

Complexity of inclusion problems for unambiguous automata and context-free grammars

Lorenzo Clemente, University of Warsaw, Poland

May 1, 2019

1 Intro

Complement of UCFL languages need not be CFL [4].

The “CFG \subseteq NFA” problem is easily shown to be EXPTIME-c.. In fact, the following closely related problem is EXPTIME-c.: Given a CFG G and a family of DFA's A_1, \dots, A_k , decide whether $L(G) \cap \bigcap_{i=1}^k L(A_k) = \emptyset$ [3, 6]. We can reduce the problem above to the “CFG \subseteq NFA” problem, by simply noticing that $L(G) \cap \bigcap_{i=1}^k L(A_k) = \emptyset$ holds iff $L(G) \subseteq \bigcup_{i=1}^k \Sigma^* \setminus L(A_k)$, and that, since the A_k 's are deterministic, a polynomial size NFA can be built to recognise the language on the right.

Let $\Sigma_n = \{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$ be an alphabet of size n and let $m \leq n$ a bound on the number of allowed letters. Then,

$$\mu_{\Sigma_n}(\Sigma_m^*) = \frac{1}{n - m + 1}. \quad (1)$$

Lemma 1 (Representation lemma). *Let $n + 1 \in \mathbb{N}$ with $n \geq 2$ be a base, let $m \in \mathbb{N}$ s.t. $1 \leq m \leq n$, and let $\alpha \in \mathbb{R}$ with $0 \leq \alpha \leq \frac{1}{n-m+1}$ be written in reduced form as*

$$\alpha = \frac{p}{q}, \quad \text{with } p, q \in \mathbb{N}, \ p \leq q.$$

There exists a DFA A over alphabet $\Sigma_n = \{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$ using only letters from $\Sigma_m \subseteq \Sigma_n$, and thus $L(A) \subseteq \Sigma_m^$, s.t.*

$$\mu_{\Sigma_n}(L(A)) = \alpha.$$

Moreover, if there exists $\ell \in \mathbb{N}$ s.t.

$$q \mid (n + 1)^\ell, \quad (2)$$

then A can be taken of size polynomial in $\log q$, n , and ℓ .

Proof. If $\alpha = \frac{1}{n-m+1}$, then just take A to be the automaton recognising Σ_m^* , and we are done.

Otherwise, assume $\alpha < \frac{1}{n-m+1}$. Our aim is to write α as the following infinite geometric sum:

$$\alpha = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \frac{\alpha_i}{(n+1)^{i+1}}, \quad \text{with } 0 \leq \alpha_i \leq m^i, \quad (3)$$

where α_i intuitively counts the number of words of length i in $L(A)$. Moreover, we would like the sequence $\alpha_0, \alpha_1, \dots$ to be eventually periodic (with small prefix and period), in order to construct a (small) finite automaton A recognising a language $L(A)$ of measure α . Let $k \in \mathbb{N}$ be a length threshold. The measure of all words of length at most k is

$$\mu_{\Sigma_n}(\Sigma_m^{\leq k}) = \sum_{i=0}^k \frac{m^i}{(n+1)^{i+1}} = \frac{1}{n-m+1} \left(1 - \left(\frac{m}{n+1} \right)^{k+1} \right), \quad (4)$$

Since the quantity in (4) goes to $\frac{1}{n-m+1} > \alpha$ for large k , fix in the following the unique $k \in \mathbb{N}$ s.t. $\alpha_0 = m^0, \alpha_1 = m^1, \dots, \alpha_{k-1} = m^{k-1}$, and $0 \leq \alpha_k < m^k$ s.t.

$$\mu_{\Sigma_n}(\Sigma_m^{\leq k-1}) + \frac{\alpha_k}{(n+1)^{k+1}} \leq \alpha < \mu_{\Sigma_n}(\Sigma_m^{\leq k-1}) + \frac{\alpha_k + 1}{(n+1)^{k+1}}. \quad (5)$$

For complexity considerations to be made later, we note here that k satisfies $\alpha \leq \mu_{\Sigma_n}(\Sigma_m^k)$, and thus $k \geq \frac{\log(1-(n-m+1)\alpha)}{\log m - \log(n+1)} - 1 = \frac{-\log(1-(n-m+1)\alpha)}{\log(n+1) - \log m}$. The minimal denominator is achieved by $m = n$, and the maximal numerator by $m = 1$. Replacing, it suffices to take $k \geq \frac{-\log(1-n\alpha)}{\log(n+1) - \log n}$. Since $-\log(1-n\alpha) = O(\log q)$ and $\log(n+1) - \log n = \log \frac{n+1}{n} = \log(1 + \frac{1}{n}) = O(\frac{1}{n})$, we obtain

$$k = O(n \log q). \quad (6)$$

Let

$$\beta = \alpha - \left(\mu_{\Sigma_n}(\Sigma_m^{\leq k-1}) + \frac{\alpha_k}{(n+1)^{k+1}} \right), \quad (7)$$

and thus $0 \leq \beta < \frac{1}{(n+1)^{k+1}}$. We can write β in base- $(n+1)$ as

$$\beta = \frac{1}{(n+1)^k} \sum_{j=1}^{\infty} \frac{\beta_j}{(n+1)^{j+1}}, \quad \text{with } 0 \leq \beta_j \leq n. \quad (8)$$

Intuitively, we can interpret β_j as the number of words of length $k+j$ that our language contains. Since β is a rational number, the sequence β_1, β_2, \dots is ultimately periodic [2], i.e., there exists a threshold $j_1 \in \mathbb{N}$ and a period $l \in \mathbb{N}$ s.t. for every $j \geq j_1$

$$\beta_{j+l} = \beta_j. \quad (9)$$

Let $\gamma_1 = \beta_{j_1}, \gamma_2 = \beta_{j_1+1}, \dots, \gamma_l = \beta_{j_1+l-1}$. Consequently,

$$\begin{aligned} \beta &= \frac{1}{(n+1)^k} \left(\sum_{j=1}^{j_1-1} \frac{\beta_j}{(n+1)^{j+1}} + \sum_{s=0}^{\infty} \left(\frac{\gamma_1}{(n+1)^{j_1+s+1}} + \dots + \frac{\gamma_l}{(n+1)^{j_1+s+l}} \right) \right) \\ &= \frac{1}{(n+1)^k} \left(\sum_{j=1}^{j_1-1} \frac{\beta_j}{(n+1)^{j+1}} + \frac{1}{(n+1)^{j_1-1}} \sum_{s=0}^{\infty} \frac{\gamma}{(n+1)^{l(s+1)+1}} \right), \quad \text{where} \end{aligned} \quad (10)$$

$$\gamma = \gamma_1(n+1)^{l-1} + \dots + \gamma_l(n+1)^0.$$

Intuitively, γ is the number of words of length $k + j_1 - 1 + (s+1)l$, for every $s \in \mathbb{N}$.

We now build a regular expression e recognising a language of measure α . For a given length k and cardinality $0 \leq h \leq m^k$, we build an expression $e_{h,k}$ recognising a language of measure $\frac{h}{(n+1)^{k+1}}$. Write h as a base- m number

$$h = \sum_{i=0}^k h_i \cdot m^i, \quad \text{with } 0 \leq h_i < m. \quad (11)$$

Then, the following regular expression $e_{h,k}$ recognises precisely h words of length k and no other word: If $h = m^k$, take $e_{h,k} = \Sigma_m^k$, and otherwise

$$\begin{aligned} e_{h,k} &= (a_1 + \dots + a_{h_0}) \cdot \Sigma_m^0 \cdot a_1^{k-1} + \\ &\quad + (a_1 + \dots + a_{h_1}) \cdot \Sigma_m^1 \cdot a_1^{k-2} + \dots + \\ &\quad + (a_1 + \dots + a_{h_{k-1}}) \cdot \Sigma_m^{k-1} \cdot a_1^0. \end{aligned}$$

The size of $e_{h,k}$ is $O(k(m+k)) = O(k(n+k))$.

We represent $\alpha - \beta = \mu(\Sigma_m^{\leq k-1}) + \frac{\alpha_k}{(n+1)^{k+1}}$ as the measure of the language recognised by the regular expression, also of size $O(k(n+k))$,

$$f = \Sigma_m^{\leq k-1} + e_{\alpha_k, k}. \quad (12)$$

Similarly, by (10) we can represent β as

$$g = e_{\beta_1, k+1} + \dots + e_{\beta_{j_1-1}, k+j_1-1} + e_{\gamma, k+j_1-1+l} \cdot e_{1,l}^*. \quad (13)$$

Since $n \leq m^k$ for k sufficiently large and $\beta_j \leq n$ ($k \geq \frac{\log n}{\log m}$ suffices), there are enough words β_j of length $k+j$ over alphabet Σ_m , and thus $e_{\beta_j, k+j}$ is well-defined. Similarly, in order for $e_{\gamma, k+j_1-1+l}$ to be well-defined, we need $\gamma \leq m^{k+j_1-1+l}$, which is satisfied for k large enough since $\gamma = O(n^l)$. The expression g above is of size $O(k(n+k) + j_1^2(n+j_1) + l(n+l))$.

Finally, the sought expression of measure α is $e := f + g$, which is of the same asymptotic size as g above. Note that e is unambiguous, since the length of the string uniquely specifies how it is parsed in $L(e)$. (Perhaps one could even derive a small deterministic automaton...?) By (6), and assuming $j_1, l \geq n$, e is of size

$$O(n^2 \log q + j_1^3 + l^2). \quad (14)$$

For the second part of the claim, assume (2) for some ℓ . By (6) and the assumption above,

$$k = O(n\ell \log(n+1)). \quad (15)$$

Since β is defined as $\alpha - \frac{\dots}{(n+1)^{k+1}}$, we can write $\beta = \frac{r}{s}$ with $r, s \in \mathbb{N}$ and $r \leq s$, where $s \mid (n+1)^{k+1}$. If we decompose the base $n+1$ in prime factors as

$$n+1 = p_1^{z_1} p_2^{z_2} \cdots p_m^{z_m}, \quad \text{with } z_1, \dots, z_m \in \mathbb{N},$$

then s is of the form $s = p_1^{t_1} p_2^{t_2} \cdots p_m^{t_m}$ with $t_i \leq (k+1)z_i$. By [2, Theorem 136], β can be written in base- $(n+1)$ with a *finite* expansion of length $j_1 = \max \left\{ \frac{t_1}{z_1}, \dots, \frac{t_m}{z_m} \right\} = O(k+1)$ (therefore the period is $l = 0$), and thus by (15)

$$j_1 = O(n\ell \log(n+1)). \quad (16)$$

By applying (14) to this case, we obtain a regular expression e of size

$$O(n^3 \ell^3 \log^3(n+1)), \quad (17)$$

which is polynomial in $\log q = O(\ell \log n)$, ℓ , and n , as required. \square

2 Closure properties of UCFL's

We notice that UCFL's are closed under union and intersection with regular languages, with quadratic complexity when the regular language is presented as a DFA. Closure under intersection with a regular language is clear by taking the product of a UPDA and a NFA.

For closure under union, the input is a UCFL L (presented by a UPDA A) and a regular language M (presented by a DFA B). We build a UPDA C recognising $L \setminus M$ and then take the product with B in order to build a PDA $D = C \times B$ recognising $(L \setminus M) \cup M$: Since the union is disjoint, D is unambiguous, as required.

3 Non-trivial lower bounds

The universality problem for UFA can be reduced to solving linear equations and checking that the solution has 1 in a given component. Consequently, this gives both a PTIME and a NC^2 upper bound. Any lower-bound?

4 Complexity of inclusion problems

The “NFA \subseteq DCFG” problem is solved in PTIME by effectively complementing the DCFG, intersecting it with the NFA, and testing non-emptiness of the resulting CFG.

Using the same trick as above, the problem “NFA \subseteq UCFG” reduces to “DFA \subseteq UCFG”. Moreover, the latter problem reduces to the universality problem “UCFG = Σ^* ” as follows: Let $L = L(A)$ and $M = L(G)$ for a DFA A

\subseteq	DFA	UFA	NFA	DCFG	UCFG	CFG
DFA	PTIME	PTIME	PSPACE-c.	PTIME	UUCFL	undecid.
UFA	PTIME	PTIME [5]	PSPACE-c.	PTIME	UUCFL	undecid.
NFA	PTIME	PTIME 5	PSPACE-c.	PTIME	UUCFL	undecid.
DCFG	PTIME	\leq UUCFL	EXPTIME-c.	undecid.	undecid.	undecid.
UCFG	PTIME	\leq UUCFL	EXPTIME-c.	undecid.	undecid.	undecid.
CFG	PTIME	\leq UUCFL	EXPTIME-c.	undecid.	undecid.	undecid.

Figure 1: Complexity of inclusion problems for various classes of regular and context-free languages

and a UCFG G . Since $L \subseteq M$ is equivalent to $L \subseteq L \cap M$, let G' be a UCFG for $N := L \cap M$. Since $N \subseteq L$ holds by construction, $L \subseteq N$ is equivalent to $N \cup (\Sigma^* \setminus L) = \Sigma^*$. Consequently, let G'' be a UCFG recognising $N \cup (\Sigma^* \setminus L)$. We have that our original problem $L \subseteq M$ is equivalent to $L(G'') = \Sigma^*$, as required. We used the fact that UCFL's are effectively closed under union and intersection with regular languages, and moreover efficiently so when those regular languages are represented as DFA's.

Similarly, “CFG \subseteq UFA” reduces to “DCFG \subseteq UFA”, which in turn reduces to UUCFL, as follows: Let L be a DCFL and M a regular language. We have

$$L \subseteq M \quad \text{iff} \quad (M \cap L) \cup (\Sigma^* \setminus L) = \Sigma^*.$$

Notice that $M \cap L$ can be recognised by a UCFG of polynomial size (since L is deterministic and M unambiguous), that $\Sigma^* \setminus L$ can be recognised by a DCFG of polynomial size (since L is deterministic), and since the last two languages are disjoint, their union is also UCFG.

We can also reduce the “CFG \subseteq UFA” problem to

$$\text{DCFG} \subseteq \text{DCFG} \cap \text{UFA},$$

with the further property that the language on the right is included by construction in the language of the left. Let A be a PDA and B a UFA. As before, we lift the alphabet to transitions of A , and obtain A' : A transition $\delta = p \xrightarrow{a, \text{op}} q$ in A becomes $p \xrightarrow{\delta, \text{op}} q$ in A' , where op is push or pop. We build a UPDA $B' = A \times B$ having as control locations pairs (p, q) with p a control location of A and q a state of B , and transitions of the form $(p, q) \xrightarrow{\delta, \text{op}} (p', q')$ whenever $\delta = p \xrightarrow{a, \text{op}} p'$ is a transition of A and $q \xrightarrow{a} q'$ is a transition of B . We have $L(A) \subseteq L(B)$ iff $L(A') \subseteq L(B')$ and $L(B') \subseteq L(A')$ by construction. Therefore, in order to decide the latter question, it suffices to decide the measure comparison problem

$$\mu(L(A')) \leq \mu(L(B')),$$

where A' is a DCFL and B' is DCFL \cap UFA. The measure on the left can be approximated in PTIME (with Etessami's technique for SCFG; check-me). It remains to:

1. Approximate the measure on the right in PTIME, by extending the method of [1] from a DFA to a UFA.
2. Show that only “few” bits are needed to actually decide the inequality above. This should use the fact that B' is not arbitrary, but of the form

$A \times B$. EDIT: Exponentially many bits are needed, even just to check whether the measure is < 1 (remove a word of exponential length).

5 NFA \subseteq UFA in PTIME

We show that nonetheless, the question whether $L(\mathcal{A}) \subseteq L(\mathcal{B})$ with \mathcal{A} and NFA and \mathcal{B} UFA can be solved in PTIME. We enrich the alphabet from Σ to $\Sigma' = \Delta_{\mathcal{A}}$, by adding information on the transition taken by \mathcal{A} . Let \mathcal{A}' be the same as \mathcal{A} , except that a transition $\delta = p \xrightarrow{a} q$ in \mathcal{A} becomes a transition $p \xrightarrow{\delta} q$ in \mathcal{A}' . Notice that \mathcal{A}' is now deterministic. Let \mathcal{B}' be the same as \mathcal{B} , except that a transition $p \xrightarrow{a} q$ in \mathcal{B} is expanded in \mathcal{B}' to a set of transitions $p \xrightarrow{\delta} q$ for every $\delta \in \Delta_{\mathcal{A}}$ of the form $r \xrightarrow{a} s$. Notice that \mathcal{B}' is still unambiguous. Clearly, $L(\mathcal{A}) \subseteq L(\mathcal{B})$ iff $L(\mathcal{A}') \subseteq L(\mathcal{B}')$: For the “only if” direction, if $w' = \delta_1 \cdots \delta_n \in L(\mathcal{A}')$ with $\delta_i = p_i \xrightarrow{a_i} q_i$, then $w = a_1 \cdots a_n \in L(\mathcal{A})$, thus $w \in L(\mathcal{B})$ by assumption, and thus $w' \in L(\mathcal{B}')$ by construction. For the “if” direction, if $w = a_1 \cdots a_n \in L(\mathcal{A})$, then there exists $w' = \delta_1 \cdots \delta_n \in L(\mathcal{A}')$ with $\delta_i = p_i \xrightarrow{a_i} q_i$, thus $w' \in L(\mathcal{B}')$ by assumption, which implies $w \in L(\mathcal{B})$ by construction. Since the inclusion problem for unambiguous automata can be solved in PTIME, our original problem is in PTIME as well.

6 DCFG \subseteq UFA

While “DCFG \subseteq UFA” reduces to UUCFL, which is in PSPACE, this needs not be optimal. Another more direct way could be the following. Let A be a DPDA and B an UFA. Then:

1. Compute in PTIME the measure $\mu(q)$ of every control state q of $L(B)$.
2. Construct a UPDA A' for $L(A) \cap L(B)$. Control locations of A' are of the form $\langle p, q \rangle$ with $p \in A$ and $q \in B$. Notice that by construction $L(\langle p, q \rangle) \subseteq L(q)$ and thus $\mu(\langle p, q \rangle) \leq \mu(q)$. Then, $\mu(\langle p, q \rangle) \geq \mu(q)$ iff $L(\langle p, q \rangle) = L(q)$ iff $L(p) \subseteq L(q)$.
3. Thus it suffices to approximate $\mu(\langle p, q \rangle)$ within $\log(\mu(q))$ bits of precision. The latter problem is on a UPDA obtained by taking the product of a DPDA and a UFA. This in general can be simpler than computing the measure of an arbitrary UPDA/UCFL.

7 Complexity of UUCFL

The UUCFL problem asks whether a given unambiguous context-free grammar recognises the universal language Σ^* .

7.1 SQRTSUM lower bound for the measure upper bound

We show that deciding whether $\mu(L) \geq x$ for a UCFL L and $x \in \mathbb{Q}$ is hard for SQRTSUM. The SQRTSUM problem is the following: Given $d_0, d_1, \dots, d_n \in \mathbb{N}$,

is it the case that the following holds:

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \sqrt{d_i} \geq d_0. \quad (18)$$

We construct a UCFG G over a n -ary alphabet $\Sigma = \{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$ and a constant $\alpha \in \mathbb{Q}$ s.t.

$$\mu(L(G)) \geq \alpha \quad \text{iff} \quad (18) \text{ holds.}$$

Let $d = \max_{i=1}^n d_i$ and

$$x_i = 1 - \frac{\sqrt{d_i}}{d} = 1 - \sqrt{\frac{d_i}{d^2}}. \quad (19)$$

Note that x_i is the least non-negative solution of the following quadratic equation in x :

$$x = \frac{1}{2} \left(1 - \frac{d_i}{d^2} \right) + \frac{1}{2} x^2. \quad (20)$$

We build a UCFG G_i s.t.

$$\mu(L(G_i)) = x_i. \quad (21)$$

Notice that, since x_i is an irrational number, $|\Sigma| \geq 2$ is necessary, otherwise G would recognise a regular language, and thus its measure would be rational. (However, in general it might still be the case that computing such a rational measure) We assume w.l.o.g. that

(NOT USED) All the d_i 's are distinct. If not, say $d_1 = d_2$, then we can replace them by the single $4d_1$, since $\sqrt{d_1} + \sqrt{d_2} = 2\sqrt{d_1} = \sqrt{4d_1}$.

1. We can assume that the maximal d is a square of the form:

$$d = (n+1)^{2h}. \quad (22)$$

If not, add a new integer $d_{n'} = (n' + 1)^{2h}$ for h large enough, where $n' = n + 1$, and replace d_0 with $d_0 + \sqrt{d_{n'}} = d_0 + (n' + 1)^h$.

We look for a grammar G_i with initial nonterminal X_i and a rule of the form:

$$X_i \leftarrow C_i \mid A_i \cdot X_i \cdot a_n \cdot X_i,$$

where $A_i, C_i \subseteq \Sigma_{n-1}^*$ are small finite languages. If we call x the measure $\mu(L(X_i))$, and a the measure of $A_i \cdot a_n$, and c the measure of C_i , under the assumption that G is unambiguous, we obtain (recall that $\mu(LM) = (n+1)\mu(L)\mu(M)$ over an alphabet of size n for an unambiguous product LM)

$$x = c + (n+1)^2 ax^2.$$

By comparing the equation above with (20), we derive

$$a = \frac{1}{2(n+1)^2} = \frac{\frac{(n+1)^{k-1}}{2}}{(n+1)^{k+1}}, \text{ for every } k \geq 1, \text{ and} \quad (23)$$

$$c = \frac{1}{2} \left(1 - \frac{d_i}{d^2} \right). \quad (24)$$

We assume w.l.o.g. that n is odd and, consequently the numerator $\frac{(n+1)^k}{2}$ above is an integer. We choose k large enough s.t. $\frac{(n+1)^{k-1}}{2} \leq (n-1)^{k-1}$, and let $A_i \subseteq \Sigma_{n-1}^{k-1}$ be a finite language containing precisely $\frac{(n+1)^{k-1}}{2}$ strings of length $k-1$.

Since $\mu_{\Sigma_n}(\Sigma_{n-1}^*) = \frac{1}{2}$ and $c < \frac{1}{2}$, by Lemma 1, there exists a DFA C_i recognising a language $L(C_i) \subseteq \Sigma_{n-1}^*$ of measure c . Moreover, since c can be put in the form $c = \frac{\frac{d}{2}(d^2-d_i)}{(n+1)^{6h}} = \frac{p}{q}$ with $p, q \in \mathbb{N}$ relatively prime and $q \mid (n+1)^{6h}$, C_i is of polynomial size.

We argue that G_i is unambiguous. We notice that any word produced by X_i has the property that it has the same number of blocks in A_i 's as a_n 's. By way of contradiction, suppose $w \in L(X_i)$ is a word with two different derivations. Necessarily w contains a_n , otherwise the first production is applied and $w \in C_i$ can be derived in only one way. Thus, the second production is applied and w can be put in the two forms $w = uva_n t = u'v'a_n t'$ with $u, u' \in A_i$, and $v, t, v', t' \in L(X_i)$. First, $u = u'$ since all strings in A_i have length $k-1$. Assume w.l.o.g. that $|v| < |v'|$, which implies that v' is of the form $v' = va_n z$ with $v = xy$, $x \in A_i$ and $y, z \in L(X_i)$. Since y is in $L(X_i)$, it has the same number of A_i 's blocks as well as a_n 's. Thus, $v = xy$ cannot be in $L(X_i)$ because it has one more $x \in A_i$, which is a contradiction.

We obtain $L(X_i) \subseteq (\Sigma_0 \cup \Sigma_1)^{\geq 2}$ and $\mu(L(X_i)) = x_i$. By constructing the unambiguous grammar G with initial nonterminal X and productions

$$X \leftarrow a_1 \cdot X_1 \mid \cdots \mid a_n \cdot X_n, \quad (25)$$

we have that $L(X) \subseteq \Sigma \cdot (\Sigma_0 \cup \Sigma_1)^{\geq 2}$ and

$$\begin{aligned} \mu(L(X)) &= \mu(L(a_1 \cdot X_1)) + \cdots + \mu(L(a_n \cdot X_n)) = \\ &= \frac{1}{n+1}(x_1 + \cdots + x_n) = \\ &= \frac{1}{n+1} \left(n - \frac{\sqrt{d_1} + \cdots + \sqrt{d_n}}{d} \right) \end{aligned}$$

and thus

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \sqrt{d_i} \geq d_0 \quad \text{iff} \quad \mu(L(X)) \leq \alpha := \frac{1}{n+1} \left(n - \frac{d_0}{d} \right). \quad (26)$$

Are there PTIME approximations for $\mu(L(G))$ within some additive error $\varepsilon > 0$?

7.2 SQRTSUM hardness for UUCFL

??? WORK IN PROGRESS ???

We construct a regular language $L' \subseteq \Sigma_2^*$ of measure $\mu(L') = 1 - \alpha$. Since $0 < \alpha < 1$, the same holds for $1 - \alpha$. We have

$$1 - \alpha = \frac{d + d_0}{(n+1)d} = \frac{(n+1)^{2h} + d_0}{(n+1)^{2h+1}} = \frac{1}{n+1} + \frac{d_0}{(n+1)^{2h+1}},$$

where $d_0 \leq n\sqrt{d} = n(n+1)^h \leq (n+1)^{h+1}$. We can write d_0 in base $n+1$ as $d_0 = \sum_{i=0}^k f_i(n+1)^i$, where $k := \lfloor \log_{n+1} d_0 \rfloor \leq h+1$ and, for every $0 \leq j \leq k$, $0 \leq f_j \leq n$. Consequently, we can write $1 - \alpha$ as

$$1 - \alpha = \frac{1}{n+1} + \frac{f_0}{(n+1)^{2h+1}} + \frac{f_1}{(n+1)^{2h}} + \cdots + \frac{f_k}{(n+1)^{2h-k+1}}, \quad (27)$$

allowing us to interpret the quantity above as the measure of a regular language $L' \subseteq \Sigma_2^*$ containing the empty word ε , and containing f_i words of length $2h-i+1$ for every $0 \leq i \leq k$. The shortest such word is of length $\geq 2h-(h+1)+1 = h \geq 2$, and there are enough such words $|\Sigma_2^2| = \left(\frac{n-1}{4}\right)^2 \geq n$ for n sufficiently large. Consider the language over Σ recognised by the nonterminal S and a rule

$$S \leftarrow L' \mid X. \quad (28)$$

First L' and $L(X)$ are disjoint since $L' \subseteq \{\varepsilon\} \cup \Sigma_2^{\geq 2}$. Consequently,

$$\begin{aligned} \mu(S) &= \mu(L') + \mu(L(X)) = \frac{d+d_0}{(n+1)d} + \frac{1}{n+1} \left(n - \frac{\sqrt{d_1} + \cdots + \sqrt{d_n}}{d} \right) = \\ &= 1 + \frac{d_0 - (\sqrt{d_1} + \cdots + \sqrt{d_n})}{(n+1)d}. \end{aligned}$$

7.3 Bounded ambiguity

Notice that the universality problem for the union of two DCFL is undecidable: the first DCFL recognises runs of a deterministic Minsky machine that has a mistake on the first counter, and the second DCFL does the same on the second counter, in such a way that their (possibly overlapping union) encodes runs with at least some mistake. Then their union is universal iff the Minsky machine is empty.

This implies that already universality of 2-ambiguous grammars is undecidable.

7.4 PSPACE upper bound

Rewrite the section below for the more specific UUCFL.

Solving $\text{CFG} \subseteq \text{UFA}$. The same construction shows that the inclusion problem $L \subseteq M$ for a CFL L and a regular language M reduces to an inclusion problem $L' \subseteq M'$ where L' is a DCFL and M' is in the same regular class as M .

In this section we present an PSPACE algorithm for the inclusion problem $L \subseteq M$ for L a DCFL recognised by a given DCFG and M recognised by a UFA.

Let G be a CFG with m nonterminals X_1, \dots, X_m , and for every nonterminal X_i and length $n \in \mathbb{N}$, let $T_n(X_i) = |L(X_i) \cap \Sigma^n|$ be the number of words of length n generated by X_i . The *generating function* $g_i : \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0} \cup \{\infty\}$ of X_i is defined as

$$g_i(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} T_n(X_i) \cdot x^n.$$

Since $|T_n(X_i)| \leq |\Sigma|^n$, the series above converges to a finite value in $\mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$ for every $x < |\Sigma|$. For two generating functions f, g , we write $f \leq g$ if, for every $x \in \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$,

$f(x) \leq g(x)$. Given two nonterminals X_i, X_j of G , the *generating function inequality problem* asks whether $g_i \leq g_j$ holds. This problem is undecidable in general, since the CFL universality problem $L(Y) = \Sigma^*$ is equivalent to $g_X \leq g_Y$ where $L(X) = \Sigma^*$.

Let $g : \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}^m$ be defined as $g(x) = (g_1(x), \dots, g_m(x))$. We assume that the grammar is in Chomsky normal form. Let A be the set of continuous functions in $\mathbb{R}_{\geq 0} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}^m$, and consider the mapping $F : A \rightarrow A$ defined as $F(f)(x) = (F_1(f)(x), \dots, F_m(f)(x))$, where

$$F_i(f)(x) = 1_{X_i \rightarrow \varepsilon?} + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow a} x + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow X_j X_k} f_j(x) \cdot f_k(x) \quad (29)$$

TODO: check that F maps continuous functions to continuous functions.

Lemma 2. *If G is unambiguous, then g is the least fixpoint of F .*

Proof. The fact that g is a fixpoint $F(g) = g$ follows immediately from unambiguity. Notice that F is itself a monotonic and continuous function on A . Monotonicity is clear. If $g_1 \leq g_2 \leq \dots$ is a non-decreasing sequence of continuous functions $g_n \in A$ with limit $g = \lim_n g_n$, then

$$\begin{aligned} F_i(\lim_n g_n) &= 1_{X_i \rightarrow \varepsilon?} + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow a} x + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow X_j X_k} (\lim_n g_n)_j(x) \cdot (\lim_n g_n)_k(x) = \\ &= 1_{X_i \rightarrow \varepsilon?} + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow a} x + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow X_j X_k} (\lim_n g_{nj})(x) \cdot (\lim_n g_{nk})(x) = \\ &= 1_{X_i \rightarrow \varepsilon?} + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow a} x + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow X_j X_k} \lim_n g_{nj}(x) \cdot \lim_n g_{nk}(x) = \\ &= 1_{X_i \rightarrow \varepsilon?} + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow a} x + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow X_j X_k} \lim_n (g_{nj}(x) \cdot g_{nk}(x)) = \\ &= \lim_n \left(1_{X_i \rightarrow \varepsilon?} + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow a} x + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow X_j X_k} g_{nj}(x) \cdot g_{nk}(x) \right) = \\ &= \lim_n (F_i(g_n)). \end{aligned}$$

Consider the non-decreasing sequence of continuous functions $g_1 \leq g_2 \leq \dots$ defined as $g_1(x) = (0, \dots, 0)$, and, for every $i \geq 1$, $g_{i+1} = F(g_i)$. Then 1) $g^* = \lim_n g_n$ is the least fixpoint of F , and 2) $g = g^*$. Regarding 1), g^* is a fixpoint of F since $F(g^*) = \lim_n F(g_n) = \lim_n g_{n+1} = g^*$, and it is clearly the least one since g_1 is the minimal element of A . Regarding 2), it follows directly from the following characterisation of the m -th approximant g_m :

Claim. *Let $T_{mn}(X_i)$ be the number of words of length n that can be derived from X_i by at most m rewriting steps. Then,*

$$g_{ni}(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} T_{mn}(X_i) \cdot x^n. \quad (30)$$

Clearly, $T_n = \lim_m T_{mn}$, and thus ... TODO □

Lemma 3. *The generating function inequality problem can be solved in EXPTIME for unambiguous grammars.*

Proof. Thanks to Lemma 2, the generating function g of an ambiguous grammar is the least fixpoint of F from (29). Let

$$p_i(x, \bar{y}) \equiv y_i - 1_{X_i \rightarrow \varepsilon?} - \sum_{X_i \rightarrow a} x - \sum_{X_i \rightarrow X_j X_k} y_j \cdot y_k, \quad (31)$$

$$\hat{\varphi}(x, \bar{y}) \equiv \bigwedge_i p_i(x, \bar{y}) = 0, \text{ and} \quad (32)$$

$$\varphi(x, \bar{y}) \equiv \hat{\varphi}(x, \bar{y}) \wedge \forall \bar{z} \cdot \hat{\varphi}(x, \bar{z}) \implies \bar{y} \leq \bar{z}. \quad (33)$$

Consequently,

$$g(x) = \bar{y} \quad \text{iff} \quad \varphi(x, \bar{y}).$$

Thus, the inequality problem $g_i \leq g_j$ is equivalent to

$$\forall x, \bar{y} \cdot \varphi(x, \bar{y}) \implies y_i \leq y_j.$$

which is a formula of Tarski algebra of fixed alternation depth, and this fragment is solvable in EXPTIME. \square

Let $\|x\| = \max_i x_i$ be the max-norm. A function $F : \mathbb{R}^m \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^m$ is *contractive* if there exists a constant $0 \leq \alpha < 1$ s.t. for every vectors $x, y \in \mathbb{R}^m$, $\|F(x) - F(y)\| \leq \alpha \cdot \|x - y\|$. By Banach's Fixpoint Theorem, a contractive function F has a unique fixpoint $x^* = F(x^*)$, which can moreover be found by iterating $x^* = \lim_n F^n(x_0)$ for any initial vector $x_0 \in \mathbb{R}^m$.

Lemma 4. *If the grammar G is linear, then F_x is contractive for x sufficiently small and thus it has a unique fixpoint.*

Proof. If G is a linear grammar, then by letting $y_i = f_i(x)$, we can write

$$F_i(y) = 1_{X_i \rightarrow \varepsilon?} + \sum_{X_i \rightarrow \alpha X_j \beta} x^{|\alpha\beta|} y_j. \quad (34)$$

Therefore,

$$F_i(y) - F_i(z) = \sum_{X_i \rightarrow \alpha X_j \beta} x^{|\alpha\beta|} y_j - \sum_{X_i \rightarrow \alpha X_j \beta} x^{|\alpha\beta|} z_j = \sum_{X_i \rightarrow \alpha X_j \beta} x^{|\alpha\beta|} (y_j - z_j),$$

and thus $\|F(y) - F(z)\| = \max_i \left(\sum_{X_i \rightarrow \alpha X_j \beta} x^{|\alpha\beta|} (y_j - z_j) \right) \leq \gamma \|y - z\|$, where $\gamma = \sum_{X_i \rightarrow \alpha X_j \beta} x^{|\alpha\beta|}$. Therefore, F is contractive $\gamma < 1$ provided that

$$x < k^{-l},$$

where k is the number of productions of G and $l = \max_{X_i \rightarrow \alpha X_j \beta} |\alpha\beta|$ is the maximum length of a r.h.s. of a production. \square

Lemma 5. *The inequality problem between an UCFG g and an ULCFG g can be solved in PSPACE.*

Proof. By Lemma 4, generating functions of ULCFG are unique solutions of polynomial equations, and thus the problem is equivalent to

$$\exists x, \bar{y}, \bar{z} \cdot \varphi_f(x, \bar{y}) \wedge \varphi_g(x, \bar{z}) \rightarrow y_i \leq z_j.$$

which is a formula of the existential fragment of Tarski algebra, and thus solvable in PSPACE. \square

Corollary 6. *The universality problem for unambiguous grammars is in PSPACE.*

Proof. Let $k = |\Sigma|$. The generating function of Σ^* is $g_{\Sigma^*}(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} k^n x^n = \frac{1}{1-kx}$, and thus L is universal iff $\forall x \cdot g_L(x) \geq \frac{1}{1-kx}$. This is the same as

$$\forall x, \bar{y} \cdot \bigwedge_i p_i(x, \bar{y}) = 0 \implies y_j \geq \frac{1}{1-kx},$$

which is a formula of the existential fragment of Tarski algebra, and thus solvable in PSPACE. \square

TODO: extend to weighted automata and grammars?

References

- [1] K. Etessami, A. Stewart, and M. Yannakakis. Stochastic context-free grammars, regular languages, and newton’s method. In *In Proc. of ICALP’13*, ICALP’13, pages 199–211, Berlin, Heidelberg, 2013. Springer-Verlag.
- [2] W. E. Hardy G.H. *An introduction to the theory of numbers*. OUP, 6ed. edition, 2008.
- [3] A. Heußner, J. Leroux, A. Muscholl, and G. Sutre. Reachability analysis of communicating pushdown systems. *LMCS*, 8(3):1–20, September 2012.
- [4] T. N. Hibbard and J. Ullian. The independence of inherent ambiguity from complementedness among context-free languages. *J. ACM*, 13(4):588–593, Oct. 1966.
- [5] R. E. Stearns and H. B. Hunt. On the equivalence and containment problems for unambiguous regular expressions, grammars, and automata. In *Proceedings of the 22nd Annual Symposium on Foundations of Computer Science*, SFCS ’81, pages 74–81, Washington, DC, USA, 1981. IEEE Computer Society.
- [6] J. Swernofsky and M. Wehar. On the complexity of intersecting regular, context-free, and tree languages. In M. M. Halldórsson, K. Iwama, N. Kobayashi, and B. Speckmann, editors, *Automata, Languages, and Programming*, volume 9135 of *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, pages 414–426. Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2015.