

# **Automating string processing in spreadsheets using input-output examples**

Junliang Yan

# Spreadsheets

	A	B	C
1	Name	City	Phone
2	A	Nanjing	12345678910
3	B	Yangzhou	10987654321
4	C	Zhenjiang	11111111111
5	D	Suzhou	22222222222
6	E	Changzhou	33333333333
7	F	Wuxi	66666666666
8	G	Nantong	99999999999

# Collect cities of residence

Name	Adress	City	
A	Jiangsu, nanjing, nju		
B	Hubei, wuhan, hust		
C	Shandong, jinan, sdu		
D	Hunan, changsha, csu		

Copy-Paste one by one?

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✓ Flashfill using input-output example!

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- String Manipulation Language

```
SubStr2(  
    Input(2),  
    TokenSeq(AlphaToken),  
    2  
)
```

Program

# Flashfill using input-output examples

- String Manipulation Language
- **Synthesize** a program with **input-output examples**

1	Input(2)	Output
A	Jiangsu, nanjing, nju	nanjing

Input-output examples

Synthesize  
➔

```
SubStr2(  
    Input(2),  
    TokenSeq(AlphaToken),  
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Program

# **String Manipulation Language**

**Construct Output Strings**



# Trace

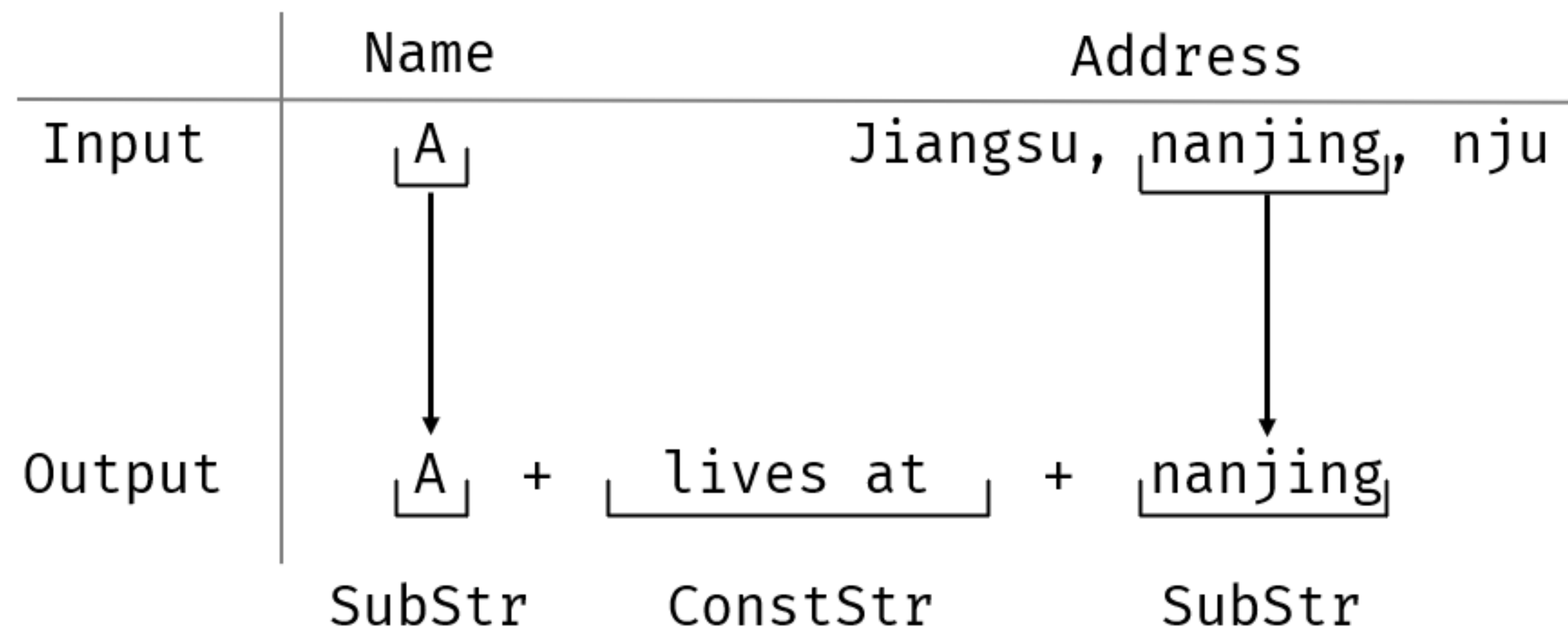
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Trace(ConstStr(...), SubStr(...), ...)

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Output: A lives at nanjing

# SubString

SubStr (            ,            )

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SubStr ( Input, , )

Input : **Index**, which input string is used.

# SubString

SubStr(Input, Left, Right)

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Left, Right: **Position Expressions**, the range of substring.

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A	Jiangsu, nanjing , nju	nanjing

SubStr( , , )

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Name	Address	City
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SubStr( **Address**, , )

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`SubStr(Address, CPos(9), CPos(-6))`

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A	Jiangsu,  nanjing , nju	nanjing

✗ `SubStr(Address, CPos(9), CPos(-6))`

✓ `SubStr(Address, Pos( $\epsilon$ , RE, 2), Pos(RE,  $\epsilon$ , 2))`

where RE = LowercaseTokens



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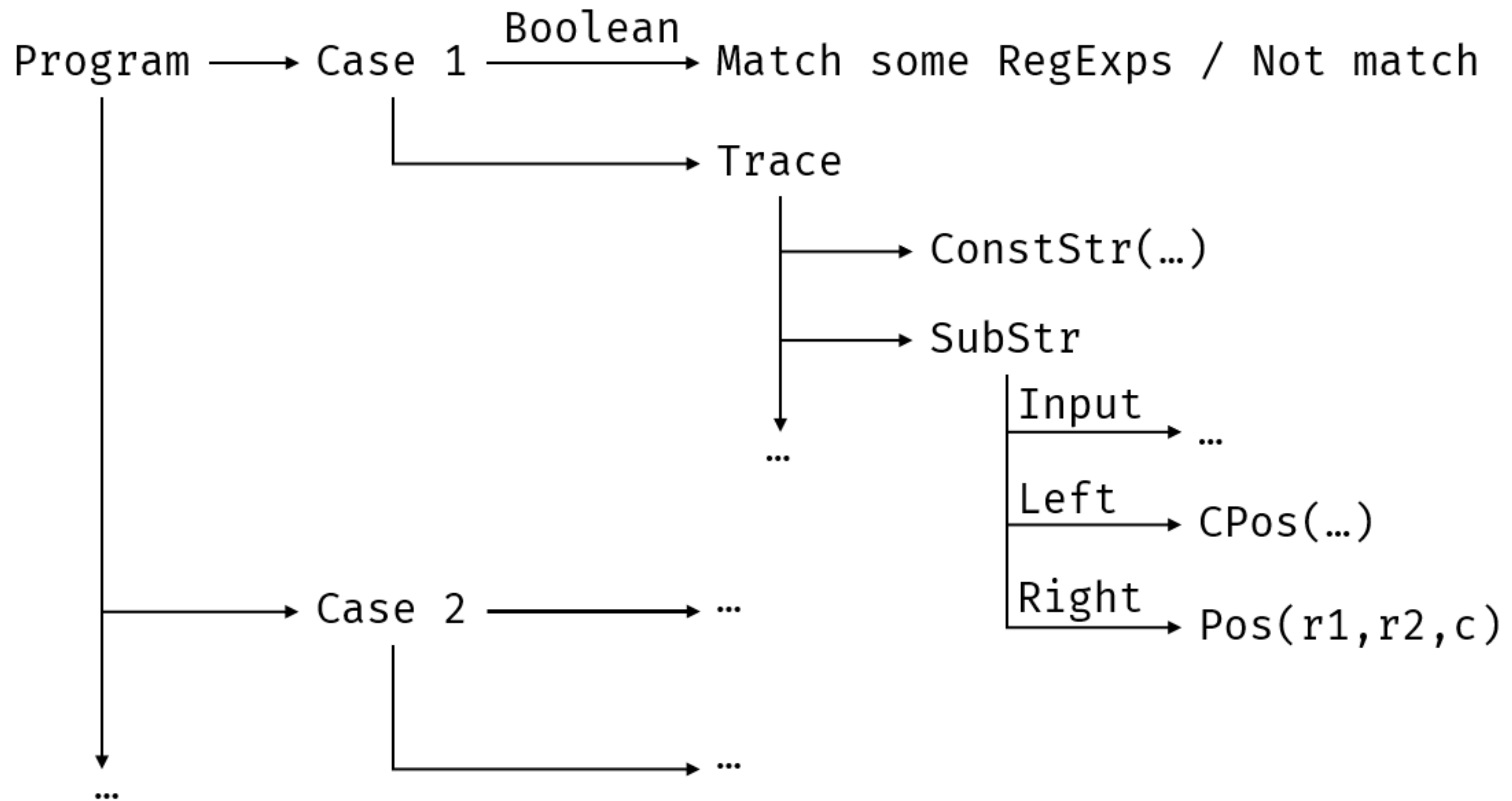
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➔ **Efficient Algorithm**

# Conditionals




# Example

Num	Rev	Code	
123	321	case 123: return 321;	
456	654	case 456: return 654;	
147	741		
258	852		

```
Trace("case_", SubStr(Num, CPos(0), CPos(-1)),  
      ":", return_, SubStr(Rev, CPos(0), CPos(-1)),  
      ":",")
```

# Example

Item	Output 
Check-in: 2000 mora	2000 mora
New character: 180 fate	180 fate
Intertwined fate: 160 primogem	
New weapon: 240 fate	

```
Trace(SubStr(Item,  
Pos(TokenSeq(Colon, Space), TokenSeq(Numeric), -1),  
CPos(-1)))
```

# **Alogrithom**

**Synthesize a program with input-output examples**



# Goal

Given some input-output examples  $(i_1, o_1), \dots, (i_n, o_n)$ ,  
Synthesize a program  $P$  such that  $P(i_1) = o_1, \dots, P(i_n) = o_n$ .

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2. Intersect programs into non-empty partitions **greedily**

$$(P_1 \cap P_2, \{(i_1, o_1), (i_2, o_2)\}), (P_3 \cap \dots, \{(i_3, o_3), \dots\}), \dots$$

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3. Construct boolean classification for partitions

$$(\text{Boolean Expression}, P_1 \cap P_2), \dots$$

# Generate Trace

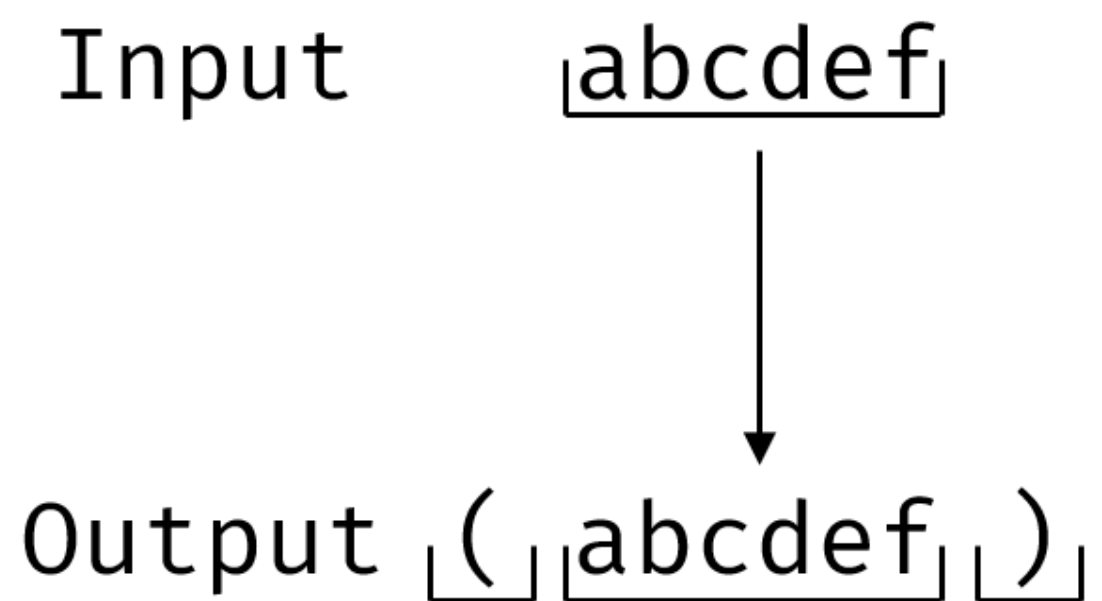
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Input abcdef



Output (abcdef)

Input a bcdef

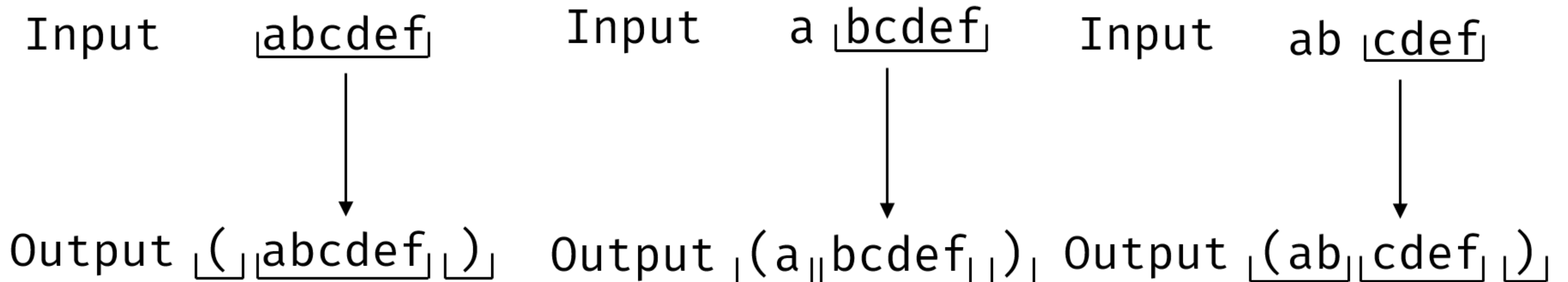


Output (a bcdef)

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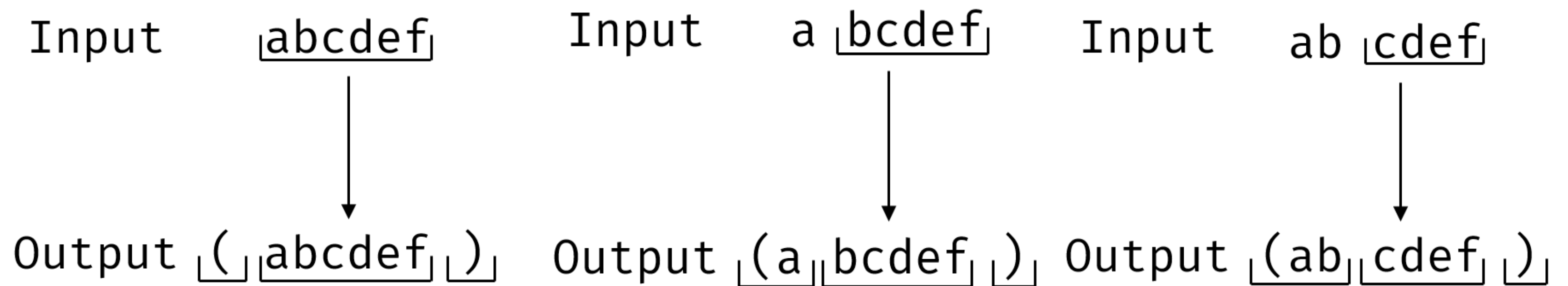




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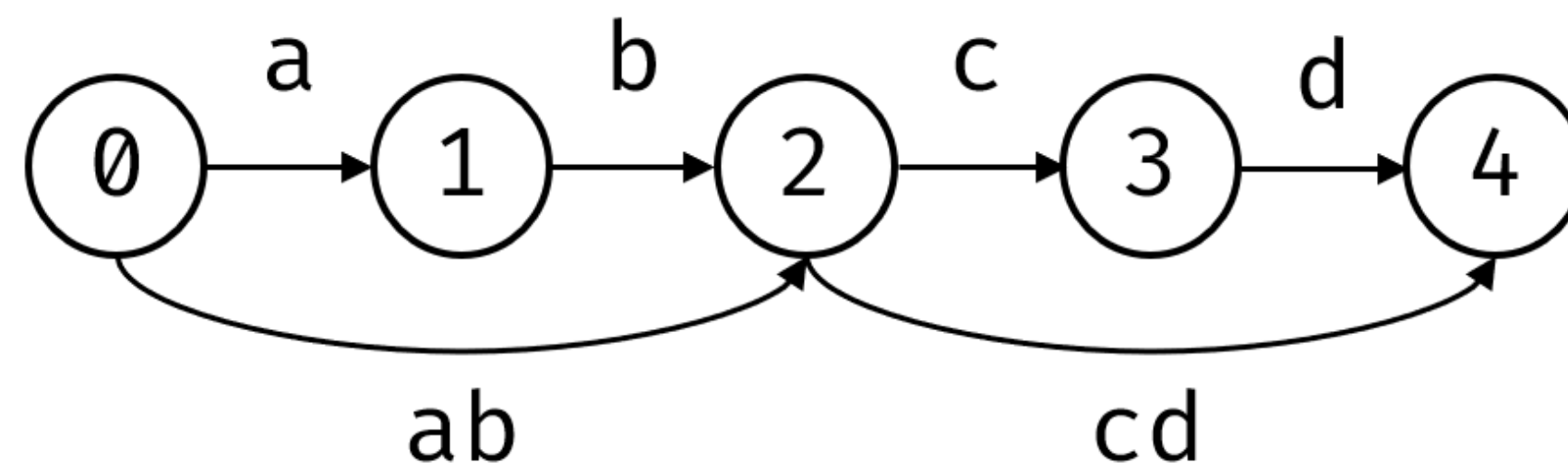
## Iterative **all** possible trace expressions



# DAG

Nodes = Each position in the output string.

Edges = Each substring  $(i, j)$  where  $i < j$ .

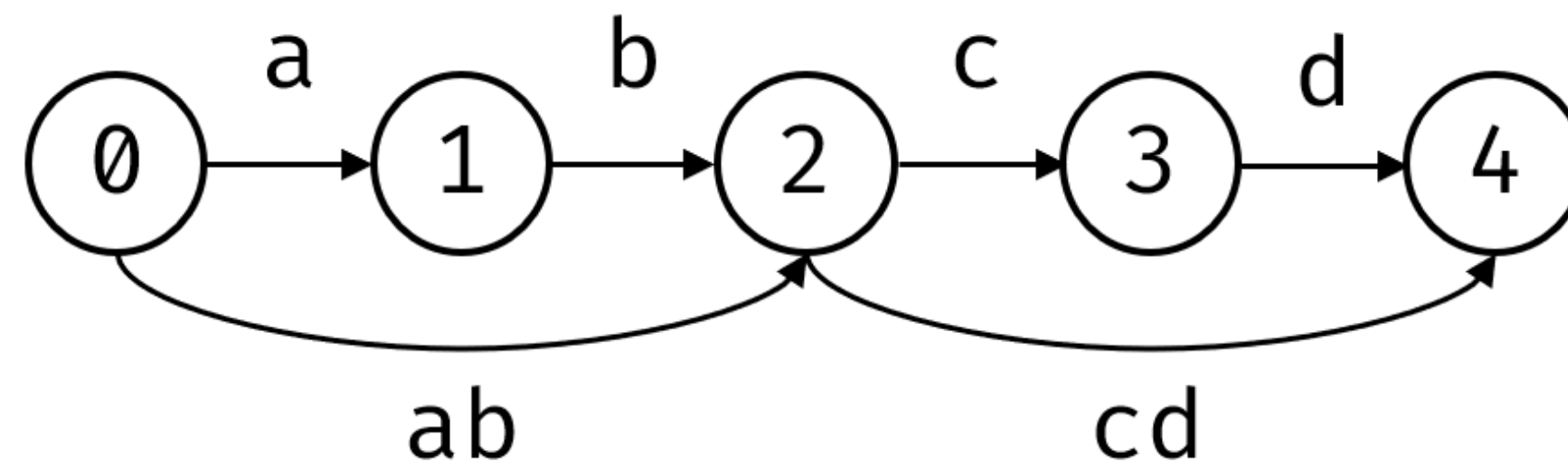


Example.  $(0, 2) \rightarrow \mathbf{ab}$ ,  $(2, 4) \rightarrow \mathbf{cd}$ .

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The origin **exponential** problem  $\rightarrow$  Quadratic sub-problems!

# Generate Substring

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**Goal.** For each of  $n^2$  substrings, find all possible **atom expressions** to generate it.

Input : Jiangsu, nanjing, nju

Program: `ConstStr("nanjing")`

`SubStr(Address, CPos(9), CPos(-6))`

`SubStr(Address, CPos(9), CPos(16))`

...

# Generate Substring

The origin **exponential** problem → Quadratic sub-problems

**Goal.** For each of  $n^2$  substrings, find all possible **atom expressions** to generate it.

Input : Jiangsu, nanjing, nju

Program: `ConstStr("nanjing")`

`SubStr(Address, CPos(9), CPos(-6))`

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...

**Use Brute-force!**

# Generate Partitions

**Goal.** Intersect programs into non-empty partitions

$$(P_1 \cap P_2, \{(i_1, o_1), (i_2, o_2)\}), (P_3 \cap \dots, \{(i_3, o_3), \dots\}), \dots$$

# Boolean Classification

**Goal.** Construct boolean classification for partitions

$$((\text{Predicate} \wedge \dots) \vee \dots, P_1 \cap P_2), \dots$$

where

$$\text{Predicate} := \text{Match}(\text{Input}, \text{RegExp}, \text{Times}) \mid \neg \text{Match}(\dots)$$



**END**

**Q & A**