COMP2111 Week 7 Term 1, 2024 Finite automata

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# Summary

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- Recap
- Deterministic Finite Automata
- Non-deterministic Finite Automata
- Regular languages
- Regular expressions

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## **Transition systems**

A transition system (or state machine) is a pair  $(S, \rightarrow)$  where S is a set and  $\rightarrow \subseteq S \times S$  is a binary relation.

#### NB

S is not necessarily finite.

Transition systems may have:

- *L*-labelled transitions:  $\rightarrow \subseteq S \times L \times S$
- A start/initial state  $s_0 \in S$
- A set of final states  $F \subseteq S$  (where runs terminate)

If  $\rightarrow$  is a partial function (from  $S \times L$  to S), the transition system is **deterministic**. If  $\rightarrow$  is a function, the transition system is **total**.

## **Reachability and Runs**

A state s' is **reachable** from a state s if  $(s, s') \in \rightarrow^*$  (the reflexive and transitive closure of  $\rightarrow$ ).

A **run** from a state *s* is a sequence  $s_1, s_2, \ldots$  such that  $s_1 = s$  and  $s_i \rightarrow s_{i+1}$  for all *i*.

#### NB

In a non-deterministic transition system there may be many (or no) runs from a state. In an unlabelled deterministic transition system there is exactly one maximal run from every state.

# **Acceptors and Transducers**

An acceptor is a transition system with:

- (input-)labelled transitions
- a start/initial state
- a set of final states
- A transducer is a transition system with:
  - (input & output-)labelled transitions
  - a start/initial state

#### NB

Acceptors accept/reject sequences of inputs. Transducers map sequences of inputs to sequences of outputs.

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A deterministic finite automaton (DFA) is a total, finite state acceptor.

DFAs represent "computation with finite memory"

DFAs are simple, easy to work with and show up all over the place.



- Q is a finite set of states
- Σ is the input alphabet
- $\delta: Q \times \Sigma \rightarrow Q$  is the transition function
- $q_0 \in Q$  is the start state
- $F \subseteq Q$  is the set of final/accepting states



- Q is a finite set of states:  $Q = \{q_0, q_1, q_2\}$
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- Q is a finite set of states:  $Q = \{q_0, q_1, q_2\}$
- $\Sigma$  is the input alphabet:  $\Sigma = \{0, 1\}$
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 $egin{aligned} \delta(q_0,0) &= q_0 \ \delta(q_0,1) &= q_1 \ \delta(q_1,0) &= q_2 \ \delta(q_1,1) &= q_1 \ \delta(q_2,0) &= q_1 \ \delta(q_2,1) &= q_1 \end{aligned}$ 



$\delta$	0	1
<b>q</b> 0	<b>q</b> 0	$q_1$
$q_1$	<b>q</b> 2	$q_1$
$q_2$	$q_1$	$q_1$



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- $F \subseteq Q$  is the set of final/accepting states:  $F = \{q_1\}$



A DFA accepts a sequence of symbols from  $\Sigma$  – i.e. elements of  $\Sigma^*$ 

Informally: A word defines a run in the DFA and the word is accepted if the run ends in a final state.



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- Take the first symbol of w

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- Start in state q<sub>0</sub>
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- Repeat the following until there are no symbols left:
  - Based on the current state and current input symbol, transition to the appropriate state determined by  $\delta$



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For a DFA  $\mathcal{A} = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$ , the **language of**  $\mathcal{A}$ ,  $\mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A})$ , is the set of words from  $\Sigma^*$  which are accepted by  $\mathcal{A}$ 

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A language  $L \subseteq \Sigma^*$  is **regular** if there is some DFA  $\mathcal{A}$  such that  $L = L(\mathcal{A})$ 

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## Language of a DFA: formally

Given a DFA  $\mathcal{A} = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$  we define  $L_{\mathcal{A}} : Q \to \Sigma^*$  inductively as follows:

- If  $q \in F$  then  $\lambda \in L_{\mathcal{A}}(q)$
- If  $q \stackrel{a}{\rightarrow} q'$  and  $w \in L_{\mathcal{A}}(q')$  then  $aw \in L_{\mathcal{A}}(q)$

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We then define

 $L(\mathcal{A}) = L_{\mathcal{A}}(q_0)$ 

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## **Examples**



## **Examples**






### Example

Find  $\mathcal{A}_3$  such that  $L(\mathcal{A}_3) = \emptyset$ 

### Find $\mathcal{A}_4$ such that $L(\mathcal{A}_4) = \{\lambda\}$

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#### **Example**

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### Example

Find  $\mathcal{A}_5$  such that  $L(\mathcal{A}_5) = \{w \in \{a, b\}^* : \text{ every odd symbol is } b\}$ 

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A **non-deterministic finite automaton (NFA)** is a non-deterministic, finite state acceptor.

More general than DFAs: A DFA is an NFA



- Q is a finite set of states
- Σ is the input alphabet
- $\delta \subseteq Q \times (\Sigma \cup \{\epsilon\}) \times Q$  is the transition relation
- $q_0 \in Q$  is the start state
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$$\delta = \left\{ \begin{array}{ccc} (q_0, 0, q_0), & (q_0, 1, q_0), & (q_0, 1, q_1), \\ (q_1, \epsilon, q_2), & (q_1, 0, q_2), & (q_1, 1, q_1), \\ & (q_2, 0, q_1) \end{array} \right\}$$



$\delta$	$\epsilon$	0	1
$q_0$	Ø	$\{q_0\}$	$\{q_0, q_1\}$
$q_1$	$\{q_2\}$	$\{q_2\}$	$\{q_1\}$
<b>q</b> 2	Ø	$\{q_1\}$	Ø



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An NFA accepts a sequence of symbols from  $\Sigma$  – i.e. elements of  $\Sigma^*$ 

Informally: A word defines several runs in the NFA and the word is accepted if **at least one run** ends in a final state.

Note 1: Runs can end prematurely (these don't count)

Note 2: An NFA will always "choose wisely"



**w**: 1000





• Colour the state  $q_0$ 





*w*: 1000

- Colour the state q<sub>0</sub>
- Colour states reachable by one or more  $\epsilon$  transitions from  $q_0$ .
- For each symbol *c* of *w*:
  - Colour all states reachable by a *c*-transition followed by 0 or more  $\epsilon$  transitions from the coloured states, and uncolour all other states.



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For an NFA  $\mathcal{A} = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$ , the **language of**  $\mathcal{A}$ ,  $L(\mathcal{A})$ , is the set of words from  $\Sigma^*$  which are accepted by  $\mathcal{A}$ 

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## Language of an NFA



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## Language of an NFA: formally

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Given an NFA  $\mathcal{A} = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$  we define  $L_{\mathcal{A}} : Q \to \Sigma^*$  inductively as follows:

- If  $q \in F$  then  $\lambda \in L_{\mathcal{A}}(q)$
- If  $q \stackrel{a}{\rightarrow} q'$  and  $w \in L_{\mathcal{A}}(q')$  then  $aw \in L_{\mathcal{A}}(q)$
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#### Example

Find  $\mathcal{B}_3$  such that  $L(\mathcal{B}_3) = \emptyset$ 

## Find $\mathcal{B}_4$ such that $L(\mathcal{B}_4) = \{\lambda\}$

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Find  $\mathcal{B}_5$  such that  $L(\mathcal{B}_5) = \{w \in \{a, b\}^* : \text{second-last symbol is } b\}$ 

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Clearly for any DFA  $\mathcal{A}$  there is an NFA  $\mathcal{B}$  such that  $L(\mathcal{A}) = L(\mathcal{B})$ .

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Theorem

For any NFA  $\mathcal{B}$  there is a DFA  $\mathcal{A}$  such that  $L(\mathcal{A}) = L(\mathcal{B})$ .

Proof sketch: (Subset construction) Given  $\mathcal{B} = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$ , construct  $\mathcal{A} = (Q', \Sigma, \delta', q'_0, F')$  as follows:

- *Q*′ = Pow(*Q*)
- $\delta'(X, a) = \{q' \in Q : \exists q \in X, q'' \in Q.q \xrightarrow{a} q'' \xrightarrow{\epsilon}^* q'\}$
- $q_0' = \{q' \in Q : q_0 \stackrel{\epsilon}{\rightarrow}^* q'\}$
- $F' = \{X \in Q' : X \cap F \neq \emptyset\}$

Intuitively: A keeps track of all the possible states B could be in after seeing a given sequence of symbols.













$\delta'$	а	Ь
Ø	Ø	Ø
$\{q_0\}$	$\{q_0\}$	$\{q_0, q_1\}$
$\{q_1\}$		
$\{q_2\}$		
$\{q_0, q_1\}$		
$\{q_0, q_2\}$		
$\{q_1, q_2\}$		
$\{q_0, q_1, q_2\}$		



$\delta'$	а	Ь
Ø	Ø	Ø
$\{q_0\}$	$\{q_0\}$	$\{q_0, q_1\}$
$\{q_1\}$	$\{q_2\}$	$\{q_2\}$
$\{q_2\}$		
$\{q_0,q_1\}$		
$\{q_0, q_2\}$		
$\{q_1, q_2\}$		
$\{q_0, q_1, q_2\}$		



















$\delta'$	а	b
Ø	Ø	Ø
$\{q_0\}$	$\{q_0\}$	$\{q_0, q_1\}$
$\{q_1\}$	$\{q_2\}$	$\{q_2\}$
$\{q_2\}$	Ø	Ø
$\{q_0,q_1\}$	$\{q_0, q_2\}$	$\{q_0,q_1,q_2\}$
$\{q_0, q_2\}$	$\{q_0\}$	$\{ q_0, q_1 \}$
$\{q_1, q_2\}$	$\{q_2\}$	$\{q_2\}$
$\{q_0, q_1, q_2\}$	$\{q_0, q_2\}$	$\{q_0, q_1, q_2\}$



$\delta'$		а	b
Ø	Α	A	Α
$\{q_0\}$	В	В	Ε
$\{q_1\}$	С	D	D
$\{q_2\}$	D	Α	Α
$\{q_0, q_1\}$	Ε	F	Н
$\{q_0, q_2\}$	F	В	Ε
$\{q_1, q_2\}$	G	D	D
$\{q_0, q_1, q_2\}$	Н	F	Н



$\delta'$		а	b
Ø	Α	A	Α
$\{q_0\}$	В	В	Ε
$\{q_1\}$	С	D	D
$\{q_2\}$	D	Α	Α
$\{q_0, q_1\}$	Ε	F	Н
$\{q_0, q_2\}$	F	В	Ε
$\{q_1, q_2\}$	G	D	D
$\{q_0, q_1, q_2\}$	Н	F	Н



$\delta'$		а	b
Ø	Α	A	Α
$\{q_0\}$	В	В	Ε
$\{q_1\}$	С	D	D
$\{q_2\}$	D	Α	Α
$\{q_0, q_1\}$	Ε	F	Н
$\{q_0, q_2\}$	F	В	Ε
$\{q_1, q_2\}$	G	D	D
$\{q_0, q_1, q_2\}$	Н	F	Н



#### Theorem

- For any NFA with n states there exists a DFA with at most 2<sup>n</sup> states that accepts the same language
- There exist NFAs with n states such that the smallest DFA that accepts the same language has at least 2<sup>n</sup> states.

# Summary

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- Recap
- Deterministic Finite Automata
- Non-deterministic Finite Automata
- Regular languages
- Regular expressions

# **Regular languages**

A language  $L \subseteq \Sigma^*$  is **regular** if there is some DFA  $\mathcal{A}$  such that  $L = L(\mathcal{A})$ 

# **Regular languages**

A language  $L \subseteq \Sigma^*$  is **regular** if there is some DFA  $\mathcal{A}$  such that  $L = L(\mathcal{A})$ 

Equivalently, there is some NFA  $\mathcal{B}$  such that  $L = L(\mathcal{B})$ 

# **Non-regular languages**

Are there languages which are not regular?

# Non-regular languages

Are there languages which are not regular? Yes

"Simple" counting argument: there are uncountably many languages, and only countably many DFAs

# Non-regular languages

Are there languages which are not regular? Yes

"Simple" counting argument: there are uncountably many languages, and only countably many DFAs

An example of a non-regular language:  $\{0^n1^n : n \in \mathbb{N}\}$ Intuitively: need arbitrary large memory to "remember" the number of 0's
# Complementation

#### Theorem

If L is a regular language then  $L^c = \Sigma^* \setminus L$  is a regular language.

Proof:

- Let  $\mathcal{A} = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$  be a DFA such that  $L(\mathcal{A}) = L$
- Consider  $\mathcal{A}' = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, Q \setminus F)$
- For any word w ∈ Σ\*, the corresponding run in A is unique, so:
  - If  $w \in L(\mathcal{A})$  then  $w \notin L(\mathcal{A}')$ , and
  - If  $w \notin L(\mathcal{A})$  then  $w \in L(\mathcal{A}')$ ,
- Therefore  $L(\mathcal{A}') = \Sigma^* \setminus L(\mathcal{A}) = L^c$

### NB

This argument does not apply for NFAs (see  $\mathcal{B}_1$  and  $\mathcal{B}_2$ )

# Union

#### Theorem

If  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  are regular languages, then  $L_1 \cup L_2$  is regular.

Proof:

- Let  $\mathcal{B}_1$  and  $\mathcal{B}_2$  be NFAs such that  $L(\mathcal{B}_1) = L_1$  and  $L(\mathcal{B}_2) = L_2$
- Construct an NFA  $\mathcal{B}$  by having a new start state with  $\epsilon$ -transitions to the start states of  $\mathcal{B}_1$  and  $\mathcal{B}_2$
- Consider  $w \in L_1 \cup L_2$ :
  - If  $w \in L_1$  then there is a run in  $\mathcal{B}_1$ , and hence in  $\mathcal{B}$ , which ends in a final state
  - If  $w \in L_2$  then there is a run in  $\mathcal{B}_2$ , and hence in  $\mathcal{B}$ , which ends in a final state
  - In either case  $w \in L(\mathcal{B})$
- Conversely, any accepting run in B will be either an accepting run in B₁ or in B₂; so if w ∈ L(B) then w ∈ L₁ ∪ L₂

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## Intersection

### Theorem

If  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  are regular languages, then  $L_1 \cap L_2$  is regular.

Proof:

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## Intersection

#### Theorem

If  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  are regular languages, then  $L_1 \cap L_2$  is regular.

Proof:

$$L_1 \cap L_2 = (L_1^c \cup L_2^c)^c$$

## Concatenation

Recall for languages X and Y:  $X \cdot Y = \{xy : x \in X, y \in Y\}$ 

#### Theorem

If  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  are regular languages, then  $L_1 \cdot L_2$  is regular.

Proof:

- Let  $\mathcal{B}_1$  and  $\mathcal{B}_2$  be NFAs such that  $L(\mathcal{B}_1) = L_1$  and  $L(\mathcal{B}_2) = L_2$
- Construct an NFA  $\mathcal{B}$  by adding  $\epsilon$ -transitions from the final states of  $\mathcal{B}_1$  to the start state of  $\mathcal{B}_2$ . Let the start state of  $\mathcal{B}$  be the start state of  $\mathcal{B}_1$ ; and let the final states of  $\mathcal{B}$  be the final states of  $\mathcal{B}_2$ .
- Any word in L<sub>1</sub> · L<sub>2</sub> can be written as wv with w ∈ L<sub>1</sub> and v ∈ L<sub>2</sub>. w has an accepting run in B<sub>1</sub> and v has an accepting run in B<sub>2</sub>, so wv has an accepting run in B.
- Conversely, any word w with an accepting run in B can be broken up into an accepting run in B₁ followed by an accepting run in B₂. Thus w can be broken up into two words w = xy where x ∈ L₁ and y ∈ L₂.

## Kleene star

Recall for a language X:  $X^* = \{w : w \text{ is the concatenation of 0 or more words in } X\}$ 

#### Theorem

If L is regular languages, then  $L^*$  is regular.

Proof:

- Let  $\mathcal{B}$  be an NFA such that  $L(\mathcal{B}) = L$
- Construct an NFA  $\mathcal{B}'$  by:
  - creating a new start state which is accepting;
  - adding an  $\epsilon\text{-transition}$  from the new start state to the start state of  $\mathcal B$
  - adding  $\epsilon\text{-transitions}$  from the final states of  $\mathcal B$  to the new start state.
- Similar arguments as before show that  $L(\mathcal{B}') = L(\mathcal{B})^*$

## **Regular operations**

Concatenation, union, and Kleene star are collectively known as the **regular operations**.

# Summary

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# **Regular expressions**

Regular expressions are a way of describing "finite automaton" patterns:

- Second-last letter is b
- Every odd symbol is *b*

Many applications in CS:

- Lexical analysis in compiler construction
- Search facilities provided by text editors and databases; utilities such as grep and awk

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• Pattern matching on strings

## **Regular expressions**

Given a finite set  $\Sigma$ , a **regular expression (regexp) over**  $\Sigma$  is defined recursively as follows:

- $\emptyset$  is a regular expression
- $\epsilon$  is a regular expression
- *a* is a regular expression for all  $a \in \Sigma$
- If  $E_1$  and  $E_2$  are regular expressions, then  $E_1E_2$  is a regular expression
- If  $E_1$  and  $E_2$  are regular expressions, then  $E_1 + E_2$  is a regular expression
- If E is a regular expression, then  $E^*$  is a regular expression We use parentheses to disambiguate regexps, though \* binds tighter than concatenation, which binds tighter than +.

## **Examples**

# **Example** The following are regular expressions over $\Sigma = \{0, 1\}$ : • $\emptyset$ • 101 + 010• $(\epsilon + 10)^*01$

# Language of a Regular expression

A regexp defines a language over  $\Sigma$ : the set of words which "match" the expression:

- Concatenation = sequences of expressions
- Union = choice of expressions
- Star = 0 or more occurrences of an expression

### Example

The following words match  $(000 + 10)^*01$ :

- 01
- 101001
- 000101000001

# Language of a Regular Expression

Formally, given a regexp, E, over  $\Sigma$ , we define  $L(E) \subseteq \Sigma^*$  recursively as follows:

- If  $E = \emptyset$  then  $L(E) = \emptyset$
- If  $E = \epsilon$  then  $L(E) = \{\lambda\}$
- If E = a where  $a \in \Sigma$  then  $L(E) = \{a\}$
- If  $E = E_1 E_2$ , then  $L(E) = L(E_1) \cdot L(E_2)$
- If  $E = E_1 + E_2$ , then  $L(E) = L(E_1) \cup L(E_2)$
- If  $E = E_1^*$  then  $L(E) = (L(E_1))^*$

### Example

L(010 + 101) = ?

 $L((\epsilon + 10)^*01) = ?$ 

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- If  $E = E_1^*$  then  $L(E) = (L(E_1))^*$

### Example

```
L(010+101) = \{010, 101\}
```

 $L((\epsilon + 10)^*01) = \{01, 1001, 101001, \ldots\}$ 

## **Regular expressions vs NfAs**

### Theorem (Kleene's theorem)

- For any regular expression E, L(E) is a regular language.
- For any regular language L, there is a regular expression E such that L = L(E)

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## **Proof of Kleene's theorem**

Given E, L(E) is a regular language. Proof by induction on E.

## Proof of Kleene's theorem

Given E, L(E) is a regular language. Proof by induction on E.

Given L, find E such that L = L(E)

• Let  $L_{q,q'}^X = \{ w \in \Sigma^* : q \xrightarrow{w}^* q' \text{ with all intermediate states in } X \}$ • Define  $E_{q,q'}^X$  such that  $L(E_{q,q'}^X) = L_{q,q'}^X$ : • When q = q':  $E_{q,q'}^{\emptyset} = \epsilon + a_1 + a_2 + \ldots + a_k$  where  $q \xrightarrow{a_i} q$ • When  $q \neq q'$ :  $E_{q,q'}^{\emptyset} = \emptyset + a_1 + a_2 + \ldots + a_k$  where  $q \xrightarrow{a_i} q'$ • For  $X \neq \emptyset$ :  $E_{q,q'}^X = \underbrace{E_{q,q'}^{X-\{r\}}}_{(1)} + \underbrace{E_{q,r}^{X-\{r\}} \cdot (E_{r,r}^{X-\{r\}})^* \cdot E_{r,q'}^{X-\{r\}}}_{(2)}$ 

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• The required expression is then  $E = \sum_{q \in F} E_{q_0,q}^Q$