

## Ehrenfeucht-Fraïssé Theorem

1. Definition. Let  $K_n = \{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$  be the first  $n$  parameters. Let  $M$  and  $N$  be interpretations in universes  $U$  and  $V$ , respectively, and let  $c_1, \dots, c_n \in U$  and  $d_1, \dots, d_n \in V$ . Define  $(M, c_1, \dots, c_n) \simeq_k (N, d_1, \dots, d_n)$  recursively by

- $(M, c_1, \dots, c_n) \simeq_0 (N, d_1, \dots, d_n)$  iff for every atomic  $K_n$ -sentence  $A$ ,  $M \models A[c_1, \dots, c_n] \Leftrightarrow N \models A[d_1, \dots, d_n]$ .
- $(M, c_1, \dots, c_n) \simeq_{k+1} (N, d_1, \dots, d_n)$  iff the following two conditions hold:
  - for all  $c \in U$ , there exists a  $d \in V$  such that  $(M, c_1, \dots, c_n, c) \simeq_k (N, d_1, \dots, d_n, d)$ , and
  - for all  $d \in V$ , there exists a  $c \in U$  such that  $(M, c_1, \dots, c_n, c) \simeq_k (N, d_1, \dots, d_n, d)$ .

2. Definition. Define the *quantifier rank* of a formula  $A$  by

$$\begin{aligned} \text{qr}(A) &= 0 && \text{if } A \text{ is atomic,} \\ \text{qr}(\neg A) &= \text{qr}(A), \\ \text{qr}(A \text{ } b \text{ } B) &= \max(\text{qr}(A), \text{qr}(B)) && (b \in \{\wedge, \vee, \rightarrow, \leftrightarrow\}), \\ \text{qr}(qx A) &= \text{qr}(A) + 1 && (q \in \{\forall, \exists\}). \end{aligned}$$

3. Definition. The relation  $(M, c_1, \dots, c_n) \equiv_k (N, d_1, \dots, d_n)$  holds iff for every  $K_n$ -sentence  $A$  such that  $\text{qr}(A) \leq k$ ,  $M \models A[c_1, \dots, c_n] \Leftrightarrow N \models A[d_1, \dots, d_n]$ .
4. Theorem.  $(M, c_1, \dots, c_n) \simeq_k (N, d_1, \dots, d_n)$  iff  $(M, c_1, \dots, c_n) \equiv_k (N, d_1, \dots, d_n)$ .
5. Theorem. There is no sentence  $B$  of first-order logic such that for all *finite* graphs  $G$ ,  $M_G \models B$  iff  $G$  is connected.

Compactness is useless to show first-order definability over finite structures. We use the Ehrenfeucht-Fraïssé theorem.

Proof. Suppose such a sentence  $B$  exists. Let  $k = \text{qr}(B)$ . To derive a contradiction, it suffices to give two finite graphs  $G$  and  $H$  such that

- $G$  is connected,
- $H$  is not connected, and
- $M_G \simeq_k M_H$ .

Let  $G = (V, E)$ , where  $V = \{v_1, \dots, v_l\}$  and  $E = \{\{v_i, v_{i+1}\} \mid 1 \leq i \leq l-1\} \cup \{\{v_l, v_1\}\}$ . Let  $H = (V \cup V', E \cup E')$ , where  $(V', E')$  is an isomorphic copy of  $(V, E)$ . Define

$$\text{dist}(v_i, v_j) = \begin{cases} j - i & \text{if } -l/2 \leq j - i \leq l/2, \\ j - i - l & \text{if } l/2 < j - i, \\ j - i + l & \text{if } j - i < -l/2, \end{cases}$$

and likewise  $\text{dist}(v'_i, v'_j)$  for  $v'_i, v'_j \in V'$ . If  $v \in V$  and  $v' \in V'$ , we define  $\text{dist}(v, v') = \infty$  and  $\text{dist}(v', v) = -\infty$ .

Suppose  $l \geq 2^k$ . We can prove

$$(M_G, c_1, \dots, c_n) \simeq_{k-n} (M_H, d_1, \dots, d_n)$$

for all  $n \in \{0, \dots, k\}$  if the following conditions hold of all  $i, j \in \{1, \dots, n\}$ :

- $|\text{dist}(c_i, c_j)| \leq 2^{k-n}$  implies  $\text{dist}(c_i, c_j) = \text{dist}(d_i, d_j)$ , and
- $|\text{dist}(d_i, d_j)| \leq 2^{k-n}$  implies  $\text{dist}(c_i, c_j) = \text{dist}(d_i, d_j)$ .