CS420

Introduction to the Theory of Computation

Lecture 13: Regular expressions & NFAs

Tiago Cogumbreiro

Today we will learn...

- Converting REGEX to NFA
- Converting NFA to REGEX

Soundess

All Regexes have an equivalent NFA

`REGEX → NFA`

Thompson's construction

All Regexes have an equivalent NFA

Lemma 1.55 (ITC)

If $L(R) = L_1$, then $L(\mathrm{NFA}(R)) = L_1$.

Given an alphabet Σ

- $\mathrm{NFA}(\underline{a}) =$

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(Proof follows by induction on the structure of R.)

The **void** NFA

$$L(\mathrm{void}) = \emptyset$$

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The **nil** operator

$$L(\mathbf{nil}) = \{\epsilon\}$$

The $\mathbf{nil}$ operator

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The **nil** operator

$$L(\mathbf{nil}) = \{\epsilon\}$$

The $\mathbf{char}(c)$ operator

$$L(\mathrm{char}(c)) = \{[c]\}$$

The $\mathbf{char}(a)$ operator

$$L(\mathbf{char}(a)) = \{[a]\}$$

The $\mathbf{char}(a)$ operator

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The $\mathbf{union}(M, N)$ automaton

$$L(\text{union}(M, N)) = L(M) \cup L(N)$$

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N_1

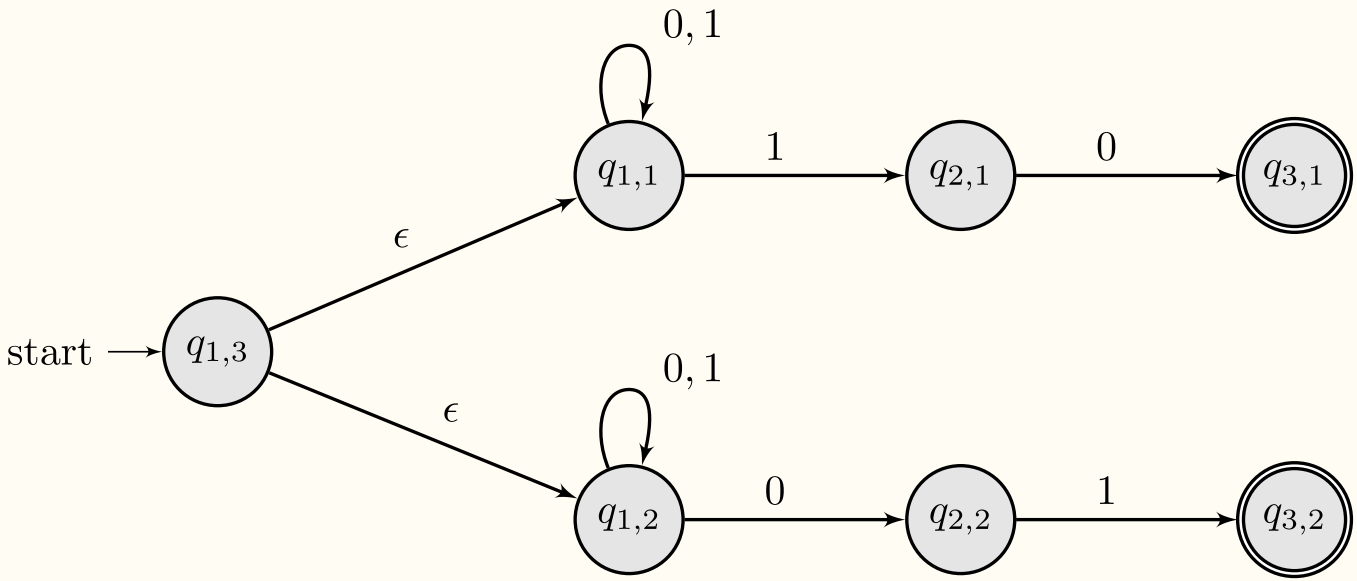
N_2

$$\text{union}(N_1, N_2) = ?$$

The $\mathbf{union}(M, N)$ operator

$$L(\mathbf{union}(M, N)) = L(M) \cup L(N)$$

Example $\mathbf{union}(N_1, N_2)$



- Add a new initial state
- Connect new initial state to the initial states of N_1 and N_2 via ϵ-transitions.

The $\mathbf{append}(M, N)$ operator

$$L(\text{append}(M, N)) = L(M) \cdot L(N)$$

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Example 1: $L(\mathbf{concat}(\mathbf{char}(\mathtt{a}), \mathbf{char}(\mathtt{b}))) = \{\mathtt{ab}\}$

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Example 1: $L(\mathbf{concat}(\mathbf{char}(\mathtt{a}), \mathbf{char}(\mathtt{b}))) = \{\mathtt{ab}\}$

Solution

What did we do? Connect the accepted states of N_1 to the initial state of N_2 via ϵ-transitions.

> Why bot connect directly from $q_{1,1}$ into $q_{1,2}$? See next slide.

Concatennation example 2

Solution

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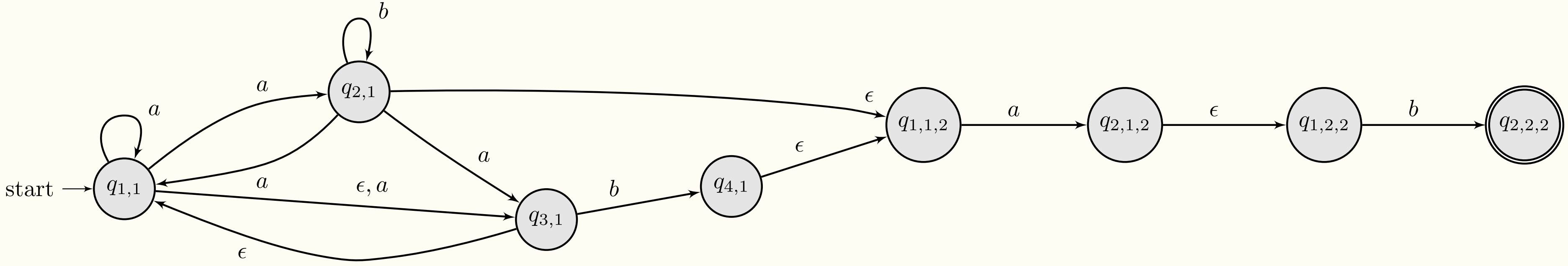

The $\mathbf{star}(N)$ operator

$$L(\mathrm{star}(N)) = L(N)^\star$$

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Example: $L(\mathrm{star}(\mathrm{concat}(\mathrm{char}(\texttt{a}), \mathrm{char}(\texttt{b})))) = \{w \mid w \text{ is a sequence of } \texttt{ab} \text{ or empty}\}$

Solution

The $\mathbf{star}(N)$ operator

$$L(\mathrm{star}(N)) = L(N)^\star$$

Example: $L(\mathrm{star}(\mathrm{concat}(\mathrm{char}(\mathtt{a}), \mathrm{char}(\mathtt{b})))) = \{w \mid w \text{ is a sequence of } \mathtt{ab} \text{ or empty}\}$

Solution

- create a new state $q_{1,1}$
- ϵ-transitions from $q_{1,1}$ to initial state
- ϵ-transitions from accepted states to $q_{1,1}$
- $q_{1,1}$ is the only accepted state

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Completeness

All NFAs have an equivalent Regex

`NFA → REGEX`

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Why is this result important?

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Why is this result important?

> If we can derive an equivalent regular expression from any NFA, then our regular expression are enough to describe whatever can be described using finite automatons.

Overview:

Converting an NFA into a regular expression

> There are many algorithms of converting an NFA into a Regex. Here is the algorithm we find in the book.

1. Wrap the NFA
2. Convert the NFA into a GNFA
3. Reduce the GNFA
4. Extract the Regex

Step 1: wrap the NFA

> Given an NFA N, add two new states q_{start} and q_{end} such that q_{start} transitions via ϵ to the initial state of N, and every accepted state of N transitions to q_{end} via ϵ. State q_{end} becomes the new accepted state.

Input

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Input

Output

Step 2: Convert an NFA into a GNFA

A GNFA has regular expressions in the transitions, rather than the inputs.

> For every edge with $a_1, \ldots, a_n$ convert into $a_1 + \cdots + a_n$

Input

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Input

Output

Step 3: Reduce the GNFA

While there are more than 2 states:

- pick a state and its incoming/outgoing edges, and convert it to transitions

Step 3.1: compress state $q_{1,2}$

$$\text{compress}(q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{\epsilon} q_{1,2} \xrightarrow{0+\epsilon} q_{2,2}) = q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{\epsilon\cdot(0+\epsilon)} q_{2,2}$$

$$\text{compress}(q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{\epsilon} q_{1,2} \xrightarrow{1} q_{3,2}) = q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{\epsilon\cdot 1} q_{3,2}$$

Input

Step 3.1: compress state $q_{1,2}$

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Input

Output

> Each state that connects to $q_{1,2}$ must connect to every state that $q_{1,2}$ connects to. Som $q_{1,1}$ must connect with $q_{2,2}$ and $q_{1,1}$ must connect with $q_{3,2}$.

Step 3.2: compress state $q_{2,2}$

Input

Step 3.2: compress state $q_{2,2}$

Input

Output

$$\text{compress}(q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{0+\epsilon} q_{2,2} \xrightarrow{\epsilon} q_{2,1}) = q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{(0+\epsilon)\cdot\epsilon} q_{2,2}$$

$$\text{compress}(q_{3,2} \xrightarrow{0} q_{2,2} \xrightarrow{\epsilon} q_{2,1}) = q_{3,2} \xrightarrow{0\cdot\epsilon} q_{2,1}$$

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Step 3.3: compress state $q_{3,2}$

After compressing a state, we must merge the new node with any old node (in red).

$$\text{compress}(q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{1} q_{3,2} \xrightarrow{0} q_{3,2} \xrightarrow{0} q_{2,1}) + q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{0+\epsilon} q_{2,1} = q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{(10^\star 0)+(0+\epsilon)} q_{2,2}$$

$$\text{compress}(q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{1} q_{3,2} \xrightarrow{0} q_{3,2} \xrightarrow{1} q_{4,2}) = q_{3,2} \xrightarrow{10^\star 1} q_{2,1}$$

Input

Output

Step 3.3: compress state $q_{4,2}$

After compressing a state, we must merge the new node with any old node (in red).

$$\text{compress}(q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{10^\star 1} q_{4,2} \xrightarrow{\epsilon} q_{2,1}) + q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{10^\star 1+0+\epsilon} q_{2,1} = q_{1,1} \xrightarrow{\left(10^\star 1 \cdot \epsilon\right) + \left(10^\star 0+0+\epsilon\right)} q_{2,2}$$

Input

Output

Result: $10^\star 1 + 10^\star 0 + 0 + \epsilon$

Exercise 1.66

Convert an NFA into a Regex

1. Convert the NFA into an NFA (same)

2. Wrap the NFA

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3. Convert NFA into GNFA

Before

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After

Exercise 1.66

Convert an NFA into a Regex

4. Compress state.

Before

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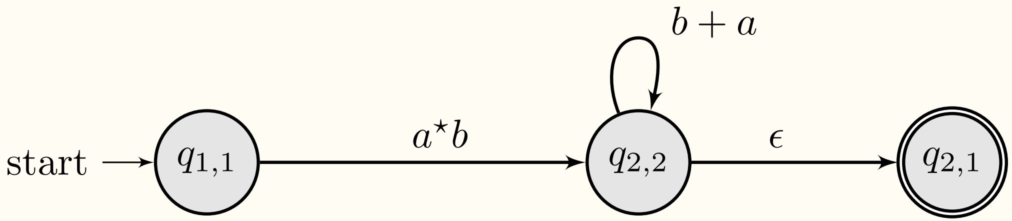
Before

After



Exercise 1.66

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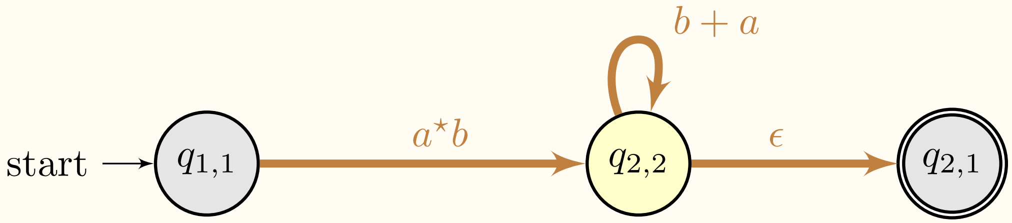
5. Compress state.

Before



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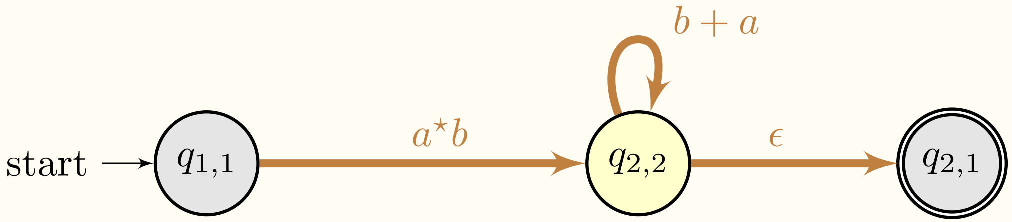
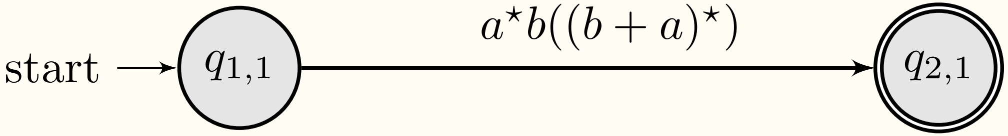


After



Exercise 8

Convert an NFA into a Regex

Before

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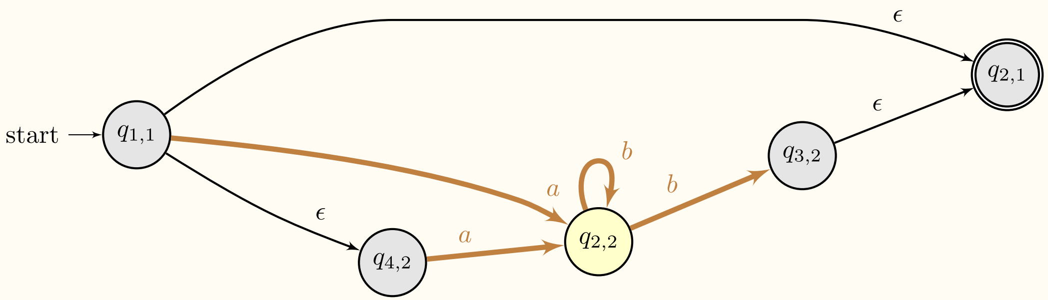

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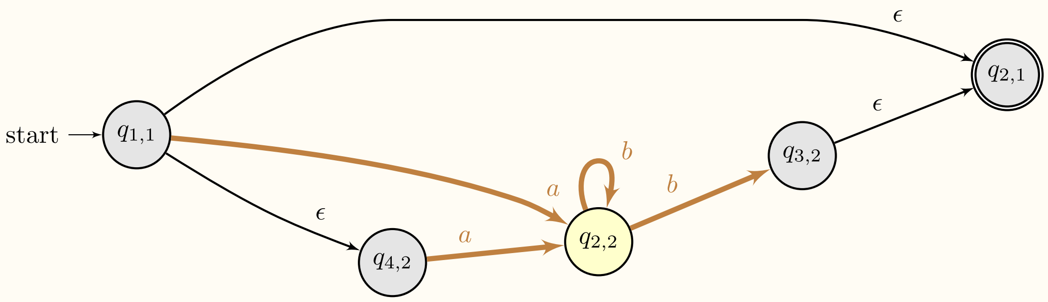
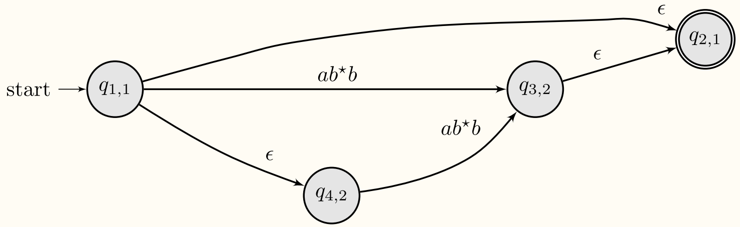


After



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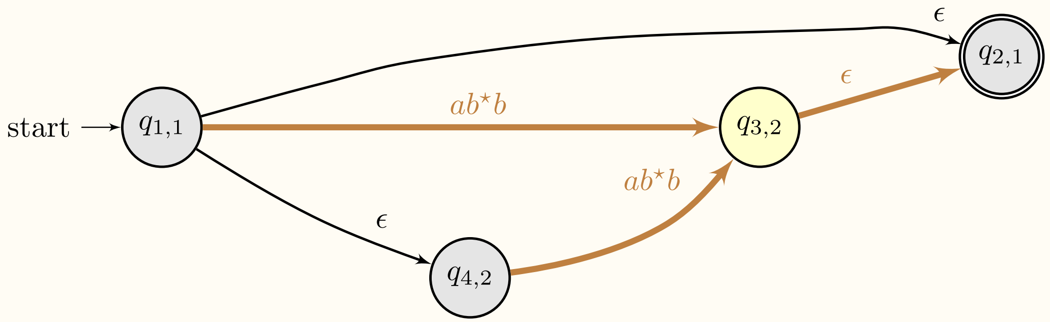

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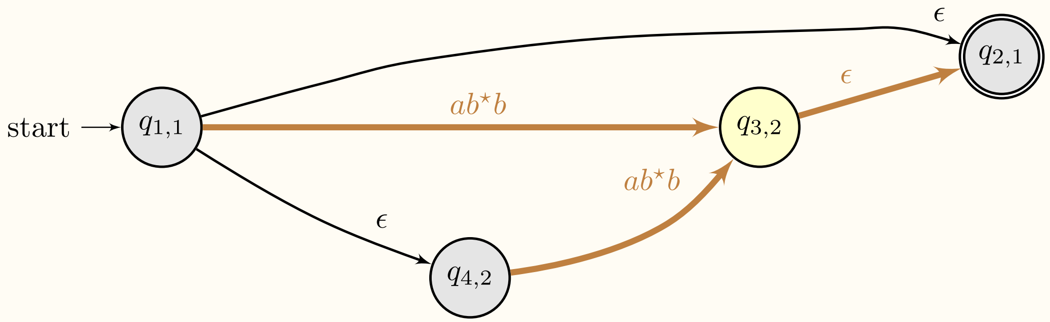

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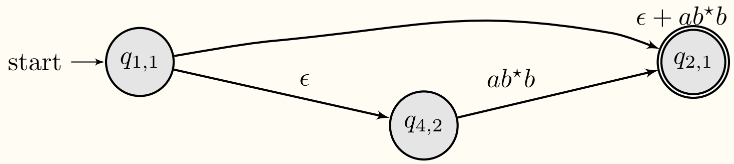

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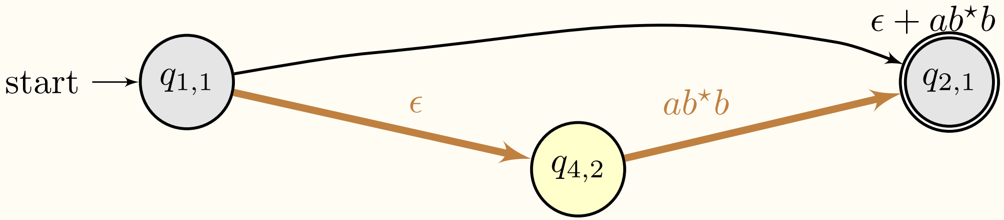

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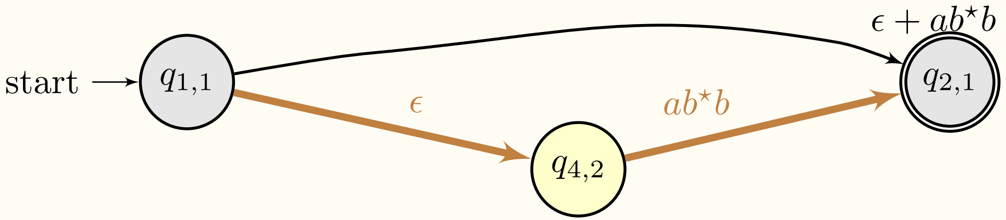

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