Course Notes on The Logical Structure of Relational Query Languages

The Logical Structure of Relational Query Languages: Topics

- Overview
- First-order logic
- Tuple Relational Calculus (TRC)
- Domain Relational Calculus (DRC)

On the Way to SQL: Relational Calculi

- \bullet Historically, SQL was a major advance over older database languages (like DL/I of IMS or DDL, DML of CODASYL DBTG) because SQL is far easier to use
- To effectively master and use SQL up to relational completeness, first mastering first-order logic makes things significantly easier

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Logic as a Basis for Database Languages

- First-order logic (predicate calculus) is simple at the level needed for relational languages
- Strong historical **prejudice against logic** (and theory) in the user world
- Formal definitions have many advantages
 - ♦ the ultimate reference document
 - test of language consistency during design
 - o need not be shown to everybody
- Logic has become a basic formalism in informatics for e.g.,
 - assertions in programming
 - ♦ integrity formulation and maintenance in DBMS
 - ♦ data models of DBMS
 - ♦ semantics of programming languages

Relational Calculi

- More used than the algebra as a basis for user languages
- Directly based on first-order logic \Rightarrow regular, systematic structure
- Less procedural than the algebra : what versus how
- Relational completeness:
 - ♦ DRC, TRC, and algebra have same expressive power
 - ♦ SQL is slightly more powerful: some computation, ordering, etc.

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TRC and DRC

- Domain Relational Calculus (DRC)
 - ♦ Most similar to logic as a modeling language
 - ♦ Typical modeling formalism in AI and natural-language studies: data is viewed as objects with properties
- Tuple Relational Calculus (TRC)
 - ♦ Reflects traditional pre-relational file structures
 - ♦ Closer to a view of relations implemented as files

A Simple Introduction to Logic

- General form of first-order logic is not necessary
- Logic is applied to a fixed domain of reference: the DB extension
- Formal system =

```
 \left\{ \begin{array}{l} {\rm formal\ language\ (syntax\ +\ semantics)} \\ {\rm deductive\ mechanisms} \end{array} \right.
```

- Here we basically need the syntax of logic, and a simple "applied" semantics linked to the DB extension
- The language of logic is used to combine elementary DB facts

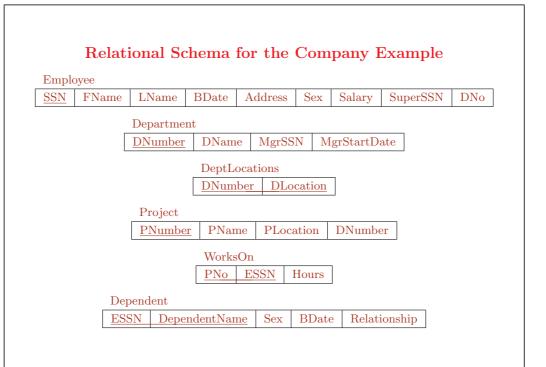
- Simple and intuitive introductions to logic:
 - ♦ Introduction to Logic for Liberal Arts and Business Majors, by S. Waner and R. Costenoble, http://www.hofstra.edu/matscw/logicintro.html, July 1996.
 - ♦ Sweet Reason: A Field Guide to Modern Logic, by T. Tymoczko and J. Henle, Springer Textbooks in Mathematical Sciences, ISBN 0-287-98930-7, Springer, 2nd ed., 1999

The Structure of First-Order Logic

- The universe of reference is the current database
- Elementary propositions: express assertions that are true or false in the universe
- Propositional connectives $(\land, \lor, \rightarrow, \neg, \leftrightarrow)$ combine propositions

P	Q	$P \wedge Q$	$P \vee Q$	$P \to Q$	$\neg P$	$P \leftrightarrow Q$
T	T	T	T	T	F	T
T	F	F	T	F	F	F
F	T	F	T	T	T	F
F	F	F	F	T	T	T

- Elementary propositions:
 - \diamond P1 : Smith was born on 09-Jan-55 is true in the current state of the world (i.e., of the database)
 - ♦ P2 : Smith is female is false
- Compound propositions:
 - $\diamondsuit\ P1 \land P2 = \text{Smith}$ was born on 09-JAN-55 \land Smith is female is false
 - $\Diamond \neg P2 = \text{Smith is not female is true}$
- Much of the problem with the intuition of logic comes from implication, namely, with the fact that $P \to Q$ is true when P is false



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Quantifiers

- Use variables to express more general assertions about the DB:
 - F1: there exists an employee who was born on 09-Jan-55 is true
 - F2: all employees were born on 09-Jan-85 is false, or
 - : there is at least one employee who was not born on 09-Jan-85 is true
 - F3: all employees born after 1950 earn more than 40k is false, or
 - : there is at least one employee born after 1950 who earns less than 40k is true
- More formally
 - F1 : $\exists e$ (e is an employee \land e was born on 09-Jan-55)
 - F2: $\neg \forall e$ (e is an employee \rightarrow e was born on 09-Jan-55), or
 - : $\exists e$ (e is an employee \land e was not born on 09-Jan-55)
 - F3: $\neg \forall e$ (e is an employee \land e was born after 01-Jan-50 \rightarrow
 - e earns more than 40k), or
 - : $\exists e$ (e is an employee \land e was born after 01-Jan-50 \land e earns less than 40k)

- \forall (for all) and \exists (there exists)
- $\bullet\,$ if you cannot do everything \dots
 - \Diamond that does not mean that there is not anything that you can do ...
 - \diamondsuit nor that there is anything that you cannot do ...

Queries

- Free variables of logic are used as query variables
- List the employees who were born on 09-Jan-55

```
\{e \mid e \text{ is an employee} \land e \text{ was born on 09-Jan-55}\}
```

- The $\{e \mid P(e)\}$ syntax evokes set theory
- A more fancy syntax for the same expression (see later)

```
SELECT ... FROM ... WHERE ...
```

Equivalence Rules

• Allow to replace a formula by another one

```
\begin{array}{lll} P \to Q & \text{is equivalent to} & \neg P \lor Q \\ \neg (P \land Q) & \neg P \lor \neg Q \\ \neg (P \lor Q) & \neg P \land \neg Q \\ \forall x \ P(x) & \neg (\exists x \ (\neg P(x))) \\ \exists x \ P(x) & \neg (\forall x \ (\neg P(x))) \\ \exists x \ (\neg P(x)) & \neg (\forall x \ P(x)) \end{array}
```

• Implication rules for quantifiers

```
\forall x \ P(x) implies that \exists x \ P(x)

\neg(\exists x \ P(x)) \neg(\forall x \ P(x))
```

but not the converse

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• This is about all the logic that is needed to master languages of traditional relational systems

Tuple Relational Calculus (TRC)

- Tuple variables:
 - ⋄ range on (takes as values) tuples of a relation
 - ♦ are explicitly linked to a relation
- List employees who make more than 50k

```
\{t \mid \text{Employee}(t) \land t.\text{Salary} > 50k\}
```

- ♦ Employee(t) is a "relation predicate", it links TRC with the DB
- ♦ t.Salary is a term whose value is the value of attribute Salary of tuple t
- List birthdate and address of employees called John Smith $\{t. \text{BDate}, t. \text{Address} \mid \text{Employee}(t) \land t. \text{FName} = \text{`John'} \land t. \text{LName} = \text{`Smith'}\}$

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General Structure of TRC Queries

$$\{t_1.A_1, t_2.A_2, \dots, t_n.A_n \mid F(t_1, \dots, t_n, t_{n+1}, \dots, t_m)\}$$

- t_1, t_2, \ldots, t_m : tuple variables each associated in F with a relation through a relation predicate
- A_i : attribute of the relation associated with t_i
- F: logical formula containing variables t_1, t_2, \ldots, t_m
- t_1, t_2, \ldots, t_n : free variables in F ("query variables")
- t_{n+1}, \ldots, t_m : variables quantified in F

TRC Semantics

- F is evaluated for all possible values t_1, t_2, \ldots, t_n (= Cartesian product)
- If F is true for a tuple, then the projection $t_1.A_1, t_2.A_2, \ldots, t_n.A_n$ is included in the result
- Result = nameless relation with n attributes; rules must be specified for deciding attribute names (e.g., A_i 's if they are all distinct)

Structure of TRC Formulas

- ullet Formula F is defined with the recursive structure of first-order logic
 - $\Diamond R(t_i)$, where R is a relation name
 - $\diamond t_i.A$ comparison $t_j.B$
 - $\diamond t_i.A$ comparison constant
 - $\Diamond \neg F$
 - $\Diamond F_1 \wedge F_2$
 - $\Diamond F_1 \lor F_2$
 - $\Diamond F_1 \to F_2$
 - $\Diamond F_1 \leftrightarrow F_2$
 - $\Diamond \exists t \ F(t)$
 - $\Diamond \ \forall t \ F(t)$
- Comparison: $=, \neq, <, >, \leq, \geq$

Join

• List name and address of employees who work for the Research department

```
\{e. \text{LName}, e. \text{Address} \mid \text{Employee}(e) \land \exists d \text{ (Department}(d) \land d. \text{DName} = \text{`Research'} \land d. \text{DNumber} = e. \text{DNo)} \}
```

• "Join term" d. DNumber = e. DNo expresses a join between relation Department and relation Employee

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Relative Procedurality of Languages

- Two different algebraic formulations for the previous example:
 - $\Diamond \pi_{\text{LName,Address}}(\sigma_{\text{DName='Research'}}(\text{Employee} \bowtie_{\text{DNo=DNumber}} \text{Department}))$
 - $\Diamond \pi_{\text{LName,Address}}(\text{Employee} \bowtie_{\text{DNo=DNumber}} (\sigma_{\text{DName='Research'}}(\text{Department})))$
- Only one TRC formulation

```
\{e. \text{LName}, e. \text{Address} \mid \text{Employee}(e) \land \\ \exists d \; (\text{Department}(d) \land d. \text{DName} = \text{`Research'} \land d. \text{DNumber} = e. \text{DNo})\}
```

- The algebra is more procedural than TRC: in TRC, the relative order of join and selection is not an issue
- For casual users, TRC style is simpler than algebra style (less to think about)
- Efficiency is another issue

- Efficiency:
 - ♦ in most cases, the strategy that evaluates selection before joins is more efficient
 - ♦ this is taken care of by the query optimizer of the DBMS

Two Joins

• For every project located in Brussels, list the project number, the controling department number, and the name of the department manager

```
\{p. \text{PNumber}, p. \text{DNum}, m. \text{LName} \mid \text{Project}(p) \land \\ \text{Employee}(m) \land p. \text{Location} = \text{`Brussels'} \land \\ \exists d \text{ (Department}(d) \land d. \text{DNumber} = p. \text{DNum} \land d. \text{MgrSSN} = m. \text{SSN})\}
```

• Same conclusion about procedurality: algebra is more procedural

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• In this example, if p.DNum is replaced by d.DNumber in the target of the query, then the quantifier $\exists d$ disappears, yielding a more symmetric formulation

```
 \begin{aligned} \{p. \text{PNumber}, d. \text{DNumber}, m. \text{LName} \mid \\ \text{Project}(p) \land \text{Employee}(m) \land \text{Department}(d) \land \\ p. \text{Location} &= \text{Brussels} \land d. \text{DNumber} = p. \text{DNum} \land d. \text{MgrSSN} = m. \text{SSN} \} \end{aligned}
```

Other Example with two Joins

 \bullet List the name of employees who work on some project controlled by department number 5

```
 \begin{aligned} \{e. \text{FName}, e. \text{LName} \mid \text{Employee}(e) \land \\ \exists p \ \exists w \ (\text{Project}(p) \land \text{WorksOn}(w) \land \\ p. \text{DNum} = 5 \land w. \text{ESSN} = e. \text{SSN} \land p. \text{PNumber} = w. \text{PNo}) \} \end{aligned}
```

• Same conclusion about procedurality: algebra is more procedural

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A "Complex" Query

• List project names of projects for which an employee whose last name is Smith is a worker or a manager of the department that controls the project

```
 \begin{aligned} & \{p. \text{PName} \mid \text{Project}(p) \land \\ & \exists e \; \exists w \; (\text{Employee}(e) \land \text{WorksOn}(w) \land \\ & w. \text{PNo} = p. \text{PNumber} \land w. \text{ESSN} = e. \text{SSN} \land e. \text{LName} = \text{`Smith'}) \\ & \lor \\ & \exists m \; \exists d \; (\text{Employee}(m) \land \text{Department}(d) \land \\ & p. \text{DNum} = d. \text{DNumber} \land d. \text{MgrSSN} = m. \text{SSN} \land m. \text{LName} = \text{`Smith'}) \} \end{aligned}
```

• Union of two queries in the algebra is expressed in TRC with disjunction

- $\{x \mid P(x) \lor Q(x)\} \equiv \{x \mid P(x)\} \cup \{x \mid Q(x)\}$
- Other version: factor out of the disjunction the repeated

```
\exists e \; (\text{Employee}(e) \land e.\text{LName} = \text{Smith})
```

Join of a Relation with Itself

• List the first and last name of each employee, and the first and last name of his/her immediate supervisor

```
\{e. \text{FName}, e. \text{LName}, s. \text{FName}, s. \text{LName} \mid \\ \text{Employee}(e) \land \text{Employee}(s) \land e. \text{SuperSSN} = s. \text{SSN}\}
```

• The attributes of the result relation have to be specified explicitly (if the result is to be used elsewhere, i.e., not just displayed) through some kind of assignment

```
F(EmpFN, EmpLN, MgrFN, MgrLN) \leftarrow \{...\}
```

• Syntax is more difficult for the algebra, unless attributes are ordered

Other Example of Join of a Relation with Itself

• List the SSN of employees who have both a dependent son and a dependent daughter

```
 \begin{aligned} \{e. & ESSN \mid  Dependent(e) \\ & \land \exists d \; (Dependent(d) \\ & \land \; e. ESSN = d. ESSN \\ & \land \; d. \\ & Relationship = 'Son' \\ & \land \; e. \\ & Relationship = 'Daughter') \} \end{aligned}
```

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Universal Quantifier

• List the name of employees who work on all projects

```
 \begin{aligned} \{e. \text{FName}, e. \text{LName} \mid \text{Employee}(e) \\ & \land \ \forall p \ \text{Project}(p) \rightarrow \\ & \exists w \ (\text{WorksOn}(w) \land w. \text{PNo} = p. \text{PNumber} \land w. \text{ESSN} = e. \text{SSN})\} \end{aligned}
```

• "all projects" are those in relation Project

- Various styles of universal quantification (for List the employees who work on all projects):

 - \Diamond logic with range-coupled quantifiers: $\{e \in \text{Employee} \mid \forall p \in \text{Project (Workson(e,p))}\}$
 - ♦ towards natural language (where quantification is "infix" rather than "prefix" as in logic, binary predicates are also infix rather than prefix, and variables are seldom used as such):
 - * $\{e \in \text{Employee} \mid \text{for all p} \in \text{Project (e Workson p)}\}$ * $\{e \in \text{Employee} \mid \text{e Workson(all p} \in \text{Project)}\}$ * $\{\text{Employee Workson (all Project)}\}$

Universal Quantifier

• List the name of employees who have at least one dependent

```
\{e. \text{LName} \mid \text{Employee}(e) \land \exists d \text{ (Dependent}(d) \land e. \text{SSN} = d. \text{ESSN})\}
```

• List the name of employees who have no dependent

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• Proof of equivalence of the formulations of List the name of employees who have no dependent by applying the equivalence rules of logic:

Safe Use of Universal Quantification

- Universal quantification must always be associated with implication
- Given relations Prereq(Course, Pre) and Took(StudID, Course), give the names of students who took all prerequisites of the course Math210
- Use of \wedge instead of \rightarrow

```
\{s. \text{Name} \mid \text{Student}(s) \land \forall p \text{ (Prereq}(p) \land p. \text{Course} = \text{`Math210'} \land \exists t \text{ Took}(t) \land t. \text{StudID} = s. \text{StudID} \land t. \text{Course} = p. \text{Pre}\}
```

- If Math210 has no prerequisites, the answer of the above query is always empty
- Correct formulation

• If Math210 has no prerequisites, the answer will be the names of all students

Safe TRC

- Formulas with quantifiers, negation, some comparisons must be restricted so at to be meaningful
- Examples of ill-formed formulas with a comparison, a negation
- Existential quantifiers
 - $\Diamond \exists t \ F(t) \text{ must have the form } \exists t \ R(t) \land F'(t)$
 - \Diamond other notation: $(\exists t \in R) F'(t)$
- Universal quantifiers must always be associated with implication
 - $\Diamond \ \forall t \ F(t)$ must have the form $\forall t \ R(t) \to F'(t)$
 - \Diamond other notation: $(\forall t \in R)$ F'(t)

- $(\exists t \in R)$ and $(\forall t \in R)$ are called **range-restricted** or **ranged-coupled** quantifiers, where R is a relation predicate that defines and restricts the range of t
- General form of safe use of universal quantifier: $\forall t \in (R(t) \land F'(t)) \ F''(t) \ (F'(t))$ and F''(t)" are any TRC formulas)
- Intuition: $\forall t \ F(t)$, where F(t) is a conjunction of database or comparison predicates, is meaningless (e.g., $\forall t \ Employee(t)$)

Domain Relational Calculus (DRC)

- Domain variables range on (i.e., take as values elements of) DB domains
- Relations are preferably viewed as predicates expressing properties of objects, represented as values
- Relation predicates (extensional predicates)
 - \Diamond realize the link between DRC and the DB
 - $\Diamond R(A_1:x_1,\ldots,A_n:x_n)$ is associated with relation $R(A_1:D_1,\ldots,A_n:D_n)$
 - $\Diamond R(A_1:a_1,\ldots,A_n:a_n)$ is true if tuple $\langle A_1:a_1,\ldots,A_n:a_n\rangle$ belongs to relation R

- Predicate WorksOn (ESSN:123456789, PNo:1, Hours:32.5) is true because tuple \langle ESSN:123456789, PNo:1, Hours:32.5 \rangle belongs to relation WorksOn
- In WorksOn(ESSN:123456789, PNo:1, Hours:32.5):
 - \diamondsuit WorksOn(ESSN: , PNo: , Hours:) is the predicate name
 - \Diamond 123456789, 1 and 32.5 are the arguments

General Structure of DRC Queries

$$\{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n \mid F(x_1, \dots, x_n, x_{n+1}, \dots, x_m)\}$$

- where formula F has the structure of first-order logic
 - $\Diamond R(A_i:x_i,\ldots,A_j:x_j)$, where R is a relation name
 - $\Diamond x_i$ comparison x_j
 - $\Diamond x_i$ comparison constant
 - $\Diamond \neg F$
 - $\Diamond F_1 \wedge F_2$
 - $\Diamond F_1 \vee F_2$
 - $\Diamond F_1 \to F_2$
 - $\Diamond F_1 \leftrightarrow F_2$
 - $\Diamond \exists x \ F(x)$
 - $\Diamond \ \forall x \ F(x)$

- As for TRC, the only things specific to DRC are the choice of domain variables and the definition of the relational predicates
- DRC has the structure of logic, applied as a DB query/assertion language
- Restrictions for safety similar to those of TRC for quantified formulas apply to DRC

Simplification of Notation

• List the birth date and address of employees named John Smith

• Many variables! Suppress variables that only appear in a relational predicate under \exists

```
 \{dn, a \mid \exists fn, ln \\ \text{Employee}(\text{FName}: fn, \text{LName}: ln, \text{Address}: a, \text{BDate}: dn) \land \\ fn = \text{`John'} \land ln = \text{`Smith'} \}
```

• $2^n - 1$ predicates are associated with each relation with n attributes

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Further Simplification

• Suppress variables that only appear in a relation predicate and in a test for equality with a constant in a conjunction (\land)

```
\{dn, a \mid \text{Employee}(\text{FName} : \text{'John'}, \text{LName} : \text{`Smith'}, \text{Address} : a, \text{BDate} : dn) \}
```

- Corresponds to projection + selection on equality in the algebra
- The rest of DRC has the structure of logic

```
• P(x) \wedge x = 3 \equiv P(3)
```

• TRC formulation of the same example:

```
\{t. \texttt{BDate}, t. \texttt{Address} \mid \texttt{Employee}(t) \land t. \texttt{FName} = \texttt{John} \land t. \texttt{LName} = \texttt{Smith}\}
```

Selection + Projection

List the name of employees with a salary greater than $50\mathrm{k}$

```
\{fn, ln \mid \exists sal  (Employee(FName : fn, LName : ln, Salary : sal) \land sal > 50k)\}
```

Could also conceivably be written

```
\{fn, ln \mid \text{Employee}(\text{FName}: fn, \text{LName}: ln, \text{Salary}: > 50k)\}
```

Join

• List name and address of employees who work in the Research department

```
\{fn, ln, a \mid \exists d \text{ (Employee(FName}: fn, LName}: ln, Address: a, DNo: d) \land Department(DName: 'Research', DNumber: d))\}
```

- A join is expressed through the occurrence of the same domain variable in two (or more) relation predicates in a conjunction (\land)
- In TRC, a join is signaled by an explicit "join condition"

```
\{e. \text{FName}, e. \text{LName}, e. \text{Address} \mid \text{Employee}(e) \land \\ \exists d \; (\text{Department}(d) \; \land d. \text{DName} = \text{`Research'} \land d. \text{DNumber} = e. \text{DNo})\}
```

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Double Join

• For every project located in Brussels, list the project number, the controling department number, and the name of the department manager

```
\begin{aligned} &\{pn,d,mfn,mln\mid \exists e\\ & (\text{Project}(\text{PNumber}:pn,\text{PLocation}: \text{`Brussels'},\text{DNum}:d) \land \\ & \text{Department}(\text{MgrSSN}:e,\text{DNumber}:d) \land \\ & \text{Employee}(\text{SSN}:e,\text{FName}:mfn,\text{LName}:mln)) \end{aligned}
```

"Complex" Query

• List project number of projects for which an employee whose last name is Smith is a worker or a manager of the department that controls the project

```
 \begin{aligned} \{p \mid \operatorname{Project}(\operatorname{PNumber}: p) & \land \exists e \text{ Employee}(\operatorname{SSN}: e, \operatorname{LName}: \text{`Smith'}) \land \\ & [\operatorname{WorksOn}(\operatorname{ESSN}: e, \operatorname{PNo}: p) \lor \\ & \exists d \text{ (Department}(\operatorname{MgrSSN}: e, \operatorname{DNumber}: d) \land \\ & \operatorname{Project}(\operatorname{PNumber}: p, \operatorname{DNum}: d)) \] \end{aligned}
```

• Many variants

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Join of a Relation with itself

• List first and last name of employees, and first and last name of their immediate supervisor

```
\{efn, eln, mfn, mln \mid \exists m 
(Employee(FName : efn, LName : eln, SuperSSN : m) \land
Employee(SSN : m, FName : mfn, LName : mln))\}
```

• Like for the algebra and TRC, attribute names for the result have to be explicitly specified through some kind of assertion

```
RES(EmpFN, EmpLN, SupFN, SupLN) \leftarrow \{efn, eln, mfn, mln \mid ...\}
```

Universal Quantifier

• List the name of employees who work on all projects

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Universal Quantifier

• List the name of employees who have no dependent