# Related Work Presentation - Language Model Programming

Zilong Li & Scott McCall

Luca Beurer-Kellner, Marc Fischer, and Martin Vechev. 2023. Prompting Is Programming: A Query Language for Large Language Models. Proc. ACM Program. Lang. 7, PLDI, Article 186 (June 2023), 24 pages. https://doi.org/10.1145/3591300

# Background

- Large Language Models (LLMs) natural language input is subdivided into a set of tokens Response is based on probability of subsequent tokens (usually, the highest one).
- Trained on a large scale of data. Can be used for downstream tasks such as code generation, summarizing text, answering questions, and more

Training LLM to perform a specific task has two different approaches: fine-tuning and prompting

# **Background (cont.)**

Fine-tuning: training the model on a specific dataset relevant to the task

- Prohibitively expensive for most users in terms of computing power
- Billions of parameters, not always clear how to fine tune
- Not possible on closed-source models such as GPT

GPU RAM
11.1 / 16.0 GB

Memory use of
roberta-base (a small
size model)

Prompting: natural language prompts as a method of instruction

- User may need to understand various differences between models to interact with them effectively
- LLMs may require back and forth interaction, limiting the generality of the types of prompts that can be provided

### **Motivation**

As usage of LLMs such as ChatGPT increase, having way to interact with various models in an identical fashion would be extremely useful, user wouldn't have to learn model internals or implementation details.

Novel idea called language model programming with three primary goals:

- Interaction. Automatically interact with LLMs.
- <u>Constraint.</u> Impose constraints on LLMs.
- <u>Efficiency and Cost.</u> Reduce the computational and financial cost of calling language models.

# Challenges with LMP (Language Model Programming)

- Providing an abstract, generalized interface to the user for prompting that can work with the specific implementation details of different models
- Providing decoding methods that limit the chance of combinatorial explosions and high query costs
- Decoding LLMs refers to the methodology of predicting most next probable token or sequence of tokens in a prompt

# Syntax of LMQL (Language Model Query Language)

 (decoder) denotes the decoding procedure employed by LMQL.

Argmax, sample and beam are supported here.

\(\quad \text{query}\)\)\ models the interaction with the language model.

It can be thought of as the body of a python function subject to some restrictions and additions.

```
LMQL Program

⟨decoder⟩ ⟨query⟩
from ⟨model⟩
[where ⟨cond⟩]
[distribute ⟨dist⟩]
```

# Syntax of LMQL (Language Model Query Language)

 from \(\phi\) denotes which LM to use.

We can use the Hugging Face Model repository or the GPT family.

- where \( \condition \) places constraints on the variables in the \( \query \).
- distribute (dist) is an optional instruction that returns the probability distribution of the last variable in the query.

#### LMQL Program

```
⟨decoder⟩ ⟨query⟩
from ⟨model⟩
[where ⟨cond⟩]
[distribute ⟨dist⟩]
```

# LMQL Example

```
Model Response
Program

☑ Color By Variable

   Write a summary of Bruno Mars, the singer:
                                                                                                                 Write a summary of Bruno Mars, the singer:
                                                                                                                                                                                                    0
           "name": "[STRING_VALUE]",
                                                                                                                  "name": " STRING_VALUE Bruno Mars ",
    "age": [INT_VALUE],
                                                                                                                   "age": INT_VALUE 34,
            "top_songs": [[
                                                                                                                   "top_songs": [
                    "[STRING_VALUE]",
                                                                                                                    " STRING_VALUE Uptown Funk ",
                                                                                                                    " STRING_VALUE Just the Way You Are "
        where STOPS_BEFORE(STRING_VALUE, '"') and \
                                                                                                                  <eos>
                        INT(INT_VALUE) and len(TOKENS(INT_VALUE)) < 2</pre>
```

Execution of \(\lambda\) body

Two kinds of variables:

- [variable] decode and assign
- {variable} retrieve/substitute

#### **Algorithm 1:** Evaluation of a top-level string *s*

```
Input: string s, trace u, scope \sigma, language model f
 1 if s contains [\langle \langle varname \rangle \rangle] then
        s_{\text{pre}}, varname, s_{\text{post}} \leftarrow \text{unpack}(s)
 2
                   // e.g. "a [b] c" \rightarrow "a ", "b", " c"
                                             // append to trace
       u \leftarrow us_{\text{pre}}
       v \leftarrow decode(f, \mathbf{u}) // use the LM for the hole
       \sigma[\text{varname}] \leftarrow v // updated scope
                                             // append to trace
       u \leftarrow uv
 7 else if s contains {⟨varname⟩} then
        varname \leftarrow unpack(s) // e.g. "{b}" \rightarrow "b"
        v \leftarrow \sigma[\text{varname}] // retrieve value from scope
        s \leftarrow \text{subs}(s, \text{varname}, v) // replace placeholder
10
         with value
                                             // append to trace
        u \leftarrow us
11
12 else
                                             // append to trace
        u \leftarrow us
14 end
```

Decoding of language model

Autoregressively generating token

#### Algorithm 2: Decoding

```
Input: trace u, scope \sigma, LM f Output: decoded sequence v
```

- $v \leftarrow \epsilon$
- 2 while True do

$$m \leftarrow \text{compute\_mask}(u, \sigma, v)$$

4 if 
$$\bigwedge_i (m_i = 0)$$
 then break

$$z \leftarrow 1/z \cdot m \odot \operatorname{softmax}(f(uv))$$

$$t \leftarrow \operatorname{pick}(z)$$

7 **if** 
$$t = EOS$$
 then break

$$v \leftarrow vt$$

9 end

Execution of \(\lambda\) body with the constraint from \(\mathbf{where}\)

- Naïve: not strong enough
- Go to the end of sentence (EOS)
- Explosion of function call
- Explosion of cost

#### **Algorithm 3:** Naive Decoding with Constraints

```
Input: trace u, scope \sigma, language model f
   Output: decoded sequence v
 1 Function decode\_step(f, u, v)
         z \leftarrow \operatorname{softmax}(f(uv))
         m \leftarrow 1^{|\mathcal{V}|}
         do
              t \leftarrow \operatorname{pick}(^{1}/z \cdot \boldsymbol{m} \odot \boldsymbol{z})
              if t \neq EOS then decode_step(u, v, vt)
 6
              else if t = EOS \land check(u, vt) then
                return v
              else m[t] \leftarrow 0
 8
         while \bigvee_i m_i = 1
10 decode step(f, u, \epsilon)
```

## **Final Semantics**

Assign annotators below to queries and constraints

FIN - fixed, unchanging

VAR - variable

INC - incrementing

DEC - decreasing

⊤: True

⊥: False

expression	$\texttt{Final}[\cdot;\sigma]$	expression	$\textbf{Final}[\cdot;\sigma]$
(const) python variable (pyvar) previous hole (var) current var (var) future hole (var)	FIN VAR FIN INC	$stop\_at(var, s)$ $x in s$ $for strings x, s$	$\begin{cases} \text{FIN} & \text{if } \llbracket var \rrbracket_{\sigma}. \text{endswith}(s) \\ & \land \text{FINAL}[var] = \text{INC} \\ \text{VAR} & \text{else} \\ \\ \text{FIN} & \text{if } x \text{ in } s \land \text{FINAL}[x] = \text{FIN} \\ & \land \text{FINAL}[s] = \text{INC} \end{cases}$
words(v) $sentences(v)$ $len(v)$	FINAL[v] FINAL[v]	$e  ext{ in } l$ for string $e$ , set $l$	$\begin{cases} \text{VAR} & \text{else} \\ \text{FIN} & \text{if } \nexists i \in l \bullet i.\text{startswith(e)} \\ & \land \text{FINAL}[x] \in \{\text{INC}, \text{FIN}\} \\ & \land \text{FINAL}[l] = \text{FIN} \end{cases}$
number equality $n == m$	$\begin{cases} \text{FIN } & \text{if } \text{FINAL}[n] = \text{FIN} \\ & \land \text{FINAL}[m] = \text{FIN} \\ \text{VAR } & \text{else} \end{cases}$ $(\text{FIN } & \text{if } \text{FINAL}[x] = \text{FIN}$	x < y	$\begin{cases} \text{VAR} & \text{else} \\ \text{FIN} & \text{if } x < y \land \text{FINAL}[x] \in \{\text{DEC}, \text{FIN}\} \\ & \land \text{FINAL}[y] \in \{\text{INC}, \text{FIN}\} \end{cases}$
string equality $x == y$		$\it a$ and $\it b$	$\begin{cases} \text{VAR} & \text{else} \\ \text{FIN} & \text{if } \exists v \in \{a,b\} \bullet \llbracket v \rrbracket_{\sigma}^F = \text{FIN}(\bot) \\ \text{FIN} & \text{if } \forall v \in \{a,b\} \bullet \llbracket v \rrbracket_{\sigma}^F = \text{FIN}(\top) \\ \text{VAR} & \text{else} \end{cases}$
function $fn(\tau_1,\ldots,\tau_k)$		$a {\sf or} b$ not $a$	$\begin{cases} \text{fin} & \text{if } \exists v \in \{a,b\} \bullet \llbracket v \rrbracket_\sigma^F = \text{fin}(\top) \\ \text{fin} & \text{if } \forall v \in \{a,b\} \bullet \llbracket v \rrbracket_\sigma^F = \text{fin}(\bot) \\ \text{var} & \text{else} \end{cases}$ $\text{Final}[a]$

## FollowMap Semantics

Evaluation rules for followmap semantics

Check whether the constraint is met.

```
Follow [\cdot](u,t)
         expression
              (const)
                            [\![\langle const \rangle]\!]_{\sigma}
    python variable
                            [pyvar]_{\sigma[v\leftarrow vt]}
             (pyvar)
previous hole (var)
                            [\langle var \rangle]_{\sigma}
                            (FIN(v)
                                         if t = EOS
       current var v
                             INC(vt) else
  future hole (var)
                            None
                             (FIN(w_1, \ldots, w_k)) if t = EOS
                             INC(w_1, \ldots, w_k)
                                                      if t = ...
            words(v)
                             INC(w_1, ..., w_k t) else
                              where w_1, \ldots, w_k \leftarrow [[words(v)]]_{\sigma}
                             (FIN(s_1,\ldots,s_k)) if t=EOS
                             INC(s_1, \ldots, s_k, t) if s_k endswith (".")
      sentences(v)
                             INC(s_1, ..., s_k t) else
                              where s_1, \ldots, s_k \leftarrow [sentences(v)]_{\sigma}
                                            if t = EOS
                             len(v)
               len(v)
                            len(v) + 1 else
               len(l)
                            len([[l]]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]})
            over list I
```

```
expression
                                   Follow [\cdot](u,t)
                                    \mathsf{fn}(\llbracket \tau_1 \rrbracket_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]}, \dots, \llbracket \tau_k \rrbracket_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]})
          fn(\tau_1,\ldots,\tau_k)
                                      [FIN(b)] if b \land FINAL[var] = INC
      stop_at(var, s)
                                     VAR(l) else
                                    where b = [var]_{\sigma} endswith(s)
                     x in s
                                      \top if x in s \vee x in t
               for string s
                                      ⊥ else
          and constant x
                                      (FIN(T) if t in l
                                       VAR(\bot) if \exists e \in l \bullet
                     x in l
 for constant list/set 1
                                                         e.startswith(vt)
                                                     else
                                    [x]_{\sigma[v\leftarrow vt]} < [y]_{\sigma[v\leftarrow vt]}
                                      (FIN(\top)) if vt = a
                                       VAR(\bot) if a.startswith(vt)
  string comp. a == v
                                                     else
number comp. x == y
                                     [\![x]\!]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]} = [\![y]\!]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]}
                                    [x]_{\sigma[v\leftarrow vt]} and [y]_{\sigma[v\leftarrow vt]}
                    a and b
                     a or b
                                    [x]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]} or [y]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]}
                                    not [x]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]}
                       not a
```

This is an example of the followmap semantics

$$\text{Follow[TEXT in ["Stephen Hawking"]]("Steph",} t) = \begin{cases} \text{FIN}(\top) & \text{if } t = \text{"en Hawking"} \\ \text{FIN}(\bot) & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

#### LMQL Evaluation

Evaluate the effectiveness of LMQL as a language as well as a tool for prompt engineers.

**Evaluation standard:** 

- Expressiveness Can we easily implement common and advanced prompting techniques with simple and concise query logic, especially in the case of interactive prompting?
- **Performance** Can LMQL be used to effectively lower the required number of model queries and thereby lower the implied computational or API-related cost of using LMs?
- Accuracy Does LMQL's constrained decoding affect task accuracy of LMs when evaluated on standard benchmarks?

#### **LMQL** Evaluation

- Baseline: generate() function in many huggingface language models.
  - generate() function generates output chunk-wise
  - do parsing and validation manually
- Dataset: general and date understanding, question answering and arithmetic math
- Model: GPT-J 6B, OPT 30B, GPT-2

### **LMQL** Evaluation

#### **Evaluation Metrics:**

- LOC: the number of functional lines of code
- Number of Model Queries: the number of times the model f is invoked for next
- Number of Decoder Calls: the number of times a new decoding loop is started
- Billable Tokens: count the number of tokens per Decoder Call plus the number of tokens that are generated.

# Results

	GPT-J-6B[27]				OPT-30B [34]			
	Standard Decoding	LMQL	Δ	Est. Cost Savings	Standard Decoding	LMQL	Δ	Est. Cost Savings
Odd One Out				2				
Accuracy	33.33%	<b>34.52</b> %	1.19%		34.52%	34.52%	0.00%	
Decoder Calls	7.96	5.96	-25.11%		7.96	5.96	-25.11%	
<b>Model Queries</b>	73.04	41.51	-43.16%		73.04	40.70	-44.27%	
Billable Tokens	1178.71	861.32	-26.93%	0.63¢/query	1173.21	856.17	-27.02%	0.63¢/query
Date Understanding	37			Ş				
Accuracy	22.89%	22.89%	0.00%		29.16%	29.16%	0.00%	
Decoder Calls	9.84	6.84	-30.47%		9.84	6.84	-30.47%	
Model Queries	103.38	57.26	-44.61%		103.38	57.00	-44.86%	
Billable Tokens	4131.28	2844.90	-31.14%	2.57¢/query	4129.55	2842.93	-31.16%	2.57¢/query

# **Contributions Summary**

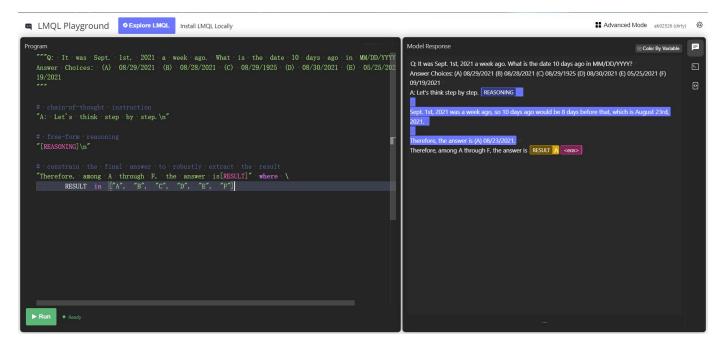
- Novel paradigm of language model programming, addressing several challenges that arise with recent LM prompting techniques
- LMQL, an efficient, high-level query language for LMs with support for scripted prompting and output constraining.
- A formal model of eager, partial evaluation semantics based on so-called final and follow abstractions.
- Reduction in inference cost and latency by 26-80% with retention or slight improvement on task accuracy.

(1) Task Decomposition and Chain of Thought
Decomposing a task and solving it step by step can improve the performance of LLMs.

```
Raw Task: In this task, based on the given context word, you need to create a pair of sentences each containing
      a blank (_) and their corresponding answer. The sentence pair should look similar, and should be about two
      related but different objects; for example "trophy" and "suitcase". Also, the sentences must be different in terms
      of trigger words (e.g., "small" and "big") which express contrasting properties about the two objects.
      Input: Context word: <> Expected Output: Ouestion 1: <> Answer 1: <> Ouestion 2: <> Answer 2: <>
      Reframed Task:
DECOMPOSITION
      Subtask 1. Write 2 objects based on the given context word.
      Input: Context word: <> Expected Output: Objects: <>
      Subtask 2. Write a sentence by connecting objects with a verb.
      Input: Objects: <> Expected Output: Sentence: <>
      Subtask 3. Create a fill in the blank question from the sentence where object 1 will fit the blank.
      Input: Object 1: <>.Sentence: <> Expected Output: Ouestion: <>
      Subtask 4. Change the given question so that answer flips to object 2 in the question.
      Input: Object 2: <>, Sentence: <>, Question: <> Expected Output: Question: <>
      Subtask 5. Generate both questions and answers:
      Input: Question 1: <> Object 1: <> Question 2: <> Object 2: <>
      Expected Output: Question 1: \Leftrightarrow Answer 1: \Leftrightarrow Question 2: \Leftrightarrow Answer 2: \Leftrightarrow
```

Swaroop Mishra, Daniel Khashabi, Chitta Baral, Yejin Choi, and Hannaneh Hajishirzi. 2022. Reframing Instructional Prompts to GPTk's Language.

The chain of thought in LMQL is implemented by an instruction, not currently formalized in the language.



## **Future Work**

A query can use another query's output as its input. Different queries can have difference constraints.

A Stack of Queries

(2) The "or" Operator is Redundant here

```
LMQL Program

⟨decoder⟩ ⟨query⟩

from ⟨model⟩

[where ⟨cond⟩]

[distribute ⟨dist⟩]
```

#### The goal of LMQL:

Control the flow of language models and constrain the response of language models

```
... [variable1] ..... [variable2] ..... [variable3] ...
```

where (variable1 ... or variable3 ...) and variable2 ...

```
The "and" doesn't have such a problem:
... [variable1] ..... [variable2] ..... [variable3] ...
where variable1 ... and variable2 ... and variable3 ...
```

#### Solutions:

- Abolish the "or".
- Limit the use of "or".

Also, [variable1] == [variable2] has the same problem.

(3) Inconsistency between the FollowMap Semantics and the Language Implementation

Check the constraints token by token.

```
expression Follow [\cdot](u,t)
               (const)
                            [\langle const \rangle]_{\sigma}
    python variable
                            [pyvar]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]}
              (pyvar)
previous hole (var)
                            [\langle var \rangle]_{\sigma}
                                         if t = \cos
                             FIN(v)
        current var v
                             INC(vt) else
   future hole (var)
                              (FIN(w_1,\ldots,w_k))
                                                       if t = \cos
                              INC(w_1,\ldots,w_k)
                                                      if t =
            words(v)
                              INC(w_1, \ldots, w_k t) else
                               where w_1, \ldots, w_k \leftarrow \llbracket words(v) \rrbracket_{\sigma}
                              (FIN(s_1,\ldots,s_k)) if t=EOS
                              INC(s_1,...,s_k,t) if s_k endswith (".")
       sentences(v)
                              INC(s_1, \ldots, s_k t) else
                               where s_1, \ldots, s_k \leftarrow [sentences(v)]_{\sigma}
                              len(v)
                                             if t = EOS
               len(v)
                             len(v) + 1 else
                len(l)
                            len([[l]]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]})
            over list I
```

```
expression Follow [\cdot](u,t)
           \operatorname{fn}(\tau_1, \ldots, \tau_k) \quad \operatorname{fn}(\llbracket \tau_1 \rrbracket_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]}, \ldots, \llbracket \tau_k \rrbracket_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]})
                                        [FIN(b)] if b \land FINAL[var] = INC
                                        VAR(l) else
       stop_at(var. s)
                                       where b = [var]_{\sigma} endswith(s)
                       x in s
                                        (\top \text{ if x in s } \lor x \text{ in } t)
                for string s
                                         ⊥ else
           and constant x
                                         (FIN(T) if t in l
                                         VAR(\bot) if \exists e \in l \bullet
                       x in l
  for constant list/set l
                                                             e.startswith(vt)
                                                         else
                                       [x]_{\sigma[v\leftarrow vt]} < [y]_{\sigma[v\leftarrow vt]}
                        x < y
                                         (FIN(T) \text{ if } vt = a)
   string comp. a == v
                                         VAR(\bot) if a.startswith(vt)
                                                          else
number comp. x == y
                                        [\![x]\!]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]} = [\![y]\!]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]}
                                        [x]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]} and [y]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]}
                       a or b
                                       [x]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]} or [y]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]}
                                       not [x]_{\sigma[v \leftarrow vt]}
                         not a
```

Most languages models have the generate() function, but GPT API's do not.

- If we evaluate token by token, it will increase the cost.
- They do not use these rules when calling the GPT APIs.
- This is limitation of GPT APIs. It cannot be resolved.

```
"id": "chatcmpl-abc123",
        "object": "chat.completion",
        "created": 1677858242,
        "model": "gpt-3.5-turbo-1106",
        "usage": [
10
        "choices": [
13
                "message": {
14
15
16
                "finish reason": "stop",
18
20
21 }
```

#### **Citations**

- Luca Beurer-Kellner, Marc Fischer, and Martin Vechev. 2023. Prompting Is Programming: A Query Language for Large Language Models. Proc. ACM Program. Lang. 7, PLDI, Article 186 (June 2023), 24 pages. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1145/3591300">https://doi.org/10.1145/3591300</a>
- Swaroop Mishra, Daniel Khashabi, Chitta Baral, Yejin Choi, and Hannaneh Hajishirzi. 2022. Reframing Instructional Prompts to GPTk's Language.