

Termination Analysis of Logic Programs based on Dependency Graphs*

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Abstract. This paper introduces a modular framework for termination analysis of logic programming. To this end, we adapt the notions of dependency pairs and dependency graphs (which were developed for term rewriting) to the logic programming domain. The main idea of the approach is that termination conditions for a program are established based on the decomposition of its dependency graph into its strongly connected components. These conditions can then be analysed separately by possibly different well-founded orders. We propose a constraint-based approach for automating the framework. Then, for example, termination techniques based on polynomial interpretations can be plugged in as a component to generate well-founded orders.

1 Introduction

Termination analysis in logic programming (LP) traditionally aims at proving that a given logic program terminates w.r.t. a specific set of queries. Termination proofs are usually done by finding ranking functions that map the states of the program to a sequence of elements of a well-founded domain such that the sequence is decreasing w.r.t. the well-founded order of the domain. Practically, it is sufficient to consider only the states that are involved in loops of the program.

Techniques in termination analysis of LPs can be divided into two groups: the global versus the local approach [4, 6, 5, 8, 10, 12, 26]. In the global approach, one wants to find only **one ranking function** for all loops [8, 10, 26]. In contrast, techniques in the local approach apply **different ranking functions** for different loops [4, 5, 12]. Some automated techniques in the global approach are based on a constraint-based framework to search for a suitable ranking function. This is done by first generating a set of symbolic constraints from all termination conditions. Then, a constraint solver is used to solve the set of constraints, yielding a suitable ranking function for the proof. In the local approach, most techniques use a given small set of norms, and try to prove that (a combination of) these norms can be applied for the termination proof of the program. It is unclear at

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Termination Proofs For Logic Programs

SJ Ball



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