



42nd International Symposium on Theoretical Aspects of Computer Science
(STACS 2025)

On Cascades of Reset Automata

Roberto Borelli – University of Udine

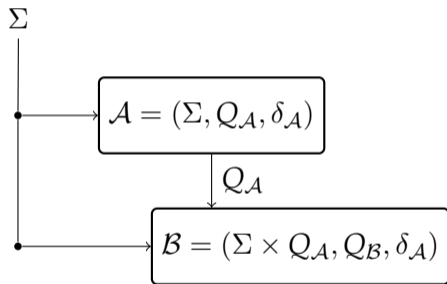
Luca Geatti – University of Udine

Marco Montali – Free University of Bozen-Bolzano

Angelo Montanari – University of Udine

Jena, March 04-07, 2025

BACKGROUND

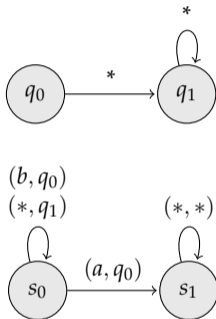


Definition

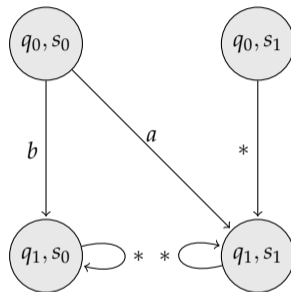
The **cascade product between \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B}** , denoted with $\mathcal{A} \circ \mathcal{B}$, is the semiautomaton $(\Sigma, Q_A \times Q_B, \delta)$ such that, for all $(q_A, q_B) \in Q_A \times Q_B$ and for all $a \in \Sigma$:

$$\delta((q_A, q_B), a) = (\delta_A(q_A, a), \delta_B(q_B, (a, q_A)))$$

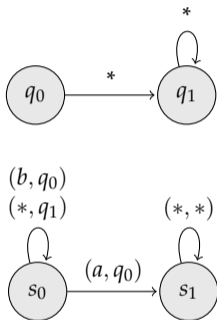
The cascade product is a generalization of the classical direct product.



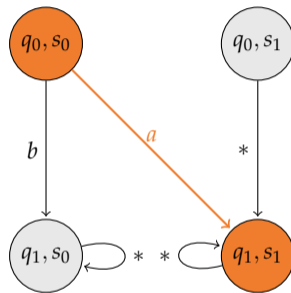
Semiautomata \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} .



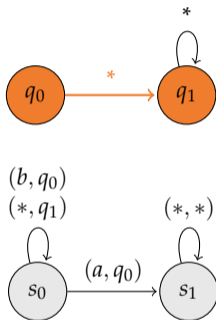
The cascade product $\mathcal{A} \circ \mathcal{B}$.



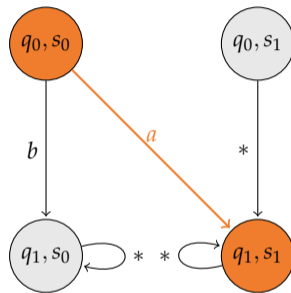
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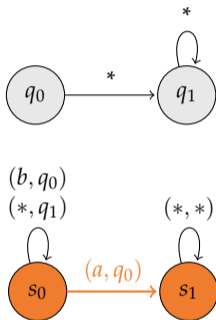


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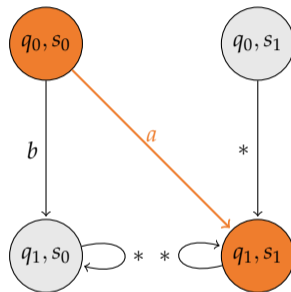


Cascades of semiautomata

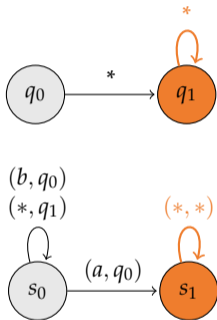
An example



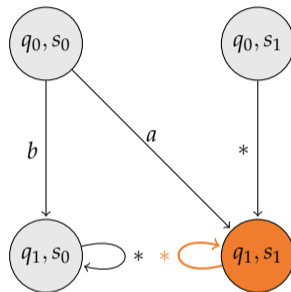
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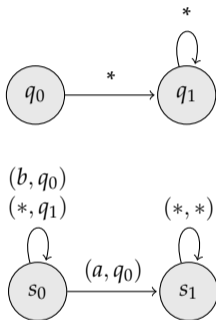
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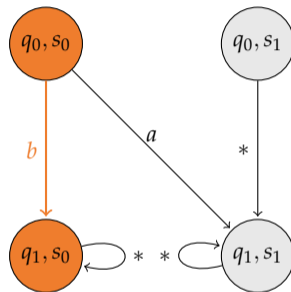
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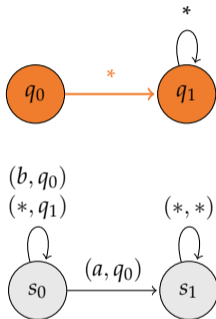


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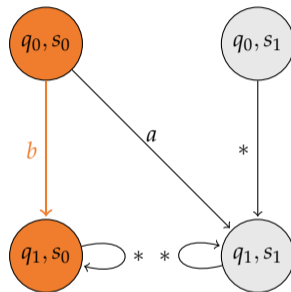


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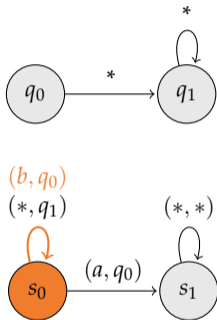
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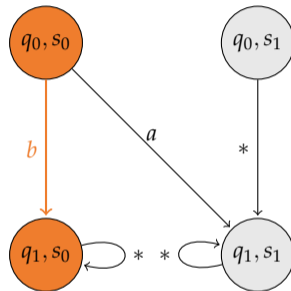
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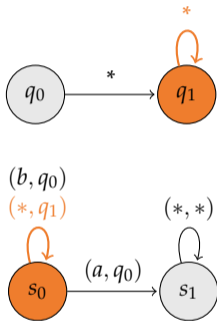
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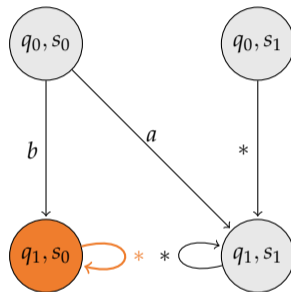
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Semiautomata \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} .



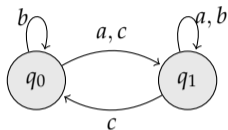
The cascade product $\mathcal{A} \circ \mathcal{B}$.

Definition

Let $\mathcal{A} = (\Sigma, Q, \delta)$ be a semiautomaton.
 For each symbol $a \in \Sigma$, we define the **function induced by a in \mathcal{A}** , denoted by τ_a , as the transformation

$$\tau_a : Q \rightarrow Q$$

such that, for all $q \in Q$, it holds $\tau_a(q) = q'$ iff $\delta(q, a) = q'$.



τ_a



τ_b



τ_c

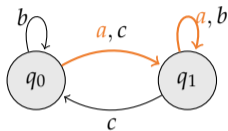


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 τ_a

 τ_b

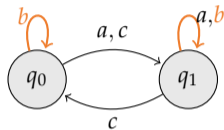
 τ_c


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τ_b



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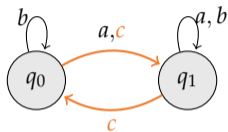


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τ_b



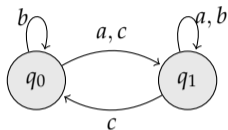
τ_c



Definition

Let $\tau : Q \rightarrow Q$. We say that τ is a

- **reset function** iff there exists $q' \in Q$ such that $\tau(q) = q'$, for all $q \in Q$. In this case, we say that τ is a *reset on q'* .
- **permutation** iff $\tau : Q \rightarrow Q$ is a bijection.



τ_a



reset

τ_b



permutation
(identity)

τ_c

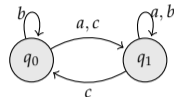


permutation

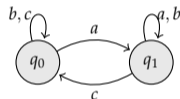
Definition

Let $\mathcal{A} = (\Sigma, Q, \delta)$ be a semiautomaton. We say that \mathcal{A} is:

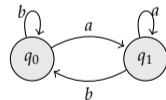
- a **permutation-reset semiautomaton** iff, for each $a \in \Sigma$, τ_a is either a permutation or a reset.
- a **reset semiautomaton** iff, for each $a \in \Sigma$, τ_a is either the *identity* function or a reset function;
- a **pure-reset semiautomaton** iff, for each $a \in \Sigma$, τ_a is a reset function.



(a) A permutation-reset semiautomaton.



(b) A reset semiautomaton.

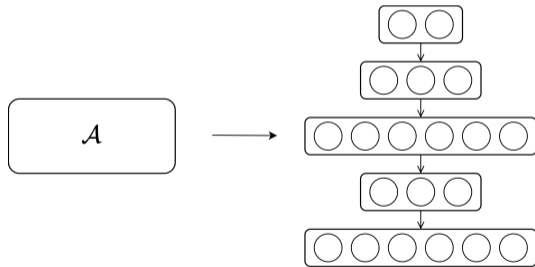


(c) A pure-reset semiautomaton.



In its automata-theoretic version, the Krohn-Rhodes theorem (1962) states that:

Any semiautomaton \mathcal{A} can be decomposed into a cascade \mathcal{C} of **permutation-reset semiautomata** such that there exists an homomorphism from the \mathcal{C} to \mathcal{A} .

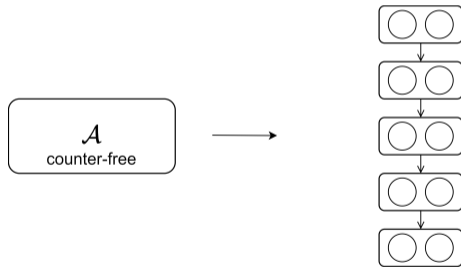




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If \mathcal{A} comes from an LTL formula, then each component in \mathcal{C} is a **two-state reset semiautomaton**.





① Cascades of Automata

- We define cascades of automata, and from this point onward, **we will focus on cascades of reset automata**.
- Regular expressions associated with cascades.

② Expressiveness Results

- *Hierarchy Lemmas*: What happens if we increase the number of components? And what about the number of states in the first component?
- *Narrowing Lemma*: What happens if we restrict ourselves to two-state cascades?

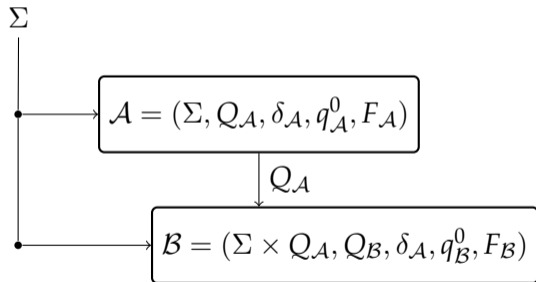
③ Efficient Closure Properties

- Intersection, union, complementation, and left concatenation over Σ .

CASCADES OF AUTOMATA



We generalize the notion of cascade product of semiautomata to automata.



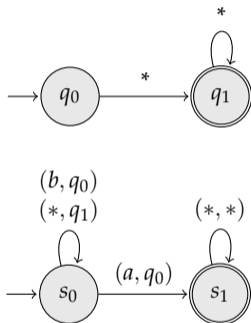
Definition

The **cascade product between \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B}** , is the automaton $(\Sigma, Q_A \times Q_B, \delta, (q_A^0, q_B^0), F_A \times F_B)$ where δ is defined as in the case of cascades of semiautomata.

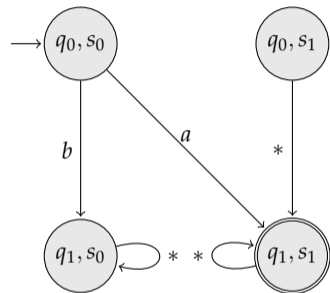


Cascades of automata

An example



Automata \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} .



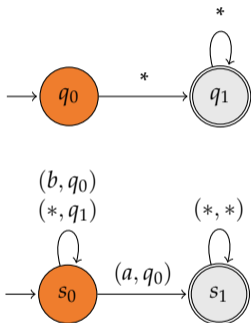
The cascade product $\mathcal{A} \circ \mathcal{B}$.

$$\mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A} \circ \mathcal{B}) = a \cdot \Sigma^*$$

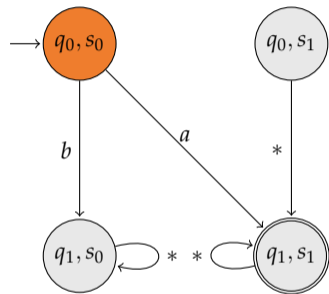


Cascades of automata

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Automata \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} .



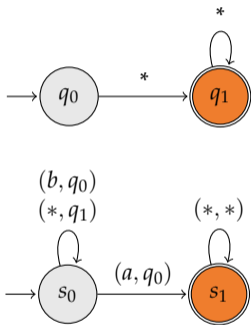
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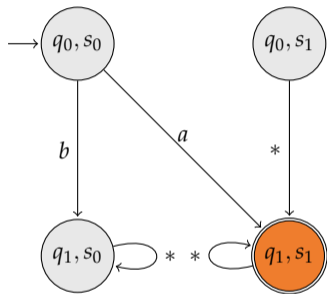


Cascades of automata

An example



Automata \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} .



The cascade product $\mathcal{A} \circ \mathcal{B}$.

$$\mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A} \circ \mathcal{B}) = a \cdot \Sigma^*$$



Theorem

Let Σ be a finite alphabet. A language $\mathcal{L} \subseteq \Sigma^*$ is recognized by a reset automaton \mathcal{A} if and only if

$$\mathcal{L} = J \cup (\Sigma^* \cdot R \cdot I^*)$$

for some $I, R \subseteq \Sigma$ such that $I \cap R = \emptyset$ and either $J = I^*$ or $J = \emptyset$.

Accepting runs of \mathcal{A} :



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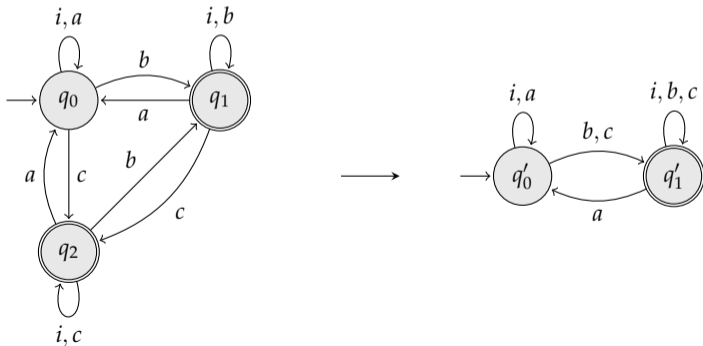
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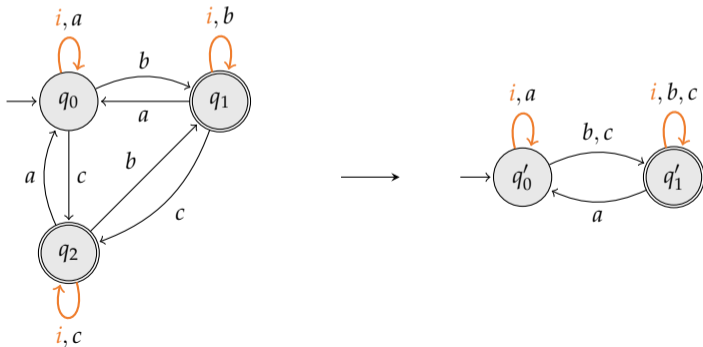
Corollary

For every reset automaton, there exists an equivalent one with two states, exactly one of which is final.



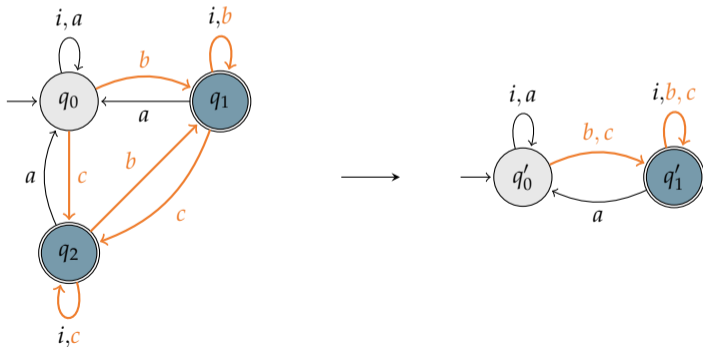
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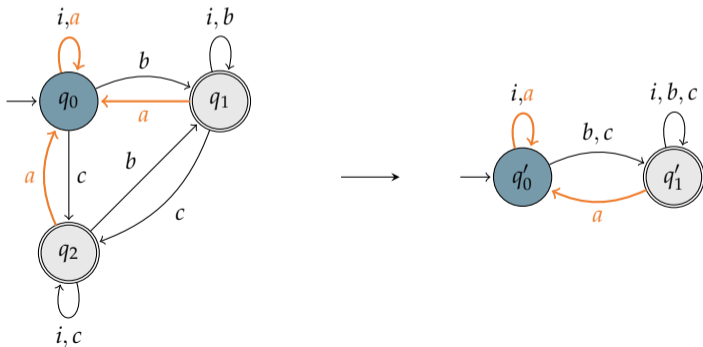
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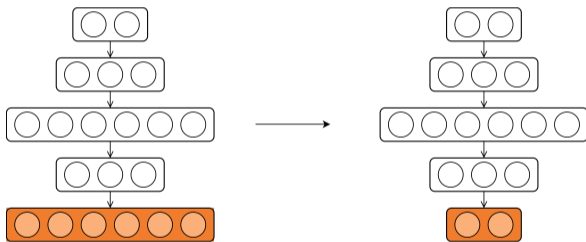
Cascades of height 1 for LTL_f formulas

Reset cascade decomposition is relevant in problems such as pastification and **normalization** of temporal logic formulas. It is crucial to study which LTL_f formulas can be expressed with cascades of resets of a specific height.

LTL_f formula	Regular Expression	Definable by a reset cascade of height 1
Fp	$\Sigma^* \cdot \vec{p}$	✓
p	$\vec{p} \cdot \Sigma^*$	✗
$p \cup q$	$(\vec{p})^* \cdot \vec{q} \cdot \Sigma^*$	✗

Lemma

The last automaton of a reset cascade can always be restricted to be a two-state reset automaton with exactly one final state.





Theorem

Let $\mathcal{A} = \langle \Sigma, Q, \delta_A, q_0, F_A \rangle$ be an automaton and let $\mathcal{B} = \langle \Sigma \times Q, \{s_0, s_1\}, \delta, s_0, \{s_f\} \rangle$, with $s_f \in \{s_0, s_1\}$, be a two-state reset automaton with one final state. It holds that:

$$\mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A} \circ \mathcal{B}) = M \cup \bigcup_{(\sigma, q) \in R_{s_f}} \mathcal{L}_q(\mathcal{A}) \cdot \sigma \cdot \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A} \downarrow_{I_B}^{\delta_A(q, \sigma)})$$

where R_{s_f} is the set of symbols in that induce a reset function on state s_f , and $M := \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A} \downarrow_{I_B}^{q_0})$ if $s_0 = s_f$ or $M := \emptyset$ otherwise.



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The automaton \mathcal{B} takes a reset transition to its final state:



Theorem

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The automaton \mathcal{B} takes a reset transition to its final state: (i) \mathcal{A} must be in state q and (ii) the input symbol must be σ .



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$$\mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A} \circ \mathcal{B}) = M \cup \bigcup_{(\sigma, q) \in R_{s_f}} \mathcal{L}_q(\mathcal{A}) \cdot \sigma \cdot \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A} \downarrow_{I_B}^{\delta_A(q, \sigma)})$$

where R_{s_f} is the set of symbols in that induce a reset function on state s_f , and $M := \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A} \downarrow_{I_B}^{q_0})$ if $s_0 = s_f$ or $M := \emptyset$ otherwise.

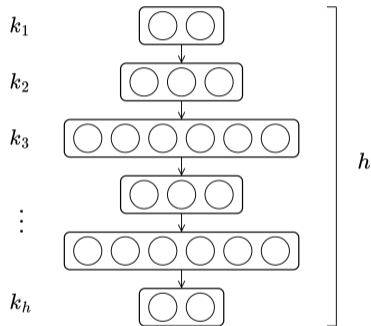
The automaton \mathcal{A} after reading σ , must reach a final state using only certain transitions that allow \mathcal{B} to remain in its final state by following identity transitions.

EXPRESSIVENESS RESULTS



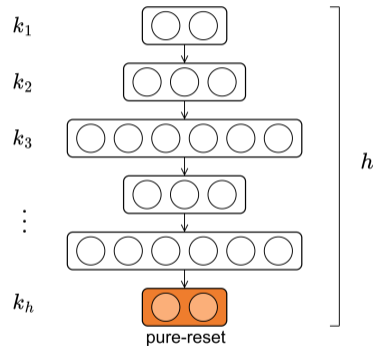
Definition

- $\mathcal{R}(k_1, \dots, k_h)$: languages definable by a cascade $\mathcal{A}_1 \circ \dots \circ \mathcal{A}_h$ of reset automata such that \mathcal{A}_i has k_i states, for each $1 \leq i \leq h$.



Definition

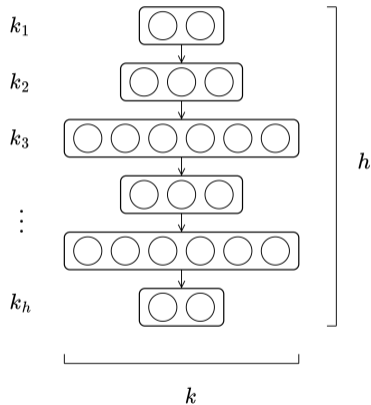
- $\mathcal{R}(k_1, \dots, k_h)$: languages definable by a cascade $\mathcal{A}_1 \circ \dots \circ \mathcal{A}_h$ of reset automata such that \mathcal{A}_i has k_i states, for each $1 \leq i \leq h$.
- $\mathcal{RPR}(k_1, \dots, k_h)$: subclass of $\mathcal{R}(k_1, \dots, k_h)$ where the last automaton (\mathcal{A}_h) is required to be pure-reset.





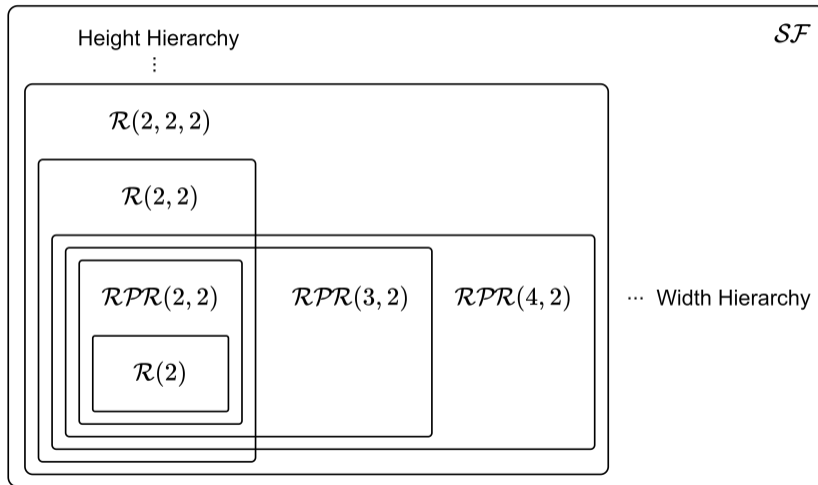
Definition

- $\mathcal{R}(k_1, \dots, k_h)$: languages definable by a cascade $\mathcal{A}_1 \circ \dots \circ \mathcal{A}_h$ of reset automata such that \mathcal{A}_i has k_i states, for each $1 \leq i \leq h$.
- $\mathcal{RPR}(k_1, \dots, k_h)$: subclass of $\mathcal{R}(k_1, \dots, k_h)$ where the last automaton (\mathcal{A}_h) is required to be pure-reset.
- \mathcal{R}_k^h : languages definable by a reset cascade of height h , where each component has $\leq k$ states.





Overall picture of expressiveness





A reset automaton in cascade with a pure-reset layer, is able to recognize the set of words ending with a two-character suffix. This is impossible using a single reset automaton.

Lemma

*Let $L = \Sigma^*aa$. It holds that:*

- 1 $L \in \mathcal{RPR}(2, 2)$;
- 2 $L \notin \mathcal{R}(2)$.



Prohibiting identities in the final layer results in a loss of expressive power no matter of the number of states of the first automaton.

Lemma

Let Σ be an alphabet with at least two symbols, let $L = a\Sigma^*$. It holds that:

- 1 $L \in \mathcal{R}(2, 2)$;
- 2 $L \notin \mathcal{RPR}(k, 2)$, for every $k \geq 2$.



We have seen that the final component of a reset cascade can always be restricted to be two-state. This does not apply to the first component.

Lemma

For each $k > 2$, let $\Sigma = \{\sigma_0, \dots, \sigma_{k-1}\}$. Let $L_k = \Sigma^* \left(\Sigma^2 \setminus \bigcup_{0 \leq i < k} \sigma_i \sigma_i \right) \cup (\Sigma \setminus \sigma_0)$, it holds that:

- 1 $L_k \in \mathcal{RPR}(k, 2)$;
- 2 $L_k \notin \mathcal{R}(k-1, 2)$.



We have seen that some languages cannot be expressed by cascades of height 1. For any given height, there exists a language that cannot be captured at that height, provided the components of the cascade are restricted to two-state resets.

Lemma

For each $h \geq 2$, let $L_h = \Sigma^{h-2}a\Sigma^*$. It holds that:

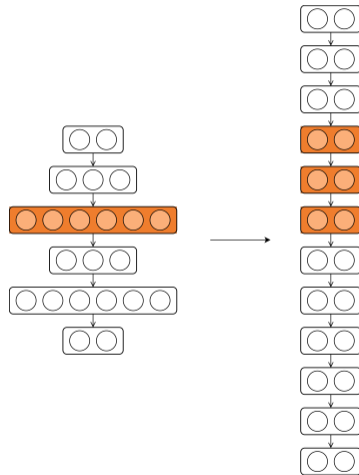
- 1 $L_h \in \mathcal{R}_2^h$;
- 2 $L_h \notin \mathcal{R}_2^{h-1}$.



The Narrowing Lemma

Lemma

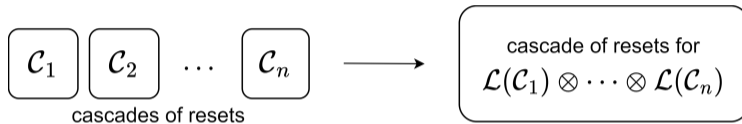
A cascade of resets can be transformed into a cascade composed entirely of two-state resets, with a quadratic increase of the height.



EFFICIENT CLOSURE PROPERTIES

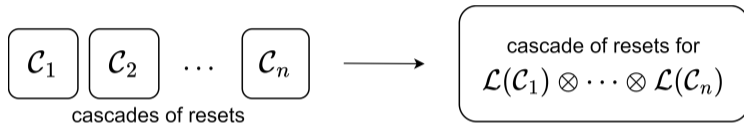


Closure of cascades of resets



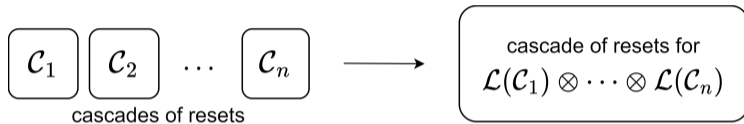


Closure of cascades of resets



We treat the cases where \otimes is:

- Intersection
- Negation
- Union
- Left concatenation of Σ



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- Intersection
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We achieve closure properties by:

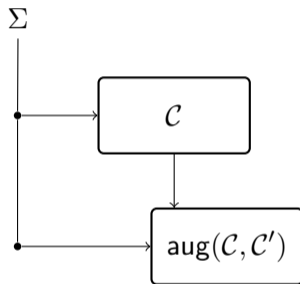
- adding two-states pure-reset components
- modifying original cascades with operations that do not alter the property of being a reset cascade



Lemma

Let \mathcal{C} and \mathcal{C}' be two reset cascades of height respectively n and m . There exists a reset cascade for the language $\mathcal{L}(\mathcal{C}) \cap \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{C}')$ of height $n + m$.

The cascade $\boxed{\text{aug}(\mathcal{C}, \mathcal{C}')}$ behaves like \mathcal{C}' and ignores the state of \mathcal{C} . Furthermore it holds that $\mathcal{C} \circ \text{aug}(\mathcal{C}, \mathcal{C}') = \mathcal{C} \times \mathcal{C}'$.



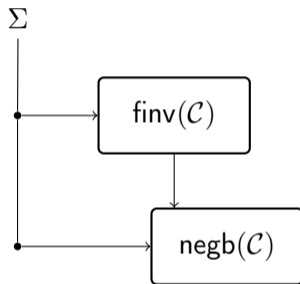


Lemma

Let \mathcal{C} be a reset cascade of height n . There exists a reset cascade for the language $\overline{\mathcal{L}(\mathcal{C})}$ of height $n + 1$.

The cascade $\boxed{\text{finv}(\mathcal{C})}$ is the cascade \mathcal{C} with all states set as final.

The block $\boxed{\text{negb}(\mathcal{C})}$ reaches a final state whenever \mathcal{C} is in a non final state and viceversa.

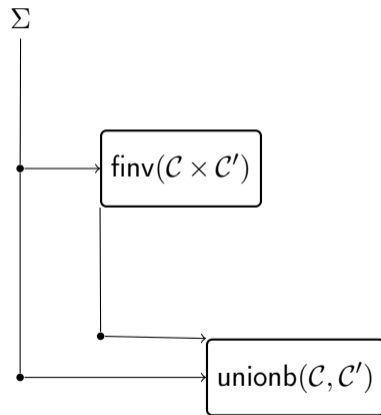




Lemma

Let \mathcal{C} and \mathcal{C}' be two reset cascades of height respectively n and m . There exists a reset cascade for the language $\mathcal{L}(\mathcal{C}) \cup \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{C}')$ of height $n + m + 1$.

The block $\text{unionb}(\mathcal{C}, \mathcal{C}')$ reaches a final state whenever either \mathcal{C} is in a final state or \mathcal{C}' is in a final state.

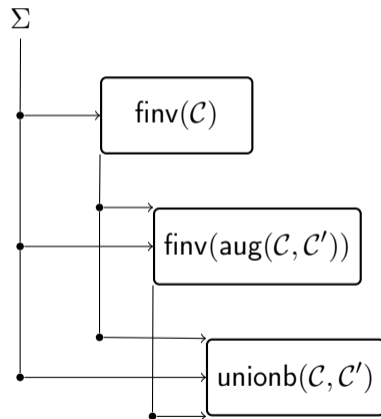




Lemma

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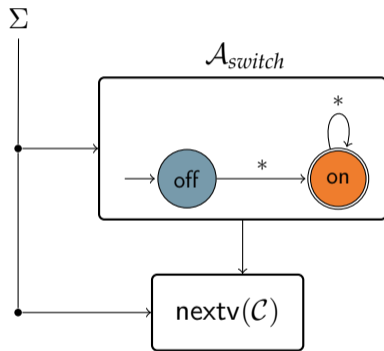


Lemma

Let \mathcal{C} be a reset cascade of height n . There exists a reset cascade for the language $\Sigma \cdot \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{C})$ of height $n + 1$.

The cascade $\boxed{\text{nextv}(\mathcal{C})}$:

- goes to its initial state (through a reset transition) whenever it reads **off**
- operates as \mathcal{C} whenever it reads **on**



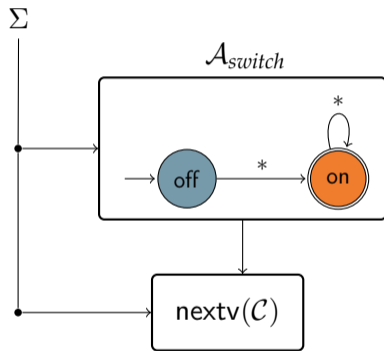
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- operates as \mathcal{C} whenever it reads **on**

Given a cascade of resets of height h for an LTL_f formula ϕ , we can construct a cascades of resets for $X(\phi)$ of height $h + 1$.



CONCLUSIONS



Summary of the results:

- We studied *cascades of reset automata* instead of semiautomata, deriving regular expressions and expressiveness bounds.
- Reset cascades are closed under fundamental operations with minimal structural modifications.

Future works:

- Closure under concatenation. This would enable efficient decomposition into reset cascades for full LTL_f .
- Extend the study to cascades of permutation automata.

THANK YOU!
ANY QUESTION?

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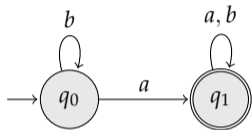
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APPENDIX

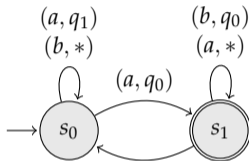


Language of a cascade of unbounded Height

An example



(a) The automaton \mathcal{A} .



(b) The automaton \mathcal{B} .



(c) The automaton $\mathcal{A} \downarrow_{I_B}^{s_1}$
where $I_B = \{(a, q_1), (b, q_0)\}$.

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A} \circ \mathcal{B}) &= \mathcal{L}_{q_0}(\mathcal{A}) \cdot a \cdot \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A} \downarrow_{I_B}^{s_1}) \\ &= b^* \cdot a \cdot a^* = b^* \cdot a^+ \end{aligned}$$