CSE341: Programming Languages

Lecture 5
More Datatypes and Pattern-Matching

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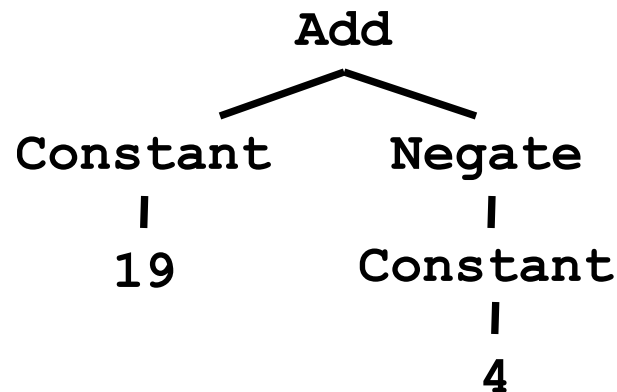
A more exciting (?) example of a datatype, using self-reference

```
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:

```
                        Add
                       /   \
              Constant      Negate
                 |             |
                19          Constant
                               |
                               4
```

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)

$$\texttt{val } \textit{p} \texttt{ = e}$$

- 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 ()