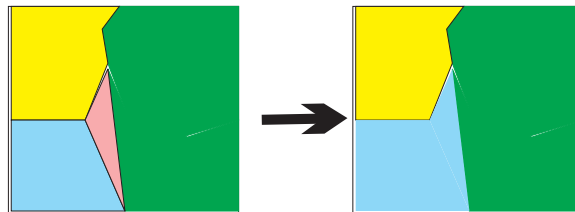


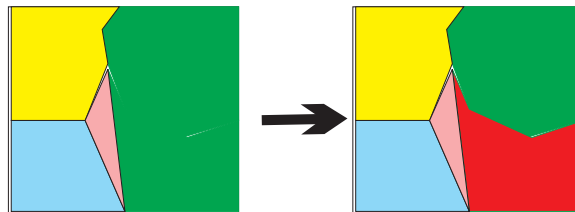
## Region Segmentation

- Connected components analysis often results in many small disjointed regions.
- A connection (or break) at a single pixel can split (or merge) entire regions.
- There are three basic approaches to segmentation:

- Region Merging - recursively merge regions that are similar.



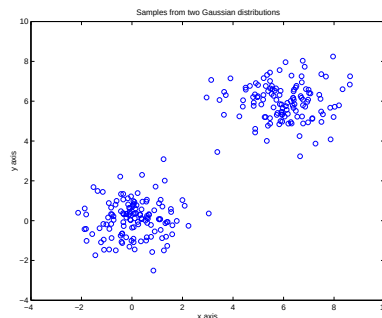
- Region Splitting - recursively divide regions that are heterogeneous.



- Split and merge - iteratively split and merge regions to form the “best” segmentation.

## Hierarchical Clustering

- Clustering refers to techniques for separating data samples into sets with distinct characteristics.



- Clustering methods are analogous to segmentation methods.
  - Agglomerative clustering - “bottom up” procedure for recursively merging clusters  $\Rightarrow$  analogous to region merging
  - Divisive clustering - “top down” procedure for recursively splitting clusters  $\Rightarrow$  analogous to region splitting

## Image Regions and Partitions

- Let  $R_m \subset S$  denote a region of the image where  $m \in \mathcal{M}$ .
- We say that  $\{R_m | m \in \mathcal{M}\}$  **partitions** the image if

$$\begin{aligned} \text{For all } m \neq k, \quad R_m \cap R_k &= \emptyset \\ \bigcup_{m \in \mathcal{M}} R_m &= S \end{aligned}$$

- Each region  $R_m$  has **features** that characterize it.

## Typical Region Features

- Color
  - Mean RGB value
  - 1-D color histograms in R, G, and B
  - 3-D color histogram in (R,G,B)
- Texture
  - Spatial autocorrelation
  - Joint probability distribution for neighboring pixels (e.g. the spatial co-occurrence matrix)
  - Wavelet transform coefficients
- Shape
  - Number of pixels
  - Width and height attributes
  - Boundary smoothness attributes
  - Adjacent region labels

## Recursive Feature Computation

- Any two regions may be merged into a new region.

$$R_{new} = R_k \cup R_l$$

- Let  $f_n = f(R_n) \in \mathbb{R}^k$  be a  $k$  dimensional feature vector extracted from the region  $R_n$ .
- Ideally, the features of merged regions may be computed without reference to the original pixels in the region.

$$\begin{aligned} f(R_k \cup R_l) &= f(R_k) \oplus f(R_l) \\ f_{new} &= f_k \oplus f_l \end{aligned}$$

here  $\oplus$  denotes some operation on the values of the two feature vectors.

## Example of Recursive Feature Computation

Example: Let  $f(R_k) = (N_k, \mu_k, c_k)$  where

$$\begin{aligned} N_k &= |R_k| \\ \mu_k &= \frac{1}{N_k} \sum_{s \in R_k} x_s \\ c_k &= \frac{1}{N_k} \sum_{s \in R_k} s \end{aligned}$$

We may compute the region features for  $R_{new} = R_k \cup R_l$  using the recursions

$$\begin{aligned} N_{new} &= N_k + N_l \\ \mu_{new} &= \frac{N_k \mu_k + N_l \mu_l}{N_{new}} \\ c_{new} &= \frac{N_k c_k + N_l c_l}{N_{new}} \end{aligned}$$

## Recursive Merging

- Define a distance function between regions. In general, this function has the form

$$d_{k,l} = D(R_k, R_l) \geq 0$$

- Ideally,  $D(R_k, R_l)$  is **only** a function of the feature vectors  $f_k$  and  $f_l$ .

$$d_{k,l} = D(f_k, f_l) \geq 0$$

- Then merge regions with minimum distance.

## Example of Merging Criteria

- Distance between color means

$$d_{k,l} = \frac{N_k}{N_{new}} |\mu_k - \mu_{new}|^2 + \frac{N_l}{N_{new}} |\mu_l - \mu_{new}|^2$$

- Distance between region centers

$$d_{k,l} = \frac{N_k}{N_{new}} |c_k - c_{new}|^2 + \frac{N_l}{N_{new}} |c_l - c_{new}|^2$$

- Distance formed by a weighted combination of the two

$$d_{k,l} = \alpha \left( \frac{N_k}{N_{new}} |\mu_k - \mu_{new}|^2 + \frac{N_l}{N_{new}} |\mu_l - \mu_{new}|^2 \right) + \beta \left( \frac{N_k}{N_{new}} |c_k - c_{new}|^2 + \frac{N_l}{N_{new}} |c_l - c_{new}|^2 \right)$$



## Recursive Merging Algorithm

- Define a distance function between regions

$$d_{k,l} = D(f(R_k), f(R_l)) > 0$$

Repeat until  $|\mathcal{M}| = 1$  {

Determine the minimum distance regions

$$(k^*, l^*) = \arg \min_{k, l \in \mathcal{M}} \{d_{k,l}\}$$

Merge the minimum distance regions

$$R_{k^*} \leftarrow R_{k^*} \cup R_{l^*}$$

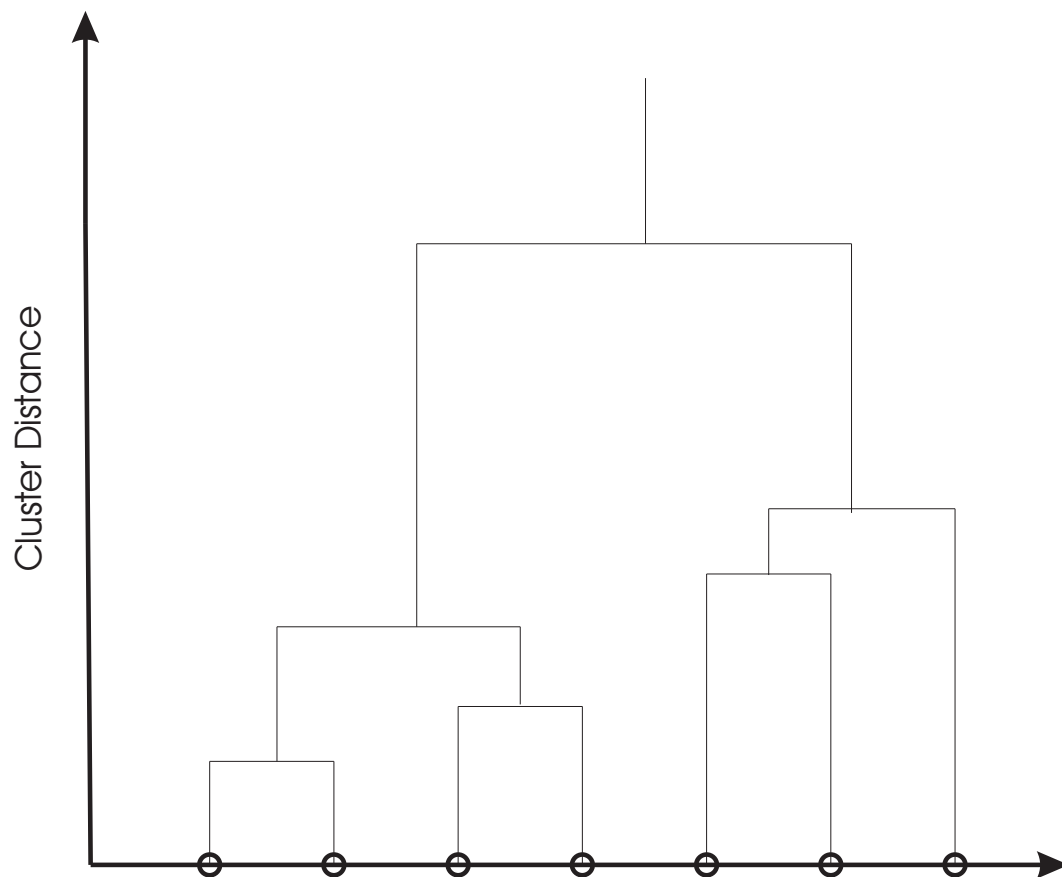
Remove unused region

$$\mathcal{M} \leftarrow \mathcal{M} - \{l^*\}$$

}

- This recursion generates a binary tree.

## Merging Hierarchy and Order Identification



- Clustering can be terminated when the distance exceeds a threshold

$$d_{k^*,l^*} > Threshold \Rightarrow \text{Stop clustering}$$

- Different thresholds result in different numbers of clusters.