

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

NOTES

COSC 3340
Intro. to Automata and Computability

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1 Formal Languages

1.1 Introduction

Definition 1.1.1. An **Alphabet** is a finite, non-empty set of atomic symbols.

Definition 1.1.2. A **word** or **string** is any finite sequence of symbols from an alphabet.

Definition 1.1.3. The **length** of a string, s , denoted $|s|$, is the number of symbols in s .

Definition 1.1.4. Given strings $s = s_1s_2 \dots s_n$ and $t = t_1t_2 \dots t_m$, their **concatenation** is defined

$$s \cdot t = s_1s_2 \dots s_nt_1t_2 \dots t_m$$

We denote by ε the **empty string**, the unique string of 0 characters.

Definition 1.1.5. Let A be any alphabet. The **Kleene Closure** of A , denoted A^* , is the set of all strings of any length over A .

Theorem 1.1.1. Let A be any finite set. Then A^* is countably infinite.

Proof. That A^* is infinite is straightforward: since A is non-empty, take $a \in A$. Then $\{a, aa, aaa, \dots\} \subseteq A^*$.

To see that it is countable, we first write $|A| = n$. Now, consider the set of all strings of length 0. This is simply $\{\varepsilon\}$. Moreover, there are n strings of length 1, n^2 strings of length 2, n^3 strings of length 3, and so on. Thus, we map ε to 0, the strings of length 1 to $1, 2, \dots, n$, the strings of length 2 to $n+1, n+2, \dots, n+n^2$, the strings of length 3 to $n+n^2+1, n+n^2+2, \dots, n+n^2+n^3$, and so on. This is a bijection from A^* to \mathbb{N} , which completes the proof. \square

Definition 1.1.6. Given an alphabet A , a **formal language** or simply **language** L is any subset of A^* .

Theorem 1.1.2. Given an alphabet A , the set of languages over A is uncountable.

Proof. Suppose, by way of contradiction, that the set of languages were countable, i.e., that we can enumerate the set as $\{L_1, L_2, L_3, \dots\}$. Consider the set of all strings $\{s_1, s_2, s_3, \dots\}$. Let L be the language defined as follows:

$$s_i \in L \text{ if and only if } s_i \notin L_i$$

To see that L is not in the above list, consider s_i . If s_i is in L , then s_i is not in L_i , by construction, and $L \neq L_i$. Similarly, if s_i is not in L , then s_i must be in L_i , by construction, and $L \neq L_i$. In other words, for all i , $L \neq L_i$. Then L is not in the above list, which is a contradiction. Hence, the set of languages is uncountable. \square

All set operations, such as union, intersection, complement, set-difference, etc. can be applied to languages, since languages are simply subsets of a Kleene Closure of an alphabet.

Definition 1.1.7. Given two languages L_1 and L_2 , the concatenation $L_1 \cdot L_2$ is given by

$$L_1 \cdot L_2 = \{s \cdot t \mid s \in L_1 \text{ and } t \in L_2\}$$

Clearly, we have

$$\begin{aligned} L \cdot \emptyset &= \emptyset = \emptyset \cdot L \\ L \cdot \{\varepsilon\} &= L = \{\varepsilon\} \cdot L \end{aligned}$$

Note that $L_1 \cdot L_2$ is not the same as $L_1 \times L_2$. Let $L_1 = L_2 = \{\varepsilon, 0, 00\}$. Then

$$L_1 \times L_2 = \{(\varepsilon, \varepsilon), (\varepsilon, 0), (\varepsilon, 00), (0, \varepsilon), (0, 0), (0, 00), (00, \varepsilon), (00, 0), (00, 00)\}$$

whereas

$$L_1 \cdot L_2 = \{\varepsilon, 0, 00, 000, 0000\}$$

Definition 1.1.8. Given a language L , the **Kleene Closure** of L , L^* , is

$$L^* = \bigcup_{i=0}^{\infty} L^i$$

where

$$L^i = \begin{cases} \{\varepsilon\} & \text{if } i = 0 \\ L \cdot L^{i-1} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Note that, while 0^0 is normally left undefined, we define $\emptyset^0 = \{\varepsilon\}$.

Theorem 1.1.3. L^* is finite if and only if $L = \emptyset$ or $L = \{\varepsilon\}$.

Proof. If $L = \emptyset$, then $L^i = \emptyset^i = \emptyset$ for $i > 0$. Then

$$\begin{aligned} \emptyset^* &= \bigcup_{i=0}^{\infty} \emptyset^i \\ &= \emptyset^0 \cup \bigcup_{i=1}^{\infty} \emptyset^i \\ &= \{\varepsilon\} \cup \bigcup_{i=1}^{\infty} \emptyset \\ &= \{\varepsilon\} \end{aligned}$$

Similarly, if $L = \{\varepsilon\}$, then $L^i = \{\varepsilon\}$ for all i , and

$$\begin{aligned} \{\varepsilon\}^* &= \bigcup_{i=0}^{\infty} \{\varepsilon\}^i \\ &= \bigcup_{i=1}^{\infty} \{\varepsilon\} \\ &= \{\varepsilon\} \end{aligned}$$

However, if L is neither \emptyset nor $\{\varepsilon\}$, then there exists a string $s \in L$ with length at least 1. Then s, ss, sss, \dots , are in L^* , hence L^* is infinite. \square

1.2 Regular Languages

1.2.1 Finite Automata

Definition 1.2.1. A **Deterministic Finite-State Automata** (DFA) or **Finite-State Machine** is a quintuple $(A, Q, \tau, q_0, \mathcal{F})$ where

- A is the **alphabet**
- Q is a finite, non-empty **set of states**
- $\tau : Q \times A \rightarrow Q$ is the **transition function**
- q_0 is the **initial state**
- $\mathcal{F} \subseteq Q$ is the set of **final states**

We can extend τ as follows:

$$\tau^* : Q \times A^* \rightarrow Q$$

$$\tau^*(q, s) = \begin{cases} q & \text{if } s = \varepsilon \\ \tau^*(\tau(q, s_0), s') & \text{if } s = s_0 \cdot s' \end{cases}$$

We proceed informally and use τ to refer to τ^* .

Consider the following DFA:



The figure indicates that we begin at state q_0 . The double-circles for states q_1 and q_2 indicate that they are accepting or final states. An arrow indicates the state to move to after receiving an input. For example, if we receive the input string $abba$, we begin at state q_0 and receive a , so we move to state q_1 . We then receive b and stay in q_1 . We repeat this for the next symbol, b , and then move to q_2 upon receiving the final a . Since q_2 is a final state, we say that this DFA **accepts** the string $abba$.

We can represent the above DFA using a table, as follows:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0	0
q_1	q_2	q_1	1
q_2	q_3	q_2	1
q_3	q_0	q_3	0

The first column indicates the states, while the first row indicates the symbols. The final column indicates whether a state is accepting: 0 refers to a non-final state, 1 to a final state. The remaining values indicate the transition function τ , e.g. $\tau(q_0, a) = q_1$, indicated by the entry corresponding to row q_0 and column a . Finally, the arrow pointing to q_0 indicates that it is the starting position.

Definition 1.2.2. Let \tilde{D} be some DFA. Then $L(\tilde{D})$, the language accepted by the DFA, is

$$\{s \in A^* \mid \tau(q_0, s) \in \mathcal{F}\}$$

Definition 1.2.3. A language is **regular** if and only if there exists a DFA that accepts it.

Definition 1.2.4. A **Non-Deterministic Finite-State Automata** (NFA) is a quintuple $(A, Q, \tau, q_0, \mathcal{F})$ where

- A is the **alphabet**
- Q is a finite, non-empty **set of states**
- $\tau : Q \times A \rightarrow 2^Q$ is the **transition function**
- q_0 is the **initial state**
- $\mathcal{F} \subseteq Q$ is the set of **final states**

We can extend τ as follows:

$$\tau^* : 2^Q \times A^* \rightarrow 2^Q$$

$$\tau^*(P, s) = \begin{cases} P & \text{if } s = \varepsilon \\ \tau^* \left(\bigcup_{q \in P} \tau(q, s_0), s' \right) & \text{if } s = s_0 \cdot s' \end{cases}$$

We proceed informally and use τ to refer to τ^* . Consider the following NFA:



The diagrams for an NFA and DFA follow the same notation. However, the notation for the table differs slightly:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0	0
q_1	q_2q_3	\emptyset	1
q_2	q_3	q_2	1
q_3	q_0	q_3	0

The values of the transition function are now sets. We informally refer to the set $\{q_0\}$ by q_0 , and similarly the set $\{q_2, q_3\}$ by q_2q_3 . In some cases, to avoid ambiguity, we will use commas, e.g. we may represent $\{q_2, q_3\}$ as q_2, q_3 . We similarly say, given a string s , if there exists a path through an NFA that ends in a final state, we say that the NFA **accepts** s .

Similarly, we define the set of languages accepted by an NFA N , $L(N)$, as

$$L(N) = \{s \in A^* \mid \tau(q_0, s) \cap \mathcal{F} \neq \emptyset\}$$

It should be clear that each DFA is an NFA, but the reverse is not true. However, we can convert an NFA to a DFA on the powerset 2^Q by using the **subset construction**: begin with the initial state and traverse the NFA, adding unseen states to the left-most column until all paths have been exhausted. For example, with our NFA above, we begin with:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0	0

q_0 has already been seen, so we ignore it. q_1 is new, so we add it to the table:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0	
q_1			

We now visit the corresponding states of q_1 , which are q_2q_3 and \emptyset , both of which have not yet been visited.

	a	b	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0	
q_1	q_2q_3	\emptyset	
q_2q_3			
\emptyset			

When q_2 receives a , it transitions to state q_3 . When q_3 receives a , it transitions to state q_0 , so q_2q_3 transitions to q_0q_3 . Similarly, q_2q_3 transitions to state q_2q_3 when it receives b .

	a	b	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0	
q_1	q_2q_3	\emptyset	
q_2q_3	q_0q_3	q_2q_3	
\emptyset			

The empty set transitions to the empty set, by definition.

	a	b
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0
q_1	q_2q_3	\emptyset
q_2q_3	q_0q_3	q_2q_3
\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset

q_0q_3 has not yet been visited, so we add it to the left-most column:

	a	b
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0
q_1	q_2q_3	\emptyset
q_2q_3	q_0q_3	q_2q_3
\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset
q_0q_3		

Then we visit its corresponding states:

	a	b
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0
q_1	q_2q_3	\emptyset
q_2q_3	q_0q_3	q_2q_3
\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset
q_0q_3	q_0q_1	q_0q_3

Continuing, we end with the following DFA:

	a	b
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0
q_1	q_2q_3	\emptyset
q_2q_3	q_0q_3	q_2q_3
\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset
q_0q_3	q_0q_1	q_0q_3
q_0q_1	$q_1q_2q_3$	q_0
$q_1q_2q_3$	$q_0q_2q_3$	q_2q_3
$q_0q_2q_3$	$q_0q_1q_3$	$q_0q_2q_3$
$q_0q_1q_3$	$q_0q_1q_2q_3$	q_0q_3
$q_0q_1q_2q_3$	$q_0q_1q_2q_3$	$q_0q_2q_3$

However, we need to include the accepting states. The accepting states of the NFA are q_1 and q_2 , and thus any state including either state is accepting:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	q_0	0
q_1	q_2q_3	\emptyset	1
q_2q_3	q_0q_3	q_2q_3	1
\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset	0
q_0q_3	q_0q_1	q_0q_3	0
q_0q_1	$q_1q_2q_3$	q_0	1
$q_1q_2q_3$	$q_0q_2q_3$	q_2q_3	1
$q_0q_2q_3$	$q_0q_1q_3$	$q_0q_2q_3$	1
$q_0q_1q_3$	$q_0q_1q_2q_3$	q_0q_3	1
$q_0q_1q_2q_3$	$q_0q_1q_2q_3$	$q_0q_2q_3$	1

Note that an NFA does not necessarily admit a DFA with as many states. Consider the following example:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow 0$	$\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$	0	0
1	2	1	0
2	3	2	0
\vdots	\vdots	\vdots	\vdots
i	$i + 1$	i	0
\vdots	\vdots	\vdots	\vdots
$n - 1$	n	$n - 1$	0
n	1	n	1

The NFA above admits the following DFA:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow 0$	$\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$	0	0
$\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$	$\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$	$\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$	1

The above DFA contains only 2 states, despite the NFA containing $n + 1$ states.

That every NFA admits a DFA which accepts the same language shows that the class of languages denoted by DFAs, \mathcal{L}_{DFA} , is the same as the class of languages denoted by NFAs, \mathcal{L}_{NFA} , i.e, that

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{DFA}} = \mathcal{L}_{\text{NFA}}$$

For an NFA, there is no guarantee of a unique smallest NFA which accepts the same strings. However, for a DFA, such a notion exists.

Consider two states, p and q , and corresponding L_p and L_q , where L_p has initial state p and L_q has initial state q . We say that p and q are distinguishable if there exists a string s such that s is in L_p and not in L_q , or vice-versa. We use this notion to **reduce** a DFA.

Begin with a partition of Q into subsets \mathcal{F} and $Q - \mathcal{F}$, i.e., the accepting and rejecting states. For a pair of states p, q if the result of transitioning p and q falls into different partitions, we partition the subset and continue.

For example, given the following DFA:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow 0$	1	2	0
1	2	3	1
2	3	4	0
3	0	5	1
4	5	6	0
5	6	7	1
6	7	0	0
7	4	1	1

We have two partitions:

Rejecting	Accepting
0, 2, 4, 6	1, 3, 5, 7

Now, 0 gets sent to the accepting partition by a and to the rejecting partition by b . Similarly, 2, 4, and 6 get sent to the accepting partition by a and to the rejecting partition by b . Thus, they belong to the same partition.

In the same vein, 1 gets sent to the rejecting partition by a and to the accepting partition by b . Similarly, 3, 5, and 7 get sent to the rejecting partition by a and to the accepting partition by b . Thus, our next partition is

Rejecting	Accepting
0, 2, 4, 6	1, 3, 5, 7
0, 2, 4, 6	1, 3, 5, 7

That our row is the same as the preceding one indicates that we have finished, and now have a minimal DFA. Call the first subset p and the second q . When an element in p receives a , it is sent to q . When it receives b , it is sent to p . Similar logic for q gives our new DFA:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow p$	q	p	0
q	p	q	1

Recall that p began as a subset of the rejecting elements and q the accepting elements, which informs the last column of the above table.

Not all DFAs can be reduced. An obvious example is the above reduced DFA. For a less trivial example, consider the following DFA:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow 0$	1	2	0
1	2	3	1
2	3	4	0
3	0	5	1
4	5	6	0
5	6	7	1
6	7	0	0
7	4	2	1

Begin, as in the previous problem, with two partitions:

Rejecting	Accepting
0, 2, 4, 6	1, 3, 5, 7

As in the previous problem, 0, 2, 4, and 6 get sent to the same partition under a and b , respectively. Under a , 1, 3, 5, and 7 go to the rejecting partition. However, under b , 7 goes to the rejecting partition while 1, 3, and 5 go to the accepting partition, which means we must create a new partition for 7.

Rejecting	Accepting
0, 2, 4, 6	1, 3, 5, 7
0, 2, 4, 6	1, 3, 5 7

We continue the process, noting that there is no need to consider singletons, i.e., the partition $\{7\}$ is already in its finale state. Under a , 0, 2, and 4 get sent to the $\{1, 3, 5\}$ partition. Under b , they get sent to the $\{0, 2, 4, 6\}$ partition. However, 6 gets sent to the $\{7\}$ partition, and so it must be partitioned separately. Similarly, 1 and 3 get sent to the $\{0, 2, 4, 6\}$ partition under a , and to the $\{1, 3, 5\}$ partition under b . 5, on the other hand, gets sent to the $\{7\}$ partition, and must be partitioned separately. In total, we have:

Rejecting	Accepting
0, 2, 4, 6	1, 3, 5, 7
0, 2, 4, 6	1, 3, 5 7
0, 2, 4 6	1, 3 5 7

We continue:

Rejecting	Accepting
0, 2, 4, 6	1, 3, 5, 7
0, 2, 4, 6	1, 3, 5 7
0, 2, 4 6	1, 3 5 7
0, 2 4 6	1 3 5 7
0 2 4 6	1 3 5 7

Notice that the reduced DFA has 8 states, like the original! This means that the original DFA is already reduced, and cannot be reduced further.

1.2.2 Regular Expressions

Definition 1.2.5. Given an alphabet A , we define a **regular expression**

- (a)
 - $a \in A$ is a regular expression denoting the language $\{a\}$
 - ε is a regular expression denoting $\{\varepsilon\}$
 - \emptyset is a regular expression denoting \emptyset
- (b) If α and β are regular expressions denoting the languages $L(\alpha)$ and $L(\beta)$, respectively, then
 - $\alpha \cup \beta$ denotes $L(\alpha) \cup L(\beta)$
 - $\alpha \cdot \beta$ denotes $L(\alpha) \cdot L(\beta)$
 - α^* denotes $L(\alpha)^*$

By convention, we define precedence of the operations \cup , \cdot , and $*$ in that order. Thus,

$$b \cdot a^* \cup c = (b \cdot (a^*)) \cup c$$

A regular expression α over an alphabet A denotes the set of languages which accept α . Thus, we would like to construct an NFA \tilde{N} such that $L(\tilde{N}) = L(\alpha)$.

The following NFA rejects all strings but a :

	a	$b \neq a$	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	\emptyset	0
q_1	\emptyset	\emptyset	1

An NFA for only ε would appear as:

	$c \in A$	
$\rightarrow q_0$	\emptyset	1

And finally, an NFA for only \emptyset is:

	$c \in A$	
$\rightarrow q_0$	\emptyset	0

Now, suppose we have an NFA for α and β . We wish to determine NFAs for $\alpha \cup \beta$, $\alpha \cdot \beta$, and α^* .

We define

$$\begin{aligned} N_{\tilde{\alpha}} &= (A, Q_{\alpha}, \tau_{\alpha}, q_0, \mathcal{F}_{\alpha}) \\ N_{\tilde{\beta}} &= (A, Q_{\beta}, \tau_{\beta}, q_0, \mathcal{F}_{\beta}) \end{aligned}$$

such that

$$\begin{aligned} L(N_{\tilde{\alpha}}) &= L(\alpha) \\ L(N_{\tilde{\beta}}) &= L(\beta) \\ Q_{\alpha} \cap Q_{\beta} &= \{q_0\} \end{aligned}$$

and clarify that these automata are non-returning, i.e., that $q_0 \notin \tau(q_0, s)$ for any s of length 1 or greater.

We construct the **Union**

$$N_{\tilde{\alpha \cup \beta}} = (A, Q_{\alpha \cup \beta}, \tau_{\alpha \cup \beta}, q_0, \mathcal{F}_{\alpha \cup \beta})$$

where $Q_{\alpha \cup \beta} = Q_{\alpha} \cup Q_{\beta}$, $\mathcal{F}_{\alpha \cup \beta} = \mathcal{F}_{\alpha} \cup \mathcal{F}_{\beta}$ and, for all $q \in Q_{\alpha \cup \beta}$ and $a \in A$

$$\tau_{\alpha \cup \beta}(q, a) = \begin{cases} \tau_{\alpha}(q_0, a) \cup \tau_{\beta}(q_0, a) & \text{if } q = q_0 \\ \tau_{\alpha}(q, a) & \text{if } q \in Q_{\alpha} - \{q_0\} \\ \tau_{\beta}(q, a) & \text{if } q \in Q_{\beta} - \{q_0\} \end{cases}$$

The **Concatenation** is constructed

$$N_{\alpha\beta} = (A, Q_{\alpha\beta}, \tau_{\alpha\beta}, q_0, \mathcal{F}_{\alpha\beta})$$

where $Q_{\alpha\beta} = Q_\alpha \cup Q_\beta$,

$$\mathcal{F}_{\alpha\beta} = \begin{cases} \mathcal{F}_\beta & \text{if } q_0 \notin \mathcal{F}_\beta \\ \mathcal{F}_\alpha \cup (\mathcal{F}_\beta - \{q_0\}) & \text{if } q_0 \in \mathcal{F}_\beta \end{cases}$$

and, for all $q \in Q_{\alpha\beta}$ and $a \in A$

$$\tau_{\alpha\beta}(q, a) = \begin{cases} \tau_\alpha(q, a) \cup \tau_\beta(q_0, a) & \text{if } q \in \mathcal{F}_\alpha \\ \tau_\alpha(q, a) & \text{if } q \in Q_\alpha - \mathcal{F}_\alpha \\ \tau_\beta(q, a) & \text{if } q \in Q_\beta - \{q_0\} \end{cases}$$

Finally, the **Kleene Closure** is constructed

$$N_{\alpha^*} = (A, Q_{\alpha^*}, \tau_{\alpha^*}, q_0, \mathcal{F}_{\alpha^*})$$

where $Q_{\alpha^*} = Q_\alpha$, $\mathcal{F}_{\alpha^*} = \mathcal{F}_\alpha \cup \{q_0\}$ and, for all $q \in Q_{\alpha^*}$ and $a \in A$

$$\tau_{\alpha^*}(q, a) = \begin{cases} \tau_\alpha(q, a) \cup \tau_\alpha(q_0, a) & \text{if } q \in \mathcal{F}_\alpha \\ \tau_\alpha(q, a) & \text{if } q \in Q_\alpha - \mathcal{F}_\alpha \end{cases}$$

This allows us to construct NFAs from a regular expression. Suppose we have a regular expression ab over $\{a, b\}$. Then we have

NFA for a			
	a	b	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	\emptyset	0
q_1	\emptyset	\emptyset	1

NFA for b			
	a	b	
$\rightarrow q_0$	\emptyset	q_2	0
q_2	\emptyset	\emptyset	1

Applying the above construction for concatenation gives

NFA for ab			
	a	b	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	\emptyset	0
q_1	\emptyset	q_2	0
q_2	\emptyset	\emptyset	1

1.2.3 Solutions of Certain Language Equations

Given a regular expression, we can form an NFA which admits the same language by solving **Language Equations**. We show the following lemma before proceeding to examples:

Lemma 1. If $X = L \cdot X \cup M$ then $X = L^* \cdot M$ is a solution, and is unique if $\varepsilon \notin L$.

Proof. Clearly, $L^* \cdot M$ is a solution, since

$$L^* \cdot M = L \cdot (L^* \cdot M) \cup M$$

. To prove uniqueness, suppose s_1 and s_2 are distinct solutions. There must exist a shortest-length string in s_1 , say s . \square

Consider the following NFA:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow 1$	2	1, 3	0
2	\emptyset	3	0
3	2, 3	1	1

This admits the following set of equations

$$X_1 = aX_2 \cup bX_1 \cup bX_3 \quad (1)$$

$$X_2 = bX_3 \quad (2)$$

$$X_3 = aX_2 \cup aX_3 \cup bX_1 \cup \varepsilon \quad (3)$$

We substitute (2) into (1) and (3):

$$X_1 = abX_3 \cup bX_1 \cup bX_3$$

$$X_3 = abX_3 \cup aX_3 \cup bX_1 \cup \varepsilon$$

which we rewrite as

$$X_1 = (ab \cup b)X_3 \cup bX_1$$

$$X_3 = (ab \cup a)X_3 \cup bX_1 \cup \varepsilon$$

We now apply our lemma to the equation for X_3

$$X_1 = (ab \cup b)X_3 \cup bX_1$$

$$X_3 = (ab \cup a)^*(bX_1 \cup \varepsilon)$$

We substitute X_3 into the equation for X_1

$$\begin{aligned} X_1 &= (ab \cup b)(ab \cup a)^*(bX_1 \cup \varepsilon) \cup bX_1 \\ &= ((ab \cup b)(ab \cup a)^* \cup b) X_1 \cup (ab \cup b)(ab \cup a)^* \cup bX_1 \\ &= ((ab \cup b)(ab \cup a)^* \cup b) X_1 \cup (ab \cup b)(ab \cup a)^* \\ &= ((ab \cup b)(ab \cup a)^* \cup b)^* (ab \cup b)(ab \cup a)^* \end{aligned}$$

Consider the example:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow 1$	2	3	0
2	2	3	0
3	2	3	1

This admits the following system of equations:

$$X_1 = aX_2 \cup bX_3$$

$$X_2 = aX_2 \cup bX_3$$

$$X_3 = aX_2 \cup bX_3 \cup \varepsilon$$

From our lemma, we have $X_2 = a^*bX_3$:

$$X_1 = aa^*bX_3 \cup bX_3$$

$$X_3 = aa^*bX_3 \cup bX_3 \cup \varepsilon$$

which can be simplified:

$$X_1 = (aa^*b \cup b)X_3$$

$$X_3 = (aa^*b \cup b)X_3 \cup \varepsilon$$

Applying our lemma to X_3 , we have

$$X_3 = (aa^*b \cup b)^*$$

Substituting into X_1 gives

$$X_1 = (aa^*b \cup b)(aa^*b \cup b)^*$$

One final example:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow 1$	\emptyset	$1, 2$	1
2	1	\emptyset	1

$$X_1 = bX_1 \cup bX_2 \cup \varepsilon$$

$$X_2 = aX_1 \cup \varepsilon$$

Substituting our equation for X_2 into X_1 gives

$$\begin{aligned} X_1 &= bX_1 \cup b(aX_1 \cup \varepsilon) \cup \varepsilon \\ &= (b \cup ba)X_1 \cup b \cup \varepsilon \\ &= (b \cup ba)^*(b \cup \varepsilon) \end{aligned}$$

1.2.4 Regular Grammars

Suppose we have a DFA

$$\tilde{D} = (A, Q, \tau, q_0, \mathcal{F})$$

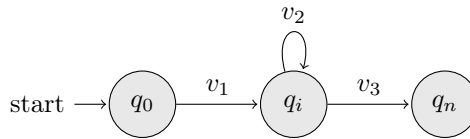
with $|Q| = n$. Consider the following set of equations

$$\begin{aligned} q_1 &= \tau(q_0, a_1) \\ q_2 &= \tau(q_1, a_2) \\ &\vdots \\ q_i &= \tau(q_{i-1}, a_i) \\ &\vdots \\ q_{n-1} &= \tau(q_{n-2}, a_{n-1}) \\ q_n &= \tau(q_{n-1}, a_n) \end{aligned}$$

Notice that we have $n + 1$ states above, but only n states in Q . Then, by the Pidgeonhole Principle, there must be some state q_i that is visited twice. In other words, there exist an i, j with $i < j$ such that $q_i = q_j$. We then consider a string $s = a_1a_2 \dots a_n$. Let $v_1 = a_1a_2 \dots a_i$, $v_2 = a_{i+1}a_{i+2} \dots a_j$, and $v_3 = a_{j+1}a_{j+2} \dots a_n$. We see that

$$\tau(q_0, s) = \tau(q_0, v_1v_2^kv_3)$$

for all $k \geq 0$.



1.3 Accepted by Turing Machines

1.4 Exercise Set 1

Exercise 1: Construct DFAs for the following NFAs using the subset construction:

(a)		a		(b)		a	b	c		(c)		a	b	c	
	$\rightarrow 1$	2	0		$\rightarrow 1$	2	2	2	1		$\rightarrow 1$	2	2	2	1
	2	3	0		2	3	1	1, 2	1		2	3	1	2, 3	1
	3	4	0		3	4	3	\emptyset	1		3	4	3	\emptyset	1
	4	5	0		4	5	4	4	1		4	5	4	4	1
	5	6	0		5	1	5	5	1		5	1	5	5	1
	6	7	0												
	7	1, 2	1												

Solution.

(a)		a		(b)		a	b	c	
	$\rightarrow 1$	2	0		$\rightarrow 1$	2	2	2	1
	2	3	0		2	3	1	1, 2	1
	3	4	0		3	4	3	\emptyset	1
	4	5	0		1, 2	2, 3	1, 2	1, 2	1
	5	6	0		4	5	4	4	1
	6	7	0		\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset	0
	7	1, 2	1		2, 3	3, 4	1, 3	1, 2	1
	1, 2	2, 3	0		5	1	5	5	1
	2, 3	3, 4	0		3, 4	4, 5	3, 4	4	1
	3, 4	4, 5	0		1, 3	2, 4	2, 3	2	1
	4, 5	5, 6	0		4, 5	1, 5	4, 5	4, 5	1
	5, 6	6, 7	0		2, 4	3, 5	1, 4	1, 2, 4	1
	6, 7	1, 2, 7	1		1, 5	1, 2	2, 5	2, 5	1
	1, 2, 7	1, 2, 3	1		3, 5	1, 4	3, 5	5	1
	1, 2, 3	2, 3, 4	0		1, 4	2, 5	2, 4	2, 4	1
	2, 3, 4	3, 4, 5	0		1, 2, 4	2, 3, 5	1, 2, 4	1, 2, 4	1
	3, 4, 5	4, 5, 6	0		2, 5	1, 3	1, 5	1, 2, 5	1
	4, 5, 6	5, 6, 7	0		2, 3, 5	1, 3, 4	1, 3, 5	1, 2, 5	1
	5, 6, 7	1, 2, 6, 7	1		1, 2, 5	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 5	1, 2, 5	1
	1, 2, 6, 7	1, 2, 3, 7	1		1, 3, 4	2, 4, 5	2, 3, 4	2, 4	1
	1, 2, 3, 7	1, 2, 3, 4	1		1, 3, 5	1, 2, 4	2, 3, 5	2, 5	1
	1, 2, 3, 4	2, 3, 4, 5	0		1, 2, 3	2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3	1, 2	1
	2, 3, 4, 5	3, 4, 5, 6	0		2, 4, 5	1, 3, 5	1, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5	1
	3, 4, 5, 6	4, 5, 6, 7	0		2, 3, 4	3, 4, 5	1, 3, 4	1, 2, 4	1
	4, 5, 6, 7	1, 2, 5, 6, 7	1		1, 4, 5	1, 2, 5	2, 4, 5	2, 4, 5	1
	1, 2, 5, 6, 7	1, 2, 3, 6, 7	1		1, 2, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 5	1, 2, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5	1
	1, 2, 3, 6, 7	1, 2, 3, 4, 7	1		3, 4, 5	1, 4, 5	3, 4, 5	4, 5	1
	1, 2, 3, 4, 7	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1		1, 2, 3, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 5	1, 2, 5	1
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2, 3, 4, 5, 6	0		1, 2, 3, 4	2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 4	1
	2, 3, 4, 5, 6	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	0		2, 3, 4, 5	1, 3, 4, 5	1, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5	1
	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7	1		1, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5	2, 3, 4, 5	2, 4, 5	1
	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7	1						
	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	1						
	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	1						
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	1						
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	0						
	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	1						
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	1						

(c)		a	b	c	
	$\rightarrow 1$	2	2	2	1
	2	3	1	2, 3	1
	3	4	3	\emptyset	1
	2, 3	3, 4	1, 3	2, 3	1
	4	5	4	4	1
	\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset	0
	3, 4	4, 5	3, 4	4	1
	1, 3	2, 4	2, 3	2	1
	5	1	5	5	1
	4, 5	1, 5	4, 5	4, 5	1
	2, 4	3, 5	1, 4	2, 3	1
	1, 5	6	2, 5	2, 5	1
	3, 5	1, 4	3, 5	5	1
	1, 4	2, 5	2, 4	2, 4	1
	6	2, 3	1, 2	2, 3	1
	2, 5	1, 3	1, 5	2, 3, 5	1
	2, 3, 5	1, 3, 4	1, 3, 5	2, 3, 5	1
	1, 3, 4	2, 4, 5	2, 3, 4	2, 4	1
	1, 4, 5	1, 2, 4	2, 4, 5	2, 4, 5	1
	2, 4, 5	1, 3, 5	1, 4, 5	2, 3, 4, 5	1
	2, 3, 4	3, 4, 5	1, 3, 4	2, 3, 4	1
	1, 2, 4	2, 3, 5	1, 2, 4	2, 3, 4	1
	1, 3, 5	1, 2, 4	2, 3, 5	2, 5	1
	2, 3, 4, 5	1, 3, 4, 5	1, 3, 4, 5	2, 3, 4, 5	1
	3, 4, 5	1, 4, 5	3, 4, 5	4, 5	1
	1, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5	2, 3, 4, 5	2, 4, 5	1
	1, 2, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 5	1, 2, 4, 5	2, 3, 4, 5	1
	1, 2, 3, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 5	2, 3, 5	1
	1, 2, 3, 4	2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	2, 3, 4	1

□

Exercise 2: Reduce the following DFAs:

(a)		a	b	
	$\rightarrow 1$	2	3	0
	2	3	2	1
	3	4	5	0
	4	1	8	1
	5	6	7	0
	6	7	6	1
	7	8	1	0
	8	5	4	1

(b)		a	b	
	$\rightarrow 1$	2	3	0
	2	3	2	1
	3	4	5	0
	4	1	8	1
	5	6	7	0
	6	7	6	1
	7	8	1	0
	8	5	5	1

(c) Your result of 1(b).

(d) Your result of 1(c).

Solution.

(a)	Rejecting	Accepting
	1, 3, 5, 7	2, 4, 6, 8
	1, 3, 5, 7	2, 4, 6, 8

Setting $p = \{1, 3, 5, 7\}$ and $q = \{2, 4, 6, 8\}$:

	a	b	
$\rightarrow p$	q	p	0
q	p	q	1

(b)	Rejecting	Accepting
	1, 3, 5, 7	2, 4, 6, 8
	1, 3, 5, 7	2, 4, 6 8
	1, 3, 5 7	2, 6 4 8
	1 3 5 7	2 6 4 8

The DFA is already reduced.

(c) We will rename the states for simplicity:

	a	b	c	
$\rightarrow 1$	2	2	2	1
2	3	1	6	1
3	4	3	0	1
6	7	6	6	1
4	5	4	4	1
0	0	0	0	0
7	8	9	6	1
5	1	5	5	1
8	10	8	4	1
9	1	7	2	1
10	12	10	10	1
11	13	14	15	1
12	6	16	16	1
13	14	13	5	1
14	16	11	11	1
15	17	15	15	1
16	9	12	18	1
17	19	20	18	1
18	21	18	18	1
19	22	23	11	1
20	15	17	16	1
21	23	21	6	1
22	20	24	25	1
23	26	19	15	1
24	18	22	22	1
25	27	25	25	1
26	24	26	10	1
27	28	27	18	1
28	29	28	15	1
29	30	30	25	1
30	25	29	22	1

Rejecting	Accepting									
0	1, 2, 3, ..., 30									
0	1, 2, 4, 5, ..., 30								2	3
0	1, 4, 5, ..., 30								2	3
0	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, ..., 30						1	9	2	3
0	4, 6, 8, 10, ..., 30	13	16	7	5	1	9	2	3	

□

Exercise 3: Construct NFAs for the following regular expressions using the construction given in class; then find the corresponding DFAs; then reduce them:

(a) $(a^2 \cup a^3 \cup a^5)^*$ over $\{a\}$

(c) $(abc \cup ab)^*aa^*(ab)^*$ over $\{a, b, c\}$

(b) $(a^2)^*(a^3)^*(a^5)^*$ over $\{a\}$

(d) $0^*(00 \cup 11)^*(01 \cup 10)^*1^*$ over $\{0, 1\}$

Solution.

(a) NFA for a

	a	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	0
q_1	\emptyset	1

NFA for a

	a	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_2	0
q_2	\emptyset	1

Concatenate these to get a^2

NFA for a^2		
	a	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	0
q_1	q_2	0
q_2	\emptyset	1

Similarly, we have

NFA for a^3		
	a	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_3	0
q_3	q_4	0
q_4	q_5	0
q_5	\emptyset	1

NFA for a^5		
	a	
$\rightarrow q_0$	q_6	0
q_6	q_7	0
q_7	q_8	0
q_8	q_9	0
q_9	\emptyset	1

(b)

□

Exercise 4: Construct regular expressions for the languages accepted by the following automata:

(a)

		a	b	c	
\rightarrow	1	2	2	2	1
	2	3	1	2, 3	1
	3	4	3	\emptyset	1
	4	1	4	4	1

(b)

		a	b	
\rightarrow	A	B	C	0
	B	A	C	0
	C	B	A	1

Solution. (a)

$$\begin{aligned}
X_1 &= aX_2 \cup bX_2 \cup cX_2 \cup \varepsilon \\
X_2 &= aX_3 \cup bX_1 \cup c(X_2 \cup X_3) \cup \varepsilon \\
X_3 &= aX_4 \cup bX_3 \cup \varepsilon \\
X_4 &= aX_1 \cup bX_4 \cup cX_4 \cup \varepsilon
\end{aligned}$$

Solving for X_4

$$\begin{aligned}
X_4 &= aX_1 \cup bX_4 \cup cX_4 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= aX_1 \cup (b \cup c)X_4 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= (b \cup c)X_4 \cup aX_1 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= (b \cup c)^*(aX_1 \cup \varepsilon) \\
&= (b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup (b \cup c)^*
\end{aligned}$$

Similarly,

$$\begin{aligned}
X_3 &= aX_4 \cup bX_3 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= a((b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup (b \cup c)^*) \cup bX_3 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= a(b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup a(b \cup c)^* \cup bX_3 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= bX_3 \cup a(b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup a(b \cup c)^* \cup \varepsilon \\
&= b^*(a(b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup a(b \cup c)^* \cup \varepsilon) \\
&= b^*a(b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup b^*a(b \cup c)^* \cup b^*
\end{aligned}$$

Solving X_2 :

$$\begin{aligned}
X_2 &= aX_3 \cup bX_1 \cup c(X_2 \cup X_3) \cup \varepsilon \\
&= (a \cup c)X_3 \cup bX_1 \cup cX_2 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= (a \cup c)(b^*a(b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup b^*a(b \cup c)^* \cup b^*) \cup bX_1 \cup cX_2 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= cX_2 \cup (a \cup c)(b^*a(b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup b^*a(b \cup c)^* \cup b^*) \cup bX_1 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= c^*((a \cup c)(b^*a(b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup b^*a(b \cup c)^* \cup b^*) \cup bX_1 \cup \varepsilon) \\
&= c^*(a \cup c)(b^*a(b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup c^*b^*a(b \cup c)^* \cup c^*b^*) \cup c^*bX_1 \cup c^* \\
&= c^*(a \cup c)b^*a(b \cup c)^*aX_1 \cup c^*(a \cup c)(c^*b^*a(b \cup c)^* \cup c^*b^*) \cup c^*bX_1 \cup c^* \\
&= (c^*(a \cup c)b^*a(b \cup c)^*a \cup c^*b)X_1 \cup c^*(a \cup c)(c^*b^*a(b \cup c)^* \cup c^*b^*) \cup c^*
\end{aligned}$$

Finally, solving for X_1 :

$$\begin{aligned}
X_1 &= aX_2 \cup bX_2 \cup cX_2 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= (a \cup b \cup c)X_2 \cup \varepsilon \\
&= (a \cup b \cup c)((c^*(a \cup c)b^*a(b \cup c)^*a \cup c^*b)X_1 \cup c^*(a \cup c)(c^*b^*a(b \cup c)^* \cup c^*b^*) \cup c^*) \cup \varepsilon \\
&= (a \cup b \cup c)(c^*(a \cup c)b^*a(b \cup c)^*a \cup c^*b)X_1 \cup (a \cup b \cup c)c^*(a \cup c)(c^*b^*a(b \cup c)^* \cup c^*b^*) \cup c^* \cup \varepsilon \\
&= ((a \cup b \cup c)(c^*(a \cup c)b^*a(b \cup c)^*a \cup c^*b))^* ((a \cup b \cup c)c^*(a \cup c)(c^*b^*a(b \cup c)^* \cup c^*b^*) \cup c^*) \cup \varepsilon
\end{aligned}$$

(b)

$$\begin{aligned}
X_A &= aX_B \cup bX_C \\
X_B &= aX_A \cup bX_C \\
X_C &= aX_B \cup bX_A \cup \varepsilon
\end{aligned}$$

Plugging in the equation for X_C into X_B

$$\begin{aligned}
X_B &= aX_A \cup b(aX_B \cup bX_A \cup \varepsilon) \\
&= aX_A \cup baX_B \cup b^2X_A \cup b \\
&= baX_B \cup (ba \cup b^2)X_A \cup b \\
&= (ba)^*((ba \cup b^2)X_A \cup b) \\
&= (ba)^*(ba \cup b^2)X_A \cup (ba)^*b
\end{aligned}$$

We substitute back into X_C :

$$\begin{aligned}
X_C &= aX_B \cup bX_A \cup \varepsilon \\
&= a((ba)^*(ba \cup b^2)X_A \cup (ba)^*b) \cup bX_A \cup \varepsilon
\end{aligned}$$

We now substitute the new equations for X_B and X_C into the equation for X_A

$$\begin{aligned}
X_A &= aX_B \cup bX_C \\
&= a((ba)^*(ba \cup b^2)X_A \cup (ba)^*b) \cup b(a((ba)^*(ba \cup b^2)X_A \cup (ba)^*b) \cup bX_A \cup \varepsilon) \\
&= a(ba)^*(ba \cup b^2)X_A \cup a(ba)^*b \cup ba((ba)^*(ba \cup b^2)X_A \cup (ba)^*b) \cup b^2X_A \cup b \\
&= (a(ba)^*(ba \cup b^2) \cup ba(ba)^*(ba \cup b^2) \cup b^2)X_A \cup bab(ba)^*b \cup b^2X_A \cup b \\
&= (a(ba)^*(ba \cup b^2) \cup ba(ba)^*(ba \cup b^2) \cup b^2)^*bab(ba)^*b \cup b^2X_A \cup b
\end{aligned}$$

□

2 Exam Cheatsheets

2.1 Exam 1

2.1.1 Converting an NFA to a DFA

Begin with the initial state. Apply the transitions and add any newly visited states. Stop when no new states can be visited.

2.1.2 Reducing a DFA

Partition all states into accepting vs rejecting. Apply all transitions to a “representative” from a partition, then apply the transitions to the remaining members of the partition. If a member differs, move it to a new partition.

2.1.3 Converting a Regular Expression to an NFA

		a	$b \neq a$	
NFA for a :	$\rightarrow q_0$	q_1	\emptyset	0
	q_1	\emptyset	\emptyset	1

		$c \in A$	
NFA for ε :	$\rightarrow q_0$	\emptyset	1

		$c \in A$	
NFA for \emptyset :	$\rightarrow q_0$	\emptyset	0

Union

Union initial states, copy remaining states from α and β . Final states are final states from α and β .

Concatenation

For final states of α , union the state from α with the initial state from β . Copy non-final states from α and non-initial states from β . Final states:

If the initial state is rejecting in β , final states are final states from β .

If the initial state is accepting in β , final states are final states from α and β , except the initial state in β .

Kleene Closure

Union final states with the initial state. Copy non-final states. Final states are final states from α and the initial state.

2.1.4 Converting an NFA to a Regular Expression

Set up system of equations. Solve for equation corresponding to initial state. Remember the lemma: if

$$X = LX \cup M$$

then

$$X = L^*M$$