

# Chapter udf

## The Interpolation Theorem

### int.1 Introduction

mod:int:int:  
sec The interpolation theorem is the following result: Suppose  $\models \varphi \rightarrow \psi$ . Then there is a **sentence**  $\chi$  such that  $\models \varphi \rightarrow \chi$  and  $\models \chi \rightarrow \psi$ . Moreover, every **constant symbol**, **function symbol**, and **predicate symbol** (other than  $=$ ) in  $\chi$  occurs both in  $\varphi$  and  $\psi$ . The **sentence**  $\chi$  is called an *interpolant* of  $\varphi$  and  $\psi$ .

The interpolation theorem is interesting in its own right, but its main importance lies in the fact that it can be used to prove results about definability in a theory, and the conditions under which combining two consistent theories results in a consistent theory. The first result is known as the Beth definability theorem; the second, Robinson's joint consistency theorem.

### int.2 Separation of Sentences

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sec A bit of groundwork is needed before we can proceed with the proof of the interpolation theorem. An interpolant for  $\varphi$  and  $\psi$  is a **sentence**  $\chi$  such that  $\varphi \models \chi$  and  $\chi \models \psi$ . By contraposition, the latter is true iff  $\neg\psi \models \neg\chi$ . A **sentence**  $\chi$  with this property is said to *separate*  $\varphi$  and  $\neg\psi$ . So finding an interpolant for  $\varphi$  and  $\psi$  amounts to finding a **sentence** that separates  $\varphi$  and  $\neg\psi$ . As so often, it will be useful to consider a generalization: a sentence that separates two *sets* of **sentences**.

**Definition int.1.** A sentence  $\chi$  *separates* sets of sentences  $\Gamma$  and  $\Delta$  if and only if  $\Gamma \models \chi$  and  $\Delta \models \neg\chi$ . If no such **sentence** exists, then  $\Gamma$  and  $\Delta$  are *inseparable*.

The inclusion relations between the classes of models of  $\Gamma$ ,  $\Delta$  and  $\chi$  are represented below:

mod:int:sep:  
lem:sep1 **Lemma int.2.** Suppose  $\mathcal{L}_0$  is the language containing every **constant symbol**, **function symbol** and **predicate symbol** (other than  $=$ ) that occurs in both  $\Gamma$  and  $\Delta$ , and let  $\mathcal{L}'_0$  be obtained by the addition of infinitely many new **constant symbols**  $c_n$  for  $n \geq 0$ . Then if  $\Gamma$  and  $\Delta$  are inseparable in  $\mathcal{L}_0$ , they are also inseparable in  $\mathcal{L}'_0$ .

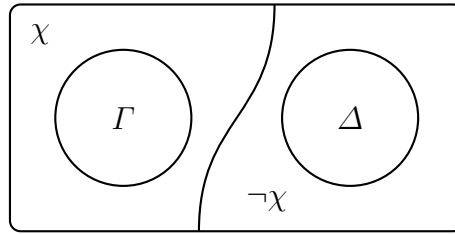


Figure int.1:  $\chi$  separates  $\Gamma$  and  $\Delta$

*Proof.* We proceed indirectly: suppose by way of contradiction that  $\Gamma$  and  $\Delta$  are separated in  $\mathcal{L}'_0$ . Then  $\Gamma \models \chi[c/x]$  and  $\Delta \models \neg\chi[c/x]$  for some  $\chi \in \mathcal{L}_0$  (where  $c$  is a new **constant symbol**—the case where  $\chi$  contains more than one such new **constant symbol** is similar). By compactness, there are *finite* subsets  $\Gamma_0$  of  $\Gamma$  and  $\Delta_0$  of  $\Delta$  such that  $\Gamma_0 \models \chi[c/x]$  and  $\Delta_0 \models \neg\chi[c/x]$ . Let  $\gamma$  be the conjunction of all **formulas** in  $\Gamma_0$  and  $\delta$  the conjunction of all **formulas** in  $\Delta_0$ . Then

$$\gamma \models \chi[c/x], \quad \delta \models \neg\chi[c/x].$$

From the former, by Generalization, we have  $\gamma \models \forall x \chi$ , and from the latter by contraposition,  $\chi[c/x] \models \neg\delta$ , whence also  $\forall x \chi \models \neg\delta$ . Contraposition again gives  $\delta \models \neg\forall x \chi$ . By monotony,

$$\Gamma \models \forall x \chi, \quad \Delta \models \neg\forall x \chi,$$

so that  $\forall x \chi$  separates  $\Gamma$  and  $\Delta$  in  $\mathcal{L}_0$ . □

**Lemma int.3.** *Suppose that  $\Gamma \cup \{\exists x \sigma\}$  and  $\Delta$  are inseparable, and  $c$  is a new **constant symbol** not in  $\Gamma$ ,  $\Delta$ , or  $\sigma$ . Then  $\Gamma \cup \{\exists x \sigma, \sigma[c/x]\}$  and  $\Delta$  are also inseparable.* mod:int:sep:  
lem:sep2

*Proof.* Suppose for contradiction that  $\chi$  separates  $\Gamma \cup \{\exists x \sigma, \sigma[c/x]\}$  and  $\Delta$ , while at the same time  $\Gamma \cup \{\exists x \sigma\}$  and  $\Delta$  are inseparable. We distinguish two cases:

1.  $c$  does not occur in  $\chi$ : in this case  $\Gamma \cup \{\exists x \sigma, \neg\chi\}$  is satisfiable (otherwise  $\chi$  separates  $\Gamma \cup \{\exists x \sigma\}$  and  $\Delta$ ). It remains so if  $\sigma[c/x]$  is added, so  $\chi$  does not separate  $\Gamma \cup \{\exists x \sigma, \sigma[c/x]\}$  and  $\Delta$  after all.
2.  $c$  does occur in  $\chi$  so that  $\chi$  has the form  $\chi[c/x]$ . Then we have that

$$\Gamma \cup \{\exists x \sigma, \sigma[c/x]\} \models \chi[c/x],$$

whence  $\Gamma, \exists x \sigma \models \forall x (\sigma \rightarrow \chi)$  by the Deduction Theorem and Generalization, and finally  $\Gamma \cup \{\exists x \sigma\} \models \exists x \chi$ . On the other hand,  $\Delta \models \neg\chi[c/x]$  and hence by Generalization  $\Delta \models \neg\exists x \chi$ . So  $\Gamma \cup \{\exists x \sigma\}$  and  $\Delta$  are separable, a contradiction. □

### int.3 Craig's Interpolation Theorem

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thm:interpol

**Theorem int.4** (Craig's Interpolation Theorem). *If  $\models \varphi \rightarrow \psi$ , then there is a sentence  $\chi$  such that  $\models \varphi \rightarrow \chi$  and  $\models \chi \rightarrow \psi$ , and every constant symbol, function symbol, and predicate symbol (other than  $=$ ) in  $\chi$  occurs both in  $\varphi$  and  $\psi$ . The sentence  $\chi$  is called an interpolant of  $\varphi$  and  $\psi$ .*

*Proof.* Suppose  $\mathcal{L}_1$  is the language of  $\varphi$  and  $\mathcal{L}_2$  is the language of  $\psi$ . Let  $\mathcal{L}_0 = \mathcal{L}_1 \cap \mathcal{L}_2$ . For each  $i \in \{0, 1, 2\}$ , let  $\mathcal{L}'_i$  be obtained from  $\mathcal{L}_i$  by adding the infinitely many new constant symbols  $c_0, c_1, c_2, \dots$ .

If  $\varphi$  is unsatisfiable,  $\exists x x \neq x$  is an interpolant. If  $\neg\psi$  is unsatisfiable (and hence  $\psi$  is valid),  $\exists x x = x$  is an interpolant. So we may assume also that both  $\varphi$  and  $\neg\psi$  are satisfiable.

In order to prove the contrapositive of the Interpolation Theorem, assume that there is no interpolant for  $\varphi$  and  $\psi$ . In other words, assume that  $\{\varphi\}$  and  $\{\neg\psi\}$  are inseparable in  $\mathcal{L}_0$ .

Our goal is to extend the pair  $(\{\varphi\}, \{\neg\psi\})$  to a maximally inseparable pair  $(\Gamma^*, \Delta^*)$ . Let  $\varphi_0, \varphi_1, \varphi_2, \dots$  enumerate the sentences of  $\mathcal{L}_1$ , and  $\psi_0, \psi_1, \psi_2, \dots$  enumerate the sentences of  $\mathcal{L}_2$ . We define two increasing sequences of sets of sentences  $(\Gamma_n, \Delta_n)$ , for  $n \geq 0$ , as follows. Put  $\Gamma_0 = \{\varphi\}$  and  $\Delta_0 = \{\neg\psi\}$ . Assuming  $(\Gamma_n, \Delta_n)$  are already defined, define  $\Gamma_{n+1}$  and  $\Delta_{n+1}$  by:

1. If  $\Gamma_n \cup \{\varphi_n\}$  and  $\Delta_n$  are inseparable in  $\mathcal{L}'_0$ , put  $\varphi_n$  in  $\Gamma_{n+1}$ . Moreover, if  $\varphi_n$  is an existential formula  $\exists x \sigma$  then pick a new constant symbol  $c$  not occurring in  $\Gamma_n, \Delta_n, \varphi_n$  or  $\psi_n$ , and put  $\sigma[c/x]$  in  $\Gamma_{n+1}$ .
2. If  $\Gamma_{n+1}$  and  $\Delta_n \cup \{\psi_n\}$  are inseparable in  $\mathcal{L}'_0$ , put  $\psi_n$  in  $\Delta_{n+1}$ . Moreover, if  $\psi_n$  is an existential formula  $\exists x \sigma$ , then pick a new constant symbol  $c$  not occurring in  $\Gamma_{n+1}, \Delta_n, \varphi_n$  or  $\psi_n$ , and put  $\sigma[c/x]$  in  $\Delta_{n+1}$ .

Finally, define:

$$\Gamma^* = \bigcup_{n \geq 0} \Gamma_n, \quad \Delta^* = \bigcup_{n \geq 0} \Delta_n.$$

By simultaneous induction on  $n$  we can now prove:

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part-a

1.  $\Gamma_n$  and  $\Delta_n$  are inseparable in  $\mathcal{L}'_0$ ;

mod:int:prf:  
part-b

2.  $\Gamma_{n+1}$  and  $\Delta_n$  are inseparable in  $\mathcal{L}'_0$ .

The basis for (1) is given by Lemma int.2. For part (2), we need to distinguish three cases:

1. If  $\Gamma_0 \cup \{\varphi_0\}$  and  $\Delta_0$  are separable, then  $\Gamma_1 = \Gamma_0$  and (2) is just (1);
2. If  $\Gamma_1 = \Gamma_0 \cup \{\varphi_0\}$ , then  $\Gamma_1$  and  $\Delta_0$  are inseparable by construction.

3. It remains to consider the case where  $\varphi_0$  is existential, so that  $\Gamma_1 = \Gamma_0 \cup \{\exists x \sigma, \sigma[c/x]\}$ . By construction,  $\Gamma_0 \cup \{\exists x \sigma\}$  and  $\Delta_0$  are inseparable, so that by [Lemma int.3](#) also  $\Gamma_0 \cup \{\exists x \sigma, \sigma[c/x]\}$  and  $\Delta_0$  are inseparable.

This completes the basis of the induction for (1) and (2) above. Now for the inductive step. For (1), if  $\Delta_{n+1} = \Delta_n \cup \{\psi_n\}$  then  $\Gamma_{n+1}$  and  $\Delta_{n+1}$  are inseparable by construction (even when  $\psi_n$  is existential, by [Lemma int.3](#)); if  $\Delta_{n+1} = \Delta_n$  (because  $\Gamma_{n+1}$  and  $\Delta_n \cup \{\psi_n\}$  are separable), then we use the induction hypothesis on (2). For the inductive step for (2), if  $\Gamma_{n+2} = \Gamma_{n+1} \cup \{\varphi_{n+1}\}$  then  $\Gamma_{n+2}$  and  $\Delta_{n+1}$  are inseparable by construction (even when  $\varphi_{n+1}$  is existential, by [Lemma int.3](#)); and if  $\Gamma_{n+2} = \Gamma_{n+1}$  then we use the inductive case for (1) just proved. This concludes the induction on (1) and (2).

It follows that  $\Gamma^*$  and  $\Delta^*$  are inseparable; if not, by compactness, there is  $n \geq 0$  that separates  $\Gamma_n$  and  $\Delta_n$ , against (1). In particular,  $\Gamma^*$  and  $\Delta^*$  are consistent: for if the former or the latter is inconsistent, then they are separated by  $\exists x x \neq x$  or  $\forall x x = x$ , respectively.

We now show that  $\Gamma^*$  is maximally consistent in  $\mathcal{L}'_1$  and likewise  $\Delta^*$  in  $\mathcal{L}'_2$ . For the former, suppose that  $\varphi_n \notin \Gamma^*$  and  $\neg\varphi_n \notin \Gamma^*$ , for some  $n \geq 0$ . If  $\varphi_n \notin \Gamma^*$  then  $\Gamma_n \cup \{\varphi_n\}$  is separable from  $\Delta_n$ , and so there is  $\chi \in \mathcal{L}'_0$  such that both:

$$\Gamma^* \models \varphi_n \rightarrow \chi, \quad \Delta^* \models \neg\chi.$$

Likewise, if  $\neg\varphi_n \notin \Gamma^*$ , there is  $\chi' \in \mathcal{L}'_0$  such that both:

$$\Gamma^* \models \neg\varphi_n \rightarrow \chi', \quad \Delta^* \models \neg\chi'.$$

By propositional logic,  $\Gamma^* \models \chi \vee \chi'$  and  $\Delta^* \models \neg(\chi \vee \chi')$ , so  $\chi \vee \chi'$  separates  $\Gamma^*$  and  $\Delta^*$ . A similar argument establishes that  $\Delta^*$  is maximal.

Finally, we show that  $\Gamma^* \cap \Delta^*$  is maximally consistent in  $\mathcal{L}'_0$ . It is obviously consistent, since it is the intersection of consistent sets. To show maximality, let  $\sigma \in \mathcal{L}'_0$ . Now,  $\Gamma^*$  is maximal in  $\mathcal{L}'_1 \supseteq \mathcal{L}'_0$ , and similarly  $\Delta^*$  is maximal in  $\mathcal{L}'_2 \supseteq \mathcal{L}'_0$ . It follows that either  $\sigma \in \Gamma^*$  or  $\neg\sigma \in \Gamma^*$ , and either  $\sigma \in \Delta^*$  or  $\neg\sigma \in \Delta^*$ . If  $\sigma \in \Gamma^*$  and  $\neg\sigma \in \Delta^*$  then  $\sigma$  would separate  $\Gamma^*$  and  $\Delta^*$ ; and if  $\neg\sigma \in \Gamma^*$  and  $\sigma \in \Delta^*$  then  $\Gamma^*$  and  $\Delta^*$  would be separated by  $\neg\sigma$ . Hence, either  $\sigma \in \Gamma^* \cap \Delta^*$  or  $\neg\sigma \in \Gamma^* \cap \Delta^*$ , and  $\Gamma^* \cap \Delta^*$  is maximal.

Since  $\Gamma^*$  is maximally consistent, it has a model  $\mathfrak{M}'_1$  whose [domain](#)  $|\mathfrak{M}'_1|$  comprises all and only the elements  $c^{\mathfrak{M}'_1}$  interpreting the [constant symbols](#)—just like in the proof of the completeness theorem (??). Similarly,  $\Delta^*$  has a model  $\mathfrak{M}'_2$  whose [domain](#)  $|\mathfrak{M}'_2|$  is given by the interpretations  $c^{\mathfrak{M}'_2}$  of the [constant symbols](#).

Let  $\mathfrak{M}_1$  be obtained from  $\mathfrak{M}'_1$  by dropping interpretations for [constant symbols](#), [function symbols](#), and [predicate symbols](#) in  $\mathcal{L}'_1 \setminus \mathcal{L}'_0$ , and similarly for  $\mathfrak{M}_2$ . Then the map  $h: M_1 \rightarrow M_2$  defined by  $h(c^{\mathfrak{M}'_1}) = c^{\mathfrak{M}'_2}$  is an isomorphism in  $\mathcal{L}'_0$ , because  $\Gamma^* \cap \Delta^*$  is maximally consistent in  $\mathcal{L}'_0$ , as shown. This follows because any  $\mathcal{L}'_0$ -[sentence](#) either belongs to both  $\Gamma^*$  and  $\Delta^*$ , or to neither: so

$c^{\mathfrak{M}'_1} \in P^{\mathfrak{M}'_1}$  if and only if  $P(c) \in \Gamma^*$  if and only if  $P(c) \in \Delta^*$  if and only if  $c^{\mathfrak{M}'_2} \in P^{\mathfrak{M}'_2}$ . The other conditions satisfied by isomorphisms can be established similarly.

Let us now define a model  $\mathfrak{M}$  for the language  $\mathcal{L}_1 \cup \mathcal{L}_2$  as follows:

1. The domain  $|\mathfrak{M}|$  is just  $|\mathfrak{M}'_2|$ , i.e., the set of all elements  $c^{\mathfrak{M}'_2}$ ;
2. If a predicate symbol  $P$  is in  $\mathcal{L}_2 \setminus \mathcal{L}_1$  then  $P^{\mathfrak{M}} = P^{\mathfrak{M}'_2}$ ;
3. If a predicate  $P$  is in  $\mathcal{L}_1 \setminus \mathcal{L}_2$  then  $P^{\mathfrak{M}} = h(P^{\mathfrak{M}'_2})$ , i.e.,  $\langle c_1^{\mathfrak{M}'_2}, \dots, c_n^{\mathfrak{M}'_2} \rangle \in P^{\mathfrak{M}}$  if and only if  $\langle c_1^{\mathfrak{M}'_1}, \dots, c_n^{\mathfrak{M}'_1} \rangle \in P^{\mathfrak{M}'_1}$ .
4. If a predicate symbol  $P$  is in  $\mathcal{L}_0$  then  $P^{\mathfrak{M}} = P^{\mathfrak{M}'_2} = h(P^{\mathfrak{M}'_1})$ .
5. Function symbols of  $\mathcal{L}_1 \cup \mathcal{L}_2$ , including constant symbols, are handled similarly.

Finally, one shows by induction on formulas that  $\mathfrak{M}$  agrees with  $\mathfrak{M}'_1$  on all formulas of  $\mathcal{L}'_1$  and with  $\mathfrak{M}'_2$  on all formulas of  $\mathcal{L}'_2$ . In particular,  $\mathfrak{M} \models \Gamma^* \cup \Delta^*$ , whence  $\mathfrak{M} \models \varphi$  and  $\mathfrak{M} \models \neg\psi$ , and  $\not\models \varphi \rightarrow \psi$ . This concludes the proof of Craig's Interpolation Theorem.  $\square$

## int.4 The Definability Theorem

mod:int:def:  
sec

One important application of the interpolation theorem is Beth's definability theorem. To define an  $n$ -place relation  $R$  we can give a formula  $\chi$  with  $n$  free variables which does not involve  $R$ . This would be an *explicit* definition of  $R$  in terms of  $\chi$ . We can then say also that a theory  $\Sigma(P)$  in a language containing the  $n$ -place predicate symbol  $P$  explicitly defines  $P$  if it contains (or at least entails) a formalized explicit definition, i.e.,

$$\Sigma(P) \models \forall x_1 \dots \forall x_n (P(x_1, \dots, x_n) \leftrightarrow \chi(x_1, \dots, x_n)).$$

But an explicit definition is only one way of defining—in the sense of determining completely—a relation. A theory may also be such that the interpretation of  $P$  is fixed by the interpretation of the rest of the language in any model. The definability theorem states that whenever a theory fixes the interpretation of  $P$  in this way—whenever it *implicitly defines*  $P$ —then it also explicitly defines it.

**Definition int.5.** Suppose  $\mathcal{L}$  is a language not containing the predicate symbol  $P$ . A set  $\Sigma(P)$  of sentences of  $\mathcal{L} \cup \{P\}$  *explicitly defines*  $P$  if and only if there is a formula  $\chi(x_1, \dots, x_n)$  of  $\mathcal{L}$  such that

$$\Sigma(P) \models \forall x_1 \dots \forall x_n (P(x_1, \dots, x_n) \leftrightarrow \chi(x_1, \dots, x_n)).$$

**Definition int.6.** Suppose  $\mathcal{L}$  is a language not containing the predicate symbols  $P$  and  $P'$ . A set  $\Sigma(P)$  of sentences of  $\mathcal{L} \cup \{P\}$  *implicitly defines*  $P$  if and only if

$$\Sigma(P) \cup \Sigma(P') \models \forall x_1 \dots \forall x_n (P(x_1, \dots, x_n) \leftrightarrow P'(x_1, \dots, x_n)),$$

where  $\Sigma(P')$  is the result of uniformly replacing  $P$  with  $P'$  in  $\Sigma(P)$ .

In other words, for any model  $\mathfrak{M}$  and  $R, R' \subseteq |\mathfrak{M}|^n$ , if both  $(\mathfrak{M}, R) \models \Sigma(P)$  and  $(\mathfrak{M}, R') \models \Sigma(P')$ , then  $R = R'$ ; where  $(\mathfrak{M}, R)$  is the **structure**  $\mathfrak{M}'$  for the expansion of  $\mathcal{L}$  to  $\mathcal{L} \cup \{P\}$  such that  $P^{\mathfrak{M}'} = R$ , and similarly for  $(\mathfrak{M}, R')$ .

**Theorem int.7** (Beth Definability Theorem). *A set  $\Sigma(P)$  of  $\mathcal{L} \cup \{P\}$ -formulas implicitly defines  $P$  if and only if  $\Sigma(P)$  explicitly defines  $P$ .*

*Proof.* If  $\Sigma(P)$  explicitly defines  $P$  then both

$$\begin{aligned} \Sigma(P) \models & \quad \forall x_1 \dots \forall x_n [(P(x_1, \dots, x_n) \leftrightarrow \chi(x_1, \dots, x_n))] \\ \Sigma(P') \models & \quad \forall x_1 \dots \forall x_n [(P'(x_1, \dots, x_n) \leftrightarrow \chi(x_1, \dots, x_n))] \end{aligned}$$

and the conclusion follows. For the converse: assume that  $\Sigma(P)$  implicitly defines  $P$ . First, we add **constant symbols**  $c_1, \dots, c_n$  to  $\mathcal{L}$ . Then

$$\Sigma(P) \cup \Sigma(P') \models P(c_1, \dots, c_n) \rightarrow P'(c_1, \dots, c_n).$$

By compactness, there are finite sets  $\Delta_0 \subseteq \Sigma(P)$  and  $\Delta_1 \subseteq \Sigma(P')$  such that

$$\Delta_0 \cup \Delta_1 \models P(c_1, \dots, c_n) \rightarrow P'(c_1, \dots, c_n).$$

Let  $\theta(P)$  be the conjunction of all **sentences**  $\varphi(P)$  such that either  $\varphi(P) \in \Delta_0$  or  $\varphi(P') \in \Delta_1$  and let  $\theta(P')$  be the conjunction of all **sentences**  $\varphi(P')$  such that either  $\varphi(P) \in \Delta_0$  or  $\varphi(P') \in \Delta_1$ . Then  $\theta(P) \wedge \theta(P') \models P(c_1, \dots, c_n) \rightarrow P'c_1 \dots c_n$ . We can re-arrange this so that each **predicate symbol** occurs on one side of  $\models$ :

$$\theta(P) \wedge P(c_1, \dots, c_n) \models \theta(P') \rightarrow P'(c_1, \dots, c_n).$$

By Craig's Interpolation Theorem there is a **sentence**  $\chi(c_1, \dots, c_n)$  not containing  $P$  or  $P'$  such that:

$$\theta(P) \wedge P(c_1, \dots, c_n) \models \chi(c_1, \dots, c_n); \quad \chi(c_1, \dots, c_n) \models \theta(P') \rightarrow P'(c_1, \dots, c_n).$$

From the former of these two entailments we have:  $\theta(P) \models P(c_1, \dots, c_n) \rightarrow \chi(c_1, \dots, c_n)$ . And from the latter, since an  $\mathcal{L} \cup \{P\}$ -model  $(\mathfrak{M}, R) \models \varphi(P)$  if and only if the corresponding  $\mathcal{L} \cup \{P'\}$ -model  $(\mathfrak{M}, R) \models \varphi(P')$ , we have  $\chi(c_1, \dots, c_n) \models \theta(P) \rightarrow P(c_1, \dots, c_n)$ , from which:

$$\theta(P) \models \chi(c_1, \dots, c_n) \rightarrow P(c_1, \dots, c_n).$$

Putting the two together,  $\theta(P) \models P(c_1, \dots, c_n) \leftrightarrow \chi(c_1, \dots, c_n)$ , and by monotony and generalization also

$$\Sigma(P) \models \forall x_1 \dots \forall x_n (P(x_1, \dots, x_n) \leftrightarrow \chi(x_1, \dots, x_n)). \quad \square$$

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