

Introduction to Cognitive Robotics

Module 9: The CRAM Plan Language

Lecture 2: Designators, process modules

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The CRAM Language

Based on CRAM documentation
<http://cram-system.org/doc>

CRAM Designators

- A designator is a Common Lisp object for describing various parameters in the CRAM language
- To the user, designators are objects containing sequences of **key-value** pairs of symbols

CRAM Designators

- Designators are effectively placeholders
 - require runtime resolution
 - based on the current context of the task action
- Designator resolution is accomplished by
 - Querying a priori knowledge embedded in the plan
 - Querying knowledge in the KnowRob2 knowledge base
 - By accessing sensorimotor data through the Perception Executive

CRAM Designators

Four types of designator

1. **Motion** designators (e.g. motor command)
2. **Location** designators (e.g. 3D pose)
3. **Object** designators (e.g. grasp configuration)
4. **Action** designators (e.g. goal)

CRAM Designators

- Designators are atomic
 - Properties are not changed by the user
 - Value is persistent
- Designators can be equated
 - for example, if they refer to the same object (at different times)
- Designators are multivalued
 - More than one key-value pair might be a solution

CRAM Designators

User API

- Functions for constructing, equating, and accessing designators
- Other API for **resolving** designators

CRAM Designators

`(make-designator parent properties &optional parent)`

- Constructs a designator of type `class` and the given properties
- If `parent` is specified, it is equated with it

`((equate parent successor)`

- Equates the two designators

CRAM Designators

`(desig-equal designator-1 designator-2)`

- Checks if two designators describe the same entity, i.e. if they are equated

`(first-desig designator)`

- Returns the first ancestor in the chain of equated designators

`(current-desig designator)`

- Returns the newest designator, i.e. that one that has been equated last to designator or one of its equated designators.

CRAM Designators

(`reference` designator &optional role)

- Tries to dereference the designator
 - Return its data object
 - Throws an error if it is not an `effective` designator, i.e. one that can be dereferenced
- By specifying a `role` parameter, different algorithms to resolve (i.e. dereference) the designator can be selected

CRAM Designators

(`next-solution` designator)

- Returns another solution for the effective designator `designator` or `NIL` if none exists
- The next solution is a newly constructed designator with identical properties that is equated to `designator` since it describes the same entity

CRAM Designators

`(designator-solutions-equal solution-1 solution-2)`

- Compares two designator solutions and returns T if they are equal

`(designator-solutions designator &optional from-root)`

- Returns the lazy list of all solutions of a designator

CRAM Designators

(`copy-designator` old-designator &key new-designator)

- Returns a new designator with the same properties as `old-designator`
- When present, the description parameter `new-designator` will be merged with the old description
- The new description will be dominant in this relation

CRAM Designators

`(make-effective-designator parent &key new-properties data-object time-stamp)`

- Returns a new effective designator with the same type as parent
- The parent's properties are used if `new-properties` is not specified
- The internal data slot that is used for dereferencing the designator is set to `data-object`

CRAM Designators

`(newest-effective-designator designator)`

- Returns the newest, i.e. the current, equated effective designator

`(desig-prop-value designator property-key)`

- Returns the value part of the designator property indicated by `property-key`

CR10–05, Slide 25

Creating Motion Designators for the TurtleSim

Create a motion designator in the REPL command line:

We follow to the normal convention of using the double asterisk for naming global variables in Common Lisp

We use the `a` macro to create designators (internally it uses the `make-designator` function)

```
TUT> (defparameter *my-desig* (design:a motion (type driving) (speed 1.5)))
```

```
*MY-DESIG*
```

```
TUT> (design-prop-value *my-desig* :speed)
```

```
1.5
```

The designator properties and values

The specified designator type is `motion`

Use `design-prop-value` function to read the value of a specified property

CRAM Designators

Designator resolution

- Resolution means to generate real parameters for executing actions from the symbolic key-value pairs of a designator
- Each designator class – `action`, `object`, `location`, and `motion` – are resolved differently

CRAM Designators

Object Designators

- Direct interface between CRAM plans and the robot **perception** sub-system
- The key-value pairs in the designator's properties describe the **object that is to be perceived**
- The perception sub-system is then responsible for resolving the designator, as follows

CRAM Designators

Object Designators

1. Parse the designator's properties for a description of the object to be found
2. Find the described object
3. Create a new effective designator with the data object bound to an instance of `object-designator-data` containing all relevant information about the object
4. Equate the new effective designator with the original designator

CRAM Designators

Action Designators

- Resolution is normally effected by using an inference engine – **Prolog** – to convert symbolic action descriptions to ROS action goals or similar data structures
- To implement resolution for an action designator, the user has to provide definitions for the predicate `action-design ?designator ?solution`

CRAM Designators

Action Designators

For example, the following designator describes the action of moving 1 m forward

The action designator has a type, in this case (type navigation)

```
(let ((goal-location
      (make-designator 'location
        `((pose , (make-pose-stamped
                    "base_footprint" 0.0
                    (make-3d-vector 1.0 0.0 0.0)
                    (make-identity-rotation))))))
      (make-designator 'action `((type navigation) (goal ,goal-location))))
```

action type
goal pose: resolution requires
this pose to be specified

CRAM Designators

Action Designators

To resolve the pose, we define the corresponding predicate `action-desig`

```
(def-fact-group navigation-action-designator (action-desig)
  (<- (action-desig ?designator ?goal)
    (desig-prop ?designator (type navigation))
    (desig-prop ?designator (goal ?goal))))
```

CRAM Designators

Location Designators

- These designators are resolved as a robot pose that is appropriate for manipulating an object
- They can be the most complex to resolve because the computation of poses such as “a location in which to stand for opening a drawer” is non-trivial

CRAM Designators

Location Designators

- Resolution is done in two steps:
 1. Generation of a lazy list of candidate poses
 2. Verification of candidate poses
(i.e. is the pose actually a feasible solution)
- This allows for a general **generation process** and specific **filter process** to remove the invalid solutions

CRAM Designators

Location Designators

- When the `reference` method is called on a location designator:
 - The system first executes **generator functions** to generate the sequence of candidate poses
 - Generator functions are **prioritized**: there is an explicit order in which they must be executed
- Each generator function takes a location designator as input and returns the (lazy) list of possible solutions

CRAM Designators

Location Designators

- Next, the system ...
 - Appends (concatenates) all lists
 - Validates each solution in turn
 - Until
 - a valid solution is found or
 - a maximum number of solutions has been tried (in which case the system throws an error)

CRAM Designators

Location Designators

- Validation functions have two parameters
 - The designator to be resolved
 - The pose candidate to validate
- Depending on the result, the solution can be
 - accepted
 - immediately rejected
 - rejected if no other validation function accepts it

CRAM Designators

Location Designators

To register a location **generator** function

`register-location-generator` `priority` `function`
&optional `doc-string`

`priority` is a `fixnum` used to order all location generators.
Common-Lisp distinguishes two types of integer types: `fixnums` and `bignum`. A `fixnum` is a small integer, which ideally occupies only a word of memory.

Solutions generated with functions with **smaller** priorities are used **first**.

`function` is a symbol naming the function that generates a list of solutions.

It takes exactly one argument: the designator

CRAM Designators

Location Designators

To register a location **validation** function

`register-location-validation` priority function
&optional doc-string

`priority` is a fixnum used to indicate the evaluation order
of all location validation functions

`function` is a symbol naming the validation function.

This function takes exactly two arguments: the
designator and a solution.

It returns either

`:accept`,

`:unknown`

(cannot decide),

`:maybe-reject`

(reject if all other validation functions return `:unknown`) ,

or

`:reject`

CRAM Process Modules

- Process modules provide a high-level abstract interface to navigation, manipulation, and perception functionality
- They hide the details of robot-specific components
- Their input is always an action designator
- They are defined with the `def-process-module` macro

This is according to the CRAM documentation here
http://cram-system.org/doc/package/cram_process_modules

However, we use process modules with motion designators in CR10-03 and we never use process modules with action designators

Similar to to a function definition but only one parameter is declared:
the name of the `variable` to which the `input designator is bound`

CRAM Process Modules

Process modules operate as follows:

1. The action designator is resolved to get the actual commands to send to the robot hardware
2. These are executed
3. Return a result value or throw an error if the execution fails

CRAM Process Modules

Example:

Define the `navigation` process module,

to be bound to the action designator `input-designator`

```
(def-process-module navigation (input-designator)
  (let ((goal-pose (reference input-designator)))
    (or (execute-navigation-action goal-pose)
        (fail 'navigation-failed))))
```

which (we will assume)
resolves to a 3D pose ...

... that is passed to the
`execute-navigation-action` function

... and throw an error if that navigation action fails

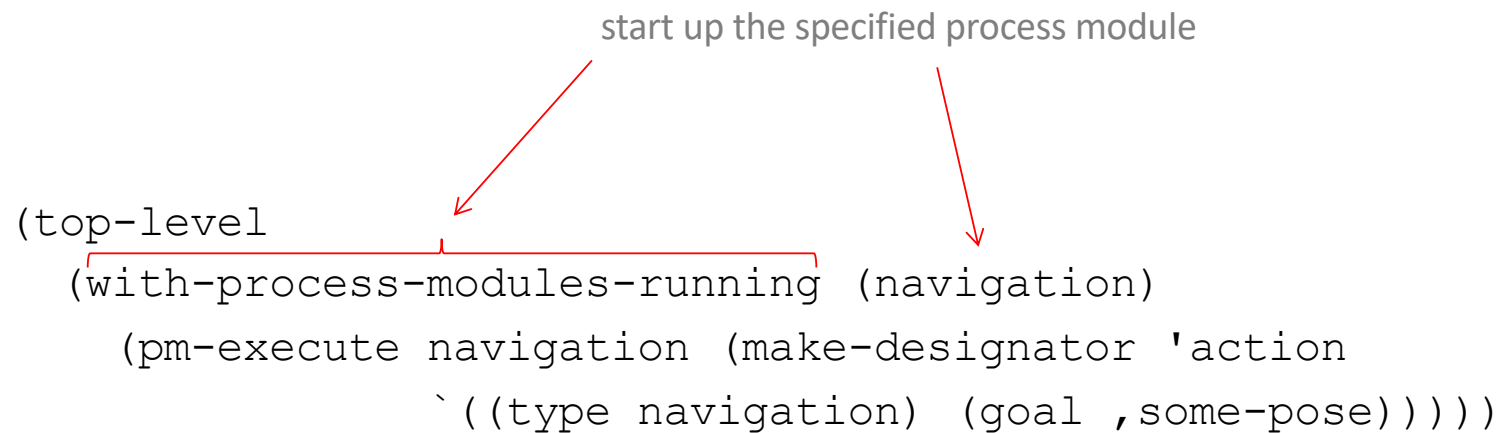
CRAM Process Modules

To send a command to the process module

use `pm-execute`

start up the specified process module

```
(top-level  
  (with-process-modules-running (navigation)  
    (pm-execute navigation (make-designator 'action  
      `((type navigation) (goal ,some-pose))))))
```



Here, we assume that `some-pose` has a valid pose value

CRAM Language Resources

CRAM Designators

http://cram-system.org/doc/package/cram_designators

CRAM Process Modules

http://cram-system.org/doc/package/cram_process_modules

Background Reading

G. Kazhoyan, Lecture notes: Robot Programming with Lisp 7. Coordinate Transformations, TF, ActionLib, slides 5-8.

https://ai.uni-bremen.de/_media/teaching/7_more_ros.pdf

T. Rittweiler, CRAM – Design and Implementation of a Reactive Plan Language, Bachelor Thesis, Technical University of Munich, 2010.

<https://common-lisp.net/~trittweiler/bachelor-thesis.pdf>