

CS 220: Survey of Programming Languages

LECTURE SLIDES

Declarative Programming Languages

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Session 7



Declarative Programming Languages

Declarative Programming Languages

Prolog

Gödel



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Procedural vs. declarative programming



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Procedural vs. declarative programming

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 - As such, they are categorized as **procedural** languages
 - “[P]rograms are organized around **control structures such as iteration and procedure invocation.**”
- An alternative way to program is to instead provide **a set of goals and rules for the computers to follow towards the achievement of those goals**
 - PLs that do this are called **declarative** languages
 - Though rules were formulated by the programmer, the language’s system “do[es] **not explicitly invoke those rules** in order to achieve the goals”



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 - Useful variables towards resolution are determined via **unification**
 - Detecting inconsistencies in any propositions (**refutation complete**) is an important property of resolution



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Background



Background

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- Designed by **Alain Colmerauer** and **Phillippe Roussel** in the Artificial Intelligence Group at the University of Aix-Marseille, and **Robert Kowalski** of the Department of Artificial Intelligence at the University of Edinburgh



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- “The primary components of Prolog are a **method for specifying predicate calculus propositions** and an **implementation of a restricted form of resolution.**”



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 - Prolog was meant as an **automated theorem prover**
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- “The primary components of Prolog are a **method for specifying predicate calculus propositions** and an **implementation of a restricted form of resolution.**”
- “The first Prolog interpreter was developed at Marseille in **1972**”.



Evaluation

- Data types^{2,3}

²http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/~pjh/prolog_module/md1/md1_data_types.html

³<http://pages.cpsc.ucalgary.ca/~denzinge/courses/449-winter2004/slides/17-TypesControl-handout.pdf>



Evaluation

- Data types^{2,3}
 - Integer, floating point real numbers, character and string as supported primitive data types, but the actual (and sole) data type supported is **term**

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Evaluation

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 - Lists, and in some variants **bags and lists**, as derived types

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- Syntax design:



⁴<https://github.com/simonkrenger/ch.bfh.bti7064.w2013.PrologParser/blob/master/bnf-grammar.txt>

⁵http://cseweb.ucsd.edu/classes/fa09/cse130/misc/prolog/prolog_tutorial.pdf

⁶<http://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/~billw/cs9414/notes/prolog/ext-prolog.html>

Evaluation

- Syntax design:
 - Production rules: 19^{4,5}
 - Keywords: No keywords for “pure” Prolog; a variant (SWI Prolog) has 12⁶

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 - **Very bare** to allow for creation of facts and rules as freely as possible
 - Everything in Prolog are either **facts, rules, or assertions**
 - Since the **underlying mechanics of achieving the goals are not explicitly controlled by the programmer**, several **overlaps in functionalities are expected**

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- Abstraction:



⁷<http://faculty.simpson.edu/lydia.sinapova/www/cmsc310/Prolog/PrologLessonsRules.htm>

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- Abstraction:
 - Variables are only “visible” to the clause they are used in⁷



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- Expressivity: Little to no add-on functionalities, but then again not really an issue in declarative programming

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- Exception handling: SWI-Prolog has `try` and `catch` predicates to perform exception handling⁹



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 - Formal proofs exist proving that **Prolog can be as fast as C**^{11,12}

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- “It is based on, and supposed to be a **successor of Prolog**...”



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- “It is based on, and supposed to be a **successor of Prolog...**”
- “The control component of the program is concerned with **the construction and pruning of search trees**. Typically, the computation rule (which selects a subformula in a goal for an extension step) is partially specified by control declarations and the pruning of a search tree is specified by pruning operator.”



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- Data types¹⁴



¹⁴http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/G%C3%B6del_%28programming_language

Evaluation

- Data types¹⁴
 - Integer, rational numbers, character and string as supported primitive data types



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Evaluation

- Data types¹⁴
 - Integer, rational numbers, character and string as supported primitive data types
 - Lists, sets, and some other (unspecified) abstract data types bags and lists, as derived types



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Evaluation

- Syntax design:



¹⁵<http://www.comp.leeds.ac.uk/hill/GOEDEL/examples.html>

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- Syntax design:
 - No grammar found, but looking at sample programs¹⁵ and the basic features available¹⁶, **Prolog is relatively simpler than Gödel**



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 - “Modularized” syntax (compared with Prolog) in that certain code sections must be declared to create the components (e.g. imported modules, predicates) needed for a program

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- Abstraction:¹⁸
 - “A Gödel source program is contained in **one or more modules**. A module declares all the symbols of the language of that module. **A module may import other modules in order to avail itself of their symbols.**”



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- Expressivity:¹⁹
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- Expressivity:¹⁹
 - “The Gödel language include modules that **process numbers, lists, strings and sets**, modules that provide **input/output**, and modules that provide **meta-programming facilities.**”
 - “Gödel also makes significant use of **abstract data types**, which are implemented by means of the module and type systems.”



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Evaluation

- Exception handling: **No (explicit) exception handling** mechanisms



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- Restricted aliasing: **No (explicit) aliasing** being done



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- Efficiency^{20,21}
 - Employs both **static and dynamic** type-checking
 - Built **on top of Prolog**
 - **Pruning** mechanism employed is based on the **commit operation of concurrent programming language**



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