CSE 135: Introduction to Theory of Computation
Pumping Lemma and non-Context-Free Languages

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03-12-2015

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 as seen, bs seen and cs seen
- We can remember one of them on the stack (say as), and compare them to another (say bs) by popping, but not to both bs and cs

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

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. $\forall i \geq 0.\ uv^i w \in L$

Pumping Lemma for CFLs

Game View

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

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Divide z into u, v, w, x, y s.t. $\lvert vwx \rvert \leq p$, and $\lvert vx \rvert > 0$		

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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 is context-free then L satisfies the pumping lemma.
- 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.

Example I

Proposition

$L_{anbncn} = \{a^n b^n c^n \mid n \geq 0\}$ *is not a CFL.*

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

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- Since $|vwx| \leq p$, vwx cannot contain all three of the symbols a, b, c, because there are p bs. So vwx either does not have any as or does not have any bs or does not have any cs. Suppose, (wlog) vwx does have any as. Then $uv^0 wx^0 y = uwy$ contains more as than either bs or cs. Hence $uwy \notin L$. $\square$

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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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- Consider $z = 0^p 1 0^p 1 \in L$.

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Wrong Proof

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Proof.

Suppose E is context-free. Let p be the pumping length.

- Consider $z = 0^p10^p1 \in L$.
- z can be pumped if we make the following division.

$$\overbrace{\underbrace{00\cdots00}_{u}\ \underbrace{0}_{v}\ \underbrace{1}_{w}}^{0^p1}\ \overbrace{\underbrace{0}_{x}\ \underbrace{00\cdots001}_{y}}^{0^p1}$$

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- Can you complete the proof?

$\cdot\cdot\longrightarrow$

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. $|vwx| \leq p$
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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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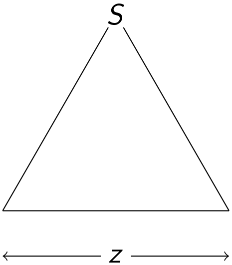

Parse Tree for z

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

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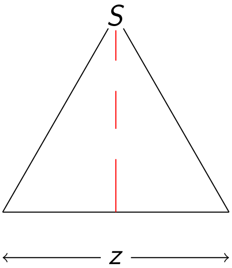

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- Since $z \in L$ there is a parse tree for z
- Since z is very long, the parse tree (which is a binary tree) must be "very tall"

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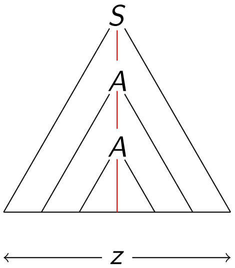

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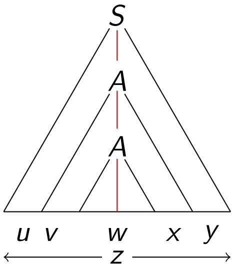

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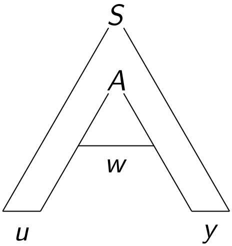
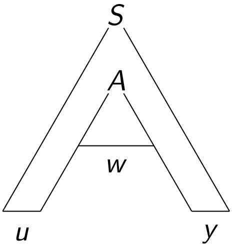
- Since z is very long, the parse tree (which is a binary tree) must be "very tall"
- The longest path in the tree, by pigeon hole principle, must have some variable (say) A repeat. Let u, v, w, x, y be as shown.

Pumping down



Pumping zero times

Pumping down and up



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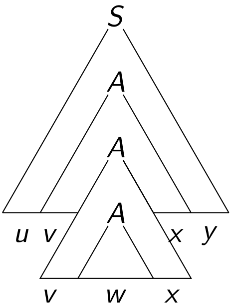

Pumping two times

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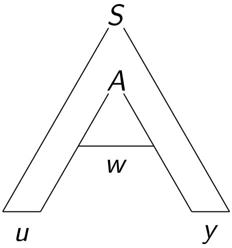

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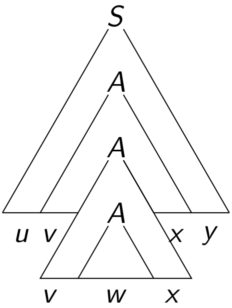

Pumping two times

- 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, $h \geq k + 1$.

$\cdots\longrightarrow$

Proof of Pumping Lemma

Repeated Variables

Proof (contd).

Proof of Pumping Lemma

Repeated Variables

Proof (contd).

- A parse tree for z has a path of length $k+1$

Proof of Pumping Lemma

Repeated Variables

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- A path of length $k+1$ has $k+2$ vertices, out of which the last one is leaf that is labelled by a terminal

Proof of Pumping Lemma

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Proof (contd).

- A parse tree for z has a path of length $k+1$
- A path of length $k+1$ has $k+2$ vertices, out of which the last one is leaf that is labelled by a terminal; thus, there are at least $k+1$ internal vertices on path.

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- Thus, there must be two vertices n_1 and n_2 on this path such that n_1 and n_2 have the same label (say A) and n_1 is an ancestor of n_2.

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- Let the yield of tree rooted at n_2 be w, and yield of n_1 be vwx.

Proof of Pumping Lemma

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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 $uvwxy$. $\cdots\rightarrow$

Proof of Pumping Lemma

Properties of u, v, w, x, y

Proof (contd).

Proof of Pumping Lemma

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Proof (contd).

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- Height of n_1 can be assumed to be at most $k + 1$; thus, the yield of n_1 (vwx) is at most $2^k = p$.

Proof of Pumping Lemma

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- Height of n_1 can be assumed to be at most $k + 1$; thus, the yield of n_1 (vwx) is at most $2^k = p$.
- $n_1 \neq n_2$.

Proof of Pumping Lemma

Properties of u, v, w, x, y

Proof (contd).

- Height of n_1 can be assumed to be at most $k + 1$; thus, the yield of n_1 (vwx) is at most $2^k = p$.
- $n_1 \neq n_2$. Since the grammar has no ϵ-productions and no unit-productions, $vwx \neq w$. i.e., $|vx| > 0$. $\cdots\!\rightarrow$

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

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

- There is a parse tree with yield uAy and root S, obtained by not expanding n_1. Thus, $S \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} uAy$.

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

- There is a parse tree with yield uAy and root S, obtained by not expanding n_1. Thus, $S \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} uAy$.
- There is a parse tree with yield vAx and root A, obtained from n_1 and not expanding n_2. Thus, $A \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} vAx$.

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

- There is a parse tree with yield uAy and root S, obtained by not expanding n_1. Thus, $S \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} uAy$.
- There is a parse tree with yield vAx and root A, obtained from n_1 and not expanding n_2. Thus, $A \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} vAx$.
- There is a parse tree with yield w and root A; this is the tree rooted at n_2. Thus, $A \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} w$.

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

- There is a parse tree with yield uAy and root S, obtained by not expanding n_1. Thus, $S \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} uAy$.
- There is a parse tree with yield vAx and root A, obtained from n_1 and not expanding n_2. Thus, $A \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} vAx$.
- There is a parse tree with yield w and root A; this is the tree rooted at n_2. Thus, $A \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} w$.

Putting it together, we have

$$S \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} uAy \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} uvAxy \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} uvvAxxy \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} \cdots \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} uv^iAx^iy \stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow} uv^iwx^iy \quad \square$$