PAUL G. ALLEN SCHOOL
OF COMPUTER SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

CSE341: Programming Languages

Lecture 5
More Datatypes and Pattern-Matching

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Useful examples

Let’s look at some more interesting datatypes …

- 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 student_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

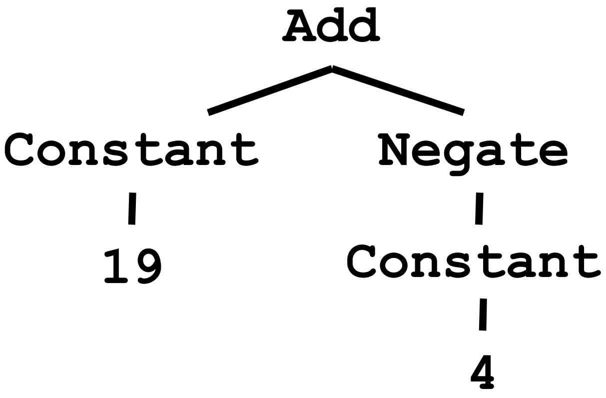
A more exciting (?) example of a datatype, using self-reference

```
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 `()`

Nested patterns

- We can nest patterns as deep as we want
  - Just like we can nest expressions as deep as we want
  - Often avoids hard-to-read, wordy nested case expressions

- So the full meaning of pattern-matching is to compare a pattern against a value for the "same shape" and bind variables to the "right parts"
  - More precise recursive definition coming after examples

Useful example: zip/unzip 3 lists

```
fun zip3 lists =
   case lists of
        ([],[],[]) => []
      | (hd1::tl1,hd2::tl2,hd3::tl3) =>
             (hd1,hd2,hd3)::zip3(tl1,tl2,tl3)
      | _ => raise ListLengthMismatch

fun unzip3 triples =
   case triples of
        [] => ([],[],[])
      | (a,b,c)::tl =>
          let val (l1, l2, l3) = unzip3 tl
          in
              (a::l1,b::l2,c::l3)
          end
```

More examples in `.sml` files

Style

- Nested patterns can lead to very elegant, concise code
  - Avoid nested case expressions if nested patterns are simpler and avoid unnecessary branches or let-expressions
    - Example: **`unzip3`** and **`nondecreasing`**
  - A common idiom is matching against a tuple of datatypes to compare them
    - Examples: **`zip3`** and **`multsign`**

- Wildcards are good style: use them instead of variables when you do not need the data
  - Examples: **`len`** and **`multsign`**

(Most of) the full definition

The semantics for pattern-matching takes a pattern *p* and a value *v* and decides (1) does it match and (2) if so, what variable bindings are introduced.

Since patterns can nest, the definition is elegantly recursive, with a separate rule for each kind of pattern. Some of the rules:

- If *p* is a variable *x*, the match succeeds and *x* is bound to *v*
- If *p* is _, the match succeeds and no bindings are introduced
- If *p* is *(p1,…,pn)* and *v* is *(v1,…,vn)*, the match succeeds if and only if *p1* matches *v1*, …, *pn* matches *vn*. The bindings are the union of all bindings from the submatches
- If *p* is *C p1*, the match succeeds if *v* is *C v1* (i.e., the same constructor) and *p1* matches *v1*. The bindings are the bindings from the submatch.
- … (there are several other similar forms of patterns)

Examples

- Pattern `a::b::c::d` matches all lists with >= 3 elements
- Pattern `a::b::c::[]` matches all lists with 3 elements
- Pattern `((a,b),(c,d))::e` matches all non-empty lists of pairs of pairs