

Structural Induction Principles for Functional Programmers

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User defined recursive types are a fundamental feature of modern functional programming languages like Haskell, Clean, and the ML family of languages. Properties of programs defined by recursion on the structure of recursive types are generally proved by structural induction on the type. It is well known in the theorem proving community how to generate structural induction principles from data type declarations. These methods deserve to be better known in the functional programming community. Existing functional programming textbooks gloss over this material. And yet, if functional programmers do not know how to write down the structural induction principle for a new type - how are they supposed to reason about it? In this paper we describe an algorithm to generate structural induction principles from data type declarations. We also discuss how these methods are taught in the functional programming course at the University of Wyoming. A Haskell implementation of the algorithm is included in an appendix.

1 Introduction

A fundamental claim made for functional programs is that they are easier to reason about. This is largely true because:

- i.) the evaluation mechanism is substitution based (following ordinary mathematical practice), and
- ii.) structural induction provides a straightforward mechanism for reasoning about programs defined by recursion on algebraic data types.

A recursive type definition naturally gives rise to a structural induction principle for the type. For functions defined by recursion on the structure of a type, structural induction is the natural mechanism for reasoning about those functions. A functional programming course is the obvious place to make the relationship between induction and recursion explicit, and yet, we know of no standard text suitable for undergraduates that does so. In fact, there is no other point in the undergraduate curriculum where the concrete relationship between induction and recursion can be made as explicit as it can be in a course on functional programming.

In this paper we introduce the functional programming course as taught at the University of Wyoming, briefly discuss well-founded induction, the justification for structural induction, and then describe an algorithm for generating a structural induction schema from a data type declaration. We also discuss the pedagogical approach we use at the University of Wyoming to teach this material and give a few examples.

2 Functional Programming in Wyoming

The University of Wyoming offers an ABET¹ is accredited Bachelor of Science in Computer Science. Functional Programming (COSC 3015) is a required third year course for undergraduate students in the

¹ABET is the recognized accreditation board for college and university programs in applied science, computing, engineering, and technology programs in the U.S.

Computer Science degree. The University of Wyoming has had the requirement for at least fifteen years. Functional Programming is taught once a year and is a prerequisite for the senior level Principles of Programming Languages (COSC 4870).

The functional programming course has been Haskell based since at least 2006; in earlier incarnations it was Scheme and LISP based. Students who take the course have already taken Discrete Structures (COSC 2300) which, as taught in Wyoming, emphasizes mathematical proofs. Students taking functional programming will (in theory) already know predicate logic, and will have done proofs by mathematical induction and possibly by complete induction. There is often a gap between the time a student takes Discrete Structure and Functional Programming and so proof methods are reviewed for the first week or two of the functional programming course. This is done by reviewing the the mathematical definition of a function and extensional equality for functions. This provides a nice segue into higher order functions and students apply the definitions to reason about *curry* and *uncurry*.

Though the course does not follow any one text, over the years it has been taught with the assistance of a variety of texts [2, 17, 8, 9, 10]. Bird's text [2] was the first one used to teach the course when it transitioned to Haskell and is still the book that is philosophically closest in spirit to the course as taught today. An objective for the functional programming course is for students to learn to do proofs in concert with program development² Of the texts cited above, only Bird's book carries through the proof theme from the beginning of the book to the end. Bird introduces a number of induction principles and, by example, expects students to be able to derive new structural induction principles from type declarations [2, Exercise 6.2.1, pp. 191]. In the functional programming class at Wyoming we make the relationship more explicit and expect students to be able to write down the structural induction principle for an arbitrary Haskell type and to use it to prove some simple properties about programs defined by recursion on the type.

Among the other texts references in the course, Thompson's book [17, pp. 141] introduces structural induction for finite lists and touches on induction for infinite lists but does not discuss induction principles for other structures. Thompson's first introduction is well after lists have first been introduced. Similarly, Hudak's book introduces list induction [8, pp. 131] and natural number induction [8, pp. 141], other forms of induction are not discussed. Hutton's text relegates reasoning about programs to the last chapter [9, Chap.13] where he introduces both natural number induction and list induction. Lipovaca [10] never mentions induction at all. In [6], Felleisen, Findler, Flatt and Krishnamurthi do not discuss induction but the design recipe connecting the shape of the input data with the shape of the program is a closely related topic. All texts mentioned have their strengths; but regarding the goal of teaching programming together with the methods for reasoning about programs, Bird's book does it best.

Among the texts that have not been used in the course (though some have been on the recommended readings list) Reade's book [15, pp.185] contains the only elementary explanation we know of regarding how structural induction principles can be derived from the declaration of a new type. Like Bird, Cousineau and Mauny [5] present a series of examples which serve to indicate how the induction principles can be gleaned from the type declaration.

Of course more advanced programming language texts explain these topics in some detail [18, 11, 14].

The derivation of structural induction principles has been best covered in the theorem proving literature. The classic paper is Burstall's [3]. Paulson covers it in detail [13, pp. 77-135]. The implementations in Isabelle HOL prover [12] is excellent, as are the accounts of structural induction principles automati-

²Students undoubtedly do not carry this practice with them to program developments beyond the functional programming course, but they learn a disciplined and formal way to think about and reason about programs.

cally generated by the Coq prover [1, 4].

Perhaps the point we'd most like to make here is that, if programming and proving are to go hand-in-hand, understanding how to generate structural induction principles from data-type declarations is essential knowledge. It is not hard to do nor is it hard to teach, and students who learn this are not hamstrung when it comes to proving things about a new user defined type.

3 Background

3.1 Recursive Type Declarations

Modern functional programming languages all support some convenient form declaring new recursive types. In Haskell [16, Section 4.2.1] user defined recursive data types are given by *Algebraic Data Type Declarations*.

The declarations of new recursive types are given by specifying, in some way, constructor names and their signatures. In dialects of ML and in Haskell, such type declarations may also be polymorphically parameterized and appear as follows.

$$\text{data } T [tVars] = C_0 [typeName] \mid C_1 [typeName] \mid \cdots \mid C_m [typeName]$$

where T is the name of the new type being defined. The type name T is followed by a list $[tVars]$ of polymorphic type variable names, say $[V_1, \dots, V_k]$. If the type is not parameterized, then the list is empty. The length of the list is the arity of T . On the right side of the declaration there are m constructor names $C_i, 0 \leq i < m, m > 0$. Each constructor is followed by a list $[typeName]$ of the names of the types of its parameters. The list may contain previously declared types, polymorphic type variables, and completely parameterized recursive instances of the type T . The *arity* of the constructor C_i is the length of the specified parameter list. A constructor name with no parameters is a constant of type T .

Recursive type declarations of this kind can be interpreted as many-sorted Σ -algebras and the finite instances of an inductively defined data type are denoted by the freely generated terms of the algebra [11, 7].

If a data type T has arity 0 then it denotes a type of kind $*$. If T has arity 1 then it is a type constructor and has kind $* \rightarrow *$. If T has arity k it is a type constructor of k arguments and has kind $\overbrace{* \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow *}^{k \text{ arrows}}$. Note that by convention the function type constructor “ \rightarrow ” associates to the right so $* \rightarrow * \rightarrow *$ means $* \rightarrow (* \rightarrow *)$. If S is a type (possibly parameterized) of the form $(T T_1 \cdots T_k)$ we write $TyCon(S)$ to denote the type constructor used to create S , in this case T . If S is a constant (not parameterized) then $TyCon(S) = S$.

Note that the constructors provide the only means for building instances of a recursive data-type of the kind described here. The implication is that every instance of the type arises from an application of a constructor C_i to appropriately typed arguments.

3.2 Well-founded Induction

Well-founded induction is a powerful and flexible form of induction. It is based on an ordering given by a well-founded relation over a type T . To show that a recursive function defined over a recursive type T terminates, it is enough to show that there is some well-founded relation \prec for which every recursive call is on a smaller instance of T with respect to \prec . Excellent accounts of well-founded induction can be found in [18, 11].

Definition 3.1 (Well-founded Relation) A binary relation on a set A is *well-founded* iff there are no infinitely descending chains $\cdots \prec a_i \prec \cdots \prec a_1 \prec a_0$, i.e. there is no function $a : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow A$ such that for all $i \in \mathbb{N}$, $a(i+1) \prec a(i)$.

Note that a well-founded relation need not be transitive [11]. Thus, for example, the relation $i \prec j \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} j = i + 1$ is well-founded but not transitive: $(1 \prec 2)$ and $(2 \prec 3)$ but $(1 \not\prec 3)$.

Theorem 3.1 (Well-founded Induction) Let \prec be a well-founded binary relation on a set A and let P be a property of A , then

$$(\forall x:A. (\forall y:A. y \prec x \Rightarrow P(y)) \Rightarrow P(x)) \Rightarrow \forall x:A. P(x)$$

If Γ is a context, well-founded induction can be written in the form of a derived proof rule as follows:

$$\frac{\Gamma, x:A, \forall y:A. y \prec x \Rightarrow P(y) \vdash P(x)}{\Gamma \vdash \forall x:A. P(x)}$$

Pedagogically, well-founded induction is a bit more difficult to justify than structural induction which is more concrete.

3.3 Structural Induction for \mathbb{N}

To show that a property P holds for all natural numbers, mathematical induction often suffices. This principle is presented as follows.

$$(P(0) \wedge \forall k : \mathbb{N}. P(k) \Rightarrow P(k+1)) \Rightarrow \forall j : \mathbb{N}. P(j)$$

As we shall see, mathematical induction is just an instance of structural induction on the natural numbers.

To see this, consider the following data type having two constructors, a constant $Z : N$ and the successor function $S : N \rightarrow N$.

data Nat = Z | S Nat

Replacing Z for 0 and S for $(+1)$ yields the following:

$$(P(Z) \wedge \forall k : \mathbb{N}. P(k) \Rightarrow P(Sk)) \Rightarrow \forall j : \mathbb{N}. P(j)$$

This is simply the structural induction principle for \mathbb{N} . As a proof rule, this appears as follows.

$$\text{(MInd)} \quad \frac{\Gamma \vdash P(Z) \quad \Gamma, k : \mathbb{N}, P(k) \vdash P(Sk)}{\Gamma \vdash \forall j : \mathbb{N}. P(j)}$$

Read the rule as follows: To show that a property P of natural numbers holds for all natural numbers, show $P(Z)$ holds and then, assuming $P(j)$ holds for some arbitrary $j \in \mathbb{N}$ show $P(Sj)$ holds as well. Note that this is an instance of well-founded induction using the well-founded relation for natural numbers, restated using the successor function in place of adding one: $i \prec_{\mathbb{N}} j \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} j = Si$.

How did the base case arise? Look at the rule for well-founded induction where the type A is specialized to \mathbb{N} and the relation is the immediate successor relation ($\prec_{\mathbb{N}}$).

$$\frac{\Gamma, j : \mathbb{N}, \forall k : \mathbb{N}. k \prec_{\mathbb{N}} j \Rightarrow P(k) \vdash P(j)}{\Gamma \vdash \forall j : \mathbb{N}. P(j)}$$

Since $j \in \mathbb{N}$ we know $j = Z$ or $j = Si$ for some $i \in \mathbb{N}$. Do a case split on j giving two subgoals:

$$\begin{aligned} i.) \quad & \Gamma, Z : \mathbb{N}, \forall k : \mathbb{N}. k \prec_{\mathbb{N}} Z \Rightarrow P(k) \vdash P(Z) \\ ii.) \quad & \Gamma, i : \mathbb{N}, \forall k : \mathbb{N}. k \prec_{\mathbb{N}} (Si) \Rightarrow P(k) \vdash P(Si) \end{aligned}$$

For (i) note that the antecedent in the induction hypothesis ($k \prec_{\mathbb{N}} Z$) is always false and so the implication is vacuously true. Thus $\forall k : \mathbb{N}. k \prec_{\mathbb{N}} Z \Rightarrow P(k)$ is trivially true and adds no information to our assumptions. Also, we already know $Z : \mathbb{N}$ so (i) simplifies to the following:

$$i.) \quad \Gamma \vdash P(Z)$$

For (ii.) note that by the definition of $\prec_{\mathbb{N}}$, if $k \prec_{\mathbb{N}} Si$ then $k = i$ and so $Si = Sk$. We do not need i at all, nor do we need the quantifier because the predecessor of Sk is just k itself. Using these facts we can simplify (ii.) to the following:

$$ii.) \quad \Gamma, k : \mathbb{N}, P(k) \vdash P(Sk)$$

This yields the ordinary rule for proof by mathematical induction (MInd).

3.4 Structural Induction in General

Structural induction is an instance of well-founded induction where the well-founded relation on pairs of terms of type T , $s \prec_T t$ is interpreted to mean that s is an immediate subterm of t (s is a child of t). The immediate subterm relation is not transitive, but as noted above, well-founded relations need not be. It is easy to see that for finite instances of a recursive data type this definition yields a well-founded relation. Also note that $\prec_{\mathbb{N}}$, as defined above, is the immediate subterm relation for the type \mathbb{N} .

We can justify the structural induction principle for a particular type T by noting that instances of a recursive type must have been generated by one of the constructors.

For a recursive type T , the fact that instances of T must have been generated by one of the constructors, together with simplifications based on the definition of \prec_T , can be used to justify the structural induction principles we describe how to generate below.

3.5 Generating the Induction Principle for a Recursive Type

We build the formula expressing the induction principle for a type T directly from its data type declaration. In Appendix A there is Haskell code which does this.

Consider a parameterized type declaration of the following form:

$$\text{data } T [V_1, \dots, V_k] = C_0 [\text{typeName}] \mid \dots \mid C_m [\text{typeName}]$$

We build the structural induction principle in steps. The polymorphic type parameters (V_i) may denote any type. Recall that $*$ is the kind denoting types. Thus, the induction principle is a universally quantified formula of the form³.

$$\forall V_1 : *. \dots \forall V_k : *. \square$$

Note that T has arity k and so $T V_1 \dots V_k$ is a type. A property of the type is a predicate over instances of the type. This yields the following:

$$\forall V_1 : *. \dots \forall V_k : *. \forall P : (T V_1 \dots V_k) \rightarrow \mathbb{B}. \square$$

³Here \square denotes a hole in the formula yet to be defined.

The goal we intend to prove is that the property holds for *all* instances of T so we can fill in the following bit:

$$\begin{aligned} & \forall V_1 : *. \dots \forall V_k : *. \forall P : (T V_1 \dots V_k) \rightarrow \mathbb{B}. \\ & (\Box \Rightarrow \forall t : (T V_1 \dots V_k). P(t)) \end{aligned}$$

Now, since every instance of the type is of the form C_i applied to the appropriate number and types of arguments, if we can show that, no matter which constructor was used, the property holds, then we've shown that it holds for all instances, no matter how the instance was constructed.

Consider a constructor declaration of the form $C_i[T_1, \dots, T_j]$. This constructor has the following type:

$$C_i : T_1 \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow T_j \rightarrow (T V_1 \dots V_k)$$

Note that some of the T_i may be instances of the type T (the one being defined) itself. These references to T are the recursive parts of the declaration and by the well-foundedness of the immediate subterm relation, we may assume the property holds for these instances. The clause constructor C_i of arity j is defined as follows:

$$\mathcal{F}(C_i) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \forall x_1 : T_1. \dots \forall x_j : T_j. \left(\bigwedge_{\substack{i \in \{1..j\}, \\ \text{TyCon}(T_i) = T}} P(x_i) \right) \Rightarrow P(C_i x_1 \dots x_j)$$

For each type T_i that is a recursive instance of T , we assume P holds for that instance. Note that the constraint on inductive hypotheses is not that $T_i = (T V_1 \dots V_k)$ but simply that T is the type constructor for the type T_i . This allows for types where the recursive instances in the type declaration do not have the same arguments in every call *i.e.* see the *SwapTree* example included below.

Putting it all together we get the following structural induction principle.

$$\begin{aligned} & \forall V_1 : *. \dots \forall V_k : *. \forall P : (T V_1 \dots V_k) \rightarrow \mathbb{B}. \\ & \left(\bigwedge_{i \in \{1..j\}} \mathcal{F}(C_i) \right) \Rightarrow \forall t : (T V_1 \dots V_k). P(t) \end{aligned}$$

The algorithm described here is implemented by the Haskell code in Appendix A. It is not difficult to generalize so that mutually recursive type declarations can be handled, but we do not present that generalization in the undergraduate course. The function *stind* shown in Appendix A takes a Haskell data type representing the abstract syntax of a Haskell data declaration and returns an instance of a formula type encoding the structural induction principle. Within the body of *stind*, the locally defined function *mkConstructorClause* implements the formula transformation defined above as \mathcal{F} .

4 In the classroom

A significant motivation for teaching induction and proofs in the context of a functional programming course is to get students thinking in a formal way about the programs they write. Students are encouraged to think about the putative theorems related to the programs they write - theorems that should hold if their programs are correct. These theorems are intended to serve as a kind of formally stated requirements for the functions.

As an example, assuming $[]$ is a right identity for append and that append is associative:

$$\begin{aligned} & \forall m : [a]. m ++ [] = m \\ & \forall m, n, r : [a]. (m ++ n) ++ r = m ++ (n ++ r) \end{aligned}$$

show that the following theorem relating reverse and append holds for finite lists:

$$\forall m, n : [a]. \text{reverse}(m ++ n) = \text{reverse } n ++ \text{reverse } m$$

This theorem gives a nice characterization of list reverse in terms of append and illustrates a pattern of contravariant behavior that can be observed in other contexts. Another example of this behavior is that the inverse of the composition of relations S and R is the composition of the inverses of R and S , *i.e.* $(S \circ R)^{-1} = R^{-1} \circ S^{-1}$.

As an example of the complexity of the theorems students are expected to be able to master in the context of a two hour final exam, the following theorems about list functions have appeared on various final exams over the last few years.

$$\begin{aligned} \forall m : [a]. m ++ [] &= m \\ \forall m : [a]. \text{length } m &= \text{length}(\text{reverse } m) \\ \forall n, m : [a]. \text{length}(m ++ n) &= (\text{length } m) + (\text{length } n) \\ \forall m, n : [a]. \text{length}(\text{zip } m \ n) &= \min(\text{length } m)(\text{length } n) \end{aligned}$$

To avoid a cascade of errors, when students are asked to prove some property by induction in the exam setting, they are provided with the induction principle they must use together with the definitions of the functions involved and some auxiliary theorems. A student who fails to correctly write down an induction principle may well know how to correctly use one.

In addition to knowing how to do proofs by induction, students in the functional programming course are required to be able to write down the structural induction principles for user defined types. The program, written for this paper, to generate induction principles has not been previously presented in the course but will be used when the course is next offered in the Fall 2013 semester. As Bird [2] and Cousineau and Mauny [5] have noted, examples suffice to show the pattern and that is the method that has been used in the class until now. With the algorithm available, students will be able to explore more examples on their own. Class quizzes and exams will be used to asses if students have internalized the method or not.

Consider the following Haskell data types:

```
data Nat = Z | S Nat
data List a = Nil | Cons a (List a)
data Tsil a = Snoc (Tsil a) a | Lin
data BTree a = Leaf a | Fork (BTree a) (BTree a)
data SwapTree a b = Leaf | Node a (SwapTree b a) (SwapTree b a)
```

The following are the structural induction principles output by the Haskell code in Appendix A for the types just given. The Haskell *show* functions for types and formulas were specialized to produce the LaTeX output.

$$\begin{aligned}
& \mathit{Nat} : \\
& \forall P : \mathit{Nat} \rightarrow \mathbb{B}. \\
& ((P \mathit{Z}) \wedge \forall n_1 : \mathit{Nat}. ((P n_1) \Rightarrow (P (S n_1)))) \Rightarrow \forall n : \mathit{Nat}. (P n)
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& \mathit{List} a : \\
& \forall a : *. \forall P : (\mathit{List} a) \rightarrow \mathbb{B}. \\
& ((P \mathit{Nil}) \wedge \forall x_1 : a. \forall l_2 : (\mathit{List} a). \\
& \quad ((P l_2) \Rightarrow (P (\mathit{Cons} x_1 l_2)))) \\
& \Rightarrow \forall l : (\mathit{List} a). (P l)
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& \mathit{Tsil} a : \\
& \forall a : *. \forall P : (\mathit{Tsil} a) \rightarrow \mathbb{B}. \\
& (\forall x_1 : a. \forall t_2 : (\mathit{Tsil} a). \\
& \quad ((P t_2) \Rightarrow (P (\mathit{Snoc} t_2 x_1)))) \wedge (P \mathit{Lin}) \\
& \Rightarrow \forall t : (\mathit{Tsil} a). (P t)
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& \mathit{BTree} a : \\
& \forall a : *. \forall P : (\mathit{BTree} a) \rightarrow \mathbb{B}. \\
& (\forall x_1 : a. (P (\mathit{Leaf} x_1)) \\
& \quad \wedge (\forall t_1 : (\mathit{BTree} a). \forall t_2 : (\mathit{BTree} a). \\
& \quad \quad (((P t_1) \wedge (P t_2)) \Rightarrow (P (\mathit{Fork} t_1 t_2)))))) \\
& \Rightarrow \forall t : (\mathit{BTree} a). (P t)
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& \mathit{SwapTree} a b : \\
& \forall a : *. \forall b : *. \forall P : (\mathit{SwapTree} a b) \rightarrow \mathbb{B}. \\
& ((P \mathit{Leaf}) \\
& \quad \wedge (\forall x_1 : a. \forall s_2 : (\mathit{SwapTree} b a). \forall s_3 : (\mathit{SwapTree} b a). \\
& \quad \quad (((P s_2) \wedge (P s_3)) \Rightarrow (P (\mathit{Node} x_1 s_2 s_3)))))) \\
& \Rightarrow \forall s : (\mathit{SwapTree} a b). (P s)
\end{aligned}$$

Now consider some seemingly pathological examples; these data types are not recursive.

```

data Bool = T | F
data Maybe a = Nothing | Just a

```

The formulas produced by the method described above yield the following “induction” principles.

$$\begin{aligned}
& \mathit{Bool} : \\
& \forall P : \mathit{Bool} \rightarrow \mathbb{B}. ((P \mathit{T}) \wedge (P \mathit{F})) \Rightarrow \forall b : \mathit{Bool}. (P b)
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& \mathit{Maybe} a : \\
& \forall a : *. \forall P : (\mathit{Maybe} a) \rightarrow \mathbb{B}. \\
& ((P \mathit{Nothing}) \wedge \forall x_1 : a. P(\mathit{Just} x_1)) \Rightarrow \forall m : (\mathit{Maybe} a). (P m)
\end{aligned}$$

The structural induction principles are generated by case analysis (on the constructors) and by including the appropriate induction hypotheses for each case. If there is no recursion in the type definition, the induction principle reduces to case analysis. The resulting formulas are theorems whether there is recursion or not.

Induction in a lazy language like Haskell is somewhat complicated by the fact that all types T are inhabited by the undefined value \perp . With regards to well-founded relations on terms of type T , for all finite terms s , $\perp \prec_T s$ and $\perp \not\prec_T \perp$. Case analysis on the natural numbers yields two cases, one for numbers constructed from the constant Z and the other for numbers constructed by the successor function S . To prove a property of lazy natural numbers an additional case is added to show that $(P \perp)$ holds. This extra case arises naturally from the schema of well-founded induction in the same way the simplified case for Z does when the case analysis splits to include the possibility of \perp . The structural induction principles can be extended to work on these *pointed* types [11, pp.310] simply by adding a clause $P(\perp)$ which must be shown to hold in addition to the others.

To give the reader a sense of the difficulty, the following question appeared on a recent final exam and was worth 12 points out of a possible 100.

1.) [12 points] Write structural induction principles for the following Haskell data-types.

```
data STree a = Leaf | Node a (STree a) (STree a)
```

```
data Lambda c = Var String
              | Const c
              | Ap (Lambda c) (Lambda c)
              | Abs String (Lambda c)
```

Students typically do well on these questions.

5 Conclusion

Students learning functional programming are in a unique position to be able to prove properties about the programs they write during the development process. It is often the case that putative properties of the functions serve as specifications for the functions and can be used to verify their correctness. Fundamental properties about recursive types can be verified in the context of a functional programming course that are virtually impossible to do in the imperative setting. However, if they do not have the ability define structural induction principles for newly defined types, students are left wanting in their skills.

At the University of Wyoming we have been presenting these methods for years in the functional programming course (COS 3015). Students practice the methods in homework assignments and there are often questions on the final examination requiring them to write structural induction principles for types they have not seen before. On the most recent exam they were required to write induction principles for a type representing lambda terms and for a tree structure with three kinds of nodes.

The methods described here have been widely implemented in the theorem proving community and deserve to be better known in the functional programming community.

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Appendix A Haskell code to generate structural induction principles from a Data declaration.

```

import Data.Char
data Type = Star | Simple String [Type] | Tuple [Type] | Arrow Type Type
  deriving (Eq, Show)
type CName = String
type TName = String
data Data = Data TName [TName] [(CName, [Type])] deriving (Eq, Show)
data Formula = FTrue
  | Pred String [Formula]
  | And Formula Formula
  | Implies Formula Formula
  | Forall String Type Formula
  deriving (Eq, Show)
conjoin = foldr1 (\f fs → And f fs)
forall = foldr (\(v,ty) more → Forall v ty more)
mkFormulaVars = map (\v → Pred v [])
numberedVars vars = map (\(x,i) → x ++ (show i)) (zip vars [1..])
stind (Data tname targs constructors) =
  let indVarName = map toLower (take 1 tname) in
  let varName = "x" in
  let newType = Simple tname (map (\t → Simple t []) targs) in
  let prefix body =
      forall (Forall "P" (Arrow newType (Simple "Bool" [])) body)
        (zip targs (repeat Star)) in
  let mkConstructorClause (c, types) =
      if null types then
        Pred "P" [Pred c []]
      else
        let arity = length types in
        let vars = numberedVars
            (map (\(Simple name _) →
                if name == tname then indVarName else varName) types) in
        let varsXTypes = zip vars types in
        let indVars = mkFormulaVars $
            map fst (filter (\(_, Simple t _) → t == tname) varsXTypes) in
        let antecedents = conjoin (map (\t → Pred "P" [t]) indVars) in
        let concl = Pred "P" [Pred c (mkFormulaVars vars)] in
        let universal body = forall body varsXTypes in
        case indVars of
          [] → universal concl
          _ → universal (Implies antecedents concl) in
  let antecedent = conjoin (map mkConstructorClause constructors) in
  let concl = Forall indVarName newType (Pred "P" [Pred indVarName []]) in
  prefix (Implies antecedent concl)

```