

Kleene Iteration: From Kleene Algebra Onwards

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Overview

What I will talk about:

- Compositionality
- Modularity
- Genericity
- Design
- Semantics

What I wont talk about:

- Efficiency
- Optimization
- Computation Complexity

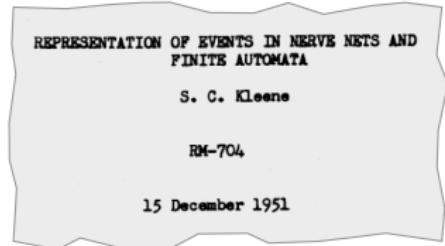


Background

-  Goncharov, "Shades of Iteration: From Elgot to Kleene", WADT 2022
-  Goncharov and Uustalu, "A Unifying Categorical View of Nondeterministic Iteration and Tests", CONCUR 2024

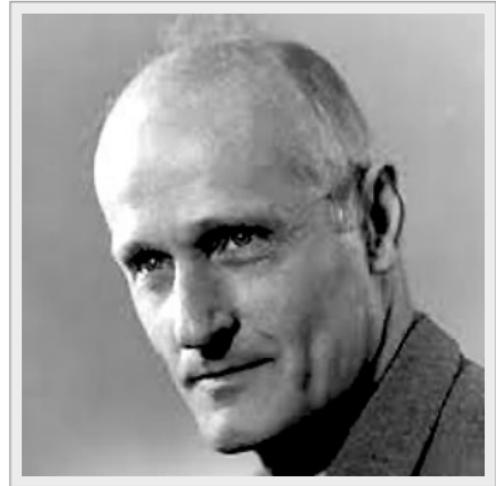
Kleene Iteration in Kleene Algebra

Regular Events



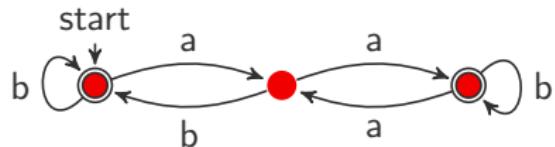
7.2 An algebraic transformation: We list several equivalences:

(1) $(E \vee F) \vee G \equiv E \vee (F \vee G).$	Associate laws
(2) $(EF)G \equiv E(FG).$	
(3) $(E+F)G \equiv EG \vee FG.$	Distributive laws
(4) $(E \vee F)G \equiv EG \vee FG.$	
(5) $E(F \vee G) \equiv EF \vee EG.$	
(6) $E^*(P \vee Q) \equiv E^*P \vee E^*Q.$	
(7) $E^*F \equiv F \vee E^*(EP).$	
(8) $E^*F \equiv F \vee E(E^*P).$	



E.g. $(b + a(ab^*a)b)^*(1 + aa)$

- Kleene star $e \mapsto e^*$
- Kleene theorem
 - Syntax for finite state machines
 - Algebraic equational reasoning



Language Interpretation

Regular expressions over Σ :

$$e, e_1, e_2 ::= (\alpha \in \Sigma) \mid 0 \mid 1 \mid e_1 + e_2 \mid e_1; e_2 \mid e^*$$

- Language interpretation:

$$[\![0]\!] = \{ \} \quad [\![e_1; e_2]\!] = \{ xy \mid x \in [\![e_1]\!], y \in [\![e_2]\!] \}$$

$$[\![1]\!] = \{ \epsilon \} \quad [\![e_1 + e_2]\!] = [\![e_1]\!] \cup [\![e_2]\!]$$

$$[\![e^*]\!] = \{ \epsilon \} \cup [\![e]\!] \cup [\![e; e]\!] \cup \dots$$

- Language $L \subseteq \Sigma^*$ is regular iff $L = [\![e]\!]$ for some regular expression e with $[\![\alpha]\!] = \alpha$ for $\alpha \in \Sigma$

② Other interpretations? Yes, e.g. **relational** one!

② Complete reasoning system for regular expressions

Axioms of Kleene Algebra

Kleene algebra is a structure $(S, 0, 1, +, ;, (-)^*)$, where $(S, 0, 1, +, ;)$ is an idempotent semiring:

- $(S, 0, +)$ and $(S, 1, ;)$ are monoids
- $(S, 0, +)$ is **commutative** ($x + y = y + x$) and **idempotent** ($x + x = x$)
- **distributive laws:**

$$x; (y + z) = x; y + x; z \quad x; 0 = 0$$

$$(x + y); z = x; z + y; z \quad 0; x = 0$$

(thus, S is partially ordered: $x \leqslant y$ iff $x + y = y$)

... plus **Kleene iteration** satisfying $x^* = 1 + x; x^*$, and

$$\frac{x; y + z \leqslant y}{x^*; z \leqslant y}$$

$$\frac{x + z; y \leqslant z}{x; y^* \leqslant z}$$

Equivalently: $x^*; z$ is a least fixpoint of $x; (-) + z$ and $z; y^*$ is a least fixpoint of $(-); y + z$

Key (Design) Features

- Complete both over language model and over relational model
- Algebraic, i.e. closed under substitution, unlike Salomaa's rule*

$$\frac{y = z + xy \quad x \text{ guarded}}{y = x^*z}$$

- All fixpoints are least (pre-)fixpoints
 - in Salomaa's system: particular fixpoints are unique fixpoints
- Induction rules

$$\frac{x; y + z \leq y}{x^*; z \leq y}$$

$$\frac{x + z; y \leq z}{x; y^* \leq z}$$

encompass infinitely many identities, critical for completeness

*A. Salomaa, Two Complete Axiom Systems for the Algebra of Regular Events, 1966

Tests for Control

- Intuition: 0 is a deadlock, 1 is a neutral program, ; is sequential composition, + is non-deterministic choice
- Kleene algebra with tests (KAT) adds control via tests:
 - Kleene sub-algebra B
 - B is Boolean algebra under $(0, 1, ;, +)$
- This enables encodings:

• Branching	$(\text{if } b \text{ then } p \text{ else } q)$	as	$b; p + \bar{b}; q$
• Looping	$(\text{while } b \text{ do } p)$	as	$(b; p)^*; \bar{b}$
• Hoare triples	$\{a\} p \{b\}$	as	$a; p; b = a; p$

Example:

$\text{while } b \text{ do } p = \text{if } b \text{ then } p \text{ else } (\text{while } b \text{ do } p)$

Kleene Algebra Today

- Regular expressions
- Algebraic language of **finite state machines** and beyond
- Relational semantics of programs
- Relational reasoning and verification, e.g. via **dynamic logic**
- Plenty of extensions:
 - modal \Rightarrow **modal Kleene algebra** (Struth et al.)
 - stateful \Rightarrow **KAT + B!** (Grathwohl, Kozen, Mamouras)
 - concurrent \Rightarrow **concurrent Kleene algebra** (Hoare et al.)
 - nominal \Rightarrow **nominal Kleene algebra** (Kozen et al.)
 - differential equations \Rightarrow **differential dynamic logic** (Platzer et al.)
 - network primitives \Rightarrow **NetKAT** (Foster et al.)
 - etc., etc., etc.
- **decidability** and **completeness** (most famously w.r.t. language interpretation and relational interpretation)

Beyond Kleene Algebra's Iteration

Scenario I: Exceptions

- Asssuming that programs may raise **exceptions**: raise $e_i =$ “raise exception e_i ”,

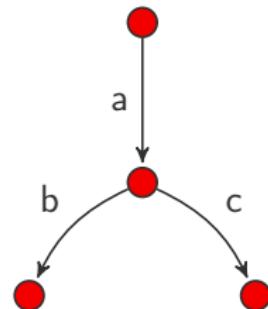
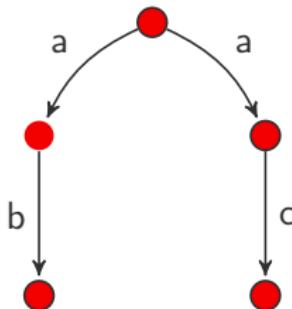
$\text{raise } e_1 = \text{raise } e_1; 0 = 0 = \text{raise } e_2; 0 = \text{raise } e_2$

- So, we cannot have more than one exception
 - ... unless we discard the law

$p; 0 = 0$

Scenario II: Branching Time

Processes



are famously non-bisimilar, failing Kleene algebra law

$$p; (q + r) = p; q + p; r$$

Scenario III: Divergence

- Identity

$$(p + 1)^* = p^*$$

is provable in Kleene algebra, because p^* is a least fixpoint

- Alternatively:

$$1^* = 1$$

- Hence **deadlock** = **divergence**

② How to undo this?

❗ $1^* = 1$ is not a Kleene algebra axiom

What is generic core of Kleene iteration?

- Core reasoning principles
- Robustness under adding features (e.g. exceptions)
- Generic completeness argument
- Compatibility with classical program semantics
 - ⇒ Soundness of while-loop encoding

Categorifying Iteration

From Algebras to Categories

- Categories \approx many-sorted monoids:

$$1_A : A \rightarrow A \quad (\text{unit}) \quad \frac{p: A \rightarrow B \quad q: B \rightarrow C}{p; q: A \rightarrow C} \quad (\text{multiplication})$$

- Objects A, B, \dots – sorts, Morphisms $p: A \rightarrow B$ – programs
- Fact: monoid = single-object category
- Kleene-Kozen categories – additionally

$$0_{A,B} : A \rightarrow B \quad \frac{p: A \rightarrow B \quad q: A \rightarrow B}{p + q: A \rightarrow B} \quad \frac{p: A \rightarrow A}{p^*: A \rightarrow A}$$

subject to Kleene algebra laws

- Fact: Kleene algebra = single-object Kleene-Kozen category
- Example: Category of relations = relational interpretation
- Tests = particular morphisms $b: A \rightarrow A$

Monads

Monad T (\simeq Kleisli triple)

- assigns object TA to every object A
- defines **unit morphisms** $\eta_A: A \rightarrow TA$
- **lifts** every $f: A \rightarrow TB$ to $f^*: TA \rightarrow TB$

(monad laws omitted)

We thus can compose **Kleisli morphisms** \rightsquigarrow **Kleisli category**:

$$\frac{p: A \rightarrow TB \quad q: B \rightarrow TC}{p; q^*: A \rightarrow TC}$$

Example: $T = \mathcal{P}$, Kleisli category \simeq category of relations

Definition: **Kleene monads** are those, whose Kleisli category is Kleene-Kozen

Kleene Monads

Monads help us to make “robustness” idea formal via **monad transformers**

- Kleene monads are closed (robust) under **writer transformer**:

$$T \mapsto T(A^* \times -)$$

- Kleene monads are **not** closed under **exception transformer**:

$$T \mapsto T(- + E)$$

- ... also **not** closed under **coalgebraic resumption transformer**:

$$T \mapsto \nu\gamma. T(- + A \times \gamma)$$

A candidate for may-diverge Kleene algebra: noting that $\mathcal{P}X \cong \{0, 1\}^X$, take $TX = \{0, 1, \infty\}^X$

Then consider $\text{Hom}(1, T1) \rightsquigarrow 1^* \neq 1$ because $1 \neq \infty$

Coproducts and Elgot Iteration

- Coproducts $A \oplus B$ can be thought of as disjoint unions $A \uplus B$
- Elgot iteration:

$$\frac{p: A \rightarrow B \oplus A}{p^\dagger: A \rightarrow B}$$

Intuitively: keep running p until reached a result in B

- $(-)^{\dagger}$ is subject to rich and elaborated equational theory of iteration*
- 😊 Very general
 - 😊 Stable under adding features
 - 😊 Does not hinge on non-determinism
 - 😢 Hinges on coproducts
 - 😢 Quasi-equational axiomatizations little explored

*S. Bloom, Z. Ésik, Iteration Theories, 1993

Uniformity

Uniformity rule

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & \xrightarrow{f} & B \oplus A \\ h \downarrow & & \downarrow 1 \oplus h \\ C & \xrightarrow{g} & B \oplus C \end{array} \Rightarrow \begin{array}{ccc} A & \xrightarrow{f^\dagger} & B \\ h \downarrow & \nearrow g^\dagger & \\ C & & \end{array}$$

for “well-behaved” h

Bloom and Esik's iteration = $\underbrace{\text{Conway identities}}_{\text{finitely many}} + \underbrace{\text{commutative identities}}_{\text{infinitely many}}$

$\underbrace{\text{Commutative identities}}_{\text{hard}} \subseteq \underbrace{\text{Uniformity rule}}_{\text{simple, standard}}$

Uniform Elgot iteration is essentially just as robust and general

Reaxiomatizing Kleene Algebra

Alternative axiomatization: idempotent semirings, plus

$$p^* = 1 + p; p^* \quad (p + q)^* = p^*; (q; p^*)^*$$

$$1^* = 1 \quad \frac{u; p = q; u}{u; p^* = q^*; u}$$

- This is true for Kleene-Kozen categories, hence for Kleene algebra
- Removing $1^* = 1$ yields **may-diverge Kleene algebras**, $(-)^*$ is no longer least fixpoint
- Uniformity

$$\frac{u; p = q; u}{u; p^* = q^*; u}$$

is postulated for **all** u (!)

Restricting Uniformity

Like originally, \mathbf{u} in

$$\frac{\mathbf{u}; \mathbf{p} = \mathbf{q}; \mathbf{u}}{\mathbf{u}; \mathbf{p}^* = \mathbf{q}^*; \mathbf{u}}$$

must generally be “well-behaved”

Restricting Uniformity

$\text{raise } e = \text{raise } e; 1 = 1; \text{raise } e = \text{raise } e$

$$\boxed{\text{raise } e} = \text{raise } e; 1^* = \boxed{1^*; \text{raise } e}$$

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Restricting Uniformity

Like originally, u in

$$\frac{u; p = q; u}{u; p^* = q^*; u}$$

must generally be “well-behaved”

⇒ Restrict to **linear** u :

$$u; 0 = 0 \quad u; (p + q) = u; p + u; q$$

Kleene-iteration category with tests (KiCT)

- Category with coproducts and nondeterminism
- Selected class of tests
- Selected class of linear **tame** morphisms
- Kleene iteration
- Laws:

$$0; p = 0 \quad (p + q); r = p; r + q; r$$

$$p^* = 1 + p; p^* \quad (p + q)^* = p^*; (q; p^*)^*$$

$$\frac{u; p^* = q^*; u}{u; p = q; u}$$

with tame u

Key Results

- KiCT + $(1^* = 1)$ with all morphisms tame = Kleene-Kozen with tests and coproducts
- KiCT with expressive tests = tame-uniform Conway iteration + non-determinism
- Free KiCT = **non-deterministic rational trees** w.r.t. may-diverge nondeterminism

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KiCT:

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But what is KiCT **without** coproducts?

Coproducts and Non-Local Flow

What coproducts mean algebraically:

$$\text{inl}; [p, q] = p \quad \text{inr}; [p, q] = q \quad [\text{inl}, \text{inr}] = 1 \quad [p, q]; r = [p; r, q; r]$$

This creates “non-local flow”, i.e. via its type $A_1 \oplus \dots \oplus A_n$ program can switch between tracks

This can be used to derive new identities, e.g.

$$p^* = (p; (1 + p))^*$$

Alternatively to coproducts we could use **names**, e.g.

$$\mu X. (a; \mu Y. (b; X + 1) + 1) \quad \text{for} \quad \text{inl}; [a; \text{inr}, b; \text{inl}]^*$$

etc.

Milner's Conundrum

- Milner* realized that “regular behaviours” are properly more general than “*-behaviours”
- Simplest example

$$\begin{cases} X = 1 + a; Y \\ Y = 1 + b; X \end{cases}$$

We can pass to $X = 1 + a; (1 + b; X)$, but not to $X = (ab)^*(1 + a)$

- This discrepancy \approx failure of Kleene theorem
- Milner's solution is equivalent to using coproducts in the language
- He also proposed a modification of Salomaa's system for
*-behaviours – proven complete only recently (Grabmayer)

*R. Milner, A complete inference system for a class of regular behaviours, 1984

Conclusions

- KiCTs reframe Kleene algebra principles in categorical setting and succeed with various yardsticks
- KiCTs **without coproducts** would be a hypothetical most basic notions of Kleene iteration
- **Open Problem:** Can it ever be found?

Appendix

Equivalence of Expressions

Example proof "by coinduction":

$$(ab)^* = 1 + a(ba)^*b$$

is true, because $1 + a(ba)^*b$ is a fixpoint of the map that defines $(ab)^*$

*A. Salomaa, Two Complete Axiom Systems for the Algebra of Regular Events, 1966

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- This only works because $x \mapsto 1 + abx$ is **guarded**
- $x \mapsto 1 + (a + 1)x$ is **un-guarded** and has infinitely many fixpoints

This reasoning is complete for guarded iteration*

- ② What about general (Kleene) iteration?

*A. Salomaa, Two Complete Axiom Systems for the Algebra of Regular Events, 1966

Salomaa's Complete Axiomatization

- e is guarded if
 - e is a letter
 - $e = 0$
 - $e = e_1e_2$ with e_1 or e_2 guarded
 - $e = e_1 + e_2$ with e_1 and e_2 guarded
- Salomaa originally defined dual empty word property (ewp):
 e has epw iff it is not guarded
- ... and, proposed complete axiomatization* w.r.t. language model:
 - A finite number of sound identities
 - plus rule:



$$\frac{v = e + uv \quad u \text{ guarded}}{v = u^*e}$$

*A. Salomaa, Two Complete Axiom Systems for the Algebra of Regular Events, 1966

No Finite Equational Axiomatization

Redko* noticed that

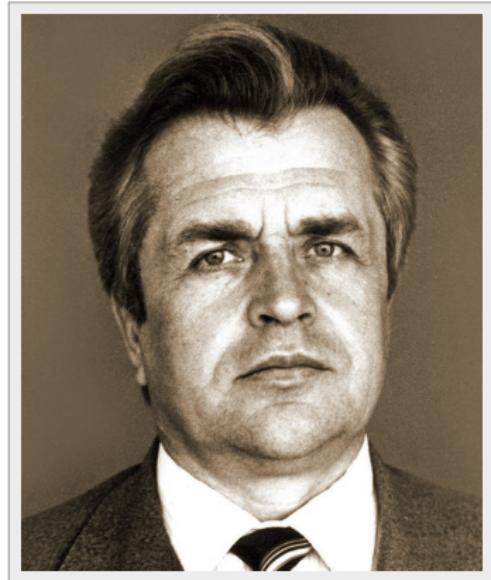
- All identities (**power identities**)

$$e^* = (e^k)^*(1 + e + \dots + e^{k-1})$$

are sound

- Any finite set of sound equations entails only finitely many of them
- Hence, no finite axiomatizability (even on one-letter alphabet)

So,



- ① How to choose infinite set of non-obvious axioms of iteration?
- ② How would we know that this choice is correct?

*V. N. Redko, On defining relations for the algebra of regular events, 1964

Conway's Monograph

Conway* came up with various insights:

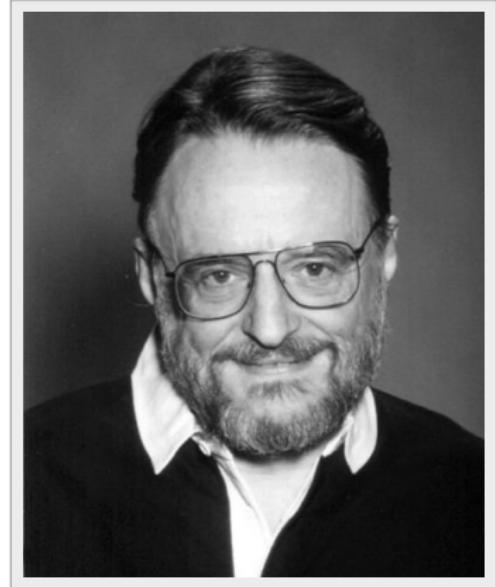
- Power identities do not suffice,
e.g. they do not imply

$$(e + u)^* = ((e + u)(u + (eu^*)^{n-2}e))^*$$
$$\quad \quad \quad (1 + (e + u) \sum_{i=0}^{n-2} (eu^*)^i)$$

- Made several conjectures on potential complete axiomatization
- Observed that algebraic laws of regular expressions transfer to **matrices** of regular expressions



⇒ Bridge between algebra and automata (represented by matrices)



* J. H. Conway, Regular Algebra and Finite Machines, 1971

Matrices of Regular Expressions

- ($n \times n$)-matrices of regular expressions support same operations.
For $n = 2$:

$$\text{"1" is } I = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} a' & b' \\ c' & d' \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} a+a' & b+b' \\ c+c' & d+d' \end{bmatrix}$$

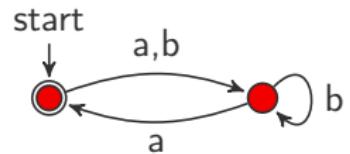
$$\text{"0" is } O = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} a' & b' \\ c' & d' \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} aa' + bc' & ab' + bd' \\ ca' + dc' & cb' + dd' \end{bmatrix}$$

- **Idea** for A^* : $I + A + A^2 + \dots$

 Key insight: there is closed form for A^* as matrix of regular expressions

- **Intuition:** in $\begin{bmatrix} e_{11} & e_{12} \\ e_{21} & e_{22} \end{bmatrix} = A^*$, e_{ij} represents **language** of 2-state automaton where i – initial, j – final

Automata and Matrices



\Updownarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^\top \begin{bmatrix} 0 & a+b \\ a & b \end{bmatrix}^* \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

\Updownarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^\top \begin{bmatrix} ((a+b)b^*a)^* & ((a+b)b^*a)^* \\ (b^*a(a+b))^*a & b^*(a(a+b))^* \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

\Updownarrow

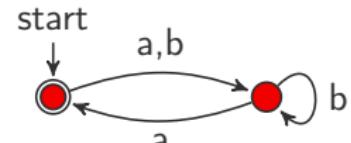
$$((a+b)b^*a)^*$$

Automata and Matrices

- Automata are triples

$$A \in \{0, 1\}^n, B \in \mathcal{E}^{n \times n}, C \in \{0, 1\}^n$$

\mathcal{E} – certain class of regular expressions



\Updownarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^\top \begin{bmatrix} 0 & a+b \\ a & b \end{bmatrix}^* \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

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\Updownarrow

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Automata and Matrices

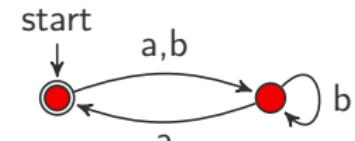
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\mathcal{E} – certain class of regular expressions

- Accepted language:

$$[A^\top B^* C]$$



\Updownarrow

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Automata and Matrices

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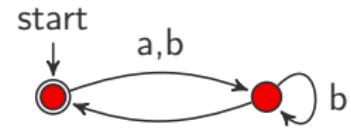
\mathcal{E} – certain class of regular expressions

- Accepted language:

$$[A^\top B^* C]$$

- **Kleene theorem:**

this is equivalence
between automata
and expressions
up to language
equality



\Updownarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^\top \begin{bmatrix} 0 & a+b \\ a & b \end{bmatrix}^* \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

\Updownarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^\top \begin{bmatrix} ((a+b)b^*a)^* & ((a+b)b^*a)^* \\ (b^*a(a+b))^*a & b^*(a(a+b))^* \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

\Updownarrow

$$((a+b)b^*a)^*$$

Control in Category

- Call morphisms of the form $d: A \rightarrow A \oplus A$ decisions
 - In particular: ff – left injection, tt – right injection
- We then can express if-then-else:

$$\frac{d: A \rightarrow A \oplus A \quad p: A \rightarrow B \quad q: A \rightarrow B}{\text{if } d \text{ then } p \text{ else } q: A \rightarrow B}$$

- In particular: $\sim d = \text{if } d \text{ then } \text{ff} \text{ else } \text{tt}$, $(d \parallel e) = \text{if } d \text{ then } \text{tt} \text{ else } e$
- Various expected laws are entailed, but some are not, e.g.

$$d \parallel \text{tt} \neq \text{tt}$$

Uniform Conway While-Operator

Theorem*: if the class of decisions is large enough, uniform Conway iteration is equivalent to while-loops

Axioms:

$$\text{while } d \text{ do } p = \text{if } d \text{ then } p; (\text{while } d \text{ do } p) \text{ else } 1$$

$$\text{while } (d \parallel e) \text{ do } p = (\text{while } d \text{ do } p); \text{while } e \text{ do } (p; \text{while } d \text{ do } p)$$

$$\text{while } (d \&& (e \parallel tt)) \text{ do } p = \text{while } d \text{ do } (\text{if } e \text{ then } p \text{ else } p)$$

Uniformity Rule:

$$\frac{u; \text{if } d \text{ then } p; tt \text{ else } ff = \text{if } e \text{ then } q; u; tt \text{ else } v; ff}{u; \text{while } d \text{ do } p = (\text{while } e \text{ do } q); v}$$

where u, v come from a selected class of programs

*S. Goncharov, Shades of Iteration: From Elgot to Kleene, 2023

Tests and Decisions

- In presence of non-determinism, decisions $d: A \rightarrow A \oplus A$ decompose:

$$d = b; tt + \bar{b}; ff \quad (b, \bar{b}: A \rightarrow A)$$

- Test-based 'if' and 'while':

Axioms:

$$\text{while } b \text{ do } p = \text{if } b \text{ then } p; (\text{while } b \text{ do } p) \text{ else } 1$$

$$\text{while } (b \vee c) \text{ do } p = (\text{while } b \text{ do } p); \text{while } c \text{ do } (p; \text{while } b \text{ do } p)$$

Uniformity:

$$\frac{u; b; p = c; q; u \quad u; \bar{b} = \bar{c}; v}{u; \text{while } b \text{ do } p = (\text{while } c \text{ do } q); v}$$