Finite State Transducers

Data structures and algorithms for Computational Linguistics III

Çağrı Çöltekin
ccoltekin@sfs.uni-tuebingen.de

University of Tübingen
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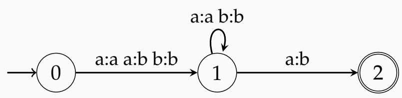
Finite state transducers

A quick introduction

- A *finite state transducer* (FST) is a finite state machine where transitions are conditioned on a pair of symbols
- The machine moves between the states based on input symbol, while it outputs the corresponding output symbol
- An FST encodes a *relation*, a mapping from a set to another
- The relation defined by an FST is called a *regular* (or *rational*) relation



`babba` → `babbb`

`aba` → `bbb`

`aba` → `abb`

Formal definition

A finite state transducer is a tuple $(\Sigma_i, \Sigma_o, Q, q_0, F, \Delta)$

- Σ_i is the *input* alphabet
- Σ_o is the *output* alphabet
- Q a finite set of states
- q_0 is the start state, $q_0 \in Q$
- F is the set of accepting states, $F \subseteq Q$
- Δ is a relation $(\Delta : Q \times \Sigma_i \to Q \times \Sigma_o)$

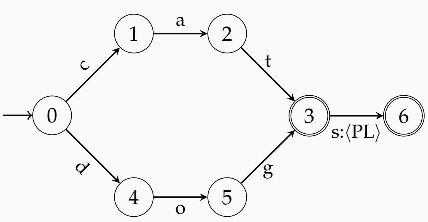
Where do we use FSTs?

Uses in NLP/CL

- Morphological analysis
- Spelling correction
- Transliteration
- Speech recognition
- Grapheme-to-phoneme mapping
- Normalization
- Tokenization
- POS tagging (not typical, but done)
- partial parsing / chunking
- ...

Where do we use FSTs?

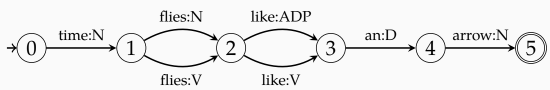
example 1: morphological analysis

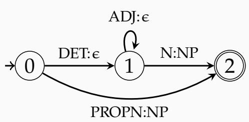


In this lecture, we treat an FSA as a simple FST that outputs its input: edge label 'a' is a shorthand for 'a:a'.

Where do we use FSTs?

example 2: POS tagging / shallow parsing





Note: (1) It is important to express the ambiguity. (2) This gets interesting if we can 'compose' these automata.

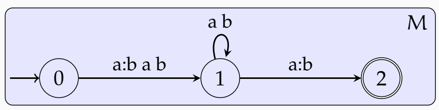
Closure properties of FSTs

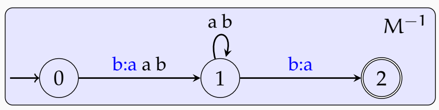
Like FSA, FSTs are closed under some operations.

- Concatenation
- Kleene star
- ~~Complement~~
- Reversal
- Union
- ~~Intersection~~
- *Inversion*
- *Composition*

FST inversion

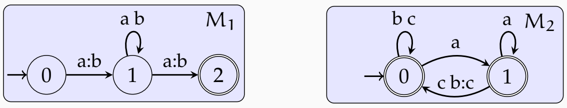
- Since FST encodes a relation, it can be reversed
- Inverse of an FST swaps the input symbols with output symbols
- We indicate inverse of an FST M with M^{-1}





FST composition

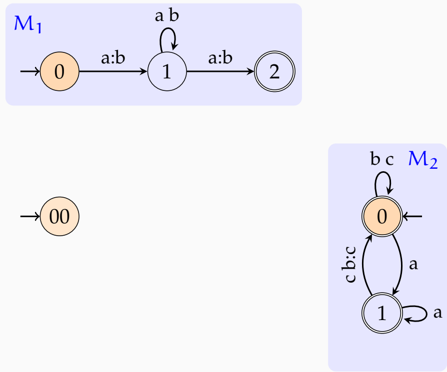
sequential application



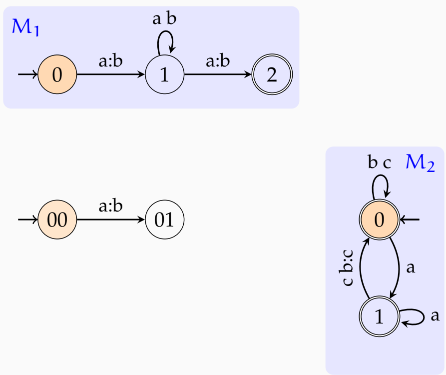
	$\xrightarrow{M_1 \circ M_2}$			
aa	$\xrightarrow{M_1}$	bb	$\xrightarrow{M_2}$	bb
bb	$\xrightarrow{M_1}$	∅	$\xrightarrow{M_2}$	∅
aaaa	$\xrightarrow{M_1}$	baab	$\xrightarrow{M_2}$	baac
abaa	$\xrightarrow{M_1}$	bbab	$\xrightarrow{M_2}$	bbac

- Can we compose without running the FSTs sequentially?

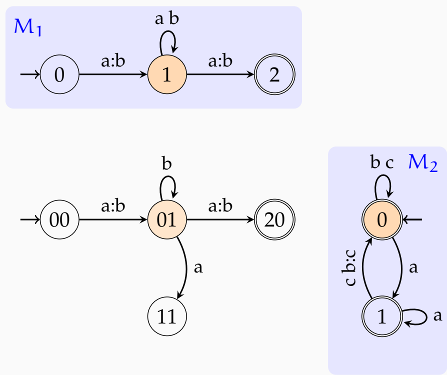
FST composition



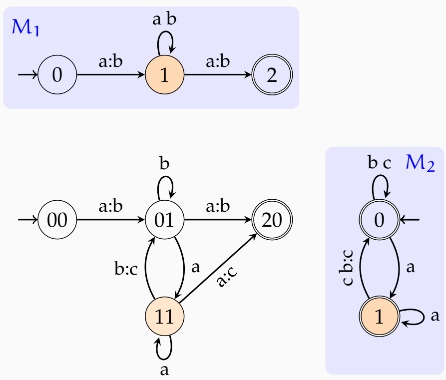
FST composition



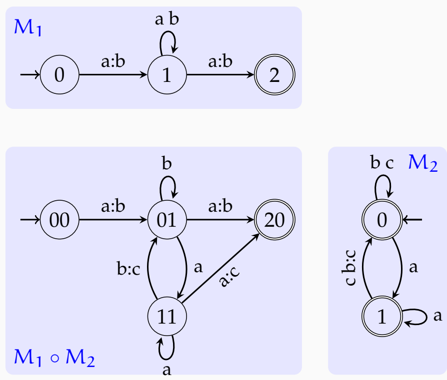
FST composition



FST composition

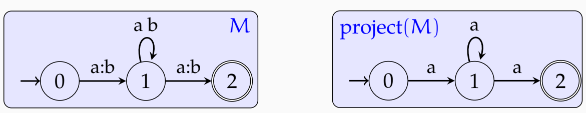


FST composition



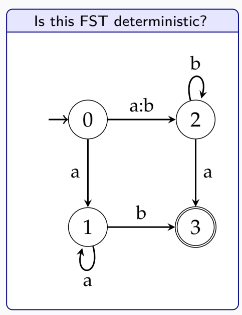
Projection

- *Projection* turns an FST into a FSA, accepting either the input language or the output language



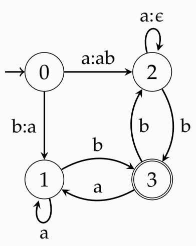
FST determinization

- A deterministic FST has unambiguous transitions from every state on any *input* symbol
- We can extend the subset construction to FSTs
- Determinization often means converting to a *subsequential* FST
- However, not all FSTs can be determinized



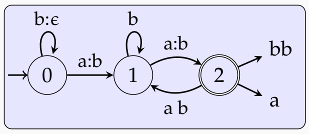
Sequential FSTs

- A sequential FST has a single transition from each state on every *input* symbol
- Output symbols can be strings, as well as ϵ
- The recognition is linear in the length of input
- However, sequential FSTs do not allow ambiguity



Subsequential FSTs

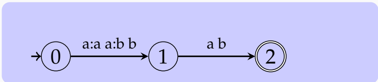
- A *k-subsequential* FST is a sequential FST which can output up to k strings at an accepting state
- Subsequential transducers allow limited ambiguity
- Recognition time is still linear

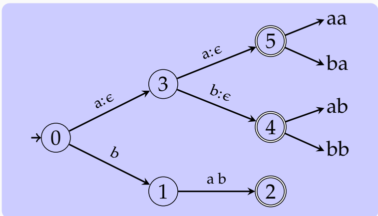


- The 2-subsequential FST above maps every string it accepts to two strings, e.g.,
  - baa → bba
  - baa → bbbb

An exercise

Convert the following FST to a subsequential FST

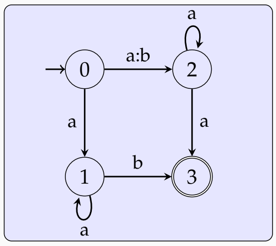




Determinizing FSTs

Another example

Can you convert the following FST to a subsequential FST?



Note that we cannot 'determine' the output on first input, until reaching the final input.

FSA vs FST

- FSA are *acceptors*, FSTs are *transducers*
- FSA accept or reject their input, FSTs produce output(s) for the inputs they accept
- FSA define sets, FSTs define relations between sets
- FSTs share many properties of FSAs. However,
  - FSTs are not closed under intersection and complement
  - We can compose (and invert) the FSTs
  - Determinizing FSTs is not always possible
- Both FSA and FSTs can be weighted (not covered in this course)

Next

- Practical applications of finite-state machines
  - String search (FSA)
  - Finite-state morphology (FST)
- Dependency grammars and dependency parsing
- Constituency (context-free) parsing

References / additional reading material

- Jurafsky and Martin (2009, Ch. 3)
- Additional references include:
  - Roche and Schabes (1996) and Roche and Schabes (1997): FSTs and their use in NLP
  - Mohri (2009): weighted FSTs

References / additional reading material (cont.)

Jurafsky, Daniel and James H. Martin (2009). *Speech and Language Processing: An Introduction to Natural Language Processing, Computational Linguistics, and Speech Recognition*. second. Pearson Prentice Hall. ISBN: 978-0-13-504196-3.

Mohri, Mehryar (2009). "Weighted automata algorithms". In: *Handbook of Weighted Automata*. Monographs in Theoretical Computer Science. Springer, pp. 213–254.

Roche, Emmanuel and Yves Schabes (1996). *Introduction to Finite-State Devices in Natural Language Processing Technical Report*. Tech. rep. TR96-13. Mitsubishi Electric Research Laboratories. URL: http://www.merl.com/publications/docs/TR96-13.pdf.

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