Low-Level Functional Programming

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What’s “Low-Level” About This?

- “low-level” refers to the construction of functions by explicitly creating and decomposing lists a few elements at a time.
- Previously we used higher-order functions to do most of the non-trivial work in a functional decomposition.
- Now we are going to use recursion.
Fundamental List Dichotomy

- A list is either:
  - empty, ()
  - non-empty, in which case it has both a
    - first
    - rest
- Most list definitions deal with these two cases separately.
- Definitions are typically a form of inductive definition, in which empty is the basis.
Defining Functions on Lists

• Suppose we want to define a function taking an arbitrary list as an argument.

• It is sufficient to:
  • define the function on the empty list, and
  • define the function on a general non-empty list.

called the “basis”

called the “induction step” or “recursion”
Example

• Define the function `halve_all`, which divides every element in a list by 2.
  • `(define (halve_all L)
      (if (null? L)
          ()
          (cons (halve (first L)) (halve_all (rest L)))))`

• This can be read:
  • “halving all of the empty list is the empty list.”
  • “halving all of a non-empty list is half of the first element followed by halving all of the rest.”
Computation by “Rewriting”

- (halve_all '(2 4 6)) ⇒
- (cons 1 (halve_all '(4 6))) ⇒
- (cons 1 (cons 2 (halve_all '(6)))) ⇒
- (cons 1 (cons 2 (cons 3 (halve_all ()))) ⇒
- (cons 1 (cons 2 '(3))) ⇒
- (cons 1 '(2 3)) ⇒
- '(1 2 3)
Alternate

- Of course, we could have just used `map` in this particular case:
  - `(define (halve A) (/ A 2))`
  - `(define (halve_all X) (map halve X))`

- Use higher order functions such as `map` when possible; resort to lower-order ones when you think you need to.

- Higher-order functions can often tell the story more succinctly.
Define from a low-level:

- map
- reduce
- member
Example: map

(define (map F L)
  (if (null? L)
      ()
      (cons (F (first L))
            (map F (rest L)))))

Example

• Define the function member which tests whether the first argument is an element of the list in the second argument. If it is, then the entire list suffix beginning with that element is returned. Otherwise #f is returned.

(define (member X L)
  (if (null? L)
      #f
      (if (equal? X (first L))
          L
          (member X (rest L))))
)
Alternate Version: Use cond

- Better readability than with nested if’s:

  (define (member X L)
    (cond
      ((null? L) #f)
      ((equal? X (first L)) L)
      (else (member X (rest L)))))

;; (test condition result)
Define from a low-level:

- keep (or filter)
- range: generates a list
range
(range 1 5) = '(1 2 3 4 5)

(define (range m n)
  (if (> m n)
    ()
    (cons m (range (+ m 1) n)))))
Matching with Two or More List Arguments

• Some functions have more than one list argument.

• Induction might, or might not, use rules that dichotomize both lists.
Example: append

(define (append L M)
  (if (null? L) M
   (cons (first L)
        (append (rest L) M))))
The Merge Pattern

- This **important** pattern arises many times in different applications.

- Construct a function that merges two lists of numbers:
  - The argument lists are already in ascending order.
  - The result is to be in ascending order as well.
Merge Example

(test (merge ' (3 5 8 10) ' (2 6 7 9 10 11)) ' (2 3 5 6 7 8 9 10 10 11))

(define (merge L M)
  (cond
    ((null? L) M)
    ((null? M) L)
    ((<= (first L) (first M)) (cons (first L) (merge (rest L) M)))
    (else (cons (first M) (merge L (rest M)))))))

; Merge retains duplicates
(define (mergesort L)
  (cond
    ((null? L) ())
    ((null? (rest L)) L)
    (else (merge (mergesort (everyother L))
           (mergesort (everyother (rest L)))))))

(test (mergesort '(5 1 9 3 2 6 4 8 7 11 10)) '(1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11))

Exercise: Define everyother.
Using Merge Pattern for Sets

• Assume we want to build a library for manipulating sets.

• Assume that the elements are drawn from a set for which there is an ordering relation (such as numbers).
Sets as Lists

• For mathematical sets:
  • Duplicate elements do not matter
  • Order does not matter

• For lists, the above are not true.
  • To represent sets as lists, we will agree:
    • A representation will not have duplicates.
    • The elements of a representation will always be in order.

• These conventions allow efficiency gains by using the merge technique.
Operations on Two Sets

• union: The elements that are in either of the sets.

• intersection: The elements that are in both.

• difference: The elements that are in the first, but not the second.
(define (union A B)
  (cond
   ((null? A) B)
   ((null? B) A)
   ((= (first A) (first B)) (cons (first A) (union (rest A) (rest B))))
   ((< (first A) (first B)) (cons (first A) (union (rest A) B)))
   (else (cons (first B) (union A (rest B))))))

(test (union '(1 2 4 6) '(3 4 5 6 7)) '(1 2 3 4 5 6 7))
(define (intersection A B)
  (cond
   ((null? A) ()
   ((null? B) ()
   ((= (first A) (first B)) (cons (first A) (intersection (rest A) (rest B))))
   ((< (first A) (first B)) (intersection (rest A) B))
   (else (intersection A (rest B)))))))

(test (intersection '(1 2 4 6) '(3 4 5 6 7)) '(4 6))
difference

(define (difference A B))

(test (difference '(1 2 4 6) '(3 4 5 6 7)) '(1 2))
Similar Example

• Consider the representation of numbers as lists of prime factors with multiplicity, e.g. 400 represented as ((2 4) (5 2)) with factors in increasing order.

• Want to define functions gcd and lcm on this representation:
  • (gcd R S) representation of greatest common divisor of R and S
  • (lcm R S) representation of least common multiple of R and S

• (test (gcd '((3 5) (5 2) (7 4)) '((3 2) (7 3) (11 2))) '((3 2) (7 3)))
  (test (lcm '((3 5) (5 2) (7 4)) '((3 2) (7 3) (11 2))) '((3 5) (5 2) (7 4) (11 2)))
Unicalc Example

- Representing “quantities” in 3 parts:
  - numeric multiplier
  - symbolic numerator
  - symbolic denominator
- e.g.
  - 2/3
  - ‘(kg meter)
  - ‘(second second)

2/3 kg meter/sec²
Normalized Quantities

• Units are sorted

• No units common to numerator and denominator (could be cancelled otherwise)

• Only “basic” units: Non-basic units must first be converted to basic ones using the database and recursion.
Basic Unit

• Any unit having a definition in the database association list is *not* basic.
  • These are *not* basic, as they have a definition in the database:
    
    (inch  (0.02539954113 (meter)()))
    (hour  (60 (minute)()))
    (minute (60 (second)()))

• These are *basic*, as they have no definition in the database: :
  meter
  kg
  second
Loop-Free

• It is assumed that the database has no circular definitions.

• Thus, any non-basic unit can be resolved, using recursion, to a combination of basic units.

• The number of steps required can be arbitrary.
Example

- Find a normalized quantity representing 1 day:
- `(assoc 'day unicalc-db)
  (day (24 (hour) ()))
- `(assoc 'hour unicalc-db)
  (hour (60 (minute) ()))
- `(assoc 'minute unicalc-db)
  (minute (60 (second) ()))
- `(assoc 'second unicalc-db)
  #f
The quantity is '(86400 (second))


Keep symbolic units sorted

- Easier to divide and multiply (using merge pattern)
Mutual Recursion

- This is recursion wherein one function calls another other than itself, but that function calls the original function, etc.
- Instead of:

  We have:

```
F \quad \text{calls} \quad F \quad \text{calls} \quad G
```
Mutual Recursion in Unicalc

• To normalize a Quantity:
  • Normalize each unit in the **numerator**, multiplying those results together.

  • Normalize each unit in the **denominator**, multiplying those results together.

  • **Cancel** units common to the resulting quantity.
Normalizing a Single Unit

- Look up the unit using assoc.
- If the unit is basic (not found), *create* a Quantity for it.

```lisp
> (normalize-unit 'second)
(1 (second) ()
```
Normalizing a Single Unit

- (Look up the unit using assoc.)
- If the unit is not basic (was found), a numerator and denominator are obtained.

- Each is a list of units.

- Normalize each unit, and multiply the results together, then divide the numerator product by the denominator product.

- Finally, combine with the multiplier in the database.
Example

- psi stands for “pounds per square inch"

\[
> \text{(normalize-unit 'psi)}
(6895.006417815267 \text{ (kg) (meter second second)})
\]

- I’m going to conceptualize the normalization process as a tree. This does not imply that you need to construct a tree.
Conceptualization as a Tree

> (assoc 'psi unicalc-db)
( psi (1 (pound_force) (inch inch)))
Recursive Expansion

\[
> (\text{assoc } \ 'pound\_force\ unicalc\_db )
\ (pound\_force \ (1 \ (pound\ free\_acceleration) () ) )
\]

psi

1  pound\_force

1  pound  free\_acceleration

1  inch  inch
Recursive Expansion

\[
> \text{(assoc 'pound unicalc-db)}
\text{(pound (0.45359237 (kg) ())})
\]

psi

1 pound_force

1 pound free_acceleration

0.45359237 kg

box indicates “basic”
Recursive Expansion

> (assoc 'free_acceleration unicalc-db)
(free_acceleration (9.80665 (meter) (second second)))
Recursive Expansion

\[ (\text{assoc 'inch unicalc-db)} \]
\[ \text{inch (0.02539954113 (meter) ()))} \]

1 pound force

0.45359237 kg

9.80665 m/s^2

0.02539954113 meter

0.02539954113 meter

1 pound free acceleration

meter

second

second
Cancellation

1 pound_force

1 pound free_acceleration

kg 9.80665

0.45359237

0.02539954113

inch inch

meter

second second
After Cancellation

\[
\frac{1 \text{ pound}}{1 \text{ free acceleration}} = 0.02539954113 \text{ meter inch inch}
\]

\[
1 \text{ psi} = (\frac{0.45359237 \text{ kg}}{9.80665 \text{ second second}}) = 6895.006417815267 \text{ (kg meter second second)}
\]
Possible Mutual Recursion

- normalize-unit could call a function, say normalize-list (i.e. list of units)
More Mutual Recursion Possibilities
(to avoid duplicating work)

- normalize-unit
- divide
- normalize-list
- multiply
Getting Scheme to Trace Calls

• Put in your source file:
  (require (lib "trace.ss"))

• Execute, e.g.:
  (trace normalize-unit ...)

• To stop tracing, execute:
  (untrace normalize-unit ...)
Example trace Output

> (normalize-unit 'psi)
| (normalize-unit psi)
| (normalize-unit pound_force)
| (normalize-unit pound)
| (normalize-unit kg)
| (1 (kg) ())
| (0.45359237 (kg) ())
| (normalize-unit free_acceleration)
| (normalize-unit meter)
| (1 (meter) ())
| (normalize-unit second)
| (1 (second) ())
| (normalize-unit second)
| (1 (second) ())
| (9.80665 (meter) (second second))
| (4.4482216152605 (kg meter) (second second))

result of (normalize-unit pound_force)
Using Auxiliary Functions

- Often the function to be defined is not directly definable in a natural or efficient way using recursion. A **helper** or **auxiliary** function may be necessary.

- Example: reverse
Inefficient Reverse $O(n^2)$

(define (reverse L)
  (if (null? L)
      ()
      (append (reverse (rest L))
              (list (first L)))))))
Use helper function to make efficient reverse $O(n)$

\[
\begin{align*}
(\text{define } & (\text{reverse-helper } L \ M) \\
(\text{if } & (\text{null? } L) \\
M & \\
(\text{reverse-helper } & (\text{rest } L) \ (\text{cons } (\text{first } L) \ M)))))
\end{align*}
\]

\[
(\text{define } (\text{reverse } L) \ (\text{reverse-helper } L \ ()))
\]

$M$ is called an **accumulator** argument
Mixed Functional Programming Examples

- Use low-level or high-level, whatever fits best
  - Maybe start with low-level, and then use high-level retrospectively, or vice-versa
- Radix conversion
  - Tail recursion
- Tree and graph searching
Tail Recursion

• Sometimes recursive definitions have “cleanup” to be done after the recursive call.

• Example:
  (define (fac N)
   (if (< N 2)
       1
       (* N (fac (- N 1)))))

“cleanup happens after fac call”
Stack Build-up

- Functions that require cleanup are non-tail-recursive.
- They build up data on the call stack.
- The depth of recursion could be limited as a consequence.
Tail Recursion

- Functions that require cleanup are non-tail-recursive.
- They build up data on the stack.
- The depth of recursion could be limited as a consequence.

- Equivalent tail-recursive function (uses a helper):
  (define (fac N) (fac-helper N 1))
  (define (fac-helper N Acc)
    (if (< N 2)
      Acc
      (fac-helper (- N 1) (* N Acc))))

  no cleanup happens before call
No Stack Build-up

(fac-helper 4 1) (fac-helper 3 4) (fac-helper 2 12) (fac-helper 1 24)

answer: 24

With tail-recursion, recursive call can be replaced with go-to.

Only certain compilers/languages do this:
- Scheme
- Prolog

Others don’t or can’t:
- C++
- Java
Convert Number to Binary

- Example:
  - (toBinary 37) \[\rightarrow\]
    \[
    \begin{array}{ccccccc}
    & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 \\
    \end{array}
    \]
    \[
    1 \times 32 + 0 \times 16 + 0 \times 8 + 1 \times 4 + 0 \times 2 + 1 \times 1
    \]
    \[
    2^5, 2^4, 2^3, 2^2, 2^1, 2^0
    \]

- First try:
  - divide by 2, record remainder, continue with quotient
  - until 0
Convert Number from Binary

- Construct fromBinary, e.g.
  - (fromBinary '1 0 0 1 0 1) \rightarrow 37

- Considerations:
  - Do we need an accumulator?
  - Can it be done with tail-recursion?
  - Try it and see.
An Approach

• Write iterative pseudo-code, then construct tail-recursive equivalent.

• \[ L = \ldots \text{list to be converted} \ldots ; \]
  \[ \text{Result} = 0; \]
  \[ \text{while}( L \neq [ ]) \]
  \[ \{ \]
  \[ \quad \text{Result} = 2 \times \text{Result} + \text{first}(L); \]
  \[ \quad L = \text{rest}(L); \]
  \[ \} \]
  \[ \ldots \text{answer is in Result} \ldots \]
McCarthy’s Transformation

- Any iterative, imperative (i.e. assignment-based) program can be transformed to a system of mutual tail recursions.
Exercises

• Compare “obvious” and tail-recursive forms of:
  • length function
  • sum of a list
  • reduce
  • reverse
Essential Non-Tail Recursions

• Some functions don’t admit a tail-recursive version (unless \textit{reverse} is used before or after):
  • Examples:
    • map, keep, drop
    • append
  • To avoid stack build-up, we might consider using reverse.
append Elimination  
(aka “appendectomy”)

• When maximum efficiency is desired, uses of append should be avoided.
• It is often possible to get rid of append by defining versions of functions with an extra accumulator argument.
• Example:

```
(define (nodes Graph)
  (remove_duplicates (append (map first Graph)
                              (map second Graph))))
```
• Show how to avoid append by generalizing map to take an accumulator.
reverse elimination

• Some functions naturally build lists in reverse.

• Rather than immediately reversing the result, consider leaving it as is (in reversed form) and exploiting this fact at a later stage of the functional composition.

• Some functions, such as map, keep, drop, ... work equally well whether or not the data is in reverse order.