Formalization of DFA using lattices
Recall worklist algorithm

let m: map from edge to computed value at edge
let worklist: work list of nodes

for each edge e in CFG do
    m(e) := ∅

for each node n do
    worklist.add(n)

while (worklist.empty.not) do
    let n := worklist.remove_any;
    let info_in := m(n.incoming_edges);
    let info_out := F(n, info_in);
    for i := 0 .. info_out.length do
        let new_info := m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) U info_out[i];
        if (m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) ≠ new_info)
            m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) := new_info;
            worklist.add(n.outgoing_edges[i].dst);
Using lattices

• We formalize our domain with a powerset lattice
• What should be top and what should be bottom?
Using lattices

• We formalize our domain with a powerset lattice
• What should be top and what should be bottom?
• Does it matter?
  – It matters because, as we’ve seen, there is a notion of approximation, and this notion shows up in the lattice
Using lattices

• Unfortunately:
  – dataflow analysis community has picked one direction
  – abstract interpretation community has picked the other

• We will work with the abstract interpretation direction

• Bottom is the most precise (optimistic) answer, Top the most imprecise (conservative)
Direction of lattice

- Always safe to go up in the lattice
- Can always set the result to $\top$
- Hard to go down in the lattice
- So ... Bottom will be the empty set in reaching defs
Worklist algorithm using lattices

let m: map from edge to computed value at edge
let worklist: work list of nodes

for each edge e in CFG do
    m(e) := ⊥

for each node n do
    worklist.add(n)

while (worklist.empty.not) do
    let n := worklist.remove_any;
    let info_in := m(n.incoming_edges);
    let info_out := F(n, info_in);
    for i := 0 .. info_out.length do
        let new_info := m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) △ info_out[i];
        if (m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) ≠ new_info))
            m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) := new_info;
            worklist.add(n.outgoing_edges[i].dst);
Termination of this algorithm?

• For reaching definitions, it terminates...

• Why?
  – lattice is finite

• Can we loosen this requirement?
  – Yes, we only require the lattice to have a finite height

• Height of a lattice: length of the longest ascending or descending chain

• Height of lattice \((2^S, \subseteq) = \)
Termination of this algorithm?

- For reaching definitions, it terminates...

- Why?
  - lattice is finite

- Can we loosen this requirement?
  - Yes, we only require the lattice to have a finite height

- Height of a lattice: length of the longest ascending or descending chain

- Height of lattice \( (2^S, \subseteq) = | S | \)
Termination

• Still, it’s annoying to have to perform a join in the worklist algorithm

```c
while (worklist.empty.not) do
    let n := worklist.remove_any;
    let info_in := m(n.incoming_edges);
    let info_out := F(n, info_in);
    for i := 0 .. info_out.length do
        let new_info := m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) □
                        info_out[i];
        if (m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) ≠ new_info))
            m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) := new_info;
            worklist.add(n.outgoing_edges[i].dst);
```

• It would be nice to get rid of it, if there is a property of the flow functions that would allow us to do so
Even more formal

• To reason more formally about termination and precision, we re-express our worklist algorithm mathematically

• We will use fixed points to formalize our algorithm
Fixed points

• Recall, we are computing m, a map from edges to dataflow information

• Define a global flow function F as follows: F takes a map m as a parameter and returns a new map m’, in which individual local flow functions have been applied
Fixed points

• We want to find a fixed point of F, that is to say a map m such that m = F(m)

• Approach to doing this?

• Define $\tilde{\bot}$, which is $\bot$ lifted to be a map:
  \[\tilde{\bot} = \lambda \ e. \ \bot\]

• Compute $F(\tilde{\bot})$, then $F(F(\tilde{\bot}))$, then $F(F(F(\tilde{\bot})))$, ... until the result doesn’t change anymore
Fixed points

- Formally:
  \[
  \text{Soln} = \bigcap_{i=0}^{\infty} F^i(\bot)
  \]

- We would like the sequence \( F^i(\bot) \) for \( i = 0, 1, 2 \) ... to be increasing, so we can get rid of the outer join

- Require that \( F \) be monotonic:
  - \( \forall a, b \cdot a \sqsubseteq b \Rightarrow F(a) \sqsubseteq F(b) \)
Fixed points
Fixed points

\[ \tilde{I} \subseteq F(\tilde{I}) \]

\[ F(\tilde{I}) \subseteq F(F(\tilde{I})) \]

\[ F^k(\tilde{I}) \subseteq F^{k+1}(\tilde{I}) \]

\[ F^{k+1}(\tilde{I}) \subseteq F^{k+2}(\tilde{I}) \]
Back to termination

- So if $F$ is monotonic, we have what we want: finite height $\implies$ termination, without the outer join
- Also, if the local flow functions are monotonic, then global flow function $F$ is monotonic
Another benefit of monotonicity

• Suppose Marsians came to earth, and miraculously give you a fixed point of F, call it fp.

• Then:
Another benefit of monotonicity

- Suppose Marsians came to earth, and miraculously give you a fixed point of F, call it $fp$.

- Then:

\[
\begin{align*}
\tilde{I} & \subseteq fp \\
F(\tilde{I}) & \subseteq F(fp) \\
F(\tilde{I}) & \subseteq fp \\
F^2(\tilde{I}) & \subseteq fp \\
& \vdots \\
ofp & \subseteq fp
\end{align*}
\]
Another benefit of monotonicity

- We are computing the least fixed point...
Recap

• Let’s do a recap of what we’ve seen so far

• Started with worklist algorithm for reaching definitions
Worklist algorithm for reaching defns

let m: map from edge to computed value at edge
let worklist: work list of nodes

for each edge e in CFG do
    m(e) := Ø

for each node n do
    worklist.add(n)

while (worklist.empty.not) do
    let n := worklist.remove_any;
    let info_in := m(n.incoming_edges);
    let info_out := F(n, info_in);
    for i := 0 .. info_out.length do
        let new_info := m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) U info_out[i];
        if (m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) ≠ new_info)
            m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) := new_info;
            worklist.add(n.outgoing_edges[i].dst);
Generalized algorithm using lattices

let m: map from edge to computed value at edge
let worklist: work list of nodes

for each edge e in CFG do
    m(e) := ⊥

for each node n do
    worklist.add(n)

while (worklist.empty.not) do
    let n := worklist.remove_any;
    let info_in := m(n.incoming_edges);
    let info_out := F(n, info_in);
    for i := 0 .. info_out.length do
        let new_info := m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) △ info_out[i];
        if (m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) ≠ new_info)
            m(n.outgoing_edges[i]) := new_info;
            worklist.add(n.outgoing_edges[i].dst);
Next step: removed outer join

• Wanted to remove the outer join, while still providing termination guarantee

• To do this, we re-expressed our algorithm more formally

• We first defined a “global” flow function $F$, and then expressed our algorithm as a fixed point computation
Guarantees

• If F is monotonic, don’t need outer join

• If F is monotonic and height of lattice is finite: iterative algorithm terminates

• If F is monotonic, the fixed point we find is the least fixed point.
What about if we start at top?

- What if we start with $\tilde{\top}: F(\tilde{\top}), F(F(\tilde{\top})), F(F(F(\tilde{\top})))$
What about if we start at top?

- What if we start with $\top: F(\top), F(F(\top)), F(F(F(\top)))$
- We get the greatest fixed point
- Why do we prefer the least fixed point?
  - More precise
Graphically
Graphically
Graphically
Graphically, another way