Finite Automata

A machine so simple that you can understand it in just one minute.

Finite Automata

The machine processes a string and accepts it if the process ends in a double circle.

The unique string of length 0 will be denoted by ε and will be called the empty or null string.

Deterministic Finite Automata

The machine accepts a string if the process ends in an accept state (double circle).

Anatomy of a Deterministic Finite Automaton

The singular of automata is automaton.

The alphabet Σ of a finite automaton is the set where the symbols come from, for example (0,1).

The language L(M) of a finite automaton is the set of strings that it accepts.

L(M) = \{x ∈ Σ: M accepts x\}

It's also called the "language decided/accepted by M".
The Language $L(M)$ of Machine $M$

The language of a finite automaton is the set of strings that it accepts.

$L(M) = \{ w \mid w \text{ has an even number of 1s}\}$

**Formal definition of DFAs**

A finite automaton is a 5-tuple $M = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$

- $Q$ is the finite set of states
- $\Sigma$ is the alphabet
- $\delta : Q \times \Sigma \rightarrow Q$ is the transition function
- $q_0 \in Q$ is the start state
- $F \subseteq Q$ is the set of accept states

$L(M)$ = the language of machine $M$

= set of all strings machine $M$ accepts

**EXAMPLE**

An automaton that accepts all and only those strings that contain 001

$L(M) = \{ 1, 11, 111, \ldots \}$

**Determine the language recognized by**

$L(M) = \{ 1, 11, 111, \ldots \}$
Determine the language decided by

\[ L(M) = \{1, 01\} \]

Membership problem

Determine whether some word belongs to the language.

Regular Languages

A language over \( \Sigma \) is a set of strings over \( \Sigma \)
A language \( L \subseteq \Sigma \) is regular if it is recognized by a deterministic finite automaton
A language \( L \subseteq \Sigma \) is regular if there is a DFA which decides it.

\[ L = \{ w \mid w \text{ contains } 001 \} \] is regular
\[ L = \{ w \mid w \text{ has an even number of } 1s \} \] is regular

DFA Membership problem

Determine whether some word belongs to the language.

Theorem: The DFA Membership Problem is solvable in linear time.

Let \( M = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F) \) and \( w = w_1...w_m \).
Algorithm for DFA \( M \):

1. \( p := q_0 \)
2. for \( i := 1 \) to \( m \) do \( p := \delta(p, w_i) \)
3. if \( p \in F \) then return Yes else return No.

Are all languages regular?

Theorem: Any finite language is regular

Theorem: \( L = \{0^n1^n : n \in \mathbb{N} \} \) is not regular

Notation:

If \( a \in \Sigma \) is a symbol and \( n \in \mathbb{N} \) then \( a^n \) denotes the string \( aaa...a \) (\( n \) times).

E.g., \( a^3 \) means \( aaa \), \( a^5 \) means \( aaaa \),
\( a^1 \) means \( a \), \( a^0 \) means \( \epsilon \), etc.

Thus \( L = \{\epsilon, 01, 0011, 000111, 00001111, ...\} \).
Theorem: $L = \{0^n1^n : n \in \mathbb{N}\}$ is not regular

Wrong Intuition:

For a DFA to decide $L$, it seems like it needs to "remember" how many 0's it sees at the beginning of the string, so that it can "check" there are equally many 1's. But a DFA has only finitely many states — shouldn't be able to handle arbitrary $n$.

How to prove a language is not regular...

Assume for contradiction there is a DFA $M$ with $L(M) = L$.

Argue (usually by Pigeonhole) there are two strings $x$ and $y$ which reach the same state in $M$.

Show there is a string $z$ such that $xz \in L$ but $yz \notin L$.

Contradiction, since $M$ accepts either both (or neither.)

Theorem: $L = \{0^n1^n : n \in \mathbb{N}\}$ is not regular

Full proof:

Suppose $M$ is a DFA deciding $L$ with, say, $k$ states.

Let $r_s$ be the state $M$ reaches after processing $0^s$.

By Pigeonhole, there is a repeat among $r_0, r_1, r_2, \ldots, r_k$. So say that $r_s = r_t$ for some $s \neq t$.

Since $0^{s+t} \in L$, starting from $r_s$ and processing $1^s$ causes $M$ to reach an accepting state.

Regular Languages

Definition: A language $L \subseteq \Sigma$ is regular if there is a DFA which decides it.

Questions:

1. Are all languages regular?
2. Are there other ways to tell if $L$ is regular?
Equivalence of two DFAs

Definition: Two DFAs $M_1$ and $M_2$ over the same alphabet are equivalent if they accept the same language: $L(M_1) = L(M_2)$.

Given a few equivalent machines, we are naturally interested in the smallest one with the least number of states.

Union Theorem

Given two languages, $L_1$ and $L_2$, define the union of $L_1$ and $L_2$ as

$$L_1 \cup L_2 = \{ w \mid w \in L_1 \text{ or } w \in L_2 \}$$

Theorem: The union of two regular languages is also a regular language.

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Proof (Sketch): Let

$M_1 = (Q_1, \Sigma, \delta_1, q_0, F_1)$ be finite automaton for $L_1$ and

$M_2 = (Q_2, \Sigma, \delta_2, q_0, F_2)$ be finite automaton for $L_2$

We want to construct a finite automaton $M = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$ that recognizes $L = L_1 \cup L_2$

Idea: Run both $M_1$ and $M_2$ at the same time.

Union Theorem

$L_1 =$ strings with even # of 1's $M_1$

$L_2 =$ strings $x$ with $|x|$ div. by 3 $M_2$

Input: 101001

Input: 101001
Union Theorem

Input: 101001

Accept.

Make a DFA keeping track of both at once.
The Regular Operations

Union: \( A \cup B = \{ w \mid w \in A \text{ or } w \in B \} \)

Intersection: \( A \cap B = \{ w \mid w \in A \text{ and } w \in B \} \)

Negation: \( \overline{A} = \{ w \mid w \not\in A \} \)

Reverse: \( A^R = \{ w_1 \ldots w_k \mid w_k \ldots w_1 \in A \} \)

Concatenation: \( A \cdot B = \{ vw \mid v \in A \text{ and } w \in B \} \)

Star: \( A^* = \{ w_1 \ldots w_k \mid k \geq 0 \text{ and each } w_i \in A \} \)

The Kleene closure: \( A^* \)

Star: \( A^* = \{ w_1 \ldots w_k \mid k \geq 0 \text{ and each } w_i \in A \} \)

From the definition of the concatenation, we define \( A^n, n = 0, 1, 2, \ldots \) recursively

\[ A^0 = \{ \varepsilon \} \]

\[ A^{n+1} = A^n \cdot A \]

\( A^* \) is a set consisting of concatenations of arbitrary many strings from \( A \).

Regular Languages Are Closed Under The Regular Operations

An axiomatic system for regular languages

Vocabulary: Languages over alphabet \( \Sigma \)

Axioms: \( \emptyset, \{a\} \) for each \( a \in \Sigma \)

Deduction rules:

- Given \( L_1, L_2 \), can obtain \( L_1 \cup L_2 \)
- Given \( L_1, L_2 \), can obtain \( L_1 \cdot L_2 \)
- Given \( L \), can obtain \( L^* \)

The Kleene Theorem (1956)

Every regular language over \( \Sigma \) can be constructed from \( \emptyset \) and \( \{a\}, a \in \Sigma \), using only the operations union, concatenation and Kleene star.
**Reverse**

Reverse: \( A^R = \{ w_1 \ldots w_k \mid w_k \ldots w_1 \in A \} \)

How to construct a DFA for the reversal of a language?

The direction in which we read a string should be irrelevant.

If we flip transitions around we might not get a DFA.

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**Nondeterministic finite automaton**

There is another type machine in which there may be several possible next states. Such machines called nondeterministic.

Allows transitions from \( q_k \) on the same symbol to many states

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**Nondeterministic finite automaton (NFA)**

Nondeterminism can arise from two different sources:
- Transition nondeterminism
- Initial state nondeterminism

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**NFA for \( \{0^k \mid k \text{ is a multiple of 2 or 3} \} \)**

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**Find the language recognized by this NFA**

\[ L = \{0^n, 0^n01, 0^n11 \mid n = 0, 1, 2\ldots \} \]
What does it mean that for an NFA to recognize a string?

Since each input symbol \( x_j \) (for \( j > 1 \)) takes the previous state to a set of states, we shall use a union of these states.

Find the language recognized by this NFA

\[ L = 1^* (01, 1, 10) (00)^* \]

Nondeterministic finite automaton

Theorem.
If the language \( L \) is recognized by an NFA, then \( L \) is also recognized by a DFA.

In other words, if we ask if there is a NFA that is not equivalent to any DFA. The answer is No.

Nondeterministic finite automaton

Theorem (Rabin, Scott 1959).
For every NFA there is an equivalent DFA.

For this they won the Turing Award.

Rabin

Scott

NFA vs. DFA

Advantages.
Easier to construct and manipulate.
Sometimes exponentially smaller.
Sometimes algorithms much easier.

Drawbacks
Acceptance testing slower.
Sometimes algorithms more complicated.

What does it mean that for a NFA to recognize a string?

Here we are going formally define this.

For a state \( q \) and string \( w \), \( \delta(q, w) \) is the set of states that the NFA can reach when it reads the string \( w \) starting at the state \( q \).

Thus for NFA= \((Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)\), the function \( \delta : Q \times \Sigma \rightarrow 2^Q \)
is defined by \( \delta^*(q, y x_k) = \bigcup_{p \in \delta^*(q,y)} \delta(p, x_k) \)
Pattern Matching

Input: Text $T$ of length $k$, string/pattern $P$ of length $n$

Problem: Does pattern $P$ appear inside text $T$?

Naive method:

\[ a_1, a_2, a_3, \ldots, a_n \]

Cost: Roughly $O(n \cdot k)$ comparisons

may occur in images and DNA sequences

unlikely in English text

Pattern Matching


Output: Does $P$ occur in $T$?

Automata solution:

The language $P$ is regular!

There is some DFA $M_P$ which decides it.

Once you build $M_P$, feed in $T$: takes time $O(n)$.

Build DFA from pattern

The alphabet is \{a, b\}.
The pattern is $a \ a \ b \ a \ a \ a \ b \ b$.

To create a DFA we consider all prefixes

$\varepsilon, a, aa, aab, aaba, aabaa, aabaaa, aabaaab, aabaaabb$

These prefixes are states. The initial state is $\varepsilon$. The pattern is the accepting state.

DFA Construction

\[ a \ a \ b \ a \ a \ a \ b \ b \]

DFA Construction

\[ a \ a \ b \ a \ a \ a \ b \ b \]
The Knuth-Morris-Pratt Algorithm (1976)

1970 Cook published a paper about a possibility of existence of a linear time algorithm

Knuth and Pratt developed an algorithm

Morris discovered the same algorithm

Pittsburgh native, CMU professor.
The KMP Algorithm - Motivation

Algorithm compares the pattern to the text in left-to-right, but shifts the pattern more intelligently than the brute-force algorithm. When a mismatch occurs, we compute the length of the longest prefix of P that is a proper suffix of P. No need to repeat these comparisons; Resume comparing here.

Languages
DFAs
The regular operations $0^n1^n$ is not regular
Union Theorem
Kleene's Theorem
NFAs
Application: KMP