### Context-Free Languages and Pushdown Automata



• Here is an example of a context-free grammar *G*<sub>1</sub>:

$$\begin{array}{cccc} A & \longrightarrow & 0A1 \\ A & \longrightarrow & B \\ B & \longrightarrow & \# \end{array}$$

- Each line is a substitution rule (or production).
- *A*, *B* are variables.
- 0, 1, # are terminals.
- The left-hand side of the first rule (*A*) is the start variable.

### Grammars and Languages

$$\begin{array}{cccc} A & \longrightarrow & 0A1 \\ A & \longrightarrow & B \\ B & \longrightarrow & \# \end{array}$$

- A grammar describes a language.
- A grammar generates a string of its language as follows.
  - Write down the start variable.
  - Find a written variable and a rule whose left-hand side is that variable.
  - Solution Replace the written variable with the right-hand side of the rule.
  - Repeat steps 2 and 3 until no variable remains.
- For example, consider the following derivation of the string 00#11 generated by  $G_1$ :

 $A \Rightarrow 0A1 \Rightarrow 00A11 \Rightarrow 00B11 \Rightarrow 00\#11$ 

• Any language that can be generated by some context-free grammar is called a context-free language.

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### Grammars and Languages

• With respect to the following <u>derivation</u> of the string 00#11 generated by *G*<sub>1</sub>:

```
A \Rightarrow 0A1 \Rightarrow 00A11 \Rightarrow 00B11 \Rightarrow 00\#11
```

we also use a <u>parse tree</u> to denote a string generated by a grammar:



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#### Definition

A <u>context-free grammar</u> is a 4-tuple  $(V, \Sigma, R, S)$  where

- *V* is a finite set of variables (also called non-terminals);
- $\Sigma$  is a finite set of terminals where  $V \cap \Sigma = \emptyset$ ;
- *R* is a finite set of <u>production rules</u>. Each rule consists of a variable and a string of variables and terminals; and
- $S \in V$  is the start variable.
- Let u, v, w are strings of variables and terminals, and  $A \longrightarrow w$  a rule. We say uAv yields uwv (written  $uAv \Rightarrow uwv$ ).
- $u \stackrel{\text{derives}}{\longrightarrow} v$  (written  $u \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} v$ ) if u = v or there is a sequence  $u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_k \ (k \ge 0)$  that  $u \Rightarrow u_1 \Rightarrow u_2 \Rightarrow \cdots \Rightarrow u_k \Rightarrow v$ .
- The <u>language</u> of the grammar is  $\{w \in \Sigma^* : S \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} w\}$ .

Example (Balanced Parentheses) Consider  $G_3 = (\{S\}, \{(,,)\}, R, S)$  where *R* is

 $S \longrightarrow (S) \mid SS \mid \epsilon.$ 

•  $A \longrightarrow w_1 \mid w_2 \mid \cdots \mid w_k$  stands for

$$\begin{array}{cccc} A & \longrightarrow & w_1 \\ A & \longrightarrow & w_2 \\ & & \vdots \\ A & \longrightarrow & w_k \end{array}$$

• Examples of the strings generated by *G*<sub>3</sub>: *ϵ*, (), (())(), . . . .

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### Parse Trees vs. Derivation Sequences

Consider the following grammar:  $E \rightarrow E + E \mid E \times E \mid (E) \mid a$ 

The following two derivation sequences have the same parse tree.

- $E \Rightarrow E + E \Rightarrow a + E \Rightarrow a + E \times E \Rightarrow a + E \times a \Rightarrow a + a \times a$
- $E \Rightarrow E + E \Rightarrow E + E \times E \Rightarrow a + E \times E \Rightarrow a + a \times E \Rightarrow a + a \times a$



### Context-Free Languages – Examples

- From a DFA *M*, we can construct a context-free grammar *G*<sub>*M*</sub> such that the language of *G* is *L*(*M*).
- Let  $M = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$  be a DFA. Define  $G_M = (V, \Sigma, P, S)$  where
  - $V = \{R_i : q_i \in Q\}$  and  $S = \{R_0\}$ ; and

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- ►  $P = \{R_i \longrightarrow aR_j : \delta(q_i, a) = q_j\} \cup \{R_i \longrightarrow \epsilon : q_i \in F\}.$
- Recall  $M_3$  and construct  $G_{M_3} = (\{R_1, R_2\}, \{0, 1\}, P, \{R_1\})$  with

$$\begin{array}{rrrr} R_1 & \longrightarrow & 0R_1 \mid 1R_2 \mid \epsilon \\ R_2 & \longrightarrow & 0R_1 \mid 1R_2. \end{array}$$

• The above is a <u>right-linear grammar</u> for which the right-hand-side contains at most one variable at the end of the rule.



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### Subclasses of Context-Free Grammars

• Right-Linear Grammar

$$\begin{array}{rrrr} R_1 & \longrightarrow & 0R_1 \mid 1R_2 \mid e \\ R_2 & \longrightarrow & 0R_1 \mid 1R_2 \end{array}$$

• Left-Linear Grammar

$$\begin{array}{rrrr} R_1 & \longrightarrow & R_1 0 \mid R_2 1 \mid \epsilon \\ R_2 & \longrightarrow & R_1 0 \mid R_2 1 \end{array}$$

• Linear Grammar

$$R_1 \longrightarrow 0R_1 1 \mid \epsilon$$

Note: Left- and Right-Linear Grammars only generate regular languages, while Linear Grammar could generate non-regular languages such as  $\{0^n1^n \mid n \ge 0\}$ . • How about rules contain both RL and LL rules? (Can you use such to generate  $\{0^n1^n \mid n \ge 0\}$ ?)

$$\begin{array}{rrrr} R_1 & \longrightarrow & R_2 1 \mid \epsilon \\ R_2 & \longrightarrow & 0R_1 \end{array}$$

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### Context-Free vs. Context-Sensitive Grammars

- $\ \, {\rm Ontext-Free \ Rules:} \ \ A \longrightarrow \beta, \quad \beta \in (V \cup \Sigma)^*$
- - **Similarity**: both replace A by  $\beta$ .
  - **Difference**: in (2), replacing *A* by *β* could only take place if *A* is surrounded by (in the context of) *α* and *γ*.
  - Context-sensitive grammars are more powerful than context-free grammars.

Grammars	Rules	Languages	Automata	
Type 3 / Right-linear	$A \rightarrow aB, A \rightarrow \epsilon$	Regular	DFA/NFA	
Type 2 / CFG	$A \rightarrow \alpha$	CFL	PDA	
Type 1 / CSG	$\alpha A \gamma \to \alpha \beta \gamma,  \beta  > 0$	CSL	LBA	
Type 0 / Unrestricted	$\alpha A \gamma \rightarrow \beta$	r.e.	Turing Machine	
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#### The Chomsky Hierarchy

### Context-Free Languages – Examples

#### Example (Fragment of C Grammar)

Consider  $G_4 = (V, \Sigma, R, \langle EXPR \rangle)$  where

•  $V = \{ \langle \text{EXPR} \rangle, \langle \text{TERM} \rangle, \langle \text{FACTOR} \rangle \}, \Sigma = \{a, +, \times, (, )\}; \text{ and}$ • *R* is





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### Ambiguity

Example (Fragment of C Grammar) Consider  $G_5$ :

 $\langle \text{EXPR} \rangle \longrightarrow \langle \text{EXPR} \rangle + \langle \text{EXPR} \rangle \mid \langle \text{EXPR} \rangle \times \langle \text{EXPR} \rangle \mid (\langle \text{EXPR} \rangle) \mid \text{a}$ 

• We have two parse trees for  $a + a \times a$ . EXPR) EXPR EXPR) (EXPR) (EXPR) EXPR) (EXPR) (EXPR) (EXPR) (EXPR) а а а а а

• If a grammar generates (w.r.t. parse trees) the same in different ways, the string is derived <u>ambiguously</u> in that grammar.

• If a grammar generates some string ambiguously, it is <u>ambiguous</u>.

### Ambiguity

- A derivation is a leftmost derivation if the leftmost variable is the one replaced at every step.
- Two leftmost derivations of  $a + a \times a$ :

#### Theorem

*A string is derived <u>ambiguously</u> in a grammar if it has two or more different leftmost derivations.* 

- If a language can only be generated by ambiguous grammars, we call it is inherently ambiguous.
  - { $a^i b^j c^k : i = j \text{ or } j = k$ } is inherently ambiguous.

### Chomsky Normal Form (CNF)

#### Definition

A context-free grammar is in <u>Chomsky normal form</u> if every rule is of the form

 $\begin{array}{cccc} S & \longrightarrow & \epsilon \\ A & \longrightarrow & BC \\ A & \longrightarrow & a \end{array}$ 

where a is a terminal, *S* is the start variable, *A* is a variable, and *B*, *C* are non-start variables.

RHS is (1) *ϵ* (only from *S*), (2) exactly two non-start variables, (3) exactly one terminal.

Theorem

*Any context-free language is generated by a context-free grammar in Chomsky normal form.* 

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### Chomsky Normal Form

#### Proof.

Given a context-free grammar for a context-free language, we will convert the grammar into Chomsky normal form.

- **(start variable**) Add a new start variable  $S_0$  and a rule  $S_0 \rightarrow S$ .
- ② ( $\epsilon$ -rules) For each  $\epsilon$ -rule  $A \longrightarrow \epsilon(A \neq S_0)$ , remove it. Then for each occurrence of A on the right-hand side of a rule, add a new rule with that occurrence deleted.

 $R \longrightarrow uAvAw \text{ becomes } R \longrightarrow uAvAw \mid uvAw \mid uAvw \mid uvw.$ 

- (unit rules) For each unit rule  $A \longrightarrow B$ , remove it. Add the rule  $A \longrightarrow u$  for each  $B \longrightarrow u$ .
- For each rule  $A \longrightarrow u_1 u_2 \cdots u_k (k \ge 3)$  and  $u_i$  is a variable or terminal, replace it by  $A \longrightarrow u_1 A_1, A_1 \longrightarrow u_2 A_2, \ldots, A_{k-2} \longrightarrow u_{k-1} u_k$ .
- For each rule  $A \longrightarrow u_1 u_2$  with  $u_1$  a terminal, replace it by  $A \longrightarrow U_1 u_2$ ,  $U_1 \longrightarrow u_1$ . Similarly when  $u_2$  is a terminal.

### Chomsky Normal Form – Example

• Consider *G*<sup>6</sup> on the left. We add a new start variable on the right.

### Chomsky Normal Form – Example

• Remove  $A \longrightarrow B$  (left) and then  $A \longrightarrow S$  (right):

$$S_{0} \longrightarrow ASA | aB | a | SA | AS \qquad S_{0} \longrightarrow ASA | aB | a | SA | AS 
S \longrightarrow ASA | aB | a | SA | AS \qquad S \longrightarrow ASA | aB | a | SA | AS 
A \longrightarrow S | b \qquad A \longrightarrow b | ASA | aB | a | SA | AS 
B \longrightarrow b \qquad B \longrightarrow b$$
• Remove  $S_{0} \longrightarrow ASA, S \longrightarrow ASA, \text{ and } A \longrightarrow ASA$ :  

$$S_{0} \longrightarrow AA_{1} | aB | a | SA | AS 
S \longrightarrow AA_{1} | aB | a | SA | AS 
B \longrightarrow b 
A_{1} \longrightarrow SA$$
• Add  $U \longrightarrow a$ :  

$$S_{0} \longrightarrow AA_{1} | \underline{UB} | a | SA | AS 
S \longrightarrow AA_{1} | \underline{UB} | a | SA | AS 
B \longrightarrow b 
A_{1} \longrightarrow SA$$
• Add  $U \longrightarrow a$ :  

$$S_{0} \longrightarrow AA_{1} | \underline{UB} | a | SA | AS 
B \longrightarrow b 
A_{1} \longrightarrow SA$$

### Schematic of Pushdown Automata



Each step of the PDA looks like:

- Read current symbol and advance head;
- Read and pop top-of-stack symbol;
- Push in a string of symbols on the stack;
- Change state.

Each transition is of the form

$$(p,a,X) \rightarrow (q,Y_1Y_2...Y_k)$$

### Three Mechanisms of Acceptance

Accept if input is consumed and

- Stack is empty (Acceptance by Empty Stack),
- PDA is in a final state (Acceptance by Final State),
- PDA is in a final state and stack is empty (*Acceptance by Final State and Empty Stack*).



It turns out that the three notions of acceptance are equivalent.

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- Consider  $L = \{0^n 1^n : n \ge 0\}.$
- We have the following table:

Language	Automata
Regular	Finite
Context-free	Pushdown

- A pushdown automaton is a finite automaton with a stack.
  - A stack is a last-in-first-out storage.
  - Stack symbols can be pushed and poped from the stack.
- Computation depends on the content of the stack.
- It is not hard to see *L* is recognized by a pushdown automaton.

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- Computation depends on the content of the stack.
- It is not hard to see *L* is recognized by a pushdown automaton.

### Pushdown Automata – Formal Definition

### Definition

A <u>pushdown automaton</u> is a 6-tuple  $(Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, F)$  where

- *Q* is the set of states;
- Σ is the <u>input alphabet</u>;
- Γ is the stack alphabet;
- $\delta: Q \times \Sigma_{\epsilon} \times \Gamma_{\epsilon} \to \mathcal{P}(Q \times \Gamma_{\epsilon})$  is the <u>transition function</u>;
- $q_0 \in Q$  is the <u>start</u> state; and
- $F \subseteq Q$  is the <u>accept</u> states.
- Recall  $\Sigma_{\epsilon} = \Sigma \cup \{\epsilon\}$  and  $\Gamma_{\epsilon} = \Gamma \cup \{\epsilon\}$ .
- We consider nondeterministic pushdown automata in the definition. It convers deterministic pushdown automata.
- Deterministic pushdown automata are strictly less powerful.
- For convenience, we often extend δ to Q × Σ<sub>ε</sub> × Γ<sub>ε</sub> → P(Q × Γ<sup>\*</sup>),
   i.e., allowing a ∈ Γ<sub>ε</sub> in the stack to be replaced by x ∈ Γ<sup>\*</sup>.

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### Computation of Pushdown Automata

• A pushdown automaton  $M = (Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, F)$  accepts input w if w can be written as  $w = w_1 w_2 \cdots w_m$  with  $w_i \in \Sigma_{\epsilon}$  and there are sequences of states  $r_0, r_1, \ldots, r_m \in Q$  and strings  $s_0, s_1, \ldots, s_m \in \Gamma^*$  (representing contents of the stack) such that

$$(r_0, s_0) \xrightarrow{w_{1,-}} (r_1, s_1) \cdots (r_i, at) \xrightarrow{w_{1+1, a \to b}} (r_{1+1}, bt) \cdots \xrightarrow{w_{m,-}} (r_m, s_m)$$

where

- $r_0 = q_0$  and  $s_0 = \epsilon$ ;
- ► For  $0 \le i < m$ , we have  $(r_{i+1}, b) \in \delta(r_i, w_{i+1}, a)$ ,  $s_i = at$ , and  $s_{i+1} = bt$  for some  $a, b \in \Gamma_{\epsilon}$  and  $t \in \Gamma^*$ .
  - \* On reading  $w_{i+1}$ , M moves from  $r_i$  with stack at to  $r_{i+1}$  with stack bt.
  - ★ Write  $c, a \rightarrow b(c \in \Sigma_{\epsilon} \text{ and } a, b \in \Gamma_{\epsilon})$  to denote that the machine is reading *c* from the input and replacing the top of stack *a* with *b*.
- ▶  $r_m \in F$ .
- The language recognized by M is denoted by L(M).
  - That is,  $L(M) = \{w : M \text{ accepts } w\}.$

### Pushdown Automata – Example

• Let 
$$M_1 = (Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_1, F)$$
 where

•  $Q = \{q_1, q_2, q_3, q_4\}, \Sigma = \{0, 1\}, \Gamma = \{0, \$\}, F = \{q_1, q_4\}; \text{ and }$ 

•  $\delta$  is the following table:

	input			0	1			$\epsilon$		
	stack	0	\$	$\epsilon$	0	\$	$\epsilon$	0	\$	$\epsilon$
	$q_1$									$\{(q_2,\$)\}$
	$q_2$			$\{(q_2, 0)\}$	$\{(q_3,\epsilon)\}$					
	$q_3$				$\{(q_3,\epsilon)\}$				$\{(q_4,\epsilon)\}$	
	$q_4$									
$\begin{array}{c} \hline q_1 \\ \hline q_1 \\ \hline \\ \hline \\ \hline \\ \\ \hline \\ \\ 1, 0 \rightarrow \epsilon \end{array}  \begin{array}{c} q_2 \\ \hline \\ 0, \epsilon \rightarrow 0 \\ \hline \\ \hline \\ 1, 0 \rightarrow \epsilon \end{array}$										
					$\epsilon, \$ \rightarrow \epsilon$		$\int_{-\infty}^{0} d\theta = \int_{-\infty}^{0} d$	έ		
• $L(M_1$	$) = \{0^{n}\}$		: n	> 0			•			E ► E √Q

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### Pushdown Automata – Example

• Let 
$$M_1 = (Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_1, F)$$
 where

•  $Q = \{q_1, q_2, q_3, q_4\}, \Sigma = \{0, 1\}, \Gamma = \{0, \$\}, F = \{q_1, q_4\}; \text{ and}$ 

•  $\delta$  is the following table:

	input			0	1			$\epsilon$			
	stack	0	\$	$\epsilon$	0	\$	$\epsilon$	0	\$	$\epsilon$	
	$q_1$									$\{(q_2,\$)$	}
	$q_2$			$\{(q_2, 0)\}$	$\{(q_3,\epsilon)\}$						
	$q_3$				$\{(q_3,\epsilon)\}$				$\{(q_4,\epsilon)\}$		
	$q_4$										
$\begin{array}{c} \hline q_1 \\ \hline q_1 \\ \hline \\ \hline \\ \hline \\ \\ 1, 0 \rightarrow \epsilon \end{array} \xrightarrow{q_2} 0, \epsilon \rightarrow 0$											
					$\epsilon, \$ \to \epsilon$	$q_3$	$\int \int dx = \int dx $	¢			
• <i>L</i> ( <i>M</i>	$(1) = \{0^n\}$	<sup>1</sup> 1 <sup>n</sup>	: n	$\geq 0\}$			•		<	(≣) E	৩৫
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Context-Free Languages

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• Consider the following pushdown automaton *M*<sub>2</sub>:



•  $L(M_2) = \{ a^i b^j c^k : i, j, k \ge 0 \text{ and, } i = j \text{ or } i = k \}$ 

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• Consider the following pushdown automaton *M*<sub>2</sub>:



•  $L(M_2) = \{ a^i b^j c^k : i, j, k \ge 0 \text{ and}, i = j \text{ or } i = k \}$ 

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### Context-Free Grammars $\Rightarrow$ Pushdown Automata

- Idea: Use PDA to simulate derivations
- Example:  $G : A \to 0A1 \mid B; B \to \#$
- Derivation:  $A \Rightarrow 0A1 \Rightarrow 00A11 \Rightarrow 00B11 \Rightarrow 00\#11$
- Rule:
  - Write the start symbol A onto the stack
  - Rewrite variable on top of stack (in reverse) according to production
  - Pop top terminal if it matches input



### Context-Free Grammars $\Rightarrow$ Pushdown Automata



#### Note

- The above construction seems to suggest that the number of states in a PDA is not very "important".
- In fact, we can turn an arbitrary PDA into an equivalence one with a single state, such PDA are sometimes called "stateless" PDA.
  - The "state" information can be incorporated into a "stack symbol", in a way how a programming language handles the "call-return" mechanism in a function call.

#### Lemma

If a language is context-free, some pushdown automaton recognizes it.

#### Proof.

Let  $G = (V, \Sigma, R, S)$  be a context-free grammar generating the language. Define

- $P = (\{q_{\text{start}}, q_{\text{loop}}, q_{\text{accept}}, \ldots\}, \Sigma, V \cup \Sigma \cup \{\$\}, \delta, q_{\text{start}}, \{q_{\text{accept}}\}) \text{ where }$ 
  - $\delta(q_{\text{start}}, \epsilon, \epsilon) = \{(q_{\text{loop}}, S\$)\}$
  - $\delta(q_{\text{loop}}, \epsilon, A) = \{(q_{\text{loop}}, w) : A \longrightarrow w \in R\}$
  - $\delta(q_{\text{loop}}, a, a) = \{(q_{\text{loop}}, \epsilon)\}$
  - $\delta(q_{\text{loop}}, \epsilon, \$) = \{(q_{\text{accept}}, \epsilon)\}$

Note that  $(r, u_1u_2 \cdots u_l) \in \delta(q, a, s)$  is simulated by  $(q_1, u_l) \in \delta(q, a, s)$ ,  $\delta(q_1, \epsilon, \epsilon) = \{(q_2, u_{l-1})\}, \ldots, \delta(q_{l-1}, \epsilon, \epsilon) = \{(r, u_1)\}.$ 

### Example

#### Example

Find a pushdown automaton recognizing the language of the following context-free grammar:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} S & \longrightarrow & \mathrm{a}T\mathrm{b} \mid \mathrm{b} \ T & \longrightarrow & T\mathrm{a} \mid \epsilon \end{array}$$



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Context-Free Languages

### Simplified PDA

- Has a single accepting state
- Empties its stack before accepting
- Each transition is either a push, or a pop, but not both



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Context-Free Languages

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### Pushdown Automata $\Rightarrow$ Context-Free Grammars

- Key Idea: For every pair (q, r) of states in PDA, introduce variable  $A_{qr}$  in CFG so that
  - $A_{qr} \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} w$  iff PDA goes from *q* to *r* reading *w* (with empty stack both at *q* and at *r*)



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### Pushdown Automata ⇒ Context-Free Grammars

- Type 1:  $A_{ps} \rightarrow aA_{qr}b$
- Type 2:  $A_{pf} \rightarrow A_{ps}A_{sf}$
- Type 3:  $A_{gg} \rightarrow \epsilon$



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#### Lemma

*If a pushdown automaton recognizes a language, the language is context-free.* 

#### Proof.

Without loss of generality, we consider a pushdown automaton that has a single accept state  $q_{\text{accept}}$  and empties the stack before accepting. Moreover, its transition either pushes or pops a stack symbol at any time. Let  $P = (Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, \{q_{\text{accept}}\})$ . Define the context-free grammar  $G = (V, \Sigma, R, S)$  where

• 
$$V = \{A_{pq} : p, q \in Q\}, S = A_{q_0, q_{\text{accept}}}; \text{ and }$$

• *R* has the following rules:

- For each  $p, q, r, s \in Q$ ,  $t \in \Gamma$ , and  $a, b \in \Sigma_{\epsilon}$ , if  $(r, t) \in \delta(p, a, \epsilon)$  and
- $(q,\epsilon) \in \delta(s,b,t)$ , then  $A_{pq} \longrightarrow aA_{rs}b \in \mathbb{R}$ .
- For each  $p, q, r \in Q$ ,  $A_{pq} \longrightarrow A_{pr}A_{rq} \in R$ .
- For each  $p \in Q$ ,  $A_{pp} \longrightarrow \epsilon \in R$ .



- We write  $A_{i,j}$  for  $A_{q_iq_i}$ .
- Consider the following context-free grammar:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} A_{14} & \rightarrow & A_{23} & \text{since } (q_2, \$) \in \delta(q_1, \epsilon, \epsilon) \text{ and } (q_4, \epsilon) \in \delta(q_3, \epsilon, \$) \\ A_{23} & \rightarrow & 0A_{23}1 & \text{since } (q_2, 0) \in \delta(q_2, 0, \epsilon) \text{ and } (q_3, \epsilon) \in \delta(q_3, 1, 0) \\ A_{23} & \rightarrow & 0A_{22}1 & \text{since } (q_2, 0) \in \delta(q_2, 0, \epsilon) \text{ and } (q_3, \epsilon) \in \delta(q_2, 1, 0) \\ A_{22} & \rightarrow & \epsilon \end{array}$$

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#### Lemma

If  $A_{pq}$  generates x in G, then x can bring P from p with empty stack to q with empty stack.

#### Proof.

Prove by induction on the length *k* of derivation.

- k = 1. The only possible derivation of length 1 is  $A_{pp} \Rightarrow \epsilon$ .
- Consider  $A_{pq} \Longrightarrow x$  of length k + 1. Two cases for the first step:
  - $A_{pq} \Rightarrow aA_{rs}b$ . Then x = ayb with  $A_{rs} \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} y$ . By IH, y brings P from r to s with empty stack. Moreover,  $(r, t) \in \delta(p, a, \epsilon)$  and  $(q, \epsilon) \in \delta(s, b, t)$  since  $A_{pq} \longrightarrow aA_{rs}b \in R$ . Let P start from p with empty stack, P first moves to r and pushes t to the stack after reading a. It then moves to s with t in the stack. Finally, P moves to q with empty stack after reading b and popping t.
  - $A_{pq} \Rightarrow A_{pr}A_{rq}$ . Then x = yz with  $A_{pr} \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} y$  and  $A_{rq} \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} z$ . By IH, *P* moves from *p* to *r*, and then *r* to *q*.

### Pushdown Automata $\Rightarrow$ Context-Free Grammars

#### Lemma

If x can bring P from p with empty stack to q with empty stack,  $A_{pq}$  generates x in G.

#### Proof.

Prove by induction on the length k of computation.

- k = 0. The only possible 0-step computation is to stay at the same state while reading  $\epsilon$ . Hence  $x = \epsilon$ . Clearly,  $A_{pp} \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} \epsilon$  in *G*.
- Two possible cases for computation of length k + 1.
  - The stack is empty only at the beginning and end of the computation. If *P* reads *a*, pushes *t*, and moves to *r* from *p* at step 1,  $(r, t) \in \delta(q, a, \epsilon)$ . Similarly, if *P* reads *b*, pops *t*, and moves to *q* from *s* at step k + 1,  $(q, \epsilon) \in \delta(s, b, t)$ . Hence  $A_{pq} \longrightarrow aA_{rs}b \in G$ . Let x = ayb. By IH,  $A_{rs} \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} y$ . We have  $A_{pq} \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} x$ . The stack is empty elsewhere. Let *r* be a state where the stack becomes empty. Say *y* and *z* are the inputs read during the computation from *p* to *r* and *r* to *q* respectively. Hence x = yz. By IH,  $A_{pr} \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} y$  and  $A_{rq} \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} z$ . Since  $A_{pq} \longrightarrow A_{pr}A_{rq} \in G$ . We have  $A_{pq} \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} x$ .

### Context-Free Grammars and Pushdown Automata

#### Theorem

A language is context-free if and only if some pushdown automaton recognizes it.

#### Corollary

Every regular language is context-free.

- When we say PDA, we mean "nondeterministic PDA"
- Deterministic PDA (DPDA) are less powerful, they only accept deterministic context-free languages (DCFL).
- DPDA cannot accept  $\{ww^R \mid w \in \{0,1\}^*\}$  or  $\overline{\{a^nb^nc^n \mid n \ge 0\}}$ .
- The equivalence problem is undecidable for PDA, yet it is decidable for DPDA.
- Regular  $\subsetneq$  DCFL  $\subsetneq$  CFL
- DCFLs are not closed under union, intersection, concatenation, but are closed under complement.

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Context-Free Languages

### Pumping Lemma for CFLs

#### Theorem

*If A is a context-free language, then there is a number p* (*the puming length*) *such that for every*  $s \in A$  *with*  $|s| \ge p$ *, there is a partition* s = uvxyz *that* 

- for each  $i \ge 0$ ,  $uv^i xy^i z \in A$ ;
- **2** |vy| > 0; and
- $|vxy| \le p.$

#### Proof.

Let  $G = (V, \Sigma, R, T)$  be a context-free grammar for A. Define b to be the maximum number of symbols in the right-hand side of a rule. Observe that a parse tree of height h has at most  $b^h$  leaves and hence can generate strings of length at most  $b^h$ . Choose  $p = b^{|V|+1}$ . Let  $s \in A$  with  $|s| \ge p$  and  $\tau$  the smallest parse tree for s. Then the height of  $\tau \ge |V| + 1$ . There are |V| + 1 variables along

the longest branch. A variable R must appear twice.

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### Pumping Lemma for CFLs



(Fig. from M. Sipser's class notes)

#### Proof. (cont'd).

From Figure (a), we see  $uv^i xy^i z \in A$  for  $i \ge 0$ . Suppose |vy| = 0. Then Figure (b) is a smaller parse tree than  $\tau$ . A contradiction. Hence |vy| > 0. Finally, recall *R* is in the longest branch of length |V| + 1. Hence the subtree *R* generating vxy has height  $\le |V| + 1$ .  $|vxy| \le b^{|V|+1} = p$ .

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### Pumping Lemma – Examples

#### Example

Show  $B = \{a^n b^n c^n : n \ge 0\}$  is not a context-free language.

Proof.

Let *p* be the pumping length.  $s = a^p b^p c^p \in B$ . Consider a partition s = uvxyz with |vy| > 0. There are two cases:

uvxyz

• *v* or *y* contain more than one type of symbol, e.g.,

aaaa aab bbbbbcccccc. Then  $uv^2xy^2z \notin B$ .

• *v* and *y* contain only one type of symbol, e.g.,

aaa aa ab bb bbbcccccc. Then one of a, b, or c does not appear in v nor y (pigeon hole principle). Hence  $uv^2xy^2z \notin B$  for |vy| > 0.

### Pumping Lemma – Examples

#### Example

Show  $C = \{a^i b^j c^k : 0 \le i \le j \le k\}$  is not a context-free language.

#### Proof.

Let *p* be the pumping length and  $s = a^p b^p c^p \in C$ . Consider any partition s = uvxyz with |vy| > 0. There are two cases:

- *v* or *y* contain more than one type of symbol. Then  $uv^2xy^2z \notin C$ .
- *v* and *y* contain only one type of symbol. Then one of a, b, or c does not appear in *v* nor *y*. We have three subcases:
  - a does not appear in *v* nor *y*.  $uxz \notin C$  for it has more a then b or c.
  - b does not appear in v nor y. Since |vy| > 0, a or c must appear in v or y. If a appears,  $uv^2xy^2z \notin C$  for it has more a than b. If c appears,  $uxy \notin C$  for it has more b than c.
  - c does not appear in v nor y.  $uv^2xy^2z \notin C$  for it has less c than a or b.

#### Example

Show  $D = \{ww : w \in \{0, 1\}^*\}$  is not a context-free language.

#### Proof.

Let *p* be the pumping length and  $s = 0^p 1^p 0^p 1^p$ . Consider a partition s = uvxyz with |vy| > 0 and  $|vxy| \le p$ . If  $0 \cdots 0 \overline{0 \cdots 01 \cdots 1} 1 \cdots 10^p 1^p$ ,  $uv^2xy^2z$  moves 1 into the second half and thus  $uv^2xy^2z \notin D$ . Similarly,  $uv^2xy^2z$  moves 0 into the first half if  $0^p 1^p 0 \cdots 0 \overline{0 \cdots 01 \cdots 1} 1 \cdots 1$ . It remains to consider  $0^p 1 \cdots 1 \overline{1 \cdots 10 \cdots 0} 0 \cdots 01^p$ . But then  $uxz = 0^p 1^i 0^j 1^p$  with i < p or j < p for |vy| > 0.  $uxz \notin D$ .

### Non-Decision Properties

- Many questions that can be decided for regular sets cannot be decided for CFLs.
- Example: Are two CFLs the same?
- Example: Are two CFLs disjoint?
- Need theory of Turing machines and decidability to prove no algorithm exists.

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### Testing Membership (Cocke-Younger-Kasami Algo.)

- Test " $w = a_1...a_n \in L(G)$ ?", assuming G in CNF.
- Algorithm (CYK) is a good example of dynamic programming and runs in time  $O(n^3)$ , where n = |w|.
  - We construct an *n*-by-*n* lower triangular array of sets of variables.

• 
$$X_{ij} = \{A \mid A \Longrightarrow w_{i,j}\}$$
, where  $w_{i,j} = a_i \cdots a_j$ . Finally, ask if  $S \in X_{1n}$ .

- Basis:  $X_{ii} = \{A \mid A \rightarrow a_i \text{ is a production}\}$
- To compute *X<sub>ij</sub>* inductively, try all possible ways of splitting *a<sub>i</sub>…a<sub>j</sub>* into substrings.



### CYK Algorithm V (2)

- Basis:  $X_{ii} = \{A \mid A \rightarrow a_i \text{ is a production }\}.$
- Induction:  $X_{ij} = \{A \mid \text{ there is a production } A \to BC \text{ and an integer } k, i < k < j, B \in X_{ik}, C \in X_{k+1,j}\}.$

#### Example

Grammar:  $S \rightarrow AB$ ,  $A \rightarrow BC \mid a$ ,  $B \rightarrow AC \mid b$ ,  $C \rightarrow a \mid b$ String w = ababa

 $\label{eq:constraint} X_{11} {=} \{A,C\} \quad X_{22} {=} \{B,C\} \quad X_{33} {=} \{A,C\} \quad X_{44} {=} \{B,C\} \quad X_{55} {=} \{A,C\}$ 

$$X_{12} = \{B, S\}$$
  
 $X_{11} = \{A, C\}$   $X_{22} = \{B, C\}$   $X_{33} = \{A, C\}$   $X_{44} = \{B, C\}$   $X_{55} = \{A, C\}$ 

### Example (cont'd)

#### Example

Grammar: 
$$S \rightarrow AB$$
,  $A \rightarrow BC \mid a$ ,  $B \rightarrow AC \mid b$ ,  $C \rightarrow a \mid b$   
String  $w = ababa$ 

$$X_{13} = \{\} \qquad \text{Yields nothing} \\ X_{12} = \{B,S\} \qquad X_{23} = \{A\} \qquad X_{34} = \{B,S\} \qquad X_{45} = \{A\} \\ X_{11} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{22} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{33} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{44} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \\ X_{13} = \{A\} \qquad X_{24} = \{B,S\} \qquad X_{35} = \{A\} \\ X_{12} = \{B,S\} \qquad X_{23} = \{A\} \qquad X_{34} = \{B,S\} \qquad X_{45} = \{A\} \\ X_{11} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{22} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{33} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{44} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \\ X_{11} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{22} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{33} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{44} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \\ X_{11} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{22} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{33} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{44} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \\ X_{11} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{22} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{33} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{44} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \\ X_{11} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{22} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{33} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{44} = \{B,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \\ X_{55} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \\ X_{55} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \\ X_{55} = \{A,C\} \qquad X_{55} = \{A,C\} \qquad$$

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### Example (cont'd)

#### Example

Grammar:  $S \rightarrow AB$ ,  $A \rightarrow BC \mid a$ ,  $B \rightarrow AC \mid b$ ,  $C \rightarrow a \mid b$ String w = ababa



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### Example (cont'd)

#### Example

#### Grammar: $S \rightarrow AB$ , $A \rightarrow BC \mid a$ , $B \rightarrow AC \mid b$ , $C \rightarrow a \mid b$ String w = ababa



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Given a CFG  $G = (V, \Sigma, P, S)$  in CNF, construct a set

 $T = \{A \mid A \Longrightarrow w, w \in \Sigma^*\}$  iteratively in the following way:

• Let 
$$T = \{A \mid A \to a \in P, a \in \Sigma_{\epsilon}\}.$$

So For all rules  $B \to CD \in P$ , if  $C, D \in T$ , then  $T = T \cup \{B\}$ .

Separate Step (2) until no more variable is added to *T*. Claim:  $S \in T$  iff  $L(G) \neq \emptyset$ .

### **Testing Infiniteness**

- The idea is essentially the same as for regular languages.
- Use the pumping lemma constant *n*. If there is a string in the language of length between *n* and 2n - 1, then the language is infinite; otherwise not.



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### Closure Properties of CFLs

- CFLs are closed under union, concatenation, and Kleene closure.
- Also, under reversal, homomorphisms and inverse homomorphisms.
- But not under intersection or difference.

### Closure of CFLs Under Reversal

- If L is a CFL with grammar G, form a grammar for L<sup>R</sup> by reversing the right side of every production.
- Example: Let G have  $S \rightarrow 0S1 \mid 01$ .
- The reversal of L(G) has grammar  $S \rightarrow 1S0 \mid 10$ .

### Closure of CFLs Under Homomorphism

- Let L be a CFL with grammar G.
- Let h be a homomorphism on the terminal symbols of G.
- Construct a grammar for h(L) by replacing each terminal symbol a by h(a).

#### Example

*G* has productions  $S \to 0S1 \mid 01$ . *h* is defined by  $h(0) = ab, h(1) = \epsilon$ . h(L(G)) has the grammar with productions  $S \to abS \mid ab$ .

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### Closure of CFLs Under Inverse Homomorphism

- Here, grammars don't help us.
- But a PDA construction serves nicely.
- Intuition: Let L = L(P) for some PDA P.
- Construct PDA P' to accept  $h^{-1}(L)$ .
- P' simulates P, but keeps, as one component of a two-component state a buffer that holds the result of applying h to one input symbol.

### Closure of CFLs Under Inverse Homomorphism

Consider a homomorphism h(0) = aba, h(1) = bc. Suppose PDA *P* accepts *ababc*. The following is the way how *P*' accepts  $h^{-1}(ababc) = 01$ .

- Each state of *P*' is of the form [q, z], where *q* is a state of *P* and  $z \in \{a, b, c\}^*$ .
- *P*' starts in state [*q*<sub>0</sub>, *ϵ*], upon reading input 0, *P*' moves to [*q*<sub>0</sub>, *aba*]; then simulate *P*'s computation on *aba* as follows
  - $\blacktriangleright \quad [q_0,\epsilon] \stackrel{0,\epsilon \to \epsilon}{\to} [q_0,aba] \stackrel{\epsilon,\alpha \to \beta}{\to} [q_1,ba] \stackrel{\epsilon}{\to} [q_2,a] \stackrel{\epsilon,-}{\to} [q_3,\epsilon]$
  - in the above, [q<sub>0</sub>, aba] → [q<sub>1</sub>, ba] simulates (q<sub>1</sub>, α → β) ∈ δ(q<sub>0</sub>, a) (i.e., specified in the transition function of *P*).
- in state [q<sub>3</sub>, ε], upon reading input 1, P' moves to [q<sub>3</sub>, bc]; then simulate P's computation on bc as follows

▶  $[q_3, \epsilon] \xrightarrow{1, \epsilon \to \epsilon} [q_3, bc] \xrightarrow{\epsilon, -} [q_4, c] \xrightarrow{\epsilon, -} [q_5, \epsilon]$ , where  $q_5$  is an accept state.

- Hence, *P*′ accepts 01.
- *P*′ updates the stack in the same way as *P* does.

### Construction of P'

- States are pairs [q, b], where:
  - q is a state of P.
  - 2 *b* is a suffix of h(a) for some symbol *a*.

Thus, only a finite number of possible values for *b*.

- Stack symbols of P' are those of P.
- Start state of P' is  $[q_0, \epsilon]$ .
- Input symbols of *P*' are the symbols to which *h* applies.
- Final states of P' are the states [q, ε] such that q is a final state of P.



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### Transitions of P'

- δ'(([q, ε], a, X) = {([q, h(a)], X)} for any input symbol a of P' and any stack symbol X.
  - ▶ When the buffer is empty, P' can reload it.
- **2**  $\delta'([q, bw], \epsilon, X)$  contains  $([p, w], \alpha)$  if  $\delta(q, b, X)$  contains  $(p, \alpha)$ , where *b* is either an input symbol of *P* or  $\epsilon$ .
  - Simulate P from the buffer.

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### Intersection with a Regular Language

- Intersection of two CFL's need not be context free.
- But the intersection of a CFL with a regular language is always a CFL.
- Proof involves running a DFA in parallel with a PDA, and noting that the combination is a PDA. (PDAs accept by final state.)



### Formal Construction

- Let the DFA A have transition function  $\delta_A$ .
- Let the PDA P have transition function  $\delta_P$ .
- States of combined PDA are [q, p], where q is a state of A and p a state of P.
- δ([q, p], a, X) contains ([δ<sub>A</sub>(q, a), r], α) if δ<sub>P</sub>(p, a, X) contains (r, α). Note a could be ε, in which case δ<sub>A</sub>(q, a) = q.
- Accepting states of combined PDA are those [q, p] such that q is an accepting state of A and p is an accepting state of P.
- Easy induction:  $([q_0, p_0], w, Z_0) \stackrel{*}{\vdash} ([q, p], \epsilon, \alpha)$  if and only if  $\delta_A(q_0, w) = q$  and in  $P : (p_0, w, Z_0) \stackrel{*}{\vdash} (p, \epsilon, \alpha)$ .

### ${x^ny^n \mid n \ge 0} \cup {x^ny^{2n} \mid n \ge 0}$ Not a DPDA Language

#### Theorem

 $CFL L = \{x^ny^n \mid n \ge 0\} \cup \{x^ny^{2n} \mid n \ge 0\}$  cannot be acceptable by a DPDA.

#### Proof.

Assume, otherwise, that DPDA M accepts L. We construct a new DPDA  $M_0$  which consists of "two modified copies"  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  of M in the following way:

- the initial state of *M*<sub>0</sub> is the initial state of *M*<sub>1</sub>, and the final states of *M*<sub>0</sub> are the final states of *M*<sub>2</sub>,
- remove all *x* transitions from M<sub>2</sub>,
- replace all the *y* transitions of  $M_2$  with *z* transitions,
- for each *y* transition emanating from an accept state of *M*<sub>1</sub>, remove that transition and add a *z* transition to its "copy" in *M*<sub>2</sub>,
- remove all *x* transitions emanating from accept states of *M*<sub>1</sub>,
- update on the stack remains unchanged.

### ${x^ny^n \mid n \ge 0} \cup {x^ny^{2n} \mid n \ge 0}$ Not a DPDA Language

#### Proof.

- Claim:  $L(M_0) \subseteq x^*y^*z^*$ 
  - The prefix before entering  $M_2$  must be accepted by  $M_1$ . Hence, the prefix must be of the form  $x^n y^n$  or  $x^n y^{2n}$ .
- If  $M_0$  accepts  $x^n y^n z^i$   $(i \ge 1)$ , then M must accept  $x^n y^{n+i}$ , only possible if i = n.
- Hence,  $M_0$  accepts  $\{x^n y^n z^n \mid n \ge 1\}$  a contradiction.



### Deterministic Context-Free Languages

- Deterministic PDA: in state *q* reading *a* with *x* at top of stack, at most one transition can apply.
  - if  $q \stackrel{\epsilon, \epsilon \to \epsilon}{\to} p$  exists, it is the only transition in *q*;
  - $q \xrightarrow{a,x \to y} p$  cannot co-exist with either  $q \xrightarrow{a,\epsilon \to z} p'$  or  $q \xrightarrow{a,x \to z} p''$ .

## Theorem $Reg \subsetneq DCFL \subsetneq CFL$

#### Theorem

- DCFLs are closed under complement, union/intersection with regular languages.
- DCFLs are not closed under union, intersection, concatenation.

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### Closure Properties of DCFL

#### Proof.

• (Complementation - YES) [Proof Idea] swap accept/non-accept states but need to make sure that DPDA reads the entire string.

L = { $a^n b^n c^n | n \ge 0$ } is not CF, yet its complement  $\overline{L}$  is CF (Why?). So { $a^n b^n c^n | n \ge 0$ } is NOT a DCFL.

- (Union/Concatenation with Regular YES): Proof IdeaDPDA  $\times$  DFA  $\rightarrow$  DPDA.
- (Union NO)  $\overline{L}$  =
  - $\ \, \bullet \ \, \{a^ib^jc^k \mid i \neq j\} \cup \{a^ib^jc^k \mid i \neq k\} \cup \{a^ib^jc^k \mid j \neq k\} \cup \\$
  - (anything with ba, cb, ca)

Each of the above four sub-languages is DCFL. However, (1) is not DCFL; otherwise,  $\overline{L}$  is DCFL.

• (Intersection - NO):  $L \cup M = \overline{\overline{L} \cap \overline{M}}$ .

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### Closure Properties of DCFL

#### Proof.

• (Concatenation - NO):

Let  $L_1 = \{a^i b^j c^k \mid i \neq j\}$  and  $L_2 = \{a^i b^j c^k \mid j \neq k\}$ ; both are DCFLs.

$$L_3 = 0L_1 \cup L_2$$
 is a DCFL.

Claim:  $A = 0^*L_3$  is not a DCFL.

- Suppose *A* is a DCFL. Then  $A \cap 0a^*b^*c^*$  is a DCFL.
- $A \cap 0a^*b^*c^* = 0L_1 \cup 0L_2$  (a DCFL) implies  $L_1 \cup L_2$  is a DCFL. However,

$$L_1 \cup L_2 = \overline{L_1} \cap \overline{L_2} = \overline{\{a^n b^n c^n \mid n \ge 0\}} - \{\text{anything with } ba, cb, ca\}$$

As  $\overline{\{a^n b^n c^n \mid n \ge 0\}}$  is not a DCFL,  $L_1 \cup L_2$  is not a DCFL – a contradiction.

#### Note:

- If *L* is a DCFL and *R* is regular, *LR* is always a DCFL but *RL* may not be a DCFL
- DCFLs are interesting as they are closed under complementation, but not closed under union, intersection, concatenation.

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# Using Idea behind PDA $\Rightarrow$ CFG to Show Closure with Regular Sets

#### Theorem

CFLs are closed under intersection with regular languages.

#### Proof.

Let  $G = (V, \Sigma, R, S)$  be a CFG in CNF and  $N = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, \{q_f\})$  be an NFA with a unique accept state. We construct  $G' = (V', \Sigma, R', S')$  as follows. A variable in V' is of the form  $(q_i, A, q_j)$ , where  $q_i, q_j \in Q, A \in V$ 

**Claim**:  $(q_i, A, q_j) \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} w$  in G' iff  $q_i \stackrel{w}{\to} q_j$  in N and  $A \stackrel{*}{\Longrightarrow} w$  in G.