Commentationes Mathematicae Universitatis Carolinae

Jiří Adámek; Jan Reiterman

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Commentationes Mathematicae Universitatis Carolinae, Vol. 17 (1976), No. 1, 97--103

Persistent URL: http://dml.cz/dmlcz/105677

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17,1 (1976)

EXACTNESS OF THE SET-VALUED COLIM

J. ADÁMEK, J. REITERMAN, PRAHA

Abstract: It is well-known that, in the category of sets, filtered colimits commute with finite limits; thus, if K is a filtered small category then the functor colim: $\mathrm{Set}^K \longrightarrow \mathrm{Set}$ is exact (i.e. preserves regular epis and finite limits). The converse is proved in the present note and other properties of colim are investigated and compared with these of colim: $\mathrm{Ab}^K \longrightarrow \mathrm{Ab}$ for the category Ab of Abelian groups.

Key words: Exact colimits, category of sets.

AMS: 08A10, 18B05 Ref. Ž.: 2.726

I. Formulation

I.1. The exactness of colim for Ab has been investigated by Isbell and Mitchell [2], [3]. In that case colim is exact iff it preserves equalizers and iff it preserves monics. For the set-valued colim (i.e. for colim : $\mathrm{Set}^K \longrightarrow \mathrm{Set}$) these properties differ. We shall prove namely the following propositions (see part III).

I.2. (a) colim preserves monics iff every diagram (*)

$$
\begin{tikzcd}[row sep=small]
 & C \\
M \arrow[ur, "f"] \arrow[dr, "q"'] & \\
 & D
\end{tikzcd}
\qquad\qquad
\begin{tikzcd}[row sep=small]
 & C \arrow[dr, "f'"] & \\
M \arrow[ur, "f"] \arrow[dr, "q"'] & & E \\
 & D \arrow[ur, "q'"'] &
\end{tikzcd}
$$

(∗) (∗∗)

in K is a part of commutative square (∗∗)

(b) colim preserves equalizers iff K has filtered components, i.e. iff K fulfils the condition of (a) and for every pair f, g of parallel morphisms there is k with $kf = kg$,

$$
\begin{tikzcd}
M \arrow[r, bend left, "f"] \arrow[r, bend right, "q"'] & N \arrow[r, "K"] & C
\end{tikzcd}
$$

(c) colim is exact iff K is filtered, i.e. iff K fulfils the conditions of (a),(b) and for every pair A, B of K-objects there is C with $\mathrm{Hom}(A,C) \neq \emptyset \neq \mathrm{Hom}(B,C)$.

I.3. This characterization is rather simple in comparison with the Ab case. Colim: $Ab^K \longrightarrow Ab$ is exact iff the following category aff K has filtered components: objects of aff K are just the objects of K; morphisms from A to B are those elements $\sum \alpha_i f_i$ of the free Abelian group over $\mathrm{Hom}_K(A,B)$ for which $\sum \alpha_i = 1$, see [3].

I.4. It is easily seen that 1) aff K has filtered components provided that K has, 2) if aff K has filtered components then K fulfils the condition of (a). Thus, denoting $A = \operatorname{colim} : Ab^K \longrightarrow Ab$, $S = \operatorname{colim} : Set^K \longrightarrow Set$ we get

S is exact $\Longrightarrow$ S preserves equalizers $\Longrightarrow$ A is exact $\Longrightarrow$ S preserves monics

None of these implications can be reversed. The counterexamples are easy (according to I.2, I.3) except that to the second implication: for the category K of finite ordinals and order preserving injections, A is proved to be exact in [3] but the only component of K is not filtered.

II. Relation to indecomposable functors

II.1. Colimits in sets are closely related to indecomposability: a functor $F: K \longrightarrow Set$ is indecomposable if whenever $F = F_1 \vee F_2$ then F_1 or F_2 is the constant functor to $\emptyset$. Notice that F is indecomposable iff colim F is a singleton set.

Let us observe that each non-trivial functor $F: K \longrightarrow Set$ can be decomposed into a sum of its components, i.e. maximal indecomposable subfunctors , $F = \coprod_{i \in I} F_i$. If $\mu : F \longrightarrow F'$ is a transformation and $F' = \coprod_{j \in J} F'_j$ is a decomposition of F' into components then for every $i \in I$ there is $c(i) \in J$ with $\mu(F_i) \subset F'_{c(i)}$. We have colim $F = I$, colim $F' = J$, colim $\mu = c$. From these observations one can derive the following properties of colim: $Set^K \longrightarrow Set$.

II.2. (a) colim preserves monics iff each non-trivial subfunctor of an indecomposable functor $F: K \longrightarrow Set$ is indecomposable, too.

(b) colim preserves equalizers iff indecomposable functors from K to Set have always the following "agreement property": for each couple $\mu, \nu : F \longrightarrow F'$ of transformations there is M and $x \in FM$ with $\mu_M x = \nu_M x$.

(c) colim preserves finite products iff the product of two indecomposable functors from K to Set is indecomposable, too.

II.3. The exactness of colim in the Ab case can be also characterized analogously [1] : colim: $Ab^K \longrightarrow Ab$ is exact iff the agreement property from (b) holds for all couples of endo-transformations of indecomposable functors from K to Set ; equivalently, iff each endotransformation $\mu :$ $: F \longrightarrow F$ of an indecomposable functor $F: K \longrightarrow Set$ has a fixed point (i.e. x in some FM with $\mu_M x = x$).

III. Proof

III.1. Necessities in I.2 follow from II.2 if we take into account that

(a) the subfunctor F of Hom(M,-) generated by $f:$ $: M \longrightarrow C$, $g: M \longrightarrow D$ must be indecomposable (then we have $f': C \longrightarrow E$, $g': D \longrightarrow E$ with $f'f = g'g$),

(b) the transformations Hom(f,-) , Hom(g,-): : Hom(N,-) $\longrightarrow$ Hom(M,-) must coincide at some $k \in$ Hom(N,C) ; and all monics are equalizers in Set^K ,

(c) the product Hom(M,-) $\times$ Hom(N,-) must be non-trivial.

III.2. Sufficiencies. (a) Let $F: K \longrightarrow Set$ be an indecomposable functor. To prove that all subfunctors of F

are indecomposable it suffices, for given $x \in FM$, $y \in FN$, to find $h\colon M \to Z$, $k\colon N \to Z$ with $Fh(x) = Fk(y)$. Fix $x \in FM$.

For every object T put $HT = \{ t \in FT$; there are $h\colon M \to Z$, $k\colon T \to Z$ with $Fh(x) = Fk(t) \}$; we shall prove that $H = F$. First, H is a subfunctor of F: given $t \in HT$ and given a morphism $p\colon T \to T_1$ we have $h\colon M \to Z$, $k\colon T \to Z$ with $Fh(x) = Fk(t)$; since p, k have a common domain there exist p', k' with $p'p = k'k$. This proves $Fp(t) \in HT_1$, because $F(k'k)(x) = Fp'(Fp(t))$.

$$\begin{tikzcd}
M \arrow[dr, "h"] & & \\
& Z \arrow[dr, "k'"] & \\
T \arrow[ur, "k"] \arrow[dr, "p"'] & & {} \\
& T_1 \arrow[ur, "p'"'] &
\end{tikzcd}$$

Second, $F - H$ (defined by $(F - H)T = FT - HT$) is a subfunctor of F , as is easily seen. Since F is indecomposable and $F = H \vee (F - H)$, either $F = H$ or $F = F - H$. The latter cannot occur, since $x \in HM$.

(b) Let $\mu, \nu : F \to F'$ be transformations between non-trivial indecomposable functors. Choose $z \in FM$ arbitrarily and put $x = \mu_M z$, $y = \nu_M z$. Via the previous part of the proof there exist $h, k\colon M \to Z$ with $F'h(x) = F'k(y)$ Choose $p\colon Z \to T$ with $ph = pk$ and put $t = F(ph)(x)$. Then $\mu_T t = F'(ph)(z) = F'(pk)(z) = \nu_T t$.

(c) is well known.

This concludes the proof.

IV. <u>A corollary</u>

IV.1. Let T be a cocomplete category which has a full subcategory D isomorphic to Set and closed under colimits and finite limits. Then we have

colim: $T^K \longrightarrow T$ is exact $\Longrightarrow$ K is filtered.

Indeed, if colim: $T^K \longrightarrow T$ is exact so is colim: : $D^K \longrightarrow D$, the latter being a restriction of the former one. As $D \sim$ Set , K is filtered by I.2c.

IV.2. The above corollary applies e.g. to the category of

- topological (resp. uniform) spaces,
- graphs,
- unary algebras of a given type

and to T^L for any such T and any small L .
In all of these examples filtered colimits commute with finite limits (as is easily seen) so that we have

colim: $T^K \longrightarrow T$ is exact $\Longleftrightarrow$ K is filtered.

R e f e r e n c e s

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Elektrotechnická fakulta
ČVUT
Suchbátarova 2,16627 Praha 6
Československo

Fakulta jaderná a fyzikálně
inženýrská ČVUT
Husova 5, 11900 Praha 1
Československo

(Oblatum 2.6. 1975)