

2-dimensional commutativity and Fox's theorem: sketchy approach

(work in progress)

Tomáš Perutka

15. 7. 2025

Prelude: commutative 1-theories

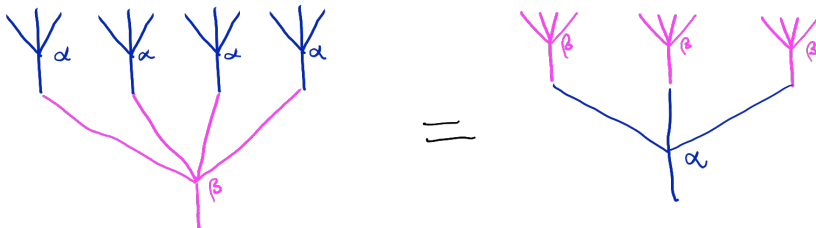
Definition (not the best one)

A Lawvere theory \mathbb{T} is commutative if for each model $X: \mathbb{T} \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ and for each $\alpha: n \rightarrow 1$ in \mathbb{T} , the n -ary operation $X(\alpha): X(1)^n \rightarrow X(1)$ is a homomorphism of models.

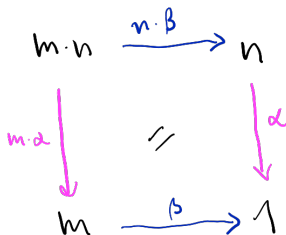
Example (justifying the name): if G is a group, then the multiplication $m: G \times G \rightarrow G$ is a group homomorphism if and only if G is commutative.

\Rightarrow theory of groups is not commutative, theory of commutative groups is commutative.

Better (syntactic) definition [Linton '66]



$\forall \alpha, \beta \text{ in } \mathbb{T}$



Why go 2-dimensional? Fox's Theorem

Special case: *Tensor product of commutative rings is their coproduct.*

Thm. (Fox '76)

- 1 For any two commutative monoids M, N in a symmetric monoidal category $(\mathcal{V}, \otimes, I)$, $M \otimes N$ is also a commutative monoid.
- 2 The 2-functor $\mathbf{CMon}(-): \mathbf{SMCat} \rightarrow \mathbf{SMCat}$ is a comonad.
- 3 This comonad is colax idempotent, and the 2-category of coalgebras identified with \mathbf{Cat}^{\sqcup} .

Rethinking Fox's Theorem

Thm. (Fox)

- 1 For any two commutative monoids M, N in a symmetric monoidal category $(\mathcal{V}, \otimes, I)$, $M \otimes N$ is also a commutative monoid.
- Let \mathbb{T} be a Lawvere 2-theory for pseudocommutative pseudomonoids.
- Models in \mathbf{Cat} = symmetric monoidal categories.
- (Same phenomenon as before: $\mathcal{V} \times \mathcal{V} \xrightarrow{\otimes} \mathcal{V}$ is a homomorphism of models only for symmetric monoidal categories.)
- Pseudo / lax / colax homomorphisms of models = strong / lax / colax symmetric monoidal functors.
- $\mathbf{CMon}(\mathcal{V}) = \mathbf{Lax}(1, \mathcal{V})$.

Rethinking Fox's Theorem

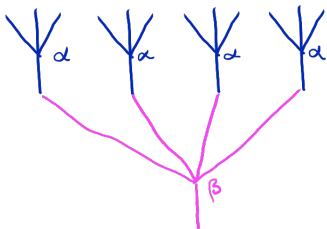
Thm. (Fox)

- 1 For any two commutative monoids M, N in a symmetric monoidal category $(\mathcal{V}, \otimes, I)$, $M \otimes N$ is also a commutative monoid.
- Let \mathbb{T} by a Lawvere 2-theory for pseudocommutative pseudomonoids.
- Models in \mathbf{Cat} = symmetric monoidal categories.
- Pseudo / lax / colax homomorphisms of models = strong / lax / colax symmetric monoidal functors.
- $\mathbf{CMon}(\mathcal{V}) = \mathbf{Lax}(1, \mathcal{V})$.

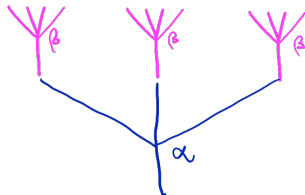
Thm. (P.)

- 1 For any pseudocommutative Lawvere 2-theory \mathbb{T} , there is a natural closed symmetric 2-multicategory structure on $\mathbf{Mod}(\mathbb{T}, \mathbf{Cat})_{lax}$ with internal hom being $\mathbf{Lax}(X, Y)$.

Pseudocommutativity



\approx



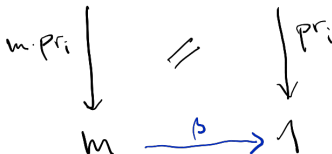
$\forall \alpha, \beta \text{ in } \Pi$

$$m \cdot n \xrightarrow{n \cdot \beta} n$$



$\forall pr_i : m \rightarrow 1$

$$m \cdot n \xrightarrow{n \cdot \beta} n$$



Recall: Gray tensor product

For any $w \in \{\text{strict, pseudo, lax, colax}\}$, let $[\mathcal{D}, \mathcal{E}]_w$ be a category of 2-functors and w -natural transformations.

$$[\mathcal{C} \otimes_{w\text{-Gray}} \mathcal{D}, \mathcal{E}] \cong [\mathcal{C}, [\mathcal{D}, \mathcal{E}]_w]$$

Added 2-cells in $\mathbb{T} \otimes_{ps\text{-Gray}} \mathbb{T}$:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} (m, k) & \xrightarrow{(1, \beta)} & (m, l) \\ (\alpha, 1) \downarrow & \text{\textcolor{brown}{\scriptsize \Sigma_{\alpha\beta}}} & \downarrow (\alpha, 1) \\ (n, l) & \xrightarrow{(1, \beta)} & (n, l) \end{array}$$

Pseudocommutativity: First try

Let $\theta : \mathbb{F}^{op} \rightarrow \mathbb{T}$ be a Lawvere 2-theory. A w -commutativity on \mathbb{T} consists of a structure (\mathbb{T}, μ, u) of a monoid in $(\mathbf{Cat}, \otimes_{w\text{-Gray}}, 1)$ on \mathbb{T} such that

- 1 μ preserves products in each variable,
- 2 ugly condition,
- 3 θ is a homomorphism of Gray monoids, i.e. $\mu(m, n) = m \cdot n$ and $u(*) = 1$.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathbb{F}^{op} \otimes \mathbb{F}^{op} & \xrightarrow{\theta \otimes \theta} & \mathbb{T} \otimes \mathbb{T} \\ \text{mult.} \downarrow & & \downarrow \mu \\ \mathbb{F}^{op} & \xrightarrow{\theta} & \mathbb{T} \end{array}$$

Going sketchy

Recall¹:

- \mathcal{V} -sketch is a \mathcal{V} -category \mathcal{S} equipped with a set of weighted cones in \mathcal{S} .
- \mathcal{F} -category is 2-category with tight and loose 1-cells.

$$(\text{Lawvere 2-theories}) \longrightarrow (\mathcal{F}\text{-sketches}) \longleftarrow (2\text{-cats with fin. powers})$$

Here:

- Lawvere theory $\theta: \mathbb{F}^{op} \rightarrow \mathbb{T}$ is an \mathcal{F} -sketch with loose cells those of \mathbb{T} , tight cells those in the image of θ , weighted cones those for finite powers.
- 2-category \mathcal{C} with finite powers is an \mathcal{F} -sketch with loose cells those of \mathcal{C} , tight cells of the form $X^n \rightarrow X$, weighted cones those for finite powers.

¹Nathanael Arkor, John Bourke, Joanna Ko: *Enhanced 2-categorical structures, two-dimensional limit sketches and the symmetry of internalisation*, 2024.

Why sketches?

$$(\text{Lawvere 2-theories}) \longrightarrow (\mathcal{F}\text{-sketches}) \longleftarrow (2\text{-cats with fin. powers})$$

Reason 1

$$\text{Mod}_w(\mathbb{T}, \mathcal{C}) \cong \mathcal{F}\text{-}\mathbf{Sk}_{s,w}(\mathbb{T}, \mathcal{C})$$

For any w , we have “enhanced Gray tensor product” $\otimes_{s,w}$ of \mathcal{F} -sketches: gives us exactly what we want!

Reason 2: Definition

A w -commutativity on a Lawvere theory $\theta: \mathbb{F}^{op} \rightarrow \mathbb{T}$ is a structure of monoid in $(\mathcal{F}\text{-}\mathbf{Sk}, \otimes_{s,w}, 1)$ on \mathbb{T} such that θ is a homomorphism of monoids.

Short exploration

Definition

A w -commutativity on a Lawvere theory $\mathbb{F}^{op} \rightarrow \mathbb{T}$ is a structure of monoid in $(\mathcal{F} - \mathbf{Sk}, \otimes_w, 1)$ on \mathbb{T} such that θ is a homomorphism of monoids.

Examples:

\mathbb{T}	commutativity	meaning
pseudomonoids	none	$X \otimes Y \neq Y \otimes X$
braided	lax	$X \otimes Y \rightarrow Y \otimes X$
symmetric	pseudo	$X \otimes Y \cong Y \otimes X$

$\mathbb{T} \dashrightarrow \text{Mod}(\mathbb{T}, \mathbb{C})$
 \downarrow
 \mathbb{C}

Thm. (P.)

There is a bijection between w -commutativity structures on \mathbb{T} and sections of a forgetful natural transformation $\text{Mod}(\mathbb{T}, \text{Mod}(\mathbb{T}, -)_w)_s \rightarrow \text{Mod}(\mathbb{T}, -)_s$.

In other words: *operations are w -homomorphisms in a coherent way.*

Lax multimorphisms

Let \mathbb{T} be a pseudocommutative Lawvere 2-theory, X_1, \dots, X_u, Y are \mathbb{T} -models in **Cat**. Then a lax \mathbb{T} -multimap $X_1, \dots, X_u \rightarrow Y$ is a lax natural transformation f

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \mathbb{T} \otimes \dots \otimes \mathbb{T} & \xrightarrow{(X_1, \dots, X_u)} & \mathbf{Cat} \otimes \dots \otimes \mathbf{Cat} \\
 \downarrow \mu^u & \Downarrow f & \downarrow \\
 & & \mathbf{Cat} \times \dots \times \mathbf{Cat} \\
 & & \downarrow \prod_{i=1}^u \\
 \mathbb{T} & \xrightarrow{Y} & \mathbf{Cat}
 \end{array}$$

Closed multicategory structure

Let \mathbb{T} be a pseudocommutative Lawvere 2-theory, X_1, \dots, X_u, Y are \mathbb{T} -models in \mathbf{Cat} . Then a lax \mathbb{T} -multimap $X_1, \dots, X_u \rightarrow Y$ is a lax natural transformation f which gives on components

$$f_{n_1, \dots, n_u} : \prod_i X_i(n_i) \rightarrow Y(n_1 \cdots n_u).$$

For the internal hom, define $[X, Y]_{lax}(n) := \text{Mod}_{lax}(\mathbb{T})(X, Y^n)$ and use the fact that pseudocommutativity promotes $Y(\alpha)$ to a pseudo-homomorphism of models, so we can put

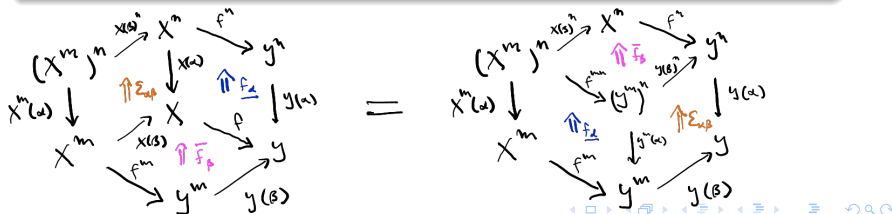
$$[X, Y]_{lax}(\alpha) := \text{Mod}_{lax}(\mathbb{T})(X, Y^n) \xrightarrow{- \circ Y(\alpha)} \text{Mod}_{lax}(\mathbb{T})(X, Y).$$

Interesting phenomenon: bilax maps

Recall: for braided / symmetric monoidal categories, one can study bilax monoidal functors, which is a compatible pair of a lax and colax structure on a functor. We have $\text{Bimon}(\mathcal{V}) \cong \text{Bilax}(1, \mathcal{V})$.

Definition (bilax morphisms of \mathbb{T} -models)

Let \mathbb{T} be lax-commutative 2-theory, $X, Y: \mathbb{T} \rightarrow \mathbf{Cat}$ models, $f: X(1) \rightarrow Y(1)$ a functor. Then a bilax structure on f is a structure of a lax homomorphism $\{\bar{f}_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in \text{mor } \mathbb{T}}$ and a colax homomorphism $\{f_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in \text{mor } \mathbb{T}}$ such that each \bar{f}_α is a colax natural transformation – or, equivalently, each f_α is a lax natural transformation.



Thanks!



Connection to 2-monads

Corresponding notion of a pseudocommutativity for 2-monads², involving (co)strengths, 7 axioms, and the following invertible 2-cells:

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 TA \times TB & \xrightarrow{t^*} & T(A \times TB) & \xrightarrow{Tt} & T^2(A \times B) \\
 \downarrow t & & \Downarrow \gamma_{AB} & & \downarrow \mu \\
 T(TA \times B) & \xrightarrow{Tt^*} & T^2(A \times B) & \xrightarrow{\mu} & T(A \times B)
 \end{array}$$

If $TX = \int^n X^m \mathbb{T} m$ corresponds to a Lawvere theory \mathbb{T} , we have an endofunctor $SX = \int^{m,n} X^{mn} \mathbb{T} m \times \mathbb{T} n$, γ_{XY} can be rewritten as

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 TX \times TY & \xrightarrow{d_{XY}} & S(X \times Y) \\
 & & \downarrow \\
 & & T(X \times Y)
 \end{array}
 \begin{array}{c}
 \xrightarrow{\otimes_1} \\
 \xleftarrow{\otimes_2}
 \end{array}$$

²M. Hyland, J. Power: *Pseudo-commutative monads and pseudo-closed 2-categories*, JPAA 175, p. 141-185, 2002.