

Parsing Beyond Context-Free Grammars

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Preface

Given that context-free grammars cannot adequately describe natural languages, grammar formalisms beyond CFG that are still computationally tractable are of central interest for computational linguists. However, despite the considerable interest in such formalisms and in their various parsing algorithms, a coherent textbook that allows access to the large body of knowledge on polynomial-time parsing beyond context-free grammars has not been available so far. Textbooks on parsing covered mainly context-free grammars while mentioning more powerful formalisms only very briefly.

This want of a detailed presentation of grammar formalisms and parsing beyond CFG is addressed with this book. The book provides an extensive overview of the formal language landscape between CFG and PTIME. It moves from Tree Adjoining Grammars to Multiple Context-Free Grammars and then to Range Concatenation Grammars while explaining available parsing techniques for these formalisms. The text is enriched with many illustrations and examples coming with the different formalisms and algorithms. This makes the book accessible to anybody familiar with basic notions of CFG parsing. It is useful both for researchers and students in computational linguistics and in formal language theory.

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