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LFG Generation by Grammar Specialization

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Abstract Full Text Authors

This article describes an approach to Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG) generation that is based on the fact that the set of strings that an LFG grammar relates to a particular acyclic f-structure is a context-free language. We present an algorithm that produces for an arbitrary LFG grammar and an arbitrary acyclic input f-structure a context-free grammar describing exactly the set of strings that the given LFG grammar associates with that f-structure. The individual sentences are then available through a standard context-free generator operating on that grammar. The context-free grammar is

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constructed by specializing the context-free backbone of the LFG grammar for the given f-structure and serves as a compact representation of all generation results that the LFG grammar assigns to the input. This approach extends to other grammatical formalisms with explicit context-free backbones, such as PATR, and also to formalisms that permit a context-free skeleton to be extracted from richer specifications. It provides a general mathematical framework for understanding and improving the operation of a family of chart-based generation algorithms.

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