



Evaluation and Operators

Principles of Functional Programming

Classes and Substitutions

We previously defined the meaning of a function application using a computation model based on substitution. Now we extend this model to classes and objects.

Question: How is an instantiation of the class $C(e_1, \dots, e_m)$ evaluated?

Answer: The expression arguments e_1, \dots, e_m are evaluated like the arguments of a normal function. That's it.

The resulting expression, say, $C(v_1, \dots, v_m)$, is already a value.

Classes and Substitutions

Now suppose that we have a class definition,

```
class C( $x_1, \dots, x_m$ ) { ... def f( $y_1, \dots, y_n$ ) = b ... }
```

where

- ▶ The formal parameters of the class are x_1, \dots, x_m .
- ▶ The class defines a method f with formal parameters y_1, \dots, y_n .

(The list of function parameters can be absent. For simplicity, we have omitted the parameter types.)

Question: How is the following expression evaluated?

```
C( $v_1, \dots, v_m$ ).f( $w_1, \dots, w_n$ )
```

Classes and Substitutions (2)

Answer: The expression $C(v_1, \dots, v_m).f(w_1, \dots, w_n)$ is rewritten to:

$$[w_1/y_1, \dots, w_n/y_n][v_1/x_1, \dots, v_m/x_m][C(v_1, \dots, v_m)/this] b$$

There are three substitutions at work here:

- ▶ the substitution of the formal parameters y_1, \dots, y_n of the function f by the arguments w_1, \dots, w_n ,
- ▶ the substitution of the formal parameters x_1, \dots, x_m of the class C by the class arguments v_1, \dots, v_m ,
- ▶ the substitution of the self reference *this* by the value of the object $C(v_1, \dots, v_n)$.

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`Rational(2, 3).numer * Rational(1, 2).denom`

$\rightarrow 1 * 3 < 2 * 2$

$\rightarrow true$

Extension Methods

Having to define all methods that belong to a class inside the class itself can lead to very large classes, and is not very modular.

Methods that do not need to access the internals of a class can alternatively be defined as extension methods.

For instance, we can add min and abs methods to class Rational like this:

```
extension (r: Rational)
  def min(s: Rational): Boolean = if s.less(r) then s else r
  def abs: Rational = Rational(r.numer.abs, r.denom)
```

Using Extension Methods

Extensions of a class are visible if they are listed in the companion object of a class (as in the code above) or if they defined or imported in the current scope.

Members of a visible extensions of class C can be called as if they were members of C. E.g.

```
Rational(1/2).min(Rational(2/3))
```

Caveats:

- ▶ Extensions can only add new members, not override existing ones.
- ▶ Extensions cannot refer to other class members via this

Extension Methods and Substitutions

Extension method substitution works like normal substitution, but

- ▶ instead of this it's the extension parameter that gets substituted,
- ▶ class parameters are not visible, so do not need to be substituted at all.

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=

```
if Rational(2, 3).less(Rational(1, 2)
then Rational(2, 3)
else Rational(1, 2)
```


Operators

In principle, the rational numbers defined by `Rational` are as natural as integers.

But for the user of these abstractions, there is a noticeable difference:

- ▶ We write `x + y`, if `x` and `y` are integers, but
- ▶ We write `r.add(s)` if `r` and `s` are rational numbers.

In Scala, we can eliminate this difference. We proceed in two steps.

Step 1: Relaxed Identifiers

Operators such as + or < count as identifiers in Scala.

Thus, an identifier can be:

- ▶ *Alphanumeric*: starting with a letter, followed by a sequence of letters or numbers
- ▶ *Symbolic*: starting with an operator symbol, followed by other operator symbols.
- ▶ The underscore character '_' counts as a letter.
- ▶ Alphanumeric identifiers can also end in an underscore, followed by some operator symbols.

Examples of identifiers:

x1 * +?%& vector_++ counter_ =

Step 1: Relaxed Identifiers

Since operators are identifiers, it is possible to use them as method names.
E.g.

```
extension (x: Rational)
  def + (y: Rational): Rational = x.add(y)
  def * (y: Rational): Rational = x.mul(y)
  ...
```

This allows rational numbers to be used like Int or Double:

```
val x = Rational(1, 2)
val y = Rational(1, 3)
x * x + y * y
```

Step 2: Infix Notation

An operator method with a single parameter can be used as an infix operator.

An alphanumeric method with a single parameter can also be used as an infix operator if it is declared with an infix modifier. E.g.

```
extension (x: Rational)
  infix def min(that: Rational): Rational = ...
```

It is therefore possible to write

<code>r + s</code>		<code>r.+(s)</code>
<code>r < s</code>	<code>/* in place of */</code>	<code>r.<(s)</code>
<code>r min s</code>		<code>r.min(s)</code>

Precedence Rules

The *precedence* of an operator is determined by its first character.

The following table lists the characters in increasing order of priority precedence:

(all letters)

|

^

&

< >

= !

:

+ -

* / %

(all other special characters)

Exercise

Provide a fully parenthesized version of

$a + b \wedge c \vee d \text{ less } a \Rightarrow b \mid c$

Every binary operation needs to be put into parentheses, but the structure of the expression should not change.