CSE 341 : Programming Languages

Lecture 5
More Datatypes and Pattern Matching

Zach Tatlock
Spring 2014

Useful examples

Let's fix the fact that our only example datatype so far was silly…

- Enumerations, including carrying other data

```
datatype suit = Club | Diamond | Heart | Spade
datatype card_value = Jack | Queen | King
                    | Ace | Num of int
```

- Alternate ways of identifying real-world things/people

```
datatype id = StudentNum of int
            | Name of string
                     * (string option)
                     * string
```


Don't do this

Unfortunately, bad training and languages that make one-of types inconvenient lead to common *bad style* where each-of types are used where one-of types are the right tool

```
(* use the studen_num and ignore other
  fields unless the student_num is ~1 *)
{ student_num : int,
  first       : string,
  middle      : string option,
  last        : string }
```

- Approach gives up all the benefits of the language enforcing every value is one variant, you don't forget branches, etc.
- And makes it less clear what you are doing

That said…

But if instead the point is that every "person" in your program has a name and maybe a student number, then each-of is the way to go:

```
{ student_num : int option,
  first       : string,
  middle      : string option,
  last        : string }
```

Expression Trees

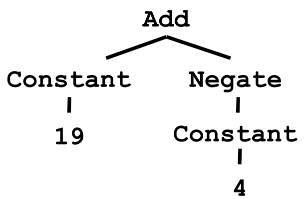
A more exciting (?) example of a datatype, using self-reference

```
datatype exp = Constant of int
             | Negate   of exp
             | Add      of exp * exp
             | Multiply of exp * exp
```

An expression in ML of type **`exp`**:

```
Add (Constant (10+9), Negate (Constant 4))
```

How to picture the resulting value in your head:



Recursion

Not surprising:

Functions over recursive datatypes are usually recursive

```
fun eval e =
   case e of
        Constant i        => i
      | Negate e2         => ~ (eval e2)
      | Add(e1,e2)        => (eval e1) + (eval e2)
      | Multiply(e1,e2)   => (eval e1) * (eval e2)
```


Putting it together

```
datatype exp = Constant of int
             | Negate   of exp
             | Add      of exp * exp
             | Multiply of exp * exp
```

Let's define **`max_constant : exp -> int`**

Good example of combining several topics as we program:

- Case expressions
- Local helper functions
- Avoiding repeated recursion
- Simpler solution by using library functions

See the **`.sml`** file…

Careful definitions

When a language construct is "new and strange," there is *more* reason to define the evaluation rules precisely…

… so let's review datatype bindings and case expressions "so far"

- *Extensions* to come but won't invalidate the "so far"

Datatype bindings

```
datatype t = C1 of t1 | C2 of t2 | … | Cn of tn
```

Adds type `t` and constructors `Ci` of type `ti->t`

- `Ci v` is a value, i.e., the result "includes the tag"

Omit "`of t`" for constructors that are just tags, no underlying data

- Such a `Ci` is a value of type `t`

Given an expression of type `t`, use *case expressions* to:

- See which variant (tag) it has
- Extract underlying data once you know which variant

Datatype bindings

```
case e of p1 => e1 | p2 => e2 | … | pn => en
```

- As usual, can use a case expressions anywhere an expression goes
  - Does not need to be whole function body, but often is
- Evaluate `e` to a value, call it `v`
- If `pi` is the first *pattern* to *match* `v`, then result is evaluation of `ei` in environment "extended by the match"
- Pattern `Ci(x1,…,xn)` matches value `Ci(v1,…,vn)` and extends the environment with `x1` to `v1` … `xn` to `vn`
  - For "no data" constructors, pattern `Ci` matches value `Ci`

Recursive datatypes

Datatype bindings can describe recursive structures

- Have seen arithmetic expressions
- Now, linked lists:

```
datatype my_int_list = Empty
                     | Cons of int * my_int_list

val x = Cons(4,Cons(23,Cons(2008,Empty)))

fun append_my_list (xs,ys) =
   case xs of
       Empty => ys
     | Cons(x,xs') => Cons(x, append_my_list(xs',ys))
```


Options are datatypes

Options are just a predefined datatype binding

- `NONE` and `SOME` are *constructors*, not just functions
- So use pattern-matching not `isSome` and `valOf`

```
fun inc_or_zero intoption =
   case intoption of
        NONE => 0
      | SOME i => i+1
```

Lists are datatypes

Do not use **hd**, **tl**, or **null** either

- **[]** and **::** are constructors too
- (strange syntax, particularly *infix*)

```
fun sum_list xs =
   case xs of
        [] => 0
      | x::xs' => x + sum_list xs'

fun append (xs,ys) =
   case xs of
        [] => ys
      | x::xs' => x :: append(xs',ys)
```


Why pattern-matching

- Pattern-matching is better for options and lists for the same reasons as for all datatypes
  - No missing cases, no exceptions for wrong variant, etc.
- We just learned the other way first for pedagogy
  - Do not use **isSome**, **valOf**, **null**, **hd**, **tl** on Homework 2
- So why are **null**, **tl**, etc. predefined?
  - For passing as arguments to other functions (next week)
  - Because sometimes they are convenient
  - But not a big deal: could define them yourself

Excitement ahead…

Learn some deep truths about "what is really going on"

- Using much more syntactic sugar than we realized

- Every val-binding and function-binding uses pattern-matching
- Every function in ML takes exactly one argument

First need to extend our definition of pattern-matching…

Each-of types

So far have used pattern-matching for one of types because we *needed* a way to access the values

Pattern matching also works for records and tuples:

- The pattern **(x1,…,xn)**
  matches the tuple value **(v1,…,vn)**
- The pattern **{f1=x1, …, fn=xn}**
  matches the record value **{f1=v1, …, fn=vn}**
  (and fields can be reordered)

Example

This is poor style, but based on what I told you so far, the only way to use patterns

- Works but poor style to have one-branch cases

```
fun sum_triple triple =
   case triple of
      (x, y, z) => x + y + z

fun full_name r =
   case r of
      {first=x, middle=y, last=z} =>
         x ^ " " ^ y ^ " " ^ z
```


Val-binding patterns

- New feature: A val-binding can use a pattern, not just a variable
  - (Turns out variables are just one kind of pattern, so we just told you a half-truth in Lecture 1)

```
val p = e
```

- Great for getting (all) pieces out of an each-of type
  - Can also get only parts out (not shown here)
- Usually poor style to put a constructor pattern in a val-binding
  - Tests for the one variant and raises an exception if a different one is there (like **hd**, **tl**, and **valOf**)

Better example

This is okay style

- Though we will improve it again next
- Semantically identical to one-branch case expressions

```
fun sum_triple triple =
   let val (x, y, z) = triple
   in
       x + y + z
   end

fun full_name r =
   let val {first=x, middle=y, last=z} = r
   in
       x ^ " " ^ y ^ " " ^ z
   end
```


Function-argument patterns

A function argument can also be a pattern

- Match against the argument in a function call

```
fun f p = e
```

Examples (great style!):

```
fun sum_triple (x, y, z) =
    x + y + z

fun full_name {first=x, middle=y, last=z} =
    x ^ " " ^ y ^ " " ^ z
```

A new way to go

- For Homework 2:
  - Do not use the # character
  - Do not need to write down any explicit types

Hmm

A function that takes one triple of type **int*int*int** and returns an **int** that is their sum:

```
fun sum_triple (x, y, z) =
    x + y + z
```

A function that takes three **int** arguments and returns an **int** that is their sum

```
fun sum_triple (x, y, z) =
    x + y + z
```

See the difference? (Me neither.) ☺

The truth about functions

- In ML, every function takes exactly one argument (*)
- What we call multi-argument functions are just functions taking one tuple argument, implemented with a tuple pattern in the function binding
  - Elegant and flexible language design
- Enables cute and useful things you cannot do in Java, e.g.,

```
fun rotate_left (x, y, z) = (y, z, x)
fun rotate_right t = rotate_left(rotate_left t)
```

* "Zero arguments" is the unit pattern `()` matching the unit value `()`