Implementing CKY Parser in Java

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**ABSTRACT**

The report provides an introduction to “Cocke, Younger, Kasami” algorithm. It gives the introduction to parsing along with steps to implement the CYK algorithm in Java language. The report also gives the different experiments that have been conducted to test the correctness of the implemented software.

# INTRODUCTION

## Parsing

**Parsing** [1] (or *Syntactic analysis*) is the process of analyzing a string of symbols, either in natural language or in computer languages, conforming to the rules of a formal grammar. Within computational linguistics the term is used to refer to the formal analysis by a computer of a sentence or other string of words into its constituents, resulting in a parse tree showing their syntactic relation to each other, which may also contain semantic and other information.

## CYK Algorithm

The Cocke-Younger-Kasami (alternatively called CYK, or CKY) [2] is a parsing algorithm for context-free grammars, named after its inventors, John Cocke, Daniel Younger and Tadao Kasami. It employs bottom-up parsing and dynamic programming. The importance of the CYK algorithm stems from its high efficiency in certain situations.

## Chomsky Normal Form

The standard version of CYK algorithm operates on context-free grammars given in Chomsky Normal Form (CNF) [3]. However any context-free grammar can be transformed into CNF which represents the same grammar. The CYK algorithm requires the context-free grammar to be rendered into CNF because it tests for possibilities to split the current sequence in help. Hence any context-free grammar that does not generate the empty string can be represented in CNF using the production rules:

A 🡪 BC and

A 🡪 α

Where A, B, C are non-terminal symbols and α is a terminal symbol

# RELATED WORKS

Algorithms to parse context-free languages has been known for a long time. There are many notable algorithms namely Earley Parser, CYK Algorithm and Chart Parsing [4].

Earley Algorithm is implemented using dynamic programming and top-down approach. In this algorithm, a special symbol ● is used in the right-hand side of the production rule to indicate the progress that is being made.

The CYK algorithm is a classic example of the dynamic programming paradigm. This algorithm implements bottom-up approach.

In both CYK and Earley algorithms, the order in which different events occur is determined by the procedures that make up these algorithms. Chart Parsing facilitates dynamic determination of the order in which the entries are processed.

# APPROACH

The important part of CYK algorithm is parsing. At first basics of parsing was learnt and understood. After that, the working of CYK algorithm was studied. Once the working of the algorithm was clearly understood, the next step was to select the language to be used to implement the algorithm. Java language was selected since it is most widely used.

## Implementation

The implementation initially began by following the algorithm blindly and directly. At first the production rules are checked for correctness and check whether they belong to CNF. If they are not in CNF, the execution is terminated. Assuming the production rules abide by the given rules and are in CNF, we further proceed to fill the matrix.

In the first loop, the diagonal of the matrix is filled. This is done by checking the terminal symbol with their LHS. In the next loop, we iterate through all the possible combinations of the two strings and check if they can be produced. If they are produced, we make a note of it, save it and move to the next entry.

At the end, the entire matrix is filled. We then check if the start symbol is present in the right most index of first row. If it is present, the entered string can be parsed with the given grammar, if it does not exist, the string cannot be parsed by the given grammar.

## Pseudocode

Read the details from the file

For (int I = 0; I < num\_prod; ++I) //For each productions

{

Extract the LHS

Extract RHS

Validate LHS

Validate RHS

If the production rule is present in CNF

Add it to the grammar for future use

}

For (int I = 0; I < strLength; ++I)

Fill the diagonal elements of the matrix

For (int k = 1; k < strLength; ++k)

For (int j = k; j < strLength; ++j)

For (int l = j-k; l < j; ++l)

{

Generate different combinations of the string and save the symbols in the remaining matrix

}

Display the upper half of the matrix

If the top right corner has the start symbol

{

The string can be parsed by the given grammar

}

Else

{

The string cannot be parsed by the give grammar

}

D:\University of Texas at Dallas\Sem 5 - Spring 2016\Natural Language Processing\CYKParser-NLP\NLP - 1.png

# SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

## Input

The input for the software is a text file called “inputGrammar.txt”. This input file should be in a required format.

* Line 1 : Number of production rules
* Line 2 : The starting variable
* Line 3 : The string to be parsed
* Line 4 to end : The production rules for the grammar

## Output

The output at the end of execution of the software is the CYK table. The upper half of the matrix is displayed in order to represent the CYK table. If there are more than one symbol in a single cell of the matrix, they are separated by a comma. The software also tells if the given string can be parsed by the given grammar.

## Note

There are special instructions to be followed in writing the production rules in the text file. Some of the rules are mentioned in the earlier section. Other rules are mentioned here.

In order to execute the program successfully, the rules should strictly be in Chomsky Normal Form (CNF). The LHS of the production rule should strictly be a non-terminal symbol. RHS can be of two non-terminal symbols (separated by a space) or a single terminal symbol. Also, care should be taken to make sure there are no space between the production rules except between the two non-terminal symbols in the RHS.

# EXPERIMENTS

## Test 1

The grammar used for this test is selected form Wikipedia. The grammar is given below:

S🡪NP VP VP🡪VP PP

VP🡪V NP VP🡪eats

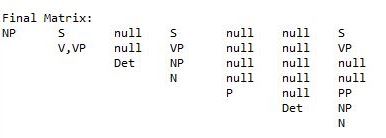
PP🡪P NP NP🡪Det N

NP🡪she V🡪eats

P🡪with N🡪fish

N🡪fork Det🡪a

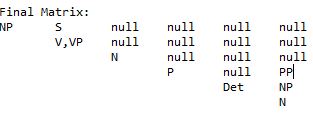
The string to be parsed is “she eats a fish with a fork”. The matrix generated by the software is:



Since the starting symbol i.e. S is at the top - right corner of the matrix, the string can be parsed by the given grammar.

## Test 2

For testing the false case i.e. when the grammar is not able to parse the string, the grammar used is the same as above. The string to be parsed is changed to “she eats fish with a fork”. The matrix obtained for this case is:



## Test 3

Another experiment that has been carried out is not from English grammar. The grammar is given below

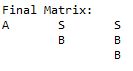
S🡪A B A🡪a

A🡪S C B🡪b

B🡪B B C🡪c

C🡪C A

The string to be parsed is “a b b”



This grammar is taken for examining and testing only to check that the parser is not only made for English grammar. Hence proved that the software can be used to any language that is in Chomsky Normal Form.

## Test 4

The next test gives an idea of what happens if the entered grammar is not in CNF. The grammar entered has a production rule that doesn’t comply with the rules of CNF.

S🡪NP VP VP🡪VP PP

VP🡪V NP VP🡪eats

PP🡪P NP NP🡪Det N

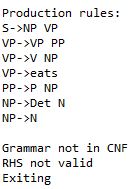
NP🡪N NP🡪she

V🡪eats P🡪with

N🡪fish N🡪fork

Det🡪a

This grammar has a production rule “NP🡪N”. This rule violates the rules of CNF. The outcome that the program returns is:



# CONCLUSION

The successful completion of the software gives a clear vision and a better picture of the algorithm. It gives a clear understanding of the steps involved in CYK algorithm. On implementing the algorithm, it helps to learn the worst case running time complexity of CYK algorithm is θ (n3. |G|) where n is the length of the parsed string and |G| is the size of the CNF grammar. The space complexity of CYK algorithm is θ (n2) since there are only n2 entries in the matrix for a given string of length n [5].

Another conclusion that is determined about the CYK algorithm is that it is a recognizer, not a parser. For the algorithm to succeed it simply has to find the start symbol in the corresponding cell. For the algorithm to be a parser, it should return all the possible parses for a given input. There is a simple way to change this algorithm form recognizer to a parser. The table entries can be paired with pointers that keep track of the symbols from where they are derived. This will incur considerable cost to the software.

# REFERENCES

1. Parsing, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parsing>
2. CYK Algorithm, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CYK_algorithm>
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5. Li, Te, and Devi Alagappan. A Comparison of CYK and Earley Parsing Algorithms.