

Substitution and Prenex Normal Form

Deepak D'Souza

Department of Computer Science and Automation
Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

19 February 2025

Outline

1 Substitution

2 Prenex Normal Form

Substitution in Formulas

(EFT III.8)

Let φ be an S -formula with a free var x . Let t be an S -term. Then the **substitution** of t for x in φ , written $\varphi[t/x]$, is the S -formula obtained by replacing each **free** occurrence of x in φ by t .

If $M = (D, I, A)$ is a model, the formula $\varphi[t/x]$ should say the same thing about the domain element $M(t)$ in M that φ says about $A(x)$ in M .

Example

Let φ be the formula

$$\exists z(z + z = x).$$

- Then $\varphi[y/x]$ is the formula

$$\exists z(z + z = y).$$

- What should $\varphi[z/x]$ be?

Substitution in Formulas

(EFT III.8)

Let φ be an S -formula with a free var x . Let t be an S -term. Then the **substitution** of t for x in φ , written $\varphi[t/x]$, is the S -formula obtained by replacing each **free** occurrence of x in φ by t .

If $M = (D, I, A)$ is a model, the formula $\varphi[t/x]$ should say the same thing about the domain element $M(t)$ in M that φ says about $A(x)$ in M .

Example

Let φ be the formula

$$\exists z(z + z = x).$$

- Then $\varphi[y/x]$ is the formula

$$\exists z(z + z = y).$$

- What should $\varphi[z/x]$ be? **Not** the formula $\exists z(z + z = z)$,

Substitution in Formulas

(EFT III.8)

Let φ be an S -formula with a free var x . Let t be an S -term. Then the **substitution** of t for x in φ , written $\varphi[t/x]$, is the S -formula obtained by replacing each **free** occurrence of x in φ by t .

If $M = (D, I, A)$ is a model, the formula $\varphi[t/x]$ should say the same thing about the domain element $M(t)$ in M that φ says about $A(x)$ in M .

Example

Let φ be the formula

$$\exists z(z + z = x).$$

- Then $\varphi[y/x]$ is the formula

$$\exists z(z + z = y).$$

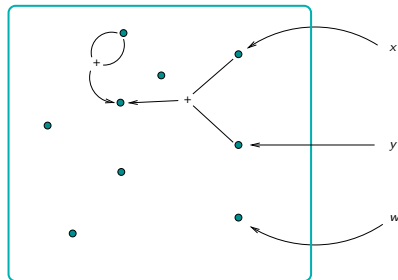
- What should $\varphi[z/x]$ be? **Not** the formula $\exists z(z + z = z)$, but something like

$$\exists u(u + u = z).$$

Illustrating Substitution Lemma

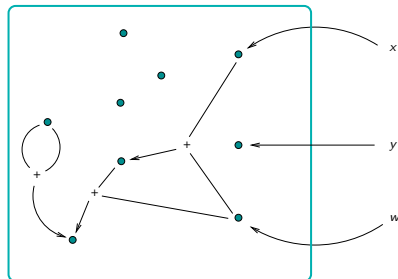
φ :

$$\exists z(x + y = z + z)$$



$\varphi[(x + w)/x, w/y]$:

$$\exists z((x + w) + w = z + z)$$



Substitution Definition

Let φ be an S -formula, x_1, \dots, x_n be **distinct** variables, and t_1, \dots, t_n be S -terms. Then $\varphi[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n]$ denotes the formula obtained by **simultaneously** substituting t_i for x_i in φ .

If $\varphi = \exists z(z + z = x \wedge r(x, y))$, what should $\varphi[y/x, w/y]$ be?

First define substitution on terms: $t[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n]$.

Definition (Substitution for terms)

$$\begin{aligned} c[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] &= c \\ x[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] &= t_i \text{ if } x_i = x, \text{ else } x \\ f(t'_1, \dots, t'_k)[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] &= f(t'_1[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n], \dots, \\ &\quad t'_k[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n]) \end{aligned}$$

Substitution Definition ctd.

Definition (Substitution for formulas)

$$\begin{aligned}(t = t')[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] &= t[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] = t'[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] \\ (r(t'_1, \dots, t'_k))[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] &= r(t'_1[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n], \dots, t'_k[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n]) \\ (\neg\varphi)[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] &= \neg(\varphi[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n]) \\ (\varphi \vee \psi)[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] &= (\varphi[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] \vee \psi[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n]) \\ (\exists x\varphi)[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] &= \exists u(\varphi[u/x, t_{i_1}/x_{i_1}, \dots, t_{i_m}/x_{i_m}])\end{aligned}$$

where x_{i_1}, \dots, x_{i_m} are those x_i s which occur free in $\exists x\varphi$ and $t_i \neq x_i$, and u is x if x does not occur in t_{i_1}, \dots, t_{i_m} ; otherwise u is a var which does not occur in $\varphi, t_{i_1}, \dots, t_{i_m}$.

Exercise

Exercise

What is

- ① $r(v_0, f(v_1, v_2)) [v_2/v_1, v_0/v_2, v_1/v_3]$
- ② $\exists v_0 r(v_0, f(v_1, v_2)) [v_4/v_0, f(v_1, v_2)/v_2]$
- ③ $\exists v_0 r(v_0, f(v_1, v_2)) [v_0/v_1, v_2/v_2, v_4/v_0]$

Substitution Lemma

Lemma (Substitution)

$$\begin{aligned} M \models \varphi[t_1/x_1, \dots, t_n/x_n] \\ \text{iff} \\ M[M(t_1)/x_1] \cdots [M(t_n)/x_n] \models \varphi. \end{aligned}$$

In particular,

$$M \models \varphi[t/x] \text{ iff } M[M(t)/x] \models \varphi.$$

Theorem (Prenex Normal Form)

For every FO formula φ we can construct a *logically equivalent* formula ψ such that:

- ψ is of the form $Q_1x_1 \cdots Q_nx_n \chi$ (with $n \geq 0$), where each Q_i is “ \exists ” or “ \forall ”, and χ is quantifier-free;
- $\text{free}(\varphi) = \text{free}(\psi)$;
- and the number of quantifiers in φ and ψ are the same.

Prenex Example

Prenex normal form example

$$\neg \exists x p(x) \vee \forall x r(x) \equiv$$

Prenex Example

Prenex normal form example

$$\neg \exists x p(x) \vee \forall x r(x) \equiv \forall x \forall y (\neg p(x) \vee r(y))$$

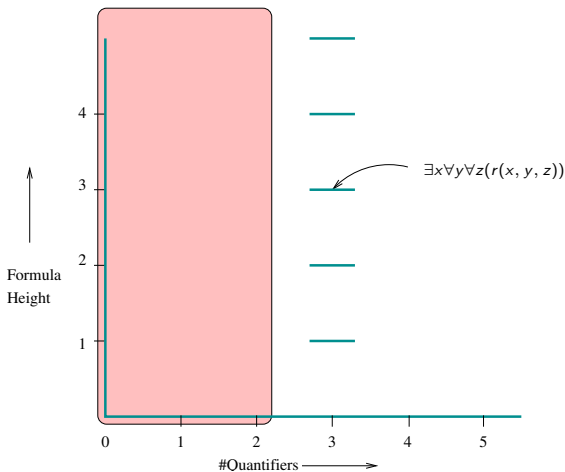
Some Useful Identities

$\varphi \equiv \psi$ means “ φ is logically equivalent to ψ ”.

- ① If $\varphi \equiv \psi$ then $\neg\varphi \equiv \neg\psi$.
- ② If $\varphi \equiv \psi$ and $\varphi' \equiv \psi'$, then $\varphi \vee \varphi' \equiv \psi \vee \psi'$.
- ③ If $\varphi \equiv \psi$ then $\exists x\varphi \equiv \exists x\psi$ and $\forall x\varphi \equiv \forall x\psi$.
- ④ $\neg\exists x\varphi \equiv \forall x\neg\varphi$ and $\neg\forall x\varphi \equiv \exists x\neg\varphi$.
- ⑤ If $x \notin \text{free}(\psi)$ then:
 - $\exists x\varphi \vee \psi \equiv \exists x(\varphi \vee \psi)$.
 - $\forall x\varphi \vee \psi \equiv \forall x(\varphi \vee \psi)$.

Proof of Prenex Theorem

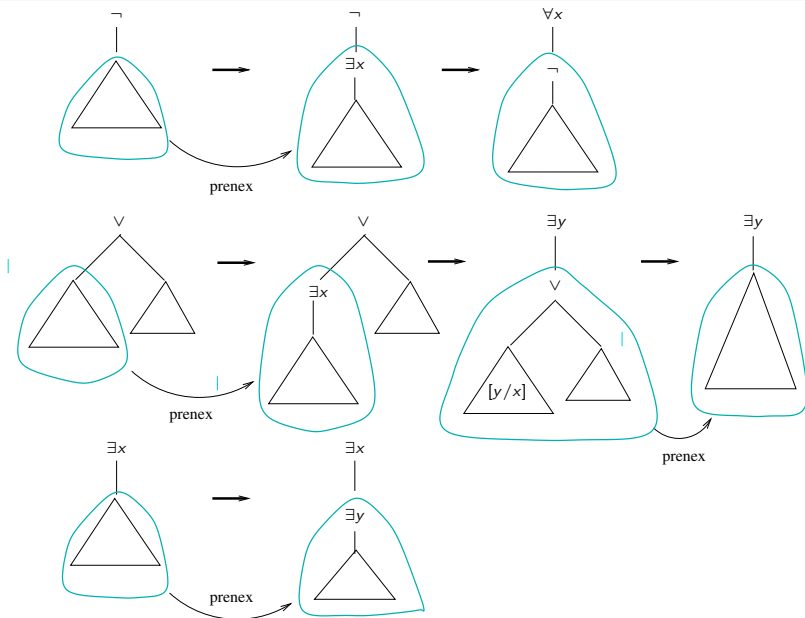
Argue by induction on the **number of quantifiers** in φ (and in the inductive step, by induction on the **height** of φ).



Proof of Prenex Theorem

- Base case: 0 quantifiers, hence φ is quantifier-free, and we can take $\psi = \varphi$.
- Induction step: Consider φ with $n + 1$ quantifiers. Use further induction on height of φ ($P(k)$: If φ has $n + 1$ quantifiers and has height k then φ has a prenex equivalent with same number of quantifiers and free vars):
 - Base case: Atomic formula, vacuously true since no quantifiers.
 - Induction step: Consider cases
 - $\neg\psi$
 - $\psi \vee \chi$
 - $\exists x\psi$

Prenex Proof



Illustrating Prenex Procedure

