COP4020 Programming Languages

Prolog

Chris Lacher

Based on Robert van Engelen

Overview

- Logic programming principles
- Prolog

Logic Programming

- Logic programming is a form of declarative programming

- A program is a *collection of axioms*
- Each axiom is a *Horn clause* of the form:

  H :- B_1, B_2, ..., B_n.

  where H is the head term and B_i are the body terms
- Meaning: H is true if all B_i are true

- A user states a *goal* (a theorem) to be proven
- The logic programming system uses *inference steps* to prove the goal (theorem) is true, using a logical resolution strategy

Resolution Strategies

- To *deduce* a goal (theorem), the programming system searches axioms and combines sub-goals using a resolution strategy
- For example, given the axioms:

  C :- *A*, *B*.

  D :- *C*.
- *Forward chaining* deduces first that C is true:

  C :- *A*, *B*

  and then that *D* is true:

  D :- *C*
- *Backward chaining* finds that *D* can be proven if sub-goal *C* is true:

  D :- *C*

  the system then deduces that the sub-goal is *C* is true:

  C :- *A*, *B*

  since the system could prove *C* it has proven *D*

Prolog

- Prolog uses backward chaining, which is more efficient than forward chaining for larger collections of axioms
- Prolog is interactive (mixed compiled/interpreted)
- Example applications:
  - Expert systems
  - Artificial intelligence
  - Natural language understanding
  - Logical puzzles and games
- Popular system: SWI-Prolog
  - Login `linprog.cs.fsu.edu`
  - `pl` (or `swipl`) to start SWI-Prolog
  - `halt.` to halt Prolog (period is the Prolog command terminator)

Definitions: Prolog Clauses

- A program consists of a collection of *Horn clauses*
- Each clause consists of a *head predicate* and *body predicates*:

  H :- B_1, B_2, ..., B_n.

  - A clause is either a *rule*, e.g.
    ```
    snowy(X) :- rainy(X), cold(X).
    ```
    meaning: "If X is rainy and X is cold then this implies that X is snowy"
  - Or a clause is a *fact*, e.g.
    ```
    rainy(rochester).
    ```
    meaning "Rochester is rainy."
  - This fact is identical to the rule with **`true`** as the body predicate:
    ```
    rainy(rochester) :- true.
    ```
- A predicate is a term (an atom or a structure), e.g.
  - **`rainy(rochester)`**
  - **`member(X,Y)`**
  - **`true`**

Definitions: Queries and Goals

- *Queries* are used to "execute" goals
- A query is interactively entered by a user after a program is loaded
  - A query has the form

    ?- G_1, G_2, ..., G_n.

    where G_i are goals (predicates)
- A goal is a predicate to be proven true by the programming system
  - Example program with two facts:
    - **`rainy(seattle).`**
    - **`rainy(rochester).`**
  - Query with one goal to find which city *C* is rainy (if any):

    ```
    ?- rainy(C).
    ```
  - Response by the interpreter:

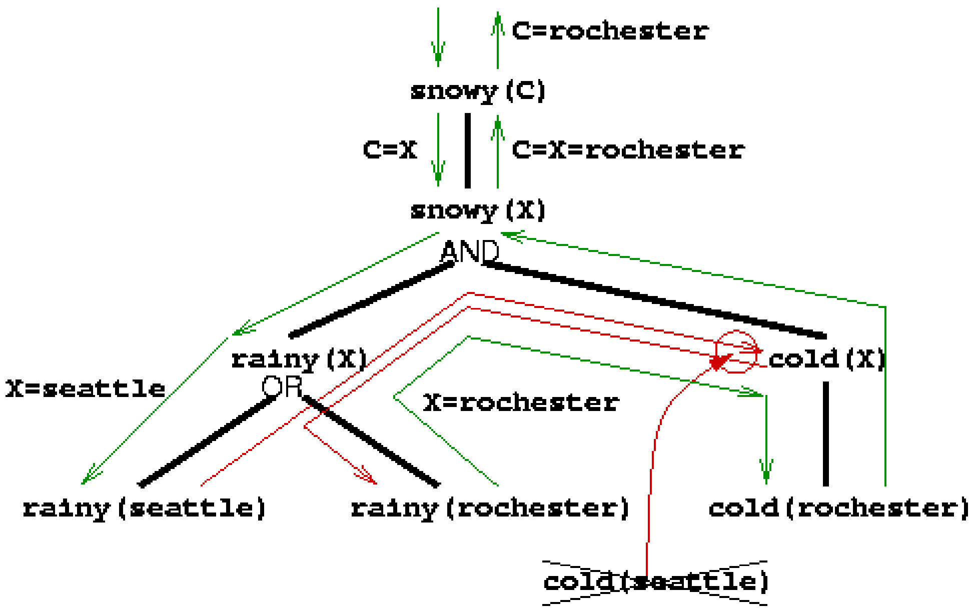
    ```
    C = seattle
    ```
  - Type a semicolon ; to get next solution:

    ```
    C = rochester
    ```
  - Typing another semicolon does not return another solution

Example

- Consider a program with three facts and one rule:
    - **`rainy(seattle).`**
    - **`rainy(rochester).`**
    - **`cold(rochester).`**
    - **`snowy(X) :- rainy(X), cold(X).`**
  - Query and response:
    ```
    ?- snowy(rochester).
    yes
    ```
  - Query and response:
    ```
    ?- snowy(seattle).
    no
    ```
  - Query and response:
    ```
    ?- snowy(paris).
    no
    ```
  - Query and response:
    ```
    ?- snowy(C).
    C = rochester
    ```
    because **`rainy(rochester)`** and **`cold(rochester)`** are sub-goals that are both true facts

Backward Chaining with Backtracking



An unsuccessful match forces backtracking in which alternative clauses are searched that match (sub-)goals

- Consider again:
  `?- snowy(C).`
  `C = rochester`
- The system first tries **`C=seattle`**:
  `rainy(seattle)`
  `cold(seattle)` **fail**
- Then **`C=rochester`**:
  `rainy(rochester)`
  `cold(rochester)`
- When a goal fails, *backtracking* is used to search for solutions
- The system keeps this execution point in memory together with the *current variable bindings*
- Backtracking unwinds variable bindings to establish new bindings

Example: Family Relationships

- Facts:
  - `male(albert).`
  - `male(edward).`
  - `female(alice).`
  - `female(victoria).`
  - `parents(edward, victoria, albert).`
  - `parents(alice, victoria, albert).`
- Rule:

  `sister(X,Y) :- female(X), parents(X,M,F), parents(Y,M,F).`
- Query: `?- sister(alice, Z).`
- The system applies backward chaining to find the answer:
  1. `sister(alice,Z)` matches 2nd rule: `X=alice, Y=Z`
  2. New goals: `female(alice),parents(alice,M,F),parents(Z,M,F)`
  3. `female(alice)` matches 3rd fact
  4. `parents(alice,M,F)` matches 2nd rule: `M=victoria, F=albert`
  5. `parents(Z,victoria,albert)` matches 1st rule: `Z=edward`

Example: Murder Mystery

```
% the murderer had brown hair:
        murderer(X) :- hair(X, brown).
% mr_holman had a ring:
        attire(mr_holman, ring).
% mr_pope had a watch:
        attire(mr_pope, watch).
% If sir_raymond had tattered cuffs then mr_woodley had the pincenez:
        attire(mr_woodley, pincenez) :-
          attire(sir_raymond, tattered_cuffs).
% and vice versa:
        attire(sir_raymond,pincenez) :-
          attire(mr_woodley, tattered_cuffs).
% A person has tattered cuffs if he is in room 16:
        attire(X, tattered_cuffs) :- room(X, 16).
% A person has black hair if he is in room 14, etc:
        hair(X, black) :- room(X, 14).
        hair(X, grey) :- room(X, 12).
        hair(X, brown) :- attire(X, pincenez).
        hair(X, red) :- attire(X, tattered_cuffs).
% mr_holman was in room 12, etc:
        room(mr_holman, 12).
        room(sir_raymond, 10).
        room(mr_woodley, 16).
        room(X, 14) :- attire(X, watch).
```

Example (cont'd)

- Question: who is the murderer?

```
?- murderer(X).
```

- Execution trace (indentation shows nesting depth):

```
murderer(X)
   hair(X, brown)
      attire(X, pincenez)
         X = mr_woodley
         attire(sir_raymond, tattered_cuffs)
            room(sir_raymond, 16)
            FAIL (no facts or rules)
         FAIL (no alternative rules)
      REDO (found one alternative rule)
      attire(X, pincenez)
         X = sir_raymond
         attire(mr_woodley, tattered_cuffs)
            room(mr_woodley, 16)
            SUCCESS
         SUCCESS: X = sir_raymond
      SUCCESS: X = sir_raymond
   SUCCESS: X = sir_raymond
SUCCESS: X = sir_raymond
```

Unification and Variable Instantiation

- In the previous examples we saw the use of variables, e.g. C and X
- A variable is *instantiated* to a term as a result of *unification*, which takes place when goals are matched to head predicates
  - Goal in query: `rainy(C)`
  - Fact: `rainy(seattle)`
  - Unification is the result of the goal-fact match: `C=seattle`
- Unification is recursive:
  - An uninstantiated variable unifies with anything, even with other variables which makes them identical (aliases)
  - An atom unifies with an identical atom
  - A constant unifies with an identical constant
  - A structure unifies with another structure if the functor and number of arguments are the same and the arguments unify recursively
- Once a variable is instantiated to a non-variable term, it cannot be changed: “proofs cannot be tampered with”

Examples of Unification

- The built-in predicate **=**(*A*,*B*) succeeds if and only if *A* and *B* can be unified, where the goal **=**(*A*,*B*) may be written as *A* **=** *B*
  - ```
    ?- a = a.
    yes
    ```
  - ```
    ?- a = 5.
    No
    ```
  - ```
    ?- 5 = 5.0.
    No
    ```
  - ```
    ?- a = X.
    X = a
    ```
  - ```
    ?- foo(a,b) = foo(a,b).
    Yes
    ```
  - ```
    ?- foo(a,b) = foo(X,b).
    X = a
    ```
  - ```
    ?- foo(X,b) = Y.
    Y = foo(X,b)
    ```
  - ```
    ?- foo(Z,Z) = foo(a,b).
    no
    ```

Definitions: Prolog Terms

- *Terms* are symbolic expressions that are Prolog's building blocks
- A Prolog program consists of Horn clauses (axioms) that are terms
- Data structures processed by a Prolog program are terms
- A term is either
  - a *variable*: a name beginning with an upper case letter
  - a *constant*: a number or string
  - an *atom*: a symbol or a name beginning with a lower case letter
  - a *structure* of the form:
    $$functor(arg_1, arg_2, ..., arg_n)$$
    where *functor* is an atom and arg_i are terms
- Examples:
  - **`X`**, **`Y`**, **`ABC`**, and **`Alice`** are variables
  - **`7`**, **`3.14`**, and **`"hello"`** are constants
  - **`foo`**, **`barFly`**, and **`+`** are atoms
  - **`bin_tree(foo, bin_tree(bar, glarch))`** and **`+(3,4)`** are structures

Term Manipulation

- Terms can be analyzed and constructed
  - Built-in predicates **`functor`** and **`arg`**, for example:
    - ```
      ?- functor(foo(a,b,c), foo, 3).
      yes
      ```
    - ```
      ?- functor(bar(a,b,c), F, N).
      F = bar
      N = 3
      ```
    - ```
      ?- functor(T, bee, 2).
      T = bee(_G1,_G2)
      ```
    - ```
      ?- functor(T, bee, 2), arg(1, T, a), arg(2, T, b).
      T = bee(a,b)
      ```
  - The "univ" operator `=..`
    - ```
      ?- foo(a,b,c) =.. L
      L = [foo,a,b,c]
      ```
    - ```
      ?- T =.. [bee,a,b]
      T = bee(a,b)
      ```

Prolog Lists

- A list is of the form:

  $[elt_1, elt_2, \ldots, elt_n]$

  where elt_i are terms
- The special list form

  $[elt_1, elt_2, \ldots, elt_n \mid tail]$

  denotes a list whose tail list is *tail*
- Examples
  - **`?- [a,b,c] = [a|T].`**
    `T = [b,c]`
  - **`?- [a,b,c] = [a,b|T].`**
    `T = [c]`
  - **`?- [a,b,c] = [a,b,c|T].`**
    `T = []`

List Operations: List Membership

- List membership definitions:
```
member(X, [X|T]).
member(X, [H|T]) :- member(X, T).
```
- `?- member(b, [a,b,c]).`
  - Execution:
    member(b,[a,b,c]) does not match **member(X,[X|T])**
  - **member(b,[a,b,c])** matches predicate **member**$(X_1, [H_1|T_1])$ with X_1=**b**, H_1=**a**, and T_1=**[b,c]**
  - Sub-goal to prove: **member(b, [b,c])**
  - **member(b,[b,c])** matches predicate **member**$(X_2, [X_2|T_2])$ with X_2=**b** and T_2=**[c]**
  - The sub-goal is proven, so **member(b,[a,b,c])** is proven (deduced)
  - Note: variables can be "local" to a clause (like the formal arguments of a function)
  - Local variables such as X_1 and X_2 are used to indicate a match of a (sub)-goal and a head predicate of a clause

Predicates and Relations

- Predicates are *not* functions with distinct inputs and outputs
- Predicates are more general and define *relationships* between objects (terms)
  - **`member(b,[a,b,c])`** *relates* term **`b`** to the list that contains **`b`**
  - ```
    ?- member(X, [a,b,c]).
    X = a ;     % type ';' to try to find more solutions
    X = b ;     % ... try to find more solutions
    X = c ;     % ... try to find more solutions
    no
    ```
  - ```
    ?- member(b, [a,Y,c]).
    Y = b
    ```
  - ```
    ?- member(b, L).
    L = [b|_G255]
    ```
    where **`L`** is a list with **`b`** as head and **`_G255`** as tail, where **`_G255`** is a new variable
    ```

List Operations: List Append

- List append predicate definitions:

```
append([], A, A).
append([H|T], A, [H|L]) :- append(T, A, L).
```

- ```
  ?- append([a,b,c], [d,e], X).
  X = [a,b,c,d,e]
  ```
- ```
  ?- append(Y, [d,e], [a,b,c,d,e]).
  Y = [a,b,c]
  ```
- ```
  ?- append([a,b,c], Z, [a,b,c,d,e]).
  Z = [d,e]
  ```
- ```
  ?- append([a,b],[],[a,b,c]).
  No
  ```
- ```
  ?- append([a,b],[X|Y],[a,b,c]).
  X = c
  Y = []
  ```
  ```

Example: Bubble Sort

```
        bubble(List, Sorted) :-
            append(InitList, [B,A|Tail], List),
            A < B,
            append(InitList, [A,B|Tail], NewList),
            bubble(NewList, Sorted).
        bubble(List, List).
?- bubble([2,3,1], L).
     append([], [2,3,1], [2,3,1]),
     3 < 2,                          % fails: backtrack
     append([2], [3,1], [2,3,1]),
     1 < 3,
     append([2], [1,3], NewList1),   % this makes: NewList1=[2,1,3]
     bubble([2,1,3], L).
       append([], [2,1,3], [2,1,3]),
       1 < 2,
       append([], [1,2,3], NewList2), % this makes: NewList2=[1,2,3]
       bubble([1,2,3], L).
         append([], [1,2,3], [1,2,3]),
         2 < 1,                       % fails: backtrack
               append([1], [2,3], [1,2,3]),
         3 < 2,                       % fails: backtrack
               append([1,2], [3], [1,2,3]),   % does not unify: backtrack
       bubble([1,2,3], L).   % try second bubble-clause which makes L=[1,2,3]
     bubble([2,1,3], [1,2,3]).
   bubble([2,3,1], [1,2,3]).
```

Imperative Features

- Prolog offers built-in constructs to support a form of control-flow
  - **`\+`** *G* negates a (sub-)goal *G*
  - **`!`** (cut) terminates backtracking for a predicate
  - **`fail`** always fails to trigger backtracking
- Examples
  - ```
    ?- \+ member(b, [a,b,c]).
    no
    ```
  - ```
    ?- \+ member(b, []).
    yes
    ```
  - Define:
    ```
    if(Cond, Then, Else) :- Cond, !, Then.
    if(Cond, Then, Else) :- Else.
    ```
  - ```
    ?- if(true, X=a, X=b).
    X = a ; % type ';' to try to find more solutions
    no
    ```
  - ```
    ?- if(fail, X=a, X=b).
    X = b ; % type ';' to try to find more solutions
    no
    ```

Example: Tic-Tac-Toe

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

- Rules to find line of three (permuted) cells:
  - `line(A,B,C) :- ordered_line(A,B,C).`
  - `line(A,B,C) :- ordered_line(A,C,B).`
  - `line(A,B,C) :- ordered_line(B,A,C).`
  - `line(A,B,C) :- ordered_line(B,C,A).`
  - `line(A,B,C) :- ordered_line(C,A,B).`
  - `line(A,B,C) :- ordered_line(C,B,A).`

Example: Tic-Tac-Toe

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

- Facts:
  - ordered_line(1,5,9).
  - ordered_line(3,5,7).
  - ordered_line(1,2,3).
  - ordered_line(4,5,6).
  - ordered_line(7,8,9).
  - ordered_line(1,4,7).
  - ordered_line(2,5,8).
  - ordered_line(3,6,9).

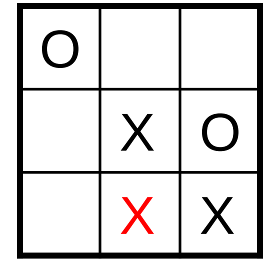
Example: Tic-Tac-Toe

- How to make a good move to a cell:
  - `move(A) :- good(A), empty(A).`
- Which cell is empty?
  - `empty(A) :- \+ full(A).`
- Which cell is full?
  - `full(A) :- x(A).`
  - `full(A) :- o(A).`

Example: Tic-Tac-Toe

- Which cell is best to move to? (check this in this order
  - `good(A) :- win(A).            % a cell where we win`
  - `good(A) :- block_win(A).      % a cell where we block the opponent from a win`
  - `good(A) :- split(A).          % a cell where we can make a split to win`
  - `good(A) :- block_split(A).% a cell where we block the opponent from a split`
  - `good(A) :- build(A).          % choose a cell to get a line`
  - `good(5).                      % choose a cell in a good location`
  - `good(1).`
  - `good(3).`
  - `good(7).`
  - `good(9).`
  - `good(2).`
  - `good(4).`
  - `good(6).`
  - `good(8).`

Example: Tic-Tac-Toe



split

- How to find a winning cell:
  - `win(A) :- x(B), x(C), line(A,B,C).`
- Choose a cell to block the opponent from choosing a winning cell:
  - `block_win(A) :- o(B), o(C), line(A,B,C).`
- Choose a cell to split for a win later:
  - ```
    split(A) :- x(B), x(C), \+ (B = C),
      line(A,B,D), line(A,C,E), empty(D), empty(E).
    ```
- Choose a cell to block the opponent from making a split:
  - ```
    block_split(A) :- o(B), o(C), \+ (B = C),
      line(A,B,D), line(A,C,E), empty(D), empty(E).
    ```
- Choose a cell to get a line:
  - `build(A) :- x(B), line(A,B,C), empty(C).`

Example: Tic-Tac-Toe

O		
X	O	
X		

- Board positions are stored as facts:
  - `x(7).`
  - `o(5).`
  - `x(4).`
  - `o(1).`
- Move query:
  - `?- move(A).`
    `A = 9`

Prolog Arithmetic

- Arithmetic is needed for computations in Prolog
- Arithmetic is not relational
- The **`is`** predicate evaluates an arithmetic expression and instantiates a variable with the result
- For example
  - **`X is 2*sin(1)+1`**
    instantiates **`X`** with the results of **`2*sin(1)+1`**

Examples with Arithmetic

- A predicate to compute the length of a list:
  - `length([], 0).`
  - `length([H|T], N) :- length(T, K), N is K + 1.`
- where the first argument of length is a list and the second is the computed length
- Example query:
  - ```
    ?- length([1,2,3], X).
    X = 3
    ```
- Defining a predicate to compute GCD:
  - `gcd(A, A, A).`
  - `gcd(A, B, G) :- A > B, N is A-B, gcd(N, B, G).`
  - `gcd(A, B, G) :- A < B, N is B-A, gcd(A, N, G).`
    ```

Database Manipulation

- Prolog programs (facts+rules) are stored in a database
- A Prolog program can manipulate the database
  - Adding a clause with **`assert`**, for example:
    `assert(rainy(syracuse))`
  - Retracting a clause with **`retract`**, for example:
    `retract(rainy(rochester))`
  - Checking if a clause is present with **`clause(Head, Body)`** for example:
    `clause(rainy(rochester), true)`
- Prolog is *fully reflexive*
  - A program can reason about all if its aspects (code+data)
  - A meta-level (or metacircular) interpreter is a Prolog program that executes (another) Prolog program, e.g. a tracer can be written in Prolog

A Meta-level Interpeter

- ```
  clause_tree(G) :- write_ln(G), fail. % just show goal
  clause_tree(true) :- !.
  clause_tree((G,R)) :-
     !,
     clause_tree(G),
     clause_tree(R).
  clause_tree((G;R)) :-
     !,
     ( clause_tree(G)
     ; clause_tree(R)
     ).
  clause_tree(G) :-
     ( predicate_property(G,built_in)
     ; predicate_property(G,compiled)
     ), !,
     call(G). % let Prolog do it
  clause_tree(G) :- clause(G,Body), clause_tree(Body).
  ```
- ```
  ?- clause_tree((X is 3, X<1; X=4)).
  _G324 is 3, _G324<1 ; _G324=4
  _G324 is 3, _G324<1
  _G324 is 3
  3<1
  _G324=4
  X = 4
  ```