

CSEN1002 Compilers Lab, Spring Term 2024

Task 1: Regular Expressions to Non-Deterministic Finite Automata

Due: Week starting 17.02.2024

1 Objective

For this task you need to implement Thompson's construction for converting a regular expression to an equivalent NFA. Description of Thompson's construction can be found in Chapter 3 of the textbook and at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thompson's_construction.

2 Requirements

- We make the following assumptions for simplicity.
 - a) The alphabet Σ of the regular expression is always a subset of the Latin alphabet, not including **e**.
 - b) Regular expressions do not include \emptyset .
 - c) The empty string ε is represented by **e**.
 - d) \circ is represented by **.** and \cup by **|**.
 - e) Regular expressions are represented in *postfix* notation.
 - f) States of the resulting NFA are numbers.
 - g) For a postfix regular expression R , states *introduced* by NFA equivalent to a prefix of R are smaller (as numbers) than states *introduced* by NFA equivalent to longer prefixes of R . For operators (such as union and $*$) which introduce a start and an accept state, the start state is smaller (as a number) than the accept state.
 - h) Following Thompson's construction, concatenation involves merging the accept state of the first (left) NFA and the start state of the second (right) NFA; the resulting merged state is the accept state of the first NFA.
- You should implement a class constructor **RegExToNfa** and a method **toString**.
- **RegExToNfa** takes one parameter which is a string of the form $A\#R$. A is a string representation of an alphabet Σ , a semicolon-separated sequence of alphabetically sorted symbols, and R is a postfix regular expression over Σ . **RegExToNfa** constructs the NFA to R as per Thompson's construction.
- **toString** returns a string describing the NFA resulting from Thompson's construction. A string describing the NFA resulting from Thompson's construction is of the form $Q\#A\#T\#I\#F$.
 - Q is a string representation of the set of states; a semicolon-separated sequence of sorted integer literals.

- A is a string representation of the input alphabet; a semicolon-separated sequence of alphabetically sorted symbols
- T is a string representation of the transition function. T is a semicolon-separated sequence of triples. Each triple is a string representing a single transition; a comma-separated sequence i, a, j where i is a state of Q , a a symbol of A or ϵ , and j a state of Q representing a transition from i to j on input a . These triples are sorted by the source state i , then (if the same state has more than one outgoing transition) by the input a , and then (if multiple triples share the same source state and input, due to non-determinism) by the destination state j .
- I is an integer literal representing the initial state.
- F is a string representation of the set of accept states; a semicolon-separated sequence of sorted integer literals.
- For example, `toString`, being invoked on a `RegexToNfa` object representing the regular expression `a;b#ab|`, should return the string

0;1;2;3;4;5#a;b#0,a,1;1,e,5;2,b,3;3,e,5;4,e,0;4,e,2#4#5

- Important Details:

- Your implementation should be done within the template file “`RegexToNfa.java`” (uploaded to the CMS).
- You are not allowed to change package, file, constructor, or method names/signatures.
- You are allowed to implement as many helper classes/methods within the same file (if needed).
- Public test cases have been provided on the CMS for you to test your implementation.
- Please ensure that the public test cases run correctly without modification before coming to the lab to maintain a smooth evaluation process.
- Private test cases will be uploaded before your session and will have the same structure as the public test cases.

3 Evaluation

- Your implementation will be tested by ten input regular expressions.
- You get one point for each correct output of `toString`; hence, a maximum of ten points.
- The evaluation will take place during your lab sessions of the week starting Saturday, February 17.

4 Online Submission

- You should submit your code at the following link.

<https://forms.gle/5a8bZTG6ThNfw24z8>

- Submit one Java file (`RegexToNfa.java`) containing executable code.
- **Online submission is due by the end of your lab session.**