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Conceptual reasoning
Belief, multiple agents
and preference

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Contents

Abstract	xi
Acknowledgements	xiii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Motivation and goals	1
1.2 Overview and structure	1
2 Background	5
2.1 Lattices and order	5
2.2 Formal Concept Analysis	8
2.3 Bilattices	11
3 Ontology and belief	15
3.1 Language consensus	16
3.2 Misrepresentation	18
3.3 Believed worlds, or paradigm shift	21
3.4 Formulae and regions	27
3.5 Language of descriptions	31
3.6 Information ordering on abstract objects	34
3.7 Descriptions and contexts	38
4 Model theory	43
4.1 Abstract contexts and models	43
4.2 Information ordering on contexts	46
4.3 Validity	51
5 Proof theory	53
5.1 Formal systems	53
5.2 Entailment, or information ordering on theorems	57
5.3 Proof procedure	61
5.4 Information ordering on theories	65
6 Models and theories	73
6.1 Contexts and theories revisited	73
6.2 Mappings between contexts and theories	76
6.3 Models revisited	78
6.4 Language revisited	79

6.5	Relating the information orderings	80
6.6	Soundness and completeness	82
7	Multiple agents	85
7.1	Believed theories	85
7.2	Conceptual worlds and bilattices	87
7.3	Concept lattices of theories	93
7.4	Towards numeric measure	97
7.5	Preference and epistemic states	102
8	Conclusion	105
8.1	Summary	105
8.2	Future work	106
8.2.1	Dynamic worlds	106
8.2.2	Binary relations	109
8.2.3	Implementation	110
8.3	Related research	112
A	Proofs	115
	Bibliography	119

Abstract

One of the central issues in Artificial Intelligence (AI) in general—and in the area of knowledge representation and reasoning in particular—is *common sense reasoning*. This includes logics of knowledge and belief, non-monotonic reasoning, truth-maintenance and belief revision. Within these fields the notion of a *consistent belief state* is the crucial one. Additionally, there is a growing interest in *partial information states*, with an *information ordering* being the key notion.

The issues of *inconsistency* and *partiality of information* are central to this work. The thesis proposes a logical knowledge representation formalism employing *partial objects* and *partial worlds* on its semantic side. The syntax includes a language, formulae, and *partial theories*, theories associated with partial worlds. Partial worlds and theories are *consistent*, and *contradictory information* is assumed to arise in *multiple agent* situations. Relevant mathematical structures are discussed, in particular partial theories are related to partial worlds.

A multiple agent case is considered. A set of agents is assumed to provide multiple description sets, where description sets represent *partial* syntactic information about partial worlds. A set of description sets gives rise to a set of theories, equipped with an information ordering—a *lattice* containing all those theories (and some alternatives) can be derived. This demonstrates that partial theories can be partially ordered by an information ordering and the obtained lattice structure facilitates the theory selection process based on *information value* and *truthness* of theories. It is also suggested how to derive a numeric measure (and hence a linear order) on the theories.