



GALACTIC : A new Plateform for Semantic Clustering

GAlois LAttices, Concept Theory, Implicational systems and Closures

Christophe Demko¹ Karell Bertet¹ Axel Jean-Caurant¹

¹L3I Lab, University of La Rochelle, France
`prenom.nom@univ-lr.fr`

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What is GALACTIC?

Stands for

GAlois **LA**ttices, **C**oncept Theory, **I**mplicational systems and **C**losures

Evariste Galois (1811-1831)

- French mathematician
- He died young in a pistol duel





What is GALACTIC?

- The GALACTIC project implements novel paradigms and algorithms:
 - for **semantic clustering** of heterogeneous and complex data
 - using a **predicate-based embedding** in a description space
 - supporting an **interactive** approach that places the analyst at the center of the analysis process
- GALACTIC is at the intersection of:
 - **Pattern-mining**-based hierarchical **clustering**
 - The theoretical framework of **Formal Concept Analysis** (FCA)



Outline

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Preliminaries: Clustering, Pattern-Mining and FCA
 - Clustering and Pattern-mining
 - Formal Concept Analysis
- 3 GALACTIC: Framework and Platform
 - Predicates, Descriptions and Strategies
 - Algebraic Foundations and Algorithms
 - Platform and Tutorials
- 4 Conclusion



Clustering

Clustering

Clustering is the task of grouping a set of objects in such a way that objects in the same group/cluster are more “similar” (in some sens) to each other than to those in other groups

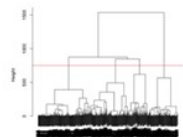
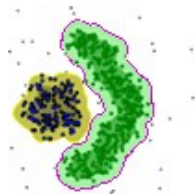
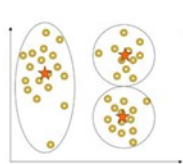
Clustering methods depends on the type of data;

- Numerical data (distance, similarity measure)
- Categorical/discrete data (pattern, common attributes)
- Graphs (modularity, ..)



Type of clusters

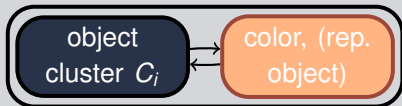
- **Partitioning**: divide the data into k groups
 - **Exclusive**: each instance belongs to exactly one cluster
 - **Non-exclusive**: each instance may belong to multiple clusters
- **Hierarchy**: each group is a subgroup of its parent
 - **Divisive** approach (top-down): starts with a single global cluster
 - **Agglomerative** approach (bottom-up): starts with one cluster per instance





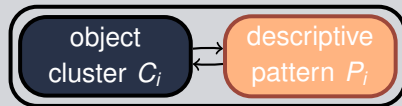
Clustering

Classical clustering $\{C_i\}$



- **K-means**: partitionning of numerical data (distance)
- **Cure**: hierarchical clustering, for numerical data (distance)
- **Louvain**: partitionning (communities) of nodes of a graph (modularity)
-

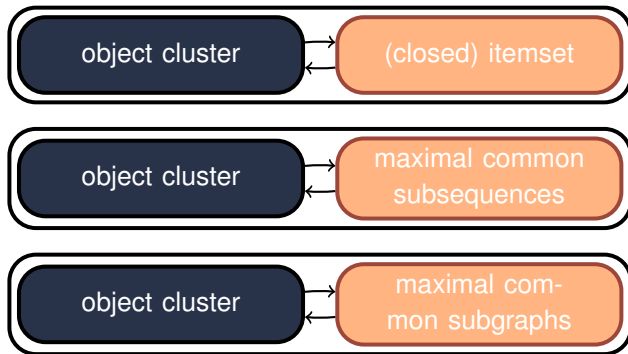
Semantic clustering $\{(C_i, P_i)\}$



- **Pattern mining**: hierarchical, for categorical data, graphs and sequences
- **FCA**: hierarchical, for categorical data
- **GALACTIC**: hierarchical, for complex and heterogeneous data



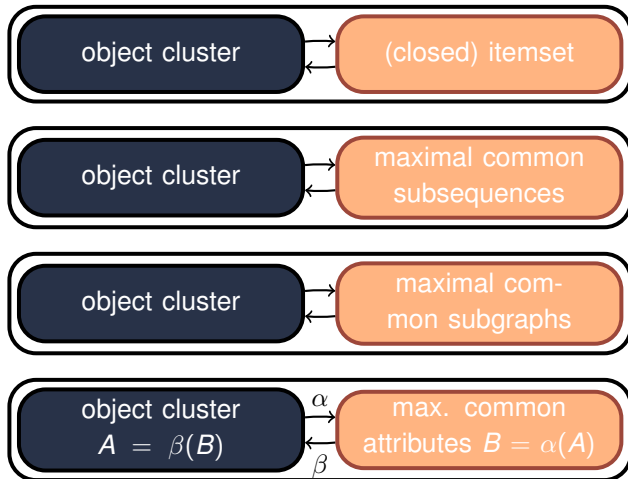
Pattern Mining



- Pattern mining was first introduced for **categorical data**, starting with Apriori [1] and later A-close algorithms
- They are top-down hierarchical clustering methods
- They were then extended to **sequence mining** [2] and **graph mining**



Pattern Mining



Concept

- Pattern mining was first introduced for **categorical data**, starting with Apriori [1] and later A-close algorithms
- They are top-down hierarchical clustering methods
- They were then extended to **sequence mining** [2] and **graph mining**
- This approach can be formalized within the framework of FCA, with the (α, β) **Galois connection**



Formal Concept Analysis

- **Formal Concept Analysis** [3] (FCA) is a mathematical theory designed for applications in areas such as knowledge representation, information retrieval, data analysis and mining, and data visualization, ...
- It provides tools for understanding and visualizing data by structuring it into a **hierarchy of concepts** (a concept lattice) and by deriving **implications between attributes** (rule bases)
- These tools rely on solid theoretical foundations based on a **triplet of bijective mapping** between data, concept lattices, and rule bases, established through a **Galois connection** (α, β) between objects and binary attributes [4]



Example

Excerpt of Animals dataset

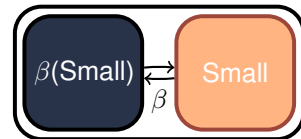
$\alpha \setminus \beta$	Small	Med.	Large	Hunt	Run	Mane	Hooves
Fox		✓		✓	✓		
Dog		✓			✓		
Wolf		✓		✓	✓	✓	
Cat	✓			✓	✓		
Tiger			✓	✓	✓		
Lion			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Horse			✓		✓	✓	✓
Zebra			✓		✓	✓	✓
Cow			✓				✓



Example

Excerpt of Animals dataset

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Lion			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Horse			✓		✓	✓	✓
Zebra			✓		✓	✓	✓
Cow			✓				✓

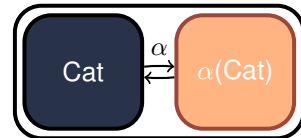
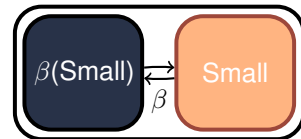




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Excerpt of Animals dataset

$\alpha \swarrow \beta$	Small	Med.	Large	Hunt	Run	Mane	Hooves
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Cat	✓			✓	✓		
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Cow			✓				✓

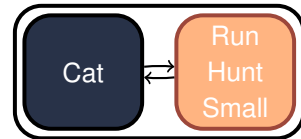
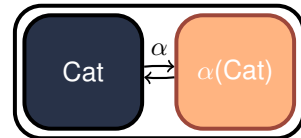
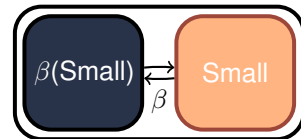




Example

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$\alpha \swarrow \beta$	Small	Med.	Large	Hunt	Run	Mane	Hooves
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Lion			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Horse			✓		✓	✓	✓
Zebra			✓		✓	✓	✓
Cow			✓				✓



Concept



Definitions

Formal Context (G, M, I)

A formal context (G, M, I) is defined by a **binary relation** $I \subseteq G \times M$ between a **set of objects** G and a **set of attributes** M

- G stands for "Gegenstände" (objects in German) and M stands for "Merkmale" (attributes in German)
- For $a \in G$ and $b \in M$, the notation $a I b$ means that the object a has the attribute b

Galois connection (α, β)

The Galois connection (α, β) is induced by the relation I , for $A \subseteq G$ and $B \subseteq M$:

- $\alpha(A) = \{ b \in M \mid \forall a \in A, I(a, b) \}$
- $\beta(B) = \{ a \in G \mid \forall b \in B, I(a, b) \}$

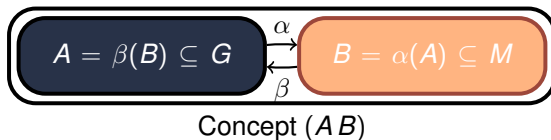


Definitions

Formal Concept (A, B)

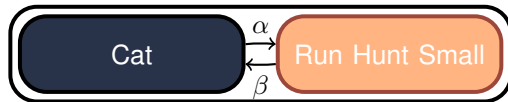
A concept is a pair (A, B) such that $A \subseteq G$, $B \subseteq M$, $A = \beta(B)$ and $B = \alpha(A)$

- A is called the **extent** of the concept
- B is called the **intent** of the concept.
- B is a **closed set** of attributes by the **closure operator** $(\alpha \circ \beta)$



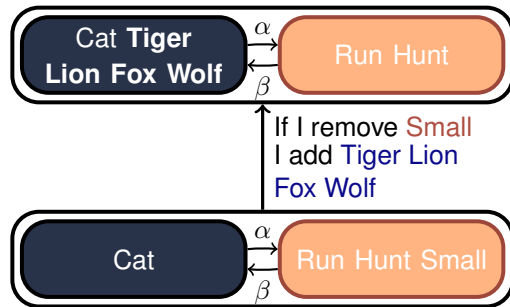


Example



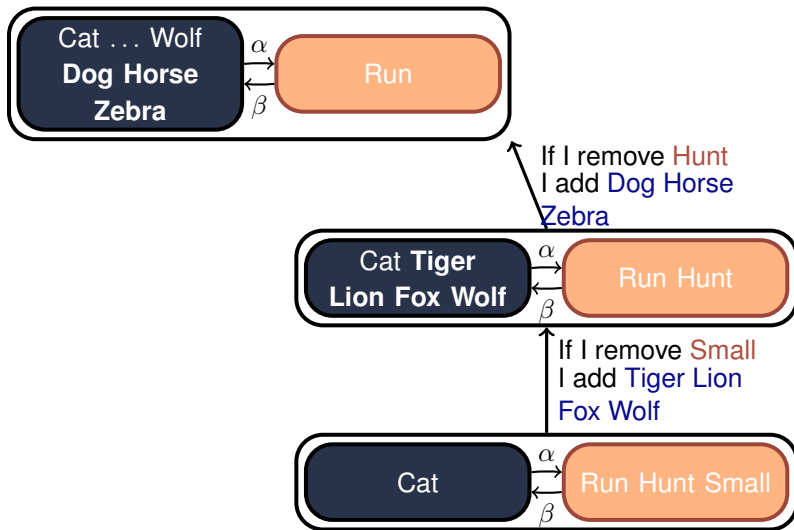


Example



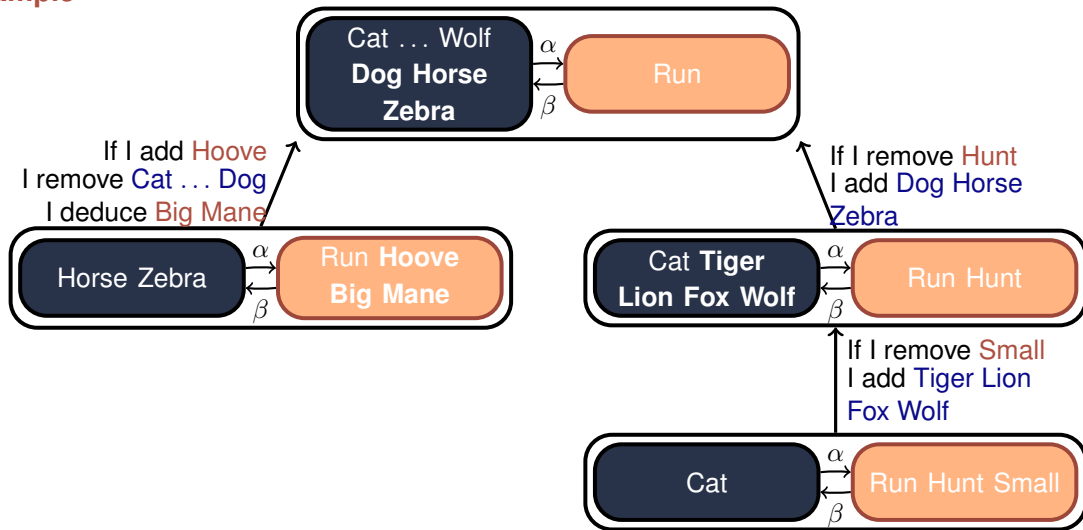


Example



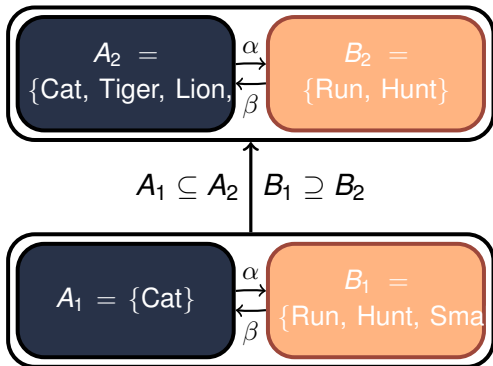


Example





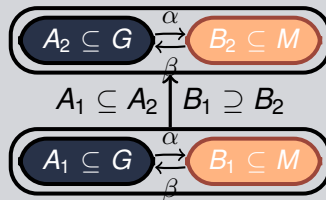
Definitions



Concept Lattice

A **concept lattice** consists of all concepts of a context and the **subconcept–superconcept relation** $\leq$ defined for (A_1, B_1) and (A_2, B_2) by:

$$(A_1, B_1) \leq (A_2, B_2) \iff A_1 \subseteq A_2 \iff B_2 \subseteq B_1$$

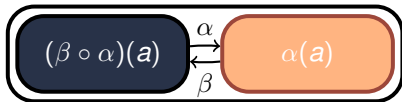




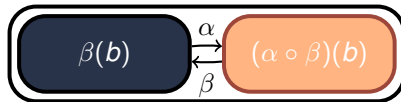
Reduced Concept Lattice

A concept lattice is usually represented in a reduced form involving:

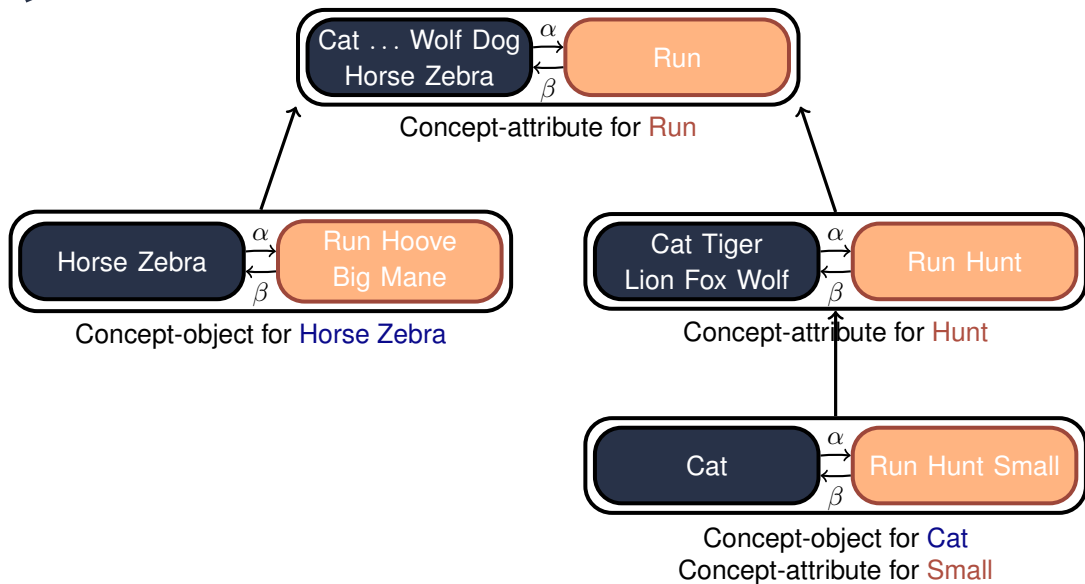
- A reduction to its **Hasse diagram**:
 - only the cover relations of the subconcept-superconcept order $\leq$ are displayed
 - reflexive and transitive relations of $\leq$ are omitted.
- A reduction to the **new object** $a \in G$ introduced by a **concept-object**
- A reduction to the **new attribute** $b \in M$ introduced by a **concept-attribute**
- An empty concept for the others concepts:
 - Its attributes and objects are derived from concept-objects and concept-attributes.

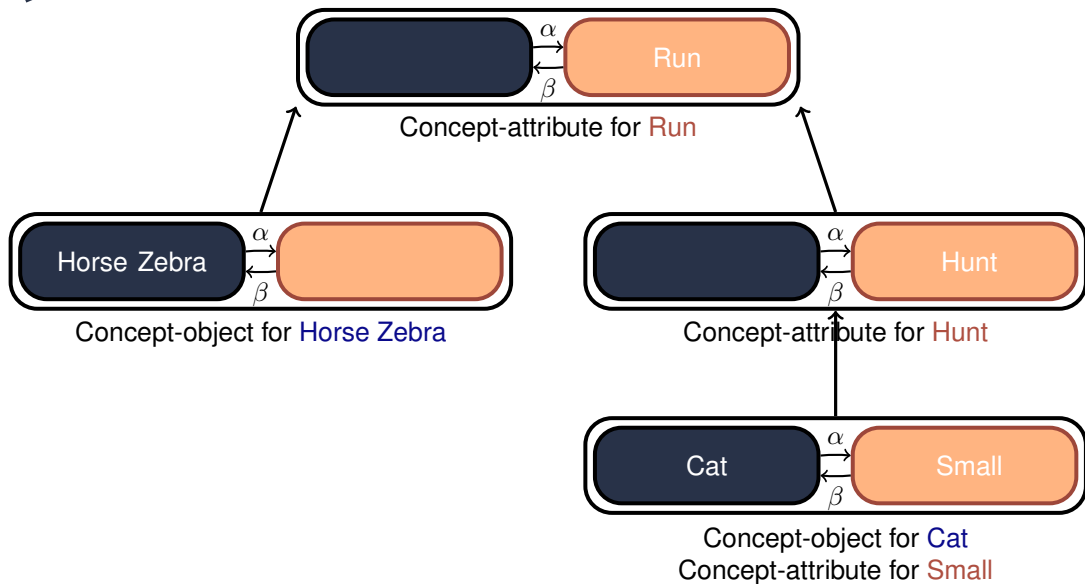


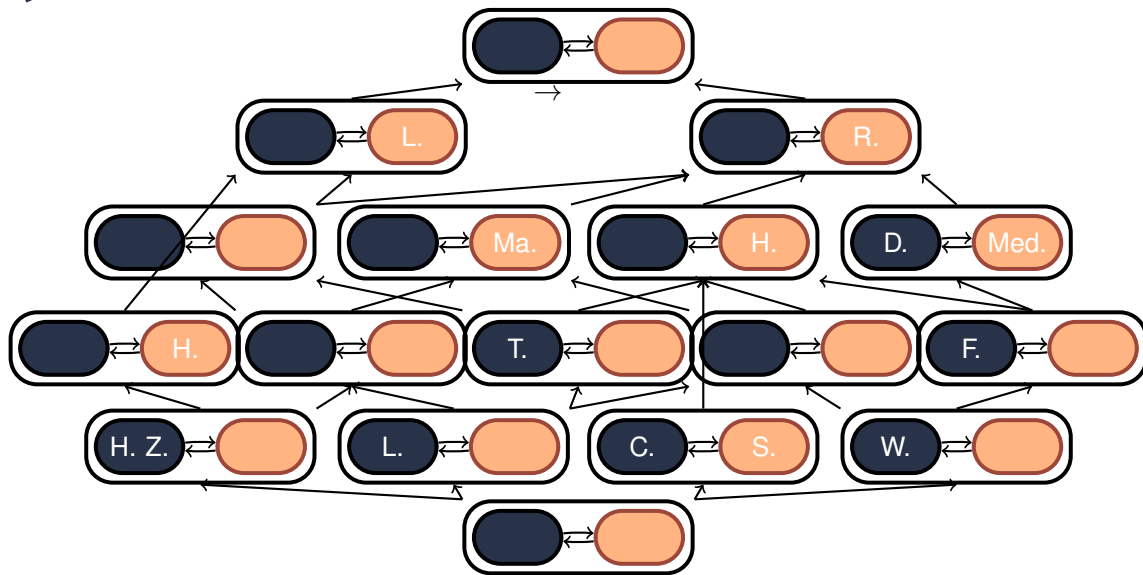
Concept-object for **a**

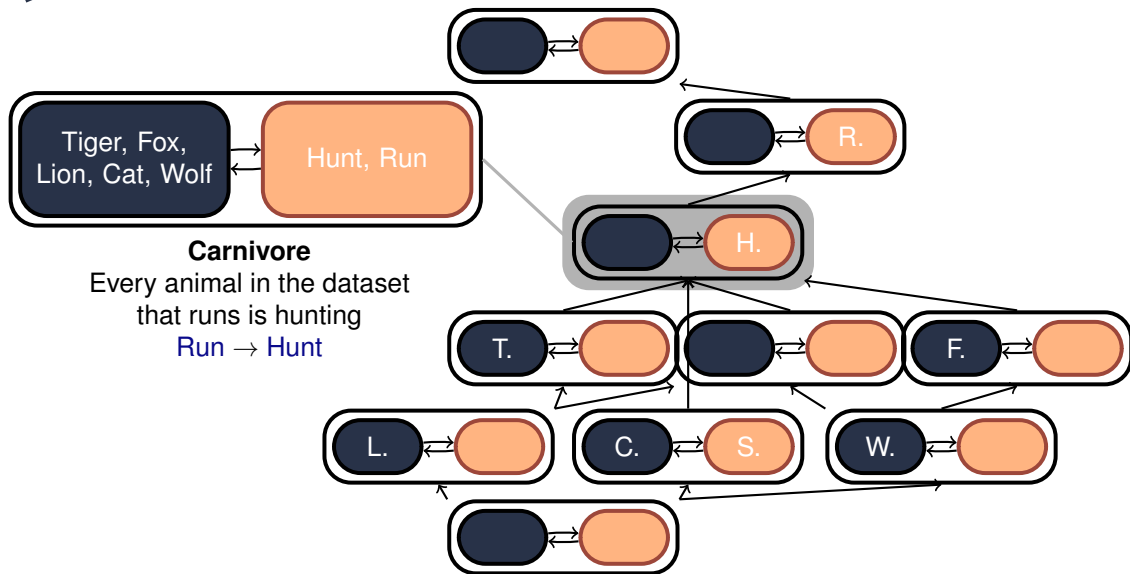


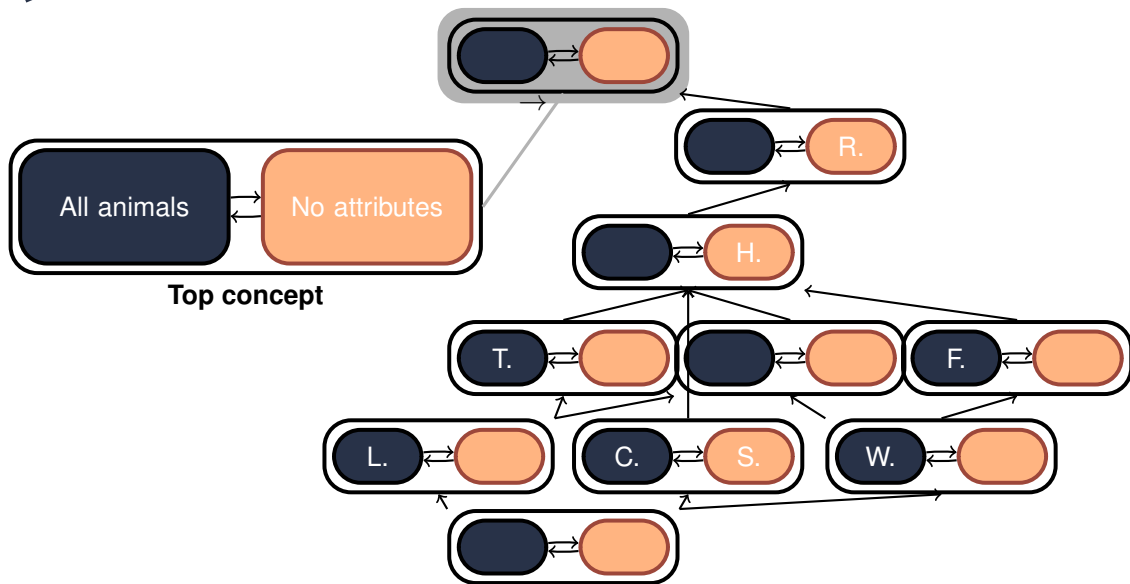
Concept-attribute for **b**

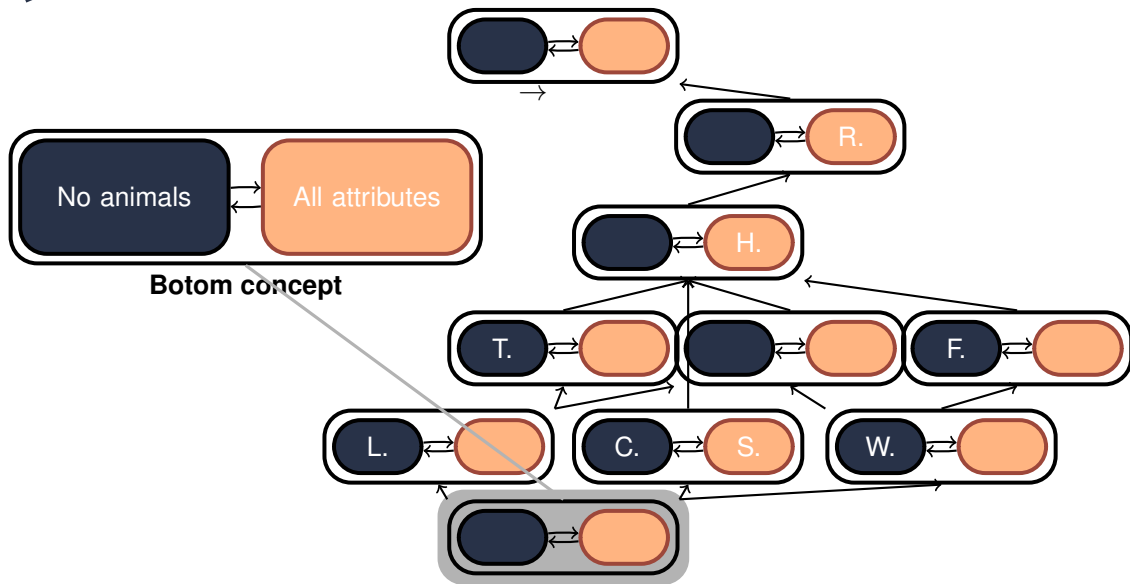














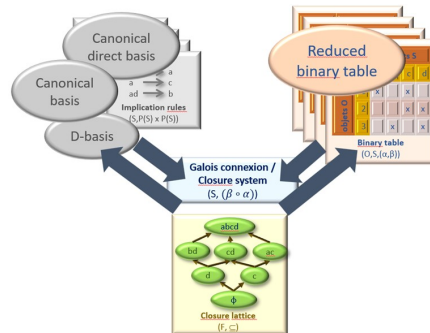
Algebraic foundations of FCA

Triple of bijective mappings

Three bijective mappings are induced by the Galois connection (α, β) through the closure operator $(\beta \circ \alpha)$ [5]:

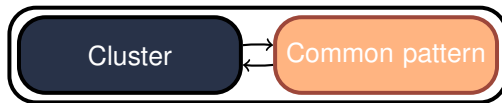
- between (reduced) data and concepts (fundamental FCA theorem [6])
- between (reduced) data and rule bases (through concepts)

⇒ **Deterministic generation algorithms**





Data	Algos FCA	
Binary	NextClosure (1982)[7], ...	✓ Bijections (Galois connection) ✗ Pattern explosion
Complex	Pattern Structures (2001)[8], LCA (2001)[9], ...	✓ Extension of the Galois connection ✗ Botom-up generation



Hierarchy

Data	Algos PM	
Categ.	Apriori (1994)[1], A-Close (2003), ...	✓ Frequent (closed) patterns ✗ Pattern explosion
Complex	Sequences: GSP (1996)[13], PrefixSpan (2001), CloSpan (2003), ... Graphs: gSpan (2002)[14], ...	✓ Top-down generation ✗ Dedicated algorithms



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Data	Algos GALACTIC	
Complex & Heterog.	NPC (2020)[10] RCC (2025)[11] LSE (2026)[12]	✓ Extension of the Galois connection ✓ Top-down and random generation ✓ Exploration strategies ✗ Recent early-stage lab work

Data	Algos PM	
Categ.	Apriori (1994)[1], A-Close (2003), ...	✓ Frequent (closed) patterns ✗ Pattern explosion
Complex	Sequences: GSP (1996)[13], PrefixSpan (2001), CloSpan (2003), ... Graphs: gSpan (2002)[14], ...	✓ Top-down generation ✗ Dedicated algorithms



Input Data

GALACTIC handles heterogeneous data as input.

- **Simple data** (Boolean, Numerical, Categorical)
- **Complex data** (String, Sequences, Temporal Sequences, ...)

Input Data

GALACTIC considers a **dataset** (G, S) where G is a set of objects, S is a set of characteristics, and each characteristic $s \in S$ is a mapping from objects to a domain D_s :

$$s : G \rightarrow D_s$$

Numerical	$s : G \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$
Boolean	$s : G \rightarrow \{0, 1\}$
Categorical	$s : G \rightarrow \Sigma_s$
Sequence	$s : G \rightarrow \Sigma_s^*$



Predicates

GALACTIC introduces **generic predicates** for each characteristic.

- A predicate assigns one of the three values - *true*, *false*, or *none* - to each object.
- The *none* value makes it possible to represent uncertainty

Generic Predicate

For each characteristic $s \in S$, a **predicate** p_s is defined as:

$$p_s : G \rightarrow \{0, 1, \text{none}\}$$

where $p_s(a) = 1$ whenever the value $s(a)$ satisfies the predicate p_s
 $p_s(a) = 0$ whenever the value $s(a)$ don't satisfies the predicate p_s
 $p_s(a) = ?$ whenever the value $s(a)$ is unknown



Some Predicates

Predicate p_s	Characteristic $s \in S$	Definition (for $a \in G$)
$category_s$	Categorical	$category_s(a)[X] \equiv \langle s(a) \in X ? \rangle$ <i>Is $s(a)$ contained in the category set X?</i>
leq_s	Number	$leq_s(a)[x] \equiv \langle s(a) \leq x ? \rangle$ <i>Is $s(a)$ less than or equal to x?</i>
geq_s	Number	$geq_s(a)[x] \equiv \langle s(a) \geq x ? \rangle$ <i>Is $s(a)$ greater than or equal to x?</i>
$Subsequence_s$	Sequence	$SubSequence_s(a)[x] \equiv \langle x \sqsubseteq s(a) ? \rangle$ <i>Does $s(a)$ contain x as a subsequence?</i>



Descriptions

GALACTIC introduces **generic descriptions** for each characteristic

- A description is a mapping that associates a set of true predicates to a subset of objects
- The descriptions are **computed on the fly** for each subset of objects

Generic Description

For a subset $A \subseteq G$, and for a characteristic $s \in S$, a description δ_s is defined by:

$$\begin{aligned}\delta_s : \quad 2^G &\mapsto 2^P \\ A &\rightarrow \{p_s \in P \mid \forall a \in A, p_s(a) = \text{true}\}\end{aligned}$$



Concepts

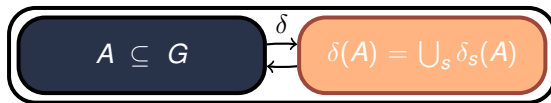
GALACTIC defines concepts as a pair of objects-predicates:

- The **predicate intent** contains the predicates of the descriptions of all characteristics, allowing heterogeneous data types to be combined
- The **object extent** contains all objects that satisfy every predicate in the intent

Concept $(A, \delta(A))$

A concept is a pair $(A, \delta(A))$ such that:

$$\delta(A) = \bigcup_{s \in S} \delta_s(A) \quad \text{and} \quad A = \{a \in G \mid \forall p_s \in \delta(A), p_s(a)\}$$



Concept $(A, \delta(A))$

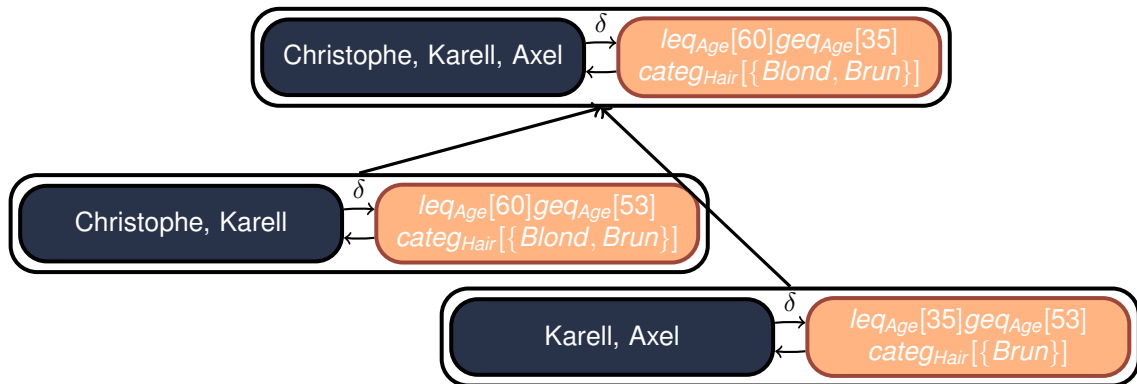


Example

	Age	Hair
Christophe	60	Blond
Karell	53	Brun
Axel	35	Brun

$$\delta_{Age}(A) = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} leq_{Age}[\max(Age(A))] \\ geq_{Age}[\min(Age(A))] \end{array} \right\}$$

$$\delta_{Hair}(A) = \{ category_{Hair}[\{ Hair(A) \}] \}$$





Strategies

GALACTIC provides **generic strategies** of exploration of the data that enable the generation of strict subsets of $A \subset G$ that serve as candidates for subconcepts

Generic Strategy

For a subset $A \subseteq G$, and for a characteristic $s \in S$, a **strategy** σ_s is defined by:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \sigma_s : & 2^G & \mapsto & 2^G \\ & A & \rightarrow & A' \subset A \end{array}$$

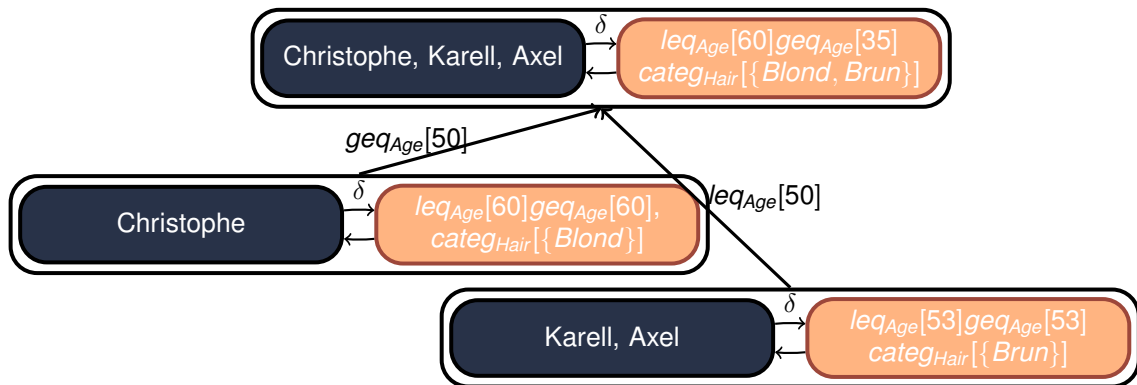
A **basic strategy** depends on a characteristic $s \in S$, and generates predicates - called selectors - that are true only for a strict subset of $A \subset G$



Example

	Age	Hair
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$$\sigma_{Age}(A) = \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} leq_{Age} & [mean(Age(A)) + \alpha * dev] \\ geq_{Age} & [mean(Age(A)) + \alpha * dev] \end{array} \right\}$$





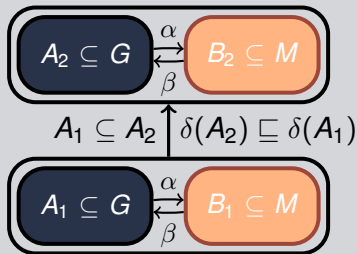
Types of strategies

- A **basic strategy** depends on characteristics and generates predicates - called selectors - that are true only for a strict subset of $A \subset G$
- A **meta strategy** depends on other strategies
 - `Naive-Strategy()`: generates all possible subconcepts by considering every possible subset of objects
 - `Recursive-Strategy(strategy-name)`: recursively applies the strategy provided as a parameter to further explore the concept hierarchy
- A **valued strategy** depends on a measure
 - `Selective-Strategy(strategy-name, measure, ratio, threshold)`: applies a strategy and retains only the top `ratio` fraction of the generated subconcepts that satisfy the `threshold`, according to a filtering measure:
 - **Support**: the number of objects contained in a concept.
 - **Entropy**: the class-based entropy of a concept with respect to a class attribute.

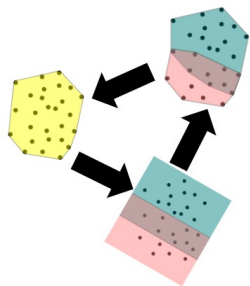


Pattern Structure [8]

If the predicate space 2^P is equipped with a subsumption relation such that $\delta(A') \sqsubseteq \delta(A)$ whenever $A \subseteq A'$, then the **Galois connection** between 2^G and 2^P is preserved.

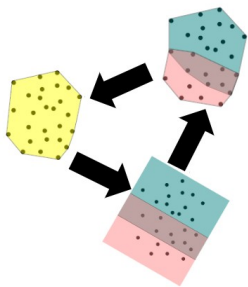


Rather than being precomputed, the description $\delta(A)$ is **generated on the fly** by GALACTIC during the analysis.



Description $\delta(A)$

The **description** $\delta(A)$ is defined as predicates that characterize the boundary of the generalized convex hull of objects A

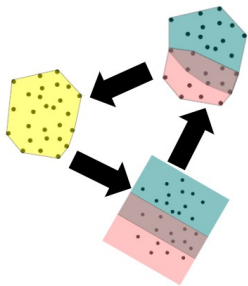


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Strategy $\sigma(A)$

A **strategy** $\sigma(A)$ defines a cut of the generalized convex hull, used to refine A into candidate subgroups $A' \subseteq A$



Description $\delta(A)$

The **description** $\delta(A)$ is defined as predicates that characterize the boundary of the generalized convex hull of objects A

Strategy $\sigma(A)$

A **strategy** $\sigma(A)$ defines a cut of the generalized convex hull, used to refine A into candidate subgroups $A' \subseteq A$

Subconcept $(A', \delta(A'))$

For each selected candidate subgroup $A' \subseteq A$, a new description $\delta(A')$ is computed. The resulting pair $(A', \delta(A'))$ forms a **subconcept** of the concept $(A, \delta(A))$



GALACTIC maintains a concept lattice structure:

- The **Galois connection** between the data space and the predicate-based description spaces is preserved
- The three **bijjective mappings** between data, concepts, and rules are maintained
- Concept lattice and basis of rules **generation algorithms are deterministic** and require no parameter tuning.

GALACTIC generates predicates without preprocessing:

- Predicates are **progressively discovered** during analysis, initially with the description predicates of the dataset (G, S)
- They are incrementally enriched by predicates of **newly added concepts**
- The set P of discovered predicates corresponds to the data, and the resulting lattice is **the concept lattice of (G, P, δ)** [10].



Description spaces [15]

The **description spaces** are characterized through a **double Galois connection** between the data space $(2^G, \subseteq)$ and the space of descriptive predicates 2^P depending on whether they are considered:

- as classical binary attributes $(2^P, \subseteq)$
- or as predicates endowed with semantic relationships $(2^P, \sqsubseteq)$

$$(2^G, \subseteq) \begin{matrix} \xleftarrow{\beta} \\ \xrightarrow{\alpha \sqsupseteq \delta} \end{matrix} (2^P, \subseteq) \begin{matrix} \xleftarrow{\alpha \circ \beta} \\ \xrightarrow{\epsilon = \max_{\sqsubseteq}} \end{matrix} (2^P, \sqsubseteq)$$

The predicate description $\delta(A)$ is characterized by $\max_{\sqsubseteq}(\alpha(A))$, the semantically maximal predicates of the potentially infinite set $\alpha(A)$

They can be computed dynamically as the extreme points $\epsilon(\alpha(A))$ of the generalized convex hull



GALACTIC implements two algorithms, starting from the full concept $(G, \delta(G))$:

NEXTPRIORITYCONCEPT (NPC)

The **NPC algorithm** [10]:

- generates the lattice in a **top-down approach**, with a **same recursive strategy**
- uses a constraint propagation mechanism to ensure that a lattice is produced

SUBLATTICEEXTENSION (SLE)

The **SLE algorithm** [12]:

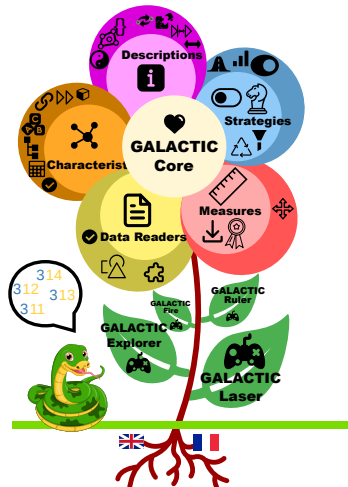
- generates the lattice in a **random approach**, with the same principle as the RCC algorithm [11] for classical FCA binary data
- enables the insertion of **user-selected concepts**, with the possibility of **switching strategies**



The platform

Written in python and Fully extensible

- A **core** library:
 - Implementation of NPC, RCC and SLE algorithms
 - A nested collection of python packages for the algebraic foundations
- An ecosystem of **extensions**:
 - Data readers
 - Characteristics
 - Descriptions
 - Strategies
 - Measures
- Several **applications**





Tutorials

Tutorial Prog1

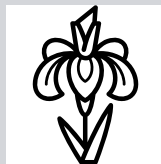
Learn how to build and manipulate a hierarchy of concepts:

- For core **simple data** type: Boolean, Category and Number
- For more **complex data** handled in the extensions: String, Sequences, Temporal Sequences, Interval Sequences (forthcoming)

with:

- Specialized descriptions and strategies
- Core strategies and measures

Notebook



Iris sample

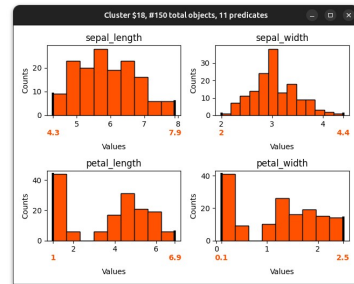
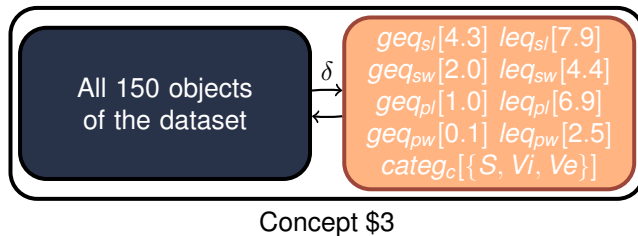
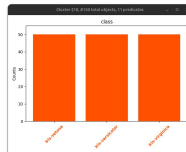
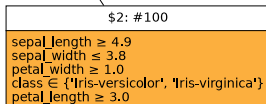
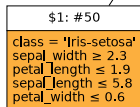
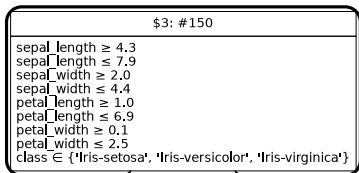


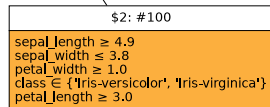
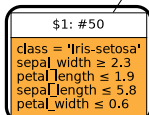
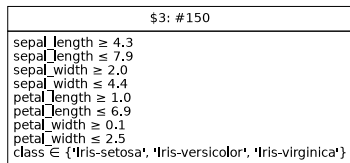
Iris DataSet

Attributes	Characteristic	Description	Basic Strategy	Valued Strategy
sepal_length (sl)	Number	δ_{sl}^N	σ_{sl}^N	$\sigma_{sl}^E(c) \sigma_{sl}^S$
sepal_width (sw)	Number	δ_{sw}^N	σ_{sw}^N	$\sigma_{sw}^E(c) \sigma_{sw}^S$
petal_length (pl)	Number	δ_{pl}^N	σ_{pl}^N	$\sigma_{pl}^E(c) \sigma_{pl}^S$
petal_width (pw)	Number	δ_{pw}^N	σ_{pw}^N	$\sigma_{pw}^E(c) \sigma_{pw}^S$
class (c)	Category	δ_c^C		

- Numerical-Description δ^N (Number)
- Category-Description δ^C (Category)
- Numerical-Quantile-Strategy σ^N (Number)
- Entropy-Strategy σ^E (Entropy measure)
- Support-Strategy σ^S (Support measure)





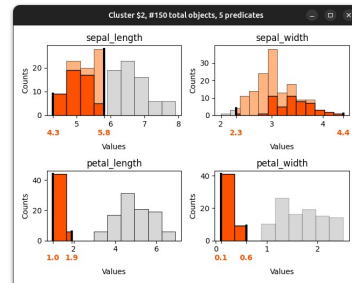
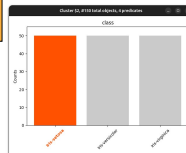


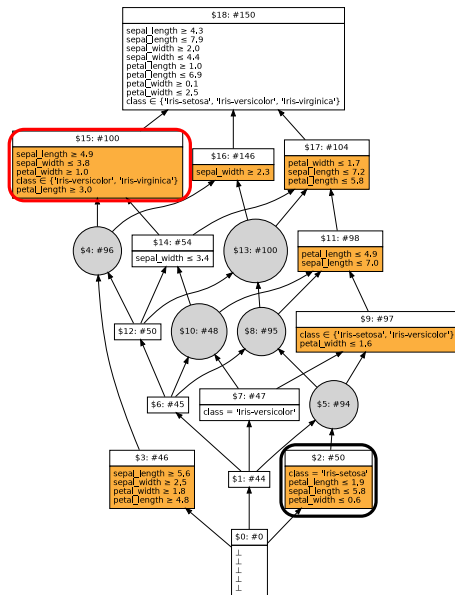
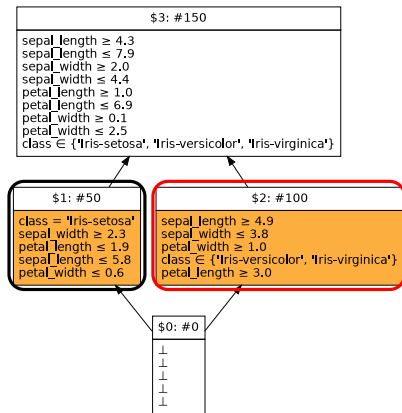
All 50 Setosa objects

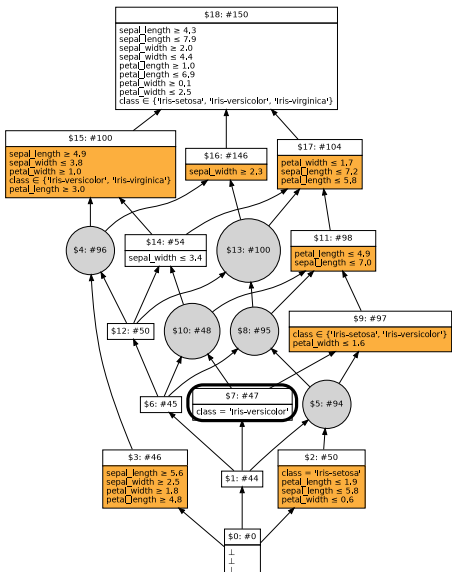
δ

$geq_{sl}[4.3]$ $leq_{sl}[5.8]$
 $geq_{sw}[2.3]$ $leq_{sw}[4.4]$
 $geq_{pl}[1.0]$ $leq_{pl}[1.9]$
 $geq_{pw}[0.1]$ $leq_{pw}[0.6]$
 $categ_c[\{S\}]$

Concept \$1





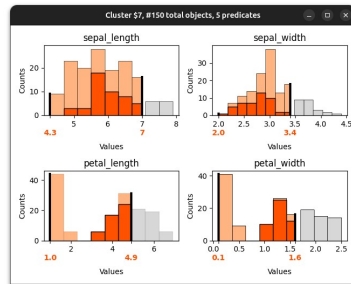
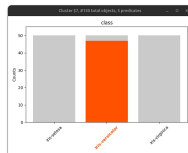


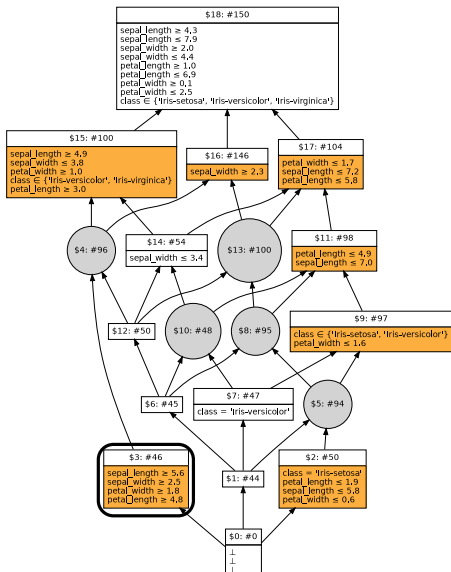
47 Versicolor objects

δ

$\text{geq}_{sl}[4.3]$ $\text{leq}_{sl}[7.0]$
 $\text{geq}_{sw}[2.0]$ $\text{leq}_{sw}[3.4]$
 $\text{geq}_{pl}[1.0]$ $\text{leq}_{pl}[6.9]$
 $\text{geq}_{pw}[0.1]$ $\text{leq}_{pw}[1.6]$
 $\text{categ}_c[\{Ve\}]$

Concept \$7



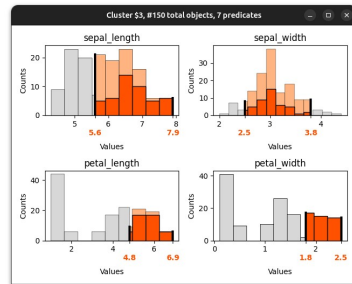
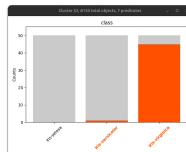


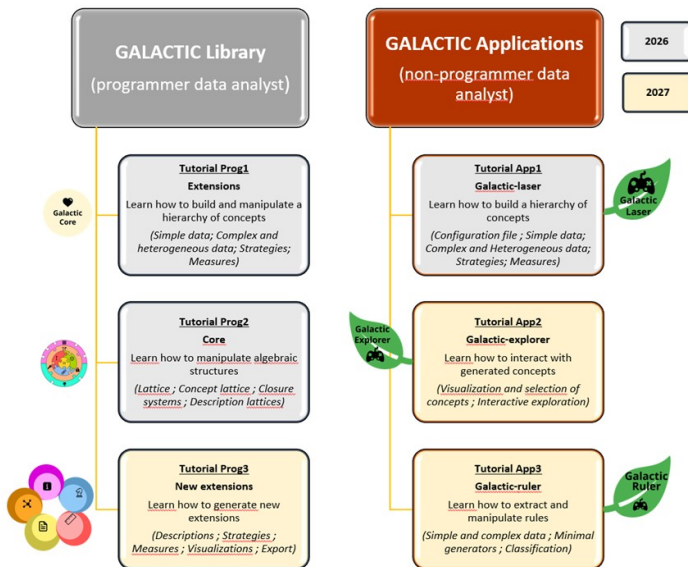
45 Virginica + 1
Versicolor objects

δ

$geq_{sl}[5.6] \quad leq_{sl}[7.9]$
 $geq_{sw}[2.5] \quad leq_{sw}[3.8]$
 $geq_{pl}[4.8] \quad leq_{pl}[6.9]$
 $geq_{pw}[1.8] \quad leq_{pw}[2.5]$
 $categ_c[\{Vi, Ve\}]$

Concept \$3







Tutorials for programmer data-analysts

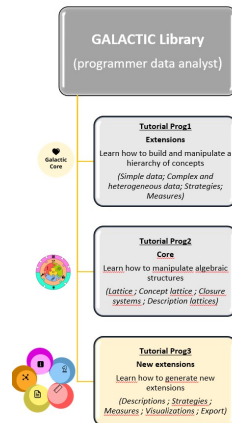
Tutorial Prog2 (forthcoming)

Learn how to work with **algebraic structures**:

- Concept lattices, lattice theory, and closure operators
- Triplet of bijections between data, concept lattices, and rule bases
- Description spaces and main algorithms
- Extensions of rule bases

Tutorial Prog3 (forthcoming)

Learn how to generate new characteristic, descriptions, and strategies





Tutorials for non-programmer data-analysts

Tutorial App1 (forthcoming)

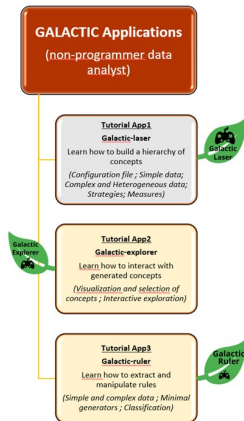
Learn how to build a hierarchy of concepts using the `Galactic-laser` application (YAML configuration files)

Tutorial App2 (forthcoming)

Learn how to interact with concepts using the `Galactic-explorer` application

Tutorial App3 (forthcoming)

Learn how to extract rules using the `Galactic-ruler` application





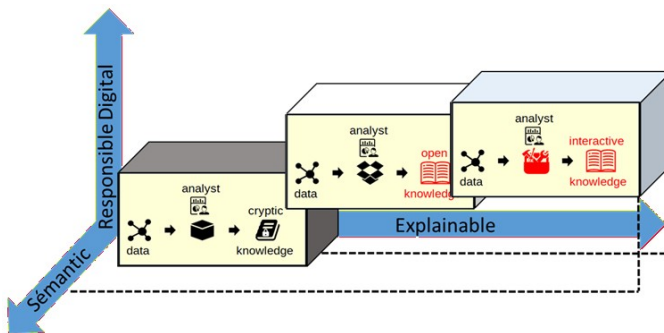
Conclusion

- An **initial version 0.4 in 2019** as a proof of concept
 - Descriptions and strategies for (temporal) sequences [16] (PhDs work)
 - `Galactic-laser` and `Galactic-explorer` applications
 - Advances in the algebraic understanding
- A **core redesign version 0.5 in 2026**, aiming at a higher TRL
 - Release of version 0.5 at PFIA 2026
 - Website: <https://www.thegalactic.org>
 - Ongoing work and remaining improvements
- A **future version 1.0 in 2027**
 - With completed extensions, visualizations² and accompanying tutorials

²Thanks to Louna Denis for the concepts visualizations of the Iris dataset



GALACTIC proposes **predicate embeddings** as an alternative to classical vector embeddings for **semantic enrichment** and **interactivity**





Some questions ?

ml.univ-lr.fr/sympa/info/galactic



www.thegalactic.org





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