

28 Feb 2007
 Re: Gerald Dalley (dalleyg@mit.edu)

Designing a data abstraction: operators

```
(=pf pf1 pf2): pf, pf → boolean
  tests whether two factorizations are the same

(divides-pf? pf1 pf2): pf, pf → boolean
  tests whether pf1 divides evenly into pf2

(has-factor? pf p): pf, prime → boolean
  tests whether p is a prime factor of pf
```

```
(*pf pf1 pf2): pf, pf → pf
  returns factorization of n1*n2

(/pf pf1 pf2): pf, pf → pf
  returns factorization of n1/n2 if n2 divides n1

(gcd-pf pf1 pf2): pf, pf → pf
  returns factorization of greatest common divisor of pf1 and pf2
```

+pf, -pf
Not really appropriate for this data type. The only way to do it is converting to integer and then factorizing again.

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How constructor choices affect operators

One constructor
Suppose our only constructor is (make-prime-factors n)
How do I write "pf: *pf, pf → pf*"?

```
(define (*pf pf1 pf2)
  (make-prime-factors
    (* (get-number pf1)
       (get-number pf2))))

(define (*pf pf1 pf2) : pf, pf → pf
  (let ((combined-factors (append (get-all-factors pf1)
                                    (get-all-factors pf2))))
    ... how do I make a pf out of the resulting list of factors?
  ))
```

Let's provide two constructors:

```
(factorize n) : integer → pf
(make-prime-factors lst) : list<prime> → pf
```

```
(define (*pf pf1 pf2)
  (make-prime-factors
    (append (get-all-factors pf1)
            (get-all-factors pf2))))
```

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Many different representations are possible

```
(factorize 40); 40 = 2*2*2*5
⇒ (2 2 2 5) 2*2*2*5 (sorted order)
⇒ (2 5 2 2) 2*5*2*2 (order doesn't matter)
⇒ ((2 3) (5 1)) 23 * 51
⇒ (40 (2 5)) stores n and its unique factors
```

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Representation matters

```
; representation (2 2 2 5)
(define (get-multiplicity pf p)
  (cond ((null? pf) 0)
        ((= (car pf) p) (+ 1 (get-multiplicity (cdr pf) p)))
        (> (car pf) p) 0)
    (else (get-multiplicity (cdr pf) p))))

; representation ((2 3) (5 1)) (sorted order)
(define (get-multiplicity pf p)
  (cond ((null? pf) 0)
        ((= (caar pf) p) (get-multiplicity (cadar pf) p))
        (> (car pf) p) 0)
    (else (get-multiplicity (cdr pf) p))))

; representation (40 (2 5))
(define (get-multiplicity pf p)
  (define (multiplicity-of-p-in m)
    (if (divides? p m)
        (+ 1 (multiplicity-of-p-in (quotient m p)))
        0))
    (multiplicity-of-p-in (car pf)))
```

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Representations also have implicit assumptions

```
(define (make-prime-factors lst) lst)

(define (*pf pf1 pf2)
  (append pf1 pf2))
  ... assumes order doesn't matter

(define (get-multiplicity pf p)
  (cond ((null? pf) 0)
        ((= (car pf) p)
         (+ 1 (get-multiplicity (cdr pf) p)))
        (> (car pf) p) 0)
    (else (get-multiplicity (cdr pf) p))))
  ... assumes sorted order
```

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Pain Error Checking is Your Friend

```
(define (add-prime-factor p pf)
  (if (not (prime? p))
      (error "p is not prime")
      (cons p pf)))

(get-multiplicity
  (add-prime-factor
    24
    (make-prime-factor 1)))
2)
```



- Pain
 - Lets you know you're alive
 - Lets you know right away when something bad is happening
- Error checking
 - Lets you know right away when something bad is happening

Photo from:
<http://www.9gag.com/>

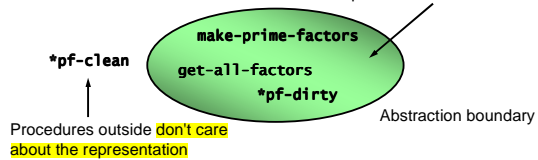
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Respect abstraction boundaries

```
(define (*pf-clean pf1 pf2)
  (make-prime-factors
    (append (get-all-factors pf1) (get-all-factors pf2))))
```

```
(define (*pf-dirty pf1 pf2)
  (append pf1 pf2))
```

Procedures inside the abstraction boundary "know" that the real representation is (2 5 2 2), and depend on it



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Summary of data abstraction design

1. Choose **constructors** and **accessors** that are **useful** to clients and that make it possible to write the **operators** you need
 - Constructors and accessors should be **complete**: you need to be able to construct **every possible object in the domain**, and you need to be able to get out enough data to reconstruct the object
 - Write down the **contract** between the constructors and accessors
2. Choose **representation** that is appropriate to the operators you need (that makes the operators **readable** and **efficient**)
 - Write down the **assumptions** implicit in your representation
3. Respect **abstraction boundaries** as much as possible
 - Even within your abstraction's own code
 - Another way to say it: *Minimize the amount of code that "knows" what the real representation is.*

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