

# Unit-3: Greedy Methods & Dynamic Programming

**Greedy Methods** 

Dynamic Programming

### Greedy methods

The problem which are solved using greedy method is of following structure:

- •There are 'n' inputs of some values and objective functions.
- •The method gives an optimal solution to the problem by considering the *inputs* 1 (one) at a time, checking to see if it can be included in the set of values which give an optimal solution, and than check if it is a *feasible solution*.
- •All of 'n' inputs may **not be included**, only those needed to form the **optimal solution will be included**.
- •Each input may consume some resources which is generally available in limited quantity.

### Greedy methods...

The flow of data is as in the figure below:

N inputs

Select for optimality

Feasible? Yes

Include

- •Greedy method depends upon local maximum.
- •The strategy adopted for achieving the optimal solutions is called the "Greedy Methods".
- •The word greedy refers to *allocating the maximum possible* values of some limited resource to the first element which enter the optimal solution.
- Feasibility of solution means, to find solution by obeying the constraints.

### Greedy methods...

Below methods come under the head of Greedy methods:

- 1. Knapsack problem
- 2. Job sequencing with deadline
- 3. Minimum spanning tree
- 4. Shortest path method

#### 1). Knapsack problem

- •Given a set of items, each with a weight and a value, determine the number of each item to include in a *collection (Sack)* so that the total weight is *less than or equal to a given limit* and the total *value (profit)* is *as large as possible*.
- •The problem often arises in *resource allocation* where the decision makers have to choose from a set of *non-divisible projects* or tasks under a *fixed budget* or *time constraint*, respectively.
- •The problem refers to the commonplace problem of *packing the most valuable or useful items* without overloading the luggage.
- •Knapsack problems appear in real-world decision-making processes in a wide variety of fields, such as finding the *least wasteful way to cut raw materials*, *selection of investments and portfolios*.

### 2). Job sequencing with deadline

- •In job sequencing problem, the objective is to *find a sequence of jobs*, which is *completed within* their deadlines and gives maximum profit.
- •Let us consider, a set of n given jobs which are associated with deadlines and profit is earned, if a job is completed by its deadline.
- •These jobs need to be ordered in such a way that there is maximum profit.
- •Constraints:
- Each job required 1 unit of time.
- •No 2 jobs can be done simultaneously (one job at a time).

### 3). Minimum Spanning tree

- •Graphs are represented as a set of edges or values.
- •Spanning tree is a **sub graph of a graph**, since it is a **subset of a graph**.
- •Assume that a graph is given, having 6 (six) vertices and 6 (six) edges.
- •Like, vertices (v) = (1,2,3,4,5,6)
- •And edges (e) =  $\{(1,2), (2,3), (3,4), \dots\}$
- •While preparing a spanning tree from a graph, we must *take subset of edges* but *vertices must be* as it is.
- •We must include all the vertices, than what about the edges?

### Minimum Spanning tree...

- |V| = n = 6
- $\bullet$  | E| = n-1 = 5
- •There will be 6 vertices and 5 edges in a spanning tree (if the graph is containing 6 vertices and 6 edges).
- •Definition: "Spanning tree is a sub graph of a graph having all the vertices and only n-1 edges.
- •From a given weighed graph, we can draw spanning tree in so many ways.
- •But we are interested in the spanning tree which is having the *minimum cost*.
- •This could be achieved manually by drawing all the possible spanning tree from a given graph.

### Minimum Spanning tree...

- But this is not a feasible solution.
- •We are having two methods by which we can achieve a minimum spanning tree at just one try.
- 1. Prim's algorithm
- 2. Kruskal's algorithm

#### Prim's algorithm:

- •This is a greedy method which can find minimum spanning tree.
- •This method starts with the edge with the minimum cost.
- Then select minimum weight out of all the connected edges.

### Minimum Spanning tree...

- •Care is to be taken while selecting edges that, it does *not form the cycle*.
- •Prim's algorithm can't find spanning tree from the un-connected graph.

#### Kruskal's algorithm:

- •This is a greedy method which can find minimum spanning tree.
- •This method starts with the edge with the minimum cost.
- •Than it again *finds the minimum cost edge* and draw the tree further.
- •This will be continued until spanning tree is complete.
- •Spanning tree can be formed from the un-connected graph.

# 4). Shortest path method: Dijkstra's

- •In the shortest path problem, we are interested in *the length of a particular path* and not the total length.
- •The problem is to determine the shortest path from the source node to all the remaining node of the graph G.
- •A greedy strategy for this problem require a *multi stage solution* with an *optimization measure*.
- •The path can be built edge by edge, the sum of the length of the path built until now can be used as the optimization measure.
- •Dijkstra's algorithm is well known and a popular algorithm for solving shortest path problem.
- •It is implemented in high speed computer, network routers and switches.

### Dynamic programming

- •The idea of dynamic programming is quite simple, avoid calculating the same thing twice.
- •This is achieved by **keeping a table of known results** that feels up as sub-instances of the **problem** that is solved.
- Dynamic programming is a bottom up technique.
- It starts with the smallest and simplest sub-instances.
- •The dynamic programming strategy drastically (extremely) **reduces the unnecessary calculations**, by **avoiding the sequence which cannot possibly lead to an optimal solution.**
- •In dynamic programming, an optimal sequence of decisions are arrived by the "principle of optimality".

### Dynamic programming...

#### Principle of Optimality:

An optimal sequence of decisions has a property that whatever be the initial state and decision, the remaining decisions must constitute an optimal decision sequence with regard to the state resulting from the first decision.

- 1. Rod Cutting problem
- 2. Multistage graph
- 3. Travelling salesman problem
- 4. Longest common subsequence
- 5. Matrix multiplication / Matrix chain multiplication

### 1). Rod Cutting problem

- •This technique gives the answer to the question: How to cut a metal rod into pieces, so that the revenue (profit) obtained by selling them is maximum?
- •The rod has an integer unit length and cut lengths are also to be an integer units.
- It is assumed that there is no cutting cost.
- •We are always interested in the *unique cuts*.

### 2). Multi stage graph

- •A multi stage graph is a **weighted directed graph** in which, **vertices are grouped into several** stages.
- •This method is *applicable in the project management*, where in order to complete a project, we have to *perform several activities in different stages*.
- •At each stage, we have to take several decisions on the basis of weights available.
- •We have to **select the minimum cost edges**, in order to have **minimum cost to complete a particular task.**
- •That is why, it is called **optimization problem (minimization problem)**, and this is solved through **dynamic programming**.

### 3). Travelling salesman problem

- A salesman has to visit various cities from his hometown.
- He has to visit all the cities exactly once.
- Means he can not revisit the city nor he can miss any of it.
- •He has to return to his hometown after the journey.
- •We have to find the **route which costs minimum**.
- •Cost adjacency matrix will be given with the problem itself.
- •This algorithm can be applicable in *logistic, deciding the route, planning and scheduling*.

### 4). Longest Common Subsequence

- •A subsequence is a subset of elements from the sequence with **strictly increasing order** (not necessarily continuous).
- •There can be more than one common sub sequences for the given two strings.
- •We have to find out the *longest common subsequence*.
- •It means we have to find common subsequence that is of *maximum length*.
- •We have to follow the *relative order of character positions*.
- •It means that, while comparing we must look to the forward direction and not backward.
- •It can be used in the 'diff-utility', revision control system, etc.

### 5). Matrix chain multiplication

- •Suppose, we have more than 2 matrices (A1, A2, A3); we have to multiply these matrices such that the cost of multiplication is minimum.
- •We have to find the sequence of multiplication in which the cost is minimum.
- •We can first multiply A1 with A2 and than the answer is multiplied with A3, or we can multiply A2 and A3 than the answer is multiplied with A1.
- This algorithm is applicable in signal processing and network industry.

# Unit-2: Divide and Conquer Strategy

**Divide and Conquer** 

Decrease and Conquer

### Divide and Conquer Strategy

- •In divide and conquer strategy, problem is *divided into smaller sub-problems* and then *each problem is solved independently.*
- •When we keep on dividing the subproblems into even smaller sub-problems, we may eventually reach a stage where *no more division is possible*.
- •Those "atomic" smallest possible sub-problem are solved.
- •The solution of all sub-problems is finally *merged* in order to obtain the solution of an *original problem*.
- Divide and conquer is a recursive strategy.
- •It is important to note that, sub-problems must be similar to the main problem.

#### Merge sort

- Merge sort algorithm is considered as one of the good example of Divide and Conquer method.
- •We assume that sorting is to be done in the ascending order.
- •Given a set (array) of unsorted numbers, idea is to split this set (array) in to two almost equal parts.
- •Than, each of these is individually sorted and the two arrays obtained as a result are merged to obtain a single sorted array.
- •This operation can be carried out recursively on the half sized array till we are left with arrays of size 2 or 1.

#### Pros and Cons of Divide and Conquer

#### **Pros**

- •It can solve difficult problems easily as, it divides the problem into similar sub-problems.
- •Methods which use divide and conquer is much easier to understand as the same process is repeated many number of times.
- •Algorithm designed with divide and conquer strategy does not require any modifications, as the sub-division of problem is parallel and can be processed by parallel processing systems.
- •It makes efficient use memory cache, because when the problem gets divided, they are so small that they can be easily solved in the cache itself.

### Pros and Cons of Divide and Conquer...

#### Cons

- •Divide and conquer strategy uses recursion that makes it a little slower and if a little error occurs in the code, than the program may enter into infinite loop.
- Usage of stack may make use of extra space.
- •Performing recursion for number of time greater than the stack in the CPU than the system may crash.
- •If all the sub-problems are working properly but, error persist in any single sub-problem than it may lead to error.
- •Sometimes it happens that sub-problem may increase the solving time and it may consume extra memory.

## Divide and Conquer vs. Dynamic Prog.

Divide and Conquer	Dynamic Programming
· ·	This is an algorithm that helps to efficiently solve a class of problems that has overlapping subproblems.
Sub-problems are independent of each other.	Sub-problems are inter dependent.
This algorithm works on recursive approach.	It is non-recursive approach.
It is time consuming as it solves each sub-problems independently.	Requires lesser time as it uses the data of the previous stage.
Comparatively, this approach is considered less efficient.	Considerably more efficient approach.

#### Decrease and Conquer

- •The decrease and conquer approach works on following steps:
  - Step 1: Decrease
  - Step 2: Conquer
  - Step3: Extend

#### Decrease:

- Reduce the problem instance to smaller instance of the same problem and extend the solution.
- Example: 1000 \* 1000.
- Reduce the number by removing two zeros (00).

#### **Conquer:**

Now, conquer the problem by solving a smaller number (10 \* 10) of a problem.

#### **Extend:**

- Take the answer from the conquer and add removed number (0000) to the answer.
- So that you can have an actual answer.

#### Decrease and Conquer...

- •It is suggested that the name "Divide and Conquer" should be used only when each problem may generate two or more sub-problems.
- •The name "Decrease and Conquer" has been proposed for the single sub-problem class.
- •According to this definition, *merge sort comes under "Divide and Conquer"* strategy and *binary* search comes under "Decrease and Conquer" strategy.

#### Unit-4: Backtracking

- •Backtracking is an algorithmic-technique for solving problems recursively by trying to **build a solution incrementally, one piece at a time, removing those solutions that fail to satisfy the constraints** of the problem at any point of time.
- Backtracking found its first use in games and many artificial intelligence applications.
- It was found that such problems require traversal of a large search tree.
- It requires **exponential time.**
- •In order to reduce the search time, strategy used is "Back tracking".
- •Back tracking is a systematic method to examine all possible configuration of a problem space.
- •In this method, we generate each possible configuration exactly once, avoiding repetitions and missing configuration.

#### Combinatorial search

- •The selection of a given number of element from a largest number without considering the arrangements.
- •The benefits that can occur from analyzing and improving algorithms for problems which implements combinatorial search (search in non-systematic manner) the time of which grows exponentially in the size of the problem, which can be very high.
- •So, by using exhaustive search techniques we can optimally solve small problems although the tie complexity may be very high.
- •In certain situation, it would be good to spend more time to get an optimal solution.

#### Search and Traversal

- •The most problems with graphs and trees require searching for a node with same specific property.
- •When the search requires necessarily *visiting every node in the structure,* then it is called a traversal.
- There are three methods of traversal in binary tree.

#### 1. In-order traversal

-Traverse left sub-tree, Visit and use the root, Traverse the right sub-tree

#### Pre-order traversal

-Visit and use the root, Traverse left sub-tree, Traverse the right sub-tree

#### 3. Post-order traversal

-Traverse left sub-tree, Traverse the right sub-tree, Visit and use the root

#### 8 Queens problem

- •In general form, this is of "n-queens" problem, but to understand it in the precise manner we understand it with 8 queens or 4 queens problem.
- •In the 4 queens problem, we have 4\*4 chess board, we have to place all the queens such that no queen can attack each other.
- •We have to take care that no two queens are placed on the same column and/or on the same row.
- •No two queens should be placed in the diagonal cells of the chess board.
- •We will have 4\*4 chess board and we have to place 4 queens on the chess board as per the constraints discussed.
- •It helps you build quality like constraint programming, or evolutionary algorithms.
- •We found that 'N' problem can be solved with just in the form of '4'.
- •It can give answer to question like: Can I schedule 'N' work items using shared resources, within time limit?

#### m-Coloring problem

- •In m-coloring problem, a graph G=(V,E) is a set of m colors with its constraints.
- •We want to determine if the nodes of the graph can be colored with distinct colors, so that no two adjacent nodes have the same color.
- •M-color optimization problem finds the minimum number of colors required to paint the graph.
- •This minimum number is known as "chromatic number" of a graph.
- •This technique is applicable in making a schedule, a time table, sudoku.
- •There are many ways to color all the vertices in different color.

#### Hamiltonian Circuit

- •A circuit is a path in an undirected or directed graph that visits each vertex exactly once.
- •To determine whether such paths and cycles exists in a graph is the "Hamiltonian path problem".
- **Definition**: "A Hamiltonian path is a path that visits each vertex of the graph exactly once and return to the starting vertex."
- •As per the rule of the backtracking, we will explore all the possibilities which form a Hamiltonian circuit for the given graph.
- •This problem looks similar to Travelling salesman problem up to some extent. But, in TSP we need to find the smallest path.
- •This may applied into Computer Graphics, electronic circuit design, etc.

### Constructing Typical State Space

•To understand how backtracking work, we must see how objects such as permutations and subset can be constructed by determining the right state space.

#### Constructing all subsets

- •To design a suitable state space for representing a collection of objects, it is important to know the number of objects we will need to represent.
- •It means, how many subset of n elements set exists? Ex: {1,2,3,...,n}
- •There are exactly two subsets when n=1 namely  $\{\Phi\}$  and  $\{1\}$ , and four subsets when n=2, and 8 subsets when n=3.
- •There are 2<sup>n</sup> subsets of n elements.

### Constructing Typical State Space...

#### Constructing all permutations

- •To design a suitable state space for representing permutations, we start by counting them, there are n distinct choices for the value of the  $1^{st}$  element of a permutation of  $\{1,2,...n\}$
- •Once we have fixed this value of n, there are n-1 candidates remaining for the second position, since we can have any value except n1, as repetition is not allowed.
- •If we take this argument to its logical conclusion we get a total of n! distinct permutations.

### Unit-5: Branch & Bound Algorithm

- •In order to find an optimal solution over a finite set of alternatives an obvious approach is to enumerate all the alternatives and then select the best option.
- •This method will be more demanding when the problem statement is very small.
- •Branch & Bound algorithm *reduces the number of alternatives that needs to be considered* by partitioning the problem into a set of smaller sub-problems by using the information available at each step.
- Each step generates an information which eliminates steps for final results.

#### 8-Puzzle problem

- •In the 8-puzzle problem, we are given with 3\*3 matrix in which 1,2,....8 numbers are dynamically arranged.
- •A matrix will have one empty cell which will be used to move numbers from one place to another.
- All the numbers are scrambled and the goal is to reach the target position.
- •We can move a number to the left side, right side, in upward direction or downward direction as pert the space available.
- •The solution space tree will have nodes representing the state of 8 tiles on the 3\*3 board.
- •We shall use the best first search technique.
- •The given starting scrambled state will be represented as the root node.
- •We shall use "Manhattan Distance" as the cost of re-arranging.

#### Shortest Path problem

- •In this method, we have to find the shortest path between the starting node and the sink node (goal).
- •We will find it in the depth first search (DFS) manner.
- •We are interested in finding the optimal path amongst all the paths.
- •This method of finding the shortest path is to be used when the size of problem is small.
- While finding the path we cannot move in the backward direction.
- •Always choose the shortest value from the leaf node for further exploration.
- The bounding process takes place as we reach the sink.
- •Prune the path whose value is bigger than the bound.

#### 0/1 Knapsack problem

- •The objective of this method is to fill the knapsack such that the profit earned is maximum and we are filling the knapsack less than or equal to its capacity.
- •We would include an object (full of its weight) or not include it at all.
- •Knapsack problem (0/1) is actually a maximization problem which can be solved with Greedy method, Dynamic Programming and Backtracking also.
- •In Branch and Bound, we would consider it as a minimization problem, we will mark profit as a negative and then convert it into positive later on.
- •We will use Least Cost Branch and Bound (LC-BB).
- •It means Least cost branch will be explored first.

#### Unit-1: Basics of Design & Analysis of Algorithms

- Computer have lots of memory but no imagination.
- •So solving a problem or getting work done by a computer can be quite a demanding task.
- •Getting work done by computer require considerable amount of careful planning and attention to details.
- •One of the difficulties in getting a problem solved by a computer is that, when we humans perform any task, there may be many steps which are doing un-consciously and most of the time we are not aware of them.
- •When the same job is required to be done by a computer, all these obvious and un-obvious steps need to be included in the algorithm.

### Solving a problem with a computer

- •Following steps are required to solve a problem using computer:
- 1. Statement of a problem or problem definition
- 2. Development of a model
- 3. Design of the algorithm
- 4. Checking the correctness of the algorithm
- 5. Implementation in some programming language.

### 1. Statement of a problem or problem definition

- •Initially we have to understand the requirements of a particular problem.
- •If we are the originator of the problem than we have to ask ourselves several questions.
- •If originator of the problem is someone else than we have to interview him/her expecting detailed answers of every questions.
- •To get right answers, requires right questions.
- a) Do we understand the vocabulary used in the statement problem?
- b) What information is given?
- c) What is to be found?
- d) How to recognize a valid solution?
- e) What important information is missing?
- f) What assumptions have been made?

#### 2. Development of a model

- •We have to develop a mathematical model where calculations can be done.
- •There are two more questions which must be answered:
- 1. "Which mathematical structure seems to be suited?
- 2. Are there any problems that have been solved, which resemble this one?
- •There are several general problem solving strategy which are available:
- 1. Divide and Conquer
- 2. Dynamic Programming
- 3. Greedy Search
- 4. Back tracking
- Branch and Bound

### 3. Design of the algorithm

- •There are various issues which arises in the design of an algorithm.
- •The design approach depends mainly on the model we are choosing.
- •There can be more than one algorithm to solve the problem and the choice between them will be based on the effectiveness.
- •The natural tendency to start coding a problem early should be avoided.
- •Additional time that is spent in the initial design phase would help you develop a program quickly which is likely bug free and efficient.

## 4. Checking the correctness of the algorithm

- •One of the difficult task in algorithm development is to prove its correctness.
- •One of the possible way to prove its correctness is to input several possibilities and compare it against manually calculated or known result.
- This approach to measure the correctness is not sufficient for its reliability and efficiency.
- •This tells us that an algorithms correctness does not necessarily imply anything about its efficiency.

# 5. Implementation in some programming language

- •Once the algorithm is designed and checked for correctness, it is the time to code it in some programming language.
- This could be a straight forward or a difficult task depending upon how clearly the algorithm is written and the programming strategy is adopted.
- •So one major difficulty is that we must design the data structures to represent important information held within the algorithm.
- To do so we must answer the following questions:
- What are the variables?
- 2. What are their types?
- 3. How many arrays are required and what are the sizes?
- 4. Is it worth while to use linked list?
- 5. Which subroutines are needed?
- 6. Which programming language will support this data structure sufficiently?

#### What is Algorithm?

- •The word 'algorithm' means "set of rules to be followed in any type of problem-solving operations".
- •It means algorithm is a set of rules/instructions that step-by-step define how a work is to be executed so as to get the expected results.

#### **Characteristics of an Algorithm**

- 1). Clear and Unambiguous: Algorithm should be clear and unambiguous. Each of its steps should be clear in all aspects and must lead to only one meaning.
- 2). Well-Defined Inputs: If an algorithm says to take inputs, it should be well-defined inputs.
- 3). Well-Defined Outputs: The algorithm must clearly define what output will be yielded and it should be well-defined as well.

### What is Algorithm?...

- 4). Finite-ness: The algorithm must be finite, i.e. it should not end up in an infinite loops or similar.
- **5). Feasible:** The algorithm must be simple, generic and practical, such that it can be executed upon will the available resources. It must not contain some future technology, or anything.
- **6). Language Independent:** The Algorithm designed must be language-independent, i.e. it must be just plain instructions that can be implemented in any language, and yet the output will be same, as expected.

#### Top down design

- •Programmers have tried to design and code algorithms directly in programming language, rather than carefully decomposing the problem into simpler problems and checking the relationship.
- •The method which is applying the concept of decomposing is called the "Top down technique".
- •Experience has shown that top-down design technique results in fewer mistakes than line by line development.
- •The top down method decomposes the overall problem into precisely specified sub-problems.
- •Than it proves that if each sub-problem is solved correctly, and the solutions are fitted together in a specified way, than the original problem will be solved correctly.

### Structured programming

- •A structured programming is useful in development of the algorithm and in the implementation of the program.
- •While writing a program, the major concerns of a programmer are:
- 1. Easy debugging
- 2. Easy modification, extension and maintenance
- 3. Easy understanding by other programmers in the team
- 4. Reasonable assurance that the program logic is correct
- Structured programming is a perfect way of developing and implementing algorithms.
- •It means that, while debugging a program, a programmer would like to know:
  - "How did I came here"?
  - That is the path that the program control has traversed.
  - In a structured programming, all the control constructs have a single entry point & single exit point.

## Factors affecting an efficiency of an algorithm

- The design and implementation of algorithm have an influence on their efficiency.
- An algorithm when implemented must use some resources to complete its task.
- Resources like: CPU time, and Internal memory (RAM), must be used efficiently so that resources could be used somewhere else.
- In the earlier time, cost of the computer resources was the driving force behind the desire to design an efficient algorithms.
- In the present, the cost of these resources are reduces and it is continuously decreasing but, because of more complex requirements, efficient algorithm is inevitable.
- 1. Removing redundant computation outside the loops:
- Most of the in-efficiency that lies into the design of an algorithm are due to redundant computations or un-necessary storage.
- The effect of redundant computation is serious when it is embedded within a loop, which must be executed many times.
- The most common mistake when using loop is to repeatedly calculate the part of an expression.

## Factors affecting an efficiency of an algorithm...

```
 \begin \end{subarray} $\circ$ Example: $$x=0$ for $i=1$ to n do $$begin $$$x=x+0.01; $$$ $$y=(a*a*a+c)*x*x+b*b*x; end $$
```

## Factors affecting an efficiency of an algorithm...

#### 2. Referencing of an array elements:

- Generally, arrays are processed by iterative constructs.
- If proper care is not taken while programming, redundant computation can creep into an array processing.

#### 3. <u>Inefficiency due to late termination:</u>

- Another possibility of in-efficiency that may occur into the implementation of an algorithm is when considerably more tests are carried out.
- Example: Bubble sort

#### 4. Early detection of desired output conditions

- Any sorting algorithm requires to compare all the elements with each other.
- What if, if the elements which are input for sorting are already in the sorted structure?
- By putting a check at the very early stage of an algorithm we could reduce the un-required processing of the algorithm.

#### Design using recursion

- Some computer programming languages allow a module or function to call itself.
- $\circ$  This technique is known as recursion. In recursion, a function  $\alpha$  either calls itself directly or calls a function  $\beta$  that in turn calls the original function  $\alpha$ .
- The function  $\alpha$  is called recursive function.
- One may argue why to use recursion, as the same task can be done with iteration.
- The first reason is, recursion makes a program more readable and because of latest enhanced CPU systems, recursion is more efficient than iterations.
- Time Complexity:
- Amount (extra) of time required to execute/compute the certain function/task is known as time complexity.
- In case of iterations, we take number of iterations to count the time complexity.
- Likewise, in case of recursion, assuming everything is constant, we try to figure out the number of times a recursive call is being made.
- Space Complexity:
- Space complexity is counted as what amount of (extra) space is required for a module to execute.
- The space required in recursion is high, hence it is considered that space complexity of recursive function is high.

### Regular Expressions (RE)

- •Regular expression is a method of expressing long and possible infinite sequences of some symbols.
- •Generally, it is in the form of the formula shown in the form of the formula which shows ordering of various symbols.
- •Suppose, we want to denote two strings, 'ab' and 'ac', it will be written as:
  - RE r = a(b|c)
- •Here, the '|' (pipe) symbol denotes alternate possibilities and string concatenation operation which is denoted by simply writing symbols one after another.
- •Use of RE here is an indication of a link between the theory of algorithms and the theory of formal languages.
- •One is the specification of how to do computation and the other is a record of a dynamic behaviour when the computation takes place.