What are Formal Languages and Compilers?

Petr Zemek

Brno University of Technology, Faculty of Information Technology Božetěchova 2, 612 00 Brno, CZ http://www.fit.vutbr.cz/~izemek



Formal languages and compilers, 2012









- Examples:
 - gcc: .c file \rightarrow binary executable file
 - javac: .java file \rightarrow .class file





- Examples:
 - gcc: .c file \rightarrow binary executable file
 - javac: .java file \rightarrow .class file
- typically high-level code \rightarrow low-level code





• A language is a set of "legal" sentences.

- A language is a set of "legal" sentences.
- A sentence is a sequence of symbols.

- A language is a set of "legal" sentences.
- A sentence is a sequence of symbols.
- The symbols can be characters, words, punctuation, hieroglyphs, dots and dashes (Morse code), etc.

- A language is a set of "legal" sentences.
- A sentence is a sequence of symbols.
- The symbols can be characters, words, punctuation, hieroglyphs, dots and dashes (Morse code), etc.
- A formal language is a language defined by a finite set of unambiguous rules delimiting the legal sentences from the illegal ones.

- A language is a set of "legal" sentences.
- A sentence is a sequence of symbols.
- The symbols can be characters, words, punctuation, hieroglyphs, dots and dashes (Morse code), etc.
- A formal language is a language defined by a finite set of unambiguous rules delimiting the legal sentences from the illegal ones.

Example

Rules: $S \rightarrow aSb, S \rightarrow ab$ Starting symbol: STerminal symbols: a, b

- A language is a set of "legal" sentences.
- A sentence is a sequence of symbols.
- The symbols can be characters, words, punctuation, hieroglyphs, dots and dashes (Morse code), etc.
- A formal language is a language defined by a finite set of unambiguous rules delimiting the legal sentences from the illegal ones.

Example

Rules: $S \rightarrow aSb, S \rightarrow ab$ Starting symbol: STerminal symbols: a, b

The formal language: $\{a^n b^n : n \ge 1\}$

- A language is a set of "legal" sentences.
- A sentence is a sequence of symbols.
- The symbols can be characters, words, punctuation, hieroglyphs, dots and dashes (Morse code), etc.
- A formal language is a language defined by a finite set of unambiguous rules delimiting the legal sentences from the illegal ones.

Example

Rules: $S \rightarrow aSb, S \rightarrow ab$ Starting symbol: STerminal symbols: a, b

The formal language: $\{a^n b^n : n \ge 1\}$

• there are various models for describing formal languages

• underly many areas of theoretical computer science (mathematical logic, complexity theory, automata theory, graph theory, etc.)

- underly many areas of theoretical computer science (mathematical logic, complexity theory, automata theory, graph theory, etc.)
- provide formal models for describing formal languages

- underly many areas of theoretical computer science (mathematical logic, complexity theory, automata theory, graph theory, etc.)
- provide formal models for describing formal languages

Practical viewpoint: they have applications in many areas, like

description of programming languages, compilers

- underly many areas of theoretical computer science (mathematical logic, complexity theory, automata theory, graph theory, etc.)
- provide formal models for describing formal languages

- description of programming languages, compilers
- computer-aided art (turtle graphics, fractals)

- underly many areas of theoretical computer science (mathematical logic, complexity theory, automata theory, graph theory, etc.)
- provide formal models for describing formal languages

- description of programming languages, compilers
- computer-aided art (turtle graphics, fractals)
- modeling and simulation of biological organisms (plant development)

- underly many areas of theoretical computer science (mathematical logic, complexity theory, automata theory, graph theory, etc.)
- provide formal models for describing formal languages

- description of programming languages, compilers
- computer-aided art (turtle graphics, fractals)
- modeling and simulation of biological organisms (plant development)
- molecular genetics

- underly many areas of theoretical computer science (mathematical logic, complexity theory, automata theory, graph theory, etc.)
- provide formal models for describing formal languages

- description of programming languages, compilers
- computer-aided art (turtle graphics, fractals)
- modeling and simulation of biological organisms (plant development)
- molecular genetics
- coding theory and cryptography

- underly many areas of theoretical computer science (mathematical logic, complexity theory, automata theory, graph theory, etc.)
- provide formal models for describing formal languages

- description of programming languages, compilers
- computer-aided art (turtle graphics, fractals)
- modeling and simulation of biological organisms (plant development)
- molecular genetics
- coding theory and cryptography
- natural language processing

- underly many areas of theoretical computer science (mathematical logic, complexity theory, automata theory, graph theory, etc.)
- provide formal models for describing formal languages

- description of programming languages, compilers
- computer-aided art (turtle graphics, fractals)
- modeling and simulation of biological organisms (plant development)
- molecular genetics
- coding theory and cryptography
- natural language processing
- design of embedded systems

- underly many areas of theoretical computer science (mathematical logic, complexity theory, automata theory, graph theory, etc.)
- provide formal models for describing formal languages

- description of programming languages, compilers
- computer-aided art (turtle graphics, fractals)
- modeling and simulation of biological organisms (plant development)
- molecular genetics
- coding theory and cryptography
- natural language processing
- design of embedded systems
- ... and many other application areas



- introduction to formal languages and compiler construction
- models for describing formal languages (grammars, automata)
- using these models in compiler construction
- studying properties of these models



• getting five credits :) oh yeah!



- getting five credits :) oh yeah!
- introduce you to formal languages



- getting five credits :) oh yeah!
- introduce you to formal languages
- introduce you to compiler construction



- getting five credits :) oh yeah!
- introduce you to formal languages
- introduce you to compiler construction
- see applications of mathematics in computer science



- getting five credits :) oh yeah!
- introduce you to formal languages
- introduce you to compiler construction
- see applications of mathematics in computer science
- improve your English skills

That's all folks.