Prolog

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Syllogisms

- "Prolog" is all about **programming in logic**.
- Socrates is a man.
- All men are mortal.
- Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

Facts, rules, and queries

- Fact: Socrates is a man.
  \[\text{man(socrates)}\]
- Rule: All men are mortal.
  \[\text{mortal(X) :- man(X)}\]
- Query: Is Socrates mortal?
  \[\text{mortal(socrates)}\]

Running Prolog I

- Create your "database" (program) in any editor
- Save it as **text only**, with a **.pl** extension
- Here's the complete "program":
  \[\text{man(socrates).} \]
  \[\text{mortal(X) :- man(X).} \]
### Running Prolog II

- Prolog is *completely interactive*.
- Begin by invoking the Prolog interpreter: `sicstus`
- Then load your program: `consult('mortal.pl')`
- Then, ask your question at the prompt: `mortal(socrates)`
- Prolog responds:
  - Yes

### Syntax I: Structures

- Example structures:
  - `sunshine`
  - `man(socrates)`
  - `path(garden, south, sundial)`
- `<structure> ::= <name> | <name> ( <arguments> )`
- `<arguments> ::= <argument> | <argument>, <arguments>`

### Syntax II: Base Clauses

- Example base clauses:
  - `debug_on`
  - `loves(john, mary)`
  - `loves(mary, bill)`
- `<base clause> ::= <structure> .`
Syntax III: Nonbase Clauses

- Example nonbase clauses:
  - mortal(X) :- man(X).
  - mortal(X) :- woman(X).
  - happy(X) :- healthy(X), wealthy(X), wise(X).

Syntax IV: Predicates

- A predicate is a collection of clauses with the same functor and arity.
  - loves(john, mary).
  - loves(mary, bill).
  - loves(chuck, X) :- female(X), rich(X).

Syntax V: Programs

- A program is a collection of predicates.
  - Predicates can be in any order.
  - Predicates are used in the order in which they occur.

Syntax VI: Assorted details

- Variables begin with a capital letter: X, Socrates, _result
- Atoms do not begin with a capital letter: x, socrates
- Other atoms must be enclosed in single quotes:
  - 'Socrates'
  - 'C:/My Documents/examples.pl'
Syntax VII: Assorted details

- In a quoted atom, a single quote must be quoted or backslashed: ‘Can’‘t, or won’t?’
- /* Comments are like this */
- Prolog allows some infix operators, such as :- (turnstile) and , (comma). These are syntactic sugar for the functors ‘:+ ’and ‘,’.
- Example:
  
  ‘:+ ‘(mortal(X), man(X)).

Backtracking

loves(chuck, X) :- female(X), rich(X).
female(jane).
female(mary).
rich(mary).

-------- Suppose we ask: loves(chuck, X).
female(X) = female(jane), X = jane.
rich(jane) fails.
female(X) = female(mary), X = mary.
rich(mary) succeeds.

Additional answers

- female(jane).
female(mary).
female(susan).
- ? female(X).
- X = jane ;
- X = mary
- Yes

Common problems

- Capitalization is extremely important!
  - Capitalized symbols are variables!
- No space between a functor and its argument list:
  - man(socrates), not man (socrates).
- Don’t forget the period! (But you can put it on the next line.)
**Prolog Execution Model/ Prolog Debugger**

Goal = parent(P, john)

- parent(james, john)
- parent(florence, john)
- parent(alan, elizabeth)
- parent(alan, emily)

**Execution Model (conjunctions)**

parent(james, john),
parent(florence, john),
parent(alan, elizabeth),
parent(alan, emily),
female(emily),
female(florence),
female(elizabeth).

**Readings**

- loves(chuck, X) :- female(X), rich(X).
- Declarative reading: Chuck loves X if X is female and rich.
- Approximate procedural reading: To find an X that Chuck loves, first find a female X, then check that X is rich.
- Declarative readings are almost always preferred.
- Try to write Prolog predicates so that the procedural and natural declarative reading give the same answers.

**Logic is Monotonic**

- Classical logic, anyway.
- Monotonic never gets smaller
- In logic, a thing is true or false
  - 3>2 is true
  - If something is true, it’s true for all time
    - 3>2 always was and always will be true
  - us_president(‘George W. Bush’) ?
  - loves(‘Tom Cruise’, ‘Katie Holms’) ?
Non-Monotonic Logic

- A non-monotonic logic is one in which a proposition's true value can change in time.
- Learning a new fact may cause the number of true propositions to decrease.
- Prolog is non-monotonic for two reasons:
  - You can assert and retract clauses.
  - Prolog uses “negation as failure.”

Assert and Retract

- Normally we assert and retract facts (i.e., base clauses).
- You can assert/retract any clause.

Negation as failure

- NOT is basic to logic.
- How can we prove that something is false?
- Pure prolog only supports positive proofs.
- Handling negation is much more difficult.
  - Quickly leads to undecidability.
- Yet...
  - ?- man(tom).
  - No
- In Prolog, we often use our inability to prove P to be a prove that P is false.
- This is the semantics databases assume.

not is Prolog’s NAF operator

- Birds can fly, except for penguins.
  - canFly(X) :- bird(X), not(penguin(X)).
  - bird(eagle), bird(wren), bird(penguin), bird(emu).
- Birds can fly unless we know them to be flightless.
  - canFly(X) :- bird(X), not(cantFly(X)).
  - cantFly(penguin), cantFly(emu).
- What does this mean?
  - not(bird(X))
- The ‘standard not operator is \(+.\).
A Simple Prolog Model

- Imagine prolog as a system which has a database composed of two components:
  - FACTS - statements about true relations which hold between particular objects in the world. For example:
    - parent(adam, able): adam is a parent of able
    - parent(eve, able): eve is a parent of able
    - male(adam): adam is male
  - RULES - statements about true relations which hold between objects in the world which contain generalizations, expressed through the use of variables. For example, the rule
    - father(X, Y) :- parent(X, Y), male(X).
  - might express:
    - for any X and any Y, X is the father of Y if X is a parent of Y and X is male.

Nomenclature and Syntax

- A prolog rule is called a clause.
- A clause has a head, a neck and a body:
  - father(X, Y) :- parent(X, Y), male(X).
  - head
  - neck
  - body
- the head is a rule’s conclusion.
- The body is a rule’s premise or condition.
- note:
  - read :- as IF
  - read , as AND
  - a . marks the end of input

Prolog Database

- parent(adam, able)
- parent(adam, cain)
- male(adam)
- ...
- father(X, Y) :- parent(X, Y), male(X).
- sibling(X, Y) :- ...

Facts comprising the “extensional database”

Rules comprising the “intensional database”

The terms extensional and intensional are borrowed from the language philosophers use for epistemology.

- Extension refers to whatever exists, i.e., “is quantifiable in space as well as in time.”
- Intension is an antonym of extension, referring to “that class of existence which may be quantifiable in time but not in space.”
- NOT intensional with an “s” which has to do with “will, volition, desire, plan, …”

For KBs and DBs we use

- extensional to refer to that which is explicitly represented (e.g., a fact), and
- intensional to refer to that which is represented abstractly, e.g., by a rule of inference.

Epistemology is “a branch of philosophy that investigates the origin, nature, methods, and limits of knowledge.”
A Simple Prolog Session

?- assert(parent(adam,able)).
yes

?- parent(X,able).

?- parent(eve,able).
yes

?- parent(adam,able).
X = able

?- sibling(X,Y).

A Prolog Session

?- [user],
female(eve).
parent(adam,cain).
parent(eve,cain).
father(X,Y) :-
parent(X,Y), male(X).
mother(X,Y) :-
parent(X,Y), female(X).
^user consulted 356 bytes 0.0666673 sec.
yes

?- mother(Who, cain).
Who = cain
yes

?- trace, mother(Who, cain).
(2) 1 Call: mother(_, _0, cain) ?
(3) 2 Exit: parent(adam, cain)
(4) 2 Fail: female(adam)
(3) 2 Back to: parent(0, cain) ?
(3) 2 Exit: parent(eve, cain)
(5) 2 Fail: female(eve)
(2) 1 Exit: mother(eve, cain)
Who = eve
yes

How to Satisfy a Goal

Here is an informal description of how Prolog satisfies a goal (like father(adam,X)). Suppose the goal is G:

- if G = P;Q then first satisfy P, carry any variable bindings forward to Q, and then satisfy Q.
- if G = P;Q then first satisfy P. If that fails, then try to satisfy Q.
- if G = not(P) then try to satisfy P, If this succeeds, then fail and if it fails, then succeed.
- if G is a simple goal, then look for a fact in the DB that unifies with G look for a rule whose conclusion unifies with G and try to satisfy its body.
**Note**

- Two basic conditions are true, which always succeeds, and fail, which always fails.
- A comma (,) represents conjunction (i.e., and).
- A semi-colon represents disjunction (i.e., or), as in:
  \[ \text{grandParent}(X,Y) :\text{grandFather}(X,Y); \text{grandMother}(X,Y). \]
- There is no real distinction between RULES and FACTS. A FACT is just a rule whose body is the trivial condition true. That is:
  \[ \text{parent}(\text{adam},\text{cain}) \text{ and } \text{parent}(\text{adam},\text{cain}) \text{ are equivalent.} \]
- Goals can usually be posed with any of several combination of variables and constants:
  - `\text{parent}(\text{cain},\text{able})` - Is Cain Able’s parent?
  - `\text{parent}(\text{cain},X)` - Who is a child of Cain?
  - `\text{parent}(X,\text{cain})` - Who is Cain a child of?
  - `\text{parent}(X,Y)` - What two people have a parent/child relationship?

**Prolog Terms**

- The term is the basic data structure in Prolog.
- The term is to Prolog what the s-expression is to Lisp.
- A term is either:
  - A constant
    - `\text{john}, 13, 3.1415, +, 'a constant'`
  - A variable
    - `\text{X}, \text{Var}, \text{a number}, \_too`  
  - A compound term
    - `\text{part}(\text{arm},\text{body})`
    - `\text{part}(\text{arm}(\text{john}),\text{body}(\text{john}))`
- The reader and printer support operators:
  - `- X is read as ‘\text{~}(X).’`
  - `5 + 2 is read as ‘+(5,2).’`
  - `\text{a:b:c:d} \text{read as ‘:-\text{(a,}\text{b,}\text{c,d).}}`"

**Compound Terms**

- A compound term can be thought of as a relation between one or more terms:
  - `\text{part_of}(\text{finger},\text{hand})`
- And is written as:
  - The relation name (principle functor) which must be a constant.
  - An open parenthesis
  - The arguments - one or more terms separated by commas.
  - A closing parenthesis.
- The number of arguments of a compound terms is called its arity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>arity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f(a,b)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f(g(a),b)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Notion of Unification**

- Unification is when two things “become one”
- Unification is kind of like assignment
- Unification is kind of like equality in algebra
- Unification is mostly like pattern matching
- Example:
  - `\text{loves}(\text{john}, X)` unifies with `\text{loves}(\text{john}, \text{mary})` and in the process, `X` gets unified with `mary`
Unification I

- Any value can be unified with itself.
  - weather(sunny) = weather(sunny)
- A variable can be unified with another variable.
  - X = Y
- A variable can be unified with ("instantiated to") any Prolog term.
  - Topic = weather(sunny)

Explicit Unification

- The explicit unification operator is 
  - =
- Unification is symmetric:
  - Cain = father(adam)
  - means the same as
  - father(adam) = Cain
- Most unification happens implicitly, as a result of parameter transmission.
  - E.g., Prolog tries to prove older(X, bob) by unifying it with the fact older(zeus, _).

Unification II

- Two different structures can be unified if their constituents can be unified.
  - mother(mary, X) = mother(Y, father(Z))
- In Prolog, a variable can be unified with a structure containing that same variable.
  - This is usually a Bad Idea.
  - Unifying X and f(X) binds X to a circular structure which Prolog can not print.
  - X = f(f(f(f(f(...

Scope of Names

- The scope of a variable is the single clause in which it appears.
- The scope of the "anonymous" ("don't care") variable (eg, _ or _foo) is itself.
  - loves(_, _) = loves(john, mary)
- A variable that only occurs once in a clause is a useless singleton; replace it with an anonymous variable.
  - Most Prolog interpreters will issue warnings if you have rules with singleton variables
  - isFather(X) :- male(X), parent(X, _child).
Writing Prolog Programs

- Suppose the database contains
  loves(chuck, X) :- female(X), rich(X).
  female(jane).
  and we ask who Chuck loves,
  ? loves(chuck, Woman).
- female(X) finds a value for X, say, jane
- rich(X) then tests whether jane is rich

Clauses as Cases

- A predicate consists of multiple clauses whose heads have the same principle functor and arity.
- Each clause represents a “case”:
  grandfather(X,Y) :- father(X,Z), father(Z,Y).
  grandfather(X,Y) :- mother(X,Z), mother(Z,Y).
  abs(X, Y) :- X < 0, Y is -X.
  abs(X, X) :- X >= 0.
- Clauses with heads having different arity are unrelated.
- Like methods in OO languages

Ordering

- Clauses are always tried in order
  buy(X) :- good(X).
  buy(X) :- cheap(X).
  cheap('Java 2 Complete').
  good('Thinking in Java').
- What will buy(X) choose first?

Ordering II

- Try to handle more specific cases (those having more variables instantiated) first.
  dislikes(john, bill).
  dislikes(john, X) :- rich(X).
  dislikes(X, Y) :- loves(X, Z), loves(Z, Y).
Ordering III

- Some "actions" cannot be undone by backtracking over them:
  - write, nl, assert, retract, consult
- Do tests before you do undoable actions:
  - `take(A) :- at(A, in_hand), write("You're already holding it!"), nl.`

Recursion

- Prolog makes avoiding infinite recursion the programmer's responsibility.
- But it always tries clauses in order and processes conditions in a clause from left to right.
- So, handle the base cases first, recur only with a simpler case, use right recursion.
  
  ```prolog
  ancestor(P1,P2) :- parent(P1,P2).
  ancestor(P1,P2) :- parent(P1,X), ancestor(X,P2).
  ```
- But not:
  
  ```prolog
  ancestor(P1,P2) :- parent(P1,P2).
  ancestor(P1,P2) :- ancestor(P1,X), parent(X,P2).
  ```

Facts and Rules

- Designing a Prolog knowledge base usually starts with deciding which predicates will be provided as facts and which will be defined by rules.
  - `parent(Adam, cain).`
  - `child(X, Y) :- parent(Y, X).`
- We don't have to worry about this in logic and in some logic programming languages:
  - `parent(X, Y) <-> child(Y, X)`
- Of course, it's common for a predicate to be defined using both facts and rules.
  - Example: `int(0). int(suc(X)) :- int(X).`
  - What's at issue is really avoiding non-terminating reasoning.

Choosing predicates

- Designing a set of predicates (an ontology) requires knowledge of the domain and how the representation will be used.
- Example: representing an object's color.
  - `green(kermit)`
  - `color(kermit, green)`
  - `value(kermit, color, green)`
  - `attribute(kermit, color, value, green)`
- Which of these is best?
Issues in choosing predicates

What queries can be asked?
- A principle functor cannot be a variable, e.g., can’t do: `Relation(john,mary)`
- Which can we use to answer:
  - Is kermit green?
  - What color is Kermit?
  - What do we know about Kermit?
  - What is the range of the color attribute?

How efficient is retrieval of facts and rules.
- Let a term’s signature be its principle functor and arity.
- Prolog indexes a fact or rule head on its signature and the signature of its first argument.
- This is done for efficiency.

Cut and Cut-fail

- The cut, !, is a commit point. It commits to:
  - the clause in which it occurs (can’t try another)
  - everything up to that point in the clause
- Example:
  - `loves(chuck, X) :- female(X), !, rich(X).`
  - Chuck loves the first female in the database, but only if she is rich.
  - `Cut-fail, (!, fail), means give up now and don’t even try for another solution. More on this later`

Arithmetic: Built-In `is/2`

- Arithmetic expressions aren’t normally evaluated in Prolog.
- Built-In `infix operator is/2` evaluates its 2nd argument, and unifies the result with its 1st argument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>?- X = 5 + 2.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X = 7 ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Any variables in the right-hand side of `is/2` must be instantiated when it is evaluated.
- More on this later

What you can’t do

- There are no functions, only predicates
- Prolog is programming in logic, therefore there are few control structures
- There are no assignment statements; the state of the program is what’s in the database
Workarounds II

- There are few control structures in Prolog, BUT...
- You don’t need IF because you can use multiple clauses with “tests” in them
- You seldom need loops because you have recursion
- You can, if necessary, construct a “fail loop”

Fail Loops

notice_objects_at(Place) :-
at(X, Place), write('There is a '), write(X), write(' here.'), nl, fail.
notice_objects_at(_).

Use fail loops sparingly, if at all.

Workarounds II

- There are no functions, only predicates, BUT...
- A call to a predicate can instantiate variables: female(X) can either
  - look for a value for X that satisfies female(X), or
  - if X already has a value, test whether female(X) can be proved true
- By convention, output variables come last
  - Square(N,N2) :- N2 is N*N.

Functions are a subset of relations, so you can define a function like factorial as a relation
- factorial(N,0) :- N<1.
- factorial(1,1).
- factorial(N,M) :- N2 is N-1, factorial(N2,M2), M is N*M2.
- The last argument to the relation is used for the value that the function returns.
- How would you define:
  - fib(n)=fib(n-1)+fib(n-2) where fib(0)=0 and fib(1)=1
Workarounds III

- There are no assignment statements, BUT...
- the Prolog database keeps track of program state

\[
\text{bump\_count} \leftarrow
\begin{align*}
& \text{retract(count(X))}, \\
& Y \text{ is } X + 1, \\
& \text{assert(count(Y))},
\end{align*}
\]

- Don't get carried away and misuse this!

Lists in Prolog

- Prolog has a simple universal data structure, the term, out of which others are built.
- Prolog lists are important because
  - They are useful in practice
  - They offer good examples of writing standard recursive predicates
  - They show how a little syntactic sugar helps

Linked Lists

- Prolog allows a special syntax for lists:
  - \([a,b,c]\) is a list of 3 elements
  - \([\]\) is a special atom indicating a list with 0 elements
- Internally, Prolog lists are regular Prolog terms with the functor '.' (so called “dotted pairs”)
  \([a,b,c] = '.'(a, '.'(b, '.'(c, []))).\]
- The symbol | in a list indicates “rest of list”, or the term that is a dotted pair’s 2nd argument.
  \([a,b,c] = [a|b,c].\]
- \([\text{Head}|\text{Tail}]\) is a common expression for dividing a list into its 1st element (Head) and the rest of the list (Tail).

Example: list/1

\% list(?List) succeeds if its arg is a well formed list.
list([]).
list([\_Head|\Tail]):-
list(\Tail).

- Since Prolog is untyped, we don’t have to know anything about \textbf{Head} except that it is a term.
- The list can have terms of any type
  \([1, \text{foo}, X, [\text{sub}, \text{list}], 3.14]\)
Example: member/2

% member(?Element, ?List) is true iff Element is a top-level member of the list List.
member(Element, [Element|_Tail]).
member(Element, [_Head|Tail]):- member(Element, Tail).

This is a standard recursive definition of member:

(1) If the list has some elements, is what we’re looking for the first one?
(2) If the list has some elements, is what we’re looking for in the rest of the list?
(3) The answer is no.

Example: delete/3

% delete(+Element, +List, -NewList)
% delete/3 succeeds if NewList results from removing one occurrence of Element from List.
delete(Element, [Element|Tail], Tail).
delete(Element, [Head|Tail], [Head|NewTail]):-
delete(Element, Tail, NewTail).

Member has several uses

% member(+,+) checks membership.
| ? | ?-- member(b,[a,b,c]).
   yes
| ? | ?-- member(x,[a,b,c]).
   no

% member(--,+) generates members.
| ? | ?-- member(a,L).
   L = [a|_A] ? ;
   L = [_A,a|_B] ? ;
   L = [_A,_B,a|_C] ?
   yes

% member(+-,+) generates lists.
| ? | ?-- member(X,[a,b,c]).
   X = a ? ;
   X = b ? ;
   X = c ? ;
   no

% member(--,-) generates lists.
| ? | ?-- member(X,L).
   L = [X|_A] ? ;
   L = [_A,X|_B] ? ;
   L = [_A,_B,X|_C] ?
   yes

Using member to test list elements

Does a list L have a negative number in it?
member(X,L), number(N), N<0.

Are all of the elements of L numbers between 1 and 10?
not(member(X,L),
    not(number(X) ; X<1 ; X>10))
Example: append/3

% append(?List1, ?List2, ?List3)
% append/3 succeeds if List3 contains all the
% elements of List1, followed by all the elements
% of List2.

append([], List2, List2).
append([Head|List1], List2, [Head|List3]):-
append(List1, List2, List3).

Example: sublist/3

% sublist(?SubList, +List). Note: The 1st append % finds a beginning point for the sublist and the % 2nd append finds an end point
sublist(SubList, List):-
append(_List1, List2, List),
append(SubList, _List3, List2).
% example: sublist([3,4],[1,2,3,4,5,6])

Example: append is amazing

% append(+,+,+) checks
| ? append([1,2],[a,b],[1,2,a,b])
| no % append(+,+,+) concatenates
% append(+,+,--) concatenates
| ? append([1,2],L,[1,2,a,b])
| L = [1,2,a,b] ?
oyes
| ? append(X,[a,b],[1,2,a,b])
| X = [1,2,a,b] ?
oyes
| ? append(X,Y,[1,2,a,b])
| X = [], Y = [1,2,a,b] ?
oyes
| ? append(X,Y,[1,2,a,b])
| X = [1], Y = [2,a,b] ?
oyes
| ? append(X,Y,[1,2,a,b])
| X = [1,2], Y = [a,b] ?
oyes
| ? append(X,Y,[1,2,a,b])
| X = [1,2,a], Y = [b] ?
oyes
| ? append(X,Y,[1,2,a,b])
| X = [1,2,a,b], Y = [] ?
nono

Example: sublist/3 (cont)

% here's another way to write sublist/2
sublist1(SubList, List):-
append(List1, _List2, List),
append(_List3, SubList, List1).

Example: “naïve” reverse

% nreverse(?,List, ?ReversedList) is true iff the % result of reversing the top-level elements of % list List is equal to ReversedList.

nreverse([], []). nreverse([Head|Tail], ReversedList):- nreverse(Tail, ReversedTail), append(ReversedTail, [Head], ReversedList).

- this is simple but inefficient
- it’s not tail recursive
- append is constantly copying and recopying lists
- it’s a traditional benchmark for Prolog.

Example: efficient reverse/3

% reverse(+List, -ReversedList) is a “tail recursive” % version of reverse.

reverse(List, ReversedList) :- reverse1(List, []). reverse1([], ReversedList).

reverse1([Head|Tail], PartialList, ReversedList):-
  reverse1(Tail, [Head|PartialList], ReversedList).

Finding Paths

adj(1,2). adj(1,3). adj(2,3). adj(2,4). adj(3,4). adj(5,6).
adjacent(N1,N2) :-- adj(N1,N2). adjacent(N1,N2) :-- adj(N2,N1).
connected(From,To) :- go(From,To, []).
go(From,To, Passed) :- adjacent(From,To),
                    not(member(To, Passed)),
go(Next,To, [Next|Passed]).

1 IS CONNECTED TO 2, 3, 4

Paths: 12 13 123 124 132 1234 134 1243 1234 1342 1324

Note: calling trace/0 turns on tracing. Calling notrace/0 turns it off.
“Pure Prolog” and non-logical built-ins

- All the examples so far have been “pure Prolog”
- Contain no built-ins with non-logical side-effects
- Prolog has many built-in predicates that have such side-effects:
  - Type checking of terms
  - Arithmetic
  - Control execution
  - Input and output
  - Modify the program during execution (assert, retract, etc.)
  - Perform aggregation operations
- Use of non-logical built-in predicates usually affects the reversibility of your program.