

Kleene Iteration: From Kleene Algebra Onwards

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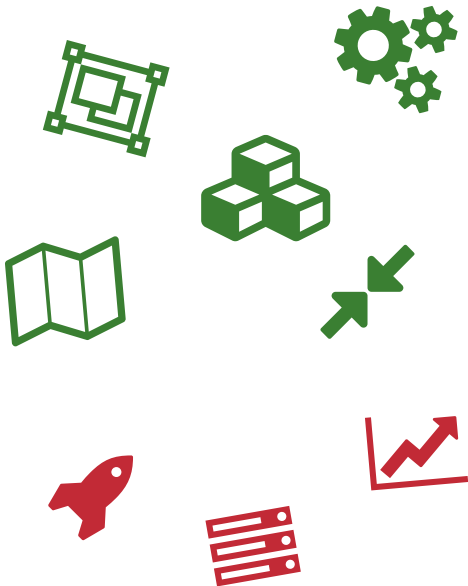
Overview

What I will talk about:

- Compositionality
- Modularity
- Genericity
- Design
- Semantics

What I won't talk about:

- Efficiency
- Optimization
- Computation Complexity



Background



Goncharov, “Shades of Iteration: From Elgot to Kleene”,
WADT 2022



Goncharov and Uustalu, “A Unifying Categorical View of
Nondeterministic Iteration and Tests”, CONCUR 2024

Kleene Iteration in Kleene Algebra

Regular Events

REPRESENTATION OF EVENTS IN NERVE NETS AND FINITE AUTOMATA

S. C. Kleene

RM-704

15 December 1951

7.2 An algebraic transformation: We list several equivalences:

(1) $(E \vee F) \vee G \equiv E \vee (F \vee G).$

(2) $(EF)G \equiv E(FG).$

(3) $(E^*F)G \equiv E^*(FG).$

(4) $(E \vee F)G \equiv EG \vee FG.$

(5) $E(F \vee G) \equiv EF \vee EG.$

(6) $E^*(F \vee G) \equiv E^*F \vee E^*G.$

(7) $E^*F \equiv F \vee E^*(EF).$

(8) $E^*F \equiv F \vee E^*(E^*F).$

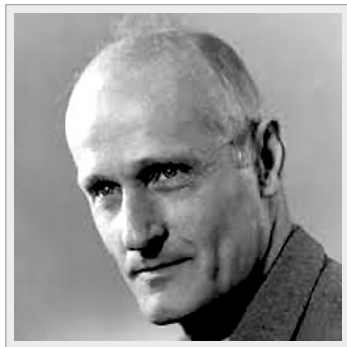
Associative laws

Distributive laws

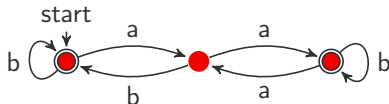
- Kleene star $e \mapsto e^*$

- Kleene theorem

- Syntax for finite state machines
- Algebraic equational reasoning



E.g. $(b + a(ab^*a)b)^*(1 + aa)$



Language Interpretation

Regular expressions over Σ :

$$e, e_1, e_2 ::= (a \in \Sigma) \mid 0 \mid 1 \mid e_1 + e_2 \mid e_1; e_2 \mid e^*$$

- Language interpretation:

$$\llbracket 0 \rrbracket = \{ \} \qquad \llbracket e_1; e_2 \rrbracket = \{xy \mid x \in \llbracket e_1 \rrbracket, y \in \llbracket e_2 \rrbracket\}$$

$$\llbracket 1 \rrbracket = \{\epsilon\} \qquad \llbracket e_1 + e_2 \rrbracket = \llbracket e_1 \rrbracket \cup \llbracket e_2 \rrbracket$$

$$\llbracket e^* \rrbracket = \{\epsilon\} \cup \llbracket e \rrbracket \cup \llbracket e; e \rrbracket \cup \dots$$

- Language $L \subseteq \Sigma^*$ is regular iff $L = \llbracket e \rrbracket$ for some regular expression e with $\llbracket a \rrbracket = a$ for $a \in \Sigma$

❓ Other interpretations? Yes, e.g. **relational** one!

❓ Complete reasoning system for regular expressions

Axioms of Kleene Algebra

Kleene algebra is a structure $(S, 0, 1, +, ;, (-)^*)$, where $(S, 0, 1, +, ;)$ is an idempotent semiring:

- $(S, 0, +)$ and $(S, 1, ;)$ are monoids
- $(S, 0, +)$ is **commutative** ($x + y = y + x$) and **idempotent** ($x + x = x$)
- **distributive laws:**

$$\begin{array}{ll} x; (y + z) = x; y + x; z & x; 0 = 0 \\ (x + y); z = x; z + y; z & 0; x = 0 \end{array}$$

(thus, S is partially ordered: $x \leq y$ iff $x + y = y$)

... plus **Kleene iteration** satisfying $x^* = 1 + x; x^*$, and

$$\frac{x; y + z \leq y}{x^*; z \leq y} \qquad \frac{x + z; y \leq z}{x; y^* \leq z}$$

Equivalently: $x^*; z$ is a least fixpoint of $x; (-) + z$ and $z; y^*$ is a least fixpoint of $(-); y + z$

Key (Design) Features

- Complete both over language model and over relational model
- **Algebraic**, i.e. closed under substitution, unlike Salomaa's rule*

$$\frac{y = z + xy \quad x \text{ guarded}}{y = x^*z}$$

- All fixpoints are **least** (pre-)fixpoints
 - in Salomaa's system: **particular** fixpoints are **unique** fixpoints
- Induction rules

$$\frac{x; y + z \leq y}{x^*; z \leq y}$$

$$\frac{x + z; y \leq z}{x; y^* \leq z}$$

encompass infinitely many identities, critical for completeness

*A. Salomaa, Two Complete Axiom Systems for the Algebra of Regular Events, 1966

Tests for Control

- Intuition: 0 is a deadlock, 1 is a neutral program, ; is sequential composition, + is non-deterministic choice
- Kleene algebra with tests (KAT) adds control via tests:
 - Kleene sub-algebra B
 - B is Boolean algebra under $(0, 1, ;, +)$
- This enables encodings:
 - Branching (if b then p else q) as $b; p + \bar{b}; q$
 - Looping (while b do p) as $(b; p)^*; \bar{b}$
 - Hoare triples $\{a\} p \{b\}$ as $a; p; b = a; p$

Example:

$\text{while } b \text{ do } p = \text{if } b \text{ then } p \text{ else } (\text{while } b \text{ do } p)$

Kleene Algebra Today

- Regular expressions
- Algebraic language of **finite state machines** and beyond
- Relational semantics of programs
- Relational reasoning and verification, e.g. via **dynamic logic**
- Plenty of extensions:
 - modal \Rightarrow **modal Kleene algebra** (Struth et al.)
 - stateful \Rightarrow **KAT + B!** (Grathwohl, Kozen, Mamouras)
 - concurrent \Rightarrow **concurrent Kleene algebra** (Hoare et al.)
 - nominal \Rightarrow **nominal Kleene algebra** (Kozen et al.)
 - differential equations \Rightarrow **differential dynamic logic** (Platzer et al.)
 - network primitives \Rightarrow **NetKAT** (Foster et al.)
 - etc., etc., etc.
- **decidability** and **completeness** (most famously w.r.t. language interpretation and relational interpretation)

Beyond Kleene Algebra's Iteration

Scenario I: Exceptions

- Assuming that programs may raise **exceptions**: $\text{raise } e_i =$ “raise exception e_i ”,

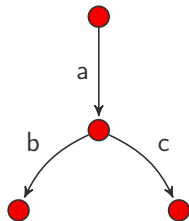
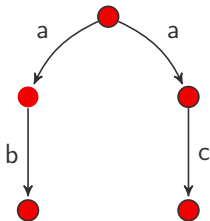
$$\text{raise } e_1 = \text{raise } e_1; 0 = 0 = \text{raise } e_2; 0 = \text{raise } e_2$$

- So, we cannot have more than one exception
 - ... unless we discard the law

$$p; 0 = 0$$

Scenario II: Branching Time

Processes



are famously non-bisimilar, failing Kleene algebra law

$$p; (q + r) = p; q + p; r$$

Scenario III: Divergence

- Identity

$$(p + 1)^* = p^*$$

is provable in Kleene algebra, because p^* is a least fixpoint

- Alternatively:

$$1^* = 1$$

- Hence **deadlock** = **divergence**

 How to undo this?

 $1^* = 1$ is not a Kleene algebra axiom

What is generic core of Kleene iteration?

- Core reasoning principles
- Robustness under adding features (e.g. exceptions)
- Generic completeness argument
- Compatibility with classical program semantics
 - ⇒ Soundness of while-loop encoding

Categorifying Iteration

From Algebras to Categories

- **Categories** \approx many-sorted monoids:

$$1_A: A \rightarrow A \quad (\text{unit}) \quad \frac{p: A \rightarrow B \quad q: B \rightarrow C}{p; q: A \rightarrow C} \quad (\text{multiplication})$$

- **Objects** A, B, \dots – sorts, **Morphisms** $p: A \rightarrow B$ – programs
- **Fact:** monoid = single-object category
- **Kleene-Kozen categories** – additionally

$$0_{A,B}: A \rightarrow B \quad \frac{p: A \rightarrow B \quad q: A \rightarrow B}{p + q: A \rightarrow B} \quad \frac{p: A \rightarrow A}{p^*: A \rightarrow A}$$

subject to Kleene algebra laws

- **Fact:** Kleene algebra = single-object Kleene-Kozen category
- **Example:** Category of relations = relational interpretation
- Tests = particular morphisms $b: A \rightarrow A$

Monads

Monad T (\simeq Kleisli tripple)

- assigns object TA to every object A
- defines **unit morphisms** $\eta_A: A \rightarrow TA$
- **lifts** every $f: A \rightarrow TB$ to $f^*: TA \rightarrow TB$

(monad laws omitted)

We thus can compose **Kleisli morphisms** \rightsquigarrow **Kleisli category**:

$$\frac{p: A \rightarrow TB \quad q: B \rightarrow TC}{p; q^*: A \rightarrow TC}$$

Example: $T = \mathcal{P}$, Kleisli category \simeq category of relations

Definition: **Kleene monads** are those, whose Kleisli category is Kleene-Kozen

Kleene Monads

Monads help us to make “robustness” idea formal via **monad transformers**

- Kleene monads are closed (robust) under **writer transformer**:

$$T \mapsto T(A^* \times -)$$

- Kleene monads are **not** closed under **exception transformer**:

$$T \mapsto T(- + E)$$

- ... also **not** closed under **coalgebraic resumption transformer**:

$$T \mapsto \nu\gamma. T(- + A \times \gamma)$$

A candidate for may-diverge Kleene algebra: noting that $\mathcal{P}X \cong \{0, 1\}^X$, take $TX = \{0, 1, \infty\}^X$

Then consider $\text{Hom}(1, T1) \rightsquigarrow 1^* \neq 1$ because $1 \neq \infty$

Coproducts and Elgot Iteration

- Coproducts $A \oplus B$ can be thought of as disjoint unions $A \uplus B$
- Elgot iteration:

$$\frac{p: A \rightarrow B \oplus A}{p^\dagger: A \rightarrow B}$$

Intuitively: keep running p until reached a result in B

- $(-)^{\dagger}$ is subject to rich and elaborated equational theory of iteration*
 - 😊 Very general
 - 😊 Stable under adding features
 - 😊 Does not hinge on non-determinism
 - 😞 Hinges on coproducts
 - 😞 Quasi-equational axiomatizations little explored

*S. Bloom, Z. Ésik, Iteration Theories, 1993

Uniformity

Uniformity rule

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & \xrightarrow{f} & B \oplus A \\ h \downarrow & & \downarrow 1 \oplus h \\ C & \xrightarrow{g} & B \oplus C \end{array} \quad \Rightarrow \quad \begin{array}{ccc} A & \xrightarrow{f^\dagger} & B \\ h \downarrow & \nearrow g^\dagger & \\ C & & \end{array}$$

for “well-behaved” h

Bloom and Esik’s iteration = $\underbrace{\text{Conway identities}}_{\text{finitely many}} + \underbrace{\text{commutative identities}}_{\text{infinitely many}}$

$$\underbrace{\text{Commutative identities}}_{\text{hard}} \subseteq \underbrace{\text{Uniformity rule}}_{\text{simple, standard}}$$

Uniform Elgot iteration is essentially just as robust and general

Reaxiomatizing Kleene Algebra

Alternative axiomatization: idempotent semirings, plus

$$p^* = 1 + p; p^* \quad (p + q)^* = p^*; (q; p^*)^*$$

$$1^* = 1 \quad \frac{u; p = q; u}{u; p^* = q^*; u}$$

- This is true for Kleene-Kozen categories, hence for Kleene algebra
- Removing $1^* = 1$ yields **may-diverge Kleene algebras**, $(-)^*$ is no longer least fixpoint
- Uniformity

$$\frac{u; p = q; u}{u; p^* = q^*; u}$$

is postulated for **all** u (!)

Restricting Uniformity

Like originally, u in

$$\frac{u; p = q; u}{u; p^* = q^*; u}$$

must generally be “well-behaved”

Restricting Uniformity

$\text{raise } e = \text{raise } e; 1 = 1; \text{raise } e = \text{raise } e$

$$\boxed{\text{raise } e} = \text{raise } e; 1^* = \boxed{1^*; \text{raise } e}$$

Restricting Uniformity

$\text{raise } e = \text{raise } e; 1 = 1; \text{raise } e = \text{raise } e$

$\boxed{\text{raise } e} = \text{raise } e; 1^* = \boxed{1^*; \text{raise } e}$

Restricting Uniformity

Like originally, u in

$$\frac{u; p = q; u}{u; p^* = q^*; u}$$

must generally be “well-behaved”

⇒ Restrict to **linear** u :

$$u; 0 = 0 \quad u; (p + q) = u; p + u; q$$

Kleene-iteration category with tests (KiCT)

- Category with coproducts and nondeterminism
- Selected class of tests
- Selected class of linear **tame** morphisms
- Kleene iteration
- Laws:

$$0; p = 0 \quad (p + q); r = p; r + q; r$$

$$p^* = 1 + p; p^* \quad (p + q)^* = p^*; (q; p^*)^*$$

$$\frac{u; p^* = q^*; u}{u; p = q; u}$$

with tame u

Key Results

- $\text{KiCT} + (1^* = 1)$ with all morphisms tame = Kleene-Kozen with tests and coproducts
- KiCT with expressive tests = tame-uniform Conway iteration + non-determinism
- Free $\text{KiCT} = \text{non-deterministic rational trees}$ w.r.t. may-diverge nondeterminism

What is generic core of Kleene iteration?

KiCT:

- ✔ Core reasoning principles
- ✔ Robustness under adding features
- ✔ Generic completeness argument
- ✔ Compatibility with classical program semantics

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But what is KiCT **without** coproducts?

Coproducts and Non-Local Flow

What coproducts mean algebraically:

$$\text{inl}; [p, q] = p \quad \text{inr}; [p, q] = q \quad [\text{inl}, \text{inr}] = 1 \quad [p, q]; r = [p; r, q; r]$$

This creates “non-local flow”, i.e. via its type $A_1 \oplus \dots \oplus A_n$ program can switch between tracks

This can be used to derive new identities, e.g.

$$p^* = (p; (1 + p))^*$$

Alternatively to coproducts we could use **names**, e.g.

$$\mu X. (\alpha; \mu Y. (b; X + 1) + 1) \quad \text{for} \quad \text{inl}; [\alpha; \text{inr}, b; \text{inl}]^*$$

etc.

Milner's Conundrum

- Milner* realized that “regular behaviours” are properly more general than “*-behaviours”
- Simplest example

$$\begin{cases} X = 1 + a; Y \\ Y = 1 + b; X \end{cases}$$

We can pass to $X = 1 + a; (1 + b; X)$, but not to $X = (ab)^*(1 + a)$

- This discrepancy \approx failure of Kleene theorem
- Milner's solution is equivalent to using coproducts in the language
- He also proposed a modification of Salomaa's system for *-behaviours – proven complete only recently (Grabmayer)

*R. Milner, A complete inference system for a class of regular behaviours, 1984

Conclusions

- KiCTs reframe Kleene algebra principles in categorical setting and succeed with various yardsticks
- KiCTs **without coproducts** would be a hypothetical most basic notions of Kleene iteration
- **Open Problem:** Can it ever be found?

Appendix

Equivalence of Expressions

Example proof "by coinduction":

$$(ab)^* = 1 + a(ba)^*b$$

is true, because $1 + a(ba)^*b$ is a fixpoint of the map that defines $(ab)^*$

*A. Salomaa, Two Complete Axiom Systems for the Algebra of Regular Events, 1966

Equivalence of Expressions

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$$1 + a(ba)^*b = 1 + a(1 + (ba)(ba)^*)b$$

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- This only works because $x \mapsto 1 + abx$ is **guarded**
- $x \mapsto 1 + (a + 1)x$ is **un-guarded** and has infinitely many fixpoints

This reasoning is complete for guarded iteration*

? What about general (Kleene) iteration?

*A. Salomaa, Two Complete Axiom Systems for the Algebra of Regular Events, 1966

Salomaa's Complete Axiomatization

- e is guarded if
 - e is a letter
 - $e = 0$
 - $e = e_1 e_2$ with e_1 **or** e_2 guarded
 - $e = e_1 + e_2$ with e_1 **and** e_2 guarded
- Salomaa originally defined dual **empty word property (ewp)**:
 e has epw iff it is not guarded
- ... and, proposed complete axiomatization* w.r.t. language model:
 - A finite number of sound identities
 - plus rule:



$$\frac{v = e + uv \quad u \text{ guarded}}{v = u^*e}$$

*A. Salomaa, Two Complete Axiom Systems for the Algebra of Regular Events, 1966

No Finite Equational Axiomatization

Redko* noticed that

- All identities (**power identities**)

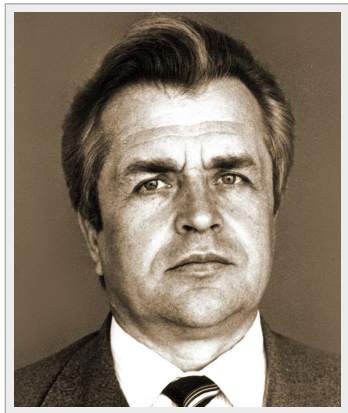
$$e^* = (e^k)^*(1 + e + \dots + e^{k-1})$$

are sound

- Any finite set of sound equations entails only finitely many of them
- Hence, no finite axiomatizability (even on one-letter alphabet)

So,

- ① How to choose infinite set of non-obvious axioms of iteration?
- ① How would we know that this choice is correct?



*V. N. Redko, On defining relations for the algebra of regular events, 1964

Conway's Monograph

Conway* came up with various insights:

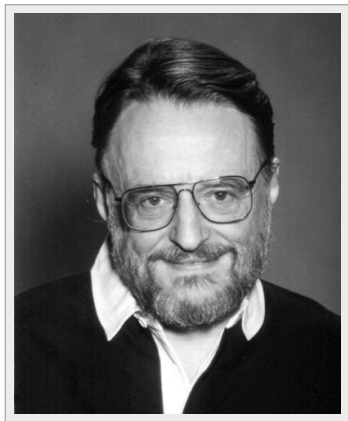
- Power identities do not suffice, e.g. they do not imply

$$(e + u)^* = ((e + u)(u + (eu^*)^{n-2}e))^* \\ (1 + (e + u) \sum_{i=0}^{n-2} (eu^*)^i)$$

- Made several conjectures on potential complete axiomatization
- Observed that algebraic laws of regular expressions transfer to **matrices** of regular expressions



⇒ Bridge between algebra and automata (represented by matrices)



*J. H. Conway, Regular Algebra and Finite Machines, 1971

Matrices of Regular Expressions

- $(n \times n)$ -matrices of regular expressions support same operations.
For $n = 2$:

$$\text{"1" is } I = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} a' & b' \\ c' & d' \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} a + a' & b + b' \\ c + c' & d + d' \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\text{"0" is } O = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} a' & b' \\ c' & d' \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} aa' + bc' & ab' + bd' \\ ca' + dc' & cb' + dd' \end{bmatrix}$$

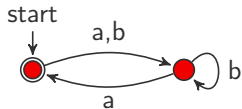
- **Idea** for A^* : $I + A + A^2 + \dots$



Key insight: there is closed form for A^* as matrix of regular expressions

- **Intuition:** in $\begin{bmatrix} e_{11} & e_{12} \\ e_{21} & e_{22} \end{bmatrix} = A^*$, e_{ij} represents **language** of 2-state automaton where i – initial, j – final

Automata and Matrices

 \Leftrightarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^T \begin{bmatrix} 0 & a+b \\ a & b \end{bmatrix}^* \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

 \Leftrightarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^T \begin{bmatrix} ((a+b)b^*a)^* & ((a+b)b^*a)^* \\ (b^*a(a+b))^*a & b^*(a(a+b))^* \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

 \Leftrightarrow

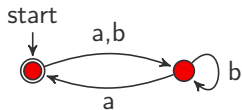
$$((a+b)b^*a)^*$$

Automata and Matrices

- Automata are triples

$$A \in \{0, 1\}^n, \quad B \in \mathcal{E}^{n \times n}, \quad C \in \{0, 1\}^n$$

\mathcal{E} – certain class of regular expressions



$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^T \begin{bmatrix} 0 & a+b \\ a & b \end{bmatrix}^* \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$



$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^T \begin{bmatrix} ((a+b)b^*a)^* & ((a+b)b^*a)^* \\ (b^*a(a+b))^*a & b^*(a(a+b))^* \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$



$$((a+b)b^*a)^*$$

Automata and Matrices

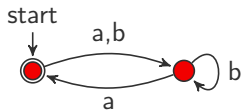
- Automata are triples

$$A \in \{0, 1\}^n, \quad B \in \mathcal{E}^{n \times n}, \quad C \in \{0, 1\}^n$$

\mathcal{E} – certain class of regular expressions

- Accepted language:

$$\llbracket A^\top B^* C \rrbracket$$



$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^\top \begin{bmatrix} 0 & a+b \\ a & b \end{bmatrix}^* \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$



$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^\top \begin{bmatrix} ((a+b)b^*a)^* & ((a+b)b^*a)^* \\ (b^*a(a+b))^*a & b^*(a(a+b))^* \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$



$$((a+b)b^*a)^*$$

Automata and Matrices

- Automata are triples

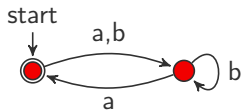
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\mathcal{E} – certain class of regular expressions

- Accepted language:

$$\llbracket A^\top B^* C \rrbracket$$

- Kleene theorem:**
this is equivalence
between automata
and expressions
up to language
equality



\Leftrightarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^\top \begin{bmatrix} 0 & a+b \\ a & b \end{bmatrix}^* \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

\Leftrightarrow

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}^\top \begin{bmatrix} ((a+b)b^*a)^* & ((a+b)b^*a)^* \\ (b^*a(a+b))^*a & b^*(a(a+b))^* \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

\Leftrightarrow

$$((a+b)b^*a)^*$$

Control in Category

- Call morphisms of the form $d: A \rightarrow A \oplus A$ **decisions**
 - In particular: ff – left injection, tt – right injection
- We then can express **if-then-else**:

$$\frac{d: A \rightarrow A \oplus A \quad p: A \rightarrow B \quad q: A \rightarrow B}{\text{if } d \text{ then } p \text{ else } q: A \rightarrow B}$$

- In particular: $\sim d = \text{if } d \text{ then } ff \text{ else } tt$, $(d \parallel e) = \text{if } d \text{ then } tt \text{ else } e$
- Various expected laws are entailed, but some are not, e.g.

$$d \parallel tt \neq tt$$

Uniform Conway While-Operator

Theorem*: if the class of decisions is large enough, uniform Conway iteration is equivalent to while-loops

Axioms:

while d do p = if d then p; (while d do p) else 1

while (d || e) do p = (while d do p); while e do (p; while d do p)

while (d && (e || tt)) do p = while d do (if e then p else p)

Uniformity Rule:

$$\frac{u; \text{if } d \text{ then } p; \text{tt else } ff = \text{if } e \text{ then } q; u; \text{tt else } v; ff}{u; \text{while } d \text{ do } p = (\text{while } e \text{ do } q); v}$$

where u, v come from a selected class of programs

*S. Goncharov, Shades of Iteration: From Elgot to Kleene, 2023

Tests and Decisions

- In presence of non-determinism, decisions $d: A \rightarrow A \oplus A$ decompose:

$$d = b; tt + \bar{b}; ff \quad (b, \bar{b}: A \rightarrow A)$$

- Test-based 'if' and 'while':

Axioms:

$\text{while } b \text{ do } p = \text{if } b \text{ then } p; (\text{while } b \text{ do } p) \text{ else } 1$

$\text{while } (b \vee c) \text{ do } p = (\text{while } b \text{ do } p); \text{while } c \text{ do } (p; \text{while } b \text{ do } p)$

Uniformity:

$$\frac{u; b; p = c; q; u \quad u; \bar{b} = \bar{c}; v}{u; \text{while } b \text{ do } p = (\text{while } c \text{ do } q); v}$$