NATURAL DEDUCTION

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Contents

1. Natural Deduction

Logical symbols are explained by (1) how to prove it (introduction) and (2) how to use it (elimination). We use the capital Greek letter Γ to denote a list of hypotheses. A hypothesis is just a formula. The order and the number of occurrence of a given formula does not matter. For example,

$$\varphi, \psi, \chi \qquad\qquad \psi, \varphi, \chi \qquad\qquad \varphi, \varphi, \psi, \chi$$

are considered to be the set of hypotheses.

We write

$$\Gamma \vdash \varphi$$

to mean "the hypotheses in Γ *entail* φ".

1.1. Rules.

The simplest rule is the *identity rule*. It says that we can conclude φ if it is already part of the set of hypotheses.

$$\textsc{Id}\ \frac{}{\Gamma, \varphi \vdash \varphi}$$

1.1.1. *Top.* We can always derive $\top$, but because we can't use $\top$ in any meaningful way, it has no elimination rules.

$$\top\text{-}\textsc{Intro}\ \frac{}{\Gamma \vdash \top}$$

1.1.2. *Conjunction.* Conjunctions behave like pairs. To construct a pair, we need two elements (the first element and the second element). It has two elimination rules, one extracts the first element and the other extracts the second element.

$$\wedge\text{-}\textsc{Intro}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi \qquad \Gamma \vdash \psi}{\Gamma \vdash \varphi \wedge \psi} \qquad\qquad \wedge\text{-}\textsc{Elim-L}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi \wedge \psi}{\Gamma \vdash \varphi} \qquad\qquad \wedge\text{-}\textsc{Elim-R}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi \wedge \psi}{\Gamma \vdash \psi}$$

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Proof Script.

(i) To prove $\varphi \wedge \psi$: we need to prove both φ and ψ.
(ii) To use $\varphi \wedge \psi$: since $\varphi \wedge \psi$, we may assume both φ and ψ.

1.1.3. *Implication.* Implications behave like functions. If I can write a program ψ with input φ, then I can abstract the input to get a function. The elimination rule is also known as *modus ponens*. It is function application.

$$\textsc{$\Rightarrow$-Intro}\ \frac{\Gamma, \varphi \vdash \psi}{\Gamma \vdash \psi \Rightarrow \psi} \qquad \textsc{$\Rightarrow$-Elim}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi \Rightarrow \psi \qquad \Gamma \vdash \varphi}{\Gamma \vdash \psi}$$

Proof Script.

(i) To prove $\varphi \Rightarrow \psi$: suppose that φ ... therefore ψ.
(ii) To use $\varphi \Rightarrow \psi$: since $\varphi \Rightarrow \psi$, to prove ψ it suffices to prove φ.

1.1.4. *Universal Quantification.*

$$\textsc{$\forall$-Intro}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi}{\Gamma \vdash \forall x.\varphi}(x \notin \Gamma) \qquad \textsc{$\forall$-Elim}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \forall x.\varphi}{\Gamma \vdash \varphi[t/x]}$$

Note that the side condition is crucial. Say, one of the hypotheses is "x is even" from which we can prove x is divisible by 2. It's incorrect to infer that for all x, x is divisible by 2 because the hypotheses constrain x to even numbers.
Proof Script.

(i) To prove $\forall x.\varphi$: let x be given, ... therefore φ.
(ii) To use $\forall x.\varphi$: since $\forall x.\varphi$, $\varphi[t/x]$.

1.1.5. *Bottom.* Bottom does not have an introduction rule but it has a powerful elimination rule. The elimination rule is also known as *ex falso quodlibet*.

$$\textsc{$\bot$-Elim}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \bot}{\Gamma \vdash \varphi}$$

1.1.6. *Disjunction.* Disjunctions behave like tagged unions. Its elimination rule is the `if ... then ... else ...` construct in programming languages.

$$\textsc{$\vee$-Intro-L}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi}{\Gamma \vdash \varphi \vee \psi} \qquad \textsc{$\vee$-Intro-R}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \psi}{\Gamma \vdash \varphi \vee \psi} \qquad \textsc{$\vee$-Elim}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi \vee \psi \qquad \Gamma, \varphi \vdash \chi \qquad \Gamma, \psi \vdash \chi}{\Gamma \vdash \chi}$$

Proof Script.

(i) To prove $\varphi \vee \psi$: prove either φ or ψ.
(ii) To use $\varphi \vee \psi$: case analysis.

1.1.7. *Existential Quantification.*

$$\textsc{$\exists$-Intro}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi[t/x]}{\Gamma \vdash \exists x.\varphi} \qquad \textsc{$\exists$-Elim}\ \frac{\Gamma \vdash \exists x.\varphi}{\Gamma \vdash \varphi[y/x]}(y \notin \Gamma)$$

The side condition in the elimination rule is crucial because $\exists x.\varphi$ contains a *witness* that we know nothing about so the set of hypotheses Γ cannot assume anything about it.

Proof Script.

(i) To prove $\exists x.\varphi$: find a witness t for which $\varphi[t/x]$ holds.
(ii) To use $\exists x.\varphi$: we get a hypothetical witness y that we don't know anything about and $\varphi[y/x]$ holds.

2. Examples

Example 2.1.

$$\varphi \wedge \psi \Rightarrow \varphi$$

Proof 1. Suppose that $\varphi \wedge \psi$, then φ and ψ. We need to prove φ but it is already a hypothesis. □

Proof 2.

$$\Rightarrow\text{-}\textsc{Intro}\ \dfrac{\wedge\text{-}\textsc{Elim-L}\ \dfrac{\textsc{Id}\ \dfrac{}{\varphi \wedge \psi \vdash \varphi \wedge \psi}}{\varphi \wedge \psi \vdash \varphi}}{\vdash \varphi \wedge \psi \Rightarrow \varphi}$$

□

Example 2.2.

$$\neg(\varphi \vee \psi) \Rightarrow \neg\varphi \wedge \neg\psi$$

Proof 1. Suppose that $\neg(\varphi \vee \psi)$. We need to prove $\neg\varphi \wedge \neg\psi$. It suffices to prove $\neg\varphi$ and $\neg\psi$ separately.

(i) Proof of $\neg\varphi$: Assume φ, we need to prove $\bot$. Since we know that $\neg(\varphi \vee \psi)$, it suffices to prove $\varphi \vee \psi$, which follows immediately from φ.
(ii) Proof of $\neg\psi$: Assume ψ, we need to prove $\bot$. Since we know that $\neg(\varphi \vee \psi)$, it suffices to prove $\varphi \vee \psi$, which follows immediately from ψ.

□

Proof 2.

$$\Rightarrow\text{-}\textsc{Intro}\ \dfrac{\wedge\text{-}\textsc{Intro}\ \dfrac{\Rightarrow\text{-}\textsc{Intro}\ \dfrac{\Rightarrow\text{-}\textsc{Elim}\ \dfrac{\textsc{Id}\ \dfrac{}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi), \varphi \vdash \neg(\varphi \vee \psi)} \qquad \Delta}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi), \varphi \vdash \bot}}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi) \vdash \neg\varphi} \qquad \dfrac{\Xi}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi) \vdash \neg\psi}\ \Rightarrow\text{-}\textsc{Intro}}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi) \vdash \neg\varphi \wedge \neg\psi}}{\vdash \neg(\varphi \vee \psi) \Rightarrow \neg\varphi \wedge \neg\psi}$$

where $\Delta =$

$$\vee\text{-}\textsc{Intro-L}\ \dfrac{\textsc{Id}\ \dfrac{}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi), \varphi \vdash \varphi}}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi), \varphi \vdash \varphi \vee \psi}$$

and $\Xi =$

$$\Rightarrow\text{-}\textsc{Elim}\ \dfrac{\textsc{Id}\ \dfrac{}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi), \psi \vdash \neg(\varphi \vee \psi)} \qquad \dfrac{\dfrac{}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi), \psi \vdash \psi}\ \textsc{Id}}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi), \psi \vdash \varphi \vee \psi}\ \vee\text{-}\textsc{Intro-R}}{\neg(\varphi \vee \psi), \psi \vdash \bot}$$

□

Example 2.3.

$$\forall x.\varphi \Rightarrow \exists x.\varphi$$

Proof 1. Suppose that $\forall x.\varphi$. We need to prove $\exists x.\varphi$. It suffices to find a witness t so that $\varphi[t/x]$. Since we know $\forall x.\varphi$, any witness works. □

Proof 2.

$$\dfrac{\dfrac{\dfrac{\dfrac{}{\forall x.\varphi \vdash \forall x.\varphi}\,\textsc{Id}}{\forall x.\varphi \vdash \varphi[t/x]}\,\forall\text{-}\textsc{Elim}}{\forall x.\varphi \vdash \exists x.\varphi}\,\exists\text{-}\textsc{Intro}}{\vdash \forall x.\varphi \Rightarrow \exists x.\varphi}\,\Rightarrow\text{-}\textsc{Intro}$$

□