Finite Automata and Formal Languages

TMV026/DIT321 – LP4 2010

Lecture 12

May 6th 2010

Overview of today's lecture:

- **Normal Forms for Context-Free Languages**
- **Pumping Lemma for Context-Free Languages**

Useful, Useless and Reachable Symbols

Let $G = (V, T, R, S)$ be a CFG.

Let $X \in V \cup T$ and let $\alpha, \beta \in (V \cup T)^*$.

Definition: The symbol X is ***useful*** if $S \Rightarrow^* \alpha X \beta \Rightarrow^* w$ for some $w \in T^*$.

Definition: X is ***useless*** iff it is not useful.

Definition: X is ***generating*** if $X \Rightarrow^* w$ for some $w \in T^*$.

Definition: X is ***reachable*** if $S \Rightarrow^* \alpha X \beta$.

Eliminating Useless Symbols

If we eliminate useless symbols we do not change the language generated by the grammar.

A symbol that is useful should be generating and reachable.

Example: Consider the following grammar

$$S \to AB \mid a \qquad A \to b$$

If we first check for generating symbols and then for reachability we find that an equivalent smaller grammar is

$$S \to a$$

If we first check for reachability and then for generating we get

$$S \to a \qquad A \to b$$

Computing the Generating Symbols

Let $G = (V, T, R, S)$ be a CFG.

The following inductive definition computes the generating symbols of G:

Base Case: All elements of T are generating.

Inductive Step: If a production $A \to \alpha$ is such that all symbols of α are known to be generating, then A is also generating.

Observe that α could be ϵ.

Theorem: *The procedure above finds all and only the generating symbols of a grammar.*

Proof: See Theorem 7.4 in the book.

Example: Generating Symbols

Consider the grammar over $\{a\}$ given by the rules:

$$\begin{aligned} S &\rightarrow aS \mid W \mid U \\ W &\rightarrow aW \\ U &\rightarrow a \\ V &\rightarrow aa \end{aligned}$$

a is generating.

U and V are generating since $U \rightarrow a$ and $V \rightarrow aa$.

S is generating since $S \rightarrow U$.

W is however not generating.

Computing the Reachable Symbols

Let $G = (V, T, R, S)$ be a CFG.

The following inductive definition computes the reachable symbols of G:

Base Case: The start variable S is reachable.

Inductive Step: If A is reachable and we have a production $A \rightarrow \alpha$ then all symbols in α are reachable.

Theorem: *The procedure above finds all and only the reachable symbols of a grammar.*

Proof: See Theorem 7.6 in the book.

Example: Reachable Symbols

Consider the grammar given by the rules:

$$\begin{aligned} S &\rightarrow aB \mid BC \\ A &\rightarrow aA \mid c \mid aDb \\ B &\rightarrow DB \mid C \\ C &\rightarrow b \\ D &\rightarrow B \end{aligned}$$

S is reachable.

Hence a, B and C are reachable.

Then b and D are reachable.

However A is not reachable.

Eliminating Useless Symbols

Theorem: *Let $G = (V, T, R, S)$ be a CFG and let $\mathcal{L}(G) \neq \emptyset$. Let $G' = (V', T', R', S)$ be constructed as follows:*

1. *Eliminate all non-generating symbols and all productions involving one or more of those symbols*
2. *In the same way, eliminate now all symbols that are not reachable in the grammar*

Then G' has no useless symbols and $\mathcal{L}(G) = \mathcal{L}(G')$.

Proof: See Theorem 7.2 in the book.

Example: Eliminating Useless Symbols

Consider the grammar given by the rules:

$$\begin{array}{lcl} S & \to & gAe \mid aYB \mid CY \\ B & \to & dd \mid D \\ D & \to & n \\ V & \to & baXXX \mid oV \\ X & \to & fV \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{lcl} A & \to & bBY \mid ooC \\ C & \to & jVB \mid gl \\ U & \to & kW \\ W & \to & c \\ Y & \to & Yhm \end{array}$$

The simplified grammar is:

$$\begin{array}{lcl} S & \to & gAe \\ A & \to & ooC \\ C & \to & gl \end{array}$$

Nullable Variables

Definition: A variable A is ***nullable*** if $A \Rightarrow^* \epsilon$.

Observe that only variables are nullable.

Let $G = (V, T, R, S)$ be a CFG.

The following inductive definition computes the nullable variables of G:

Base Case: If $A \to \epsilon$ is a production then A is nullable.

Inductive Step: If $B \to X_1 X_2 \dots X_k$ is a production and each X_i is nullable then B is nullable.

Theorem: *The procedure above finds all and only the nullable variables of a grammar.*

Proof: See Theorem 7.7 in the book.

Eliminating ϵ-Productions

Definition: An ***ϵ-production*** is a production of the form $A \to \epsilon$.

Let $G = (V, T, R, S)$ be a CFG.

The following procedure eliminates the ϵ-production of G:

1. Determine all nullable variables of G.
2. Build P with all the productions of R plus a rule $A \to \alpha\beta$ whenever we have $A \to \alpha B \beta$ and B is nullable.
   Note: If $A \to X_1 X_2 \dots X_k$ and all X_i are nullable, we do not include the case with all the X_i absent.
3. Construct $G' = (V, T, R', S)$ where R' contains all the productions in P except for the ϵ-productions.

Theorem: *The grammar G' constructed as above from the grammar G is such that $\mathcal{L}(G') = \mathcal{L}(G) - \{\epsilon\}$.*

Proof: See Theorem 7.9 in the book.

Example: Eliminating ϵ-Productions

Example: Consider the grammar given by the rules:

$$S \to aSb \mid SS \mid \epsilon$$

By eliminating ϵ-productions we obtain

$$S \to ab \mid aSb \mid S \mid SS$$

Example: Consider the grammar given by the rules:

$$S \to AB \qquad A \to aAA \mid \epsilon \qquad B \to bBB \mid \epsilon$$

By eliminating ϵ-productions we obtain

$$S \to A \mid B \mid AB \qquad A \to a \mid aA \mid aAA \qquad B \to b \mid bB \mid bBB$$

Eliminating Unit Productions

Definition: A ***unit production*** is a production of the form $A \to B$.

This is similar to ϵ-transitions in a ϵ-NFA.

Let $G = (V, T, R, S)$ be a CFG.

The following procedure eliminates the unit production of G:

1. Build P with all the productions of R plus a rule $A \to \alpha$ whenever we have $A \to B$ and $B \to \alpha$.
2. Construct $G' = (V, T, R', S)$ where R' contains all the productions in P except for the unit production.

Theorem: *The grammar G' constructed as above from the grammar G is such that $\mathcal{L}(G') = \mathcal{L}(G)$.*

Example: Eliminating Unit Productions

Consider the grammar given by the rules:

$$\begin{array}{lcllcl} S & \to & CBh \mid D & A & \to & aaC \\ B & \to & Sf \mid ggg & C & \to & cA \mid d \mid C \\ D & \to & E \mid SABC & E & \to & be \end{array}$$

By eliminating unit productions we obtain:

$$\begin{array}{lcllcl} S & \to & CBh \mid be \mid SABC & A & \to & aaC \\ B & \to & Sf \mid ggg & C & \to & cA \mid d \\ D & \to & be \mid SABC & E & \to & be \end{array}$$

Simplification of a Grammar

Theorem: *Let $G = (V, T, R, S)$ be a CFG whose language contains at least one string other than ϵ. If we construct G' by*

1. *Eliminating ϵ-productions*
2. *Eliminating unit productions*
3. *Eliminating useless symbols*

using the procedures shown before then $\mathcal{L}(G') = \mathcal{L}(G) - \{\epsilon\}$.
In addition, G' contains no ϵ-productions, no unit productions and no useless symbols.

Note: It is important to apply the steps in this order!

Chomsky Normal Form

Definition: A CFG is in ***Chomsky Normal Form*** (CNF) if G has no useless symbols and all the productions are of the form $A \to BC$ or $A \to a$.

Observe that a CFG that is in CNF has no unit or ϵ-productions.

Theorem: *For any CFG G whose language contains at least one string other than ϵ, there is a CFG G' that is in Chomsky Normal Form and such that $\mathcal{L}(G') = \mathcal{L}(G) - \{\epsilon\}$.*

Proof: See Theorem 7.16 in the book.

Chomsky Normal Form

Let us assume G has no ϵ- or unit productions and no useless symbols.

Every production is of the form $A \to a$ or $A \to X_1 X_2 \dots X_k$.

If X_i is a terminal introduce a new variable A_i and a new rule $A_i \to X_i$ (if no such rule exists for X_i).

Use A_i in place of X_i in any rule whose body has length more than 1.

Now, all rules are of the form $B \to b$ or $B \to C_1 C_2 \dots C_k$ with all C_j variables.

Introduce $k-2$ new variables and break each rule $B \to C_1 C_2 \dots C_k$ as

$$B \to C_1 D_1 \quad D_1 \to C_2 D_2 \quad \dots \quad D_{k-2} \to C_{k-1} C_k$$

Example: Chomsky Normal Form

Consider the grammar given by the rules:

$$S \to aSb \mid SS \mid ab$$

We first obtain

$$S \to ASB \mid SS \mid AB \qquad A \to a \qquad B \to b$$

Then we obtain a grammar in Chomsky Normal Form

$$\begin{array}{lcl} S & \to & AC \mid SS \mid AB \\ A & \to & a \\ B & \to & b \\ C & \to & SB \end{array}$$

Pumping Lemma for Left Regular Languages

Let $G = (V, T, R, S)$ be a left regular language and let $n = |V|$.

If $a_1 a_2 \dots a_m \in \mathcal{L}(G)$ and $m > n$, then any derivation

$$S \Rightarrow a_1 A_1 \Rightarrow a_1 a_2 A_2 \Rightarrow \dots \Rightarrow a_1 \dots a_i A \Rightarrow \dots \Rightarrow a_1 \dots a_j A \Rightarrow \dots \Rightarrow a_1 \dots a_m$$

has length m and there is at least one variable A which is used twice.

(Pigeon-hole principle)

If $x = a_1 \dots a_i$, $y = a_{i+1} \dots a_j$ and $z = a_{j+1} \dots a_m$, we have $|xy| \leqslant n$ and $xy^k z \in \mathcal{L}(G)$ for all k.

Pumping Lemma for Context-Free Languages

Theorem: *Let $\mathcal{L}$ be a context-free language. Then, there exists a constant n such that if $w \in \mathcal{L}$ with $|w| \geqslant n$, then we can write $w = xuyvz$ such that*

1. $|uyv| \leqslant n$,
2. $uv \neq \epsilon$, *that is, at least one of u and v is not empty,*
3. $\forall k \geqslant 0,\ xu^k yv^k z \in \mathcal{L}$.

Proof: (Sketch)

We can assume that the language is presented by a grammar in Chomsky Normal Form, working with $\mathcal{L} - \{\epsilon\}$.

Observe that parse trees for grammars in CNF have at most 2 children.

A crucial remark is that if $m+1$ is the height of a parse tree for w, then $|w| \leqslant 2^m$ (prove this as an exercise!).

Proof Sketch: Pumping Lemma for Context-Free Languages

Let $|V| = m > 0$. Take $n = 2^m$ and w such that $|w| \geqslant 2^m$.

Any parse tree for w has a path of length at least $m + 1$.

Let $A_0, A_1 \ldots, A_k$ be the variables in the path. We have $k \geqslant m$.

Then at least 2 of the last $m + 1$ variables should be the same, say A_i and A_j.

Observe figures 7.6 and 7.7 in pages 282–283.

See Theorem 7.18 in the book for the complete proof.

Example: Pumping Lemma for Context-Free Languages

Consider the following grammar:

$$\begin{array}{lcllcl} S & \to & AC \mid AB & A & \to & a \\ B & \to & b & C & \to & SB \end{array}$$

Consider the derivation for the string $aaaabbbb$

$$S \Rightarrow AC \Rightarrow aC \Rightarrow aSB \Rightarrow aACB \Rightarrow aaCB \Rightarrow aaSBB \Rightarrow aaACBB \Rightarrow aaaCBB \Rightarrow aaaSBBB \Rightarrow aaaABBBB \Rightarrow aaaaBBBB \Rightarrow aaaabBBB \Rightarrow aaaabbBB \Rightarrow aaaabbbB \Rightarrow aaaabbbb$$

Consider the parse tree and the last 2 occurrences of the symbol S.

Then we have $x = aa$, $u = a$, $y = ab$, $v = b$, $z = bb$.

Example: Pumping Lemma for Context-Free Languages

Lemma: *The language* $\mathcal{L} = \{a^m b^m c^m \mid m > 0\}$ *is not context-free.*

Proof: Assume $\mathcal{L}$ is context-free.

Then we have n as stated in the Pumping lemma.

Consider $w = a^n b^n c^n$. We have that $|w| \geqslant n$.

So we know that $w = xuyvz$ such that

$$|uyv| \leqslant n \qquad |uv| > 0 \qquad \forall k \geqslant 0,\ xu^k yv^k z \in \mathcal{L}$$

Since $|uyv| \leqslant n$ there is one letter $d \in \{a, b, c\}$ that do not occur in uyv.

Since $|uv| > 0$ there is another letter $e \in \{a, b, c\}, e \neq d$ that does occur in uv.

Then e has more occurrences then d in xu^2yv^2z and this contradicts the fact that $xu^2yv^2z \in \mathcal{L}$.