Regular Expressions

Definitions

Equivalence to Finite Automata

RE's: Introduction

- ***Regular expressions*** are an algebraic way to describe languages.
- They describe exactly the regular languages.
- If E is a regular expression, then L(E) is the language it defines.
- We'll describe RE's and their languages recursively.

RE's: Definition

- Basis 1: If *a* is any symbol, then a is a RE, and L(a) = {a}.
  - Note: {a} is the language containing one string, and that string is of length 1.
- Basis 2: ϵ is a RE, and L(ϵ) = {ϵ}.
- Basis 3: ∅ is a RE, and L(∅) = ∅.

RE' s: Definition – (2)

- Induction 1: If E_1 and E_2 are regular expressions, then E_1+E_2 is a regular expression, and $L(E_1+E_2) = L(E_1) \cup L(E_2)$.
- Induction 2: If E_1 and E_2 are regular expressions, then E_1E_2 is a regular expression, and $L(E_1E_2) = L(E_1)L(E_2)$.

Concatenation : the set of strings wx such that w Is in $L(E_1)$ and x is in $L(E_2)$.

RE's: Definition – (3)

- Induction 3: If E is a RE, then E* is a RE, and L(E*) = (L(E))*.

Closure, or "Kleene closure" = set of strings $w_1w_2\ldots w_n$, for some $n \geq 0$, where each w_i is in L(E).
Note: when n=0, the string is ϵ.

Precedence of Operators

- Parentheses may be used wherever needed to influence the grouping of operators.
- Order of precedence is * (highest), then concatenation, then + (lowest).

Examples: RE's

- $L(01) = \{01\}$.
- $L(01+0) = \{01, 0\}$.
- $L(0(1+0)) = \{01, 00\}$.
  - Note order of precedence of operators.
- $L(0^*) = \{\epsilon, 0, 00, 000, \dots\}$.
- $L((0+10)^*(\epsilon+1))$ = all strings of 0's and 1's without two consecutive 1's.

More Examples: RE' s

- L((0+1)*101(0+1)*) = all strings of 0's and 1's having 101 as a substring.
- L((0+1)*1(0+1)*0(0+1)*1(0+1)*) = all strings of 0's and 1's having 101 as a subsequence.
- L(1*(1*01*01*01*)*1*) =all strings of 0's and 1's having a number of 0's that is a multiple of 3.

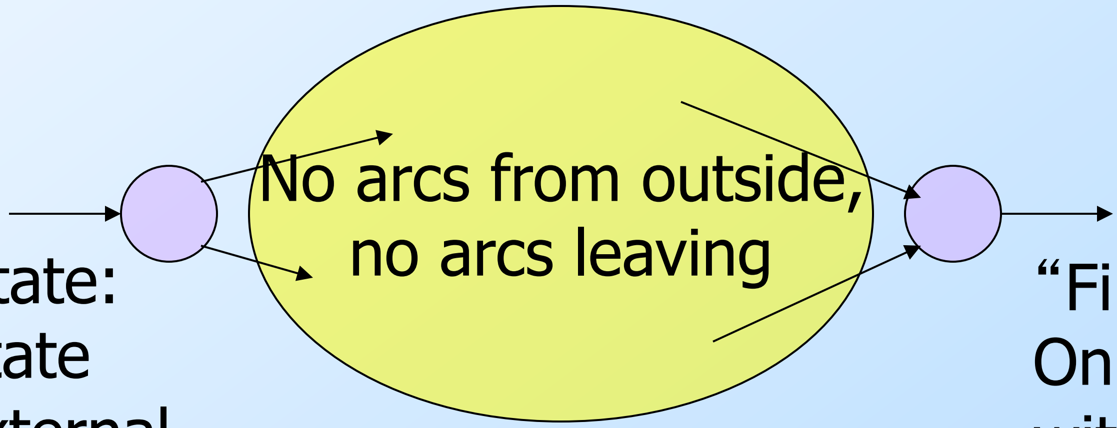
Equivalence of RE's and Automata

- We need to show that for every RE, there is an automaton that accepts the same language.
  - Pick the most powerful automaton type: the ϵ-NFA.
- And we need to show that for every automaton, there is a RE defining its language.
  - Pick the most restrictive type: the DFA.

Converting a RE to an ϵ-NFA

- Proof is an induction on the number of operators (+, concatenation, *) in the RE.
- We always construct an automaton of a special form (next slide).

Form of ϵ-NFA's Constructed

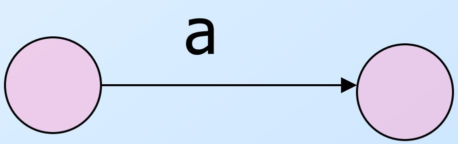


Start state:
Only state
with external
predecessors

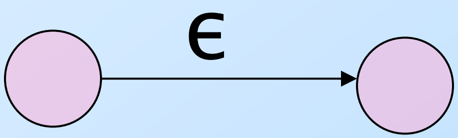
"Final" state:
Only state
with external
successors

RE to ϵ-NFA: Basis

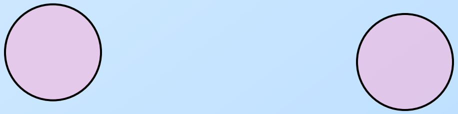
- Symbol **a**:



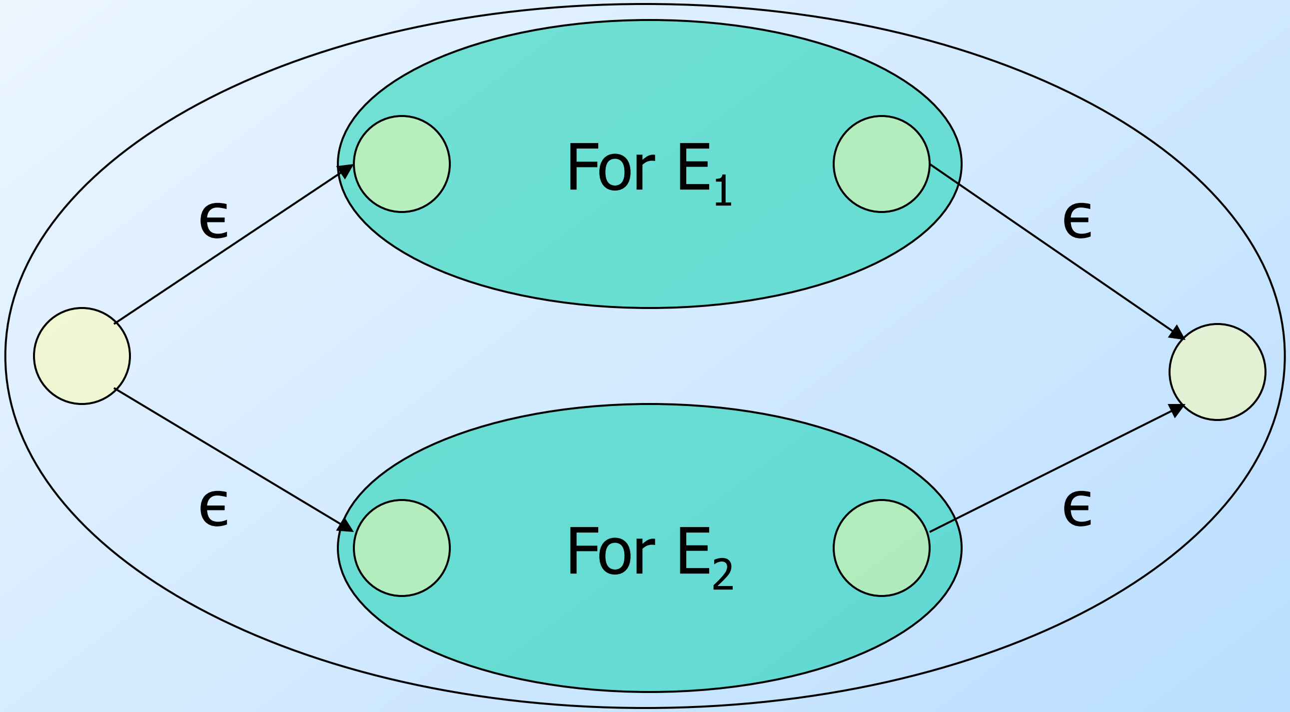
- ϵ:



- $\emptyset$:

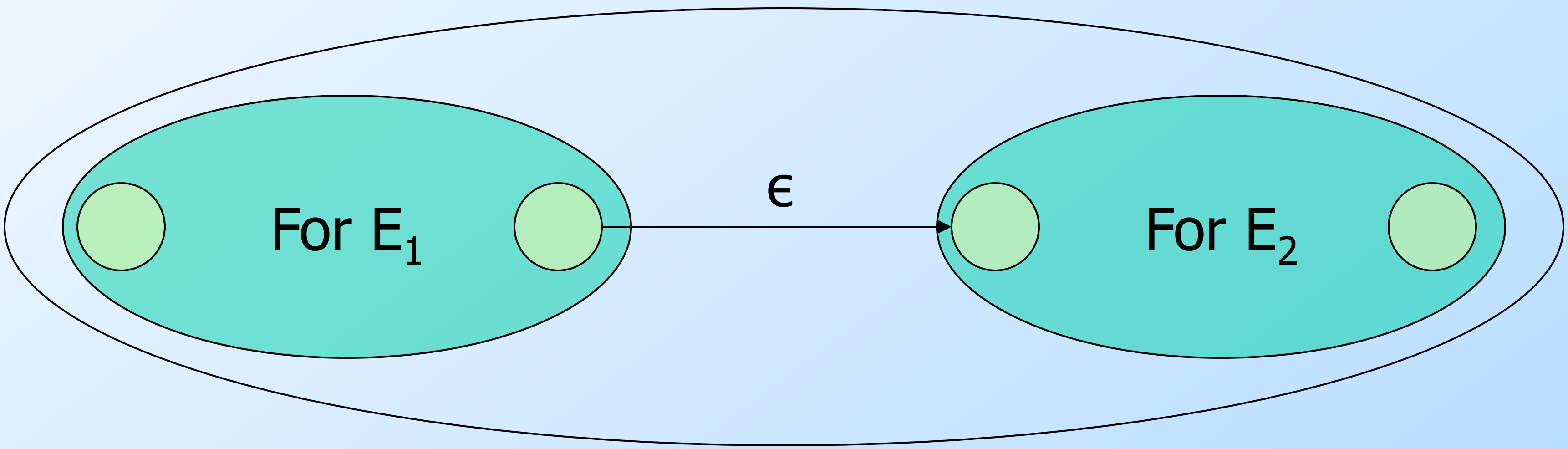


RE to ϵ-NFA: Induction 1 – Union



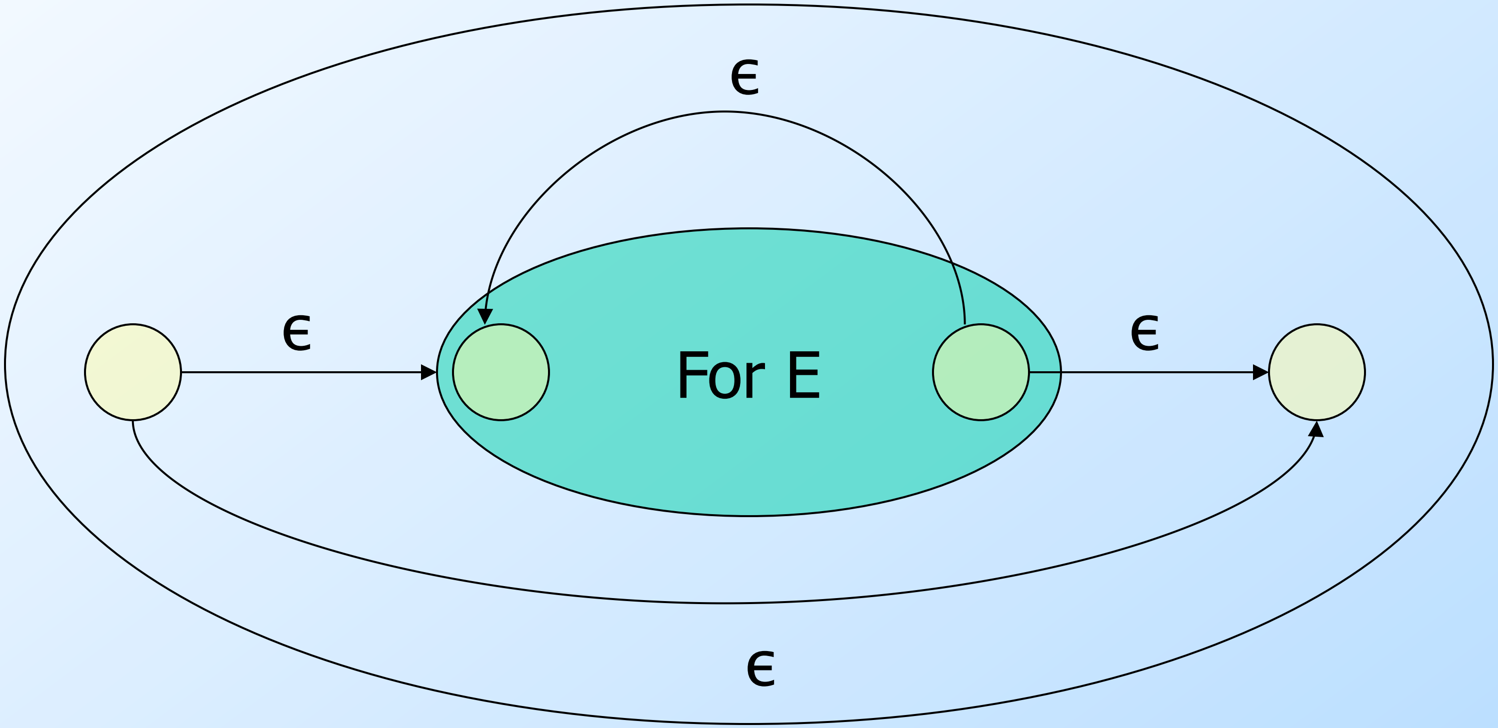
For $E_1 \cup E_2$

RE to ϵ-NFA: Induction 2 – Concatenation



For E_1E_2

RE to ϵ-NFA: Induction 3 – Closure



For E*

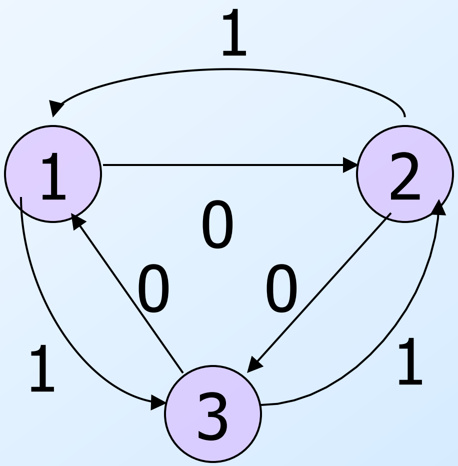
DFA-to-RE

- A strange sort of induction.
- States of the DFA are assumed to be 1,2,…,n.
- We construct RE's for the labels of restricted sets of paths.
  - Basis: single arcs or no arc at all.
  - Induction: paths that are allowed to traverse next state in order.

k-Paths

- A k-path is a path through the graph of the DFA that goes **through** no state numbered higher than k.
- Endpoints are not restricted; they can be any state.

Example: k-Paths



0-paths from 2 to 3:
RE for labels = 0.

1-paths from 2 to 3:
RE for labels = 0+11.

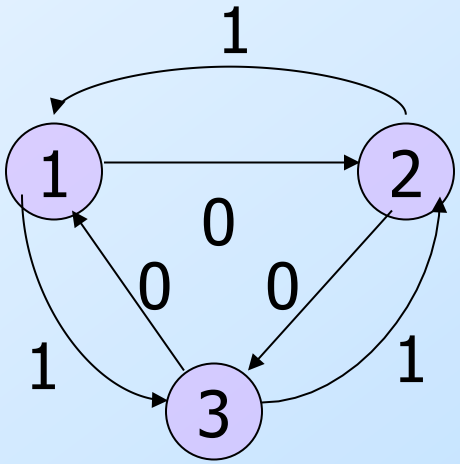
2-paths from 2 to 3:
RE for labels =
(10)*0+1(01)*1

3-paths from 2 to 3:
RE for labels = ??

k-Path Induction

- Let R_{ij}^k be the regular expression for the set of labels of k-paths from state i to state j.
- Basis: k=0. R_{ij}^0 = sum of labels of arc from i to j.
  - $\emptyset$ if no such arc.
  - But add ϵ if i=j.

Example: Basis



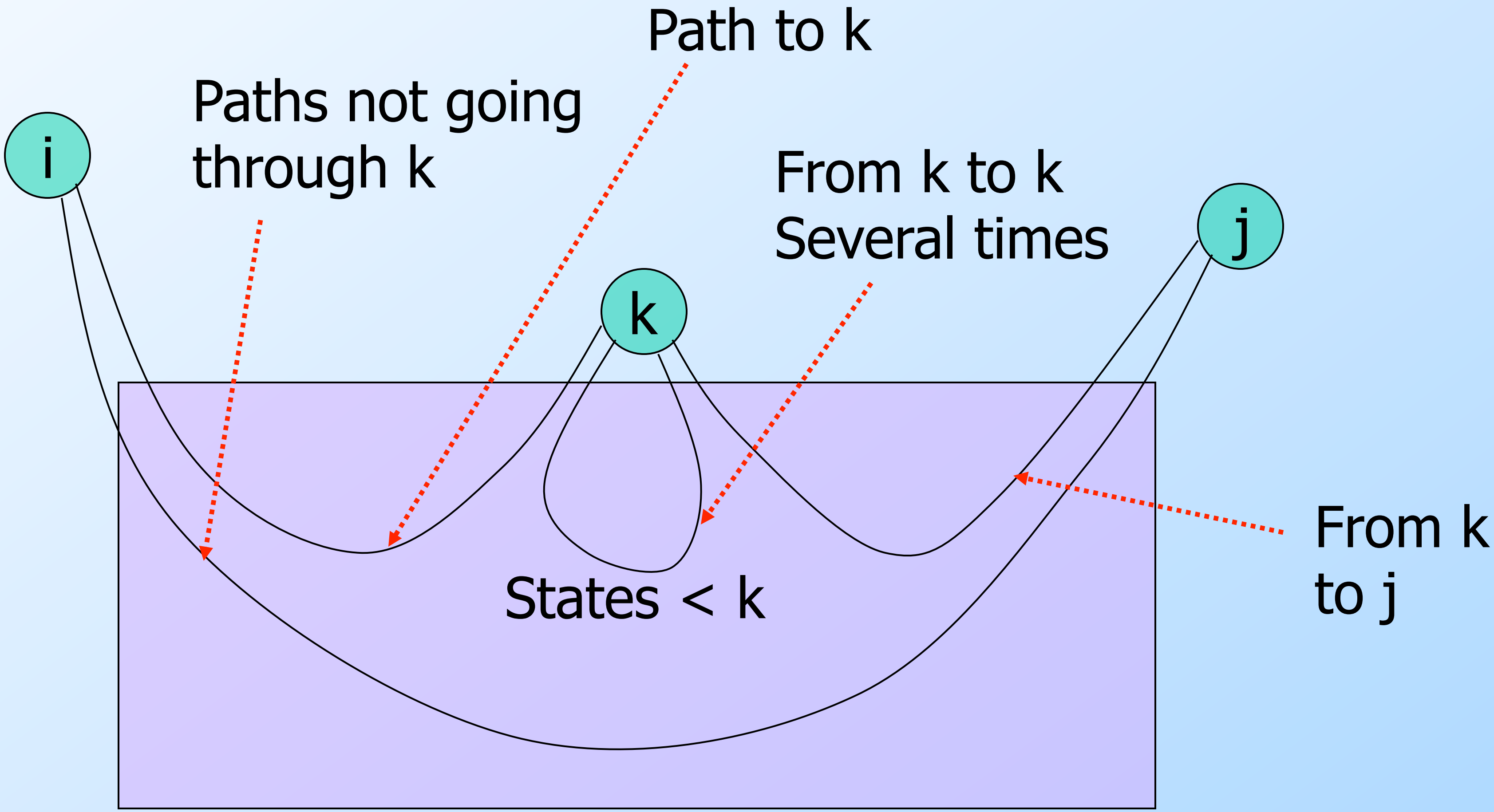
- $R_{12}^{0} = 0.$
- $R_{11}^{0} = \varnothing + \epsilon = \epsilon.$

k-Path Inductive Case

- A k-path from i to j either:
  1. Never goes through state k, or
  2. Goes through k one or more times.

$$R_{ij}^{k} = \underbrace{R_{ij}^{k-1}}_{\text{Doesn't go through k}} + \underbrace{R_{ik}^{k-1}}_{\text{Goes from i to k the first time}}\underbrace{(R_{kk}^{k-1})^*}_{\text{Zero or more times from k to k}} \underbrace{R_{kj}^{k-1}}_{\text{Then, from k to j}}.$$

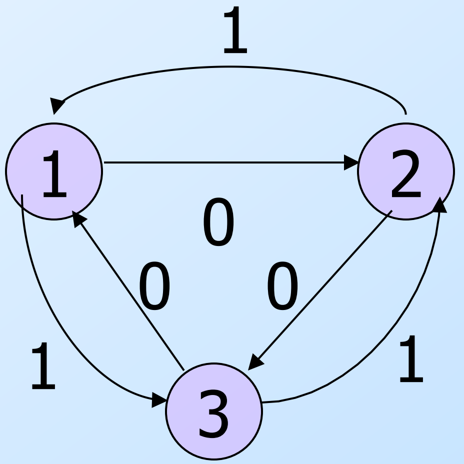
Illustration of Induction



Final Step

- The RE with the same language as the DFA is the sum (union) of R_{ij}^{n}, where:
  1. n is the number of states; i.e., paths are unconstrained.
  2. i is the start state.
  3. j is one of the final states.

Example



- $R_{23}^{3} = R_{23}^{2} + R_{23}^{2}(R_{33}^{2})^{*}R_{33}^{2} = R_{23}^{2}(R_{33}^{2})^{*}$
- $R_{23}^{2} = (10)^{*}0+1(01)^{*}1$
- $R_{33}^{2} = 0(01)^{*}(1+00) + 1(10)^{*}(0+11)$
- $R_{23}^{3} = [(10)^{*}0+1(01)^{*}1]\,[(0(01)^{*}(1+00) + 1(10)^{*}(0+11))]^{*}$

Summary

- Each of the three types of automata (DFA, NFA, ϵ-NFA) we discussed, and regular expressions as well, define exactly the same set of languages: the **regular** languages.