6.1400

Lecture 3: Nondeterminism and Regular Expressions

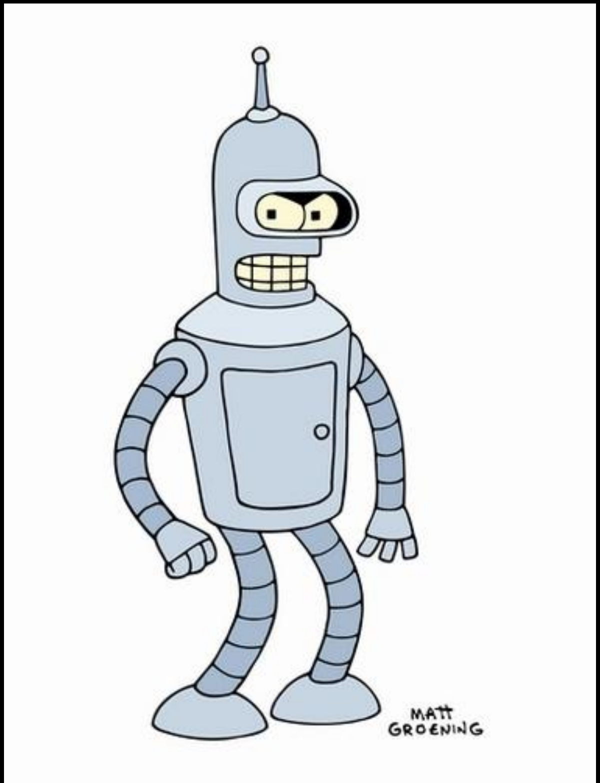
These slides are on the webpage!

6.1400

Announcements:

- Pset 0 is out, due tomorrow 11:59pm
- Latex source of hw on Piazza
- Pset 1 coming out Thursday
- No class next Tuesday *(...because next week Monday classes will be on Tuesday)*

Deterministic Finite Automata



Computation with finite memory

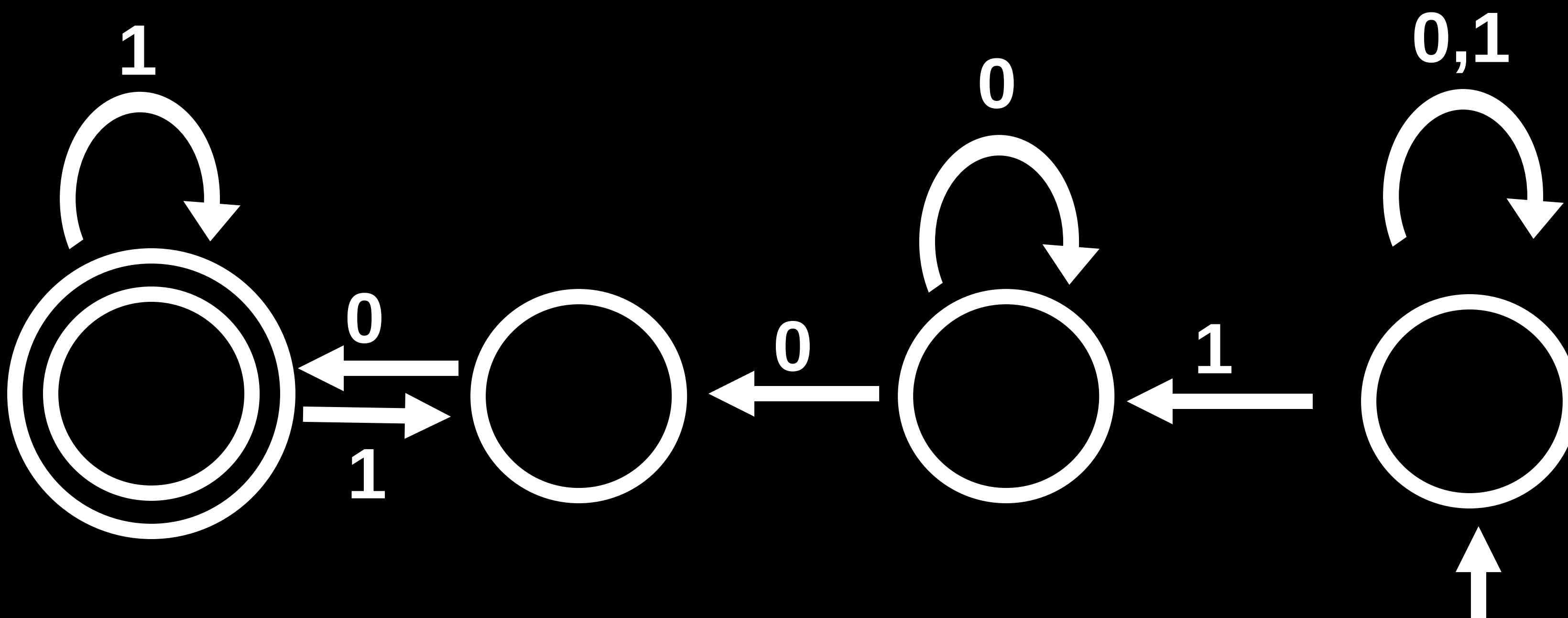
Regular Languages = Sets of strings accepted by DFAs

Non-**D**eterministic **F**inite **A**utomata

Computation with finite memory

and magical guessing

Non-deterministic Finite Automata (NFA)



This NFA recognizes: {w | w contains 100}

An NFA **accepts string x**
if *there is some path reading in x* that
reaches *some accept state* from *some start state*

Every NFA can be perfectly simulated by some DFA!

Theorem: For every NFA N, there is a DFA M such that L(M) = L(N)

Corollary: A language A is regular if and only if A is recognized by an NFA

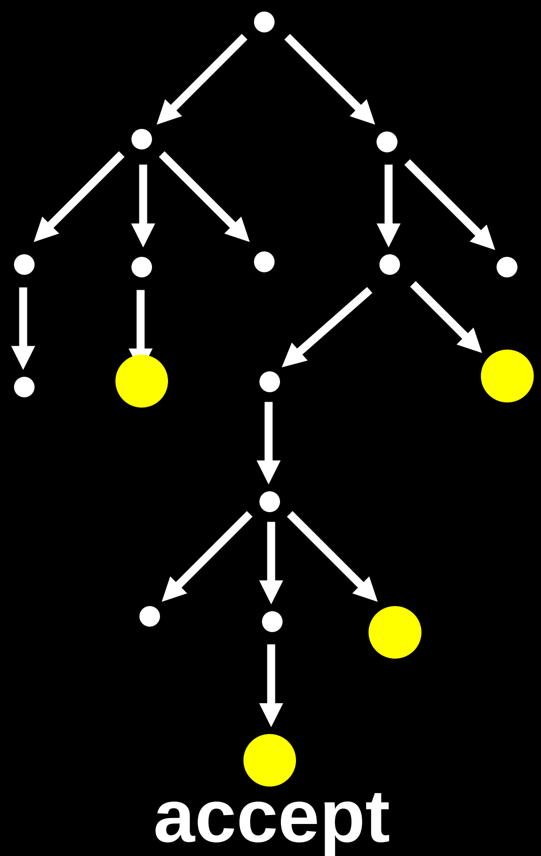
Corollary: A is regular iff A^R is regular

left-to-right DFAs ≡ right-to-left DFAs

From NFAs to DFAs

Input: NFA **N** = $(Q, \Sigma, \delta, Q_0, F)$

Output: DFA **M** = $(Q', \Sigma, \delta', q_0', F')$



To learn if NFA N accepts, we could do the computation of N *in parallel*, maintaining the set of *all* possible states that can be reached

Idea:

Set $Q' = 2^Q$

From NFAs to DFAs: Subset Construction

Input: NFA $N = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, Q_0, F)$

Output: DFA $M = (Q', \Sigma, \delta', q_0', F')$

$$Q' = 2^Q$$

$$\delta' : Q' \times \Sigma \rightarrow Q'$$

For $S \in Q'$, $\sigma \in \Sigma$: $\delta'(S,\sigma) = \bigcup_{q \in S} \varepsilon(\delta(q,\sigma))$ *

$$q_0' = \varepsilon(Q_0)$$

$F' = \{ S \in Q' \mid f \in S \text{ for } \textit{some } f \in F \}$

* For $S \subseteq Q$, the **ε-closure of S** is
$\varepsilon(S) = \{r \in Q$ reachable from some $q \in S$
by taking zero or more ε-transitions$\}$

Reverse Theorem for Regular Languages

The reverse of a regular language is also a regular language

If **a language can be recognized by a DFA that reads strings from *right* to *left*,**
then **there is an "normal" DFA that accepts the same language**

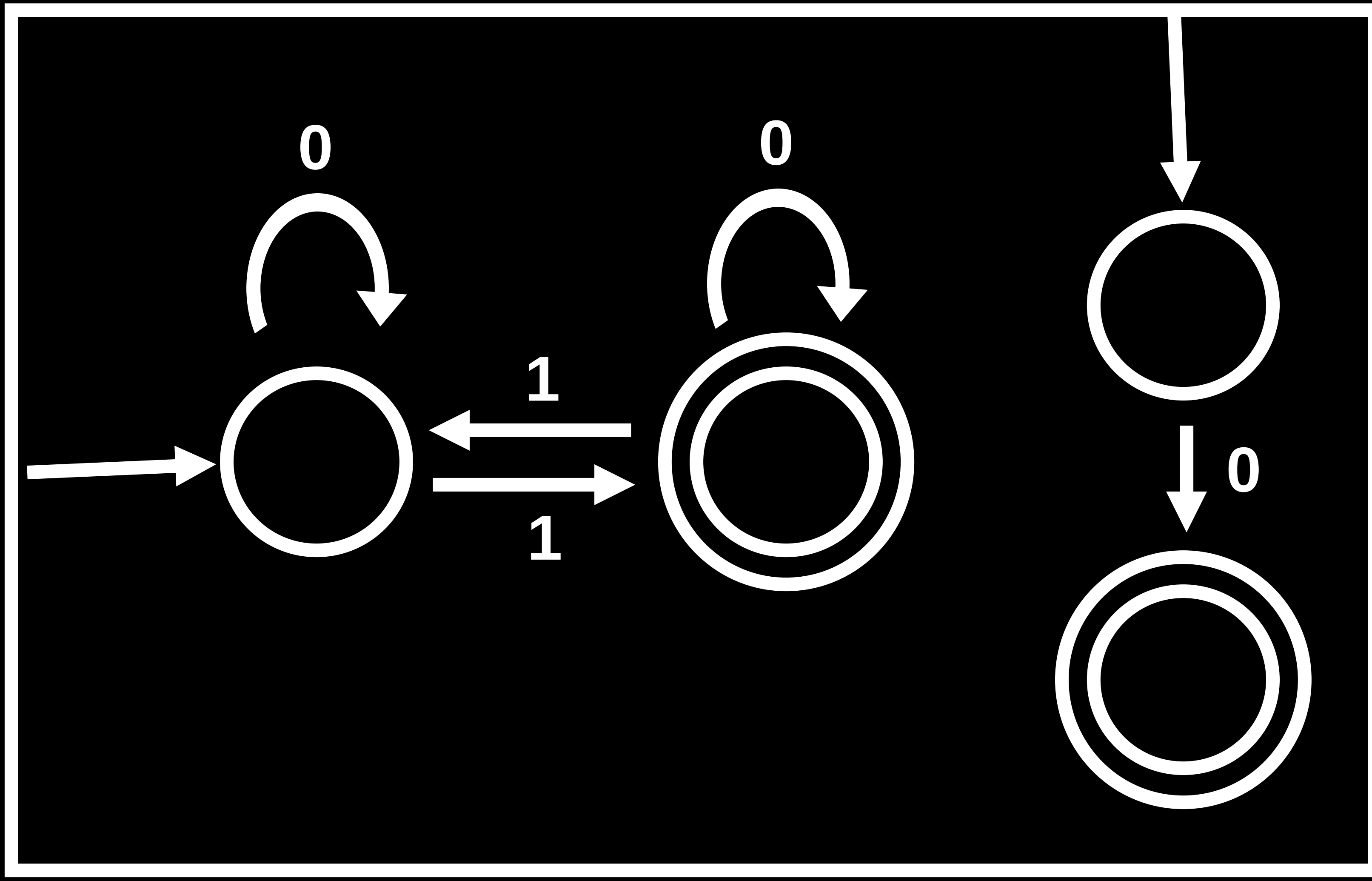
Proof Sketch?

Given a DFA for a language L, "reverse" its arrows, and flip its start and accept states, getting an NFA. Convert that NFA back to a DFA!

Using NFAs instead of DFAs can make proofs about regular languages *much* easier!

Remember this on homework/exams!

Union Theorem using NFAs?



Some Operations on Languages

- **Union:** $A \cup B = \{ w \mid w \in A \text{ or } w \in B \}$
- **Intersection:** $A \cap B = \{ w \mid w \in A \text{ and } w \in B \}$
- **Complement:** $\neg A = \{ w \in \Sigma^* \mid w \notin A \}$
- **Reverse:** $A^R = \{ w_1 \ldots w_k \mid w_k \ldots w_1 \in A, w_i \in \Sigma \}$

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

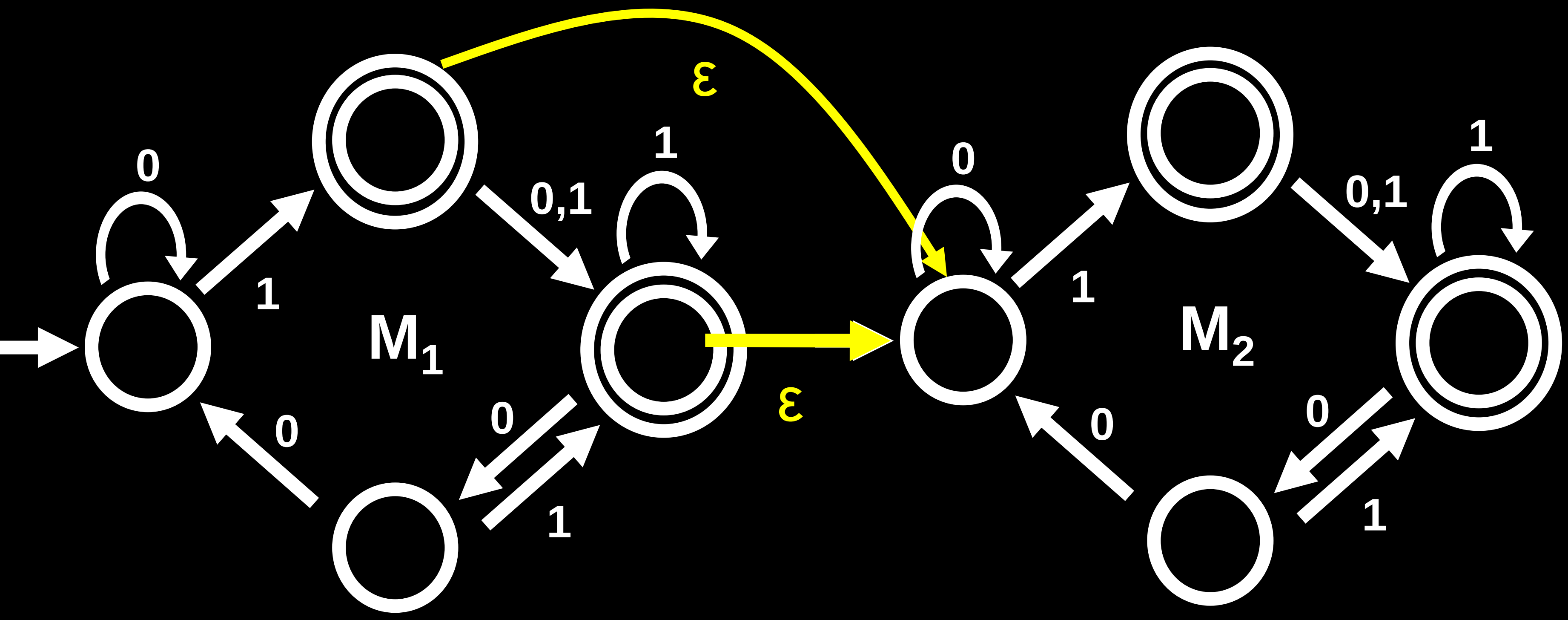
Star: $A^* = \{ s_1 \ldots s_k \mid k \geq 0 \text{ and each } s_i \in A \}$

A* = set of all strings over alphabet A

Regular Languages are closed under concatenation

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

Given DFAs M_1 for A and M_2 for B, connect the accept states of M_1 to the start state of M_2



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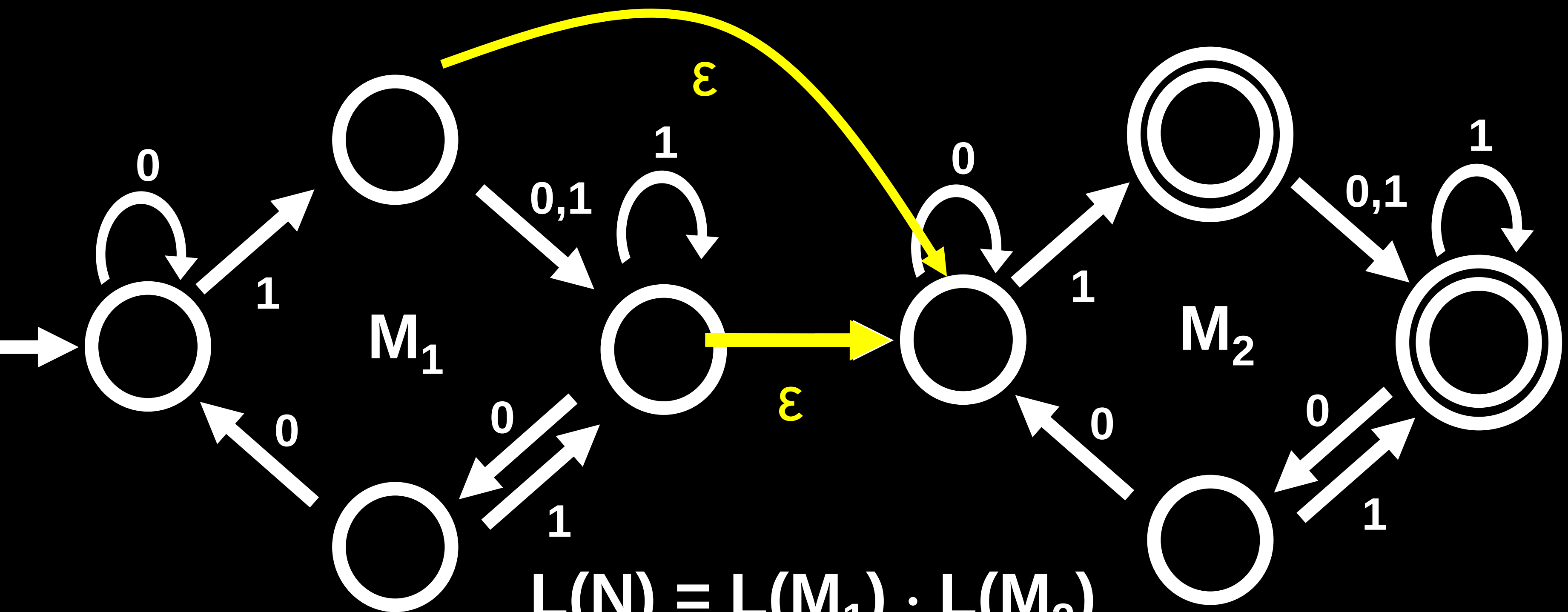


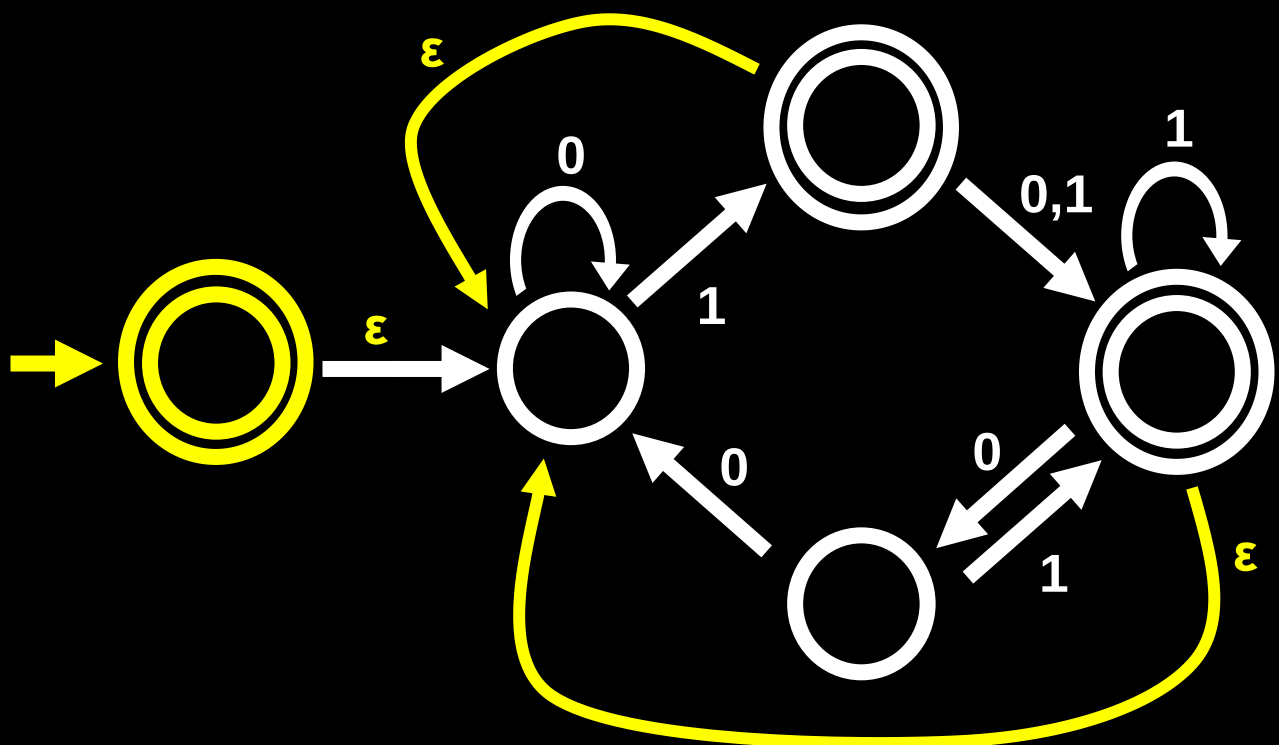
$L(N) = L(M_1) \cdot L(M_2)$

Regular Languages are closed under star

$A^* = \{ s_1 \ldots s_k \mid k \geq 0 \text{ and each } s_i \in A \}$

Let M be a DFA

We construct an NFA N that recognizes L(M)*



Formally, the construction is:

Input: DFA **M** $= (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_1, F)$

Output: NFA **N** $= (Q', \Sigma, \delta', \{q_0\}, F')$

$$Q' = Q \cup \{q_0\}$$

$$F' = F \cup \{q_0\}$$

$$\delta'(q,a) = \begin{cases} \{\delta(q,a)\} & \text{if } q \in Q \text{ and } a \neq \varepsilon \\ \{q_1\} & \text{if } q \in F \text{ and } a = \varepsilon \\ \{q_1\} & \text{if } q = q_0 \text{ and } a = \varepsilon \\ \varnothing & \text{if } q = q_0 \text{ and } a \neq \varepsilon \\ \varnothing & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

Regular Languages are closed under star

How would we *prove* that the NFA construction works? 🤔

Want to show: $L(N) = L(M)^*$

1. $L(N) \supseteq L(M)^*$

2. $L(N) \subseteq L(M)^*$

1. L(N) $\supseteq$ L(M)*

Let w = $w_1 \cdots w_k$ be in L(M)* where $w_1,\ldots,w_k \in$ L(M)

We show: N accepts w by induction on k

Base Cases:

✓ k = 0 (w = ε)

✓ k = 1 (w $\in$ L(M) and L(M) $\subseteq$ L(N))

Inductive Step: Let k $\geq$ 1 be an integer

I.H. N accepts all strings v = $v_1 \cdots v_k \in$ L(M)*, $v_i \in$ L(M)

Let u = $u_1 \cdots u_k u_{k+1} \in$ L(M)* , $u_i \in$ L(M)

N accepts $u_1 \cdots u_k$ (by I.H.) and M accepts u_{k+1}

imply that N also accepts u

since N has ε-transitions from final states to start state of M

2. L(N) ⊆ L(M)*

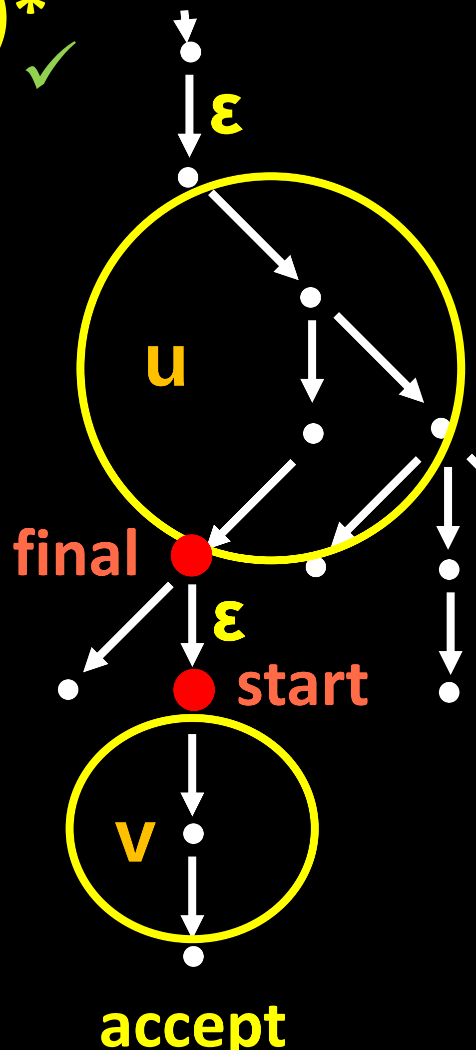
Let w be accepted by N; we want to show w ∈ L(M)*

If w = ε, then w ∈ L(M)* ✓

I.H. If N accepts u and takes k ε-*transitions,* then u ∈ L(M)*

Let w be accepted by N with k+1 *ε-transitions*.

Write w as w=uv, where v is the substring read after the *last* ε-transition



N accepts u, so

u ∈ L(M)*

By I.H.

w = uv∈L(M)*

v ∈ L(M)

Regular Languages are closed under all of the following operations:

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

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

Complement: $\neg A = \{ w \in \Sigma^* \mid w \notin A \}$

Reverse: $A^R = \{ w_1 \ldots w_k \mid w_k \ldots w_1 \in A, w_i \in \Sigma \}$

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

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Regular Expressions: Computation as Description

A different way of thinking about computation:
What is the complexity of describing the strings in the language?

DFAs find "patterns" in strings;
regular expressions give us a way to describe them precisely

During the “nerve net” hype in the 1950s…

U. S. AIR FORCE

PROJECT RAND

RESEARCH MEMORANDUM

REPRESENTATION OF EVENTS IN NERVE NETS AND
FINITE AUTOMATA

S. C. Kleene

RM-704

15 December 1951

Syntax

Inductive Definition of Regexp

Let Σ be an alphabet. We define the regular expressions over Σ inductively:

For all $\sigma \in \Sigma$, σ is a regexp

ε is a regexp

$\varnothing$ is a regexp

If R_1 and R_2 are both regexps, then

(R_1R_2), $(R_1 + R_2)$, and $(R_1)^*$ are regexps

Examples: ε, 0, $(1)^*$, $(0+1)^*$, $((((0)^*1)^*1) + (10))$

Precedence Order: $*$

then $\cdot$

then $+$

Example: $R_1{}^*R_2 + R_3 = ((R_1{}^*)\cdot R_2) + R_3$

Semantics

Definition: Regexps Represent Languages

The regexp $\sigma \in \Sigma$ *represents* the language $\{\sigma\}$

The regexp ε represents $\{\varepsilon\}$

The regexp $\varnothing$ represents $\varnothing$

If R_1 and R_2 are regular expressions representing L_1 and L_2 then:

(R_1R_2) represents $L_1 \cdot L_2$

$(R_1 + R_2)$ represents $L_1 \cup L_2$

$(R_1)^*$ represents L_1^*

Example: $(10 + 0^*1)$ represents $\{10\} \cup \{0^k1 \mid k \geq 0\}$

Regexps Represent Languages

For every regexp R,
define **L(R)** to be the language that R represents

A string $w \in \Sigma^*$ is ***accepted by R***
(or, w matches R) if $w \in L(R)$

Examples: 0, 010, and 01010 match $(01)^*0$

110101110101100 matches $(0+1)^*0$

$L((0+1)^*0) = \{w \in \{0,1\}^* \mid w \text{ ends in a } 0\}$

$\Sigma = \{0,1\}$

Give a regular expression for …

{ w | w has exactly a single 1 }

0*10*

{ w | w contains 001 }

(0+1)*001(0+1)*

$\Sigma = \{0,1\}$

What language does the regexp $\varnothing^*$ represent?

$\{\varepsilon\}$

$\Sigma = \{0,1\}$

Give a regular expression for …

$\{ w \mid w$ has length ≥ 3 and its 3rd symbol is 0 $\}$

$$(0+1)(0+1)0(0+1)^*$$

$\Sigma = \{0,1\}$

Give a regular expression for …

$\{ w \mid w = \varepsilon \text{ or every odd position in } w \text{ is a } 1 \}$

$(1(0 + 1))^*(1 + \varepsilon)$

How expressive are regular expressions?

DFAs ≡ NFAs ≡ Regular Expressions!

L can be represented by some regexp
⇔ L is regular

L can be represented by some regexp

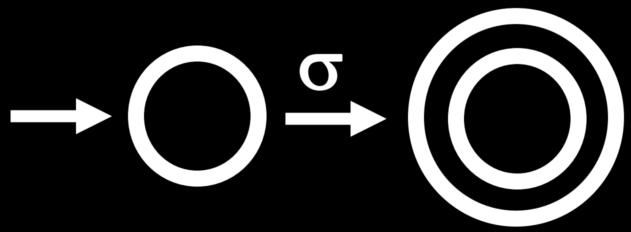
$\Rightarrow$ **L is regular**

Given any regexp R, we will construct an NFA N such that R represents L(N)

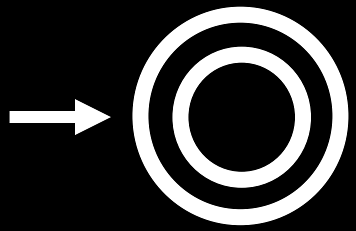
Proof by induction on the *length* of the regexp R:

Base Cases (R has length 1):

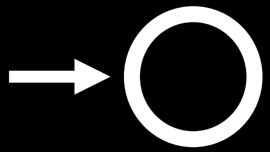
$R = \sigma$



$R = \varepsilon$



$R = \varnothing$



Induction Step: Suppose every regexp of length $< k$ represents some regular language.

Consider a regexp R of length $k > 1$

Three possibilities for R:

$R = R_1 + R_2$

$R = R_1 R_2$

$R = (R_1)^*$

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By induction, R_1 and R_2 represent some regular languages, L_1 and L_2

But $L(R) = L(R_1 + R_2) = L_1 \cup L_2$

so L(R) is regular, by the union theorem!

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$R = (R_1)^*$

By induction, R_1 and R_2 represent some regular languages, L_1 and L_2

But $L(R) = L(R_1 \cdot R_2) = L_1 \cdot L_2$

Thus L(R) is regular because regular languages are closed under concatenation

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Consider a regexp R of length $k > 1$

Three possibilities for R:

$R = R_1 + R_2$

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By induction, R_1 represents a regular language L_1

But $L(R) = L(R_1^*) = L_1^*$

Thus L(R) is regular because regular languages are closed under star

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By induction, R_1 represents a regular language L_1

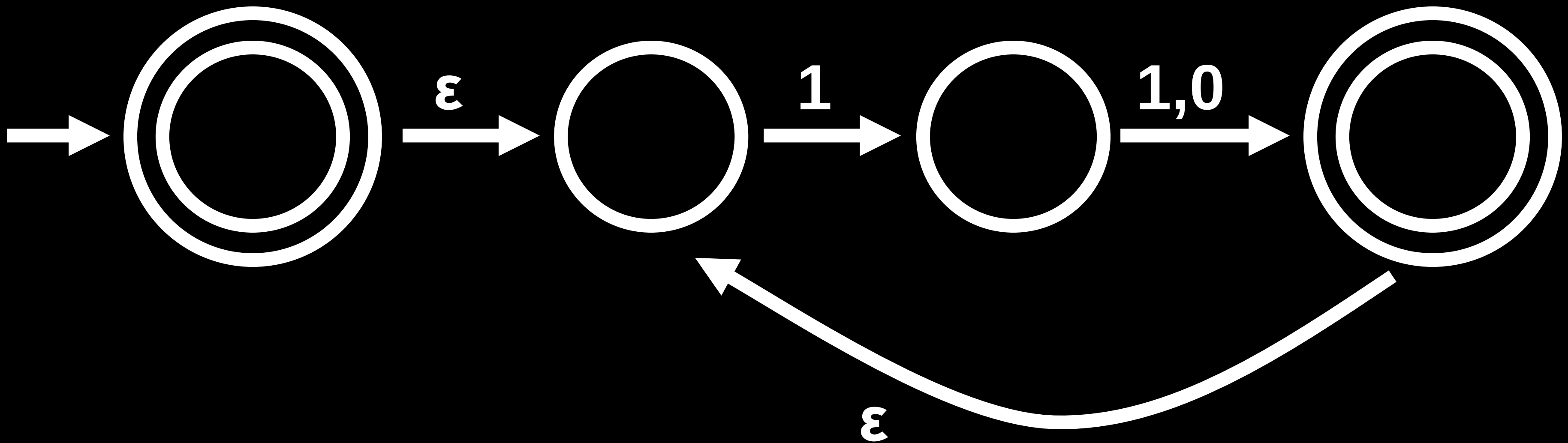
But $L(R) = L(R_1^*) = L_1^*$

Thus L(R) is regular because regular languages are closed under star

Therefore: If L is represented by a regexp, then L is regular

An Algorithm for Converting Regexps to NFAs!

Give an NFA that accepts the language represented by (1(0 + 1))*



Regular expression: (1(0+1))*

Generalized NFAs (GNFA)

L can be represented by a regexp

$\Leftarrow$

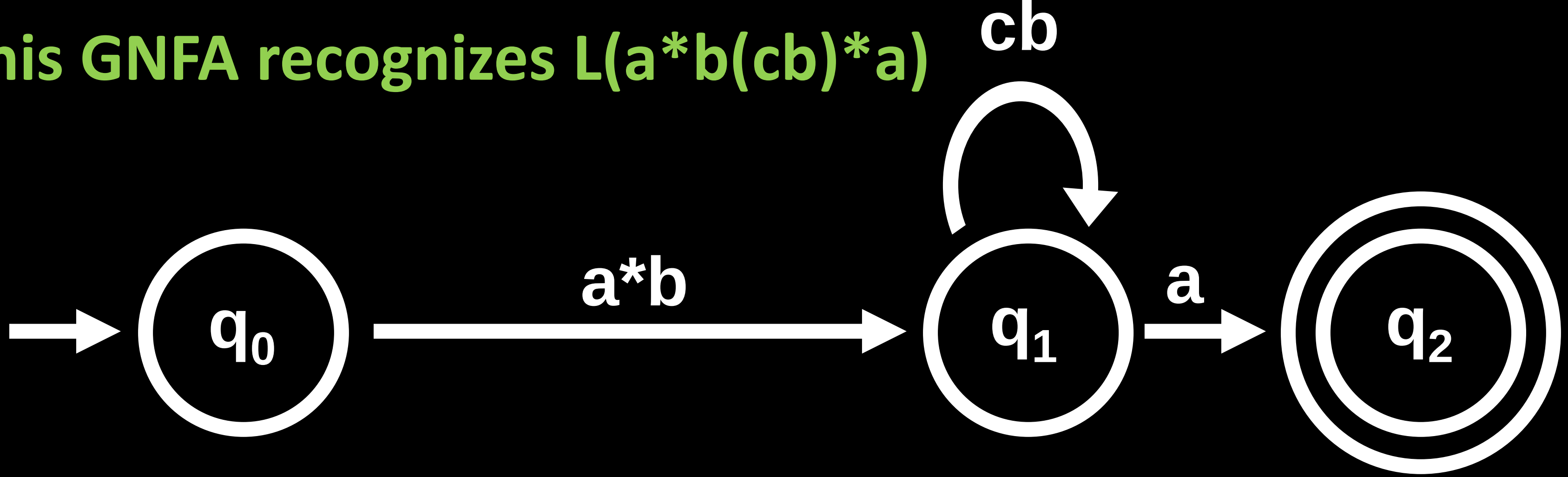
L is a regular language

Idea: Transform a DFA for L into a regular expression by *removing states* and re-labeling the arcs with *regular expressions*

Rather than reading in just 0 or 1 letters from the string on an arc, we can read in *entire substrings*

Generalized NFA (GNFA)

This GNFA recognizes L(a*b(cb)*a)



Accept string x ⇔ there is *some path* of regexps $R_1, \ldots, R_k$ from start state to final state such that x matches $R_1 \cdots R_k$

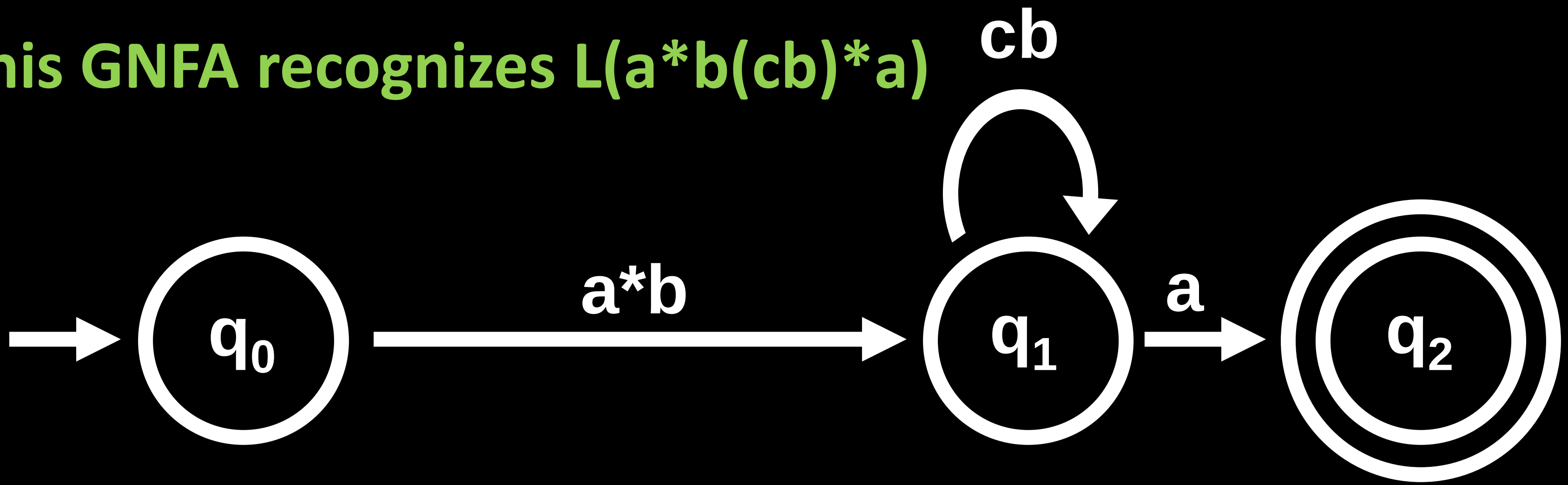
Is aaabcbcba accepted or rejected? accepted

Is bba accepted or rejected? rejected

Is bcba accepted or rejected? accepted

Generalized NFA (GNFA)

This GNFA recognizes L(a*b(cb)*a)



Accept string x ⇔ there is *some path* of regexps $R_1, \ldots, R_k$ from start state to final state such that x matches $R_1 \cdots R_k$

Every NFA is also a GNFA.
Every regexp can be converted into a GNFA with just two states!