

15-411: Dynamic Semantics

Jan Hoffmann

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code review!


Dynamic Semantics

- **Static semantics:** definition of valid programs
 - **Dynamic semantics:** definition of how programs are executed
 - So far: Dynamic semantics is given in English on lab handouts
 - This only works since you know how C programs should behave
 - Sometimes needed to consult the reference compiler
 - A description in English will always be ambiguous
- ➔ **Need precise ways of defining the meaning of programs**

Types of (Formal) Dynamic Semantics

- **Denotational Semantics:** Abstract and elegant.
 - Each part of a program is associated with a denotation (math. object)
 - For example: a procedure is associated with a mathematical function
- **Axiomatic Semantics:** Strongly related to program logic.
 - Gives meaning to phrases using logical axioms
 - The meaning is identical to the set of properties that can be proved
- **Operational Semantics:** Describes how programs are executed
 - Related to interpreters and abstract machines
 - Most popular and flexible form of semantics

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Operational Semantics

- **Many different styles**

- Natural semantics (or big-step semantics or evaluation dynamics)
- Structural operational semantics
- Substructural operational semantics
- Abstract machine (or small-step with continuation)

- **We will use an abstract machine**

- Very general: can describe non-termination, concurrency, ...
- Low-level and elaborate

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How to pick the right dynamic semantics?

Evaluating Expressions

Continuations

Want to model a single evaluation step

$$e \rightarrow e'$$

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$$e \triangleright K$$

“Evaluate expression e and pass the result to K ”

The continuation has a ‘hole’ for the result value of e .

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Use a continuation K :

A stack of partial computations.

$$e \triangleright K$$

“Evaluate expression e and pass the result to K ”

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Evaluation Rules: Addition

$$e_1 + e_2 \triangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad e_1 \triangleright (_ + e_2, K)$$

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First evaluate e_1 .

$$e_1 + e_2 \triangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad e_1 \triangleright (- + e_2, K)$$

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e is a constant.

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Evaluation Rules: Addition

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Continue with evaluating e_2 .

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$$c_1 \triangleright (_ + e_2, K) \longrightarrow e_2 \triangleright (c_1 + _, K)$$

Continuation is an addition.

$$c_2 \triangleright (c_1 + _, K) \longrightarrow c \triangleright K \quad (c = c_1 + c_2 \bmod 2^{32})$$

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Two constants

Actual addition.

Evaluation Rules: Binary Operations

Arithmetic operations are treated like addition

$$e_1 \oplus e_2 \triangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad e_1 \triangleright (_ \oplus e_2, K)$$

$$c_1 \triangleright (_ \oplus e_2, K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad e_2 \triangleright (c_1 \oplus _, K)$$

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Arithmetic is modulo 2^{32} to match our x86 architecture

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Arithmetic is modulo 2^{32} to match our x86 architecture

What about
effects?

Evaluation Rules: Binops with Effects

In case of an arithmetic exception: Abort the computation and report and error

$$e_1 \circledast e_2 \triangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad e_1 \triangleright (_ \circledast e_2, K)$$

$$c_1 \triangleright (_ \circledast e_2, K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad e_2 \triangleright (c_1 \circledast _, K)$$

$$c_2 \triangleright (c_1 \circledast _, K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad c \triangleright K \quad (c = c_1 \circledast c_2)$$

$$c_2 \triangleright (c_1 \circledast _, K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad \text{exception(arith)} \quad (c_1 \circledast c_2 \text{ undefined})$$

There is no rule for further evaluating an exception.

Example Evaluation

$$((4 + 5) * 10) + 2 \triangleright \cdot$$

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$$\longrightarrow (4 + 5) * 10 \quad \triangleright _ + 2$$

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$$\longrightarrow (4 + 5) * 10 \quad \triangleright _ + 2$$

$$\longrightarrow 4 + 5 \quad \triangleright _ * 10, _ + 2$$

Example Evaluation

$$((4 + 5) * 10) + 2 \triangleright \cdot$$

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$$\longrightarrow 4 \triangleright _ + 5, _ * 10, _ + 2$$

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$$\longrightarrow 4 + 5 \triangleright _ * 10, _ + 2$$

$$\longrightarrow 4 \triangleright _ + 5, _ * 10, _ + 2$$

$$\longrightarrow 5 \triangleright 4 + _, _ * 10, _ + 2$$

Example Evaluation

$$((4 + 5) * 10) + 2 \triangleright \cdot$$

$$\longrightarrow (4 + 5) * 10 \triangleright _ + 2$$

$$\longrightarrow 4 + 5 \triangleright _ * 10, _ + 2$$

$$\longrightarrow 4 \triangleright _ + 5, _ * 10, _ + 2$$

$$\longrightarrow 5 \triangleright 4 + _, _ * 10, _ + 2$$

$$\longrightarrow 9 \triangleright _ * 10, _ + 2$$

Example Evaluation

$$((4 + 5) * 10) + 2 \triangleright \cdot$$

\longrightarrow	$(4 + 5) * 10$	\triangleright	$_ + 2$
\longrightarrow	$4 + 5$	\triangleright	$_ * 10, _ + 2$
\longrightarrow	4	\triangleright	$_ + 5, _ * 10, _ + 2$
\longrightarrow	5	\triangleright	$4 + _, _ * 10, _ + 2$
\longrightarrow	9	\triangleright	$_ * 10, _ + 2$
\longrightarrow	10	\triangleright	$9 * _, _ + 2$

Example Evaluation

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\longrightarrow	$(4 + 5) * 10$	\triangleright	$_ + 2$
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\longrightarrow	4	\triangleright	$_ + 5, _ * 10, _ + 2$
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\longrightarrow	9	\triangleright	$_ * 10, _ + 2$
\longrightarrow	10	\triangleright	$9 * _, _ + 2$
\longrightarrow	90	\triangleright	$_ + 2$

Example Evaluation

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\longrightarrow	$(4 + 5) * 10$	\triangleright	$_ + 2$
\longrightarrow	$4 + 5$	\triangleright	$_ * 10, _ + 2$
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\longrightarrow	2	\triangleright	$90 + _$
\longrightarrow	92	\triangleright	\cdot

Evaluation Rules: End of and Evaluation

If we reach a constant and the empty continuation then we stop

$$c \triangleright \cdot \longrightarrow \text{value}(c)$$

Evaluation Rules: Boolean Expressions

$$e_1 \ \&\& \ e_2 \triangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad e_1 \triangleright (_ \ \&\& \ e_2 , K)$$

$$\text{false} \triangleright (_ \ \&\& \ e_2 , K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad \text{false} \triangleright K$$

$$\text{true} \triangleright (_ \ \&\& \ e_2 , K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad e_2 \triangleright K$$

true and *false* are also values

(We could also use 1 and 0 but distinguishing helps detect errors.)

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Notice the short-cutting.

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Integers or
booleans.

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Variables and Environments II

The rules we have seen so far just carry over

$$\eta \vdash e_1 \oplus e_2 \triangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta \vdash e_1 \triangleright (- \oplus e_2, K)$$

$$\eta \vdash c_1 \triangleright (- \oplus e_2, K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta \vdash e_2 \triangleright (c_1 \oplus -, K)$$

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The environment never changes when evaluating expressions

Executing Statements

Executing Statements I

Executions of statements don't pass values to the continuation

Statements have usually an effect on the environment

Machine configurations:

$$\eta \vdash s \blacktriangleright K$$

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Sequences:

$$\eta \vdash \text{seq}(s_1, s_2) \blacktriangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta \vdash s_1 \blacktriangleright (s_2, K)$$

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No ops:

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A terminating execution ends with a nop.

Executing Statements II

Interaction with expressions is straightforward

Assignments:

$$\eta \vdash \text{assign}(x, e) \blacktriangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta \vdash e \triangleright (\text{assign}(x, _), K)$$

$$\eta \vdash v \triangleright (\text{assign}(x, _), K) \quad \longrightarrow$$

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Update the environment with new mapping.

Executing Statements III

Conditionals:

$$\eta \vdash \text{if}(e, s_1, s_2) \blacktriangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta \vdash e \triangleright (\text{if}(_, s_1, s_2), K)$$

$$\eta \vdash \text{true} \triangleright (\text{if}(_, s_1, s_2), K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta \vdash s_1 \blacktriangleright K$$

$$\eta \vdash \text{false} \triangleright (\text{if}(_, s_1, s_2), K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta \vdash s_2 \blacktriangleright K$$

Executing Statements IV

Loops:

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Not that the following statements are equivalent:

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Non-termination:

$$s_0 \longrightarrow s_1 \longrightarrow s_2 \longrightarrow \dots$$

We can make an infinite number of steps without reaching a final state

Executing Statements V

Assertions:

$\eta \vdash \text{assert}(e) \blacktriangleright K \longrightarrow \eta \vdash e \triangleright (\text{assert}(_), K)$

$\eta \vdash \text{true} \triangleright (\text{assert}(_), K) \longrightarrow \eta \vdash \text{nop} \blacktriangleright K$

$\eta \vdash \text{false} \triangleright (\text{assert}(_), K) \longrightarrow \text{exception}(\text{abort})$

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Declarations:

$$\eta \vdash \text{decl}(x, \tau, s) \blacktriangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta[x \mapsto \text{nothing}] \vdash s \blacktriangleright K$$

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If C0 had shadowing then we would have to be careful here.

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Assertions:

$$\eta \vdash \text{assert}(e) \blacktriangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta \vdash e \triangleright (\text{assert}(_), K)$$

$$\eta \vdash \text{true} \triangleright (\text{assert}(_), K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta \vdash \text{nop} \blacktriangleright K$$

$$\eta \vdash \text{false} \triangleright (\text{assert}(_), K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad \text{exception}(\text{abort})$$

Declarations:

$$\eta \vdash \text{decl}(x, \tau, s) \blacktriangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad \eta[x \mapsto \text{nothing}] \vdash s \blacktriangleright K$$

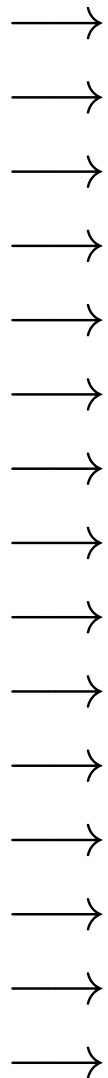
Final states:

$$\text{exception}(E), \quad \text{nop} \blacktriangleright \cdot$$

If C0 had shadowing then we would have to be careful here.

Example: Infinite Loop

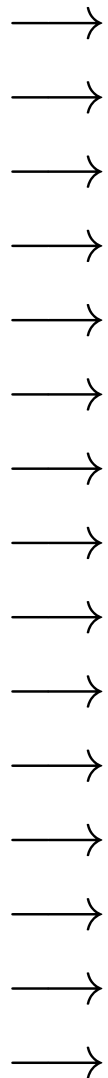
`while(x > 0, assign(x, x + 1))` $\eta = [x \mapsto 1]$



Example: Infinite Loop

$\text{while}(x > 0, \text{assign}(x, x + 1)) \quad \eta = [x \mapsto 1]$

$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash \text{while}(x > 0, s) \quad \blacktriangleright \cdot$



Example: Infinite Loop

$\text{while}(x > 0, \text{assign}(x, x + 1)) \quad \eta = [x \mapsto 1]$

	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash \text{while}(x > 0, s)$	▶	.
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash \text{if}(x > 0, \text{seq}(s, \text{while}(x > 0, s)), \text{nop})$	▶	.
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash x > 0$	▷	$\text{if}(_, \text{seq}(s, \text{while}(x > 0, s)), \text{nop})$
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash x$	▷	$_ > 0; \text{if}(_, \text{seq}(s, \text{while}(x > 0, s)), \text{nop})$
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash 1$	▷	$_ > 0; \text{if}(_, \text{seq}(s, \text{while}(x > 0, s)), \text{nop})$
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash 0$	▷	$1 > _; \text{if}(_, \text{seq}(s, \text{while}(x > 0, s)), \text{nop})$
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash \text{true}$	▷	$\text{if}(_, \text{seq}(s, \text{while}(x > 0, s)), \text{nop})$
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash \text{seq}(s, \text{while}(x > 0, s))$	▶	.
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash \text{assign}(x, x + 1)$	▶	$\text{while}(x > 0, \text{assign}(x, x + 1))$
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash x + 1$	▷	$\text{assign}(x, _); \text{while}(x > 0, s)$
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash x$	▷	$_ + 1; \text{assign}(x, _); \text{while}(x > 0, s)$
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→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash 1$	▷	$1 + _; \text{assign}(x, _); \text{while}(x > 0, s)$
→	$[x \mapsto 1] \vdash 2$	▷	$\text{assign}(x, _); \text{while}(x > 0, s)$
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...			

Functions

Function Calls

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- Save the continuation of the caller
- Execute the body of the callee in a new environment that maps the formal parameters to the argument values
- Pass the return value to the environment of the caller

Call Stack

We need to keep track of continuations and environment in stack frames

Call stack:

$$S ::= \cdot \mid S, \langle \eta, K \rangle$$

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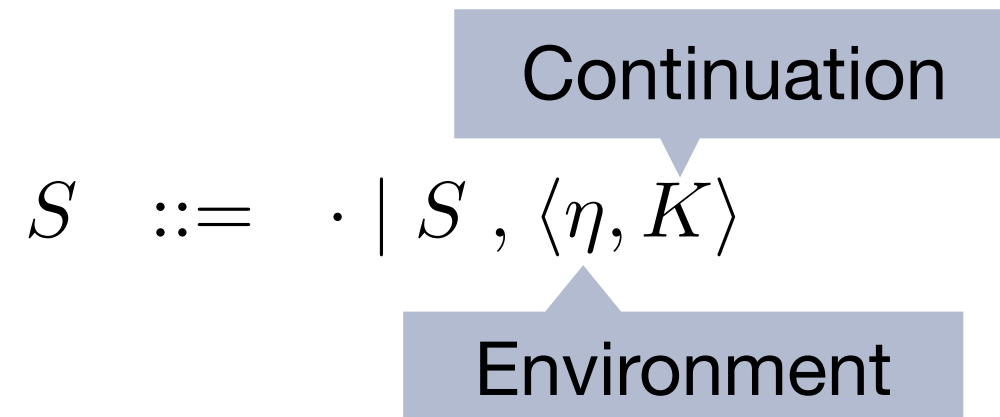
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Configurations:

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Execution $S ; \eta \vdash s \blacktriangleright K$

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Configurations:

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Existing rules can be lifted to the new configurations by passing through the call stack

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(given that f is defined as $f()\{s\}$)

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Two arguments:

$$S ; \eta \vdash f(e_1, e_2) \triangleright K \quad \longrightarrow \quad S ; \eta \vdash e_1 \triangleright (f(-, e_2), K)$$

$$S ; \eta \vdash c_1 \triangleright (f(-, e_2), K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad S ; \eta \vdash e_2 \triangleright (f(c_1, -), K)$$

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$$S ; \eta \vdash c_2 \triangleright (f(c_1, -), K) \quad \longrightarrow \quad (S, \langle \eta, K \rangle) ; [x_1 \mapsto c_1, x_2 \mapsto c_2] \vdash s \blacktriangleright \cdot$$

(given that f is defined as $f(x_1, x_2)\{s\}$)

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Need to restore continuation and environment and pass return value

$$S ; \eta \vdash \text{return}(e) \blacktriangleright K$$

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Special case: returning void

$$S , \langle \eta', K' \rangle ; \eta \vdash \text{nop} \blacktriangleright \cdot \quad \longrightarrow \quad S ; \eta' \vdash \text{nothing} \triangleright K'$$

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Dummy value

Alternative: elaborate each function that returns void with `return(nothing)` statements.

Execution of the Main Function

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$\cdot ; \eta \vdash c \triangleright \cdot \longrightarrow \text{value}(c)$ (final state)

Statics, Dynamics, and Safety

Overview of Machine States (Configurations)

$S ; \eta \vdash e \triangleright K$ – Evaluating the expression e with the continuation K

$S ; \eta \vdash s \blacktriangleright K$ – Evaluating the statement s with the continuation K

$\text{value}(c)$ – Final state, return a value

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The language should be deterministic: there at most one transition per state

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Theorem 1 (No undefined behavior) *If a program passes all the static semantics, and*

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then either \mathcal{ST}_n is a final state or else \mathcal{ST}_n is not-stuck because there exists a state \mathcal{ST}' such that $\mathcal{ST}_n \longrightarrow \mathcal{ST}'$.

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15-312

Expressions	e	$::=$	$c \mid e_1 \odot e_2 \mid \text{true} \mid \text{false} \mid e_1 \ \&\& \ e_2 \mid x \mid f(e_1, e_2) \mid f()$
Statements	s	$::=$	$\text{nop} \mid \text{seq}(s_1, s_2) \mid \text{assign}(x, e) \mid \text{decl}(x, \tau, s)$ $\mid \text{if}(e, s_1, s_2) \mid \text{while}(e, s) \mid \text{return}(e) \mid \text{assert}(e)$
Values	v	$::=$	$c \mid \text{true} \mid \text{false} \mid \text{nothing}$
Environments	η	$::=$	$\cdot \mid \eta, x \mapsto c$
Stacks	S	$::=$	$\cdot \mid S, \langle \eta, K \rangle$
Cont. frames	ϕ	$::=$	$_ \odot e \mid c \odot _ \mid _ \ \&\& \ e \mid f(_, e) \mid f(c, _)$ $\mid s \mid \text{assign}(x, _) \mid \text{if}(_, s_1, s_2) \mid \text{return}(_) \mid \text{assert}(_)$
Continuations	K	$::=$	$\cdot \mid \phi, K$
Exceptions	E	$::=$	$\text{arith} \mid \text{abort} \mid \text{mem}$

Summary I

All ops.

Expressions	e	$::=$	$c \mid e_1 \odot e_2 \mid \text{true} \mid \text{false} \mid e_1 \ \&\& \ e_2 \mid x \mid f(e_1, e_2) \mid f()$
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$S ; \eta \vdash e_1 \odot e_2 \triangleright K$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash e_1 \triangleright (_ \odot e_2 , K)$
$S ; \eta \vdash c_1 \triangleright (_ \odot e_2 , K)$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash e_2 \triangleright (c_1 \odot _ , K)$
$S ; \eta \vdash c_2 \triangleright (c_1 \odot _ , K)$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash c \triangleright K \quad (c = c_1 \odot c_2)$
$S ; \eta \vdash c_2 \triangleright (c_1 \odot _ , K)$	\longrightarrow	exception(arith) $\quad (c_1 \odot c_2 \text{ undefined})$
$S ; \eta \vdash e_1 \&\& e_2 \triangleright K$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash e_1 \triangleright (_ \&\& e_2 , K)$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{false} \triangleright (_ \&\& e_2 , K)$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash \text{false} \triangleright K$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{true} \triangleright (_ \&\& e_2 , K)$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash e_2 \triangleright K$
$S ; \eta \vdash x \triangleright K$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash \eta(x) \triangleright K$

Summary: Expressions

$S ; \eta \vdash \text{seq}(s_1, s_2) \blacktriangleright K$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash s_1 \blacktriangleright (s_2, K)$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{nop} \blacktriangleright (s, K)$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash s \blacktriangleright K$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{assign}(x, e) \blacktriangleright K$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash e \triangleright (\text{assign}(x, _), K)$
$S ; \eta \vdash c \triangleright (\text{assign}(x, _), K)$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta[x \mapsto c] \vdash \text{nop} \blacktriangleright K$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{decl}(x, \tau, s) \blacktriangleright K$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta[x \mapsto \text{nothing}] \vdash s \blacktriangleright K$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{assert}(e) \blacktriangleright K$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash e \triangleright (\text{assert}(_), K)$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{true} \triangleright (\text{assert}(_), K)$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash \text{nop} \blacktriangleright K$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{false} \triangleright (\text{assert}(_), K)$	\longrightarrow	exception(abort)
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{if}(e, s_1, s_2) \blacktriangleright K$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash e \triangleright (\text{if}(_, s_1, s_2), K)$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{true} \triangleright (\text{if}(_, s_1, s_2), K)$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash s_1 \blacktriangleright K$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{false} \triangleright (\text{if}(_, s_1, s_2), K)$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash s_2 \blacktriangleright K$
$S ; \eta \vdash \text{while}(e, s) \blacktriangleright K$	\longrightarrow	$S ; \eta \vdash \text{if}(e, \text{seq}(s, \text{while}(e, s)), \text{nop}) \blacktriangleright K$

Summary: Statements

$$\begin{array}{l}
S ; \eta \vdash f(e_1, e_2) \triangleright K \\
S ; \eta \vdash c_1 \triangleright (f(_, e_2), K) \\
S ; \eta \vdash c_2 \triangleright (f(c_1, _), K) \\
\\
S ; \eta \vdash f() \triangleright K \\
\\
S ; \eta \vdash \text{return}(e) \blacktriangleright K \\
(S, \langle \eta', K' \rangle) ; \eta \vdash v \triangleright (\text{return}(_), K) \\
\cdot ; \eta \vdash c \triangleright (\text{return}(_), K)
\end{array}
\quad
\begin{array}{l}
\longrightarrow \\
\longrightarrow \\
\longrightarrow \\
\\
\longrightarrow \\
\\
\longrightarrow \\
\longrightarrow \\
\longrightarrow
\end{array}
\begin{array}{l}
S ; \eta \vdash e_1 \triangleright (f(_, e_2), K) \\
S ; \eta \vdash e_2 \triangleright (f(c_1, _), K) \\
(S, \langle \eta, K \rangle) ; [x_1 \mapsto c_1, x_2 \mapsto c_2] \vdash s \blacktriangleright \cdot \\
\text{(given that } f \text{ is defined as } f(x_1, x_2)\{s\}\text{)} \\
\\
(S, \langle \eta, K \rangle) ; \cdot \vdash s \blacktriangleright \cdot \\
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\\
S ; \eta \vdash e \triangleright (\text{return}(_), K) \\
S ; \eta' \vdash v \triangleright K' \\
\text{value}(c)
\end{array}$$

Summary: Functions