Tau Prolog
Grammar specification

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In this document, we describe the full Prolog grammar specification used by Tau Prolog to parse Prolog code.

Grammar

Figure 1 shows the production rules used for deriving Prolog programs and goals. For simplicity, the terminal symbols `comma` and `dot` in the grammar denote `atom` symbols (see Table 1) whose values are `','` and `'.'`, respectively. Furthermore, a terminal symbol with the form `op(specifier,priority)` denotes an atom with a given specifier[1] (`xf`, `yf`, `fx`, `fy`, `xfx`, `xfy` or `yfx`) and priority (between `0` and `1200`).

$$
\begin{array}{rcl}
\langle Expr_n \rangle & \rightarrow & \texttt{op(fx,n)}\ \langle Expr_{n-1} \rangle \mid \texttt{op(fy,n)}\ \langle Expr_n \rangle \mid \\
& & \langle Expr_{n-1} \rangle\ \texttt{op(xf,n)} \mid \langle Expr_n \rangle\ \texttt{op(yf,n)} \mid \\
& & \langle Expr_{n-1} \rangle\ \texttt{op(xfx,n)}\ \langle Expr_{n-1} \rangle \mid \\
& & \langle Expr_{n-1} \rangle\ \texttt{op(xfy,n)}\ \langle Expr_n \rangle \mid \\
& & \langle Expr_n \rangle\ \texttt{op(yfx,n)}\ \langle Expr_{n-1} \rangle \mid \\
& & \langle Expr_{n-1} \rangle \\
\langle Expr_0 \rangle & \rightarrow & \texttt{number} \mid \texttt{variable} \mid \texttt{string} \mid \langle List \rangle \mid \langle Term \rangle \mid \\
& & \texttt{lparen}\ \langle Expr_{1200} \rangle\ \texttt{rparen} \mid \texttt{lbrace}\ \langle Expr_{1200} \rangle\ \texttt{rbrace} \\
\langle Term \rangle & \rightarrow & \texttt{atom}\ \langle Term_2 \rangle \\
\langle Term_2 \rangle & \rightarrow & \texttt{lparen}\ \langle Expr_{999} \rangle\ \langle Term_3 \rangle \mid \lambda \\
\langle Term_3 \rangle & \rightarrow & \texttt{comma}\ \langle Expr_{999} \rangle\ \langle Term_3 \rangle \mid \texttt{rparen} \\
\langle List \rangle & \rightarrow & \texttt{lbracket}\ \langle List_2 \rangle \\
\langle List_2 \rangle & \rightarrow & \langle Expr_{999} \rangle\ \langle List_3 \rangle \mid \texttt{rbracket} \\
\langle List_3 \rangle & \rightarrow & \texttt{comma}\ \langle Expr_{999} \rangle\ \langle List_3 \rangle \mid \texttt{bar}\ \langle Expr_{999} \rangle\ \texttt{rbracket} \mid \texttt{rbracket} \\
\langle Rule \rangle & \rightarrow & \langle Expr_{1200} \rangle\ \texttt{dot} \\
\langle Program \rangle & \rightarrow & \langle Rule \rangle\ \langle Program \rangle \mid \lambda
\end{array}
$$

Figure 1: Formal grammar

All rules have an inherited attribute, `top_level`, for knowing whether the derivation is in the *top level* or not. In the top level, it is forbidden to derivate an atom with the value `'.'` (without simple quotes) as an expression –unless it is followed by a parenthesis `'('`– since it denotes the final of rules and goals.

[1] The specifier indicates the type of operator (infix, prefix or sufix) and its associativity.

Terminal symbols

Table 1 shows all the terminal symbols of the grammar next to their regular expressions (with PCRE[2] syntax). Note that the `whitespace` symbol represents both white spaces and comments.

Table 1: Terminal symbols

Symbol	Regular expression
whitespace	/\s*(?:%.*|\/*(?:\n|\r|.)*?*\/|\s+)\s*/
variable	/[A-Z_][a-zA-Z0-9_]*/
atom	/!|,|;|[a-z][0-9a-zA-Z_]*|[#\$\&*\+\-\.\/\:\<\=\>\?@\^\~\\]+| '(?:[^']*?(?:\\(?:x?\d+)?\\)*(?:'')*(?:\\')*)*'/
number	/0o[0-7]+|0x[0-9a-f]+|0b[01]+|0'(?:''|\\[abfnrtv\\'"`] |\\x?\d+\\\|.)|\d+(?:\.\d+(?:e[+-]?\d+)?)?/i
string	/"([^"]|""|\\")*"|`([^`]|``|\\`)*`/
lbrace	/\[/
rbrace	/\]/
lbracket	/\{/
rbracket	/\}/
lparen	/\(/
rparen	/\)/
bar	/\\|/
error	/./

Table 2 gives the initial operator table of Prolog, which can be modified using the `op/3` built-in predicate (more information about it in the url `http://tau-prolog.org/documentation/prolog/builtin/op/3`).

Table 2: Initial Prolog operators

Priority	Specifier	Operators
1200	xfx	`:-` `-->`
1200	fx	`:-` `?-`
1100	xfy	`;`
1050	xfy	`->`
1000	xfy	`,`
900	fy	`\+`
700	xfx	`=` `\=`
700	xfx	`==` `\==` `@<` `@=<` `@>` `@>=`
700	xfx	`=..`
700	xfx	`is` `=:=` `=\=` `<` `=<` `>` `>=`
500	yfx	`+` `-` `/\` `\/`
400	yfx	`*` `/` `//` `rem` `mod` `<<` `>>`
200	xfx	`**` `\\`
200	xfy	`^` `\\`
200	fy	`-` `+` `\` `\\`

[2]Perl-compatible regular expressions.