

The Power of Tarski's Relation Algebra on Trees

*Jelle Hellings*¹

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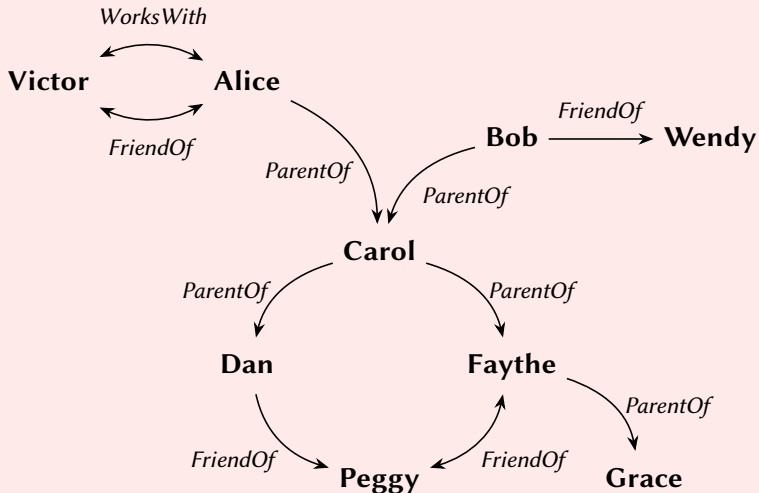
¹ Hasselt University

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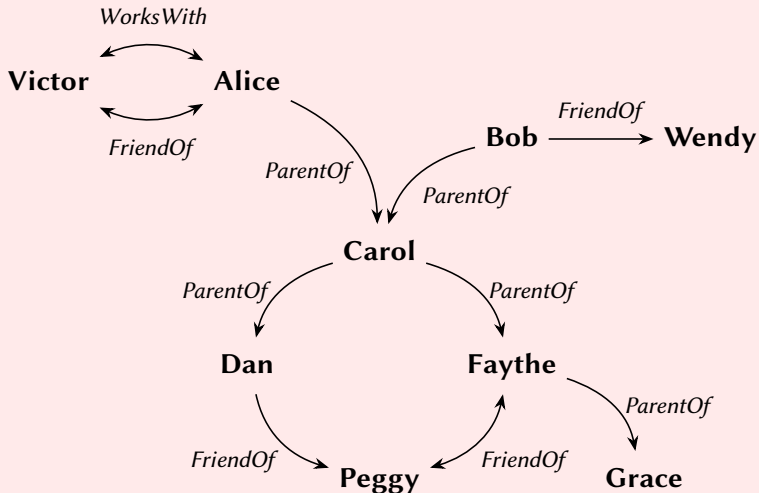
³ Indiana University



Relation algebra: graphs and queries

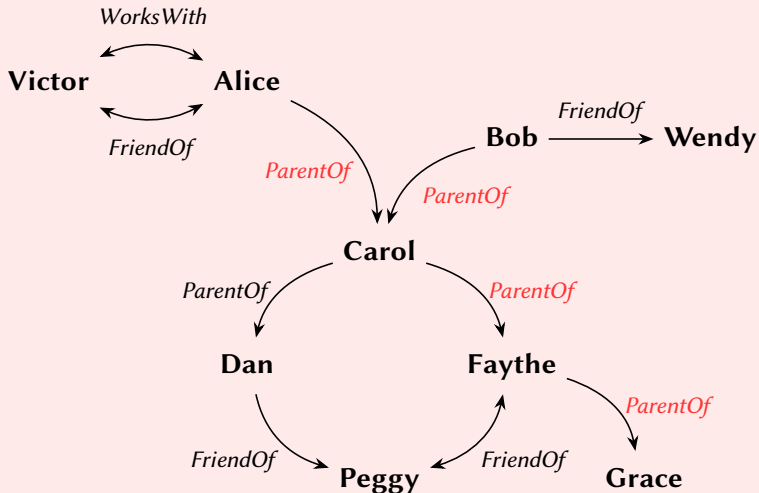


Relation algebra: graphs and queries



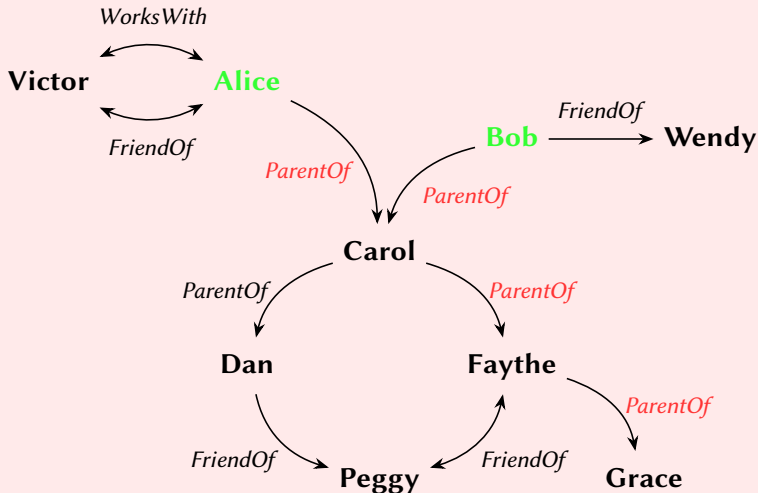
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Relation algebra: graphs and queries



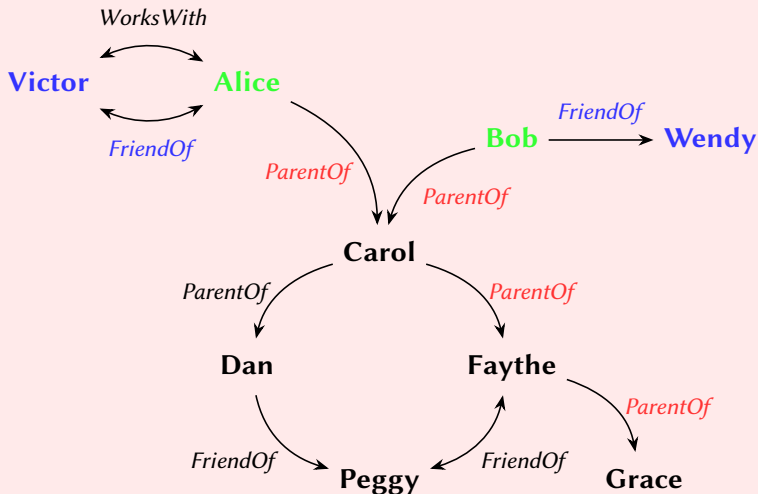
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Relation algebra: graphs and queries



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Relation algebra: graphs and queries



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Relation algebra: other operators

$$\textit{ChildOf} = \textit{ParentOf}^{-1}$$

$$\textit{AcquaintanceOf} = \textit{FriendOf} \cup \textit{WorksWith}$$

$$\textit{WorkFriendOf} = \textit{FriendOf} \cap \textit{WorksWith}$$

$$\textit{NonWorkFriend} = \textit{FriendOf} - \textit{WorksWith}$$

$$\textit{Parent} = \pi_1[\textit{ParentOf}]$$

$$\textit{NonParent} = \bar{\pi}_1[\textit{ParentOf}]$$

$$\textit{GrandParentOf} = \textit{ParentOf} \circ \textit{ParentOf}$$

Also: constants \emptyset , id, di.

Relation algebra and query languages

Tarski's Relation Algebra, FO[3]

\emptyset	id	\cup	\circ	-1	π	$\bar{\pi}$	\cap	$-$	di
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- ▶ On graphs: RPQs, 2RPQs, Nested RPQs, Graph XPath.
- ▶ XPath of Benedikt et al.
- ▶ Path⁺ of Wu et al.
- ▶ Downward queries of Hellings et al.
- ▶ Conditional and Navigational XPath.

Questions about the relation algebra

Questions

- ▶ Are all these operators necessary?
- ▶ What does each operator add?

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What is the expressive power of fragments of the relation algebra?

Expressive power of relation algebra

Background: when are queries equivalent?

Two types of queries and equivalences

Path-queries. The exact query result is important:

$$\text{FriendOf} \cap \text{WorksWith} \equiv_{\text{path}} \text{FriendOf} - (\text{FriendOf} - \text{WorksWith}).$$

Boolean-queries. The existence of a query result is important:

$$\text{FriendOf}^{-1} \circ \text{ParentOf} \equiv_{\text{bool}} \pi_1[\text{FriendOf}] \cap \pi_1[\text{ParentOf}].$$

Definition

Language \mathcal{L}_1 is **z-subsumed** by \mathcal{L}_2 if every query in \mathcal{L}_1 is z-equivalent to a query in \mathcal{L}_2 (denoted by $\mathcal{L}_1 \preceq_z \mathcal{L}_2$).

Background: query fragments

Let $\mathcal{F} \subseteq \{\text{di}, ^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -\}$.

- ▶ We write $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F})$: only allows $\emptyset, \text{id}, \ell, \circ, \cup$, and all operators in \mathcal{F} .
- ▶ We write $\mathcal{N}(\underline{\mathcal{F}})$ to represent all operators expressible in $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F})$ using the following basic rewrite rules:

$$\pi_1[e] = \bar{\pi}_j[\bar{\pi}_1[e]] = (e \circ e^{-1}) \cap \text{id} = (e \circ (\text{id} \cup \text{di})) \cap \text{id};$$

$$\pi_2[e] = \bar{\pi}_j[\bar{\pi}_2[e]] = (e^{-1} \circ e) \cap \text{id} = ((\text{id} \cup \text{di}) \circ e) \cap \text{id};$$

$$\bar{\pi}_i[e] = \text{id} - \pi_i[e];$$

$$e_1 \cap e_2 = e_1 - (e_1 - e_2).$$

Examples

- ▶ $\mathcal{N}(\underline{\bar{\pi}}) = \mathcal{N}(\pi, \bar{\pi})$.
- ▶ $\mathcal{N}(\underline{-1}, -) = \mathcal{N}(-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$.

Results on graphs

Previous work by Fletcher et al.

Relative expressive power of relation algebra fragments *on graphs*:

- ▶ Path queries: each operator adds expressive power.
- ▶ Boolean queries: \neg sometimes does not add expressive power.

Results on graphs

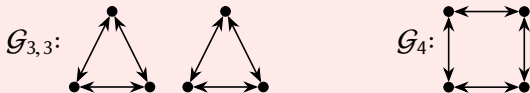
Previous work by Fletcher et al.

Relative expressive power of relation algebra fragments *on graphs*:

- ▶ Path queries: each operator adds expressive power.
- ▶ Boolean queries: $^{-1}$ sometimes does not add expressive power.

Example: strong Boolean separations

Consider $(\mathcal{E} \circ \mathcal{E}) \cap \mathcal{E}$:



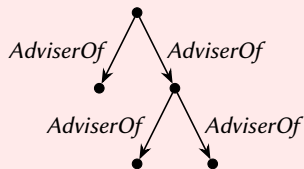
Without \cap (or $-$): no query distinguishes $\mathcal{G}_{3,3}$ and \mathcal{G}_4 .

Our work: studying trees

Goal

Improve understanding of the relation algebra by studying the expressive power in *restricted* settings.

Trees



- ▶ Trees are hierarchical/nested structures.
E.g. taxonomies, organizational charts, documents, file systems.
- ▶ Tree-based formal data models and query languages
E.g. XML data with XPath, JSON data, nested relational data.

Initial classification

		downward		non-downward			
non-local				$\mathcal{N}(\text{di},^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi})$	\mathcal{N}	non-monotone	
				$\mathcal{N}(\text{di},^{-1}, \pi)$	$\mathcal{N}(\text{di},^{-1}, \pi, \cap)$	monotone	
local		$\mathcal{N}(\pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$	$\mathcal{N}({}^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap)$		$\mathcal{N}({}^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$	non-monotone	
		$\mathcal{N}(\cap, -)$ $\mathcal{N}(\pi, \cap)$	$\mathcal{N}({}^{-1}, \pi, \cap)$			monotone	
		1-subtree reducible		2-subtree reducible		3-subtree reducible	

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		$\mathcal{N}(\cap, -)$ $\mathcal{N}(\pi, \cap)$	$\mathcal{N}({}^{-1}, \pi, \cap)$			monotone	
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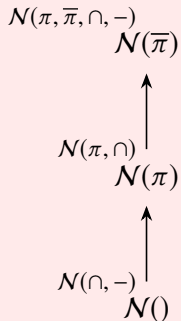
- ▶ $\mathcal{N}(\pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$ studied by Hellings et al.

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- ▶ $\mathcal{N}(\pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$ studied by Hellings et al.
- ▶ $\mathcal{N}({}^{-1}, \pi)$ studied by Benedikt et al.
- ▶ $\mathcal{N}({}^{-1}, \pi, \cap)$ studied by Wu et al.

Downward queries: Boolean and path queries



- ▶ $\mathcal{N}(\pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$ is downward.
- ▶ $^{-1}$ and di are not downward.

Theorem (Hellings et al.)

Let $\mathcal{F} \subseteq \{\pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -\}$.

We have $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F}) \leq_{\text{path}} \mathcal{N}(\underline{\mathcal{F}} - \{\cap, -\})$.

Local queries

Locality

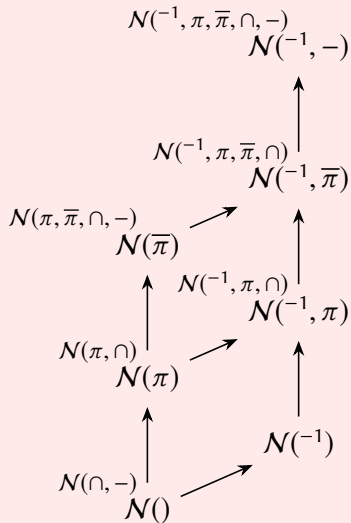
Definition

A query q is *local* if there exists $k \geq 0$ such that, for every tree \mathcal{T} , and for all nodes m and n , $(m, n) \in \llbracket q \rrbracket_{\mathcal{T}}$ if and only if $(m, n) \in \llbracket q \rrbracket_{\mathcal{T}'}$, with \mathcal{T}' the smallest subtree of \mathcal{T} containing all nodes at distance at most k from the nearest common ancestor of m and n .

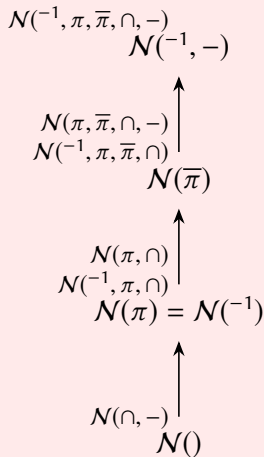
- ▶ $\mathcal{N}^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -$ is local.
- ▶ di is not local.

Local queries: main results

Path queries



Boolean queries



Condition tree queries

Definition

If an expression always evaluates to a subset of id then it is called a *node expression*.

Definition

A *condition tree query* Q is a tuple $Q = (\mathcal{T}, C, s, t, \gamma)$ with

- ▶ $\mathcal{T} = (\mathcal{V}, \Sigma, \mathbf{E})$ a labeled tree,
- ▶ C is a set of *node expressions*,
- ▶ $s \in \mathcal{V}$ is the *source node*,
- ▶ $t \in \mathcal{V}$ is the *target node*,
- ▶ $\gamma \subseteq \mathcal{V} \times C$ is the *node-condition relation*.

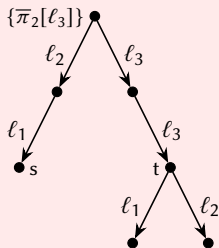
$\gamma(n)$ denotes the set $\{e_1, \dots, e_k\}$ of conditions related to node $n \in \mathcal{V}$.
 $\gamma(n)$ also denotes the expression $e_1 \circ \dots \circ e_k$ ($\equiv_{\text{path}} e_1 \cap \dots \cap e_k$).

A condition tree query example

Consider the union-free expression

$$\ell_1^{-1} \circ \ell_2^{-1} \circ \bar{\pi}_2[\ell_3] \circ \ell_3 \circ \ell_3 \circ \pi_1[\ell_1] \circ \pi_1[\ell_2].$$

This expression is path-equivalent to

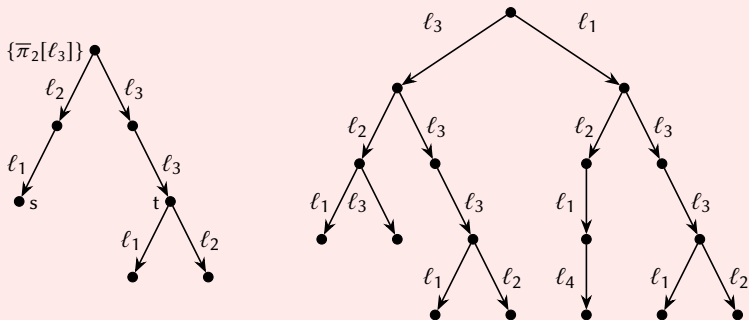


A condition tree query example

Consider the union-free expression

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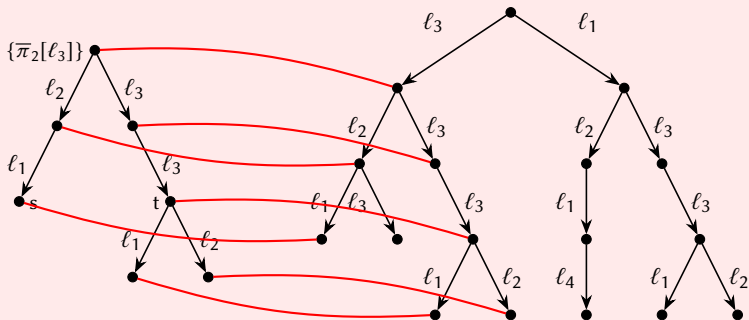


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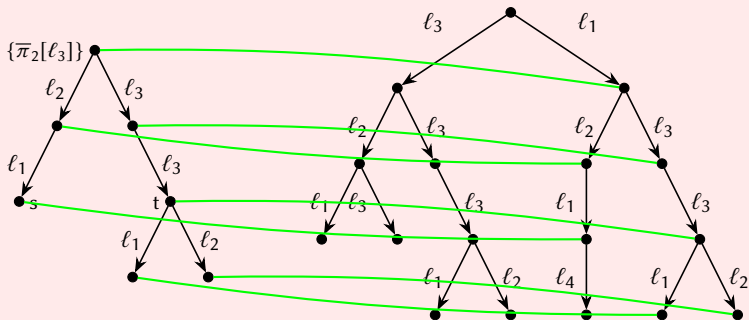


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This expression is path-equivalent to



Condition tree queries and local queries

$\mathbf{Q}_{\text{tree}}(\mathcal{F})$ are the condition tree queries in which node conditions are restricted to union-free expressions in $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F})$.

Claim

Let $\{-1, \pi\} \subseteq \mathcal{F} \subseteq \{-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}\}$.

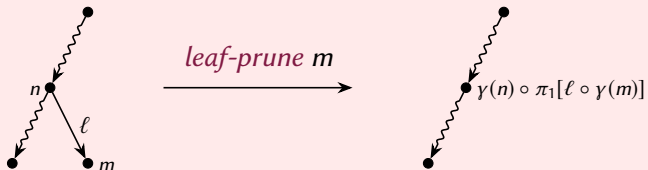
$\mathbf{Q}_{\text{tree}}(\mathcal{F})$ and union-free $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F})$ path-subsume each other.

Proposition

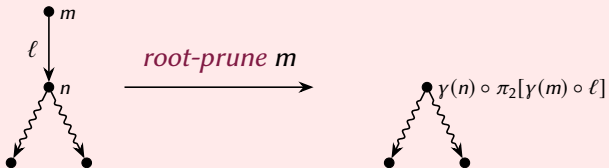
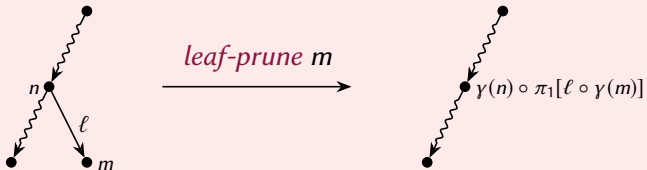
Let $\mathcal{F} \subseteq \{-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}\}$ and Q be a condition tree query in $\mathbf{Q}_{\text{tree}}(\mathcal{F})$.

There exists a union-free expression e in $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F})$ such that $e \equiv_{\text{path}} Q$.

Basic manipulations on condition tree queries



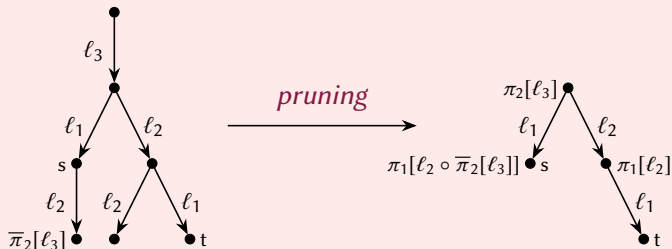
Basic manipulations on condition tree queries



Up-down queries

Definition

A condition tree query $Q = (\mathcal{T}, C, s, t, \gamma)$ is an *up-down query* if all edges of \mathcal{T} are on the unique path from s to t not taking into account the direction of the edges.



Lemma

Let $\{\pi\} \subseteq \underline{\mathcal{F}} \subseteq \{-1, \bar{\pi}, \pi\}$, and Q be a condition tree query in $\mathbf{Q}_{\text{tree}}(\mathcal{F})$. There exists an up-down query Q' in $\mathbf{Q}_{\text{tree}}(\mathcal{F})$ such that $Q \equiv_{\text{path}} Q'$.

Up-down queries and local queries

Claim

Let $\{-1, \pi\} \subseteq \mathcal{F} \subseteq \{-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}\}$.

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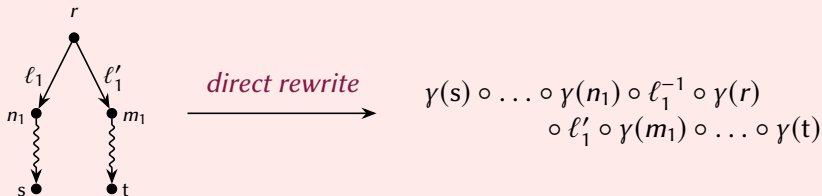
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Proposition

Let $\mathcal{F} \subseteq \{-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}\}$ and e be a union-free expression in $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F})$.

There exists a condition tree query Q in $\mathbf{Q}_{\text{tree}}(\mathcal{F})$ such that $e \equiv_{\text{path}} Q$.

Proof.



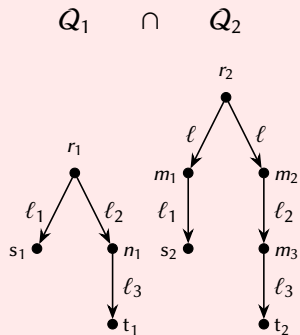
Path-queries: eliminate intersection

Theorem

Let $\{-1, \pi\} \subseteq \mathcal{F} \subseteq \{-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap\}$.

We have $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F}) \leq_{\text{path}} \mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F} - \{\cap\})$.

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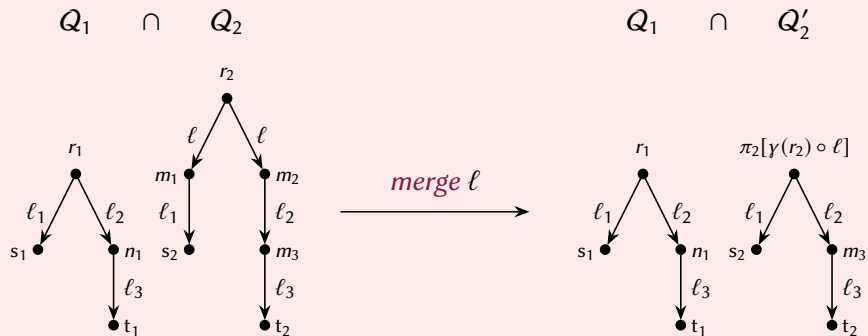
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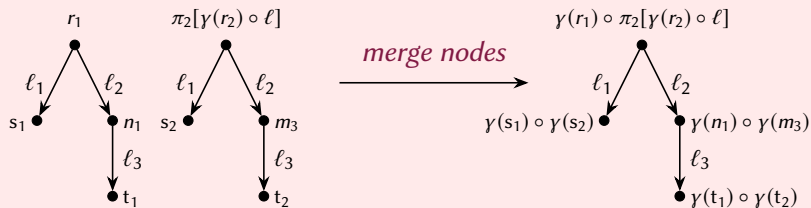
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Proof.

$Q_1 \cap Q'_2$

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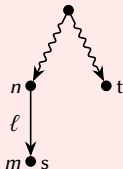
Boolean queries: eliminate projection or converse

Proposition

$\mathcal{N}(\pi) \leq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(-1)$ and $\mathcal{N}(-1) \leq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(\pi)$.

Proof.

Wu et al.: union-free $\mathcal{N}(\pi)$ is path-equivalence to $\mathbf{Q}_{\text{tree}}()$.



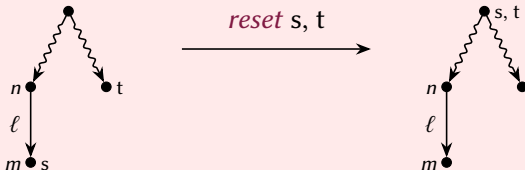
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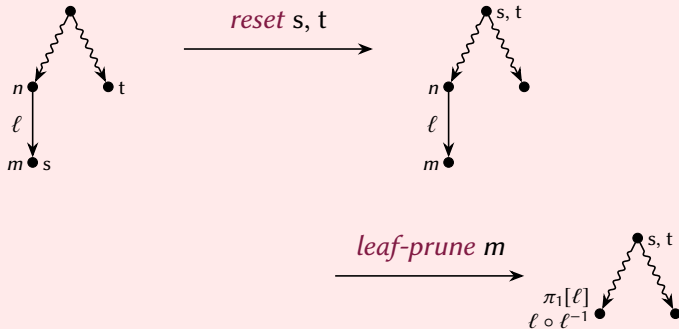
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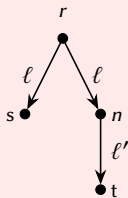
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Bonus: condition tree queries on chains

Definition

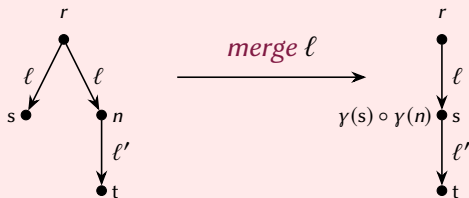
A condition tree query is a *chain query* if it is up-down and \mathcal{T} consists of a single path.



Bonus: condition tree queries on chains

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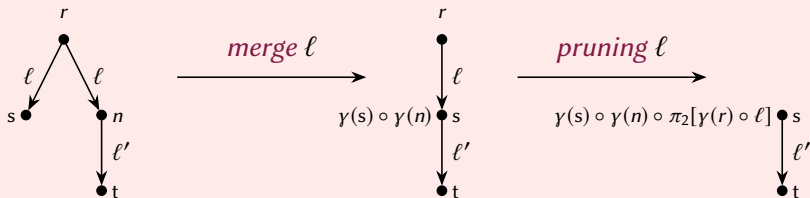
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Bonus: condition tree queries on chains

Definition

A condition tree query is a *chain query* if it is up-down and \mathcal{T} consists of a single path.



Lemma

Let $\{\pi\} \subseteq \underline{\mathcal{F}} \subseteq \{-1, \bar{\pi}, \pi\}$, and Q be a condition tree query in $\mathbf{Q}_{\text{tree}}(\mathcal{F})$. There exists a chain query Q' in $\mathbf{Q}_{\text{tree}}(\mathcal{F})$ such that $Q \equiv_{\text{path}} Q'$.

Bonus: eliminate difference on chains

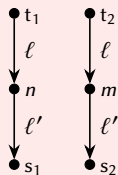
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Let $\{-1, \bar{\pi}\} \subseteq \mathcal{F} \subseteq \{-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -\}$.

On chains, we have $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F}) \equiv_{\text{path}} \mathcal{N}(-1, \bar{\pi})$.

Proof.

$$Q_1 - Q_2$$



Bonus: eliminate difference on chains

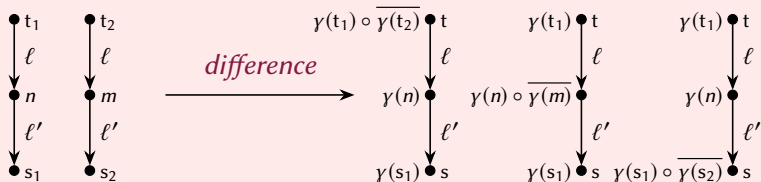
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Proof.

$Q_1 - Q_2$



Separation results

Recognizing branches



Definition

A k -subtree-reduction step on tree \mathcal{T} consists of removing a subtree rooted at a node n with parent m , given that parent m has at least k other children isomorphic to n .

Theorem

1. $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \cap)$ and $\mathcal{N}(-1, -)$ are closed under 3-subtree-reductions.
2. $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, -1, \pi, \bar{\pi})$ is closed under 2-subtree-reductions.
3. $\mathcal{N}(-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap)$ is closed under 1-subtree-reductions.

The subtree-reductions classification is strict



Proposition

Already on unlabeled trees, we have

1. $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}) \not\leq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap)$,
2. $\mathcal{N}(-1, -) \not\leq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap)$,
3. $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \cap) \not\leq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(\text{di}, -1, \pi, \bar{\pi})$.

Proof.

1. $e_1 = \mathcal{E} \circ \text{di} \circ \text{di} \circ \mathcal{E}$.
2. $e_2 = (\mathcal{E}^{-1} \circ \mathcal{E}) - \text{id}$.
3. $e_3 = (((\text{di} \circ \mathcal{E}) \cap \text{di}) \circ ((\text{di} \circ \mathcal{E}) \cap \text{di})) \cap \text{di}$.

Diversity and jumping in trees

Proposition

Already on unlabeled trees, $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \cap) \not\stackrel{\text{bool}}{=} \mathcal{N}(-1, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$.

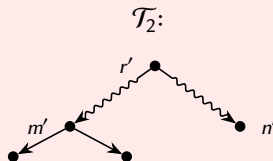
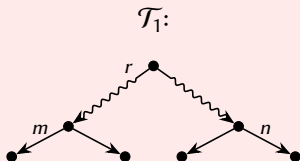
Proof.

$$e = P_{2,-r} \circ \text{di} \circ P_{2,-r}$$

$$P_{2,-r} = \pi_2[\mathcal{E}] \circ P_2$$

$$P_2 = \pi_1[S_2]$$

$$S_2 = (\mathcal{E} \circ \text{di}) \cap \mathcal{E}.$$



Diversity and jumping in chains

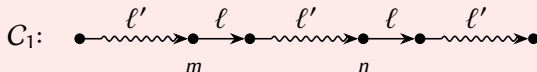
Proposition

Already on chains, we have

1. $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, ^{-1}) \not\leq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$;
2. $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \pi) \not\leq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$.

Proof.

1. $e_1 = (\ell \circ \ell^{-1}) \circ \text{di} \circ (\ell \circ \ell^{-1})$.
2. $e_2 = \pi_1[\ell] \circ \text{di} \circ \pi_1[\ell]$.



Brute-force: path queries

Proposition

Already on unlabeled trees, we have

1. $\mathcal{N}(-1) \not\stackrel{\text{path}}{\sim} \mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \pi, \bar{\pi})$,
2. $\mathcal{N}(\pi) \not\stackrel{\text{path}}{\sim} \mathcal{N}(-1)$.

Proof.

1. $e_1 = \mathcal{E}^{-1}$
2. $e_2 = \pi_1[\mathcal{E}] \circ \pi_2[\mathcal{E}]$



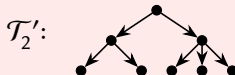
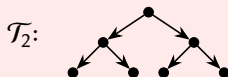
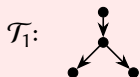
Brute-force: Boolean queries

Proposition

Already on unlabeled trees, we have

1. $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, ^{-1}) \not\subseteq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(\text{di})$ and $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \pi) \not\subseteq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(\text{di})$,
2. $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, ^{-1}, \cap) \not\subseteq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$,
3. $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \pi) \not\subseteq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(\text{di}, ^{-1})$.

Proof.



Conclusion and discussion

Overview of results

		Boolean queries						Path queries						
		di	$^{-1}$	π	$\bar{\pi}$	\cap	$-$	di	$^{-1}$	π	$\bar{\pi}$	\cap	$-$	
Local queries	Downward queries	$\mathcal{N}()$	X	X*	X*	X*	✓	✓	X*	X*	X*	X*	✓	✓
		$\mathcal{N}(\cap)$	X	X*	X*	X*		✓	X*	X*	X*	X*		✓
		$\mathcal{N}(\cap, -)$	X*	X*	X*	X*			X*	X*	X*	X*		
		$\mathcal{N}(\pi)$	X	✓		X*	✓	X*	X*	X*		X*	✓	X*
		$\mathcal{N}(\pi, \cap)$	X	✓		X*		X*	X*	X*		X*		X*
		$\mathcal{N}(\pi, \bar{\pi})$	X	✓			✓	✓	X*	X*			✓	✓
		$\mathcal{N}(\pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap)$	X	✓				✓	X*	X*				✓
		$\mathcal{N}(\pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$	X	X					X*	X*				
	$\mathcal{N}(\cdot^{-1})$	$\mathcal{N}(\cdot^{-1})$	X		✓	X*	✓	X*	X*		X*	X*	X	X*
		$\mathcal{N}(\cdot^{-1}, \pi)$	X			X*	✓	X*	X*		X*	✓	X*	
		$\mathcal{N}(\cdot^{-1}, \pi, \cap)$	X			X*		X*	X*		X*		X*	
		$\mathcal{N}(\cdot^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi})$	X				✓	X	X*			✓	X	
		$\mathcal{N}(\cdot^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap)$	X					X	X*				X	
		$\mathcal{N}(\cdot^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$	X						X*					
	$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \cdot)$	$\mathcal{N}(\text{di})$		X	X	X*	X	X*		X	X	X*	X	X*
		$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \pi)$		✓		X*	X	X*		X		X*	X	X*
		$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \pi, \cap)$		X		X*		X*		X		X*		X*
		$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \pi, \bar{\pi})$		✓			X	X		X			X	X
		$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap)$		X				?		X				?
		$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$		X						X				
$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \cdot^{-1})$				X	X*	X	X*			X	X*	X	X*	
$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \cdot^{-1}, \pi)$					X*	X	X*				X*	X	X*	
$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \cdot^{-1}, \pi, \cap)$					X*		X*				X*		X*	
$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \cdot^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi})$						X	X					X	X	
$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \cdot^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap)$?						?	
$\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, \cdot^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -)$														

Conclusion

We fully established relationships between the local fragments.

Open problem

Let $\{\text{di}, \bar{\pi}, \cap\} \subseteq \mathcal{F} \subseteq \{\text{di}, ^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap\}$ and let $z \in \{\text{bool}, \text{path}\}$.

Do we have a collapse $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F} \cup \{-\}) \leq_z \mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F})$ or not?

Conclusion

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Let $\{\text{di}, \bar{\pi}, \cap\} \subseteq \mathcal{F} \subseteq \{\text{di}, ^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap\}$ and let $z \in \{\text{bool}, \text{path}\}$.

Do we have a collapse $\mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F} \cup \{-\}) \leq_z \mathcal{N}(\mathcal{F})$ or not?

Lemma

On unlabeled chains, we have $\mathcal{N}(\text{di}, ^{-1}, \pi, \bar{\pi}, \cap, -) \leq_{\text{bool}} \mathcal{N}(\bar{\pi})$.