extension of* $\leq$ as the family $(\leq_\kappa)_\kappa$ of relations $\leq_\kappa$ on the set $\Lambda^{\Sigma}_{\kappa}$ modulo $\beta\eta$-equivalence indexed by simple types κ where $\leq_\kappa$'s are defined by induction on κ as follows:

$$\begin{array}{rll} t_1 \leq_{\mathsf{o}} t_2 & \text{if} & t_1 \leq t_2 \\ t_1 \leq_{\kappa \to \kappa'} t_2 & \text{if} & \text{for any } t_1', t_2', \quad t_1' \leq_\kappa t_2' \implies t_1\, t_1' \leq_{\kappa'} t_2\, t_2'. \end{array}$$

Furthermore we extend the relation to open terms: for $t_1, t_2 \in \Lambda^{\Sigma}_{\Gamma,\kappa}$, we define $t_1 \leq_{\Gamma,\kappa} t_2$ if $\lambda\Gamma.t_1 \leq_{\Gamma\to\kappa} \lambda\Gamma.t_2$. We omit the subscripts of $\leq_\kappa$ and $\leq_{\Gamma,\kappa}$ if there is no confusion.

The next lemma follows immediately from the basic lemma (a.k.a. the abstraction theorem) of logical relations (see the full version for details).

▶ **Lemma 6.** *Let $\leq$ be a base quasi-ordering. Each component $\leq_\kappa$ of the logical relation extension of $\leq$ is a quasi-ordering. Further, $\leq_\kappa$ is the point-wise quasi-ordering:*

$$t_1 \leq_{\kappa\to\kappa'} t_2 \quad \text{if and only if} \quad \text{for any } t' \in \Lambda^\Sigma_\kappa, \quad t_1\, t' \leq_{\kappa'} t_2\, t'.$$

Every quasi-ordering for higher-order terms used in this paper is a logical relation extension (of some base quasi-ordering). The next ordering is used in the previous paper [2].

▶ **Definition 7** (homeomorphic embedding)**.** Let Σ be a ranked alphabet. The *homeomorphic embedding* ordering $\preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma}$ between Σ-ranked trees[2] is inductively defined by the following rules:

$$\frac{\pi_i \preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma} \pi'_i \quad (\text{for all } i \leq k) \qquad k = \Sigma(a)}{a\,\pi_1 \cdots \pi_k \preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma} a\,\pi'_1 \cdots \pi'_k} \qquad \frac{\pi \preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma} \pi_i \qquad k = \Sigma(a) > 0 \qquad 1 \leq i \leq k}{\pi \preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma} a\,\pi_1 \cdots \pi_k}$$

We extend the above ordering to a base ordering by: $t_1 \preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma} t_2$ if $\mathcal{T}(t_1) \preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma} \mathcal{T}(t_2)$.

For example, $\mathtt{br\,a\,b} \preceq^{\mathrm{he}} \mathtt{br\,(br\,a\,c)\,b}$. The homeomorphic embedding on words is nothing but the (scattered) subsequence ordering. The following is a fundamental result on the homeomorphic embedding:

▶ **Proposition 8** (Kruskal's tree theorem [7])**.** *For any (finite) ranked alphabet Σ, the homeomorphic embedding $\preceq^{\mathrm{he}}$ on Σ-ranked trees is a well-quasi-ordering.*

Also, we often use the Dickson's theorem [6] which says that the product quasi-ordering (component-wise quasi-ordering) of a finite number of wqo's is a wqo.

The next is the quasi-ordering that is used in the theorems in this paper.

▶ **Definition 9** (occurrence-number quasi-ordering)**.** Let Σ be a ranked alphabet. For $a \in \Sigma$ and a Σ-tree π, we define $\#_a(\pi)$ as the number of occurrences of a in π, and extend this to a ground closed $\lambda^{\to}$-term t by $\#_a(t) := \#_a(\mathcal{T}(t))$. Then we define a base quasi-ordering $\preceq^{\#,\Sigma,a}$ by:

$$t_1 \preceq^{\#,\Sigma,a} t_2 \quad \text{if} \quad \#_a(t_1) \leq \#_a(t_2).$$

Also we define a base quasi-ordering $\preceq^{\#,\Sigma}$ by:

$$t_1 \preceq^{\#,\Sigma} t_2 \quad \text{if} \quad \text{for every } a \in \Sigma, \quad t_1 \preceq^{\#,\Sigma,a} t_2.$$

Note that $\pi \preceq^{\mathrm{he}} \pi'$ implies $\pi \preceq^{\#,\Sigma} \pi'$, shown by induction on the rule of $\preceq^{\mathrm{he}}$; and further $\pi \preceq^{\mathrm{he}}_\kappa \pi'$ implies $\pi \preceq^{\#,\Sigma}_\kappa \pi'$ for any κ since $\preceq^{\mathrm{he}}_\kappa$ and $\preceq^{\#,\Sigma}_\kappa$ are point-wise quasi-ordering. Also note that $\preceq^{\#,\Sigma}_\kappa \;=\; \cap_{a\in\Sigma}(\preceq^{\#,\Sigma,a}_\kappa)$ for any κ.

The next quasi-ordering is used just in proofs. We write $\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}$ for the ranked alphabet $\{0 \mapsto 0, 1 \mapsto 0, + \mapsto 2, \times \mapsto 2\}$; we write $+\,t\,t'$ as $t + t'$ and $\times\,t\,t'$ as $t \times t'$. We define a set-theoretical denotational interpretation $[\![-]\!]$ of $\Lambda^{\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}}$ by: $[\![\mathsf{o}]\!] := \mathbb{N}$, $[\![\kappa \to \kappa']\!]$ is the set of functions from $[\![\kappa]\!]$ to $[\![\kappa']\!]$, $[\![0]\!] := 0$, $[\![1]\!] := 1$, $[\![+]\!](n)(m) := n + m$, and $[\![\times]\!](n)(m) := n \times m$. For $t_1, t_2 \in \Lambda^{\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}}_{\Gamma,\kappa}$, we write $t_1 =^{[\![]\!]}_{\Gamma,\kappa} t_2$ (or $t_1 =^{[\![]\!]} t_2$) if $[\![t_1]\!] = [\![t_2]\!]$.

▶ **Definition 10** (natural number quasi-ordering)**.** We define a base quasi-ordering $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}$ on the set $\Lambda^{\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}}_{\mathsf{o}}$ by:

$$t_1 \preceq^{\mathbb{N}} t_2 \quad \text{if} \quad [\![t_1]\!] \leq [\![t_2]\!].$$

[2] In the usual definition, a quasi-ordering on labels (tree constructors) is assumed. Here we fix the quasi-order on labels to the identity relation.

3 Numeric Pumping Lemma for Higher-order Tree Languages

Here we explain the nAK-conjecture and the pumping lemma for higher-order tree languages with respect to $\preceq^{\#,\Sigma}$.

▶ **Conjecture 11** (nAK-conjecture). *For any Σ and κ, $\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma}$ is a well quasi-ordering.*

Our main theorem (Theorem 14) is to show the above conjecture for κ of order up to 3. The above conjecture (and Theorem 14) can be used for the following pumping lemma:

▶ **Theorem 12** (pumping lemma). *Assume that Conjecture 11 holds. Then, for any order-n ground closed λY^{nd}-term t of a ranked alphabet Σ such that $\mathcal{L}(t)$ is infinite, there exist an infinite sequence of trees $\pi_0, \pi_1, \pi_2, \ldots \in \mathcal{L}(t)$, and constants c, d such that:*

(i) $\pi_0 \prec^{\#,\Sigma} \pi_1 \prec^{\#,\Sigma} \pi_2 \prec^{\#,\Sigma} \cdots$, *and*

(ii) $|\pi_i| \leq \mathbf{exp}_n(ci + d)$ *for each* $i \geq 0$.

Furthermore, we can drop the assumption on Conjecture 11 when $n \leq 3$.

The proof of the above theorem is obtained as a simple modification of the proof of the pumping lemma in [2]: see the full version.

▶ Remark. The theorem we prove in the full version is actually slightly stronger than Theorem 12 above, in the following three points (see the full version for details):

(i) As in [2], we relax the assumption of nAK conjecture, so that $\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma}$ need not be the logical relation; any higher-order extension of the base quasi-ordering that is closed under application suffices.

(ii) As in [2], we use actually a weaker conjecture, called the *periodicity*, which requires that, for any $\vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} t : \kappa \to \kappa$ and $\vdash_{\mathtt{ST}} s : \kappa$, there exist $i, j > 0$ such that $t^i\, s \preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma} t^{i+j}\, s \preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma} t^{i+2j}\, s \preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma} \cdots$.

(iii) Whilst Theorem 12 states a pumping lemma on $\preceq^{\#,\Sigma}$, the generalized theorem states a pumping lemma on arbitrary base quasi-ordering with certain conditions, which includes $\preceq^{\#,\Sigma}$ and $\preceq^{\mathrm{he}}$ as instances.

By the correspondence between order-n tree grammars and order-$(n+1)$ word grammars [3, 1], we also have:

▶ **Corollary 13** (pumping lemma for word languages). *Assume that Conjecture 11 holds. Then, for any order-n ground closed λY^{nd}-term t of a word alphabet Σ (where $n \geq 1$) such that $\mathcal{L}_{\mathtt{w}}(t)$ is infinite, there exist an infinite sequence of words $w_0, w_1, w_2, \ldots \in \mathcal{L}_{\mathtt{w}}(t)$, and constants c, d such that:*

(i) $w_0 \prec^{\#,\Sigma} w_1 \prec^{\#,\Sigma} w_2 \prec^{\#,\Sigma} \cdots$, *and*

(ii) $|w_i| \leq \mathbf{exp}_{n-1}(ci + d)$ *for each* $i \geq 0$.

Furthermore, we can drop the assumption on Conjecture 11 when $n \leq 4$.

4 Numeric Version of Order-3 Kruskal's Tree Theorem

Here we prove the main theorem (Theorem 14 below), which states that the nAK-conjecture (Conjecture 11) holds for order-3 types. In this whole section, by a *term*, we mean a $\lambda^{\to}$-term, and we never consider a fixed-point combinator nor non-determinism.

4.1 Main theorem

▶ **Theorem 14.** *For any alphabet* Σ *and any type* κ *of order up to 3,* $\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma}$ *on* Λ_κ^Σ *is a wqo.*

The theorem above is obtained as a corollary of the following lemma.

▶ **Lemma 15.** *For any alphabet* Σ*, any* $a \in \Sigma$*, and any order-2 type environment* Γ *(i.e., a type environment whose codomain consists of types of order up to 2), the quasi-ordering* $\preceq_{\Gamma,\mathtt{o}}^{\#,\Sigma,a}$ *on* $\Lambda_{\Gamma,\mathtt{o}}^{\emptyset}$ *is a wqo.*

Proof sketch of Theorem 14.

- For Theorem 14, it is sufficient that $\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma,a}$ on Λ_κ^Σ is a wqo for every $a \in \Sigma$ and κ with $\mathtt{order}(\kappa) \leq 3$, because $\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma} = \cap_{a\in\Sigma}(\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma,a})$ and well-quasi-orderings are closed under finite intersection.
- For $\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma,a}$ to be a wqo for every order-3 type κ, it is sufficient that the restriction of $\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma,a}$ to $\Lambda_\kappa^\emptyset$ (i.e. $\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma,a} \cap (\Lambda_\kappa^\emptyset \times \Lambda_\kappa^\emptyset)$) is a wqo for every order-3 type κ, because $t_1 \preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma,a} t_2$ holds if $\lambda\Sigma.t_1 (\preceq_{\Sigma\to\kappa}^{\#,\Sigma,a} \cap (\Lambda_{\Sigma\to\kappa}^\emptyset \times \Lambda_{\Sigma\to\kappa}^\emptyset)) \lambda\Sigma.t_2$, and $\mathtt{order}(\Sigma \to \kappa) \leq 3$.
- For $\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma,a} \cap (\Lambda_\kappa^\emptyset \times \Lambda_\kappa^\emptyset)$ to be a wqo, Lemma 15 is sufficient, because $t_1 (\preceq_\kappa^{\#,\Sigma,a} \cap (\Lambda_\kappa^\emptyset \times \Lambda_\kappa^\emptyset)) t_2$ holds if $t_1\, z_1 \cdots z_k \preceq_{\Gamma,\mathtt{o}}^{\#,\Sigma,a} t_2\, z_1 \cdots z_k$, where $\kappa = \kappa_1 \to \cdots \to \kappa_k \to \mathtt{o}$ and $\Gamma = z_1 : \kappa_1, \ldots, z_k : \kappa_k$.

See the full version for details. ◀

Henceforth, we fix arbitrary $a_{\text{fix}} \in \Sigma$, and show Lemma 15 for $a = a_{\text{fix}}$. We prove this lemma in two steps: First we give a transformation $(\cdot)^\natural$ from order-3 terms in $\Lambda_{\Gamma,\mathtt{o}}^\emptyset$ (and their type environment Γ) to order-2 terms in $\Lambda_{\Gamma^\natural,\mathtt{o}}^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}$ (and to $\Gamma^\natural$) so that it reflects quasi-orderings: $t^\natural \preceq_{\Gamma^\natural,\mathtt{o}}^{\mathbb{N}} t'^\natural$ implies $t \preceq_{\Gamma,\mathtt{o}}^{\#,\Sigma,a_{\text{fix}}} t'$ (Lemma 18). Then we show that $\preceq_{\Gamma^\natural,\mathtt{o}}^{\mathbb{N}}$ on $\Lambda_{\Gamma^\natural,\mathtt{o}}^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}$ is a wqo (Lemma 19). From these two results, Lemma 15 follows immediately.

4.2 Transformation from order-3 terms to order-2 terms

The key observation behind the transformation $(\cdot)^\natural$ is as follows. Let s be a closed term of type $\mathtt{o}^m \to \mathtt{o}$ and $t_1, \ldots, t_m$ be closed terms of type $\mathtt{o}$. Then, we have:

$$\#_a(s\, t_1 \cdots t_m) = c_1 \times \#_a(t_1) + \cdots + c_m \times \#_a(t_m) + d$$

for some numbers $c_1, \ldots, c_m, d$ that do not depend on $t_1, \ldots, t_m$. This is because the order-1 function s representable as a $\lambda^\to$-term can copy only arguments, and the number of copies cannot depend on the arguments. Thus, if we are interested only in the number of occurrences of a constant, information about an order-1 function can be represented by a tuple $(c_1, \ldots, c_m, d)$ of numbers (order-0 values, in other words). By lifting this representation to order-3 terms in $\Lambda_{\Gamma,\mathtt{o}}^\emptyset$, we obtain order-2 terms in $\Lambda_{\Gamma^\natural,\mathtt{o}}^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}$.

The actual transformation is non-trivial. Let us first fix $\Gamma = \varphi_1 : \kappa_1, \ldots, \varphi_m : \kappa_m, f_1 : \mathtt{o}^{q_1} \to \mathtt{o}, \ldots, f_\ell : \mathtt{o}^{q_\ell} \to \mathtt{o}$. Here, φ_i's are order-2 variables and f_j's are variables of order up to 1. Every element of $\Lambda_{\Gamma,\mathtt{o}}^\emptyset$ can be normalized to a term generated by the following syntax (which we call an *order-3 normal form*):

$$t ::= y \mid f_j \mid t_1\, t_2 \mid \varphi_i\, t_1 \cdots t_k \mid \lambda y.t.$$

Here, y is a local variable of order 0. We require that the order of $\varphi\, t_1 \cdots t_k$ is at most 1. For example, $\varphi : (\mathtt{o} \to \mathtt{o}) \to \mathtt{o} \to \mathtt{o} \to \mathtt{o},\ f : \mathtt{o} \to \mathtt{o} \to \mathtt{o},\ x : \mathtt{o} \vdash \lambda y : \mathtt{o}.\ \varphi\, (f\, x)\, ((\lambda y' : \mathtt{o}.\ f\, y'\, y')\, y) : \mathtt{o} \to \mathtt{o} \to \mathtt{o}$ is an order-3 normal form. It can be checked by induction that for any order-3 normal form t, $\mathtt{eorder}_\Gamma(t) \leq 1$ (with a suitable environment Γ). Since any long $\beta\eta$-normal form in $\Lambda^{\emptyset}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ with $\texttt{order}(\Gamma \to \mathsf{o}) = 3$ is an order-3 normal form, considering only order-3 normal forms does not lose generality. In the rest of this section, we use the meta-variable t for order-3 normal forms.

We now define the transformation for order-3 normal forms. Given a term $t_0 \in \Lambda^{\emptyset}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$, we transform the term in a compositional manner, by transforming each subterm t typed by:

$$\varphi_1 : \kappa_1, \dots, \varphi_m : \kappa_m, f_1 : \mathsf{o}^{q_1} \to \mathsf{o}, \dots, f_\ell : \mathsf{o}^{q_\ell} \to \mathsf{o}; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \dots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash t : \mathsf{o}^r \to \mathsf{o}$$

to a term e with some suitable type environment. Here, $y_1, \dots, y_n$ are order-0 variables that are bound inside t_0 (rather than t), $\texttt{order}(\kappa_i) = 2$ for $i \le m$, and $q_i \ge 0$ for $i \le \ell$. We call f_i and φ_i *external variables* and y_i an *internal variable*. Note that an external variable f_i can be order-0.

We first explain how variables and environments are transformed.

- The variables $y_1, \dots, y_n$ will just disappear after the transformation.
- For each order-1 variable f_i of type $\mathsf{o}^{q_i} \to \mathsf{o}$, we prepare a tuple of variables $(c_{f_i,1}, \dots, c_{f_i,q_i}, d_{f_i})$. Each $c_{f_i,j}$ expresses how often f_i copies the j-th argument, and d_{f_i} expresses how often a_{fix} occurs in the value of f_i, so that the number of a_{fix} in $f_i\, t_1, \dots, t_{q_i}$ can be represented by $c_{f_i,1} \times \#_{a_{\text{fix}}}(t_1) + \dots + c_{f_i,q_i} \times \#_{a_{\text{fix}}}(t_{q_i}) + d_{f_i}$ (recall the observation given at the beginning of this subsection).
- For each order-2 variable φ_i of type $\kappa_i = (\mathsf{o}^{q_1} \to \mathsf{o}) \to \dots \to (\mathsf{o}^{q_k} \to \mathsf{o}) \to (\mathsf{o}^{q} \to \mathsf{o})$ (where $q_k > 0$), we prepare a tuple of order-1 variables $(g_{\varphi_i,1}, \dots, g_{\varphi_i,q}, h_{\varphi_i}, \hat{h}_{\varphi_i})$. Basically, $g_{\varphi_i,j}$ and h_{φ_i} are analogous to $c_{f_i,j}$ and d_{f_i}, respectively. Given order-1 functions $t_1, \dots, t_k$ whose values are $\vec{u}_1, \dots, \vec{u}_k$ (where each $\vec{u}_\ell$ is a tuple of size $q_\ell + 1$), for each $j \le q$, the function $\varphi_i\, t_1\, \cdots\, t_k$ copies the j-th order-0 argument $g_{\varphi_i,j}(\vec{u}_1, \dots, \vec{u}_k)$ times, and creates $h_{\varphi_i}(\vec{u}_1, \dots, \vec{u}_k)$ copies of the constant a_{fix}. The other function variable $\hat{h}_{\varphi_i}$ is similar to h_{φ_i} but used for counting an internal variable y_j rather than a_{fix}.

For a type environment

$$\Gamma = \varphi_1 : \kappa_1, \dots, \varphi_m : \kappa_m, f_1 : \mathsf{o}^{q_1} \to \mathsf{o}, \dots, f_\ell : \mathsf{o}^{q_\ell} \to \mathsf{o}$$

where $\kappa_i = (\mathsf{o}^{q^i_1} \to \mathsf{o}) \to \dots \to (\mathsf{o}^{q^i_{k_i}} \to \mathsf{o}) \to (\mathsf{o}^{q^i} \to \mathsf{o})$ ($q^i_{k_i} > 0,\ i = 1, \dots, k$), we define:

$$\Gamma^\natural := \overrightarrow{\overrightarrow{g_{\varphi_i,j}}^{j \le q^i}, h_{\varphi_i}, \hat{h}_{\varphi_i} : \mathsf{o}^{q^i_1+1} \to \dots \to \mathsf{o}^{q^i_{k_i}+1} \to \mathsf{o}}^{i \le m}, \overrightarrow{\overrightarrow{c_{f_i,j}}^{j \le q_i}, d_{f_i} : \mathsf{o}}^{i \le \ell}$$

We now define the transformation of terms. A term t such that

$$\varphi_1 : \kappa_1, \dots, \varphi_m : \kappa_m, f_1 : \mathsf{o}^{q_1} \to \mathsf{o}, \dots, f_\ell : \mathsf{o}^{q_\ell} \to \mathsf{o}; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \dots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash t : \mathsf{o}^r \to \mathsf{o}$$

is transformed to a tuple $(v_1, \dots, v_n; w_1, \dots, w_r; e)$, using the transformation relation

$$\varphi_1{:}\kappa_1, \dots, \varphi_m{:}\kappa_m, f_1{:}\mathsf{o}^{q_1} \to \mathsf{o}, \dots, f_\ell{:}\mathsf{o}^{q_\ell} \to \mathsf{o}; y_1{:}\mathsf{o}, \dots, y_n{:}\mathsf{o} \vdash t \rhd (v_1, \dots, v_n; w_1, \dots, w_r; e)$$

defined below. Here, each component is constructed from variables $c_{f_i,j}, d_{f_i}, g_{\varphi_i,j}, h_{\varphi_i}, \hat{h}_{\varphi_i}$ above and $\times, +, 0, 1$. The output of the transformation consists of three parts, separated by semicolons: a (possibly empty) sequence $v_1, \dots, v_n$, a (possibly empty) sequence $w_1, \dots, w_r$, and a single element e. The term v_j represents how often y_j is copied, w_j represents how often the j-th argument of t is copied, and e represents how often the constant a_{fix} is copied. The terms v_j and w_j are auxiliary ones for this transformation, and e plays the role of $t^\natural$ explained in Section 4.1.

The transformation relation is defined by the following rules, where $\Gamma = \varphi_1 : \kappa_1, \ldots, \varphi_m : \kappa_m, f_1 : \mathsf{o}^{q_1} \to \mathsf{o}, \ldots, f_\ell : \mathsf{o}^{q_\ell} \to \mathsf{o}$ is fixed.

$$\frac{}{\Gamma; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \ldots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash y_j \triangleright (\underbrace{0, \ldots, 0}_{j-1}, 1, \underbrace{0, \ldots, 0}_{n-j}; ; 0)} \quad \text{(IVar)}$$

$$\frac{}{\Gamma; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \ldots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash f_i \triangleright (\underbrace{0, \ldots, 0}_{n}; c_{f_i,1}, \ldots, c_{f_i,q_i}; d_{f_i})} \quad \text{(Var)}$$

$$\frac{\begin{array}{c}\Gamma; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \ldots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash t_1 \triangleright (v_1, \ldots, v_n; w_1, \ldots, w_r; e) \qquad r \geq 1\\ \Gamma; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \ldots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash t_2 \triangleright (v'_1, \ldots, v'_n; ; e')\end{array}}{\Gamma; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \ldots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash t_1 t_2 \triangleright (v_1 + w_1 v'_1, \ldots, v_n + w_1 v'_n; w_2, \ldots, w_r; e + w_1 e')} \quad \text{(App0)}$$

$$\frac{\begin{array}{c}\Gamma; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \ldots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash t_j \triangleright (\vec{v}_j; \vec{w}_j; e_j) \qquad \vec{u}_j = (\vec{w}_j; e_j) \qquad (\text{for each } j \in \{1, \ldots, k\})\\ \vec{u'}_{j,j'} = (\vec{w}_j; v_{j,j'}) \qquad (\text{for each } j \in \{1, \ldots, k\} \text{ and } j' \in \{1, \ldots, n\})\\ k \geq 1 \text{ and the type of } t_k \text{ is order-1}\end{array}}{\begin{array}{l}\Gamma; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \ldots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash \varphi_i\, t_1 \cdots t_k \triangleright\\ (\hat{h}_{\varphi_i}(\vec{u'}_{1,1}, \ldots, \vec{u'}_{k,1}) \ldots, \hat{h}_{\varphi_i}(\vec{u'}_{1,n}, \ldots, \vec{u'}_{k,n});\\ g_{\varphi_i,1}(\vec{u}_1, \ldots, \vec{u}_k), \ldots, g_{\varphi_i,q_i}(\vec{u}_1, \ldots, \vec{u}_k);\ h_{\varphi_i}(\vec{u}_1, \ldots, \vec{u}_k))\end{array}} \quad \text{(App1)}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \ldots, y_n : \mathsf{o}, y_{n+1} : \mathsf{o} \vdash t \triangleright (v_1, \ldots, v_n, v_{n+1}; w_1, \ldots, w_r; e)}{\Gamma; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \ldots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash \lambda y_{n+1}.t \triangleright (v_1, \ldots, v_n; v_{n+1}, w_1, \ldots, w_r; e)} \quad \text{(Lam)}$$

Rules (IVar) (for internal variables of type o) (Var) (for order-1 variables), and (Lam) should be obvious from the intuition on the tuple and the translation of an environment. Rules (App0) and (App1) are for applications of order-1 and order-2 functions respectively. (Note however that in (App0), t_1 itself may be an application of order-2 function, of the form $\varphi\, t_{1,1} \cdots t_{1,k}$.) In (App0), note that $t_1 t_2$ creates w_1 copies of (the value of) t_2, so that the number of copies of y_i can be calculated by $v_i + w_1 v'_i$, where v_i and v'_i are the numbers of copies created by t_1 and t_2 respectively. Rule (App1) is based on the intuition explained above about the translation of order-2 variables. Note that the same function $\hat{h}_{\varphi_i}$ is used for counting $y_1, \ldots, y_n$; this is because φ_i does not know y_j (in other words, φ_i cannot be instantiated to a term containing y_j as a free variable), so that the information for counting y_j can only be passed through arguments $\vec{u'}_{j,j'}$.

It should be clear that if $\Gamma; y_1 : \mathsf{o}, \ldots, y_n : \mathsf{o} \vdash t \triangleright (v_1, \ldots, v_n; w_1, \ldots, w_r; e)$ then $v_j, w_{j'}, e \in \Lambda^{\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}}_{\Gamma^\natural, \mathsf{o}}$ and the order of $\Gamma^\natural \to \mathsf{o}$ is no greater than 2.

▶ **Example 16.** Let $\Gamma = \varphi : (\mathsf{o} \to \mathsf{o}) \to \mathsf{o} \to \mathsf{o}, f : \mathsf{o} \to \mathsf{o}$. Then, we have

$$\Gamma^\natural \;=\; g_{\varphi,1}, h_\varphi, \hat{h}_\varphi : \mathsf{o}^2 \to \mathsf{o},\ c_{f,1}, d_f : \mathsf{o}$$

and $t := \lambda y.\varphi(\varphi\, f)\, y$ is transformed to

$$t^\natural \;=\; h_\varphi\big(g_{\varphi,1}(c_{f,1}, d_f), h_\varphi(c_{f,1}, d_f)\big) + g_{\varphi,1}\big(g_{\varphi,1}(c_{f,1}, d_f), h_\varphi(c_{f,1}, d_f)\big) \times 0$$

by the following derivation:

$$\dfrac{\dfrac{\dfrac{\dfrac{}{\Gamma; y:\mathtt{o} \vdash f \rhd (0; c_{f,1}; d_f)}\;(\textsc{Var})}{\Gamma; y:\mathtt{o} \vdash \varphi\, f \rhd (\hat{h}_\varphi(c_{f,1},0); g_{\varphi,1}(c_{f,1},d_f); h_\varphi(c_{f,1},d_f))}\;(\textsc{App1})}{\Gamma; y:\mathtt{o} \vdash \varphi(\varphi\, f) \rhd (\hat{h}_\varphi(\vec{u}'); g_{\varphi,1}(\vec{u}); h_\varphi(\vec{u}))}\;(\textsc{App1}) \quad \dfrac{}{\Gamma; y:\mathtt{o} \vdash y \rhd (1;;0)}\;(\textsc{IVar})}{\dfrac{\Gamma; y:\mathtt{o} \vdash \varphi(\varphi\, f)\, y \rhd (\hat{h}_\varphi(\vec{u}') + g_{\varphi,1}(\vec{u}) \times 1;\; ; h_\varphi(\vec{u}) + g_{\varphi,1}(\vec{u}) \times 0)}{\Gamma; \vdash \lambda y.\varphi(\varphi\, f)\, y \rhd (; \hat{h}_\varphi(\vec{u}') + g_{\varphi,1}(\vec{u}) \times 1; h_\varphi(\vec{u}) + g_{\varphi,1}(\vec{u}) \times 0)}\;(\textsc{Lam})}\;(\textsc{App0})$$

where $\vec{u} = g_{\varphi,1}(c_{f,1}, d_f), h_\varphi(c_{f,1}, d_f)$ and $\vec{u}' = g_{\varphi,1}(c_{f,1}, d_f), \hat{h}_\varphi(c_{f,1}, 0)$. The terms in the bottom line of the derivation, $\hat{h}_\varphi(\vec{u}') + g_{\varphi,1}(\vec{u}) \times 1$ and $t^\natural = h_\varphi(\vec{u}) + g_{\varphi,1}(\vec{u}) \times 0$, have type $\mathtt{o}$ under the environment $\Gamma^\natural$, and $\mathtt{eorder}(\lambda\Gamma^\natural.t^\natural) = \mathtt{order}(\Gamma^\natural \to \mathtt{o}) = 2$.

The next example is a slightly modified one involving an external variable $x:\mathtt{o}$ instead of the internal variable $y:\mathtt{o}$. We have

$$(\Gamma, x:\mathtt{o})^\natural \;=\; \Gamma^\natural,\; d_x : \mathtt{o}$$

and $t' := \varphi(\varphi\, f)\, x$ is transformed to

$$t'^\natural \;=\; h_\varphi\big(g_{\varphi,1}(c_{f,1}, d_f), h_\varphi(c_{f,1}, d_f)\big) + g_{\varphi,1}\big(g_{\varphi,1}(c_{f,1}, d_f), h_\varphi(c_{f,1}, d_f)\big) \times d_x$$

by the following derivation:

$$\dfrac{\dfrac{\dfrac{\dfrac{}{\Gamma, x:\mathtt{o}; \vdash f \rhd (0; c_{f,1}; d_f)}\;(\textsc{Var})}{\Gamma, x:\mathtt{o}; \vdash \varphi\, f \rhd (\hat{h}_\varphi(c_{f,1},0); g_{\varphi,1}(c_{f,1},d_f); h_\varphi(c_{f,1},d_f))}\;(\textsc{App1})}{\Gamma, x:\mathtt{o}; \vdash \varphi(\varphi\, f) \rhd (\hat{h}_\varphi(\vec{u}'); g_{\varphi,1}(\vec{u}); h_\varphi(\vec{u}))}\;(\textsc{App1}) \quad \dfrac{}{\Gamma, x:\mathtt{o}; \vdash x \rhd (0;;d_x)}\;(\textsc{Var})}{\Gamma, x:\mathtt{o}; \vdash \varphi(\varphi\, f)\, x \rhd (\hat{h}_\varphi(\vec{u}') + g_{\varphi,1}(\vec{u}) \times 0;\; ; h_\varphi(\vec{u}) + g_{\varphi,1}(\vec{u}) \times d_x)}\;(\textsc{App0})$$

where $\vec{u}$ and $\vec{u}'$ are the same as above. ◀

Lemma 17 below says that the transformation preserves the meaning of ground terms. Here we regard constants in Σ as variables of up to order 1, and we define a substitution $\theta_\Sigma^{a_{\mathrm{fix}}}$ by:

$$\theta_\Sigma^{a_{\mathrm{fix}}} \;:=\; [\overrightarrow{1/c_{a,i}}^{a\in\Sigma, i\le \mathtt{ar}(a)},\; 1/d_{a_{\mathrm{fix}}},\; \overrightarrow{0/d_a}^{a\in\Sigma\setminus\{a_{\mathrm{fix}}\}}].$$

(Recall that $a_{\mathrm{fix}} \in \Sigma$ above is the constant arbitrarily fixed at the end of Section 4.1.)

▶ **Lemma 17** (preservation of meaning). *If $\Sigma; \vdash t \rhd (;;e)$, then we have $\#_{a_{\mathrm{fix}}}(t) = [\![e\theta_\Sigma^{a_{\mathrm{fix}}}]\!]$.*

The above lemma follows from a usual substitution lemma (on internal variables) and a subject reduction property; see the full version for the proof.

The correctness of the transformation is stated as the following lemma.

▶ **Lemma 18** (ordering reflection). *Let: Σ be an alphabet; $a_{\mathrm{fix}} \in \Sigma$; Γ be an environment of the form*

$$\Gamma = \varphi_1 : \kappa_1, \dots, \varphi_m : \kappa_m, f_1 : \mathtt{o}^{q_1} \to \mathtt{o}, \dots, f_\ell : \mathtt{o}^{q_\ell} \to \mathtt{o}$$

where $\mathtt{order}(\kappa_i) = 2$ and $q_i \ge 0$; $t, t' \in \Lambda^{\emptyset}_{\Gamma,\mathtt{o}}$; and

$$\Gamma; \vdash t \rhd (;;e) \qquad \Gamma; \vdash t' \rhd (;;e').$$

Then we have:

$$t \preceq^{\#,\Sigma,a_{\mathrm{fix}}}_{\Gamma,\mathtt{o}} t' \qquad \textit{if} \qquad e \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma^\natural,\mathtt{o}} e'.$$

The proof of the above lemma is given in the full version, where we use Lemma 17 and substitution lemmas on external variables.

4.3 $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}$ on order-2 terms is a wqo

The main goal of this subsection is to prove the following lemma.

▶ **Lemma 19** ($\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ on order-2 terms is wqo). *For $\Gamma = f_1 : \mathsf{o}^{q_1} \to \mathsf{o}, \ldots, f_n : \mathsf{o}^{q_n} \to \mathsf{o}$, the quasi-ordering $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ on $\Lambda^{\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ is a wqo.*

Lemma 15 follows as a corollary of Lemma 19 above and Lemma 18 in the previous subsection:

Proof of Lemma 15. Let $t_0, t_1, \ldots \in \Lambda^{\emptyset}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ be an infinite sequence. We have the infinite sequence $e_0, e_1, \ldots \in \Lambda^{\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}}_{\Gamma^\natural,\mathsf{o}}$ such that $\Gamma; \vdash t_i \rhd (;;e_i)$, and by Lemma 18, $t_i \preceq^{\#,\Sigma,a_{\text{fix}}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}} t_j$ if $e_i \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma^\natural,\mathsf{o}} e_j$. By Lemma 19, there indeed exist $i, j\, (i < j)$ such that $e_i \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma^\natural,\mathsf{o}} e_j$. Thus, we have $t_i \preceq^{\#,\Sigma,a_{\text{fix}}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}} t_j$ as required. ◀

To prove Lemma 19, we restrict (without loss of generality) $\Lambda^{\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ to the set of β-normal forms (which we call *order-2 polynomials*), generated by the following grammar:

$$P ::= 0 \mid 1 \mid P_1 + P_2 \mid P_1 \times P_2 \mid f\, P_1 \cdots P_q$$

Here, in $f\, P_1 \cdots P_q$, f should have type $\mathsf{o}^q \to \mathsf{o}$. We write $\mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_2$ for the set of all order-2 polynomials, and write $\mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ for $\Lambda^{\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}} \cap \mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_2$. Note that the arity of f may be 0, so that, for example, $f_1(f_2 \times (f_2 + 1)) \in \mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{f_1:\mathsf{o}\to\mathsf{o}, f_2:\mathsf{o},\mathsf{o}}$. Thus, for Lemma 19, the following suffices:

▶ **Lemma 20** ($\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ on order-2 polynomials is wqo). *For $\Gamma = f_1 : \mathsf{o}^{q_1} \to \mathsf{o}, \ldots, f_n : \mathsf{o}^{q_n} \to \mathsf{o}$, the quasi-ordering $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ on $\mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ is a wqo.*

The idea for proving this lemma is as follows:

- An order-2 polynomial is regarded as a tree. Thus, by Kruskal's tree theorem (Proposition 8), the set $\mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ is well-quasi-ordered with respect to the homeomorphic embedding $\preceq^{\text{he},\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}\cup\Gamma}_{\mathsf{o}}$. Unfortunately, however, the relation $P_1 \preceq^{\text{he},\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}\cup\Gamma}_{\mathsf{o}} P_2$ does not necessarily imply $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$; for example, if $P_1 = 1$ and $P_2 = f_1(1)$, then $P_1 \preceq^{\text{he},\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}\cup\Gamma}_{\mathsf{o}} P_2$ holds but $P_1 \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}} P_2$ does not, because f_1 may be instantiated to $\lambda x.0$. Similarly for $P_1 = f_2$ and $P_2 = f_2 \times 0$.
- To address the problem above, we classify the values of $f \in \mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ (i.e. elements of $\Lambda^{\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}}_{\mathsf{o}^q\to\mathsf{o}}$) into a finite number of equivalence classes $A^{(1)}, \ldots, A^{(\ell)}$, and use the classification to further normalize order-2 polynomials, so that $P_1 \preceq^{\text{he},\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}\cup\Gamma}_{\mathsf{o}} P_2$ implies $P_1 \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}} P_2$ on the normalized polynomials. For example, in the case of $P_1 = 1$ and $P_2 = f_1(1)$ above, the values of f_1 are classified to (i) those that use the argument, (ii) those that return a positive constant without using the argument, and (iii) those that always return 0. We can then normalize $P_2 = f_1(1)$ to $f_1(1)$ (in case (i)), $f_1(0)$ (in case (ii)), and 0 (in case (iii)), respectively. (In case (ii), any argument is replaced with 0, because the argument is irrelevant.) Thus, we can indeed deduce $P_1 \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}} P_2$ from $P_1 \preceq^{\text{he},\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}\cup\Gamma}_{\mathsf{o}} P_2$ when the value of f_1 is restricted to just those in (i); and the same holds also for (ii) and (iii). It follows that the restriction of the relation $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ to each classification of the values of $f_1, \ldots, f_\ell \in \mathit{dom}(\Gamma)$ is a wqo. Since the number of classifications is finite, by Dickson's theorem (recall the sentence below Proposition 8), $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ (which is the intersection of the restrictions of $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ to the finite number of classifications) is also a wqo.

We first formalize and justify the reasoning in the last part (using Dickson's theorem).

▶ **Definition 21** (finite case analysis). For $\Gamma = f_1 : \kappa_1, \ldots, f_n : \kappa_n$, we call a *finite case analysis of* Γ a family $(A_i^j)_{i\leq n, j\in J_i}$ of sets such that $\Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\kappa_i} = \cup_{j\leq J_i} A_i^j$ for each $i \leq n$. For $(A_i)_{i\leq n}$ such that $A_i \subseteq \Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\kappa_i}$, we define a quasi-ordering $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,(A_i)_i}$ on $\Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ as follows:

$$t \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,(A_i)_i} t' \qquad \Longleftrightarrow \qquad \forall t_1 \in A_1, \ldots, t_n \in A_n.\ [\![t[t_i/f_i]_i]\!] \leq [\![t'[t_i/f_i]_i]\!]$$

We often omit the subscript Γ of $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,(A_i)_i}$ and write $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(A_i)_i}$.

The following lemma follows immediately from the fact that the intersection of a finite number of wqo's is a wqo (which is in turn an immediate corollary of Dickson's theorem). (see the full version for omitted proofs in the rest of this section).

▶ **Lemma 22.** *For $\Gamma = f_1 : \kappa_1, \ldots, f_n : \kappa_n$ and a finite case analysis $(A_i^j)_{i\leq n, j\in J_i}$ of Γ, if $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(A_i^{j_i})_i}$ on $\Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ is a wqo for any "case" $(j_i)_{i\leq n} \in \prod_{i\leq n} J_i$, then so is $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}$ on $\Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$.*

Thus, to prove Lemma 20, it remains to find an appropriate decomposition $\Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\kappa_i} = \cup_{j\leq J_i} A_i^j$ (where κ_i is an order-1 type $\mathsf{o}^q \to \mathsf{o}$), and prove that $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(A_i^{j_i})_i}$ is a wqo.

Henceforth we identify an element of $\Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\mathsf{o}^q\to\mathsf{o}}$ with the corresponding element of the polynomial semi-ring $\mathbb{N}[x_1, \ldots, x_q]$. For example, $\lambda x_1.\lambda x_2.((\lambda y.y)x_1) + x_2 \times x_2$ is identified with the polynomial $x_1 + x_2^2$ (which is obtained by normalizing and omitting λ-abstractions, assuming a fixed ordering of the bound variables). For $t \in \Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\mathsf{o}^q\to\mathsf{o}}$ we write $\mathtt{poly}(t)$ for the corresponding polynomial.

We define the equivalence relation $\sim$ as the least semi-ring congruence relation on $\mathbb{N}[x_1, \ldots, x_q]$ that satisfies (i) $a \sim 1$ if $a > 0$ and (ii) $x_i^j \sim x_i$ if $j > 0$. For example, $2x_1^2x_2 + 3x_1x_2^2 + x_1 + 4 \sim x_1x_2 + x_1 + 1$, and the quotient set $\mathbb{N}[x_1]/\sim$ consists of:

$$[0]_\sim, [1]_\sim, [x_1]_\sim, [x_1 + 1]_\sim,$$

and $\mathbb{N}[x_1, x_2]/\sim$ consists of

$$[0]_\sim, [1]_\sim, [x_1]_\sim, [x_2]_\sim, [x_1x_2]_\sim, [1+x_1]_\sim, [1+x_2]_\sim, [1+x_1x_2]_\sim, [x_1+x_2]_\sim, \ldots, [1+x_1+x_2+x_1x_2]_\sim.$$

In general, $\mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([q]))$ (where $[q]$ denotes $\{1, \ldots, q\}$ and $\mathcal{P}(X)$ denotes the powerset of X) gives a complete representation of the quotient set $\mathbb{N}[x_1, \ldots, x_q]/\sim$, i.e.,

$$\mathbb{N}[x_1, \ldots, x_q]/\sim \;=\; \left\{ \left[\sum_{\{p_1<\cdots<p_r\}\in\Phi} x_{p_1}\cdots x_{p_r} \right]_\sim \,\middle|\, \Phi \in \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([q])) \right\}.$$

Through $\mathtt{poly} : \Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\mathsf{o}^q\to\mathsf{o}} \to \mathbb{N}[x_1, \ldots, x_q]$, we can induce an equivalence relation on $\Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\mathsf{o}^q\to\mathsf{o}}$ from $\sim$ on $\mathbb{N}[x_1, \ldots, x_q]$, and let A_q^Φ be the equivalence class corresponding to Φ, i.e.,

$$A_q^\Phi := \left\{ t \in \Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\mathsf{o}^q\to\mathsf{o}} \,\middle|\, \mathtt{poly}(t) \sim \sum_{\{p_1<\cdots<p_r\}\in\Phi} x_{p_1}\cdots x_{p_r} \right\}. \tag{1}$$

Then we have $\Lambda^{\Sigma_\mathbb{N}}_{\mathsf{o}^q\to\mathsf{o}} = \sqcup_{\Phi\in\mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([q]))} A_q^\Phi$. Now, given $\Gamma = f_1 : \mathsf{o}^{q_1} \to \mathsf{o}, \ldots, f_n : \mathsf{o}^{q_n} \to \mathsf{o}$, we have obtained a finite case analysis of Γ as $(A_{q_i}^\Phi)_{i\leq n, \Phi\in\mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([q_i]))}$; for $(\Phi_i)_i \in \prod_{i\leq n} \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([q_i]))$, we write $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i}$ for $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(A_{q_i}^{\Phi_i})_i}$. Thus it remains to show that $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i}$ on $\mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ is a wqo for each $(\Phi_i)_i \in \prod_{i\leq n} \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([q_i]))$.

The following lemma justifies the partition of polynomials based on $\sim$.

▶ **Lemma 23** (zero/positive). *For any $\Gamma = f_1 : \mathsf{o}^{q_1} \to \mathsf{o}, \ldots, f_n : \mathsf{o}^{q_n} \to \mathsf{o}$, $(\Phi_i)_i \in \prod_{i\leq n} \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([q_i]))$, and $\Gamma \vdash P : \mathsf{o}$, we have either $P \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i} 0$ or $1 \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i} P$.*

In other words, the lemma above says that, given an order-2 polynomial P, whether $P[t_1/f_1, \dots, t_n/f_n]$ evaluates to 0 or not is solely determined by the equivalence classes $t_1, \dots, t_n$ belong to.

▶ **Example 24.** Let $\Gamma := f : \mathtt{o}^2 \to \mathtt{o}$, and $\Phi := \{\emptyset, \{1,2\}\} \in \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([2]))$, which denotes the equivalence class $[1 + x_1 x_2]_\sim$. We have $1 \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Phi} f\, P_1\, P_2$ for any P_1 and P_2, since any element of the equivalence class is of the form $a + \cdots$ for some natural number $a \geq 1$.

Based on the property above, we define the rewriting relation $\longrightarrow_{(\Phi_i)_i}$, to simplify order-2 polynomials by replacing (i) subterms that always evaluate to 0, and (ii) arguments of a function that are irrelevant, with 0.

▶ **Definition 25** (rewriting relation and $(\Phi_i)_i$-normal form)**.** For $\Gamma = f_1 : \mathtt{o}^{q_1} \to \mathtt{o}, \dots, f_n : \mathtt{o}^{q_n} \to \mathtt{o}$ and $(\Phi_i)_i \in \prod_{i \leq n} \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([q_i]))$, we define the relation $\longrightarrow^{\circ}_{(\Phi_i)_i}$ by the following two rules.

- $P \longrightarrow^{\circ}_{(\Phi_i)_i} 0$ if $P \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i} 0$ and $P \neq 0$.
- $f_\ell\, P_1 \cdots P_{q_\ell} \longrightarrow^{\circ}_{(\Phi_i)_i} f_\ell\, P_1 \cdots P_{k-1}\, 0\, P_{k+1} \cdots P_{q_\ell}$ if (i) $P_k \neq 0$ and (ii) for all $\phi \in \Phi_\ell$ such that $k \in \phi$, there exists $p \in \phi$ such that $P_p \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i} 0$.

We write $P_0 \longrightarrow_{(\Phi_i)_i} P_1$ if $P_i = E[P'_i]$ and $P'_0 \longrightarrow^{\circ}_{(\Phi_i)_i} P'_1$ for some E, P'_0 and P'_1, where the evaluation context E is defined by:

$$E ::= [\,] \mid E + P \mid P + E \mid E \times P \mid P \times E \mid f\, P_1 \dots P_{i-1}\, E\, P_{i+1} \dots P_q.$$

We call a normal form of $\longrightarrow_{(\Phi_i)_i}$ a $(\Phi_i)_i$*-normal form.*

Intuitively, the condition (ii) in the second rule says that whenever the k-th argument P_k is used by f_ℓ, it occurs only in the form of $P_k \times P_p \times \cdots$ (up to equivalence) and P_p always evaluates to 0; thus, the value of P_k is actually irrelevant.

▶ **Example 26.** We continue Example 24. Recall $\Gamma = f : \mathtt{o}^2 \to \mathtt{o}$ and $\Phi = \{\emptyset, \{1,2\}\}$. Consider the order-2 polynomial $f\,1\,(1 \times 0)$. It can be rewritten to $f\,1\,0$ by using the first rule (and the evaluation context $E = f\,1\,[\,]$). We can further apply the second rule to obtain $f\,1\,0 \longrightarrow_\Phi f\,0\,0$, because $k = 1$ satisfies the conditions ((i) and) (ii). In fact, if $1 \in \phi \in \Phi$, then $\phi = \{1,2\}$; hence, the required condition holds for $p = 2$. Note that $f\,0\,0$ is a Φ-normal form; the first rule is not applicable, as $f\,0\,0 \not\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Phi} 0$ by the discussion in Example 24.

The following lemma guarantees that any order-2 polynomial can be transformed to at least one equivalent $(\Phi_i)_i$*-normal form.*

▶ **Lemma 27** (existence of normal form)**.**

1. $\longrightarrow_{(\Phi_i)_i}$ *is strongly normalizing.*
2. *If* $P \longrightarrow_{(\Phi_i)_i} P'$ *then* $P \approx^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i} P'$.

We can reduce the wqoness of $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i}$ to that of $\preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}} \cup \Gamma}_{\mathtt{o}}$ by the following lemma:

▶ **Lemma 28.** *For* $\Gamma = f_1 : \mathtt{o}^{q_1} \to \mathtt{o}, \dots, f_n : \mathtt{o}^{q_n} \to \mathtt{o}$, $(\Phi_i)_i \in \prod_{i \leq n} \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([q_i]))$*, and* $(\Phi_i)_i$*-normal forms* $\Gamma \vdash P', P : \mathtt{o}$*, if* $P' \preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}} \cup \Gamma}_{\mathtt{o}} P$ *then* $P' \preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i} P$.

The proof is given by a simple calculation using Lemma 23 and that the given $(\Phi_i)_i$-normal forms P', P do not satisfy the condition for the rewriting $\longrightarrow_{(\Phi_i)_i}$.

Now we are ready to prove Lemma 20.

Proof of Lemma 20. By Lemma 22, it suffices to show that $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i}$ on $\mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ is a wqo for each $(\Phi_i)_i \in \prod_{i\leq n} \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}([q_i]))$. By the Kruskal's tree theorem, $\preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}\cup\Gamma}_{\mathsf{o}}$ on $\mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ is a wqo, and hence the sub-ordering $\preceq^{\mathrm{he},\Sigma_{\mathbb{N}}\cup\Gamma}_{\mathsf{o}}$ on the subset

$$\{P \in \mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}} \mid P \text{ is a } (\Phi_i)_i\text{-normal form}\} \subseteq \mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$$

is a wqo. Therefore by Lemma 28, $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i}$ on $\{P \in \mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}} \mid P$ is a $(\Phi_i)_i$-normal form$\}$ is a wqo. By Lemma 27, $\{P \in \mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}} \mid P$ is a $(\Phi_i)_i$-normal form$\}$ and $\mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ – both modulo $\beta\eta$-equivalence – are isomorphic (with respect to $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i}$ and $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i}$); hence $\preceq^{\mathbb{N}}_{(\Phi_i)_i}$ on $\mathrm{P}^{\mathbb{N}}_{\Gamma,\mathsf{o}}$ is a wqo. ◀

5 Conclusion

W have introduced the nAK-conjecture, a weaker version of the AK-conjecture in [2], and proved it up to order 3. We have also proved a pumping lemma for higher-order grammars (which is slightly weaker than the pumping lemma conjectured in [2]) under the assumption that the nAK-conjecture holds. Obvious future work is to show the nAK-conjecture or the original AK-conjecture for arbitrary orders. Finding other applications of the two conjectures (cf. an application of Kruskal's tree theorem to program termination [4]) is also left for future work.

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