

# CREATING A UNIVERSAL INFORMATION LANGUAGE

OSCAR BENDER-STONE

**ABSTRACT.** Welkin is a formalized programming language to store information. We introduce its use cases and rigorously define its syntax and semantics. From there, we introduce the bootstrap, making Welkin completely self-contained under the meta-theory of Peano Arithmetic.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Humanity produces a colossal amount of data each year. According to the International Data Corporation, there is currently 163 zettabytes of digital data in the world. Given that the average human can read, on average, 200 words per minute, and approximating a word as 8 bytes, this would require *billions* of years ( $7.8675 \times 10^9$  minutes). Even in restricted areas, such as academia, the amount of data available cannot be consumed individually. On JSTOR alone, there are over 2800 journals, translating to around 12 *million* articles. Taking the average size of an article to be 5000 words, this amounts to *hundreds* of years ( $3 \times 10^8$  minutes) for a *single* journal provider. The sheer scale of this data coincides with the trends in increased complexity, with little further predictions rapidly increasing this total.

In an attempt to tame these large data sets, a key concept called *information* emerged. Within modern databases, this is pronounced in the way data is organized and the relations between them. In modern formalizations, this is best represented by Knowledge Graphs, particularly OWL and John Sowa's Conceptual Graphs. More recently, AI systems are being more deeply integrated with databases, providing an easier way for users to query across a large amount of websites or resources at a time. However, most formulations miss on the *underlying structure* behind the data, providing a “shadow” through a model instead of the “thing itself”. Additionally, research done in AI aims to provide a good “average”; the amount of fake data produced is a concern, as noted in [1].

Analyzing this problem from a theoretical lens, the natural question arises: *why* is there so much information present? Could it be *compressed* into a smaller form? The leading two theories on the matter provide hard limitations on compression, each with their own notion of “information”:

- **Shannon entropy:** Claude Shannon founded information theory and defined information as the “reduction of uncertainty”, measured in a probabilistic setting.
- **Kolmogorov complexity:** Andrey Kolmogorov founded Algorithmic Information Theory, independently connecting Shannon's work to computability.

However, these theories lack a suitable *semantics*. These were expanded upon in Scott domains, which have been successful in projects like Prolog. Nevertheless *none* of these theories adequately explain what *information* is:

- **Knowledge Graphs** *encode* this structure through First Order Logic, but fall apart through contradictions or fallacious axioms. These can be recited through logics like Relevant logic, but the emphasis is placed on *truth* rather than *structure*. This fails to provide the notion that information can be false.

- **Shannon entropy** and **Kolmogorov complexity** provide a *measure* of information, not an exact notion of information itself. In the former, this is measured with random strings and focuses on binary strings, whereas the latter gets closer to computation yet studies a *minimum size*, not the properties of a Turing machine witnessing this bound.
- **Scott domains** come close to providing a semantic basis, but ultimately focus on the *hierarchical structure*, and not the *connections between domains*.

This thesis proposes to reexamine a topic in the literature: the notion of *information*. Using the etymology in Latin, “to form”, this thesis develops a formalized programming language to organize information. This provides the missing link to the *semantics* of information, more so than labels within Knowledge Graphs or ones commonly used in AI.

### 1.1. Goals.

The aim of this thesis is to create a formalized programming language, called Welkin, derived from an archaic German word meaning “sky, heavens”. The key goals outline the deficiencies observed in the formalisms above:

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## 2. FOUNDATIONS

We introduce the base theory needed for this thesis. We will keep it self-contained; additional references will be provided in each sub-section. We introduce an informal, set-theoretic definition, followed by the appropriate encoding into the meta-theory.

### 2.1. Well-formed Formulas.

The foundations of Welkin are based on the first-order theory of Peano Arithmetic. We will integrate the presentation of both. We only introduce one notion general to first-order logic:

**Definition 2.1.0.** The **language** of first-order logic consists of the symbols  $\mathcal{L}_{\text{FOL}} = \{\neg \wedge \vee \rightarrow \leftrightarrow \forall \exists ()\} \cup \{x_i\}$ , with symbols called:

- **Unary connective: not**  $\neg$
- **Binary connectives: and**  $\wedge$ , **or**  $\vee$ , **implication**  $\rightarrow$ , and **iff**  $\leftrightarrow$
- **Quantifiers** called **for all**  $\forall$  and **exists**  $\exists$
- **Left/Right parentheses**  $()$
- a **variable**  $x_i$  for each binary string  $i$

We will restrict our *primary* language to ensure simplicity of the checker, limited to the language of Peano Arithmetic, but extra notation is added throughout in a meta-theoretic sense.

**Definition 2.1.1.** The **language** of PA is the set  $\mathcal{L}_A = \{0, 1, +, *\}$ , with symbols called:

- **zero** (0) and **one** (1).
- **addition** (+) and **multiplication** (\*).
- **less than or equals** ( $\leq$ )

Note that the full language of our meta-theory is  $\mathcal{L}_T = \mathcal{L}_{\text{FOL}} \cup \mathcal{L}_A$ . We will encode these in the syntax of Welkin; see Section 5.

We require the notion of **well-formed formula** to introduce the axioms, specific to Peano-Arithmetic.

**Definition 2.1.2.** A **term** in Peano Arithmetic is defined recursively:

- **Base case:**
  - The constants 0 and 1 are terms.
  - Each variable  $x_i$  is a term.
- **Recursive case:** let  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  be terms. Then  $\alpha + \beta$ ,  $\alpha * \beta$ , and  $(\alpha)$  are terms.

A **constant term** is a term without variables. More precisely:

- **Base case:** 0 and 1 are constant terms.
- **Inductive step:** let  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  be constant terms. Then  $\alpha + \beta$ ,  $\alpha * \beta$ , and  $(\alpha)$  are constant terms.

**Definition 2.1.3.** A **well-formed formula (wff)** in Peano Arithmetic is defined recursively:

- **Base case:** given terms  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ ,  $\alpha = \beta$  is a wff.
- **Recursive case:** let  $\varphi$  and  $\psi$  be wffs.
  - **Connectives:**  $\neg\varphi$ ,  $\varphi \wedge \psi$ ,  $\varphi \vee \psi$ ,  $\varphi \rightarrow \psi$ , and  $\varphi \leftrightarrow \psi$  are wffs.
  - **Quantifiers:** Let  $x$  be a variable. Then  $\forall x.\varphi$  and  $\exists x.\varphi$  are wffs.

**Remark 2.1.4.** To simplify writing formulas, we add several abbreviations.

- We add two symbols:
  - **successor function**  $S$ , given by:  $S(n) \equiv n + 1$
  - **inequality**  $\leq$ , given by:  $x \leq y \equiv \exists z.z + x = y$
- We assume *most* of the binary connectives are **right-associative**. More precisely, for any wffs  $\varphi$ ,  $\psi$ , and  $\rho$ , we add the following abbreviations:
  - $\varphi \wedge \psi \wedge \rho \equiv \varphi \wedge (\psi \wedge \rho)$
  - $\varphi \vee \psi \vee \rho \equiv \varphi \vee (\psi \vee \rho)$
  - $\varphi \leftrightarrow \psi \leftrightarrow \rho \equiv \varphi \leftrightarrow (\psi \leftrightarrow \rho)$

We exclude  $\rightarrow$  due to a higher risk of ambiguity. However, in our theory, the remaining connectives are provably associative, and therefore, this notation is permissible (see Definition 2.2.8).

- We exclude parentheses between *different* connectives through the following **order of operations or priorities**: first  $\neg$ , then either  $\wedge$  or  $\vee$ , next either  $\forall$  and  $\exists$ , and finally  $\rightarrow$  and  $\leftrightarrow$ .

**Definition 2.1.5.** Let  $x$  be a variable and  $\alpha$  be a term. We define when  $x$  **occurs** in  $\alpha$  inductively.

- **Base case:**
  - $x$  does not occur in 0 and 1.
  - $x$  occurs in  $x_i$  iff  $x = x_i$ .
- **Inductive step:** let  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  be terms.
  - $x$  occurs in  $(\alpha)$  iff  $x$  occurs in  $\alpha$ .
  - $x$  occurs in  $\alpha + \beta$ ,  $\alpha * \beta$  iff  $x$  occurs in both  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ .

**Definition 2.1.6.** Let  $x$  be a variable and  $\varphi$  a wff. We recursively define when  $x$  is **bound** to  $\varphi$ :

- **Base case:** for atomic formulas  $\varphi$ ,  $x$  is bound in  $\varphi$  iff  $x$  occurs in  $\varphi$ .
- **Inductive step:** let  $\varphi, \psi$  be formulas.
  - $x$  is bound in  $\neg\varphi$  iff  $x$  is bound in  $\varphi$ .
  - $x$  is bound in  $\neg\varphi, \varphi \wedge \psi, \varphi \vee \psi, \varphi \rightarrow \psi$ , and  $\varphi \leftrightarrow \psi$  iff  $x$  is bound in both  $\varphi$  and  $\psi$ .
  - Let  $y$  be a variable. Then  $x$  is bound in  $\forall y.\varphi(y), \exists y.\varphi(y)$  iff either  $x = y$  or  $x$  is bound in  $\varphi$ .

We say  $x$  is **free** in  $\varphi$  if it is not bound in  $\varphi$ .

**Definition 2.1.7.** A **sentence** is a wff with no free variables. For completeness, we define this inductively:

- **Base case:** for constant terms  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ ,  $\alpha = \beta$  is a sentence.
- **Recursive case:** let  $\varphi$  and  $\psi$  be sentences.
  - **Connectives:**  $\neg\varphi, \varphi \wedge \psi, \varphi \vee \psi, \varphi \rightarrow \psi$ , and  $\varphi \leftrightarrow \psi$  are sentences.

## 2.2. Peano Arithmetic: Axioms and Proofs.

Before we introduce proof, we introduce the axioms of **PA**.

**Definition 2.2.8.** The **axioms of FOL** include:

**Definition 2.2.9.** The theory **Robinson Arithmetic Q** contains the following axioms:

- (Q1)  $\forall x.x + 1 \neq 0$
- (Q2)  $\forall x.\forall y.x + 1 = y + 1 \rightarrow x = y$
- (Q3)  $\forall x.(x \neq 0 \rightarrow \exists y.x = y + 1)$
- (Q4)  $\forall x.x + 0 = x$
- (Q5)  $\forall x.\forall y.(x + (y + 1) = (x + y) + 1)$
- (Q6)  $\forall x.x * 0 = 0$
- (Q7)  $\forall x.\forall y.x * (y + 1) = x * y + x$

The theory **PA** = **Q**  $\cup$  **I**, where **I** is an **induction schema**, defined over each first-order formula  $\varphi$  in  $\mathcal{L}_A$ :

$$(I) \quad \varphi(0) \wedge \forall n(\varphi(n) \rightarrow \varphi(n + 1)) \rightarrow \forall n\varphi(n)$$

We adopt a single rule of inference, namely **modus ponens**, a meta-theoretic rule:

$$(MP) \quad A \text{ and } A \rightarrow B \text{ implies } B$$

Now we can define proofs.

**Definition 2.2.10.** A **proof** in **PA** is defined recursively.

- **Base Case:**
- **Recursive Case:**

### 2.3. Key Properties of Peano Arithmetic.

**PA** enjoys several properties. We will define the first in depth, but it is cited here for clarity.

**Theorem 2.3.11.** *PA proves the following:*

- *Every Primitive Recursive Function (PRF) is total.*
- *PA is infinitely axiomatizable but not finitely so.*

We choose **PA** as a well-established theorem and a reasonable “minimal” theory. This contrasts with **Q**, which is too weak for computability proofs without induction, as well as **ZFC**, which has a much larger proof ordinal. Welkin requires a rich enough theory that can *directly* encode its core proofs, even with added verbosity. Note that any of these proofs can be *astronomically large*, but the point is to work in a theory where they are *possible*.

Note that from the work of Sergei Artemov, there is a weak form consistency that can be proven in **PA** and **ZFC**, separately. However, **PA** is needed as a meta-theory to ensure that Welkin is self-contained; see more in Bootstrap for details. **PA** can also be used to *define* Turing machines, which we next.

### 2.4. Set Theoretic Notions.

We wish to define our notions in terms of set-theory, as that is predominant in the definitions of computability. To do this, we introduce suitable *encodings* into **PA**. We will elaborate when necessary.

**Definition 2.4.12.** We encode the following set-theoretic notions recursively:

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- Instead of considering arbitrary alphabets, we consider binary  $\{0, 1\}$ .
- Any finite set is encoded by a natural number

### 2.5. Turing Machines.

**Definition 2.5.13.** A **Turing machine (TM)** is a 7-tuple  $(Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, B, F)$ , where:

- $Q$  is a finite set of **states**
- $\Sigma$  is a finite **alphabet**
- $\Gamma$  is a finite set of **tape symbols**
- $\delta : Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R\}$  is a **transition function**, where  $\{L, R\}$  denote directions **left** and **right**, respectively.

The encoding of TMs is more involved but possible through several mechanisms.

**Definition 2.5.14.** Let  $T$  be a TM. The **description**  $d_T$  of a Turing machine is the encoding of its transition diagram into a standard format.

## 3. INFORMATION SYSTEMS

We introduce the bulk of this thesis: providing an optimality criterion for an information system and deriving the best one in terms of explicitly computable structures. We first introduce structures, followed by their representations. We then prove that the study to convert between representations is RE-complete, ensuring the theory is sufficiently expressive.

### 3.1. Structures.

In FOL, the usual definition of a structure relies on a tuple of finitely many relations and function symbols on a domain. We simplify the definition; this will be expanded upon in Section 5.

**Definition 3.1.0.** A **structure** is a **bigraph**, namely a tuple  $(X, T, G)$ , where

- $X$  is a **domain**, a set of binary strings
- $T$  is a tree on  $X$ , the **hierarchy** of  $X$ . We make this more precise with the following constructors:
  - We add a symbol  $\emptyset \notin X$  called the **root**.
  - There is a **parent function**  $p : X \rightarrow X \cup \{\emptyset\}$  that is surjective. The preimage  $p^{-1}(x)$  is the set of **children of  $x$** . this can be encoded by a binary predicate  $\varphi_p$  such that it is functional,
 
$$\forall x. \forall y_1. \forall y_2. (p(x, y_1) \wedge p(x, y_2) \rightarrow y_1 = y_2)$$
 and surjective,
 
$$\forall x. \exists y. p(y, x).$$
- $G$  is a **hypergraph** on  $X$ , encoded by a definable binary predicate  $\varphi_G$  in **PA**.

Any hypergraph can be used to represent a FOL-structure via a disjoint; the latter can then be considered to be an indexed family of relations.

### 3.2. Bases For Turing Machines.

Let  $\mathcal{M}$  be the set of all Turing machines. We examine a suitable lattice-structure on this set provide a semi-lattice as a step towards organizational optimality.

**Definition.** Let  $\mathcal{A} \subseteq \mathcal{M}$ . We say  $\mathcal{A}$  **spans**  $\mathcal{M}$  if there is an explicitly computable, surjective  $f : \mathcal{M} \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(\mathcal{A})$  such that  $\mathcal{A} = \{M \mid f(M) = \{M\}\}$ . In this case, we call  $f$  an **analyzer** of  $\mathcal{A}$ .

Analogous to group theory, bases enjoy a computable version of the First Isomorphism Theorem.

**Theorem.** Suppose  $(\mathcal{A}, f)$  is a basis for  $\mathcal{M}$ . The following hold:

- Let  $\rho$  be the function that takes Turing machines to the smallest Turing machine  $M'$  such that  $f(M) = f(M')$ . Then  $g = f \circ \rho$  is an analyzer for  $\mathcal{A}$ . We call  $g$  the **canonical analyzer** w.r.t the basis.
- The inverse  $f^{-1} : \mathcal{F}(\mathcal{A}) \rightarrow \ker(f)$  is explicitly computable; we call this a **synthesizer**. In particular, so is  $g^{-1}$ , which we call the **canonical synthesizer** (w.r.t. the basis).
- Define the following operations on Turing machines:
  - $M_1 \sqcup M_2 = g^{-1}(f(M_1) \cup f(M_2))$
  - $M_1 \sqcap M_2 = g^{-1}(f(M_1) \cap f(M_2))$

Then  $\sqcup$  and  $\sqcap$  are explicitly computable, and  $(M_1, \sqcup, \sqcap)$  is a semi-lattice. We call the induced partial order  $M_1 \sqsubseteq M_2 \Leftrightarrow M_1 = M_1 \sqcap M_2$  a **part-hood** relation, and the system  $(\mathcal{M}, \sqcup, \sqcap)$  the **Mereological System** of the basis.

*Proof* ■

### 3.3. Mereological Rewrite Systems.

We generalize a basis to include rewrite components. This will be the starting point for discussing the optimality of the semantics.

**Definition 3.3.1.** Let  $(A, f)$  be a basis on  $\mathcal{M}$ . The **Mereological Category**  $\mathcal{C}(A, f)$  is the largest category closed under explicit transformations on  $\mathcal{F}(\mathcal{A})$ . In detail, it contains:

- Objects:  $\mathcal{F}(\mathcal{A})$ .
- Morphisms:  $\text{Hom}(A_1, A_2) = \mathcal{E}(g^{-1}(A_1), g^{-1}(A_2))$ . If  $\text{Hom}(A_1, A_2) \neq \emptyset$ , then we write  $A_1 \rightarrow A_2$ .

**Definition 3.3.2. Definition.** A **progress theorem** is a proposition  $p$  of the form  $\forall A. \exists D_A. \forall B. D_A(B) \Rightarrow B \rightarrow A$  where  $D_A$  is a family of explicitly computable unary predicates called the **progress predicate of  $p$** . We say a Mereological Category has **progress  $p$**  if it satisfies  $p$ . Note that  $A$  may be free in  $D_A$ . We write  $\text{Prog}(\mathcal{C})$  for the set of progress theorems satisfied by  $\mathcal{C}$ .

**Definition 3.3.3.** A Mereological Category has **universal progress** if the **Universal Progress Theorem (UPT)** holds: for every  $A \in \mathcal{A}$ , there is a  $N$  such that, for every  $B$  with  $N$  elements,  $B \rightarrow A$ . This ensures the existence of  $m : \mathcal{F}(\mathcal{A}) \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ , given by  $m(A) = \min\{N \mid \forall B, |B| \geq N. B \rightarrow A\}$ .

**Definition 3.3.4.** The category of Mereological Categories with universal progress consists of:

- Objects: Mereological Categories.
- Morphisms:  $\sigma : \mathcal{C}(A_1, f_1) \rightarrow \mathcal{C}(A_2, f_2)$  are the faithful functors.

Our goal is to find the final object in this meta-category above with universal progress.

#### 4. SYNTAX

#### 5. SEMANTICS

##### 5.1. Terms.

We expand upon to analyze the ASTs generated from Section 4.

#### 6. BOOTSTRAP

#### 7. CONCLUSION

#### REFERENCES

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DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT BOULDER, BOULDER, CO  
Email address: oscar-bender-stone@protonmail.com