

Introduction to Categories and Categorical Logic

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CHAPTER 1

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1. Introduction

We say that a function $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is:

injective if $\forall x, x' \in X. f(x) = f(x') \implies x = x'$,
surjective if $\forall y \in Y. \exists x \in X. f(x) = y$,

monic if $\forall g, h. f \circ g = f \circ h \implies g = h$ (f is left cancellative),
epic if $\forall g, h. g \circ f = h \circ f \implies g = h$ (f is right cancellative).

PROPOSITION 1. *Let $f : X \rightarrow Y$. Then,*

- (1) *f is injective $\iff f$ is monic.*
- (2) *f is surjective $\iff f$ is epic.*

PROOF. We first show (1).

(\Leftarrow) Suppose f is monic. Fix a one-element set $\mathbf{1} = \{\bullet\}$. Then, note that elements $x \in X$ are in 1-1 correspondence with functions $\bar{x} : \mathbf{1} \rightarrow X$, defined by $\bar{x}(\bullet) := x$. Then, for all $x, x' \in X$, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
 & f(x) = f(x') \\
 \implies & f(\bar{x}(\bullet)) = f(\bar{x}'(\bullet)) \\
 \implies & (f \circ \bar{x})(\bullet) = (f \circ \bar{x}')(\bullet) \\
 \implies & f \circ \bar{x} = f \circ \bar{x}' \\
 \implies & \bar{x} = \bar{x}' \quad (\text{since } f \text{ is monic}) \\
 \implies & \bar{x}(\bullet) = \bar{x}'(\bullet) \\
 \implies & x = x'
 \end{aligned}$$

This shows that f is injective.

(\Rightarrow) Suppose f is injective. Let $f \circ g = f \circ h$ for all $g, h : A \rightarrow X$. Then, for all $a \in A$,

$$\begin{aligned}
 & (f \circ g)(a) = (f \circ h)(a) \\
 \implies & f(g(a)) = f(h(a)) \\
 \implies & g(a) = h(a) \quad (\text{since } f \text{ is injective}) \\
 \implies & g = h
 \end{aligned}$$

This establishes that f is monic. And, we are done. □

Exercise 2

Show that $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is surjective iff it is epic.

PROOF. (\implies) Suppose $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is epic. And, assume, for the sake of contradiction, f is *not* surjective. Then, there exists some $y_0 \in Y$, such that, for all $x \in X$, $f(x) \neq y_0$. Define mappings $g, h : Y \rightarrow Y \cup \{Y\}$ by:

$$g(y) := y$$

$$h(y) := \begin{cases} y & \text{if } y \neq y_0 \\ Y & \text{if } y = y_0 \end{cases}$$

Note that $g \neq h$.

Then, for all $x \in X$, $(g \circ f)(x) = g(f(x)) = h(f(x)) = (h \circ f)(x)$. This implies $g \circ f = h \circ f$, which implies $g = h$, since f is epic. The last conclusion contradicts the fact that $g \neq h$. Thus, we conclude f is surjective.

(\impliedby) Suppose $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is surjective. Then, for any $y \in Y$, there exists an $x \in X$, such that $f(x) = y$. Now, assume, for all $g, h : Y \rightarrow Z$, $g \circ f = h \circ f$. Then, for all $y \in Y$, $g(y) = g(f(x)) = (g \circ f)(x) = (h \circ f)(x) = h(f(x)) = h(y)$, which implies $g = h$, showing that f is epic. And, this completes our proof. \square

Exercise 5

Suppose G and H are groups (and hence monoids), and that $h : G \rightarrow H$ is a monoid homomorphism. Prove that h is a group homomorphism.

PROOF. We need only show that h preserves inverses. To that end, suppose g^{-1} is the inverse of $g \in G$. Then, $h(g)h(g^{-1}) = h(gg^{-1}) = h(1_G) = 1_H = h(1_G) = h(g^{-1}g) = h(g^{-1})h(g)$. This establishes h preserves inverses, and we are done. \square

Exercise 6

Check that **Mon**, **Vect_k**, **Pos**, and **Top** are indeed categories.

PROOF. (**Mon**) The objects are monoids $(M, \cdot, 1_M)$, and morphisms are monoid homomorphisms. Given monoid homomorphisms, $f : (M, \cdot, 1_M) \rightarrow (N, \cdot, 1_N)$ and $g : (N, \cdot, 1_N) \rightarrow (P, \cdot, 1_P)$, the function $g \circ f : (M, \cdot, 1_M) \rightarrow (P, \cdot, 1_P)$ is also a monoid homomorphism, because for all $m, m' \in M$, we have $(g \circ f)(mm') = g(f(mm')) = g(f(m)f(m')) = (g(f(m)))(g(f(m')))) = ((g \circ f)(m))((g \circ f)(m'))$. Also, for each monoid, the identity morphism is the identity function. It is also easy to check that for all monoid homomorphisms f, g and h with the appropriate domains and codomains, $h \circ (g \circ f) = (h \circ g) \circ f$. This establishes that **Mon** is indeed a category.

(**Vect_k**) \square