

Compiler Construction

Lecture 2: Lexical Analysis I (Introduction)

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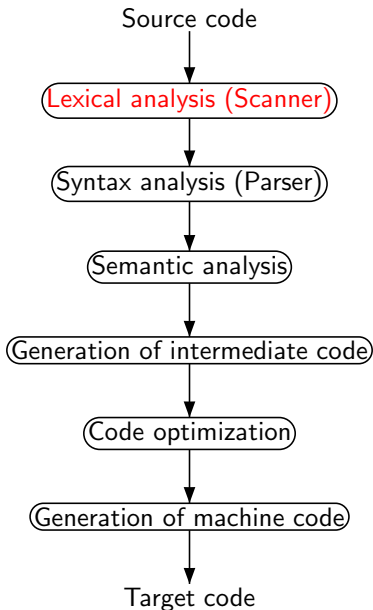
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Conceptual Structure of a Compiler



- 1 Problem Statement
- 2 Specification of Symbol Classes
- 3 The Simple Matching Problem

From Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary

Lexical: of or relating to words or the vocabulary of a language as distinguished from its grammar and construction

- **Starting point:** source program P as a **character sequence**
 - Ω (finite) **character set** (e.g., ASCII, ISO Latin-1, Unicode, ...)
 - $a, b, c, \dots \in \Omega$ **characters** (= lexical atoms)
 - $P \in \Omega^*$ **source program**
(of course, not every $w \in \Omega^*$ is a valid program)
- P exhibits **lexical structures**:
 - natural language for keywords, identifiers, ...
 - mathematical notation for numbers, formulae, ...
(e.g., $x^2 \rightsquigarrow x**2$)
 - spaces, linebreaks, indentation
 - comments and compiler directives (pragmas)
- Translation of P follows its **hierarchical structure** (later)

Observations

- 1 Syntactic atoms (called **symbols**) are represented as sequences of input characters, called **lexemes**

First goal of lexical analysis

Decomposition of program text into a **sequence of lexemes**

- 2 Differences between similar lexemes are (mostly) irrelevant (e.g., identifiers do not need to be distinguished)
 - lexemes grouped into **symbol classes** (e.g., identifiers, numbers, ...)
 - symbol classes abstractly represented by **tokens**
 - symbols identified by additional **attributes** (e.g., identifier names, numerical values, ...; required for semantic analysis and code generation)

⇒ **symbol = (token, attribute)**

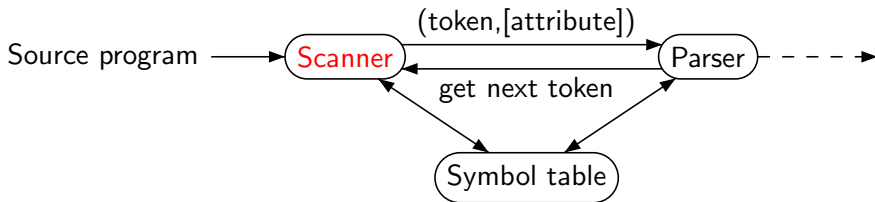
Second goal of lexical analysis

Transformation of a sequence of lexemes into a **sequence of symbols**

Definition 2.1

The goal of **lexical analysis** is to decompose a source program into a sequence of lexemes and their transformation into a sequence of symbols.

The corresponding program is called a **scanner** (or **lexer**):



Example:

$\dots _x1_ := y2 + _1_ ; _ \dots$
 $\Downarrow$
 $\dots (id, p_1)(gets,)(id, p_2)(plus,)(int, 1)(sem,) \dots$

Important Symbol Classes

- Identifiers:
- for naming variables, constants, types, procedures, classes, ...
 - usually a sequence of letters and digits (and possibly special symbols), starting with a letter
 - keywords usually forbidden; length possibly restricted

- Keywords:
- identifiers with a predefined meaning
 - for representing control structures (**while**), operators (**and**), ...

Numerals: certain sequences of digits, **+**, **-**, **.**, letters (for exponent and hexadecimal representation)

- Special symbols:
- one special character, e.g., **+**, *****, **<**, **(**, **;**, ...
 - ... or two or more special characters, e.g., **:=**, ******, **<=**, ...
 - each makes up a symbol class (**plus**, **gets**, ...)
 - ... or several combined into one class (**arithOp**)

- White spaces:
- blanks, tabs, linebreaks, ...
 - generally for separating symbols (exception: FORTRAN)
 - usually not represented by token (but just removed)

Representation of symbols: $\text{symbol} = (\text{token}, \text{attribute})$

Token: (binary) denotation of symbol class (`id`, `gets`, `plus`, ...)

Attribute: additional information required in later compilation phases

- reference to symbol table,
- value of numeral,
- concrete arithmetic/relational/Boolean operator, ...
- usually unused for singleton symbol classes

Observation: symbol classes are **regular sets**

- ⇒
- specification by **regular expressions**
 - recognition by **finite automata**
 - enables **automatic generation** of scanners (`[f]lex`)

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Definition 2.2 (Syntax of regular expressions)

Given some alphabet Ω , the set of **regular expressions** over Ω , RE_Ω , is the least set with

- $\emptyset \in RE_\Omega$,
- $\Omega \subseteq RE_\Omega$, and
- whenever $\alpha, \beta \in RE_\Omega$, also $\alpha \mid \beta, \alpha \cdot \beta, \alpha^* \in RE_\Omega$.

Remarks:

- abbreviations: $\alpha^+ := \alpha \cdot \alpha^*$, $\varepsilon := \emptyset^*$
- $\alpha \cdot \beta$ often written as $\alpha\beta$
- $*$ binds stronger than $\cdot$, $\cdot$ binds stronger than $\mid$
(i.e., $a \mid b \cdot c^* := a \mid (b \cdot (c^*))$)

Regular Expressions II

Regular expressions specify regular languages:

Definition 2.3 (Semantics of regular expressions)

The **semantics of a regular expression** is defined by the mapping

$$[\![\cdot]\!] : RE_{\Omega} \rightarrow 2^{\Omega^*} \text{ where}$$

$$[\![\emptyset]\!] := \emptyset$$

$$[\![a]\!] := \{a\}$$

$$[\![\alpha \mid \beta]\!] := [\![\alpha]\!] \cup [\![\beta]\!]$$

$$[\![\alpha \cdot \beta]\!] := [\![\alpha]\!] \cdot [\![\beta]\!]$$

$$[\![\alpha^*]\!] := [\![\alpha]\!]^*$$

Remarks: for formal languages $L, M \subseteq \Omega^*$, we have

- $L \cdot M := \{vw \mid v \in L, w \in M\}$
- $L^* := \bigcup_{n=0}^{\infty} L^n$ where $L^0 := \{\varepsilon\}$ and $L^{n+1} := L \cdot L^n$
(thus $L^* = \{w_1 w_2 \dots w_n \mid n \in \mathbb{N}, w_i \in L\}$ and $\varepsilon \in L^*$)
- $[\![\varepsilon]\!] = [\![\emptyset^*]\!] = [\![\emptyset]\!]^* = \emptyset^* = \{\varepsilon\}$

Example 2.4

❶ A keyword: `begin`

❷ Identifiers:

$(a \mid \dots \mid z \mid A \mid \dots \mid Z)(a \mid \dots \mid z \mid A \mid \dots \mid Z \mid 0 \mid \dots \mid 9 \mid \$ \mid _ \mid \dots)^*$

❸ (Unsigned) Integer numbers: $(0 \mid \dots \mid 9)^+$

❹ (Unsigned) Fixed-point numbers:

$((0 \mid \dots \mid 9)^+.(0 \mid \dots \mid 9)^*) \mid ((0 \mid \dots \mid 9)^*.(0 \mid \dots \mid 9)^+)$

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The Simple Matching Problem I

Problem 2.5 (Simple matching problem)

Given $\alpha \in RE_\Omega$ and $w \in \Omega^*$, decide whether $w \in \llbracket \alpha \rrbracket$ or not.

This problem can be solved using the following concept:

Definition 2.6 (Finite automaton)

A **nondeterministic finite automaton (NFA)** is of the form

$\mathfrak{A} = \langle Q, \Omega, \delta, q_0, F \rangle$ where

- Q is a finite set of **states**
- Ω denotes the **input alphabet**
- $\delta : Q \times \Omega_\epsilon \rightarrow 2^Q$ is the **transition function** where $\Omega_\epsilon := \Omega \cup \{\epsilon\}$
(notation: $q \xrightarrow{x} q'$ for $q' \in \delta(q, x)$)
- $q_0 \in Q$ is the **initial state**
- $F \subseteq Q$ is the set of **final states**

The set of all NFA over Ω is denoted by NFA_Ω .

If $\delta(q, \epsilon) = \emptyset$ and $|\delta(q, a)| = 1$ for every $q \in Q$ and $a \in \Omega$ (i.e., $\delta : Q \times \Omega \rightarrow Q$), then $\mathfrak{A}$ is called **deterministic (DFA)**. Notation: DFA_Ω

The Simple Matching Problem II

Definition 2.7 (Acceptance condition)

Let $\mathfrak{A} = \langle Q, \Omega, \delta, q_0, F \rangle \in \text{NFA}_\Omega$ and $w = a_1 \dots a_n \in \Omega^*$.

- A w -labeled $\mathfrak{A}$ -run from q_1 to q_2 is a sequence of transitions

$$q_1 \xrightarrow{\varepsilon^*} \xrightarrow{a_1} \xrightarrow{\varepsilon^*} \xrightarrow{a_2} \xrightarrow{\varepsilon^*} \dots \xrightarrow{\varepsilon^*} \xrightarrow{a_n} \xrightarrow{\varepsilon^*} q_2$$

- $\mathfrak{A}$ **accepts** w if there is a w -labeled $\mathfrak{A}$ -run from q_0 to some $q \in F$
- The **language** recognized by $\mathfrak{A}$ is

$$L(\mathfrak{A}) := \{w \in \Omega^* \mid \mathfrak{A} \text{ accepts } w\}$$

- A language $L \subseteq \Omega^*$ is called **NFA-recognizable** if there exists a NFA $\mathfrak{A}$ such that $L(\mathfrak{A}) = L$

Example 2.8

NFA for $a^*b \mid a^*$ (on the board)

Remarks:

- NFA as specified in Definition 2.6 are sometimes called **NFA with ε -transitions (ε -NFA)**.
- For $\mathfrak{A} \in DFA_{\Omega}$, the acceptance condition yields $\hat{\delta} : Q \times \Omega^* \rightarrow Q$ with $\hat{\delta}(q, \varepsilon) = q$ and $\hat{\delta}(q, aw) = \hat{\delta}(\delta(q, a), w)$, and
$$L(\mathfrak{A}) = \{w \in \Omega^* \mid \hat{\delta}(q_0, w) \in F\}.$$

Known from *Formal Systems, Automata and Processes*:

Algorithm 2.9 (DFA method)

Input: regular expression $\alpha \in RE_{\Omega}$, input string $w \in \Omega^*$

- Procedure:
- 1 using *Kleene's Theorem*, construct $\mathfrak{A}_{\alpha} \in NFA_{\Omega}$ such that $L(\mathfrak{A}_{\alpha}) = \llbracket \alpha \rrbracket$
 - 2 apply *powerset construction* to obtain $\mathfrak{A}'_{\alpha} = \langle Q', \Omega, \delta', q'_0, F' \rangle \in DFA_{\Omega}$ with $L(\mathfrak{A}'_{\alpha}) = L(\mathfrak{A}_{\alpha}) = \llbracket \alpha \rrbracket$
 - 3 solve the *matching problem* by deciding whether $\hat{\delta}'(q'_0, w) \in F'$

Output: “yes” or “no”

The powerset construction involves the following concept:

Definition 2.10 (ε -closure)

Let $\mathfrak{A} = \langle Q, \Omega, \delta, q_0, F \rangle \in NFA_{\Omega}$. The ε -closure $\varepsilon(T) \subseteq Q$ of a subset $T \subseteq Q$ is defined by

- $T \subseteq \varepsilon(T)$ and
- if $q \in \varepsilon(T)$, then $\delta(q, \varepsilon) \subseteq \varepsilon(T)$

Example 2.11

- 1 Kleene's Theorem (on the board)
- 2 Powerset construction (on the board)