CS339: Abstractions and Paradigms for Programming

Higher Order List Functions

Manas Thakur

CSE, IIT Bombay



Autumn 2025

Repetitions galore

➤ Recall the program to sum a list:

➤ What about product?

```
(define (prod l)
   (if (null? l)
          1
                (* (car l) (prod (cdr l)))))
```

➤ Length?

Along with similar syntax, what are we doing in each of these?

Folding a list to a single value!



The fold higher-order operation

```
(define (foldr f v l)
  (if (null? l)
      v
          (f (car l) (foldr f v (cdr l)))))
```

Also called reduce.

➤ Updated sum:

```
(define (sum l)
  (foldr + 0 l)
```

➤ Product:

```
(define (prod l)
  (foldr * 1 l)
```

➤ Length?



What was the 'r' in "foldr"?

```
(define (foldr f v l)
  (if (null? l)
       v
       (f (car l) (foldr f v (cdr l)))))
```

```
> (define l (list 1 2 3 4))
> (foldr + 0 l)
```

[(+ 1 (+ 2 (+ 3 (+ 4 0))))]

Folds from right.

➤ We also have a foldl:

$$(+ 0 1) ==> (+ 1 2) ==>$$

 $(+ 3 3) ==> (+ 6 4) ==> 10$



Transforming lists

➤ Add 10 to each element of a list:

```
(define (add10 l)
  (if (null? l)
     nil
     (cons (+ 10 (car l)) (add10 (cdr l)))))
```

➤ How about squaring each element?

```
(define (sqr-list l)
  (if (null? l)
       nil
       (cons (square (car l)) (sqr-list (cdr l)))))
```

We are *mapping* a list to another list by applying a common function to all its elements!



The map higher-order operation

```
(define (map f l)
  (if (null? l)
     nil
     (cons (f (car l)) (map f (cdr l)))))
```

➤ What's squaring a list now?

```
(define (sqr-list l)
  (map square l))
```

➤ The new add10 function:

```
(define (add10 l)
  (map (lambda (x) (+ x 10)) l))
```

Map-based functions usually are also great candidates for parallelization!



Something complex (for now!)

➤ Compute the sum of the squares of the even numbers of a list:

Now keep this aside for some time.



Filtering lists

 \triangleright Return numbers from a list that are >10:

➤ Return even numbers from a list:

You know what we're going to do next!



The filter higher-order operation

➤ The new get-evn:

```
(define (get-evn l)
  (filter even? l))
```

The new gt10:

```
(define (gt10 l)
  (filter (lambda (x) (> x 10)) l))
```



Now we can solve complex problems so elegantly!

➤ Get a list containing squares of the even numbers of a list:

```
(define (sqr-evn l)
  (map square (filter even? l)))
```

```
Next Class
We begin with OO (000)
```

➤ Compute the sum of the squares of the even numbers of a list:

```
(define (sum-sqr-evn l)
  (foldr + 0 (map square (filter even? l))))
```

```
Programming this way is called using sequences as conventional interfaces— a topic we would revisit again (that time, for efficiency) and enjoy a lot!
```

