

# CENG444: Syntactic Analysis (Parsing)

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# Some time-honored maxims of compiling

- 1 Understand the internal structure of input (parse tree)
- 2 Error reporting (they must be easy to identify by the programmer, by location and by message content)
- 3 Keep the meaning of source code as intended (transparency and compositionality)
  - 3.1 Resist the temptation to “fix” the errors of the programmer
  - 3.2 It is not YOUR program!
  - 3.3 It is usually a bad idea to second-guess a programmer, if you want to help.

- Syntax of PLs is (almost) context-free.

Declare before use

Not declare twice

Type match of use of a variable

- These are not context-free properties.

- Semantics of a program must not be ambiguous; PLs are designed not to be ambiguous in this sense.

The parser for a PL must cope with non-determinism in rule selection and application order, but it cannot allow global ambiguity.

- Development of deterministic parsing algorithms for context-free grammars.

LL parsing: left-to-right scan of input: leftmost derivations.

LR parsing: left-to-right scan of input: rightmost derivations.

- $LL(k)/LR(k)$ : an LL/LR grammar that can be parsed deterministically using  $k$ -symbol lookahead.

## Some basics of formal grammars

Let  $G=(V, \Sigma, R, S)$  be a formal grammar  $G$ .

- rule definition: Every rule in  $R$  is  $A \rightarrow w$
- rule use: if we reach the point  $uAv$  in the derivation of a string, and  $A \rightarrow w \in R$ , then we also have  $uwv$

$$uAv \Rightarrow uwv$$

- If  $A$  is the leftmost variable, this is a *leftmost derivation*
- if  $A$  is the rightmost variable, this is a *rightmost derivation*

$$L(G) = \{w \in \Sigma^* \mid S \Rightarrow^* w\}$$

- Intermediate forms reachable from  $S$  are *sentential forms*.
- Right-sentential forms:  
 $\{x \in (\Sigma \cup V)^* \mid S \Rightarrow_R^* x \Rightarrow_R^* w, w \in \Sigma^*\}$
- Left-sentential forms:  $\{x \in (\Sigma \cup V)^* \mid S \Rightarrow_L^* x \Rightarrow_L^* w, w \in \Sigma^*\}$
- Top-down parsers start with  $S$ , and reach  $w$ .
- Bottom-up parsers start with  $w$ , and reach  $S$ .

That's why they end up using rightmost derivations in reverse order.

- *Lookahead*: looking at next tokens before deciding on the rule application.

in  $S \Rightarrow_* uAv$ ,  $u \in \Sigma^*$ ,  $x$  is the lookahead string in  $ux$

$S \xRightarrow{*} uAv$  and  $u \in \Sigma^*$ . If  $u$  is a prefix of  $p$ , which  $A \rightarrow w$  rules to apply?

if  $p = uaq$ ,  $a \in \Sigma$ , then 1-symbol lookahead can reveal that  $A$  rules *not starting* with  $a$  cannot lead to  $p$ .

input: *aaba*     $G_1 : S \rightarrow aA \mid abC$   
                    $A \rightarrow aA \mid bA \mid C \mid \varepsilon$   
                    $C \rightarrow c$

- LOOKAHEAD SETS OF VARIABLES in grammar  
 $G = (V, \Sigma, P, S)$

$$LA(A) = \{x \mid S \Rightarrow_* uAv \Rightarrow_* ux; ux \in \Sigma^*\}$$

$x$  is a terminal string after prefix  $u$ : this gives all terminals from  $Av$  when prefix is  $u$

- LOOKAHEAD SETS OF RULES in the grammar:

$$LA(A \rightarrow w) = \{x \mid ww \Rightarrow_* x \in \Sigma^*; S \Rightarrow_* uAv, u \in \Sigma^*\}$$

subset of  $LA(A)$  in which subderivation  $Av \Rightarrow_* x$  are done by  $A \rightarrow w$

- These are lookaheads when  $A$  is an unknown.

$LA(A)$  : all the strings  $A$  can start

$LA(A \rightarrow w)$ : all the strings that using the  $A$  rule can start



$$LA(A) = \bigcup_{i=0}^N LA(A \rightarrow w_i)$$

- if LA sets of rules are disjoint, rule selection can be done deterministically.

$$G_2: \quad S \rightarrow Aabd \mid cAbcd \\ A \rightarrow a \mid b \mid \varepsilon$$

$$LA(S \rightarrow Aabd) = \{aabd, babd, abd\}$$

$$LA(S \rightarrow cAbcd) = \{cabcd, cbbcd, cbcd\}$$

$$LA(S) = \text{union of the two LA sets}$$

$$LA(A \rightarrow a) = \{aabd, abcd\}$$

$$LA(A \rightarrow b) = \{babd, bbcd\}$$

$$LA(A \rightarrow \varepsilon) = \{abd, bcd\}$$

- How many lookaheads do we need for this grammar?  
 $\Rightarrow$  choosing A : a can pick 1st or 3rd A rule  
 $\Rightarrow$  choosing A : ab can pick 1st or 3rd A rule  $\Rightarrow$  LL(3)

- If there are recursive rules, LA strings can be of arbitrary length; use  $trunc_k(x)$  to truncate them to length  $k$

$$LA_k(A) = trunc_k(LA(A))$$

- FIRST, FOLLOW and LA sets. Critical for LR and LL.
- Direct construction of LA sets is not straightforward in a large grammar; use FIRST and FOLLOW sets.

$FIRST_k(A)$  = prefixes of terminal strings derivable from  $A$

$FOLLOW_k(A)$  = prefixes of terminal strings that can follow the strings derivable from  $A$

for any string  $u \in (V \cup \Sigma)^*$

$$\text{FIRST}_k(u) = \text{trunc}_k(\{x \mid u \Rightarrow_* x; x \in \Sigma^*\})$$

$$\text{FOLLOW}_k(A) = \text{trunc}_k(\{x \mid S \Rightarrow_* uAv; x \in \text{FIRST}_k(v)\})$$

$$\text{Then, } \text{LA}_k(A) = \text{trunc}_k(\text{FIRST}_k(A)\text{FOLLOW}_k(A))$$

$$\text{and, } \text{LA}_k(A \rightarrow w) = \text{trunc}_k(\text{FIRST}_k(w)\text{FOLLOW}_k(A))$$

ex: for  $G_2$

$$\Rightarrow \text{FIRST}_3(S) = \{aab, bab, abd, cab, cbb, cbc\}$$

$$\Rightarrow \text{FOLLOW}_3(S) = \{\varepsilon\}$$

- STRONG LL(k) GRAMMARS: if the  $\text{LA}_k(A)$  sets are partitioned by sets  $\text{LA}_K(A \rightarrow w_i)$ , then G is strong LL(k).
- if G is strong LL(k), G is unambiguous.

## Some fine points of string calculus

- Is stack simply a conventional data structure for parsing strings?

No. It follows from property of concatenation and substitution

- If  $uAv \Rightarrow uwv$  because of  $A \rightarrow w$ , then

if  $\text{FIRST}(w)=B$ , we have  $uAv \Rightarrow uwv \Rightarrow uB \cdots v \Rightarrow u\beta \cdots v$   
because of  $B \rightarrow \beta$

- $B$ 's material is always before  $\cdots v$

- Asymmetry in FOLLOW sets:

If we have  $A \rightarrow \alpha B \beta$  where  $\text{FIRST}(\beta)$  contains 'ε'

- then  $\text{FOLLOW}(B)$  contains  $\text{FOLLOW}(A)$ :

$$S \Rightarrow^* uAv \Rightarrow u\alpha B\beta v \Rightarrow \alpha Bv$$

- but  $\text{FOLLOW}(A)$  does not necessarily contain  $\text{FOLLOW}(B)$

because we don't know whether  $S \Rightarrow^* xBy \Rightarrow^* xAy$

- Making FOLLOW sets non-empty: design an end marker and a rule  $S' \rightarrow S\$$
- Place  $\$$  in FOLLOW(S). Nothing follows  $S'$ .  $\$ \notin \Sigma$
- For  $A \rightarrow \alpha B \beta$ , everthing in FIRST( $\beta$ ) is in FOLLOW(B) if  $\beta \neq \epsilon$
- For  $A \rightarrow \alpha B \beta$  where  $\beta \Rightarrow^* \epsilon$  then everything in FOLLOW(A) is in FOLLOW(B) because:  

$$S \Rightarrow^* uAv \Rightarrow u\alpha B\beta v \Rightarrow^* \alpha Bv$$

## Bottom-up parsing

- LR( $k$ ): deterministic bottom-up parsing using rightmost derivations with  $k$ -symbol lookahead.

- Advantages of LR parsers:

More grammars are LR parsable than LL parsable

Earliest error detection in the string

Can be automated, just like LL parsers.

- Disadvantage: too much work to design manually: use a parser generator (hence the name *compiler-compiler*)

eg: non-determinism in bottom-up parse

$$S \rightarrow aAb \mid BaAa$$
$$A \rightarrow ab \mid b$$
$$B \rightarrow Bb \mid b$$

input:  $aabb \Rightarrow aAb \quad aaAb \quad aaBb ?$

- Towards determinism in BUP: How to locate what to reduce, and how to decide by which rule to do the reduction.



Bottom-up shift-reduce parsers work on *right* sentential forms; they obtain these forms in reverse order.

- *handle*: use of a rule  $A \rightarrow \beta$  at certain position in a right sentential form.

$$S \xRightarrow{R}_* \alpha A w \xRightarrow{R} \alpha \beta w$$

( $A \rightarrow \beta$  is a handle at position after  $\alpha$ ;  $w \in \Sigma^*$ ).

- There may be more than one handle if the grammar is ambiguous.

$$\begin{aligned}
 S &\rightarrow A \\
 A &\rightarrow T \mid A + T \\
 T &\rightarrow b \mid (A)
 \end{aligned}$$

input	b+(b+b)	(T→b at positions 1,4,6)
	T+(b+b)	(A→T at 0; T→b at 4,6)
	A+(T+b)	(not S→A at 1; A→T at 4; T→b at 6)
	A+(A+b)	(S→A at 4; T→b at 6; not S→A at 1)
	A+(A+T)	(A→A+T at 4; A→T at 6; not S→A 1,4)
	A+(A)	(S→A at 4; not S→A at 1; T→(A) at 3)
	A+T	(A→T at 3; not S→A at 1; A→A+T at 1)
	A	
	S	

The ones that can lead to  $S$  are handles.

- Bottom-up parsing can be seen as 'handle pruning':  
Start with input  
    locate a handle  
    use handle to reduce the sentential form  
do until S is reached

- Problems: 1) how to locate the handle; 2) reduce by which rule?

- Using a stack to keep sentential forms solves the first problem: the right end of the handle is always on top of the stack. The left end must be found.
  - Knowledge of context in which a rule can lead to a viable alternative solves the second problem: don't use the rule if it's context is not satisfied.
- viable prefix* ( $LR(0)$  context): the set of prefixes of a right-sentential form that can appear on stack.

$$S \xRightarrow{R}_* uAv \xRightarrow{A \rightarrow w} uwv \quad v \in \Sigma^*$$

$uw$  is a viable prefix

$$S \xRightarrow{*}_R uAv \xRightarrow{A \rightarrow w} uwv \quad v \in \Sigma^*$$

$uw$  is a viable prefix

- Why LR(0) context? no look into  $v$
- Why look at a PREFIX if we're parsing with rightmost derivations in reverse?

'L' in LR is for left-to-right scan.

We are trying to ensure BEFOREHAND that only viable prefixes appear on stack (deterministic parsing).

- Viable prefixes may contain patterns if there's recursion in the grammar. Finding them on-the-fly is costly.

$$S \rightarrow aA \mid bB$$

$$A \rightarrow abA \mid bB$$

$$B \rightarrow bBc \mid bc$$

$$S \Rightarrow aA \Rightarrow_*^i a(ab)^i A \Rightarrow a(ab)^i bB \Rightarrow_*^j a(ab)^i bb^j Bc^j \Rightarrow a(ab)^i bb^{j+1} c^{j+1}$$

$$S \Rightarrow bB \Rightarrow_*^j bb^j Bc^j \Rightarrow bb^{j+1} c^{j+1}$$

$$\text{LR0C}(S \rightarrow aA) = \{aA\}$$

$$\text{LR0C}(A \rightarrow abA) = \{a(ab)^i A \mid i > 0\}$$

$$\text{LR0C}(B \rightarrow bBc) = \{a(ab)^i b^{j+1} Bc, b^{j+1} Bc \mid i \geq 0, j > 0\}$$

$$\text{LR0C}(S \rightarrow aA) = \{aA\}$$

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$$\text{LR0C}(B \rightarrow bBc) = \{a(ab)^i b^{j+1} Bc, b^{j+1} Bc \mid i \geq 0, j > 0\}$$

why not  $c^j$  at the end? Viable prefix includes up to and including RHS of the rule.

- Solutions to the viable prefix problem:
  1. Shift-reduce parsing with stack search to locate the left-end of the handle.
  2. Shift-reduce parsing with no stack search; design a recognizer to keep progress over the RHSs so that we can tell whether the handle is a viable prefix for a particular rule  $\Rightarrow$  LR parsing

## LR & Shift-reduce: find both ends of a RHS without search

In the first alternative, the stack contains right sentential forms.

In the second alternative, the stack contains right sentential forms and states which give a summary of viable prefixes. No search in stack.

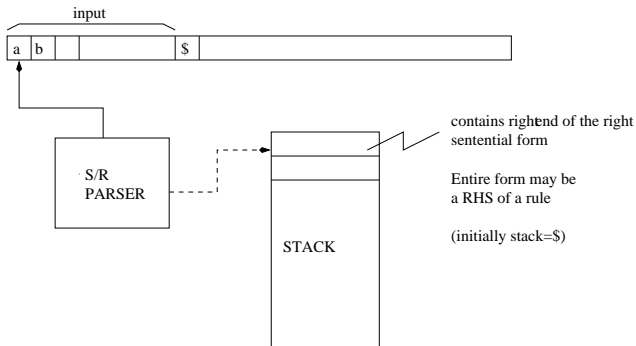
- These are the famous SLR/LALR/LR tables.



- $S \xRightarrow{*}_R uAv \xRightarrow{R} uwv \quad v \in \Sigma^*$

$A \rightarrow w$  is a handle at the end of  $u$

$uw$  is the viable prefix (LR0C).



Only viable prefixes appear in the stack

- S/R parsing:  
repeat  
    if a handle is on top, reduce by the handle (pop)  
    otherwise shift (put in stack)  
until accept or input exhausts

$$\begin{aligned}G_{AE}: \quad S' &\rightarrow S\$ \\ S &\rightarrow A \\ A &\rightarrow T \mid A + T \\ T &\rightarrow b \mid (A)\end{aligned}$$

stack	input	action
\$	b+(b+b)\$	sh
\$b	+(b+b)\$	red by T->b
\$T		r A->T
\$A		sh
\$A+	(b+b)\$	sh
\$A+(	b+b)\$	sh
\$A+(b	+b)\$	r T->b
\$A+(T		r A->T
\$A+(A		sh
\$A+(A+	b)\$	sh
\$A+(A+b	)\$	T->b
\$A+(A+T		A->A+T (conflict; but A->T is not a handle)
\$A+(A		sh
\$A+(A)	\$	r T->(A)
\$A+T		r A->A+T (conflict)
\$A		r S->A (shift-red conflict)
\$S		sh
\$S\$	-	r S'->S\$
\$S'		accept

A+A would not be a handle

- Reduce-reduce conflict shows the significance of the viable prefix problem. How to choose the right one?
- Shift-reduce conflict shows the significance of handle manipulation and structure of derivations. If the handle is not reduced, can we still get a derivation?

eg.

$E \rightarrow E * E \mid E + E \mid id$

stack	input	action
\$	id1+id2*id3	sh
\$id1	+id2*id3	r E→id1
\$E		sh
\$E+	id2*id3	sh
\$E+id2	*id3	r E→id2
\$E+E		conflict: shift or reduce?

- If shift-reduce conflict is not resolved by grammar re-writing, shift seems to work better for PL grammars.

S → if E then S | if E then S else S

input: if b then if S1 then S2 else S3

stack	action
-------	--------

\$	sh
----	----

..

\$if E .. S2	?
--------------	---

- Shift will favor innermost attachment of 'else'; reduce, outermost.
- This may be context-free, but is it deterministic context-free? (DCFL). No. That's why it is usually stated separately in PL grammars.  
Not all CFLs are DCFLs (ex. Parikh languages)

- Does the presence of conflicts mean non-LRness? not necessarily. If the grammar is ambiguous, it can't be LR(k) for any k. But if the conflict is local, it may still be LR.
- Going from S/R parsing to LR parsing: keep track of "progress" over the RHS of rules to select the right handle without a search for the left-end of the handle.
- no look beyond the RHS  $\Rightarrow$  Simple LR (SLR)
- lookahead  $\Rightarrow$  LALR(K) and LR(k) parsing
- SLR is more informative than simple LL.

- side note: Efficiency of left-recursion vs. right-recursion in S/R parsing

$Xs \rightarrow Xs, X \mid X$	vs.	$Xs \rightarrow X, Xs \mid X$
$X \rightarrow id$		$X \rightarrow id$

input: id1,id2,id3

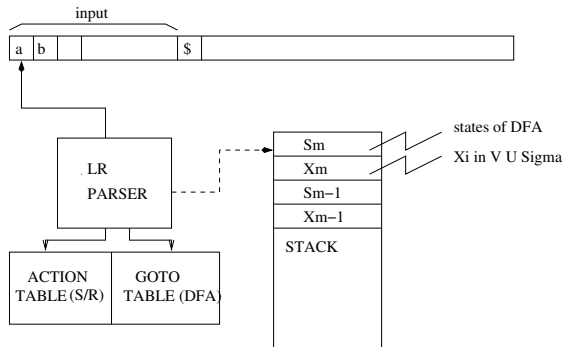
- Left recursion makes minimal use of the stack
- Right recursion makes maximal use of the stack

in S/R bottom up parsing.



- Simple LR: use of LR(0) items (no look past the RHS).
- construct a DFA for recognizing the progress over the RHSs

eg.  $A \rightarrow \cdot B \cdot C \cdot a \cdot D \cdot$   
 $C \rightarrow \cdot B \cdot C \cdot$



- SLR table construction:
  - Expand the grammar with  $S' \rightarrow S\$$
  - find LR(0) items
  - find closure of items
  - find set of items from closures
  - construct the DFA from sets of items
  - find FIRST and FOLLOW sets
  - construct ACTION and GOTO tables

- LR(0) ITEM: progress of passing over the RHS of a rule  
 $\text{LR(0)-item}(A \rightarrow uv) = \{A \rightarrow \cdot uv, A \rightarrow u \cdot v, A \rightarrow uv \cdot\}$   
 $\text{LR(0)-item}(A \rightarrow \varepsilon) = \{A \rightarrow \cdot\}$

eg. for the grammar  $G_{AE}$ :

 $S \rightarrow \cdot A$ 
 $S \rightarrow A \cdot$ 
 $A \rightarrow \cdot T$ 
 $A \rightarrow T \cdot$ 
 $A \rightarrow \cdot A + T$ 
 $A \rightarrow A \cdot + T$ 
 $A \rightarrow A + \cdot T$ 
 $A \rightarrow A + T \cdot$ 
 $T \rightarrow \cdot b$ 
 $T \rightarrow b \cdot$ 
 $T \rightarrow \cdot (A) \quad \dots$ 

- CLOSURE OF an LR(0) ITEM: All the states of parsing that can be reached from a state.

$$\text{closure}(S \rightarrow \cdot A) = \{S \rightarrow \cdot A, A \rightarrow \cdot T, A \rightarrow \cdot A + T, T \rightarrow \cdot b, T \rightarrow \cdot (A)\}$$

- goto(item,symbol)= the set of states one can go from the item by consuming the symbol (note: this is not the GOTO table!)

$$\text{goto}(A \rightarrow A \cdot + T, +) = \{A \rightarrow A + \cdot T, T \rightarrow \cdot b, T \rightarrow \cdot (A)\}$$

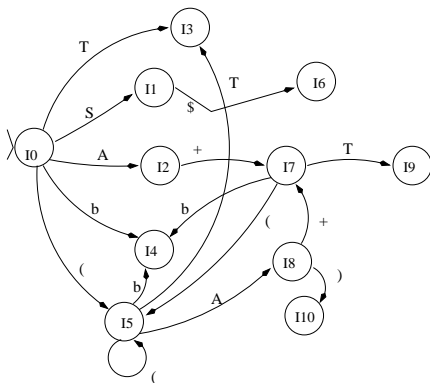
- SETS OF ITEMS= possible states of parsing. Since there are finitely many RHS, there will be finitely many combinations.

initially:  $S' \rightarrow \cdot S \$$ .

Find out where to go from goto(item,X) for all  $X \in V \cup \Sigma$ . Add this to sets of items.

Each set is a possible state of SLR parsing (GOTO/ACTION states).

- eg.:  $l_0 = \{S' \rightarrow \cdot S \$, S \rightarrow \cdot A, A \rightarrow \cdot T, A \rightarrow \cdot A + T, T \rightarrow \cdot b, T \rightarrow \cdot (A)\}$   
 $l_1 = \text{goto}(l_0, S) = \{S' \rightarrow S \cdot \$\}$   
 $l_2 = \text{goto}(l_0, A) = \{S \rightarrow A \cdot, A \rightarrow A \cdot + T\}$   
 $l_3 = \text{goto}(l_0, T) = \{A \rightarrow T \cdot\}$   
 $l_4 = \text{goto}(l_0, b) = \{T \rightarrow b \cdot\}$   
 $l_5 = \text{goto}(l_0, () = \{T \rightarrow (\cdot A), A \rightarrow \cdot T, A \rightarrow \cdot A + T, T \rightarrow \cdot b, T \rightarrow \cdot (A)\}$   
 $l_6 = \text{goto}(l_1, \$) = \{S' \rightarrow S \$ \cdot\}$   
 $l_7 = \text{goto}(l_2, +) = \{A \rightarrow A + \cdot T, T \rightarrow \cdot b, T \rightarrow \cdot (A)\}$   
 $l_8 = \text{goto}(l_5, A) = \{T \rightarrow (A \cdot), A \rightarrow A \cdot + T\}$   
 $\text{goto}(l_5, T) = l_3 \quad \text{goto}(l_5, b) = l_4 \quad \text{goto}(l_5, () = l_5$   
 $l_9 = \text{goto}(l_7, T) = \{A \rightarrow A + T \cdot\}$   
 $\text{goto}(l_7, b) = l_4 \quad \text{goto}(l_7, () = l_5 \quad \text{goto}(l_8, +) = l_7$   
 $l_{10} = \text{goto}(l_8, )) = \{T \rightarrow (A) \cdot\}$



The GOTO function as a FA

(GOTO table is a subset which only contains variable transitions)

$\text{FOLLOW}(S) = \{\$, \}$        $\text{FOLLOW}(A) = \{), +, \$\}$

$\text{FOLLOW}(T) = \{\$, +, )\}$

- setting up the ACTION table  
 for each  $I_i$ , if  $A \rightarrow \alpha \cdot a \beta$  is in  $I_i$ ,  $\text{ACTION}[i, a] = \text{shift } j$  (where  $\text{goto}(I_i, a) = I_j$ )  
 for each  $A \rightarrow \alpha \cdot$ ,  $\text{ACTION}[I_i, a] = \text{reduce by } A \rightarrow \alpha$  for all  $a \in \text{FOLLOW}(A)$
- Since the action depends on  $a$ , there may be a mixture of shift and reduce actions in the same state if the state contains both kinds of LR(0) items.

ACTION					GOTO			
	b	(	)	+	\$	S	A	T
0	sh4	sh5				1	2	3
1					accept			
2				sh7	rS->A			
3				rA->T	rA->T	rA->T		
4				rT->b	rT->b	rT->b		
5	sh4	sh5					8	3
6					accept			
7	sh4	sh5						9
8			sh10	sh7				
9				rA->A+T	rA->A+T	rA->A+T		
10				rT->(A)	rT->(A)	rT->(A)		

EVERY empty slot can be used for error reporting.



- LR parsers catch errors as early as possible

because the empty table entries are invalid derivations (and we are parsing deterministically), so that we don't need to read input further to find the error.

parsing (b+b) with SLR table

stack	input	action
0	(b+b)\$	sh5
0(5	b+b)\$	sh4
0(5b4	+b)\$	rT->b
0(5T3		rA->T
0(5A8		sh7
0(5A8+7	b)\$	sh4
0(5A8+7b4	)\$	rT->b
0(5A8+7T9		rA->A+T
0(5A8		sh10
0(5A8)10	\$	rT->(A)
0T3		rA->T
0A2		rS->A
0S1		accept

- A grammar with no conflict in the SLR tables is SLR(1).
- What is a lookahead if we are not looking past the righthand sides? the next symbol decides local action (shift/reduce).

because  $LA(A \rightarrow w) = FIRST(w)FOLLOW(A)$

- Reductions and new top determine the next viable prefix.
- In general, direct DFA construction is cumbersome. Design a NFA with empty transitions and convert to DFA.
- General LR(k) parsing is a generalization of SLR where LR(k)-items are used.
- Historically, SLR and LALR came after LR, to reduce its complexity (in class we go from SLR to LALR)

# LALR = LA()LR()

- LR(0) items are crucial to LALR

because  $LALR(1) = LA(1)LR(0)$

- We get LR(1) items from LR(0) items:

$$LR1\text{-context}(A \rightarrow w) = LR0\text{-context}(A \rightarrow w) FOLLOW_1(A)$$

- LALR is the most widely used LR technique.
- Every PL on the planet wants to be LALR.
- The ones which are not don't last very long.

- General LR( $k$ ) machine construction:  
method 1: find out closure/goto.., with LR( $k$ ) items (Dragon book)  
method 2: find LR( $k$ ) items and construct NFA from them (Sudkamp's book and EAC book)
- Finding LR(1) items

LR(0) items are of the form  $[A \rightarrow \alpha \cdot \beta]$   
shows 'local' parsing configuration in the RHS

LR(1) items are  $[A \rightarrow \alpha \cdot \beta, a]$   
 $a$  is the next symbol after RHS of  $A$  (non-local LA)

## Clarifying the idea of lookahead

- There is no SLR(0). SLR means LR(0) with 1-symbol lookahead.
- This lookahead is not part of table elements in SLR:

LR(0) items:  $[A \rightarrow \alpha \cdot \beta]$

LR(1) items  $[A \rightarrow \alpha \cdot \beta, a]$

When the dot is at the end, SLR and LALR do same action on  $a$ :  $[A \rightarrow \alpha \beta \cdot]$      $[A \rightarrow \alpha \beta \cdot, a]$

- But, SLR does it for all  $x$  in FOLLOW(A) including  $a$ , whereas LR does it only for  $a$ , which must be in FOLLOW(A).

- LALR also has  $[A \rightarrow \alpha \cdot \beta, a]$ ; it creates more states reachable from this if next symbol is in  $\text{FIRST}(\beta)$ .
- The first component is called CORE (or kernel)

- $SLR \subset LALR \subset LR$

1 A grammar which is not SLR but LALR (from Dragon book)

$$S \rightarrow L = R$$
$$S \rightarrow R$$
$$L \rightarrow *R$$
$$L \rightarrow id$$
$$R \rightarrow L$$

- hint: FOLLOW(R) contains '='.
- exercise: try SLR construction for this grammar.

in LR(0) item  $I = [\{S \rightarrow L \cdot = R\} \cup \{R \rightarrow L \cdot\}]$  we have a conflict.



## 2 A grammar which is not LALR but LR (from stackoverflow)

$$S \rightarrow aEa \mid bEb \mid aFb \mid bFa$$
$$E \rightarrow e$$
$$F \rightarrow e$$

- will give reduce/reduce conflict with LR(1) item:  
 $[\{E \rightarrow e\cdot, a/b\} \cup \{F \rightarrow e\cdot, a/b\}]$
- Grammar 1 seems like a reasonable PL construction.
- Grammar 2 doesn't.

- LALR idea: LR(1) items with common core can be merged, along with their second elements.

Let  $l_1 = [C \rightarrow d\cdot, \{c, d\}]$  and  $l_2 = [C \rightarrow d\cdot, \$]$ .

- Merge them into one state:  $l_{12} = [C \rightarrow d\cdot, \{c, d, \$\}]$
- If a state wanted to go to  $l_1$  or  $l_2$ , it can now go to  $l_{12}$
- It might reduce  $d$  to  $C$  in some examples where the original states would declare error,

BUT that error will be caught by LALR soon enough (before any shift)

- LALR gives error whenever LR gives error, IF the grammar is LALR.
- Otherwise, they produce the same result.
- Sketch of proof: Suppose we merged two sets to get
$$I_{12} = [\{A \rightarrow \alpha \cdot, a\} \cup \{B \rightarrow \beta \cdot a \gamma, b\}]$$
**S/R conflict**

say  $I_1$  is from a set that contains  $[A \rightarrow \alpha \cdot, a]$ . Since THAT set has common core,

it must also have  $[B \rightarrow \beta \cdot a \gamma, c]$  for some  $c$ . (We decide merge on cores;  $c$  not in it)

It wasn't LR (1) anyway.

- *valid* LR(1) items: things to appear on stack top

$$S \Rightarrow uAv \Rightarrow uw_1w_2av \quad (v \in \Sigma^*)$$

$[A \rightarrow w_1 \cdot w_2, x]$  is valid if  $uw_1$  is a viable prefix and  $x \in \Sigma \cup \{\$ \}$

- Why try SLR if LR is more general? LR tables are two or three orders of magnitude larger than SLR tables. But not every LR grammar is SLR. Lookahead LR (LALR) combines LR(1) states with common 'core' (LR(0) states) hence reducing the number of states. LALR seems to be practical for PL grammars.
- if the merged states do not introduce conflicts, the grammar is LALR(1)

- Recursive-descent parsing: Grammars rules as procedures

$$A \rightarrow B_1 \cdots B_i \cdots B_n$$

- $A$  : head of function
- $B_i$  : if syntactic rule, then define function  $B_i$  and call it from RHSs with  $B_i$ .
- otherwise, call `match( $B_i$ )`
- Very intuitive
- Hand-coded error reporting
- Rapid prototyping

match(T): returns true if next token is of type T

advance(): consumes the lookahead token

```

procedure S;
begin
  ID;
  if match(ASSIGN) then advance() else error();
  E;
  if match(STOP) then advance() else error();
end;

```

```

procedure ID;
begin
  if match(ID) then token:=advance();
  install_id(token);
end;

```

```

procedure E;
begin
  T;
  Eprime;
end;

```

```

procedure Eprime;
begin
  if match(OP) then {advance(); T; Eprime;}
  else /* no consumption */
end

```

# Syntactic Analysis:LL(k) parsing

eg: BUILDING a STRONG LL(1) GRAMMAR

- $G_{AE}$  :  
 $S' \rightarrow S\$$   
 $S \rightarrow A$   
 $A \rightarrow T \mid A + T$   
 $T \rightarrow b \mid (A)$

- A is left-recursive: re-write

$$\begin{aligned} A &\rightarrow TA' \\ A' &\rightarrow +TA' \mid \varepsilon \end{aligned}$$

- FIRST sets:

$$\text{FIRST}_1(S) = \{b, (\} \Rightarrow \text{FIRST}_1(A) = \{b, (\}$$

$$\text{FIRST}_1(A') = \{+, \varepsilon\} \Rightarrow \text{FIRST}_1(T) = \{b, (\}$$

- FOLLOW sets:

$$\text{FOLLOW}_1(S) = \{\$,)\} \Rightarrow \text{FOLLOW}_1(A) = \{\$,)\}$$

$$\text{FOLLOW}_1(A') = \{\$,)\}$$

$$\text{FOLLOW}_1(T) = \{\$,),+\} = \text{FIRST}_1(A')\text{FOLLOW}_1(A')$$

- LA sets:

$$\text{LA}_1(S \rightarrow A) = \{b, (\}$$

$$\text{LA}_1(A \rightarrow TA') = \{b, (\}$$

$$\text{LA}_1(T \rightarrow b) = \{b\}$$

$$\text{LA}_1(T \rightarrow (A)) = \{(\}$$

$$\text{LA}_1(A' \rightarrow \varepsilon) = \{\$,)\}$$

$$\text{LA}_1(A' \rightarrow +TA') = \{+\}$$



- A strong LL(k) parser

```

input: LL(k) grammar;
      input string p;
      LAK sets
  
```

1. Start with S ( $q=S$ )

2. repeat

```

    let  $q=uAv$     ( $A$  is leftmost variable;
     $p=uyz$          $u$  = prefix of  $q$ ;
                   $y$  is the lookahead string;
                   $\text{length}(y)=k$ )
  
```

if  $y$  is in LAK set of a rule  $A \rightarrow w$

$q=uAv \Rightarrow uwv$  can be done deterministically

let  $q=uwv$

until  $q=p$  or  $y$  is not in any LAK set

3. if  $q=p$  then accept, otherwise reject

- TABLE-DRIVEN LL. rows: variables. columns:  $LA_k$  sets
- The table predicts which rule to apply (predictive parsing)
- if the table has multiple entries, it is not LL(k)

- Constructing the  $LL(k)$  table (uses LA sets directly)

input:  $G=(\text{Alphabet}, V, P, S)$

LA $_k$  sets for all rules in  $P$

output: parsing table  $M$

1. For all  $A \rightarrow w$  in  $P$

2.  $M[A, u]$  contains  $A \rightarrow w$  ; for each terminal string  $u$  in  $LA_k(A \rightarrow w)$

3.  $M[A, \$]$  contains  $A \rightarrow w$  if  $\$$  is in  $LA_k(A \rightarrow w)$

4. Make all empty entries of  $M$  error states

b

(

)

+

\$

---

 S' | S' → S\$    S' → S\$

|

S | S → A    S → A

|

A | A → TA'    A → TA'

|

A' |                    A' → null    A' → +TA'    A' → null

|

T | T → b    T → (A)

parsing: start with  $S'$ , find the right rule from LA sets. if next symbol is \$, see if  $q = p$  after last rule.

exercise: try input  $(b+b)$  on  $LL(1)$  version of  $G_{AE}$

- A no-lookahead algorithm would backtrack 3 times for the same input.
- What about left-recursive rules?
  - Can we parse them with table-driven  $LL$ ?
  - Knowing that we can't parse them with RDP?
- No ambiguous or left-recursive grammar can be  $LL(1)$

Because  $FIRST_1(w)FOLLOW_1(A)$  would be the same for all left-recursive rules.

- Reconsider the left recursive grammar:

$$\begin{aligned}G_{AE}: \quad S' &\rightarrow S\$ \\ S &\rightarrow A \\ A &\rightarrow T \mid A + T \\ T &\rightarrow b \mid (A)\end{aligned}$$

b            (            )            +            \$

-----  
A | A → T      A → T  
  | A → A + T   A → A + T

- LL(k) versus strong LL(k) grammars:

A grammar is LL(k) but not strong LL(k) if the LA sets of rules are not necessarily disjoint but the LA sets of any sentential form is unique.

$$S \rightarrow Aabd \mid cAbcd$$

$$A \rightarrow a \mid b \mid \varepsilon$$

$$\text{LA}_2(A \rightarrow a) = \{aa, ab\}$$

$$\text{LA}_2(A \rightarrow \varepsilon) = \{ab, bc\} \Rightarrow \text{not strong LL}(2)$$

- $LA_k(uAv, A \rightarrow w) = FIRST_k(wv)$

$$LA_2(Aabd, A \rightarrow a) = \{aa\}$$

$$LA_2(Aabd, A \rightarrow b) = \{ba\}$$

$$LA_2(Aabd, A \rightarrow \varepsilon) = \{ab\}$$

Similarly  $LA_2$  sets of  $cAbcd$  also form a partition.  $\Rightarrow LL(2)$

- In general though, number of sentential forms in a grammar is quite large (sometimes can only be described by a pattern).
- LA sets must be calculated on-the-fly  $\Rightarrow$  costly



# Adaptive LL

- in 2014, Parr, Harwell and Fisher introduced Adaptive LL(), in SIGPLAN Notices of ACM.
- ALL() can handle DIRECT left-recursion because it handles rule choice at run-time (i.e. not in tables)
- Indirect left recursion is still a problem, and not ALL-parsable.
- antLR4 implements ALL()
- a bit of history: yacc can handle precedence at parse-time out of grammar: prefer shift to reduce etc.
- They are one-step closer to their onomastic nemesis, aka. LR!

- This section is from:  
 Ford, B. (2004). Parsing expression grammars: a recognition-based syntactic foundation. In *Proc. of the 31st ACM SIGPLAN-SIGACT symposium on Principles of programming languages*, pp. 111–122.
- We can deterministically parse an ambiguous grammar by RULE CHOICE (cf. LL and LR).
- In top-down parsing, if we are willing to eliminate left recursion, we can effectively parse such grammars.
- PEG= a CFG + reg. expressions on the RHS + rule choice by ordering + trumping decisions (*and* and *not*)
  - *and* and *not* are like lookahead functions; they do not consume input.
- Recent python parsers (e.g. CPython) are PEG parsers.

```

# Hierarchical syntax
Grammar    <- Spacing Definition+ EndOfFile
Definition <- Identifier LEFTARROW Expression

Expression <- Sequence (SLASH Sequence)*
Sequence  <- Prefix*
Prefix    <- (AND / NOT)? Suffix
Suffix    <- Primary (QUESTION / STAR / PLUS)?
Primary   <- Identifier !LEFTARROW
           / OPEN Expression CLOSE
           / Literal / Class / DOT

# Lexical syntax
Identifier <- IdentStart IdentCont* Spacing
IdentStart <- [a-zA-Z_]
IdentCont  <- IdentStart / [0-9]

Literal    <- [''] ( ![''] Char)* [''] Spacing
           / ["] ( !["] Char)* ["] Spacing
Class      <- '[' ( !' ' Range)* ']' Spacing
Range      <- Char '-' Char / Char
Char       <- '\\\\' [nrt.'"\\]\\\\
           / '\\\\' [0-2][0-7][0-7]
           / '\\\\' [0-7][0-7]?
           / !'\\\\' .

LEFTARROW  <- '<-' Spacing
SLASH      <- '/' Spacing
AND        <- '&' Spacing
NOT        <- '!' Spacing
QUESTION   <- '?' Spacing
STAR       <- '*' Spacing
PLUS       <- '+' Spacing
OPEN       <- '(' Spacing
CLOSE      <- ')' Spacing
DOT        <- '.' Spacing

Spacing    <- (Space / Comment)*
Comment    <- '#' (!EndOfLine .)* EndOfLine
Space      <- ' ' / '\t' / EndOfLine
EndOfLine  <- '\r\n' / '\n' / '\r'
EndOfFile  <- 1.

```

Figure 1. PEG formally describing its own ASCII syntax

Here's PEG in more informal terms:

[https:](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parsing_expression_grammar)

[//en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parsing\\_expression\\_grammar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parsing_expression_grammar)

- PEG's parsing expressions are not exactly regular expressions. Their generative power is unsettled.
- Having regular expressions on the RHS of a CFG is still context-free:
  - Ristad, Eric Sven. "Computational complexity of current GPSG theory." (1986).
- Natural language grammars are not context-free.
- There is a way to capture them, using linear-indexed grammars:
  - [https://www.academia.edu/83064603/Resisting\\_to\\_Simplify\\_Description\\_at\\_the\\_Cost\\_of\\_Baroque\\_Computation\\_Resisting\\_to\\_Simplify\\_Computation\\_at\\_the\\_Cost\\_of\\_Baroque\\_Description](https://www.academia.edu/83064603/Resisting_to_Simplify_Description_at_the_Cost_of_Baroque_Computation_Resisting_to_Simplify_Computation_at_the_Cost_of_Baroque_Description)

BOTTOM LINE: We do all this math to ensure that the source code is translated to internal representation

- 1) unambiguously,
  - 2) predictably (i.e. by an algorithm)
- How about ambiguous code? Now that's AI we haven't bargained for. Somebody has to make code choice, and that needs autonomous decision making. But it's humans who have to live with its consequences!
  - I think we should start looking at computers and ethics from this angle before it's too late.