


01204211 Discrete Mathematics

Lecture 9b: Nonregular languages¹

Jittat Fakcharoenphol

August 26, 2024

¹Based on lecture notes of *Models of Computation* course by Jeff Erickson. 

DFA: Formal definitions

A **finite-state machine** or a **deterministic finite-state automaton** (DFA) has five components:

- ▶ the input alphabet Σ ,
- ▶ a finite set of states Q ,
- ▶ a transition function $\delta : Q \times \Sigma \longrightarrow Q$
- ▶ a start state $s \in Q$, and
- ▶ a subset $A \subseteq Q$ of accepting states.

Acceptance

One step move: from state q with input symbol a , the machine changes its state to $\delta(q, a)$.

Extension: from state q with input string w , the machine changes its state to $\delta^*(q, w)$ defined as

$$\delta^*(q, w) = \begin{cases} q & \text{if } w = \varepsilon, \\ \delta^*(\delta(q, a), x) & \text{if } w = ax. \end{cases}$$

The signature of δ^* is $Q \times \Sigma^* \longrightarrow Q$.

accepting w

For a finite-state machine with starting state s and accepting states A , it accepts string w iff

$$\delta^*(s, w) \in A.$$

Language of a DFA

$L(M)$

For a DFA M , let $L(M)$ be the set of all strings that M accepts. More formally, for $M = (\Sigma, Q, \delta, s, A)$,

$$L(M) = \{w \in \Sigma^* \mid \delta^*(s, w) \in A\}.$$

We refer to $L(M)$ as the language of M .

Automatic languages²

M_1 accepts L_1 } M doesn't accept $L_1 \cap L_2$
 M_2 accepts L_2

Definition (for now)

A language L is "automatic" if there is a DFA M such that $L(M) = L$.

Lemma 1

If L_1 and L_2 are automatic languages over alphabet Σ , then

- ▶ $L_1 \cap L_2$,
- ▶ $L_1 \cup L_2$,
- ▶ $L_1 \setminus L_2$, and
- ▶ $\Sigma^* \setminus L_1$,

are also automatic.

The set of automatic languages is closed under these boolean operations.

²Taken directly from Erikson's lecture notes

Other ways to combine DFAs?

Given two languages L_1 and L_2 , we can combine them in various ways using Boolean operations (i.e., \cap , \cup , etc.).

What else can we do?

Other ways to combine DFAs?

Given two languages L_1 and L_2 , we can combine them in various ways using Boolean operations (i.e., \cap , \cup , etc.).

What else can we do?

- Concatenation: $L_1 \cdot L_2$, defined as

Other ways to combine DFAs?

Given two languages L_1 and L_2 , we can combine them in various ways using Boolean operations (i.e., \cap , \cup , etc.).

What else can we do?

- Concatenation: $\underline{L_1} \cdot \underline{L_2}$, defined as

$$\{\underline{x} \cdot \underline{y} \mid x \in \underline{L_1}, y \in \underline{L_2}\}$$

Other ways to combine DFAs?

Given two languages L_1 and L_2 , we can combine them in various ways using Boolean operations (i.e., \cap , \cup , etc.).

What else can we do?

- **Concatenation:** $L_1 \cdot L_2$, defined as

$$\{x \cdot y \mid x \in L_1, y \in L_2\}$$

- **Kleene closure:** L_1^* .

Interesting questions

We know that the set of automatic languages is closed under Boolean operations.

Questions

- ▶ Is it closed under concatenation?
- ▶ Is it closed under taking Kleene closure?

Interesting questions

We know that the set of automatic languages is closed under Boolean operations.

Questions

- ▶ Is it closed under concatenation?
- ▶ Is it closed under taking Kleene closure?

Spoiler:

Interesting questions

We know that the set of automatic languages is closed under Boolean operations.

Questions

- ▶ Is it closed under concatenation?
- ▶ Is it closed under taking Kleene closure?

Spoiler: Yes, it is (for both operations). We will see the proof, after we learn a required new concept.

Closure

Lemma 2

Given two automatic languages L_1 and L_2 , the following languages are automatic:

- ▶ $L_1 \cup L_2$,
- ▶ $L_1 \cdot L_2$, and
- ▶ L_1^* .

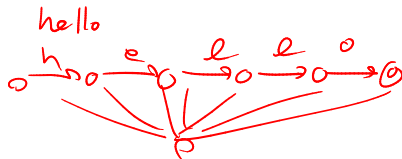
Closure

Lemma 2

Given two automatic languages L_1 and L_2 , the following languages are automatic:

- ▶ $L_1 \cup L_2$,
- ▶ $L_1 \cdot L_2$, and
- ▶ L_1^* .

More over, \emptyset and a language containing a single string are also automatic.








Closure

More over, \emptyset and a language containing a single string are also automatic.

Lemma 2

These are automatic languages

- ▶ The empty set, 
- ▶ A language containing one string, 
- ▶ $L_1 \cup L_2$ for automatic languages L_1 and L_2 , 
- ▶ $L_1 \cdot L_2$ for automatic languages L_1 and L_2 , and 
- ▶ L^* for automatic languages (L) 



Doese this look familiar?

Regular languages



regular
expression

Definition: regular languages

A language L is **regular** if and only if it satisfies one of the following conditions:

- ▶ L is empty; ✓
- ▶ L contains one string (can be the empty string ε);
- ▶ L is a union of two regular languages;
- ▶ L is the concatenation of two regular languages; or
- ▶ L is the Kleene closure of a regular language. ✓

Thm! Language L is regular iff there exists a DFA M such that $L(M) = L$.



Every regular language is automatic

Big question:

⇒

Every regular language is automatic

Big question:

⇐

Is every automatic language regular?

Spoiler:

⇒

Every regular language is automatic

Big question:

⇐

Is every automatic language regular?

Spoiler: Yes, it is. We will see some idea on how to prove this.

⇒

Every regular language is automatic

Big question:

⇐

Is every automatic language regular?

Spoiler: Yes, it is. We will see some idea on how to prove this.

Theorem 3

A language L is regular if and only if there exists a DFA M such that $L(M) = L$.

Key idea



If you have finite states, you can't possibly distinguish between strings in the language and strings not in the language.

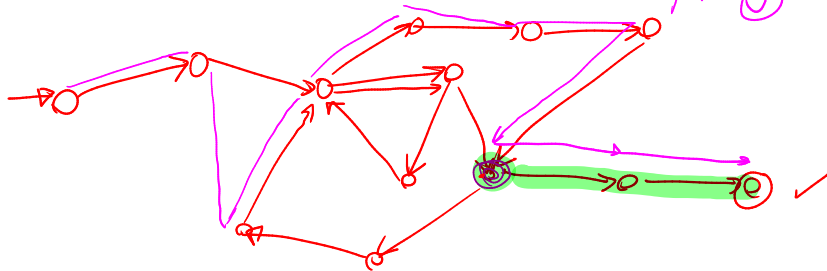
state 7240

Basic question

How can you show that you need at least two states?

Basic question

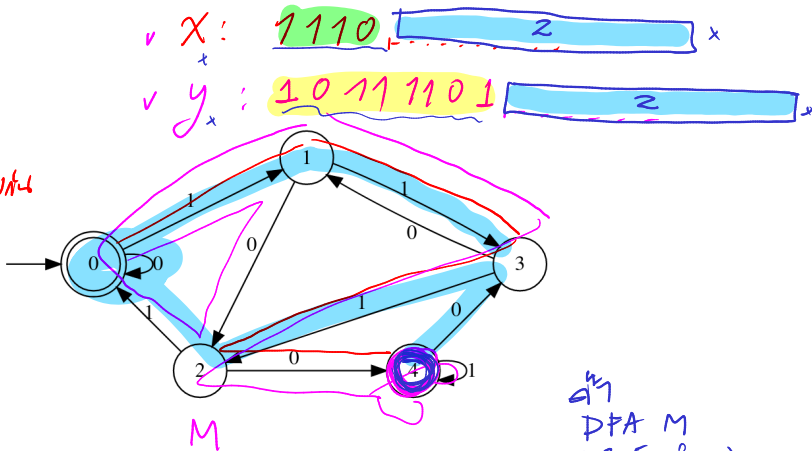
How can you show that you need at least two states?
Let's see how a DFA works.



Another example

idea:

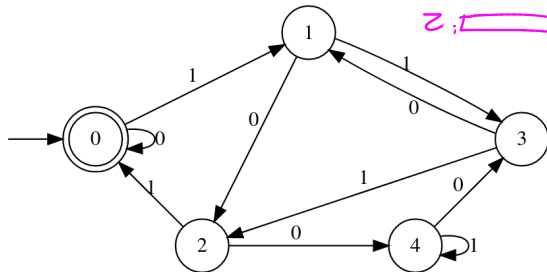
if 2 input is
 accepted in a state
 of a machine
 \Rightarrow accept/reject,
 final state.



M accepts x or y ?

a machine
 DFA M
 whether it accepts or not
 if x or y is accepted
 state transition

Another example



x :
 y : } M reaches
the same
state for
both x & y .

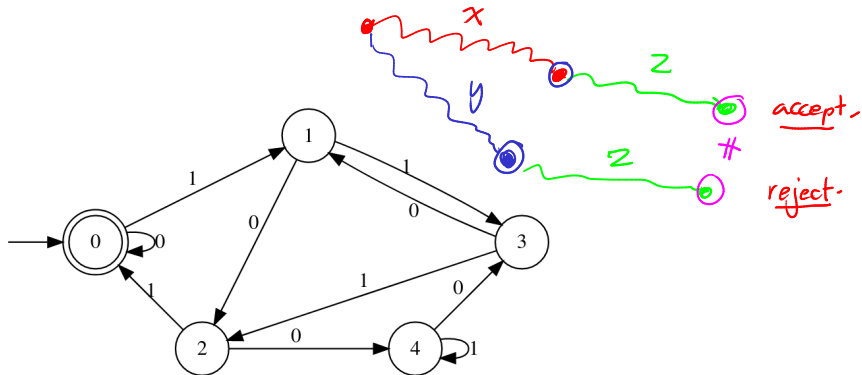
z :



If string x and y reach the same state in a DFA, for any string z , both xz and yz must reach the same state.

→ accept / reject

Another example



If string x and y reach the same state in a DFA, for any string z , both xz and yz must reach the same state.

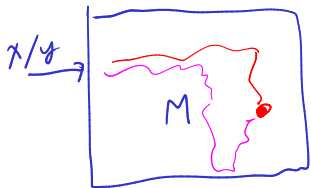
In other words, a DFA accepts xz iff it accepts yz

Contrapositive: and $[x] \neq [y]$ if xz & yz diverge to different states, \otimes if y diverge to different states

Basic question

How can you show that you need at least two states?

Handwritten DFA M of $L(M) = \{0^n 1^n \mid n \geq 0\}$



$x = 0000$

$y = 000$

$z = 01111$

$xz = 000001111 \notin L(M)$

$yz = 00001111 \in L(M)$

$z = 111$
 $xz = 0000111 \notin L(M) \times$
 $yz = 000111 \in L(M) \checkmark$
 $\Rightarrow xz \wedge yz$ are in different states.
 $\Rightarrow x \wedge y$ are in the same state.

$z = 1111$
 $xz = 00001111 \in L(M)$
 $yz = 0001111 \notin L(M)$
 $\Rightarrow xz \wedge yz$ are in different states.
 $\Rightarrow x \wedge y$ are in the same state.

Distinguishing suffixes

Consider language $L = \{0^n 1^n \mid n \geq 0\}$.

Consider $x = 0$ and $y = 00$. Consider suffix $z = \underline{11}$.

$$\begin{array}{l} xz = 011 \quad \notin L \\ yz = 0011 \quad \in L \end{array}$$

Distinguishing suffixes

Consider language $L = \{0^n 1^n \mid n \geq 0\}$.

Consider $x = 0$ and $y = 00$. Consider suffix $z = 11$.

We have that

$$xz = 0\mathbf{11} \notin L,$$

but

$$yz = 00\mathbf{11} \in L.$$

Distinguishing suffixes

Consider language $L = \{0^n 1^n \mid n \geq 0\}$.

Consider $x = 0$ and $y = 00$. Consider suffix $z = 11$.

We have that

$$xz = 0\mathbf{11} \notin L,$$

but

$$yz = 00\mathbf{11} \in L.$$

What can you say about a DFA M such that $L(M) = L$?

Distinguishing suffixes

$\{x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4, \dots, x_m\}$

Consider language $L = \{0^n 1^n \mid n \geq 0\}$.

Consider $x = 0$ and $y = 00$. Consider suffix $z = 11$.

We have that

$$xz = 011 \notin L,$$

but

$$yz = 0011 \in L.$$

What can you say about a DFA M such that $L(M) = L$?

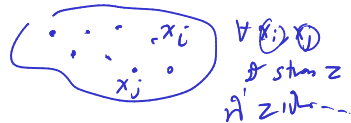
הוכחה.

Definition

For strings x and y , string z is a **distinguishing suffix** with respect to L if exactly one of xz and yz is in L .

$z??$ (2) L מכלול DFA M כזה שכל x ו- y שונים $input$ שונים M state.

Fooling sets



A **fooling set** for a language L is set F of strings such that every pair of strings in F has a distinguishing suffix.

Example: The set $\{0, 00, 000\}$ is a fooling set for $L = \{0^n 1^n \mid n \geq 0\}$.

$\begin{matrix} \textcircled{0}, & \textcircled{00} \\ \hline 01 \checkmark & 001 \times \end{matrix} \quad \bullet \quad Z=1 \quad \checkmark$
 $\begin{matrix} 0, & 000 \\ \hline 0111 \times & 000111 \checkmark \end{matrix} \quad \bullet \quad Z=111 \quad \checkmark$
 $\begin{matrix} 00, & 000 \\ \hline 0011 \checkmark & 00011 \times \end{matrix} \quad \bullet \quad Z=11 \quad \checkmark$

- ภาษา L ไม่เป็น regular
 - มี infinite fooling set สำหรับ language L .
- fooling set
 - distinguishing suffix ②

A large fooling set

$\{\epsilon, 0, 00, 000, 0000, \dots\}$

Lemma 4 $\Rightarrow F$

The set $\{0^n \mid n \geq 0\}$ is a fooling set for $L = \{0^n 1^n \mid n \geq 0\}$.

Proof.

ให้ $F = \{0^n \mid n \geq 0\}$. ให้นิยาม $x = 0^i \in F$, $y = 0^j \in F$ โดยที่ $i \neq j$
สมมติว่า $i < j$ (โดยไม่มีเสียการทั่วไป)

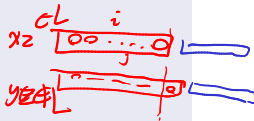
ให้ $z = 1^i$ หมายความว่า

- $xz = 0^i 1^i \in L$

- $yz = 0^j 1^i \notin L$

ดังนั้น z คือ distinguishing suffix ของ x กับ y .

$\Rightarrow F$ เป็น fooling set



Note:

A **fooling set** for a language L is set F of strings such that every pair of strings in F has a distinguishing suffix.



Observation

If language L has an infinite fooling set, L is not regular

→ since DFA M accepts language L ,
it must be that M distinguishes every pair of strings in the fooling set for L .
 \Rightarrow contradiction. \Rightarrow no DFA M accepts L .

Observation

If language L has an infinite fooling set, L is not regular



→ Lemma 5

Language $L = \{0^n 1^n \mid n \geq 0\}$ is not regular.

Proof.

We previously establish that the set $F = \{0^n \mid n \geq 0\}$ is a fooling set for L .
Since F has infinite size, from the observation, we know that L is not regular. □

Lemma 6

reverse

$\{ \underline{0110}, \underline{00}, \underline{1011}, \underline{1101}, \dots \}$

For $\Sigma = \{0, 1\}$, the language $L = \{ \underline{w} \underline{w}^R \mid w \in \Sigma^* \}$ is not regular. ← palindrome.

Proof.

ให้ $F = \{0^n \mid n \geq 0\}$ เราพิสูจน์ว่า F เป็น fooling set ของ L

พิจารณา $x = 0^i \in F$ และ $y = 0^j \in F$ ที่ $i \neq j$.

สมมติว่า $i < j$ โดยไม่เสียการทั่วไป

ให้ $z = 110^j$ เราได้ว่า $xz = 0^i 110^j \notin L$

แต่ $yz = 0^j 110^j \in L$, นั่นคือ

distinguishing suffix สำหรับ x, y ใน F ถ้า $x \neq y \Rightarrow F$ เป็น

fooling set ขนาด infinite \Rightarrow เราแสดงว่า L ไม่ใช่ regular. □

00000 01000 ✗
000 01000 ✓
00000 1000 ✓
00000 1000 ✓
x_i, x₂, ...
x_i = 00000
x_j = 00000

Not:

แสดงว่า F fooling set ① ขนาด infinite.

$L = \{0^{2^n} \mid n \geq 0\}$: Proof (1/2) $\{0, 00, 0000, 00000000, 0^{16}, 0^{32}, \dots\}$

Lemma 7

For $\Sigma = \{0\}$, the language $L = \{0^{2^n} \mid n \geq 0\}$ is not regular.

Proof.

ให้ $F = L$. 9: พิสูจน์ว่า F ไม่ fooling set ของ L .

พิจารณา $x = 0^{2^i} \in F$ และ $y = 0^{2^j} \in F$ ที่ $i < j$

ให้ $z = 0^{2^i}$ พิจารณา

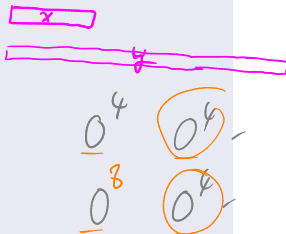
$$xz = 0^{2^i} 0^{2^i} = 0^{2^i + 2^i} = 0^{2^{i+1}} \in L$$

$$yz = 0^{2^j} 0^{2^i} = 0^{2^j + 2^i} \text{ ซึ่งไม่อยู่ใน } L$$

$$2^j < \boxed{2^j + 2^i} < 2^j + 2^j = 2^{j+1}$$

$\leftarrow \text{กรณี } 2^i > 0 \quad \leftarrow \text{กรณี } 2^i < 2^j$

ดังนั้น $2^j + 2^i$ ไม่อยู่ใน L เพราะ $2 \nmid 2^j + 2^i \Rightarrow yz \notin L$. ดังนั้น z ไม่ distinguish ชุด x และ $y \Rightarrow F$ ไม่ fooling set



$L = \{0^{\underline{2^n}} \mid n \geq 0\}$: Proof 2

Lemma 8

For $\Sigma = \{0\}$, the language $L = \{0^{2^n} \mid n \geq 0\}$ is not regular.

Proof.

Let $F = \{0^m \mid m \geq 0\}$ is infinite set of strings. F is a fooling set for L .

Let x, y be strings in F s.t. $x \neq y$. Then $x = 0^i$, $y = 0^j$ where $i < j$ (since $i < j$).

Then x and y have distinguishing suffix z .

Let k be such that $2^k > j$. Then $z = 0^{2^k + 2^k - j}$.

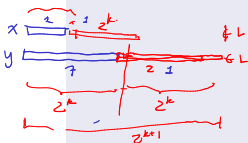
$$\bullet yz = 0^j \cdot 0^{2^k + 2^k - j} = 0^{2 \cdot 2^k} = 0^{2^{k+1}} \in L$$

$$\bullet xz = 0^i \cdot 0^{2^k + 2^k - j} = 0^{2^k} \cdot 0^{2^k - j + i} \notin L$$

Since $xz \notin L$.

Now: $2^k < \boxed{2^k + 2^k - j + i} < 2^k + 2^k = 2^{k+1}$

Since F is a fooling set for L , but L is infinite, L is not regular. \square



$L = \{0^{2^n} \mid n \geq 0\}$: Proof 3

Lemma 9

For $\Sigma = \{0\}$, the language $L = \{0^{2^n} \mid n \geq 0\}$ is not regular.

Proof.

Let $F = \{0^m \mid m \geq 0\}$ be a fooling set for L

Let x, y be strings in F s.t. $x \neq y$ choose $x = 0^i, y = 0^j$ where $i < j$ (without loss of generality)

We choose z which distinguishes x and y

• let k be such that $2^k > j$, let $z = 0^{2^k - i}$

then $xz = 0^i \cdot 0^{2^k - i} = 0^{2^k} \in L$ ✓

• $yz = 0^j \cdot 0^{2^k - i} = 0^{2^k - i + j} \notin L$ because:

$$2^k < 2^k - i + j < 2^k - i + 2^k \leq 2^k + 2^k = 2^{k+1}$$

thus F is a fooling set for L . because L is infinite fooling set, L is not regular



$L = \{0^p \mid p \text{ is prime}\}$: Proof 1

Lemma 10

For $\Sigma = \{0\}$, the language $L = \{0^p \mid p \text{ is prime}\}$ is not regular.

Proof.



$L = \{0^p \mid p \text{ is prime}\}$: Proof 2

Lemma 11

For $\Sigma = \{0\}$, the language $L = \{0^p \mid p \text{ is prime}\}$ is not regular.

Proof.

