

# CSE 135: Introduction to Theory of Computation

## Pumping Lemma for Context-free Languages

Sungjin Im

University of California, Merced

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# Non-Context Free Languages

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## Answer

$L$  is not context-free, because

- ▶ Recognizing if  $w \in L$  requires remembering the number of  $a$ s seen,  $b$ s seen and  $c$ s seen
- ▶ We can remember one of them on the stack (say  $a$ s), and compare them to another (say  $b$ s) by popping, but not to both  $b$ s and  $c$ s

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The precise way to capture this intuition is through the pumping lemma

# Pumping Lemma for CFLs

## Informal Statement

For all sufficiently long strings  $z$  in a context free language  $L$ , it is possible to find **two** substrings, not too far apart, that can be **simultaneously** pumped to obtain more words in  $L$ .

# Pumping Lemma for CFLs

## Formal Statement

### Lemma

*If  $L$  is a CFL, then  $\exists p$  (pumping length) such that  $\forall z \in L$ , if  $|z| \geq p$  then  $\exists u, v, w, x, y$  such that  $z = uvwxy$*

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# Two Pumping Lemmas side-by-side

## Context-Free Languages

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## Regular Languages

If  $L$  is a regular language, then  $\exists p$  (pumping length) such that  $\forall z \in L$ , if  $|z| \geq p$  then  $\exists u, v, w$  such that  $z = uvw$

1.  $|uv| \leq p$
2.  $|v| > 0$
3.  $\forall i \geq 0. uv^iw \in L$

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## Game View

Game between **Defender**, who claims  $L$  satisfies the pumping condition, and **Challenger**, who claims  $L$  does not.

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**Pumping Lemma:** If  $L$  is CFL, then there is always a winning strategy for the defender (i.e., challenger will get stuck).

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**Pumping Lemma:** If  $L$  is CFL, then there is always a winning strategy for the defender (i.e., challenger will get stuck).

**Pumping Lemma (in contrapositive):** If there is a winning strategy for the challenger, then  $L$  is not CFL.



# Consequences of Pumping Lemma

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- ▶ If  $L$  satisfies the pumping lemma that **does not** mean  $L$  is context-free
- ▶ If  $L$  does not satisfy the pumping lemma (i.e., challenger can win the game, *no matter* what the defender does) then  $L$  is not context-free.

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- ▶ Since  $|z| > p$ , there are  $u, v, w, x, y$  such that  $z = uvwxy$ ,  $|vwx| \leq p$ ,  $|vx| > 0$  and  $uv^i wx^i y \in L$  for all  $i \geq 0$ .

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- ▶ Since  $|vwx| \leq p$ ,  $vwx$  cannot contain all three of the symbols  $a, b, c$ , because there are  $p$   $b$ s. So  $vwx$  either does not have any  $a$ s or does not have any  $b$ s or does not have any  $c$ s.





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- ▶ Since  $|vwx| \leq p$ ,  $v, x$  cannot contain both  $as$  and  $cs$ , nor can it contain both  $bs$  and  $ds$ . Further  $|vx| > 0$ . Now  $uv^0 wx^0 y = uwy \notin L$ , because it either contains fewer  $as$  than  $cs$ , or fewer  $cs$  than  $as$ , or fewer  $bs$  than  $ds$ , or fewer  $ds$  than  $bs$ . □

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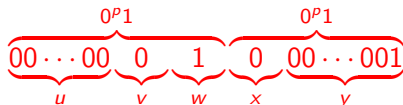
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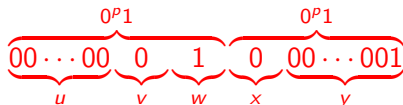
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- ▶ Can you complete the proof?

...→

# Proof of Pumping Lemma

Recall ...

## Lemma

*If  $L$  is a CFL, then  $\exists p$  (pumping length) such that  $\forall z \in L$ , if  $|z| \geq p$  then  $\exists u, v, w, x, y$  such that  $z = uvwxy$*

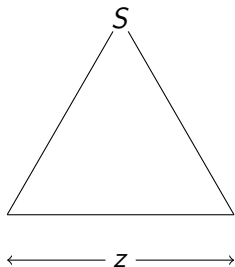
1.  $|vwx| \leq p$
2.  $|vx| > 0$
3.  $\forall i \geq 0. uv^iwx^iy \in L$

## Proof Idea

Let  $G$  be a CFG in **Chomsky Normal Form** such that  $L(G) = L$ .  
Let  $z$  be a “very long” string in  $L$  (“very long” made precise later).

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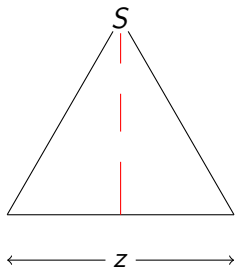


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- ▶ Since  $z \in L$  there is a parse tree for  $z$

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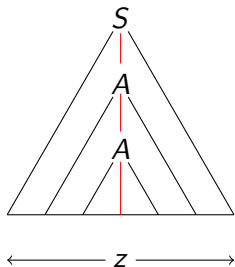
Parse Tree for  $z$

- ▶ Since  $z \in L$  there is a parse tree for  $z$
- ▶ Since  $z$  is very long, the parse tree (which is a binary tree) must be “very tall”



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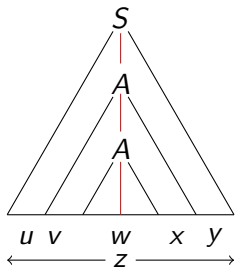


Parse Tree for  $z$

- ▶ Since  $z \in L$  there is a parse tree for  $z$
- ▶ Since  $z$  is very long, the parse tree (which is a binary tree) must be “very tall”
- ▶ The longest path in the tree, by pigeon hole principle, must have some variable (say)  $A$  repeat.

# Proof Idea

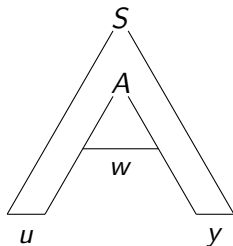
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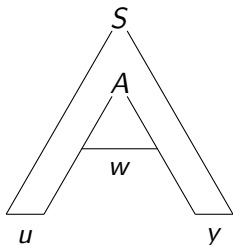
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# Pumping down

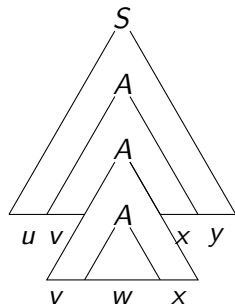


Pumping zero times

# Pumping down and up

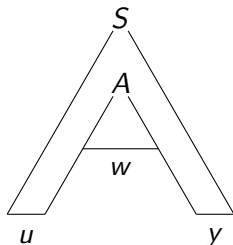


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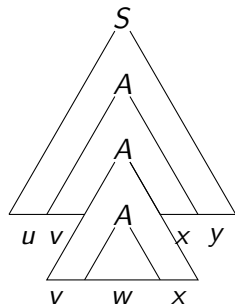


Pumping two times

## Pumping down and up



Pumping zero times



Pumping two times

- ▶ Thus,  $uv^iwx^iy$  has a parse tree, for any  $i$ .

# Proof of Pumping Lemma

Existence of tall parse trees

Proof.

Let  $G$  be a grammar in **Chomsky Normal Form** with  $k$  variables such that  $L(G) = L$ . Take  $p = 2^k$ . Consider  $z \in L$  such that  $|z| \geq p = 2^k$ .

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  - ▶ Parse trees of  $G$  are binary trees
  - ▶ **Fact:** A binary tree of height  $h$  has at most  $2^{h-1}$  leaves
  - ▶  $|z| =$ Number of leaves in parse tree of  $z = 2^{h-1} \geq 2^k$ . Thus,  $h \geq k + 1$ . ...→

# Proof of Pumping Lemma

## Repeated Variables

Proof (contd).

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- ▶ Let the yield of tree rooted at  $n_2$  be  $w$ , and yield of  $n_1$  be  $vwx$ . Yield of the root =  $z$  is say  $uvwxy$ . ...→

# Proof of Pumping Lemma

Properties of  $u, v, w, x, y$

Proof (contd).

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- ▶  $n_1 \neq n_2$ . Since the grammar has no  $\epsilon$ -productions and no unit-productions,  $vwX \neq w$ . i.e.,  $|vX| > 0$ . ...→

# Proof of Pumping Lemma

## Pumping the strings

Proof (contd).

Based on the parse tree for  $z$ , and definitions of  $u, v, w, x, y$ , we have

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Putting it together, we have

$$S \xRightarrow{*} uAy \xRightarrow{*} uvAxy \xRightarrow{*} uvvAxxxy \xRightarrow{*} \dots \xRightarrow{*} uv^i Ax^i y \xRightarrow{*} uv^i wx^i y \quad \square$$