LR Parsing. Parser Generators.

Lecture 8-9

Bottom-Up Parsing

- Bottom-up parsing is more general than topdown parsing
 - And just as efficient
 - Builds on ideas in top-down parsing
 - Preferred method in practice
- Also called LR parsing
 - L means that tokens are read left to right
 - R means that it constructs a rightmost derivation!

An Introductory Example

- LR parsers don't need left-factored grammars and can also handle left-recursive grammars
- Consider the following grammar:

$$E \rightarrow E + (E) \mid int$$

- Why is this not LL(1)?
- Consider the string: int + (int) + (int)

The Idea

 LR parsing reduces a string to the start symbol by inverting productions:

```
str \leftarrow input string of terminals repeat
```

- Identify β in str such that $A \to \beta$ is a production (i.e., str = $\alpha \beta \gamma$)
- Replace β by A in str (i.e., str becomes α A γ) until str = 5

A Bottom-up Parse in Detail (1)

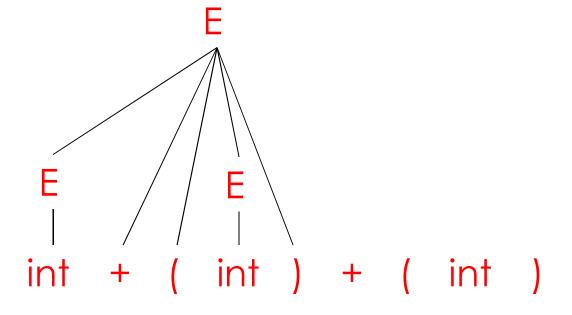
$$int + (int) + (int)$$

A Bottom-up Parse in Detail (2)

A Bottom-up Parse in Detail (3)

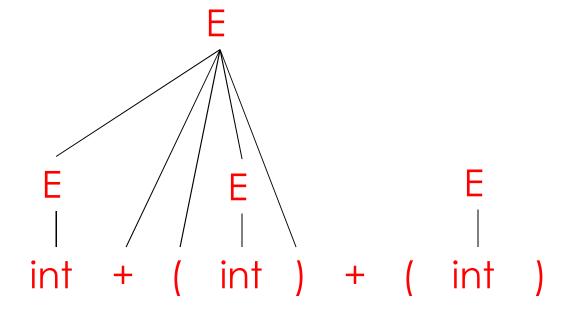
A Bottom-up Parse in Detail (4)

```
int + (int) + (int)
E + (int) + (int)
E + (E) + (int)
E + (int)
```



A Bottom-up Parse in Detail (5)

```
int + (int) + (int)
E + (int) + (int)
E + (E) + (int)
E + (int)
E + (E)
```



A Bottom-up Parse in Detail (6)

```
int + (int) + (int)

E + (int) + (int)

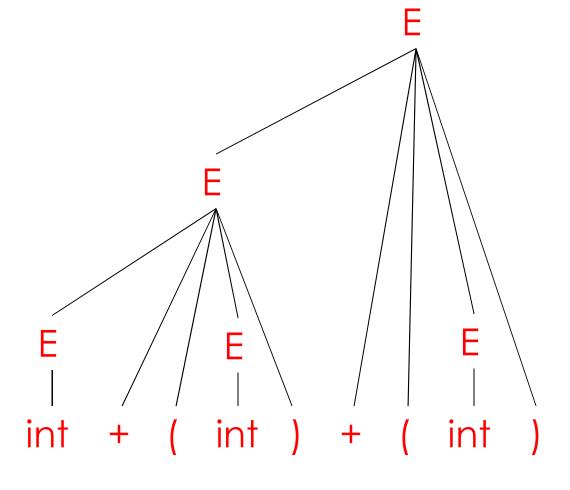
E + (E) + (int)

E + (int)

E + (E)

E
```

A rightmost derivation in reverse



Important Fact #1

Important Fact #1 about bottom-up parsing:

An LR parser traces a rightmost derivation in reverse

Where Do Reductions Happen

Important Fact #1 has an interesting consequence:

- Let $\alpha\beta\gamma$ be a step of a bottom-up parse
- Assume the next reduction is by $A \rightarrow \beta$
- Then γ is a string of terminals!

Why? Because $\alpha A \gamma \rightarrow \alpha \beta \gamma$ is a step in a right-most derivation

Notation

- Idea: Split the string into two substrings
 - Right substring (a string of terminals) is as yet unexamined by parser
 - Left substring has terminals and non-terminals
- The dividing point is marked by a
 - The ▶ is not part of the string
- Initially, all input is unexamined: $\triangleright x_1x_2 \ldots x_n$

Shift-Reduce Parsing

 Bottom-up parsing uses only two kinds of actions:

Shift

Reduce

Shift

Shift: Move ▶ one place to the right

- Shifts a terminal to the left string

$$E + (\triangleright int) \Rightarrow E + (int \triangleright)$$

Reduce

Reduce: Apply an inverse production at the right end of the left string

- If $E \rightarrow E + (E)$ is a production, then

$$E + (E + (E) \rightarrow) \Rightarrow E + (E \rightarrow)$$

▶ int + (int) + (int)\$ shift
int ▶ + (int) + (int)\$ red.
$$E \rightarrow int$$

```
▶ int + (int) + (int)$ shift
int ▶ + (int) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int
E \blacktriangleright + (int) + (int)$ shift 3 times
```

```
int + (int) + (int)$ shift

int \blacktriangleright + (int) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int

E \blacktriangleright + (int) + (int)$ shift 3 times

E + (int \blacktriangleright) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int
```

```
int + (int) + (int)$ shift

int \triangleright + (int) + (int)$ red. E → int

E \triangleright + (int) + (int)$ shift 3 times

E + (int \triangleright) + (int)$ red. E → int

E + (E \triangleright) + (int)$ shift
```

```
▶ int + (int) + (int)$ shift

int ▶ + (int) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int

E \blacktriangleright + (int) + (int)$ shift 3 times

E + (int ▶) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int

E + (E \blacktriangleright) + (int)$ shift

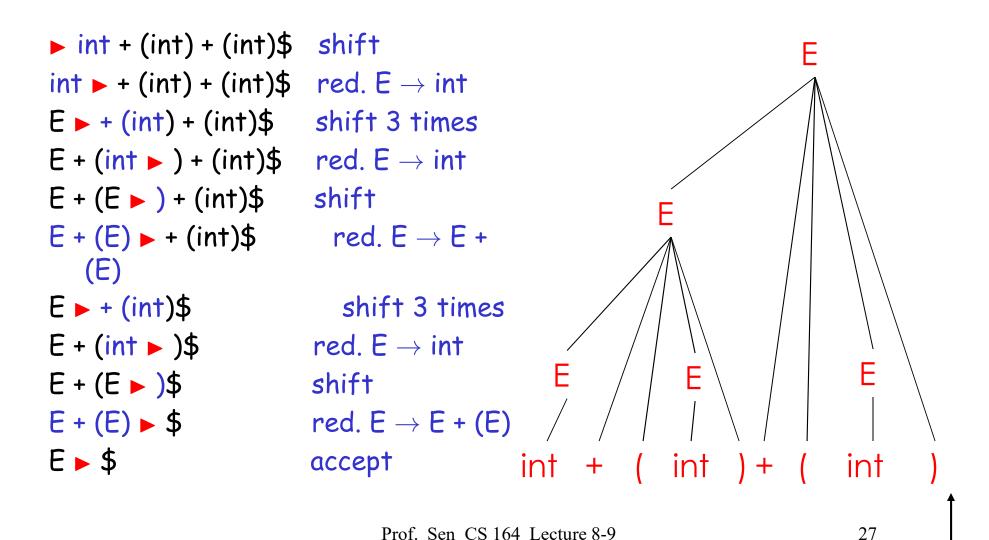
E + (E \blacktriangleright) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow E + (E \blacktriangleright) + (int)$
```

```
int + (int) + (int)$
                             shift
                            red. \mathsf{E} \to \mathsf{int}
int ► + (int) + (int)$
E \rightarrow + (int) + (int)$ shift 3 times
E + (int \triangleright) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int
E + (E \triangleright) + (int)$ shift
E + (E) \rightarrow + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow E +
   (E)
E \rightarrow + (int)$
                                shift 3 times
                                                   int + ( int ) + (
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                                                                                        23
```

```
int + (int) + (int)$
                              shift
int \blacktriangleright + (int) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int
E \rightarrow + (int) + (int)$ shift 3 times
E + (int \triangleright) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int
E + (E \triangleright) + (int)$ shift
E + (E) \rightarrow + (int) red. E \rightarrow E +
    (E)
E \rightarrow + (int)$
                               shift 3 times
E + (int ▶ )$
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```

```
int + (int) + (int)$
                              shift
int \blacktriangleright + (int) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int
E \rightarrow + (int) + (int)$ shift 3 times
E + (int \triangleright) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int
E + (E \triangleright) + (int)$ shift
E + (E) \rightarrow + (int) red. E \rightarrow E +
    (E)
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                               shift 3 times
E + (int ▶ )$
                             red. E \rightarrow int
E + (E ► )$
                             shift
                                                                 ( int ) + (
                                                                                           25
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```

```
int + (int) + (int)$
                             shift
                            red. E \rightarrow int
int \rightarrow + (int) + (int)$
E \rightarrow + (int) + (int)$ shift 3 times
E + (int \triangleright) + (int)$ red. E \rightarrow int
E + (E \triangleright) + (int)$ shift
E + (E) \rightarrow + (int) red. E \rightarrow E +
   (E)
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                            shift
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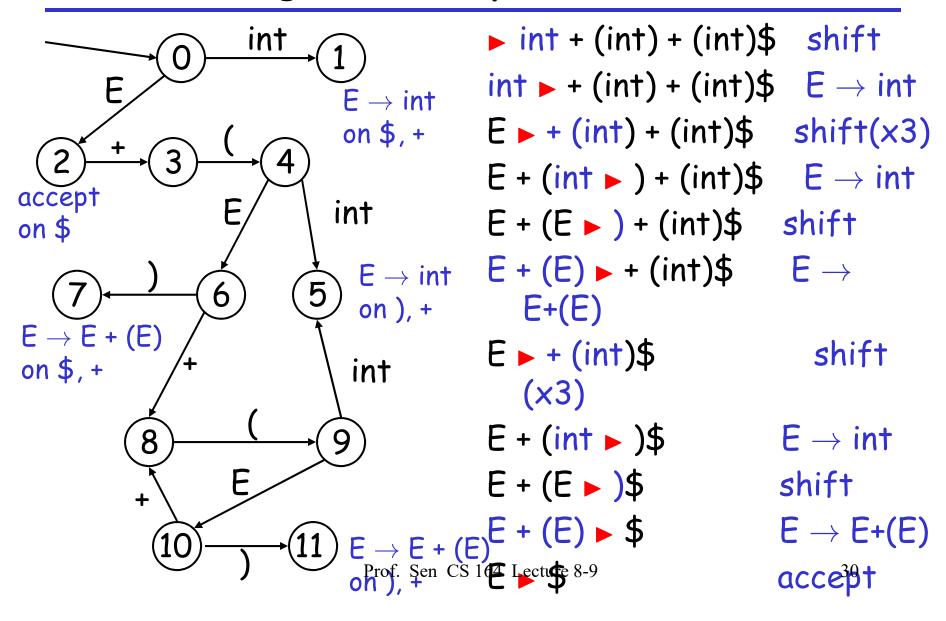
The Stack

- · Left string can be implemented as a stack
 - Top of the stack is the
- Shift pushes a terminal on the stack
- Reduce pops 0 or more symbols from the stack (production rhs) and pushes a non-terminal on the stack (production lhs)

Key Issue: When to Shift or Reduce?

- Decide based on the left string (the stack)
- Idea: use a finite automaton (DFA) to decide when to shift or reduce
 - The DFA input is the stack
 - DFA language consists of terminals and nonterminals
- We run the DFA on the stack and we examine the resulting state X and the token tok after
 - If X has a transition labeled tok then shift
 - If X is labeled with " $A \rightarrow \beta$ on tok" then <u>reduce</u>

LR(1) Parsing. An Example

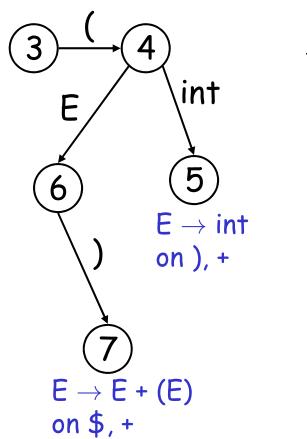


Representing the DFA

- Parsers represent the DFA as a 2D table
 - Recall table-driven lexical analysis
- Lines correspond to DFA states
- Columns correspond to terminals and nonterminals
- Typically columns are split into:
 - Those for terminals: action table
 - Those for non-terminals: goto table

Representing the DFA. Example

The table for a fragment of our DFA:



	int	+	()	\$	E
•••						
3			s 4			
4	<i>s</i> 5					<i>g</i> 6
5		$\mathbf{r}_{E ightarrow int}$		$\mathbf{r}_{E o int}$		
6	s 8		s7			
7		$\mathbf{r}_{E o E ext{+}(E)}$			$r_{\text{E} o \text{E+(E)}}$	
•••						

The LR Parsing Algorithm

- After a shift or reduce action we rerun the DFA on the entire stack
 - This is wasteful, since most of the work is repeated
- Remember for each stack element to which state it brings the DFA
- · LR parser maintains a stack

```
\langle sym_1, state_1 \rangle \dots \langle sym_n, state_n \rangle
state<sub>k</sub> is the final state of the DFA on sym_1 \dots sym_k
```

The LR Parsing Algorithm

```
Let I = w$ be initial input
Let j = 0
Let DFA state 0 be the start state
Let stack = \( \dummy, 0 \)
   repeat
        case action[top_state(stack), I[j]] of
                shift k: push ( I[j++], k )
                reduce X \to \alpha:
                    pop |\alpha| pairs,
                     push (X, Goto[top_state(stack), X])
                accept: halt normally
                error: halt and report error
```

LR Parsing Notes

- · Can be used to parse more grammars than LL
- Most programming languages grammars are LR
- · Can be described as a simple table
- There are tools for building the table
- How is the table constructed?

Key Issue: How is the DFA Constructed?

- The stack describes the context of the parser
 - What non-terminal we are looking for
 - What productions we are looking for
 - What we have seen so far from the rhs

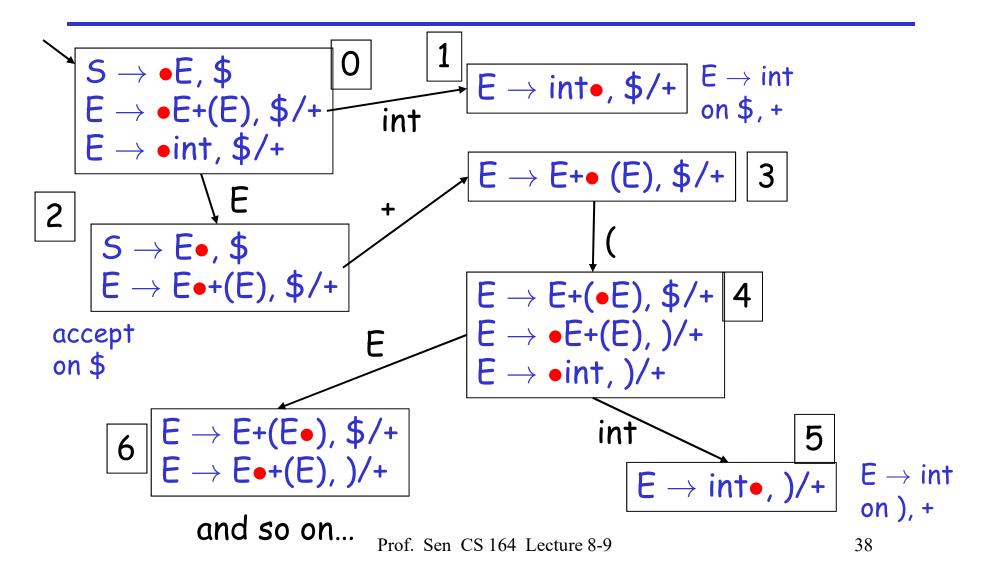
LR(1) Items

An LR(1) item is a pair:

$$X \to \alpha \bullet \beta$$
, a

- $X \rightarrow \alpha \beta$ is a production
- a is a terminal (the lookahead terminal)
- LR(1) means 1 lookahead terminal
- [X $\rightarrow \alpha \bullet \beta$, a] describes a context of the parser
 - We are trying to find an X followed by an a, and
 - We have α already on top of the stack
 - Thus we need to see next a prefix derived from βa

Constructing the Parsing DFA. Example.



Note

- The symbol > was used before to separate the stack from the rest of input
 - $\alpha \triangleright \gamma$, where α is the stack and γ is the remaining string of terminals
- In LR(1) items is used to mark a prefix of a production rhs:

$$X \rightarrow \alpha \bullet \beta$$
, a

- Here β might contain non-terminals as well
- · In both case the stack is on the left

Convention

- We add to our grammar a fresh new start symbol 5 and a production $S \rightarrow E$
 - Where E is the old start symbol
 - No need to do this if E had only one production
- The initial parsing context contains:

- Trying to find an 5 as a string derived from E\$
- The stack is empty

LR(1) Items (Cont.)

In context containing

$$\mathsf{E} \to \mathsf{E} + \bullet (\mathsf{E})$$
, +

- If (follows then we can perform a <u>shift</u> to context containing

$$\mathsf{E} \to \mathsf{E} + (\bullet \; \mathsf{E} \;)$$
, +

In context containing

$$\mathsf{E} \to \mathsf{E} + (\mathsf{E}) \bullet +$$

- We can perform a reduction with $E \rightarrow E + (E)$
- But only if a + follows

LR(1) Items (Cont.)

Consider a context with the item

$$\mathsf{E} \to \mathsf{E} + (\bullet \; \mathsf{E} \;)$$
 , +

- We expect next a string derived from E)+
- There are two productions for E

$$\mathsf{E} \to \mathsf{int}$$
 and $\mathsf{E} \to \mathsf{E} + (\mathsf{E})$

 We describe this by <u>extending</u> the context with two more items:

$$\mathsf{E} o ullet \mathsf{int,})$$
 $\mathsf{E} o ullet \mathsf{E} + (ullet \mathsf{E})$,)

The Closure Operation

 The operation of extending the context with items is called the closure operation

```
Closure(Items) = repeat for each [X \to \alpha \bullet Y \beta, a] in Items for each production Y \to \gamma for each b \in First(\beta a) add [Y \to \bullet \gamma, b] to Items until Items is unchanged
```

Constructing the Parsing DFA (1)

Construct the start context: Closure({5 → •E, \$})

$$S \rightarrow \bullet E, \$$$

 $E \rightarrow \bullet E+(E), \$$
 $E \rightarrow \bullet int, \$$
 $E \rightarrow \bullet E+(E), +$
 $E \rightarrow \bullet int, +$

We abbreviate as:

$$S \rightarrow \bullet E, \$$$

 $E \rightarrow \bullet E+(E), \$/+$
 $E \rightarrow \bullet int, \$/+$

Constructing the Parsing DFA (2)

- A DFA state is a <u>closed</u> set of LR(1) items
 - This means that we performed Closure
- The start state is Closure([5 → •E, \$])
- A state that contains [X $\rightarrow \alpha \bullet$, b] is labeled with "reduce with X $\rightarrow \alpha$ on b"
- And now the transitions ...

The DFA Transitions

- A state "State" that contains $[X \to \alpha \bullet y\beta, b]$ has a transition labeled y to a state that contains the items "Transition(State, y)"
 - y can be a terminal or a non-terminal

```
Transition(State, y)

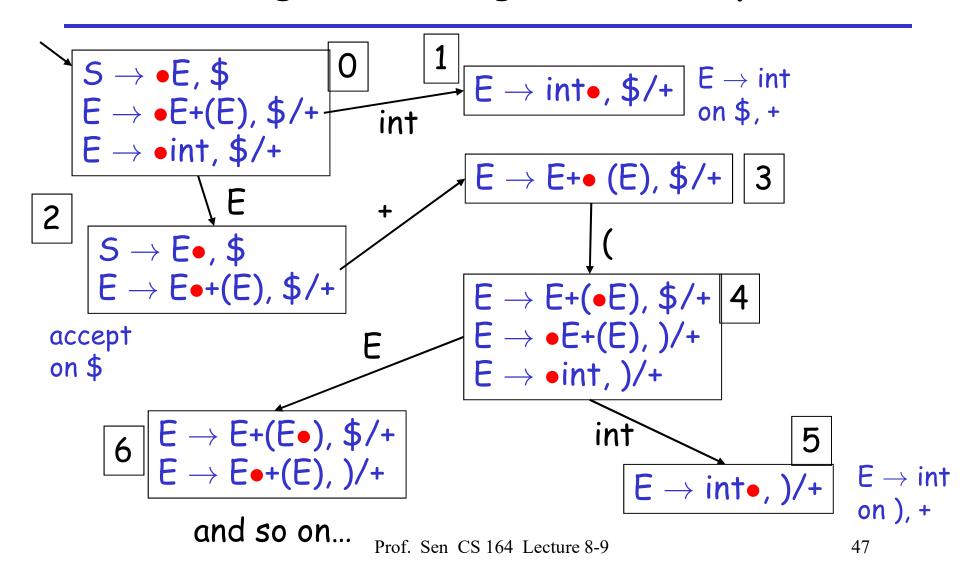
Items \leftarrow \varnothing

for each [X \rightarrow \alpha \bullet y\beta, b] \in State

add [X \rightarrow \alpha y \bullet \beta, b] to Items

return Closure(Items)
```

Constructing the Parsing DFA. Example.



LR Parsing Tables. Notes

- Parsing tables (i.e. the DFA) can be constructed automatically for a CFG
- But we still need to understand the construction to work with parser generators
 - E.g., they report errors in terms of sets of items
- What kind of errors can we expect?

Shift/Reduce Conflicts

If a DFA state contains both

[X
$$\rightarrow \alpha \bullet \alpha \beta$$
, b] and [Y $\rightarrow \gamma \bullet$, a]

- Then on input "a" we could either
 - Shift into state [$X \rightarrow \alpha a \bullet \beta$, b], or
 - Reduce with $Y \rightarrow \gamma$
- This is called a <u>shift-reduce conflict</u>

Shift/Reduce Conflicts

- Typically due to ambiguities in the grammar
- Classic example: the dangling else

```
S \rightarrow \text{if E then } S \mid \text{if E then } S \text{ else } S \mid OTHER
```

Will have DFA state containing

```
[S \rightarrow \text{if E then S} \bullet, \text{else}]
[S \rightarrow \text{if E then S} \bullet \text{else S}, \text{$}]
```

- · If else follows then we can shift or reduce
- · Default (bison, CUP, etc.) is to shift
 - Default behavior is as needed in this case

More Shift/Reduce Conflicts

· Consider the ambiguous grammar

$$E \rightarrow E + E \mid E * E \mid int$$

We will have the states containing

```
[E \rightarrow E * \bullet E, +] \qquad [E \rightarrow E * E \bullet, +]
[E \rightarrow \bullet E + E, +] \Rightarrow^{E} [E \rightarrow E \bullet + E, +]
```

- Again we have a shift/reduce on input +
 - We need to reduce (* binds more tightly than +)
 - Recall solution: declare the precedence of * and +

More Shift/Reduce Conflicts

 In bison/CUP declare precedence and associativity:

```
%left +
%left *
```

- Precedence of a rule = that of its last terminal
 - See bison/CUP manual for ways to override this default
- Resolve shift/reduce conflict with a <u>shift</u> if:
 - no precedence declared for either rule or terminal
 - input terminal has higher precedence than the rule
 - the precedences are the same and right associative

Using Precedence to Solve S/R Conflicts

Back to our example:

$$[E \rightarrow E * \bullet E, +] \qquad [E \rightarrow E * E \bullet, +]$$

$$[E \rightarrow \bullet E + E, +] \Rightarrow^{E} \qquad [E \rightarrow E \bullet + E, +]$$

• Will choose reduce because precedence of rule $E \rightarrow E * E$ is higher than of terminal +

Using Precedence to Solve S/R Conflicts

Same grammar as before

$$E \rightarrow E + E \mid E * E \mid int$$

We will also have the states

```
[E \rightarrow E + \bullet E, +] \qquad [E \rightarrow E + E \bullet, +]
[E \rightarrow \bullet E + E, +] \Rightarrow^{E} [E \rightarrow E \bullet + E, +]
```

- · Now we also have a shift/reduce on input +
 - We choose reduce because $E \rightarrow E + E$ and + have the same precedence and + is left-associative

Using Precedence to Solve S/R Conflicts

Back to our dangling else example

```
[S \rightarrow \text{if E then S} \bullet, \text{else}]
[S \rightarrow \text{if E then S} \bullet \text{else S}, \text{x}]
```

- Can eliminate conflict by declaring else with higher precedence than then
 - Or just rely on the default shift action
- But this starts to look like "hacking the parser"
- Best to avoid overuse of precedence declarations or you'll end with unexpected parse trees

Reduce/Reduce Conflicts

If a DFA state contains both

$$[X \rightarrow \alpha \bullet, a]$$
 and $[Y \rightarrow \beta \bullet, a]$

 Then on input "a" we don't know which production to reduce

· This is called a reduce/reduce conflict

Reduce/Reduce Conflicts

- Usually due to gross ambiguity in the grammar
- · Example: a sequence of identifiers

$$S \rightarrow \varepsilon$$
 | id | id S

· There are two parse trees for the string id

$$S \rightarrow id$$

 $S \rightarrow id$ $S \rightarrow id$

How does this confuse the parser?

More on Reduce/Reduce Conflicts

Consider the states

$$[S' \rightarrow \bullet S, \quad \$] \qquad [S \rightarrow \mathsf{id} \bullet S, \, \$]$$

$$[S \rightarrow \bullet, \quad \$] \qquad \Rightarrow^{\mathsf{id}} \qquad [S \rightarrow \bullet, \quad \$]$$

$$[S \rightarrow \bullet \; \mathsf{id}, \quad \$] \qquad [S \rightarrow \bullet \; \mathsf{id}, \quad \$]$$

$$[S \rightarrow \bullet \; \mathsf{id} \; S, \, \$] \qquad [S \rightarrow \bullet \; \mathsf{id} \; S, \, \$]$$

 $[S \rightarrow id \bullet, \$]$

Reduce/reduce conflict on input \$

$$S' \rightarrow S \rightarrow id$$

 $S' \rightarrow S \rightarrow id S \rightarrow id$

• Better rewrite the grammar: $S \rightarrow \varepsilon$ | id S

Using Parser Generators

- Parser generators construct the parsing DFA given a CFG
 - Use precedence declarations and default conventions to resolve conflicts
 - The parser algorithm is the same for all grammars (and is provided as a library function)
- But most parser generators do not construct the DFA as described before
 - Because the LR(1) parsing DFA has 1000s of states even for a simple language

LR(1) Parsing Tables are Big

But many states are similar, e.g.



- Idea: merge the DFA states whose items differ only in the lookahead tokens
 - We say that such states have the same core

The Core of a Set of LR Items

- Definition: The <u>core</u> of a set of LR items is the set of first components
 - Without the lookahead terminals
- · Example: the core of

{ [X
$$\rightarrow \alpha \bullet \beta$$
, b], [Y $\rightarrow \gamma \bullet \delta$, d]}

is

$$\{X \to \alpha \bullet \beta, Y \to \gamma \bullet \delta\}$$

LALR States

Consider for example the LR(1) states

$$\{[X \rightarrow \alpha \bullet, \alpha], [Y \rightarrow \beta \bullet, c]\}$$

 $\{[X \rightarrow \alpha \bullet, b], [Y \rightarrow \beta \bullet, d]\}$

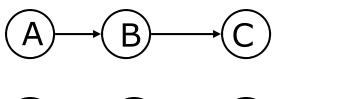
- · They have the same core and can be merged
- And the merged state contains:

$$\{[X \rightarrow \alpha \bullet, \alpha/b], [Y \rightarrow \beta \bullet, c/d]\}$$

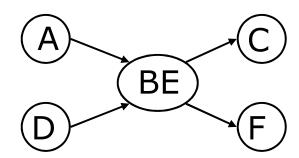
- These are called LALR(1) states
 - Stands for LookAhead LR
 - Typically 10 times fewer LALR(1) states than LR(1)

A LALR(1) DFA

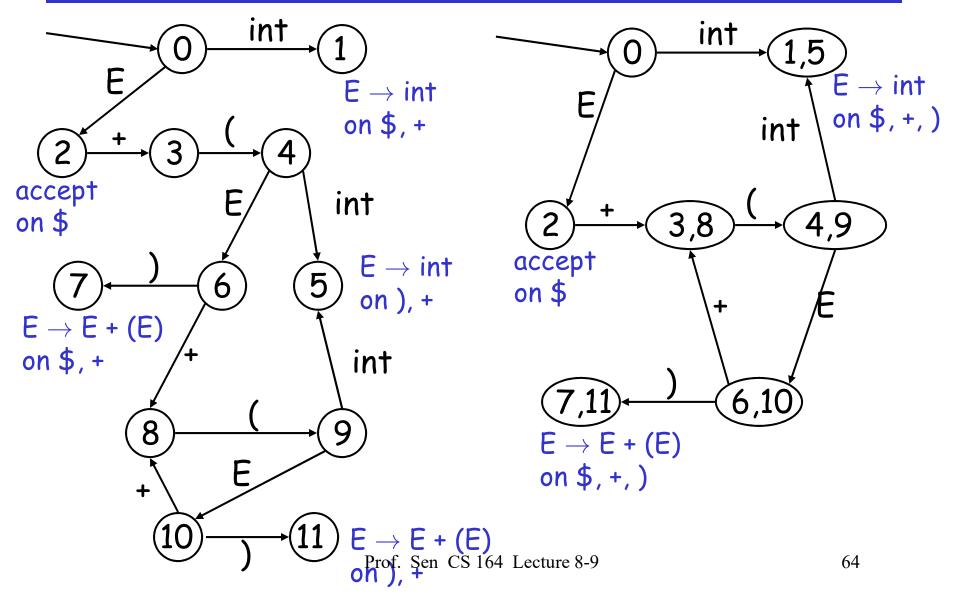
- Repeat until all states have distinct core
 - Choose two distinct states with same core
 - Merge the states by creating a new one with the union of all the items
 - Point edges from predecessors to new state
 - New state points to all the previous successors







Conversion LR(1) to LALR(1). Example.



The LALR Parser Can Have Conflicts

Consider for example the LR(1) states

$$\{[X \rightarrow \alpha \bullet, \alpha], [Y \rightarrow \beta \bullet, b]\}$$

 $\{[X \rightarrow \alpha \bullet, b], [Y \rightarrow \beta \bullet, \alpha]\}$

And the merged LALR(1) state

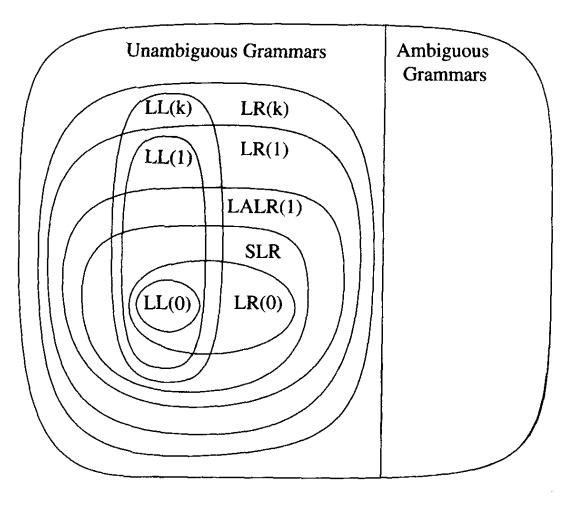
$$\{[X \rightarrow \alpha \bullet, a/b], [Y \rightarrow \beta \bullet, a/b]\}$$

- · Has a new reduce-reduce conflict
- In practice such cases are rare

LALR vs. LR Parsing

- LALR languages are not natural
 - They are an efficiency hack on LR languages
- Any reasonable programming language has a LALR(1) grammar
- LALR(1) has become a standard for programming languages and for parser generators

A Hierarchy of Grammar Classes



From Andrew Appel, "Modern Compiler Implementation in Java"

Notes on Parsing

- Parsing
 - A solid foundation: context-free grammars
 - A simple parser: LL(1)
 - A more powerful parser: LR(1)
 - An efficiency hack: LALR(1)
 - We use LALR(1) parser generators
- · Now we move on to semantic analysis

Supplement to LR Parsing

Strange Reduce/Reduce Conflicts
Due to LALR Conversion
(from the bison manual)

Strange Reduce/Reduce Conflicts

Consider the grammar

```
S \rightarrow PR, NL \rightarrow N \mid N, NL

P \rightarrow T \mid NL : T R \rightarrow T \mid N : T

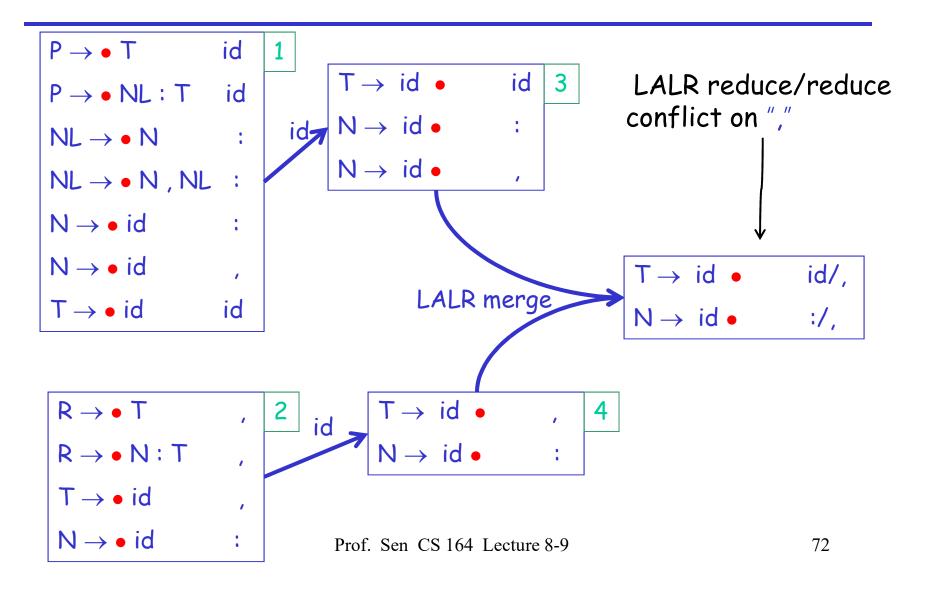
N \rightarrow id T \rightarrow id
```

- P parameters specification
- R result specification
- N a parameter or result name
- T a type name
- NL a list of names

Strange Reduce/Reduce Conflicts

- In P an id is a
 - N when followed by, or:
 - T when followed by id
- In R an id is a
 - N when followed by:
 - T when followed by,
- This is an LR(1) grammar.
- But it is not LALR(1). Why?
 - For obscure reasons

A Few LR(1) States



What Happened?

- Two distinct states were confused because they have the same core
- Fix: add dummy productions to distinguish the two confused states
- E.g., add

$R \rightarrow id bogus$

- bogus is a terminal not used by the lexer
- This production will never be used during parsing
- But it distinguishes R from P

A Few LR(1) States After Fix

