

Temporalising Unique Characterisability and Learnability of Ontology-Mediated Queries (Extended Abstract)

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Abstract

Recently, the study of the unique characterisability and learnability of database queries by means of examples has been extended to ontology-mediated queries. Here, we study in how far the obtained results can be lifted to temporalised ontology-mediated queries. We provide a systematic introduction to the relevant approaches in the non-temporal case and then show general transfer results pinpointing under which conditions existing results can be lifted to temporalised queries.


Keywords

Ontology-mediated query, temporal data, query-by-example, unique characterisability, learnability.

1. Introduction


Motivated by the challenge of constructing logical expressions from data examples, the unique characterisability and learnability of queries, formulas, and concepts has been studied extensively by the database, logic, and KR communities [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]. Recently, significant progress has been made for ontology-mediated queries, where one aims to characterise or learn a database query under background knowledge, both in the passive sense (where sets of positive and negative examples are given), see, e.g., [7], and in Dana Angluin’s sense of exact learning with membership and/or equivalence queries [8], see, e.g., [9]. Also, rather general results have been obtained about the characterisation and learnability of temporal queries, but so far without ontologies [10]. Our aim here is to combine these two directions and study the temporalisation of unique characterisability and learnability under description logic (DL) ontologies.


Let \mathcal{O} be an ontology and \mathcal{Q} a class of conjunctive queries (CQs), which we assume for simplicity to have a single answer variable. We say that a query $q \in \mathcal{Q}$ fits a pair $E = (E^+, E^-)$ of finite sets E^+ and E^- of pointed data instances (\mathcal{D}, a) wrt \mathcal{O} if $\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{D} \models q(a)$ for all

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$(\mathcal{D}, a) \in E^+$, and $\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{D} \not\models q(a)$ for all $(\mathcal{D}, a) \in E^-$. Then E uniquely characterises q wrt \mathcal{O} within \mathcal{Q} if q is the only (up to equivalence modulo \mathcal{O}) query in \mathcal{Q} that fits E wrt \mathcal{O} . An ontology language \mathcal{L} admits (polysize) characterisations within \mathcal{Q} if every $q \in \mathcal{Q}$ has a (polysize) characterisation wrt to any \mathcal{L} -ontology within \mathcal{Q} . Unique characterisations can be used to illustrate, explain, and construct queries. They are also a ‘non-procedural’ necessary condition for (polynomial) learnability using membership queries in Angluin’s framework of exact learning, where membership queries to the oracle take the form ‘does $\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{D} \models q(a)$ hold?’ We focus our investigation on the class ELIQ of CQs that are equivalent to \mathcal{ELI} -concepts.

Examples, proofs, and further context can be found in the full version [11].

Non-temporal case. We begin by summarising the relevant results that will be used as a black box in our investigation of temporalised queries. Let \mathcal{O} be an FO-ontology (typically in some DL). Given queries q_1, q_2 , we write $q_1 \models_{\mathcal{O}} q_2$ and say that q_1 is contained in q_2 wrt \mathcal{O} if $\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{D} \models q_1(a)$ implies $\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{D} \models q_2(a)$, for any pointed data instance (\mathcal{D}, a) . We utilise a well-known reduction of containment to query entailment. An ontology \mathcal{O} admits containment reduction if, for any CQ $q(x)$, there is a pointed data instance (\hat{q}, a) such that the following conditions hold: $q(x)$ is satisfiable wrt \mathcal{O} iff \mathcal{O} and \hat{q} are satisfiable; there is a surjective homomorphism $h: q \rightarrow \hat{q}$ with $h(x) = a$; and if $q(x)$ is satisfiable wrt \mathcal{O} , then $q \models_{\mathcal{O}} q'$ iff $\mathcal{O}, \hat{q} \models q'(a)$, for any CQ $q'(x)$. An ontology language \mathcal{L} admits containment reduction if every \mathcal{L} -ontology does. For languages \mathcal{L} that admit containment reduction, a unique characterization E of $q \in \mathcal{Q}$ wrt \mathcal{O} is called a singular⁺ characterisation if $E^+ = \{\hat{q}\}$. It is easy to see that if \mathcal{L} admits both (polysize) unique characterisations within \mathcal{Q} and containment reduction, then every $q \in \mathcal{Q}$ has a (polysize) singular⁺ characterisation. Containment reduction is a rather general condition: FO without equality including DLs such as \mathcal{ALCH} and $\mathcal{DL-Lite}_{\mathcal{H}}$ [12] (aka $\mathcal{DL-Lite}_{core}^{\mathcal{H}}$ [13]) and also some DLs with limited counting such as $\mathcal{DL-Lite}_{\mathcal{F}}$ [12] (aka $\mathcal{DL-Lite}_{core}^{\mathcal{F}}$ [13]) admit containment reduction but \mathcal{ALCQ} does not.

The two main approaches to compute E^- and obtain singular⁺ characterisations for languages with containment reduction are based on frontiers and splittings (aka dualities) [6]. A frontier of q wrt \mathcal{O} within \mathcal{Q} is any set $\mathcal{F}_q \subseteq \mathcal{Q}$ such that (a) $q \models_{\mathcal{O}} q'$ and $q' \not\models_{\mathcal{O}} q$, for all $q' \in \mathcal{F}_q$; and (b) if $q \models_{\mathcal{O}} q''$ for $q'' \in \mathcal{Q}$, then $q'' \models_{\mathcal{O}} q$ or there is $q' \in \mathcal{F}_q$ with $q' \models_{\mathcal{O}} q''$. An ontology language \mathcal{L} admits (polysize) finite frontiers within \mathcal{Q} if every $q \in \mathcal{Q}$ has a (polysize) finite frontier wrt to any \mathcal{L} -ontology within \mathcal{Q} .

Theorem 1. (i) $\mathcal{DL-Lite}_{\mathcal{H}}$ and the fragment $\mathcal{DL-Lite}_{\mathcal{F}}^-$ of $\mathcal{DL-Lite}_{\mathcal{F}}$, in which R^- is not functional for any $B \sqsubseteq \exists R$, admit polysize frontiers within ELIQ [14]. (ii) $\mathcal{DL-Lite}_{\mathcal{F}}$ does not admit finite frontiers within ELIQ [14]. (iii) \mathcal{EL} does not admit finite frontiers within ELIQ.

The frontier of a query supplies the negative examples for a singular⁺ unique characterisation.

Theorem 2. If \mathcal{L} admits both (polysize) frontiers within \mathcal{Q} and containment reduction, then \mathcal{L} admits (polysize) singular⁺ characterisations within \mathcal{Q} , with $E^- = \mathcal{F}_q$, for any $q \in \mathcal{Q}$.

The second path to singular⁺ characterisations is via finite splittings, which only exist if a finite signature σ of predicates is fixed. Let \mathcal{Q} be a class of queries and \mathcal{Q}^{σ} its restriction to σ , $\mathcal{Q} \subseteq \mathcal{Q}^{\sigma}$ finite, and \mathcal{O} a σ -ontology. A set $\mathcal{S}(\mathcal{Q})$ of pointed σ -data instances (\mathcal{D}, a) is called a split-partner for \mathcal{Q} wrt \mathcal{O} within \mathcal{Q}^{σ} if, for all $q' \in \mathcal{Q}^{\sigma}$, we have $\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{D} \models q'(a)$ for some

$(\mathcal{D}, a) \in \mathcal{S}(Q)$ iff $\mathbf{q}' \not\equiv_{\mathcal{O}} \mathbf{q}$ for all $\mathbf{q} \in Q$. An ontology language \mathcal{L} has general split-partners within \mathcal{Q}^σ if all finite sets of \mathcal{Q}^σ -queries have split partners wrt any σ -ontology in \mathcal{L} .

Theorem 3. (i) *ALCHT* has exponential-size general split-partners within σ -ELIQ, (ii) even wrt to the empty ontology, no polysize split-partners exist within σ -ELIQ [10].

Thus, \mathcal{EL} has finite general split-partners but no frontiers within ELIQ, and *DL-Lite $_{\mathcal{F}}^-$* has finite frontiers but no finite general split-partners within ELIQ. This is in contrast to the ontology-free case where frontiers and splittings are more closely linked [6].

Theorem 4. If \mathcal{L} admits (polysize) general split-partners within \mathcal{Q}^σ and containment reduction, then \mathcal{L} admits (polysize) singular⁺ characterisations within \mathcal{Q} , with $E^- = \mathcal{S}(\{\mathbf{q}\})$, for any $\mathbf{q} \in \mathcal{Q}^\sigma$.

Temporalisation. A temporal data instance is a sequence $\mathcal{A}_0, \dots, \mathcal{A}_n$ of domain data instances \mathcal{A}_i with i regarded as a *timestamp*. To query temporal data, one can equip standard CQs with the operators of linear temporal logic *LTL* as proposed in [15, 16, 17, 18]. Within this framework, various query languages that admit (polysize) unique characterisations and learnability have been identified in the case when no background ontology is present [10]. Here, we assume that the temporal data is mediated by a standard (non-temporal) DL ontology whose axioms are supposed to be true at all times. We consider a few families of temporal queries defined in [10] that are built from domain queries in a given class \mathcal{Q} (say, ELIQ or conjunctions of concept names, denoted \mathcal{P}) using \wedge and the temporal operators \circ (at the next moment), \diamond (some time later), \diamond_r (now or later), and U (strict until): the family $LTL_p^{\circ\diamond\diamond_r}(\mathcal{Q})$ of *path queries* of the form $\mathbf{q} = \mathbf{r}_0 \wedge \mathbf{o}_1(\mathbf{r}_1 \wedge \mathbf{o}_2(\mathbf{r}_2 \wedge \dots \wedge \mathbf{o}_n \mathbf{r}_n))$, where $\mathbf{o}_i \in \{\circ, \diamond, \diamond_r\}$ and $\mathbf{r}_i \in \mathcal{Q}$; the family $LTL_p^{\text{U}}(\mathcal{Q}^\sigma)$ of *path queries* $\mathbf{q} = \mathbf{r}_0 \wedge (\mathbf{l}_1 \text{U}(\mathbf{r}_1 \wedge (\mathbf{l}_2 \text{U}(\dots (\mathbf{l}_n \text{U} \mathbf{r}_n) \dots))))$, where $\mathbf{r}_i \in \mathcal{Q}^\sigma$, $\mathbf{l}_i \in \mathcal{Q}^\sigma \cup \{\perp\}$; and its subfamily $LTL_{pp}^{\text{U}}(\mathcal{Q}^\sigma)$ of *peerless queries* in which $\mathbf{r}_i \not\equiv_{\mathcal{O}} \mathbf{l}_i$ and $\mathbf{l}_i \not\equiv_{\mathcal{O}} \mathbf{r}_i$. The subfamily $LTL_p^{\circ\diamond}(\mathcal{Q})$ restricts $LTL_p^{\circ\diamond\diamond_r}(\mathcal{Q})$ to the operators \circ and \diamond ; note that $\diamond \mathbf{q} \equiv \circ \diamond_r \mathbf{q}$.

Temporal queries have a few essential differences from the domain ones. First, no example set can distinguish $\diamond_r(A \wedge B)$ from $\diamond_r(A \wedge (\diamond_r B \wedge \diamond_r(A \wedge \dots)))$ with sufficiently many alternating A, B . A syntactic criterion (excluding proper conjunctions that do not have a \circ -neighbour) of unique characterisability of queries in $LTL_p^{\circ\diamond\diamond_r}(\mathcal{P})$, called *safety*, was found in [10]. Second, containment reduction does not work anymore since to characterise, say, $\diamond A$ two positive examples are needed. By generalising safety in a natural way, we obtain our first transfer result:

Theorem 5. Let \mathcal{L} admit (polysize) singular⁺ characterisations within \mathcal{Q} and \mathcal{O} be a \mathcal{L} -ontology that admits containment reduction. Then $\mathbf{q} \in LTL_p^{\circ\diamond\diamond_r}(\mathcal{Q})$ is (polysize) uniquely characterisable wrt \mathcal{O} within $LTL_p^{\circ\diamond\diamond_r}(\mathcal{Q})$ iff \mathbf{q} is safe wrt \mathcal{O} ; all $\mathbf{q} \in LTL_p^{\circ\diamond}(\mathcal{Q})$ are (polysize) uniquely characterisable wrt \mathcal{O} . If \mathcal{O} admits polysize singular⁺ characterisations within \mathcal{Q} , then $LTL_p^{\circ\diamond\diamond_r}(\mathcal{Q})$ is polynomially characterisable wrt \mathcal{O} for bounded temporal depth.

As a consequence of the above results, we obtain, e.g., that every safe query in $LTL_p^{\circ\diamond\diamond_r}(\text{ELIQ})$ is polynomially characterisable wrt any *DL-Lite $_{\mathcal{H}}$* or *DL-Lite $_{\mathcal{F}}^-$* ontology and exponentially characterisable wrt any *ALCHT*-ontology. Our second transfer result is as follows:

Theorem 6. Let \mathcal{L} have (exponential-size) general split-partners within \mathcal{Q}^σ and let \mathcal{O} be a σ -ontology in \mathcal{L} that admits containment reduction. Then every $\mathbf{q} \in LTL_{pp}^{\text{U}}(\mathcal{Q}^\sigma)$ is (exponential-size) uniquely characterisable within $LTL_p^{\text{U}}(\mathcal{Q}^\sigma)$.

As a consequence, we obtain that every query in $LTL_{pp}^U(Q^\sigma)$, where Q^σ is the class of σ -ELIQs, is exponentially uniquely characterisable within $LTL_p^U(Q^\sigma)$ wrt any \mathcal{ALCH} ontology.

Learning. We apply our results on characterisability to learnability of queries in $LTL_p^{\diamond\diamond r}(\text{ELIQ})$ wrt ontologies in Angluin’s framework of exact learning [8]. In the non-temporal case, exact learning of queries has recently been studied [6, 9, 14, 19]. Given some class \mathcal{Q} of queries and an ontology \mathcal{O} , the *learner* aims to identify a *target query* $q_T \in \mathcal{Q}$ using membership queries of the form ‘does $\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{D} \models q(a)$ hold?’ to the *teacher*. It is assumed that the target query q_T uses only symbols that occur in the ontology \mathcal{O} . We call \mathcal{Q} *polynomial query (polynomial-time) learnable wrt \mathcal{L} -ontologies using membership queries* if there is a learning algorithm that receives an \mathcal{L} -ontology \mathcal{O} and an example (\mathcal{D}, a) with $\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{D} \models q_T(a)$ with \mathcal{D} satisfiable under \mathcal{O} , and constructs q_T (up to equivalence wrt \mathcal{O}) using polynomially many queries of polynomial size (in time polynomial) in the size of $q_T, \mathcal{O}, \mathcal{D}$.

As we always construct example sets effectively, our unique (exponential) characterisability results imply (exponential-time) learnability with membership queries. Obtaining polynomial-time learnability from polynomial characterisations is more challenging and, in fact, not always possible. We concentrate on ontologies formulated in fragments \mathcal{L} of the DL \mathcal{ELHF} which are in normal form [20], but conjecture that our results continue to hold in general. \mathcal{L} *admits polytime instance checking* if $\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{D} \models A(a)$, for a concept name A , can be decided in polynomial time. *Meet-reducibility* is in polytime if it can be checked in polytime whether an ELIQ is equivalent to a proper conjunction of ELIQs wrt to an \mathcal{L} -ontology. The following is shown by lifting the techniques for the non-temporal case developed in [19, 14] to the temporal case:

Theorem 7. *Let \mathcal{L} be an ontology language that contains only \mathcal{ELHF} -ontologies in normal form and that admits polysize frontiers within ELIQ that can be computed. Then:*

- (i) *The class of safe queries in $LTL_p^{\diamond\diamond r}(\text{ELIQ})$ is polynomial query learnable wrt \mathcal{L} -ontologies using membership queries.*
- (ii) *The class $LTL_p^{\diamond\diamond r}(\text{ELIQ})$ is polynomial query learnable wrt \mathcal{L} -ontologies using membership queries if the learner knows the temporal depth of the target query in advance.*
- (iii) *$LTL_p^{\diamond}(\text{ELIQ})$ is polynomial query learnable wrt \mathcal{L} -ontologies using membership queries.*

If \mathcal{L} further admits polynomial-time instance checking and polynomial-time computable frontiers within ELIQ, then in (ii) and (iii), polynomial query learnability can be replaced by polynomial-time learnability. If, in addition, meet-reducibility wrt \mathcal{L} -ontologies is in polynomial time, then also in (i) polynomial query learnability can be replaced by polynomial-time learnability.

Theorem 7 fully applies to $DL\text{-Lite}_{\mathcal{F}}^-$ as it enjoys all properties mentioned, while $DL\text{-Lite}_{\mathcal{H}}$ enjoys all properties mentioned except that meet-reducibility can be checked in poly-time. Most importantly, $DL\text{-Lite}_{\mathcal{F}}^-$ and $DL\text{-Lite}_{\mathcal{H}}$ admit polynomial time computable frontiers [14].

Outlook. Many interesting and challenging problems remain to be addressed. For instance, is it possible to overcome some of our negative results for unique characterisability by admitting some form of infinite (but finitely presentable) examples? Some results in this direction without ontologies are obtained in [21].

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