

The Category-Partition Method for Specifying and Generating Functional Tests.

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[CACM ,1988].

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Content:

- Introduction.
- The category-partition method:
 - characteristics.
 - the method.
 - examples.
- Other methods.

The goal of functional testing

- To find discrepancies between the **actual behavior** of the implemented system's function and the **desired behavior** as described in the system's functional specification.

How to achieve this goal ?

- Tests have to be execute for all the system functions.
- Tests have to be designed to maximize the chances of finding errors in the software.

Functional test can be derived from 3 sources:

1. The software specification.
2. Design information.
3. The code itself.

Partition - The standard approach

- The main idea is to partition the input domain of function being tested, and then **select test data for each class** of the partition.
- The problem of all the existing techniques is the **lack of systematic**.

The category partition method - main characteristics:

- **The test specification :**
 - is concise and uniform representation of the test information for a function.
 - it can be easily modified.
 - it gives the tester a logical way to control the volume of tests.

The category partition method - main characteristics (cont.):

- Using **generator tool** help us :
 - to provides an automated way to produce thorough tests.
 - to avoid impossible or undesirable tests.
- The method emphasizes both the specification **coverage** and the **error detection** aspects of testing.

A strategy for test case generation

1. Transform the system's specification to be more concise and structured.
2. Decompose the specification into **functional unit** - to be tested independently.
3. Identify the **parameters** and **environment conditions**.

A strategy for test case generation (cont)

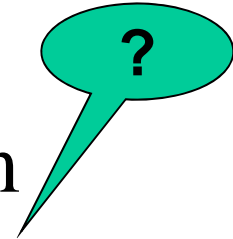
4. Find **categories** that characterize each parameter and environment condition.
5. Every category should be partitioned into distinct **choices** .



formal test specification

A strategy for test case generation (cont)

6. **test frames** - set of choices, one from each category.



↓

test cases - test frame with specific values for each choices.

↓

test scripts - sequence of test cases.

Example

Command: find

Syntax: find <pattern> <file>

Function: The find command is used to locate one or more instance of a given pattern in a text file. All lines in the file that contain the pattern are written to standard output. A line containing the pattern is written only once, regardless of the number of times the pattern occurs in it.

The pattern is any sequence of characters whose length does not exceed the maximum length of a line in the file .To include a blank in the pattern, the entire pattern must be enclosed in quotes (“”).To include quotation mark in the pattern ,two quotes in a row (“ “) must be used.

Example:

find john myfile

display lines in the file **myfile** which contain **john**

find "john smith" in myfile

display lines in the file **myfile** which contain **john smith**

find "john"" smith" in myfile

display lines in the file **myfile** which contain **john" smith**

Parameters:

Pattern size:

empty

single character

many character

longer than any line in the file

Quoting:

pattern is quoted

pattern is not quoted

pattern is improperly quoted

Embedded blanks:

no embedded blank

one embedded blank

several embedded blanks

Embedded quotes:

no embedded quotes

one embedded quotes

several embedded quotes

File name:

good file name

no file with this name

Environments:

Number of occurrence of pattern in file:

none

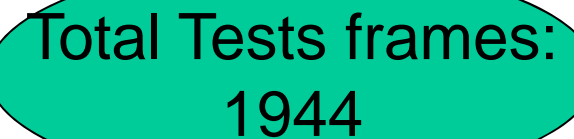
exactly one

more than one

Pattern occurrences on target line:

one

more than one



Total Tests frames:
1944

Test Frame - Example:

Pattern size : empty

Quoting : pattern is quoted

Embedded blanks : several embedded blanks

Embedded quotes : no embedded quote

File name : good file name

Number of occurrence of pattern in file : none

Pattern occurrence on target line : one

Parameters:

Pattern size:

empty	[property Empty]
single character	[property NonEmpty]
many character	[property NonEmpty]
longer than any line in the file	[property NonEmpty]

Quoting:

pattern is quoted	[property quoted]
pattern is not quoted	[if NonEmpty]
pattern is improperly quoted	[if NonEmpty]

Embedded blanks:

no embedded blank	[if NonEmpty]
one embedded blank	[if NonEmpty and Quoted]
several embedded blanks	[if NonEmpty and Quoted]

Embedded quotes:

no embedded quotes	[if NonEmpty]
one embedded quotes	[if NonEmpty]
several embedded quotes	[if NonEmpty]

File name:

good file name
no file with this name

Environments:

Number of occurrence of pattern in file:

none	[if NonEmpty]
exactly one	[if NonEmpty] [property Match]
more than one	[if NonEmpty] [property Match]



Total Tests frames:
678

Pattern occurrences on target line:

one	[if Match]
more than one	[if Match]

Parameters:

Pattern size:

empty	[property Empty]
single character	[property NonEmpty]
many character	[property NonEmpty]
longer than any line in the file	[error]

Quoting:

pattern is quoted	[property quoted]
pattern is not quoted	[if NonEmpty]
pattern is improperly quoted	[error]

Embedded blanks:

no embedded blank	[if NonEmpty]
one embedded blank	[if NonEmpty and Quoted]
several embedded blanks	[if NonEmpty and Quoted]

Embedded quotes:

no embedded quotes	[if NonEmpty]
one embedded quotes	[if NonEmpty]
several embedded quotes	[if NonEmpty] [single]

File name:

good file name	
no file with this name	[error]

Environments:

Number of occurrence of pattern in file:

none	[if NonEmpty] [single]
exactly one	[if NonEmpty] [property Match]
more than one	[if NonEmpty] [property Match]

Pattern occurrences on target line:

one	[if Match]
more than one	[if Match] [single]

Total Tests frames:
40

Test Frame :

Test case 28 : (Key = 3.1.3.2.1.2.1.)

Pattern size : many character

Quoting : pattern is quoted

Embedded blanks : several embedded blanks

Embedded quotes : one embedded quote

File name : good file name

Number of occurrence of pattern in file : exactly none

Pattern occurrence on target line : one

Command to set up the test:

```
copy/testing/sources/case_28 testfile
```

find command to perform the test:

```
find "has" "one quote" testfile
```

Instruction for checking the test :

the following line should be display:

```
This line has " one quote on it
```

Summary

The category-partition method :

- is a systematic method.
- the language is concise,easily modified and can clearly be understood.
- the tester can control the size of all the test not arbitrarily.
- the TSL is to be changed and to include more features .