

Pre-lecture brain teaser

We know that SAT is NP-complete which means that it is in NP-Hard. HALT is also in NP-Hard. Is SAT reducible to HALT?

How?

- Construct a Turing machine that considers all possible assignments. Using for loops.
- if satisfying assignment is solved then halt.

Clearly oracle for HALT can find if the following Turing machine halts and therefore if the CNF is satisfiable.

Is this ok? The turing machine runs in exponential time?

ECE-374-B: Lecture 23 - Decidability II

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Reductions

Reduction

Meta definition: Problem X reduces to problem Y , if given a solution to Y , then it implies a solution for X . Namely, we can solve Y then we can solve X . We will done this by $X \implies Y$.

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Definition

Oracle ORAC for language L is a function that receives as a word w , returns **TRUE** $\iff w \in L$.

Decider

Reduction

Meta definition: Problem X reduces to problem Y , if given a solution to Y , then it implies a solution for X . Namely, we can solve Y then we can solve X . We will denote this by $X \Rightarrow Y$.

Definition

Oracle $ORAC$ for language L is a function that receives as a word w , returns $TRUE \iff w \in L$.

Lemma

A language X reduces to a language Y , if one can construct a TM decider for X using a given oracle $ORAC_Y$ for Y .

We will denote this fact by $X \Rightarrow Y$.

Reduction proof technique

- **Y**: Problem/language for which we want to prove undecidable.

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Reduction proof technique

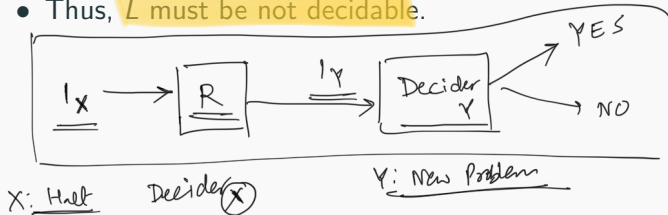
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- Assume L is decided by **TM** M .
- Create a decider for known undecidable problem **X** using M .
- Result in decider for **X** (i.e., A_{TM}).
- Contradiction **X** is not decidable.
- Thus, L must be not decidable.



Reduction implies decidability

Lemma

Let X and Y be two languages, and assume that $X \implies Y$. If Y is decidable then X is decidable.

Proof.

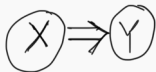
Let T be a decider for Y (i.e., a program or a **TM**). Since X reduces to Y , it follows that there is a procedure $T_{X|Y}$ (i.e., decider) for X that uses an oracle for Y as a subroutine. We replace the calls to this oracle in $T_{X|Y}$ by calls to T . The resulting program T_X is a decider and its language is X . Thus X is decidable (or more formally **TM** decidable). □

Read!

The contrapositive...

Lemma

Let X and Y be two languages, and assume that $X \implies Y$. If X is undecidable then Y is undecidable.



Halting

The halting problem

Language of all pairs $\langle M, w \rangle$ such that M halts on w :

$$\star \quad A_{\text{Halt}} = \left\{ \langle M, w \rangle \mid \underline{M \text{ is a } TM} \text{ and } \underline{M \text{ stops on } w} \right\}.$$

Similar to language already known to be undecidable:

$$A_{TM} = \left\{ \langle M, w \rangle \mid \underline{M \text{ is a } TM} \text{ and } \underline{M \text{ accepts } w} \right\}.$$

undecidable

One way to proving that Halting is undecidable...

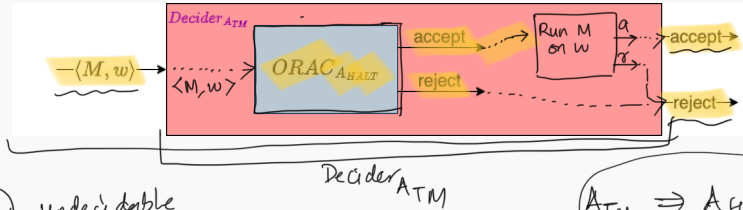
Lemma

The language A_{TM} reduces to A_{Halt} . Namely, given an oracle for A_{Halt} one can build a decider (that uses this oracle) for A_{TM} .

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Lemma

The language A_{TM} reduces to A_{Halt} . Namely, given an oracle for A_{Halt} one can build a decider (that uses this oracle) for A_{TM} .



A_{TM} : undecidable

A_{Halt} : undecidable?

Assume: Use an oracle for A_{Halt} , i.e. A_{Halt} : decidable

$A_{TM} \Rightarrow A_{Halt}$

Given:

ORAC A_{Halt}

(def.)

→ accept : if M accepts w or M rejects w
(1)
→ reject : if M loops forever.
(0)

We want:

ORAC A_{TM}

(def.)

→ accept : if M accepts w
(1)
→ reject : if M rejects w
(0) or loops forever.

One way to proving that Halting is undecidable...

Pseudocode for the diagram!

Proof.

Let $\text{ORAC}_{\text{Halt}}$ be the given oracle for A_{Halt} . We build the following decider for A_{TM} .

```
AnotherDecider- $A_{\text{TM}}(\langle M, w \rangle)$   
   $\text{res} \leftarrow \text{ORAC}_{\text{Halt}}(\langle M, w \rangle)$   
  // if  $M$  does not halt on  $w$  then reject.  
  if  $\text{res} = \text{reject}$  then  
    halt and reject.  
  //  $M$  halts on  $w$  since  $\text{res} = \text{accept}$ .  
  // Simulating  $M$  on  $w$  terminates in finite time.  
   $\text{res}_2 \leftarrow \text{Simulate } M \text{ on } w$ .  
  return  $\text{res}_2$ .
```

This procedure always return and as such its a decider for A_{TM} .



The Halting problem is not decidable

Theorem

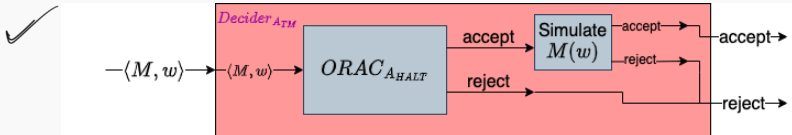
The language A_{Halt} is not decidable.

Proof.

Assume, for the sake of contradiction, that A_{Halt} is decidable. As such, there is a TM, denoted by TM_{Halt} , that is a decider for A_{Halt} . We can use TM_{Halt} as an implementation of an oracle for A_{Halt} , which would imply that one can build a decider for A_{TM} . However, A_{TM} is undecidable. A contradiction. It must be that A_{Halt} is undecidable. □



The same proof by figure...



... if A_{Halt} is decidable, then A_{TM} is decidable, which is impossible.

Emptiness

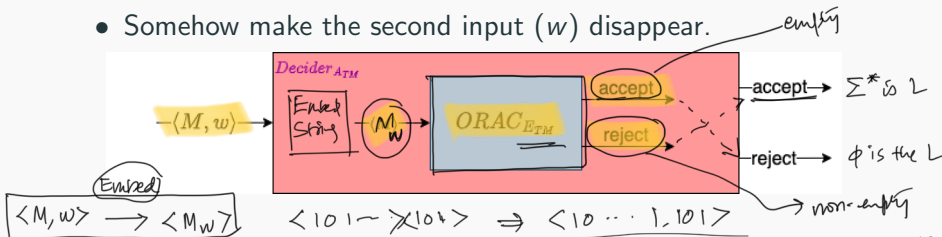
The language of empty languages

- $E_{TM} = \{ \langle M \rangle \mid M \text{ is a TM and } L(M) = \emptyset \}.$
- TM_{ETM} : Assume we are given this decider for E_{TM} .
- Need to use TM_{ETM} to build a decider for A_{TM} .
- Decider for A_{TM} is given M and w and must decide whether M accepts w .
- Restructure question to be about Turing machine having an empty language.
- Somehow make the second input (w) disappear.

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$$A_{TM} \Rightarrow E_{TM}$$

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$$f(x) : \begin{cases} w = 2 \\ y = w^2 \end{cases}$$

return y

$$f(2) = 4$$

$$f(10) = 10$$

$\langle M, w, x \rangle \rightarrow$ give accept if M accepts $w \Rightarrow \underline{L(M)} = \Sigma^*$
 $\langle M, w, x \rangle \rightarrow$ — reject if M rejects $w \Rightarrow \underline{L(M)} = \underline{\phi}$

The language of empty languages

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- Restructure question to be about Turing machine having an empty language.
- Somehow make the second input (w) disappear.
- Idea: hard-code w into M , creating a TM M_w which runs M on the fixed string w .
- TM $M_w(x)$:
 1. Input = x (which will be ignored)
 2. Simulate M on w .
 3. If the simulation accepts, accept. Else, reject.

Embedding strings...

- Given program $\langle M \rangle$ and input w ...
- ...can output a program $\langle M_w \rangle$.
- The program M_w simulates M on w . And accepts/rejects accordingly.
- **EmbedString**($\langle M, w \rangle$) input two strings $\langle M \rangle$ and w , and output a string encoding (TM) $\langle M_w \rangle$.

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- What is $L(M_w)$?
- Since M_w ignores input x .. language M_w is either Σ^* or \emptyset . It is Σ^* if M accepts w , and it is \emptyset if M does not accept w .

Emptiness is undecidable

Theorem

The language E_{TM} is undecidable.

- Assume (for contradiction), that E_{TM} is decidable.
- TM_{ETM} be its decider.
- Build decider **AnotherDecider- A_{TM}** for A_{TM} :

```
AnotherDecider- $A_{TM}$ ( $\langle M, w \rangle$ )  
   $\langle M_w \rangle \leftarrow \text{EmbedString}(\langle M, w \rangle)$   
   $r \leftarrow TM_{ETM}(\langle M_w \rangle)$ .  
  if  $r = \text{accept}$  then  
    return reject  
  //  $TM_{ETM}(\langle M_w \rangle)$  rejected its input  
  return accept
```

Emptiness is undecidable...

Consider the possible behavior of **AnotherDecider-A**_{TM} on the input $\langle M, w \rangle$.

- If TM_{ETM} accepts $\langle M_w \rangle$, then $L(M_w)$ is empty. This implies that M does not accept w . As such, **AnotherDecider-A**_{TM} rejects its input $\langle M, w \rangle$.
- If TM_{ETM} accepts $\langle M_w \rangle$, then $L(M_w)$ is not empty. This implies that M accepts w . So **AnotherDecider-A**_{TM} accepts $\langle M, w \rangle$.

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\implies **AnotherDecider- A_{TM}** is decider for A_{TM} .

But A_{TM} is undecidable...

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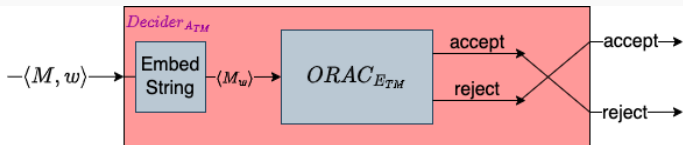
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...must be assumption that E_{TM} is decidable is false.

Emptiness is undecidable via diagram



AnotherDecider- A_{TM} never actually runs the code for M_w . It hands the code to a function TM_{ETM} which analyzes what the code would do if run it. So it does not matter that M_w might go into an infinite loop.

Equality

Equality is undecidable

$$EQ_{TM} = \left\{ \langle M, N \rangle \mid M \text{ and } N \text{ are TM's and } L(M) = L(N) \right\}.$$

Lemma

The language EQ_{TM} is undecidable.

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Let's try something different. We know E_{TM} is undecidable. Let's use that:

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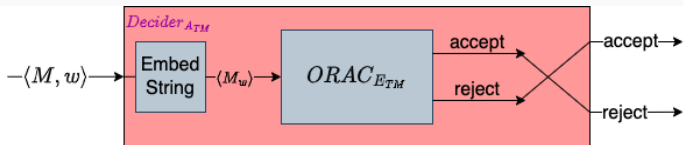
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$$E_{TM} \implies EQ_{TM}$$

Equality diagram



Proof

Proof.

Suppose that we had a decider **DeciderEqual** for EQ_{TM} . Then we can build a decider for E_{TM} as follows:

TM R :

1. Input = $\langle M \rangle$
2. Include the (constant) code for a TM T that rejects all its input. We denote the string encoding T by $\langle T \rangle$.
3. Run **DeciderEqual** on $\langle M, T \rangle$.
4. If **DeciderEqual** accepts, then accept.
5. If **DeciderEqual** rejects, then reject.



DFAs

DFAs are empty?

$$E_{DFA} = \left\{ \langle A \rangle \mid A \text{ is a DFA and } L(A) = \emptyset \right\}.$$

What does the above language describe?

All the DFA encodings that describe empty languages.

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Is the language above decidable? Yes ofcourse. It's a simple DFA.

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Lemma

The language E_{DFA} is decidable:

Proof.

Unlike in the previous cases, we can directly build a decider

(**DeciderEmptyDFA**) for E_{DFA}

TM R :

1. Input = $\langle A \rangle$
2. Mark start state of A as visited.
3. Repeat until no new states get marked:
 - Mark any state that has a transition coming into it from any state that is already marked.
4. If no accept state is marked, then accept.
5. Otherwise, then reject.



Equal DFAs

DFAs are equal?

$$EQ_{DFA} = \left\{ \langle A, b \rangle \mid A \text{ and } B \text{ are DFAs and } L(A) = L(B) \right\}.$$

What does the above language describe?

All the DFA string pairs that represent equivalent languages

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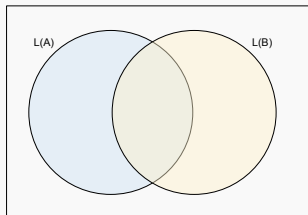
Lemma

The language E_{DFA} is decidable.

Can we show this using reductions? $EQ_{DFA} \implies E_{DFA}$

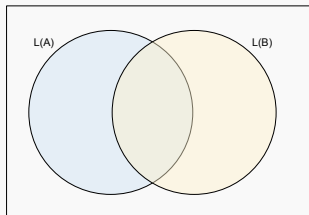
Equal DFA trick I

Need a way to determine if there any strings in one language and not the other....



Equal DFA trick I

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This is known as the symmetric difference. Can create a new DFA (C) which represents the symmetric difference of L_A and L_B .

$$L(C) = \left(L(A) \cap \overline{L(B)} \right) \cup \left(\overline{L(A)} \cap L(B) \right) \quad (1) \quad 24$$

Equal DFA trick II

Notice with $L(C)$:

- If $L(A) = L(B)$ then $L(C) = \emptyset$
- If $L(A) \neq L(B)$ then $L(C)$ is not empty

Good time to use E_{DFA} proof from before.....How do we show EQ_{DFA} is decidable using a reduction?

Equal DFA trick II

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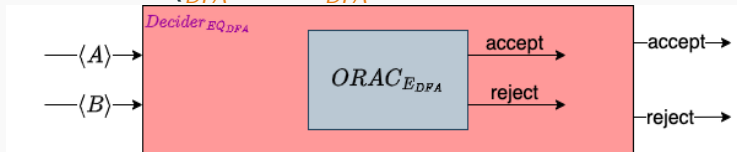
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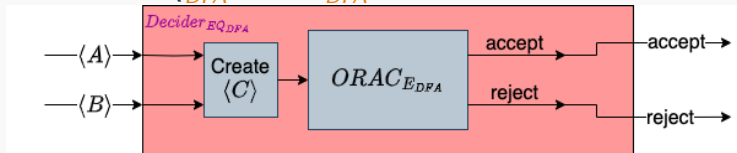
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Equal DFA decider

TM F :

1. Input = $\langle A, B \rangle$ where A and B are DFAs
2. Construct DFA C as described before
3. Run **DeciderEmptyDFA** from previous slide on C
4. If accepts, then accept.
5. If rejects, then reject.

Regularity

Many undecidable languages

- Almost any property defining a **TM** language induces a language which is undecidable.
- proofs all have the same basic pattern.
- Regularity language:
$$\text{Regular}_{\text{TM}} = \left\{ \langle M \rangle \mid M \text{ is a TM and } L(M) \text{ is regular} \right\}.$$
- **DeciderRegL**: Assume **TM** decider for $\text{Regular}_{\text{TM}}$.
- Reduction from halting requires to turn problem about deciding whether a **TM** M accepts w (i.e., is $w \in A_{\text{TM}}$) into a problem about whether some **TM** accepts a regular set of strings.

Outline of IsRegular? reduction



Proof continued...

- Given M and w , consider the following TM M'_w :
TM M'_w :
 - (i) Input = x
 - (ii) If x has the form $a^n b^n$, halt and accept.
 - (iii) Otherwise, simulate M on w .
 - (iv) If the simulation accepts, then accept.
 - (v) If the simulation rejects, then reject.
- not executing M'_w !
- feed string $\langle M'_w \rangle$ into **DeciderRegL**
- **EmbedRegularString**: program with input $\langle M \rangle$ and w , and outputs $\langle M'_w \rangle$, encoding the program M'_w .
- If M accepts w , then any x accepted by M'_w : $L(M'_w) = \Sigma^*$.
- If M does not accept w , then $L(M'_w) = \{a^n b^n \mid n \geq 0\}$.

Proof continued...

- $a^n b^n$ is not regular...
- Use **DeciderRegL** on M'_w to distinguish these two cases.
- Note - cooked M'_w to the decider at hand.
- A decider for A_{TM} as follows.

```
AnotherDecider- $A_{TM}(\langle M, w \rangle)$   
     $\langle M'_w \rangle \leftarrow \text{EmbedRegularString}(\langle M, w \rangle)$   
     $r \leftarrow \text{DeciderRegL}(\langle M'_w \rangle).$   
    return  $r$ 
```

- If **DeciderRegL** accepts $\implies L(M'_w)$ regular (its Σ^*)

Proof continued...

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- If **DeciderRegL** accepts $\implies L(M'_w)$ regular (its Σ^*) $\implies M$ accepts w . So **AnotherDecider- A_{TM}** should accept $\langle M, w \rangle$.

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- If **DeciderRegL** rejects $\implies L(M'_w)$ is not regular $\implies L(M'_w) = a^n b^n$

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```

- If **DeciderRegL** accepts $\implies L(M'_w)$ regular (its Σ^*) $\implies M$ accepts w . So **AnotherDecider- A_{TM}** should accept $\langle M, w \rangle$.
- If **DeciderRegL** rejects $\implies L(M'_w)$ is not regular $\implies L(M'_w) = a^n b^n \implies M$ does not accept $w \implies$ **AnotherDecider- A_{TM}** should reject $\langle M, w \rangle$.

Rice theorem

The above proofs were somewhat repetitious...

...they imply a more general result.

Theorem (Rice's Theorem.)

*Suppose that L is a language of Turing machines; that is, each word in L encodes a **TM**. Furthermore, assume that the following two properties hold.*

- (a) *Membership in L depends only on the Turing machine's language, i.e. if $L(M) = L(N)$ then $\langle M \rangle \in L \Leftrightarrow \langle N \rangle \in L$.*
- (b) *The set L is "non-trivial," i.e. $L \neq \emptyset$ and L does not contain all Turing machines.*

Then L is a undecidable.