



Chain-based DFA Deflation

— Novel Approaches for Fast and Scalable Regular Expression Matching

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Outline



- ❑ Background
 - ❑ Significance
 - why research regular expression (regex) matching?
 - ❑ Challenges
 - can we solve the problems of regex matching?
- ❑ Motivation
 - ❑ Observation
 - the feature of DFA (Deterministic Finite Automaton)
- ❑ Algorithms
 - ❑ Inside chain
 - D^2FA , A-DFA
 - FEACAN, Cluster-DFA, RCDFA
 - ❑ Inside chain & inter chain
 - Chain-based DFA deflation

- ❑ Conclusion





Background: Why Regular Expressions Acceleration?

- ❑ Regular expressions are now widely used
 - ❑ firewalls, filtering, authentication and monitoring
 - ❑ network intrusion detection/prevention systems
 - ❑ layer 7 switches, traffic billing, load balancing
 - ❑ content-based traffic management and routing
- ❑ Regular expression matching is expensive
 - ❑ space: large amount of memory
 - ❑ bandwidth: requires 1+ state traversal per input character
- ❑ Regular expression matching is performance bottleneck
 - ❑ in enterprise switches from Cisco, etc
 - ❑ Cisco security appliances
 - ❑ Use DFA, 1+ GB memory, still sub-gigabit throughput

Need to accelerate regular expression matching!





state explosion

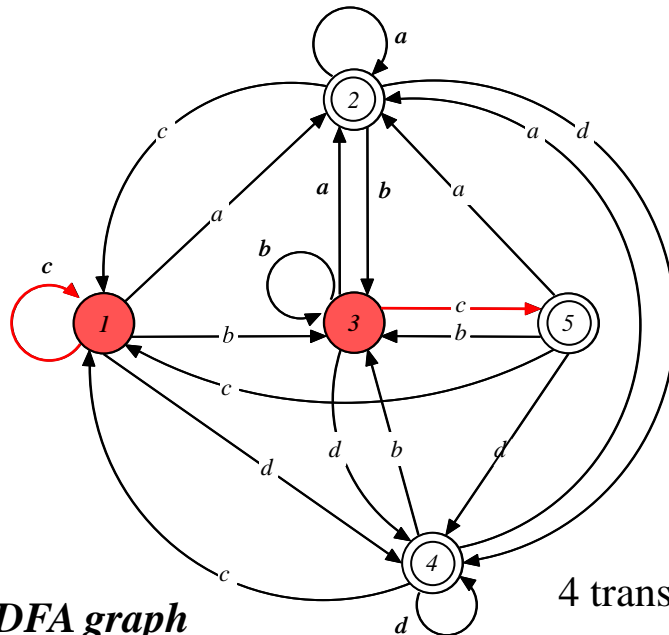
- traditionally, (construction + execution) time is the metric, e.g.
 - in networking context, execution time is critical
 - also, there may be thousands of regular expression patterns
- DFAs are fast
- but can have exponentially large number of states
 - algorithms exist to minimize number of states
 - still 1) low performance and 2) gigabytes of memory
- How to achieve high performance?
- ASIC/FPGA/TCAM
 - on-chip memory unit provides ample bandwidth
-





Background: Motivation

- How to represent DFA more compactly?
 - cannot reduce the number of states
 - how about reducing the number of transitions?
 - every state is consist of 256 next-hop transitions
 - if use a byte to represent a state ID, then need 256 bytes per state
 - state similarity: almost every state can share the same next-state transitions with multiple other states for most input characters (real world datasets)



DFA graph

4 transitions per state

RegEx: $a^+, b+c, c^*d^+$

Look at state pairs:
there are many **common transitions**.
How to remove them?





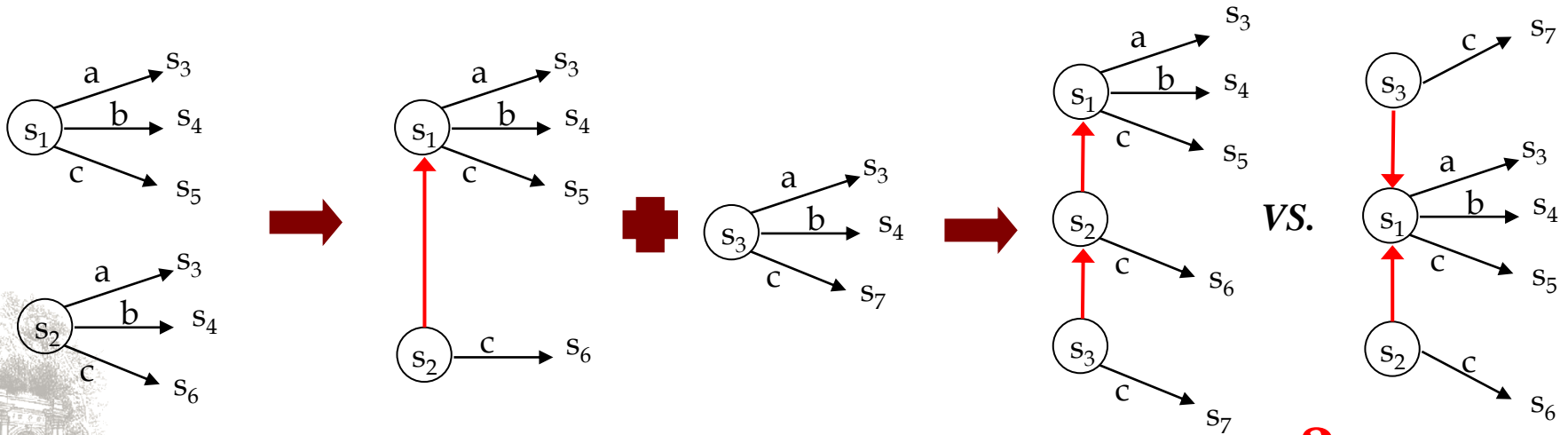
Algorithm: D²FA



□ Delay input DFA

□ introduce *default transition*

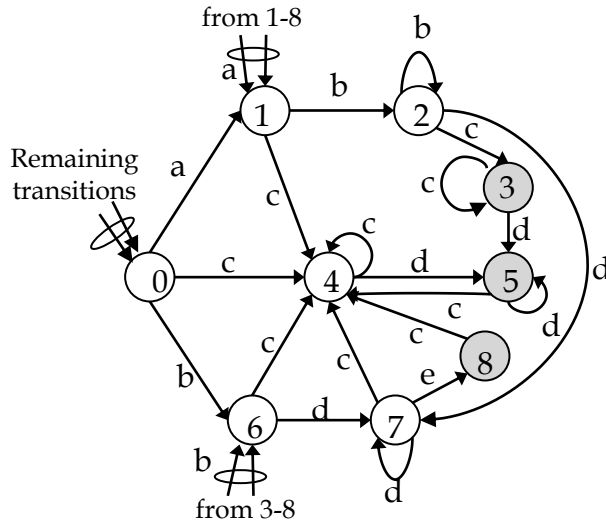
- remove the common transitions between states
- but introduce one more memory access if default transition is taken
- aim to remove as many transitions as possible, and make as less default transitions as possible per input character



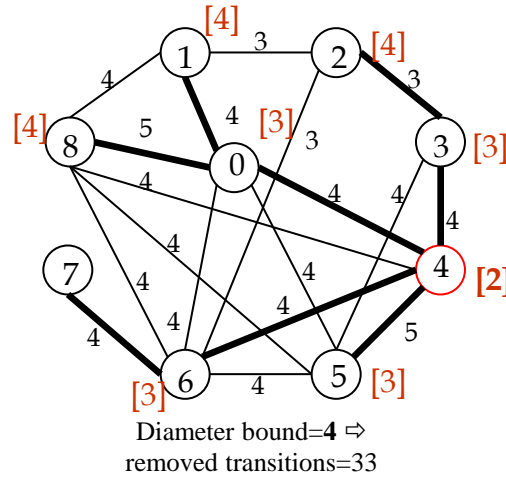
Algorithm: D²FA Construction



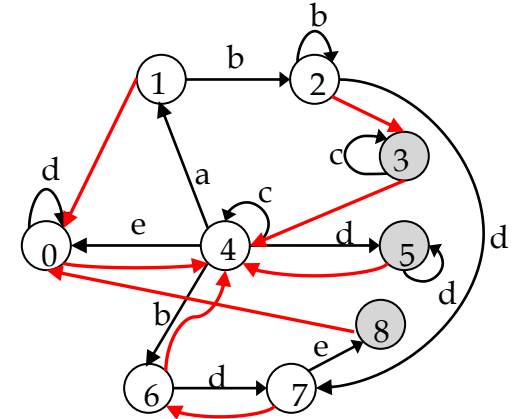
DFA



Space reduction graph

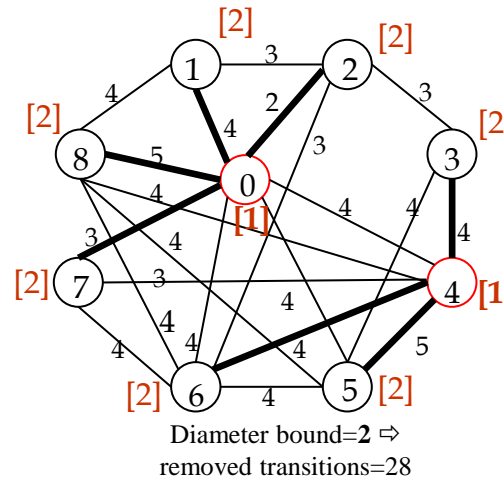


D²FA



Traversal time= $O((D/2+1)N)$
Time complexity= $O(n^2 \log n)$
Space complexity= $O(n^2)$

RegEx: ab^+c^+ , cd^+ and bd^+e





□ Advanced D²FA

- **Forward** transitions:

- **Backward** transitions:

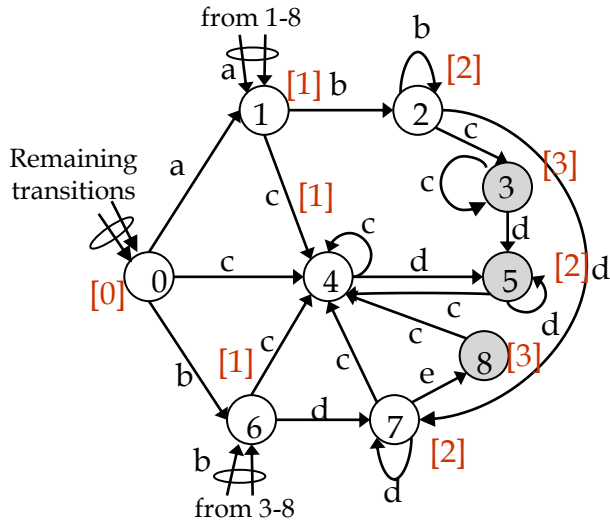
- RegEx:** ab^+c^+, cd^+ and bd^+e



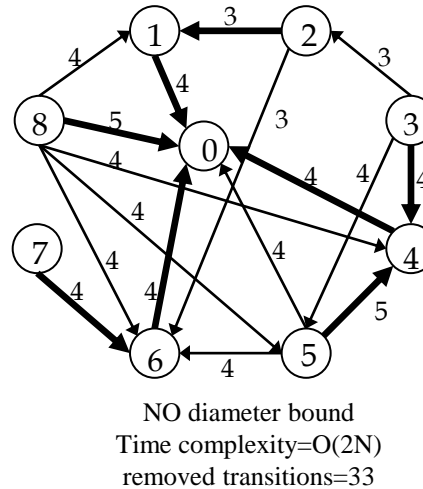
Algorithm: A-DFA Construction



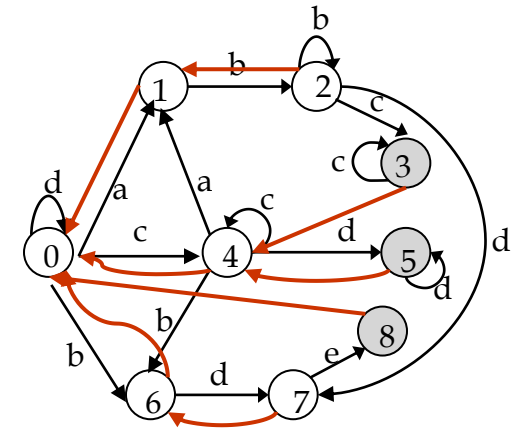
DFA



Oriented space reduction graph



A-DFA



RegEx: ab^+c^+ , cd^+ and bd^+e

Traversal time= $O(2N)$
Time complexity= $O(n^2)$
Space complexity= $O(n)$





Algorithm: D²FA & A-DFA

□ Pros

- good compression ratio
 - over 95%
- good worst-case speed
 - $O(2N)$ complexity for A-DFA

□ Cons

- inefficient hardware implementation
 - non-deterministic transition calculation
 - per input character requires comparing all the labeled transitions in current state, before taking the default transition
- non-deterministic and unbound memory access times per input character
 - transition comparisons are recursively done among all states in the default path, until a non-default transition is found

How to keep pros of D²FA and overcome the cons!





DFA graph vs. DFA matrix



□ DFA matrix $\Delta_{N \times M}$

□ regular expressions

① $def[^ef]^*add$

② $def[^df]^*bee$

③ $def[^de]^*cff$

□ alphabet

□ $\Sigma = \{a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h\}$

□ $N = 20, M = |\Sigma| = 8$

□ state

□ character

□ (next-state) transition

Character dimension

	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>h</i>
<i>0</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<i>1</i>	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
<i>2</i>	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0
<i>3</i>	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	3
<i>4</i>	4	5	6	10	8	9	3	3
<i>5</i>	4	5	6	7	11	9	3	3
<i>6</i>	4	5	6	7	8	12	3	3
<i>7</i>	13	14	14	7	2	0	14	14
<i>8</i>	8	15	8	1	8	0	8	8
<i>9</i>	9	9	16	1	0	9	9	9
<i>10</i>	13	14	14	17 ¹	2	0	14	14
<i>11</i>	8	15	8	1	18 ²	0	8	8
<i>12</i>	9	9	16	1	0	19 ³	9	9
<i>13</i>	13	14	14	10	0	0	14	14
<i>14</i>	13	14	14	7	0	0	14	14
<i>15</i>	8	15	8	1	11	0	8	8
<i>16</i>	9	9	16	1	0	12	9	9
<i>17</i>	13	14	14	7	2	0	14	14
<i>18</i>	8	15	8	1	8	0	8	8
<i>19</i>	9	9	16	1	0	9	9	9

State dimension

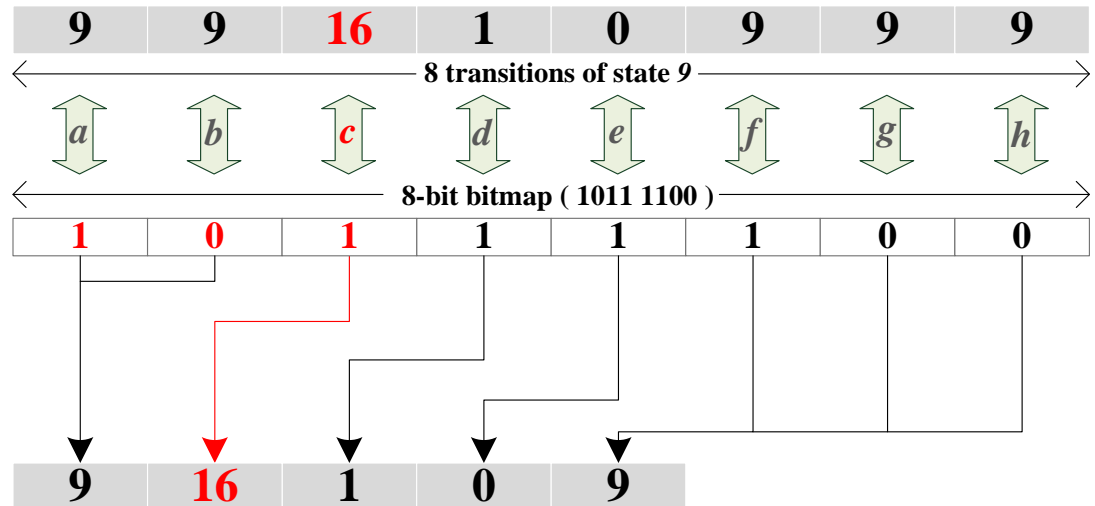




□ Bitmap technique

- Guaranteed deterministic and acceptable memory access

character	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
state	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	3
4	4	5	6	10	8	9	3	3
5	4	5	6	7	11	9	3	3
6	4	5	6	7	8	12	3	3
7	13	14	14	7	2	0	14	14
8	8	15	8	1	8	0	8	8
9	9	9	16	1	0	9	9	9
10	13	14	14	17 ¹	2	0	14	14
11	8	15	8	1	18 ²	0	8	8
12	9	9	16	1	0	19 ³	9	9
13	13	14	14	10	0	0	14	14
14	13	14	14	7	0	0	14	14
15	8	15	8	1	11	0	8	8
16	9	9	16	1	0	12	9	9
17	13	14	14	7	2	0	14	14
18	8	15	8	1	8	0	8	8
19	9	9	16	1	0	9	9	9





Algorithm: RCDFA

- ❑ Compression along the *state* dimension
 - ❑ Observation
 - ❑ Large redundancy exists among similar states whose distribution is scattered
 - ❑ Derived from regular expression characteristic
 - ❑ Verified by real-life rule sets
 - ❑ Bitmap technique is only effective for consecutively identical transitions
- ❑ Proposal
 - ❑ Make identical transitions consecutive along the *state* dimension (**DFA Reorganization**)
 - ❑ Leverage bitmap technique (**DFA Compression**)





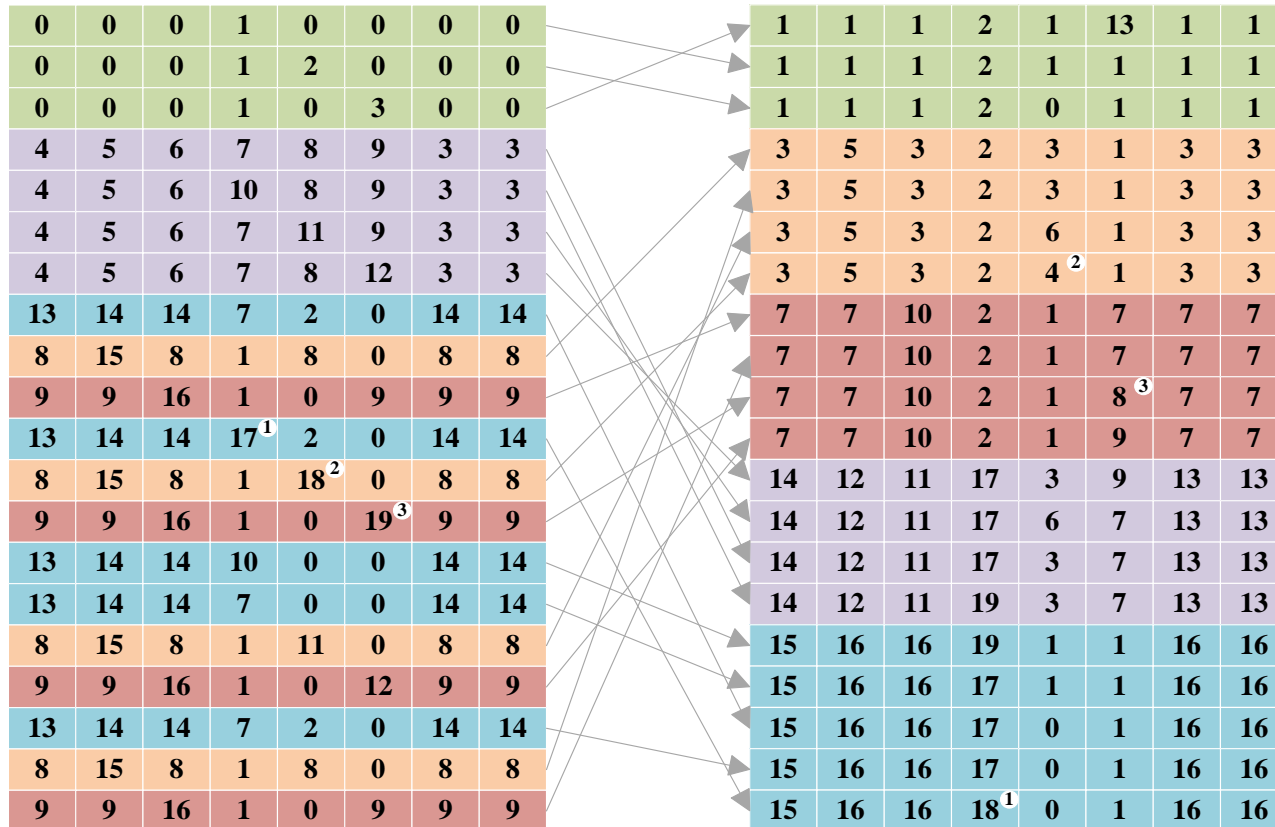
Algorithm: RCDFA



□ Reorganize DFA

- DFA matrix transform
- Cluster similar states adjacent

$$\Delta_{N \times M} \xrightarrow[\text{Elementary Transform}]{\begin{bmatrix} E & & \\ & 0 & \dots & 1 & (\mu) \\ & \vdots & E & \vdots & \\ & 1 & \dots & 0 & (\nu) \end{bmatrix} \dots \begin{bmatrix} E & & \\ & 1 & \dots & \beta & (\mu) \\ & & & E & \vdots \\ & & & & 1 & (\nu) \end{bmatrix}} \Delta'_{N \times M}$$





Algorithm: RCDFA



Compress DFA

- State Bitmap for primary redundancy among states
- Character Mapping for residual redundancy inside states

←MAPPING along the *character* dimension→

20-bit BITMAP along the *state* dimension

1	1	1	2	1	13	1	1
1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
1	1	1	2	0	1	1	1
3	5	3	2	3	1	3	3
3	5	3	2	3	1	3	3
3	5	3	2	6	1	3	3
3	5	3	2	4 ²	1	3	3
7	7	10	2	1	7	7	7
7	7	10	2	1	7	7	7
7	7	10	2	1	8 ³	7	7
7	7	10	2	1	9	7	7
14	12	11	17	3	9	13	13
14	12	11	17	6	7	13	13
14	12	11	17	3	7	13	13
14	12	11	19	3	7	13	13
15	16	16	19	1	1	16	16
15	16	16	17	1	1	16	16
15	16	16	17	0	1	16	16
15	16	16	17	0	1	16	16
15	16	16	18 ¹	0	1	16	16

=

bmp 1	bmp 2	bmp 3	bmp 4
1	1	1	1
0	0	0	1
0	0	1	0
1	0	1	0
0	0	0	0
0	0	1	0
0	0	1	0
1	0	1	1
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	1
0	0	0	1
1	1	1	0
0	0	1	1
0	0	1	0
0	1	0	0
1	0	1	1
0	1	0	0
0	0	1	0
0	0	0	0
0	1	0	0

+

bmp 1	bmp 1	bmp 1	bmp 2	bmp 3	bmp 4	bmp 1
1	1	1	2	1	13	1
3	5	3	17	0	1	3
7	7	10	19	3	7	7
14	12	11	17	6	8 ³	13
15	16	16	18 ¹	4 ²	9	16
				1	7	
				3	1	
				6		
				3		
				1		
				0		



Algorithm: RCDFA

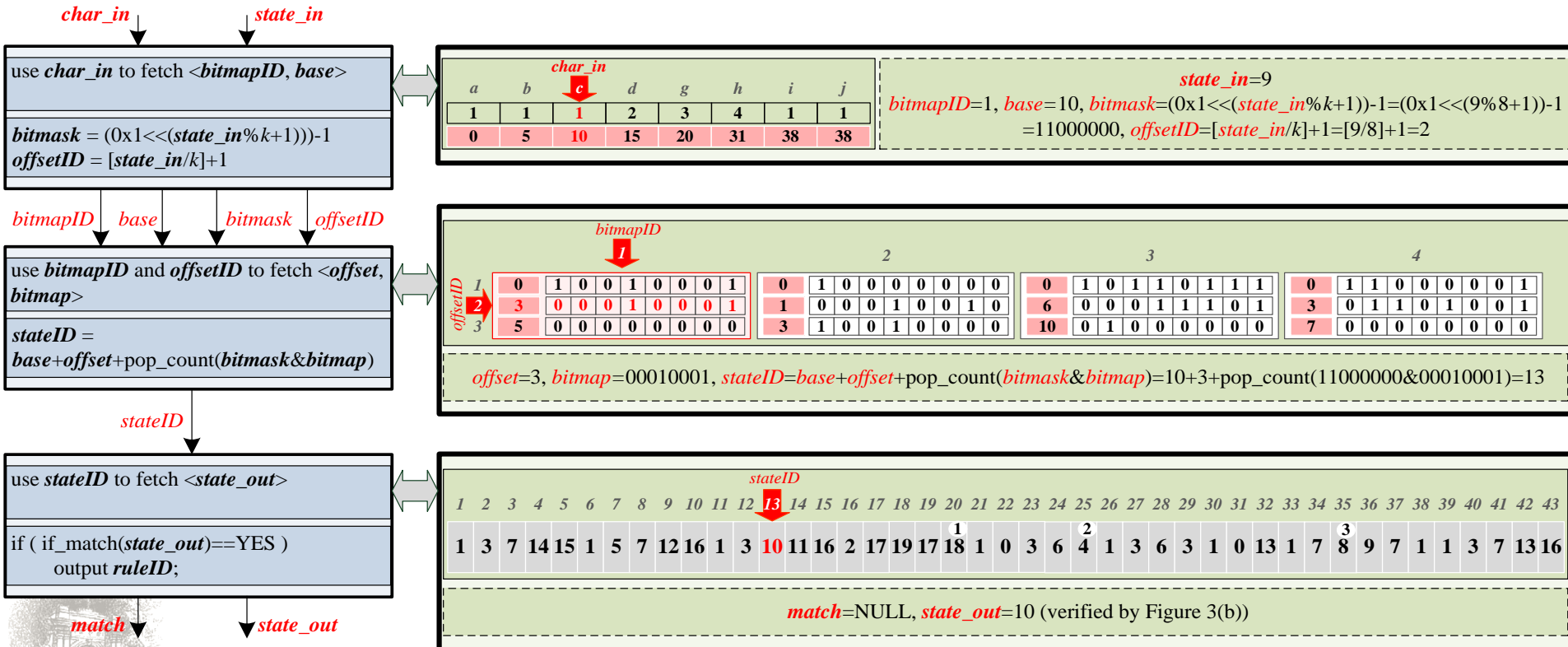


❑ Pipeline mapping architecture

❑ 3-stage memory access and table lookup

- Index mapping table, Bitmap table, Transition table

Traversal time= $O(N)$
Time complexity= $O(n \log n)$
Space complexity= $O(n)$





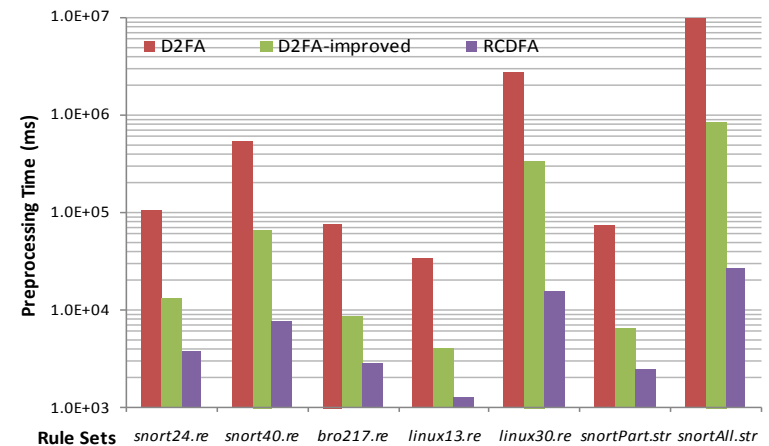
Algorithm: RCDFA



COMPRESSION RATE (% TRANSITION REDUCTION)

Rule Sets	# OF TRANSITIONS	Bitmap	D ² FA	D ² FA-improved	RCDFA
<i>Snort24.re</i>	2133760	88.87	91.04	98.73	99.01
<i>Snort40.re</i>	4868864	92.10	82.68	98.13	98.89
<i>Bro217.re</i>	1672448	70.91	76.09	98.94	98.57
<i>Linux13.re</i>	1246976	96.17	57.12	27.86	96.56
<i>Linux30.re</i>	11148032	90.84	80.94	34.88	96.79
<i>SnortPart.str</i>	1449472	31.88	83.88	99.21	98.69
<i>SnortAll.str</i>	14407680	17.86	84.11	99.22	98.90

$O(M \log N)$ preprocessing time complexity



NUMBER OF STATE ACCESSED PER INPUT CHARACTER

Rule Sets	# OF STATES	D ² FA		D ² FA-improved		RCDFA
		Avg.	Worst	Avg.	Worst	
<i>Snort24.re</i>	8335	1.09	2	1.98	9	1
<i>Snort40.re</i>	19019	1.94	2	1.98	7	1
<i>Bro217.re</i>	6533	1.18	2	1.43	9	1
<i>Linux13.re</i>	4871	1.03	2	1.73	6	1
<i>Linux30.re</i>	43547	1.04	2	1.99	13	1
<i>SnortPart.str</i>	5662	1.39	2	1.74	7	1
<i>SnortAll.str</i>	56280	1.44	2	1.78	10	1

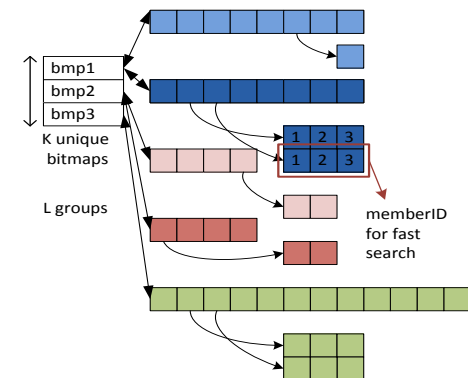
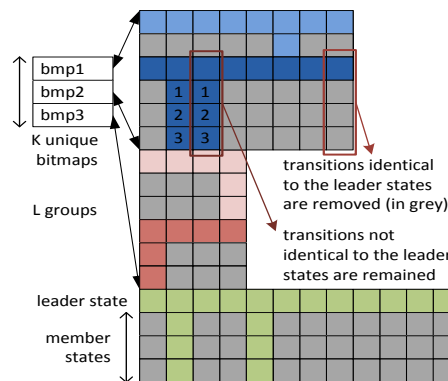
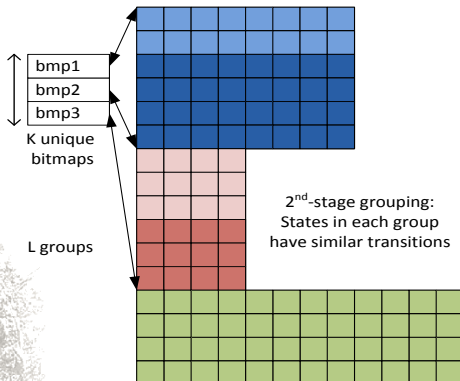
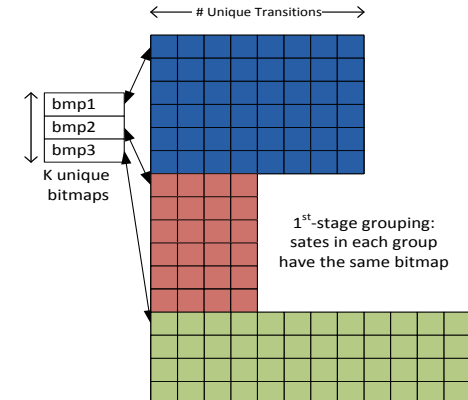
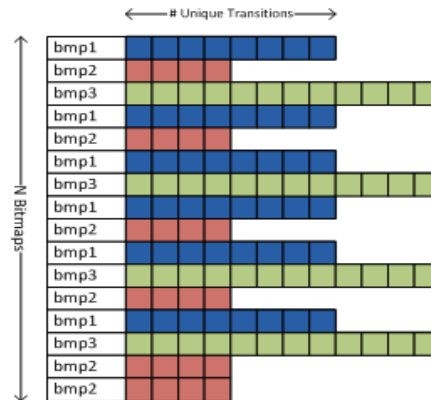
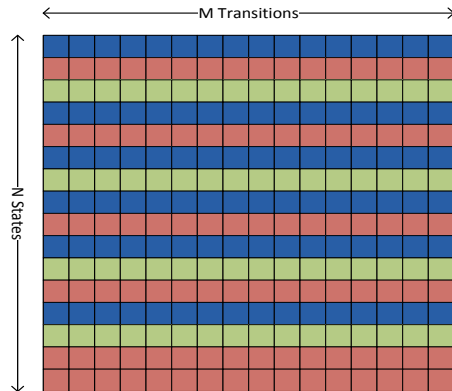




Algorithm: FEACAN



- ✓ 2-D compression
 - ✓ Intra-state compression
 - ✓ compress the number of transitions inside each state via bitmap technique
 - ✓ Inter-state compression
 - ✓ group similar states sharing identical bitmaps and encode redundant transitions in each group



Algorithm: FEACAN

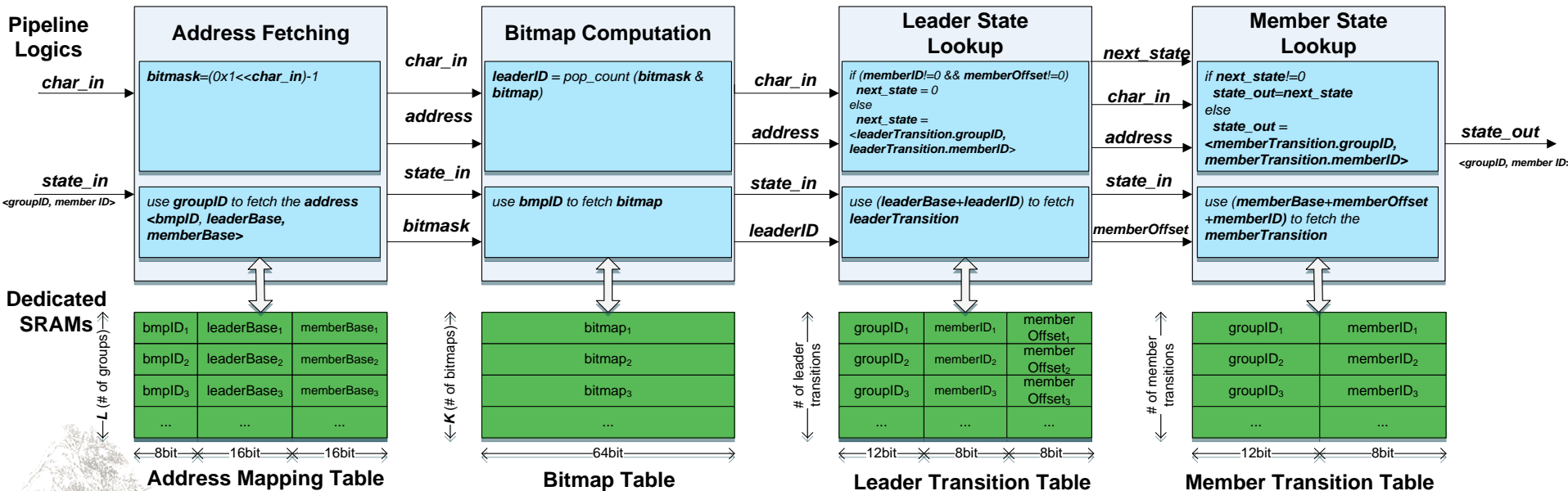


□ Pipeline mapping architecture

□ 4-stage memory access and table lookup

- Address mapping table, Bitmap table, Leader Transition table, Member transition table

Traversal time= $O(N)$
Time complexity= $O(n^2/L)$
Space complexity= $O(n)$

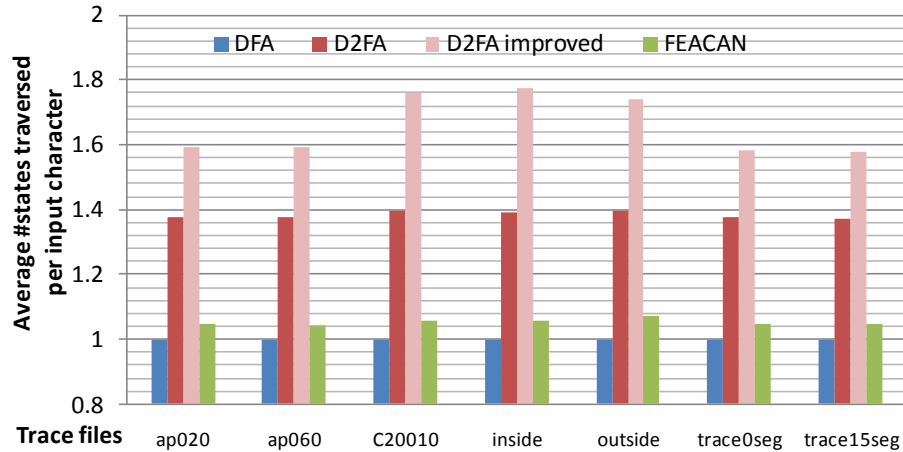




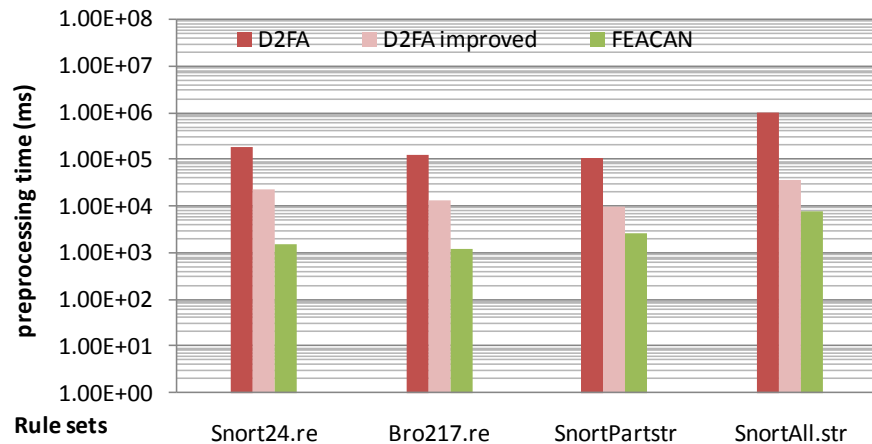
Algorithm: FEACAN



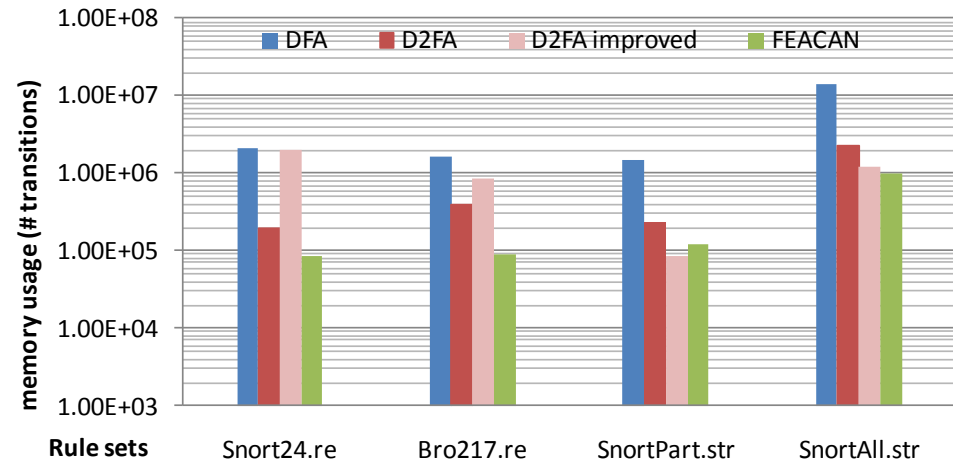
Average 1.03 states access per byte



$O(N^2 / L)$ preprocessing time complexity
(L is # of groups)



Over 90% trans compression ratio

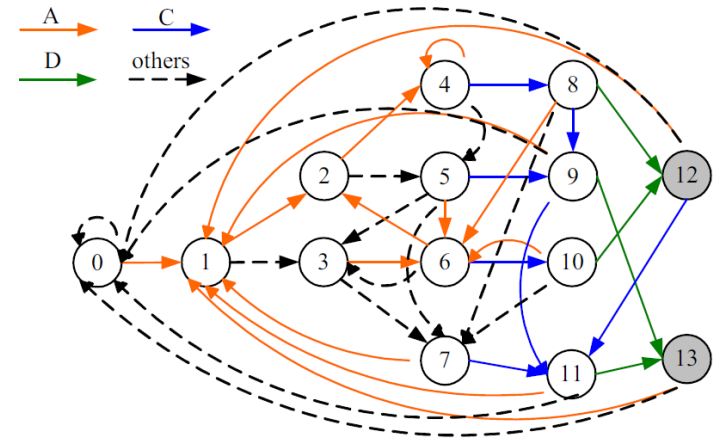




Algorithm: Cluster-DFA



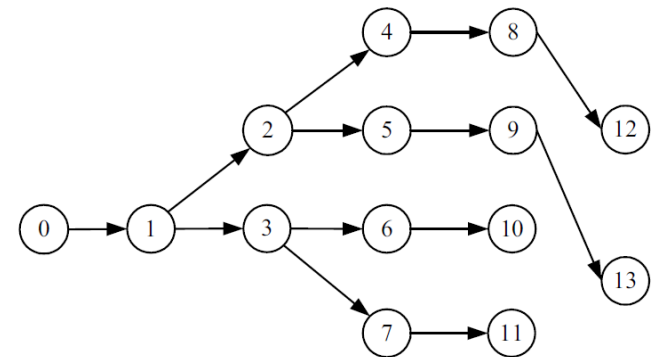
- ❑ Cluster-based observation
 - ❑ cluster
 - a states set which is composed of all son states of a certain state in the trie-tree



RegEx: $A.\{2\}CD$

TRANSITION CHARACTERISTIC INSIDE STATES

pattern set	average distinct "next-states"	average distinct clusters	% transitions in Top-2 clusters
snort-24	14.49	5.06	97.89
snort-31	12.24	4.75	97.92
snort-34	13.11	4.69	98.21
bro-217	54.29	4.23	97.95
type-1	47.79	1.93	99.96



Trie-tree



Algorithm: Cluster-DFA

□ Splitting Compression

- split DFA matrix into T1, T2, T3 matrix
 - According to the TOP-2 clusters

State	A	C	D	^
0	1	0	0	0
1	2	3	3	3
2	4	5	5	5
3	6	7	7	7
4	4	8	5	5
5	6	9	7	7
6	2	10	3	3
7	1	11	0	0
8	6	9	12	7
9	1	11	13	0
10	6	7	12	7
11	1	0	13	0
12	1	11	0	0
13	1	0	0	0

DFA matrix

State	A	C	D	^
0	X	0	0	0
1	2	3	3	3
2	4	5	5	5
3	6	7	7	7
4	4	X	5	5
5	6	X	7	7
6	2	X	3	3
7	X	X	0	0
8	6	X	X	7
9	X	X	X	0
10	6	7	X	7
11	X	0	X	0
12	X	X	0	0
13	X	0	0	0

T1 matrix

State	A	C	D	^
0	1	X	X	X
1	X	X	X	X
2	X	X	X	X
3	X	X	X	X
4	X	8	X	X
5	X	9	X	X
6	X	10	X	X
7	1	X	X	X
8	X	9	X	X
9	1	X	X	X
10	X	X	12	X
11	1	X	X	X
12	1	X	X	X
13	1	X	X	X

T2 matrix

State	A	C	D	^
0	X	X	X	X
1	X	X	X	X
2	X	X	X	X
3	X	X	X	X
4	X	X	X	X
5	X	X	X	X
6	X	X	X	X
7	X	11	X	X
8	X	X	12	X
9	X	11	13	X
10	X	X	X	X
11	X	X	13	X
12	X	11	X	X
13	X	X	X	X

T3 matrix





Algorithm: Cluster-DFA



Cluster-based Splitting Compression

compress each matrix

- bitmap for T1, T2
- sparse matrix compression algorithm for T3

state	A	C	D	^
0	X	0	0	0
1	2	3	3	3
2	4	5	5	5
3	6	7	7	7
4	4	X	5	5
5	6	X	7	7
6	2	X	3	3
7	X	X	0	0
8	6	X	X	7
9	X	X	X	0
10	6	7	X	7
11	X	0	X	0
12	X	X	0	0
13	X	0	0	0



state	A	C	D	^	base
0	X	0	0	0	0
1	0	1	1	1	2
2	0	1	1	1	4
3	0	1	1	1	6
4	0	X	1	1	4
5	0	X	1	1	6
6	0	X	1	1	2
7	X	X	0	0	0
8	0	X	X	1	6
9	X	X	X	0	0
10	0	1	X	1	6
11	X	0	X	0	0
12	X	X	0	0	0
13	X	0	0	0	0



state	A	C	D	^	base	equal
0	X	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	1	1	1	2	1
					4	1
					6	1
					4	1
					6	1
					2	1
					0	0
					6	1
					0	0
					6	1
					0	0
					0	0
					0	0

Algorithm 2 Pseudo-code for getting next state of CSCA for current state *cur* and the input character *c*

```
1: if bitmap[cur][c] == 1 then
2:   return R1[equal1[cur]][c] + base1[cur]
3: else if (temp = R3[cur][c]) != 'X' then
4:   return temp
5: else
6:   return R2[equal2[cur]][c] + base2[cur]
7: end if
```



Algorithm: Cluster-DFA



□ Time:

- at least 4 memory accesses per input character
 - *bitmap, equal1, R1, base1*

□ Space:

COMPARISON IN TERMS OF SPATIAL COMPRESSION RATIO

Group name	original DFA		our compression algorithm (CSCA)				SCR of δ FA	SCR of Default_Row
	n	SCR	$n1$	$n2$	r	SCR		
17filter-1	3172	1.0	52	22	0.024621	0.070756	0.634964	0.232905
17filter-3	30135	1.0	3	21	0.011429	0.051420	0.960985	0.356860
17filter-4	22608	1.0	7	44	0.054823	0.095459	0.097177	0.381078
snort-24	13882	1.0	13	34	0.021074	0.062055	0.037515	0.108468
snort-31	19522	1.0	7	34	0.020840	0.061391	0.053581	0.061309
snort-34	13834	1.0	6	17	0.017938	0.058231	0.032259	0.060473
bro-217	6533	1.0	1	14	0.020456	0.060557	0.061814	0.224820
type-1	249	1.0	1	2	0.000016	0.042212	0.111281	0.186697
type-2	78337	1.0	512	2	0.000102	0.042026	0.099659	0.030254
type-3	8338	1.0	43	5	0.002395	0.043842	0.948123	0.018575
type-4	5290	1.0	236	4	0.012469	0.064080	0.990808	0.046357
type-5	7828	1.0	1	22	0.002451	0.041732	0.947048	0.019762
type-6	14496	1.0	9	22	0.002300	0.042061	0.973929	0.173284





Chain



0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0
4	5	6	7	8	9	3	3
4	5	6	10	8	9	3	3
4	5	6	7	11	9	3	3
4	5	6	7	8	12	3	3
13	14	14	7	2	0	14	14
8	15	8	1	8	0	8	8
9	9	16	1	0	9	9	9
13	14	14	17 ¹	2	0	14	14
8	15	8	1	18 ²	0	8	8
9	9	16	1	0	19 ³	9	9
13	14	14	10	0	0	14	14
13	14	14	7	0	0	14	14
8	15	8	1	11	0	8	8
9	9	16	1	0	12	9	9
13	14	14	7	2	0	14	14
8	15	8	1	8	0	8	8
9	9	16	1	0	9	9	9

DFA

0	a, 0	b, 0	c, 0	d, 1	e, 0	f, 0	g, 0	h, 0
0	e, 2							
0	f, 3							
3	a, 4	b, 5	c, 6	d, 7	e, 8	f, 9	g, 3	h, 3
3	d, 10							
3	e, 11							
3	f, 12							
17								
8	a, 8	b, 15	c, 8	d, 1	e, 8	f, 0	g, 8	h, 8
9	a, 9	b, 9	c, 16	d, 1	e, 0	f, 9	g, 9	h, 9
17	d, 17 ¹							
8	e, 18 ²							
9	f, 19 ³							
14	d, 10							
14	a, 13	b, 14	c, 14	d, 7	e, 0	f, 0	g, 14	h, 14
8	e, 11							
9	f, 12							
17	a, 13	b, 14	c, 14	d, 7	e, 2	f, 0	g, 14	h, 14
8								
9								

D²FA


0	a, 0	b, 0	c, 0	d, 1	e, 0	f, 0	g, 0	h, 0
0	e, 2							
0	f, 3							
0	a, 4	b, 5	c, 6	d, 7	e, 8	f, 9	g, 3	h, 3
3	d, 10							
3	e, 11							
3	f, 12							
0	a, 13	b, 14	c, 14	d, 7	e, 2	g, 14	h, 14	
0	a, 8	b, 15	c, 8	e, 8	g, 8	h, 8		
0	a, 9	b, 9	c, 16	f, 9	g, 9	h, 9		
7	d, 17 ¹							
8	e, 18 ²							
9	f, 19 ³							
7	d, 10							
7	e, 0							
8	e, 11							
9	f, 12							
7								
8								
9								

A-DFA



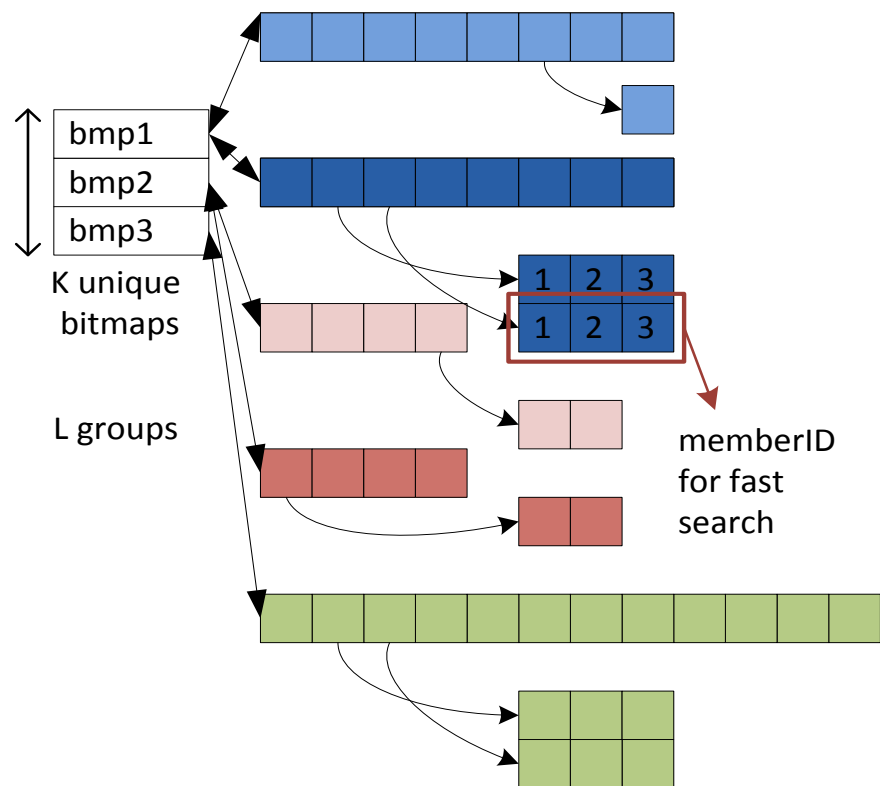


Chain

1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	13	1	1
0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
0	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	1
1	0	1	0	3	5	3	2	3		3	3
0	0	0	0	3	5	3	2	3	1	3	3
0	0	1	0	3	5	3	2	11	1	3	3
0	0	1	0	3	5	3	2	4 ²	1	3	3
1	0	1	1	7	7	10	2	1	7	7	7
0	0	0	0	7	7	10	2	1	7	7	7
0	0	0	1	7	7	10	2	1	8 ³	7	7
0	0	0	1	7	7	10	2	1	9	7	7
1	1	1	0	14	12	6	17	3	9	13	13
0	0	1	1	14	12	6	17	11	7	13	13
0	0	1	0	14	12	6	17	3	7	13	13
0	1	0	0	14	12	6	19	3	7	13	13
1	0	1	1	15	16	16	19	1	1	16	16
0	1	0	0	15	16	16	17	1	1	16	16
0	0	1	0	15	16	16	17	0	1	16	16
0	0	0	0	15	16	16	17	0	1	16	16
0	1	0	0	15	16	16	18 ¹	0	1	16	16

RCDFA



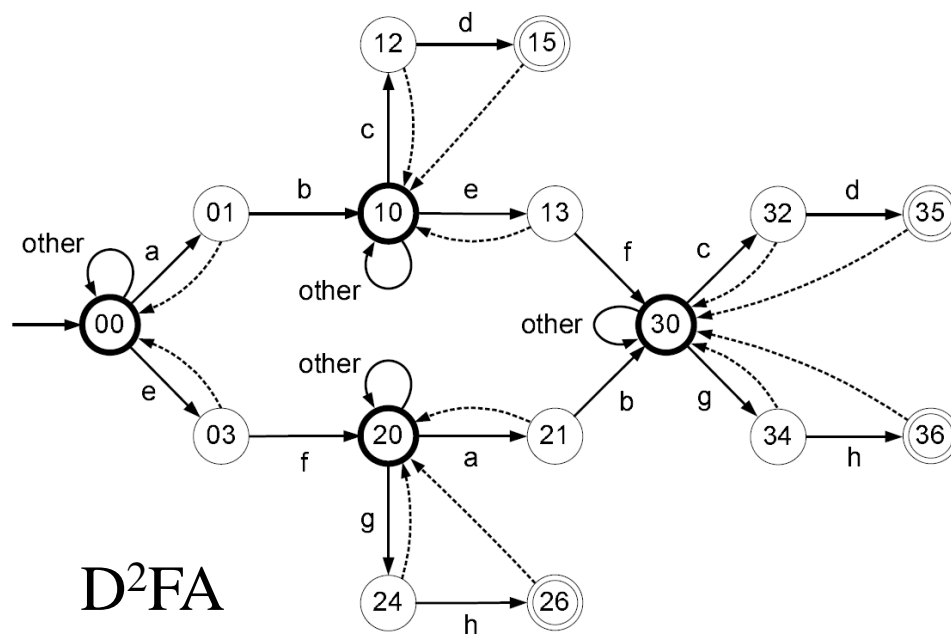
FEACAN





Algorithm: TCAM-based

- TID (Template ID)
 - chain
- PID (Private ID)
 - state in each chain



TCAM		Input	SRAM	
Source State	PID		Destination State	PID
TID			TID	
1000	001	b	0100	000
1000	011	f	0010	000
1000	***	a	1111	001
1000	***	e	1111	011
1000	***	*	1111	000
0100	010	d	1111	101
0100	011	f	0001	000
0100	***	c	1111	010
0100	***	e	1111	011
0100	***	*	1111	000
0010	001	b	0001	000
0010	100	h	1111	110
0010	***	a	1111	001
0010	***	g	1111	100
0010	***	*	1111	000
0001	010	d	1111	101
0001	100	h	1111	110
0001	***	c	1111	010
0001	***	g	1111	100
0001	***	*	1111	000



Algorithm: TCAM-based

□ TCAM-based DFA deflation

TCAM		Input	SRAM	
Source State			Destination State	
TID	PID		TID	PID
*0*0	***	a	1111	001
1000	001	b	0100	000
0010	001	b	0001	000
0*0*	***	c	1111	010
0*0*	010	d	1111	101
00	*	e	1111	011
1000	011	f	0010	000
0100	011	f	0001	000
00**	***	g	1111	100
00**	100	h	1111	110
****	***	*	1111	000





Algorithm: TCAM-based



□ Evaluation

NUMBER OF TCAM ENTRIES USED.

	Chen's method	Meiners's method	Number of DFA states	Our method	Number of NFA states
<i>Bro-217</i>	21,872	9,118	6,533	4,659	2,131
<i>Snort-34</i>	34,508	16,293	13,825	2,095	887
<i>Snort-24</i>	38,418	16,144	13,886	5,139	575
<i>Snort-31</i>	72,662	41,487	20,068	9,168	912

NUMBER OF BITS USED PER ENTRY.

	Chen's method		Meiners's method		Our method	
	TCAM	SRAM	TCAM	SRAM	TCAM	SRAM
<i>Bro-217</i>	26	18	31	23	23	15
<i>Snort-34</i>	25	17	28	20	70	62
<i>Snort-24</i>	26	18	26	18	52	44
<i>Snort-31</i>	26	18	34	26	57	49

Why so many bits?

TOTAL NUMBER OF BITS USED (MEGABIT).

	Chen's method		Meiners's method		Our method	
	TCAM	SRAM	TCAM	SRAM	TCAM	SRAM
<i>Bro-217</i>	0.54	0.38	0.27	0.20	0.10	0.07
<i>Snort-34</i>	0.82	0.56	0.44	0.31	0.14	0.12
<i>Snort-24</i>	0.95	0.66	0.40	0.28	0.26	0.22
<i>Snort-31</i>	1.80	1.25	1.35	1.03	0.50	0.43





- ❑ What make the combination of coded transitions efficient?
 - ❑ *inside chain* & *outside chain*, previous methods only take *inside chain* into account
 - ❑ the same input character and similar coding of TID, meanwhile the return state is the template state
 - ❑ as long as the coding is good enough, the result of RCDFFA will be better, maybe $O(|\Sigma|)$

