

# CS 302.1 - Automata Theory

## Lecture 12

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# Quick Recap

**Recursive Language/Turing Decidable/Decidable:** A language  $L$  is called Recursive or Turing decidable or Decidable if there exists a Total Turing Machine  $M$  and

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \forall \omega \in L, M(\omega) \text{ accepts} \\ \forall \omega \notin L, M(\omega) \text{ rejects} \end{array} \right\} \text{Halts on all inputs}$$

**The Church Turing thesis:** An algorithm can be written for a problem if and only if it is decidable, i.e. there exists a Total Turing machine that solves the problem. **Total TM  $\Leftrightarrow$  Algorithms!**

**Recursively Enumerable Language/Turing Recognizable (RE):** A language  $L$  is called Recursively Enumerable ( $RE$ ) or Turing Recognizable if

$$\begin{array}{ll} \forall \omega \in L, M(\omega) \text{ accepts} & \\ \forall \omega \notin L, M(\omega) \text{ doesn't accept} & \text{(rejects or runs infinitely)} \end{array}$$

**Co-Recursively Enumerable Language/co-Turing Recognizable (Co-RE/ $\overline{RE}$ /nRE):** A language  $L$  is Co-Recursively Enumerable (co-RE/ $\overline{RE}$ ) or Co-Turing Recognizable if

$$\begin{array}{ll} \forall \omega \in L, M(\omega) \text{ doesn't reject} & \text{(accepts or loops)} \\ \forall \omega \notin L, M(\omega) \text{ rejects} & \end{array}$$

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There exists a one-one mapping (bijective relationship) between the set of finite length binary strings and TMs.

**Universal Turing Machine:** A Universal Turing Machine, denoted as  $U_{TM}$  accepts as input (i) the encoding of a Turing Machine  $M$  and (ii) an input string  $w$  and **simulates  $M$  running on  $w$** , i.e.

$$U_{TM}(\langle M, w \rangle) = \begin{cases} \text{ACCEPTS, if } M(w) \text{ accepts} \\ \text{REJECTS, if } M(w) \text{ rejects} \\ \text{LOOPS INFINITELY, if } M(w) \text{ loops infinitely} \end{cases}$$

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Some examples of languages that are recursive/decidable:

- $A_{DFA} = \{\langle DFA \rangle, w \mid w \in L(DFA)\}$
- $E_{DFA} = \{\langle DFA \rangle \mid L(DFA) = \Phi\}$
- $A_{CFG} = \{\langle CFG, w \rangle \mid w \in L(CFG)\}$
- $E_{CFG} = \{\langle CFG \rangle \mid L(CFG) = \Phi\}$

An undecidable language:

- $A_{TM} = \{\langle M, w \rangle \mid M \text{ accepts input } w\}$

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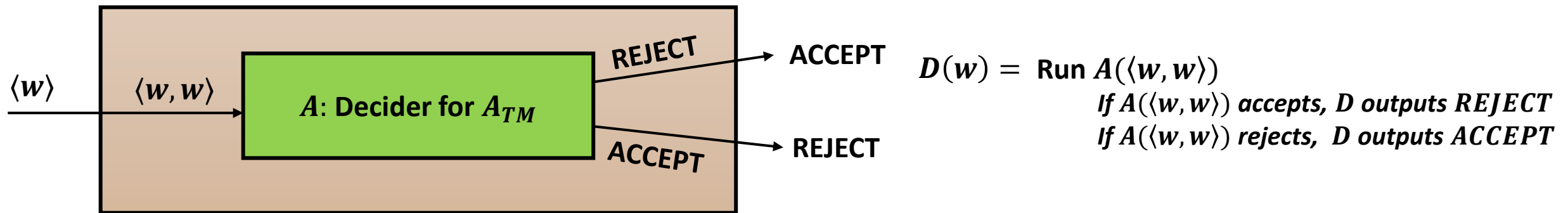
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- $A_{TM}$  is undecidable
- $A_{TM} \in RE$  but not recursive
- $A_{TM}$  is partially decidable

**Proof strategy:** By contradiction. We assume that a Total TM  $A$  exists that decides  $A_{TM}$ .

We build a Total TM  $D$  that accepts  $w$  as input and calls  $A(\langle w, w \rangle)$  as a subroutine and outputs the opposite of  $A$ .



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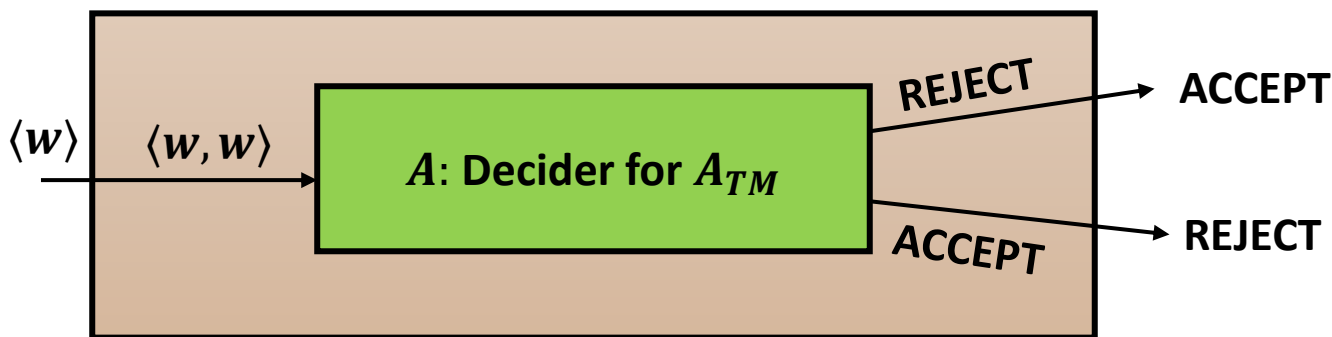
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For  $w = \langle M_w \rangle$

$D(\langle M_w \rangle) =$

Run  $A(M_w, \langle M_w \rangle)$

$A(M_w, \langle M_w \rangle)$  accepts, if  $M_w(\langle M_w \rangle)$  **accepts**  
( $D$  outputs **REJECT**)

$A(M_w, \langle M_w \rangle)$  rejects, if  $M_w(\langle M_w \rangle)$  **doesn't accept**  
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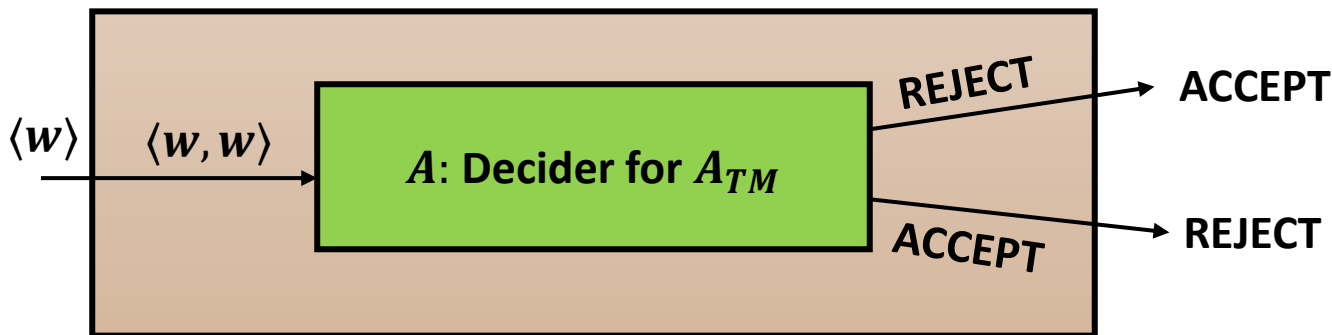
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For  $w = \langle D \rangle$ , there is a contradiction!

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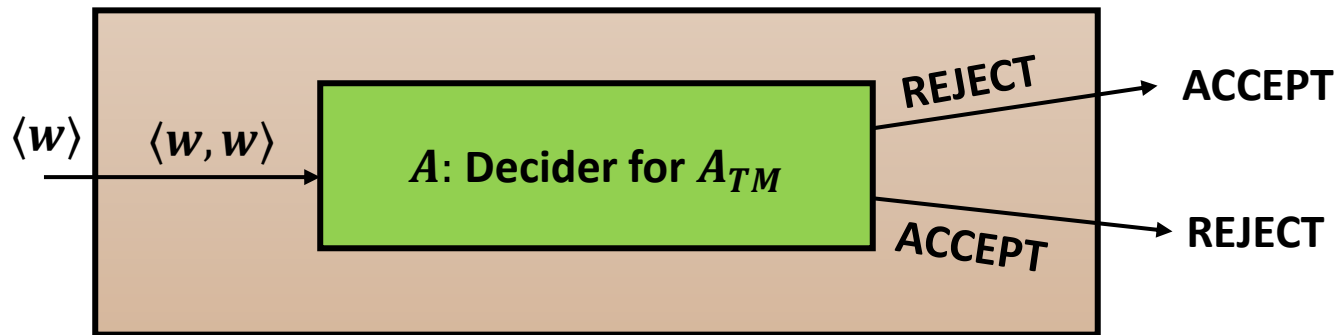
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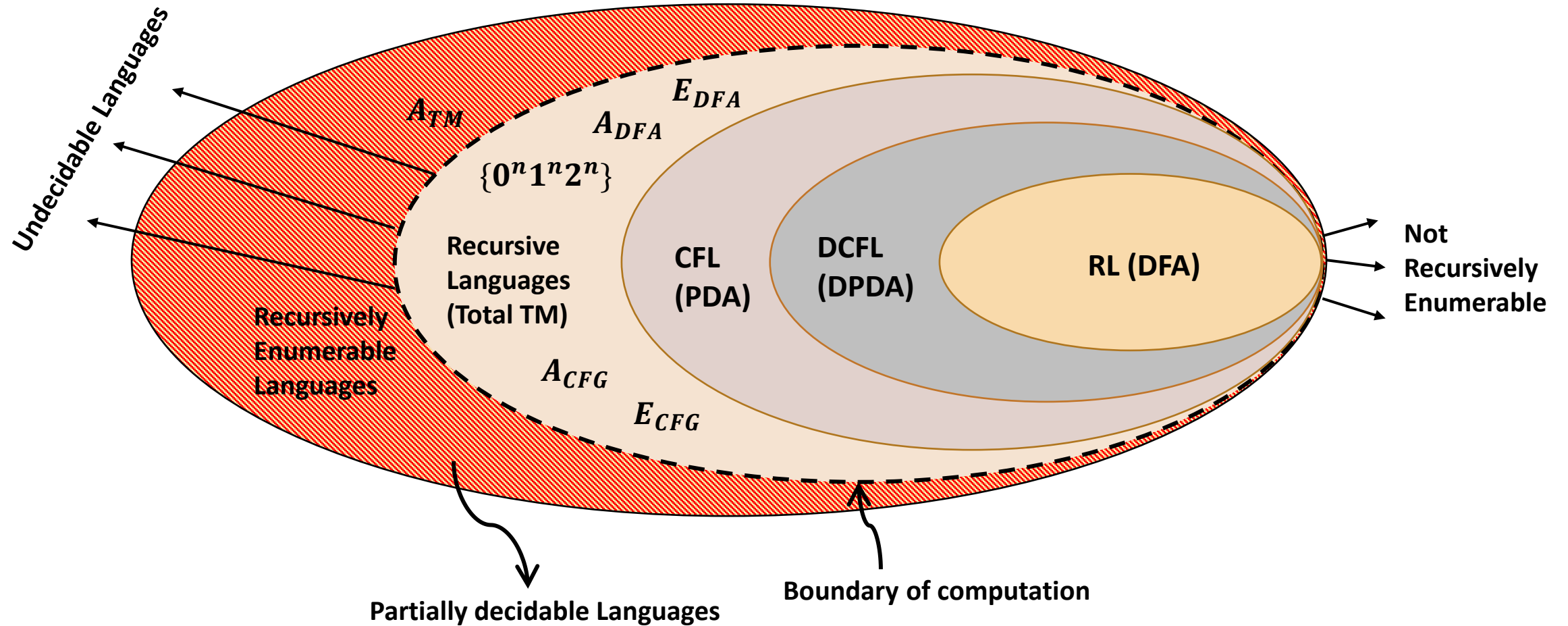


$D(\langle D \rangle)$  accepts  $\leftrightarrow D(\langle D \rangle)$  rejects  
 $D(\langle D \rangle)$  rejects  $\leftrightarrow D(\langle D \rangle)$  accepts

For  $w = \langle D \rangle$ , there is a contradiction!



# Quick Recap



# An undecidable problem

$A_{TM} = \{\langle M, w \rangle \mid M \text{ accepts input } w\}$ .  $A_{TM}$  is undecidable

$$A(\langle M, w \rangle) = \begin{cases} \text{ACCEPTS, if } M(w) \text{ accepts} \\ \text{REJECTS, if } M(w) \text{ rejects or loops infinitely} \end{cases}$$

- $A_{TM}$  is undecidable
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The proof uses a technique called **Diagonalization**.

First, recall that there exists a bijective map (one-one correspondence) between the set of all finite-length binary strings and Turing Machines.

We can list all the Turing Machines and write down the result of running any  $M_i$  on input  $\langle M_j \rangle$ .

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$M_0$	Accept	Accept	Loops	Reject	Accept	...
$M_1$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...
$M_2$	Reject	Loops	Accept	Loops	Accept	...
$M_3$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...
$M_4$	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...

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$M_1$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...
$M_2$	Reject	Loops	Accept	Loops	Accept	...
$M_3$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...
$M_4$	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...

How would this Table look for  $A$ ?

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$M_1$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...
$M_2$	Reject	Loops	Accept	Loops	Accept	...
$M_3$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...
$M_4$	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...

$A$	$\langle M_0 \rangle$	$\langle M_1 \rangle$	$\langle M_2 \rangle$	$\langle M_3 \rangle$	$\langle M_4 \rangle$	...
$M_0$	Accept	Accept	<b>Reject</b>	Reject	Accept	...
$M_1$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...
$M_2$	Reject	<b>Reject</b>	Accept	<b>Reject</b>	Accept	...
$M_3$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...
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$M_0$	Accept	Accept	<b>Reject</b>	Reject	Accept	...	Accept	...
$M_1$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...	Accept	...
$M_2$	Reject	<b>Reject</b>	Accept	<b>Reject</b>	Accept	...	Accept	...
$M_3$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...	Reject	...
$M_4$	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	...	Reject	...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...	$\vdots$	...
$D$						...		...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...	$\vdots$	...

$$D(w) = \{ \text{Run } A(\langle w, w \rangle) \}$$

If  $A(\langle w, w \rangle)$  accepts, then **REJECT**

If  $A(\langle w, w \rangle)$  rejects, then **ACCEPT**

}

$$D(\langle M_w \rangle) = \begin{cases} \text{ACCEPTS, if } M_w(\langle M_w \rangle) \text{ doesn't accept} \\ \text{REJECTS, if } M_w(\langle M_w \rangle) \text{ accepts} \end{cases}$$

- Somewhere we will also have the TM  $D$ .
- Note that  $D$  by definition **computes the opposite of the diagonal entries** of the table.

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$M_1$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...	Accept	...
$M_2$	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	Accept	...	Accept	...
$M_3$	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	Reject	...	Reject	...
$M_4$	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	...	Reject	...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...	$\vdots$	...
$D$	Reject					...		...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...	$\vdots$	...

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$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...	$\vdots$	...
$D$	Reject	Accept				...		...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...	$\vdots$	...



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Note that  $D$  by definition **computes the opposite of the diagonal entries** of the table.

What will be the  $D^{th}$  diagonal entry??

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$M_0$	Accept	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	...	Accept	...
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$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...	$\vdots$	...
$D$	Reject	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	...		...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...	$\vdots$	...

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$M_4$	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	...	Reject	...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...	$\vdots$	...
$D$	Reject	Accept	Reject	Reject	Accept	...	??	...
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$	...	$\vdots$	...

**Contradiction!**

# The Halting problem

**$HALT_{TM} = \{\langle M, w \rangle \mid M \text{ halts on input } w\}$ . Is  $HALT_{TM}$  decidable?**

**The Halting Problem:** Does there exist a Total Turing Machine  $H$  that accepts as input a Turing Machine  $M$  and an input string  $w$  and outputs YES, if  $M(w)$  halts (accepts or rejects) and NO, if  $M(w)$  does not halt (loops forever), i.e.

$$H(\langle M, w \rangle) = \begin{cases} \text{ACCEPTS, if } M(w) \text{ HALTS, i.e. accepts or rejects} \\ \text{REJECTS, if } M(w) \text{ does not HALT, i.e. loops infinitely} \end{cases}$$

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- Turing stated the Halting problem and demonstrated its undecidability in his famous 1936 paper.
- This provided a negative answer to Hilbert's Entscheidungsproblem.
- **Proof strategy:** We will try to show that if we had such a Total TM  $H$ , we would be able to build a Total TM for  $A_{TM}$
- But since we proved that  $A_{TM}$  is undecidable, this would mean that  **$H$  is undecidable**.

# The Halting problem

$HALT_{TM} = \{\langle M, w \rangle \mid M \text{ halts on input } w\}$ . Is  $HALT_{TM}$  decidable?



**Proof idea:** We first assume that there exists such a Total Turing Machine  $H$ . Then, we use  $H$  as a subroutine to construct a Total Turing Machine  $A$  for  $A_{TM}$



But  $A$  cannot be Total and so a total TM that decides  $H$  cannot exist

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**Outlining the steps for building  $A$  using  $H$ :**

- $A$  calls  $H(\langle M, w \rangle)$
- If  $H$  rejects, then we know that  $M(w)$  loops forever and so  $A$  would output  $REJECT$ .



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- If  $H$  accepts,
  - $M(w)$  surely halts (either accepts or rejects).
  - Simply run  $M(w)$  and
    - $ACCEPT$  if  $M(w)$  accepts
    - $REJECT$  if  $M(w)$  rejects





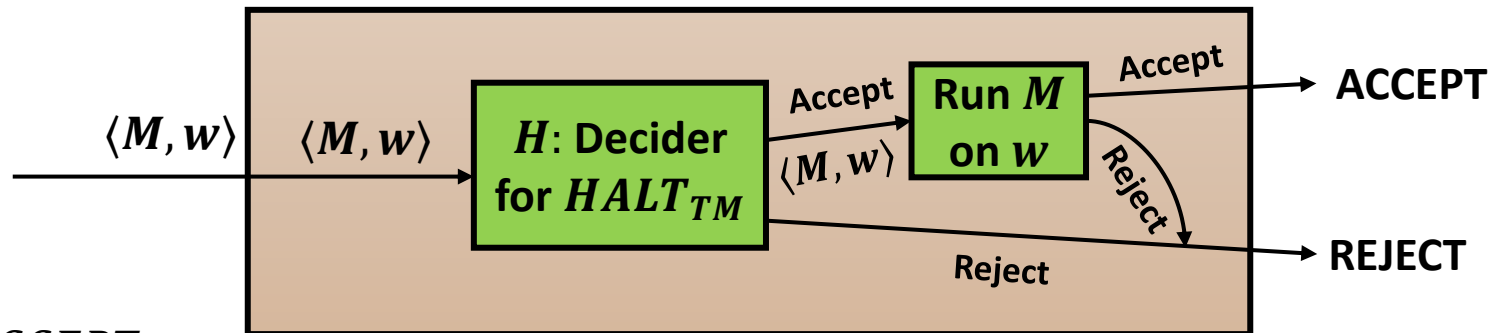
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**Proof:** Assume that there exists such a Total Turing Machine  $H$ . Then, we use  $H$  as a subroutine to construct a Total Turing Machine  $A$  for  $A_{TM}$  as follows:

$A =$  On input  $\langle M, w \rangle$   
Run  $H(\langle M, w \rangle)$   
If  $H$  rejects, output *REJECT*  
If  $H$  accepts,  
Run  $M(w)$   
If  $M(w)$  accepts, output *ACCEPT*  
If  $M(w)$  rejects, output *REJECT*



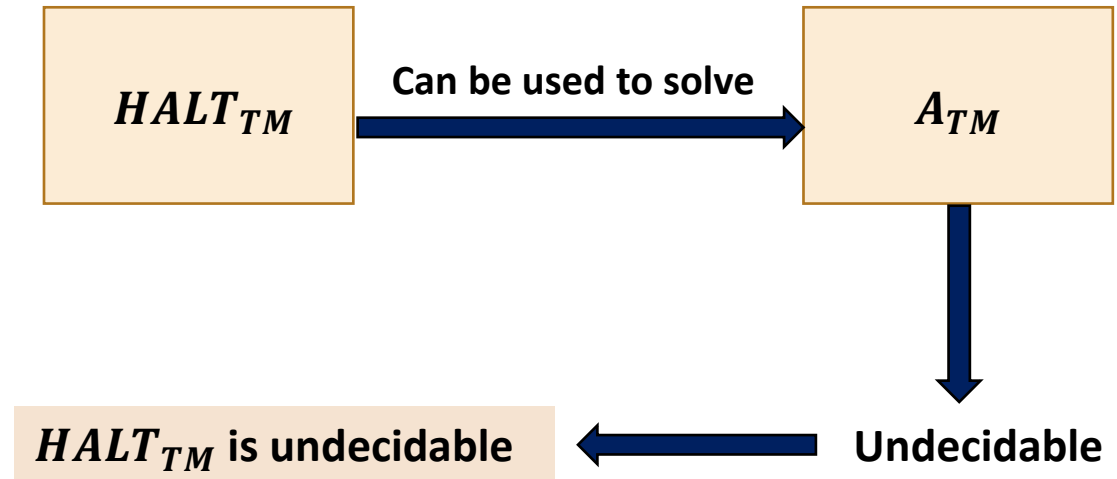
# The Halting problem

$HALT_{TM} = \{\langle M, w \rangle \mid M \text{ halts on input } w\}$ . Is  $HALT_{TM}$  decidable?

$$H(\langle M, w \rangle) = \begin{cases} \text{ACCEPTS, if } M(w) \text{ HALTS, i.e. accepts or rejects} \\ \text{REJECTS, if } M(w) \text{ does not HALT, i.e. loops infinitely} \end{cases}$$

**Proof:** Assume that there exists such a Total Turing Machine  $H$ . Then, we use  $H$  as a subroutine to construct a Total Turing Machine  $A$  for  $A_{TM}$  as follows:

$A =$  On input  $\langle M, w \rangle$   
Run  $H(\langle M, w \rangle)$   
If  $H$  rejects, output *REJECT*  
If  $H$  accepts,  
Run  $M(w)$   
If  $M(w)$  accepts, output *ACCEPT*  
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$HALT_{TM} \in RE$  as  $H$  halts whenever  $M$  accepts or rejects  $w$  and so

$Q =$  On input  $\langle M, w \rangle$ :

- Simulate  $M$  on input  $w$
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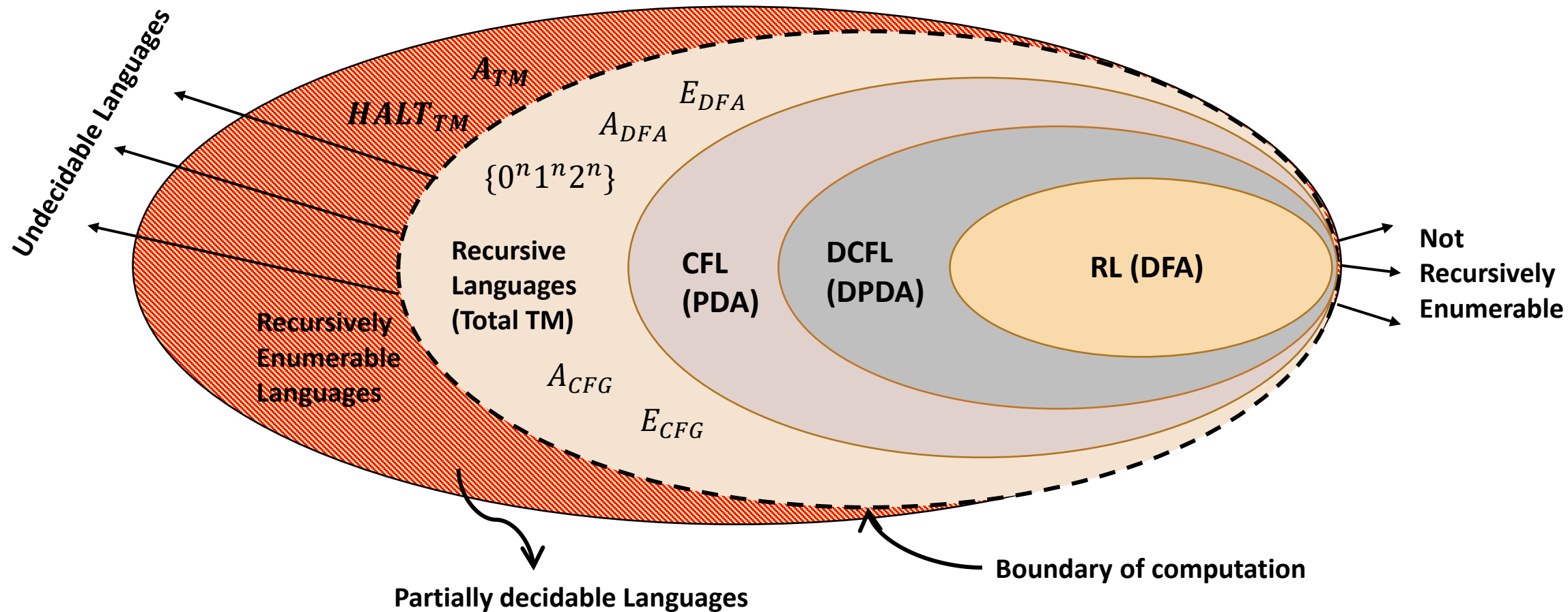
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- $HALT_{TM}$  is undecidable
- $HALT_{TM} \in RE$  but not recursive
- $HALT_{TM}$  is partially decidable

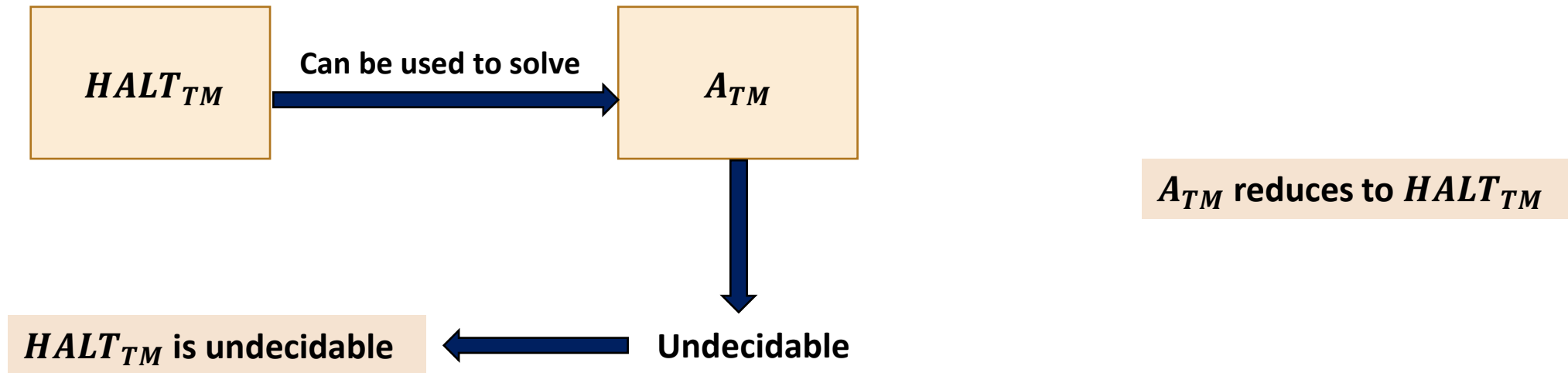


# Reduction

Recall the proof of the undecidability of the Halting Problem

**What did we do there?**

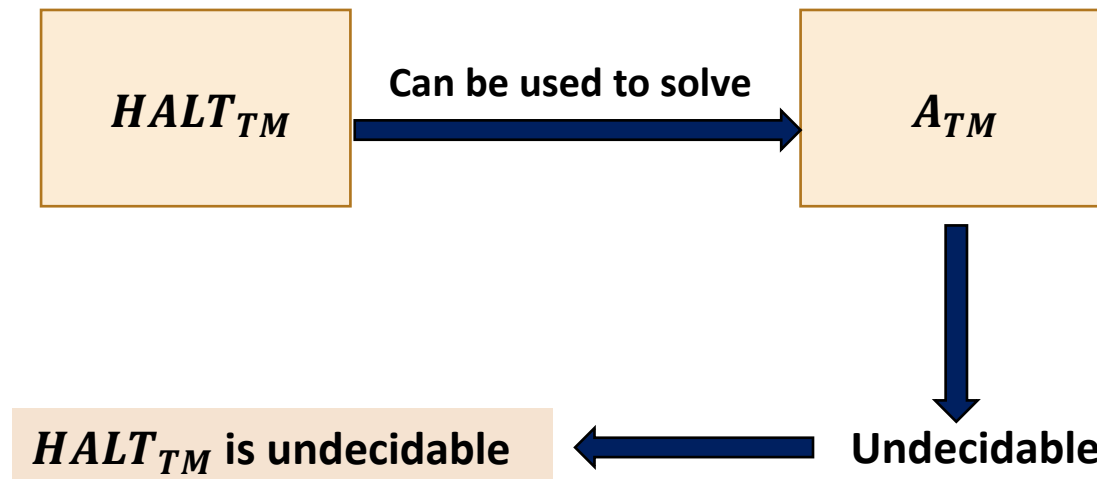
- We used a (supposed) decider for the Halting Problem to build a decider for  $A_{TM}$ .
- This established that  $HALT_{TM}$  can be used to solve  $A_{TM}$ .
- As  $A_{TM}$  is undecidable, this established that  $HALT_{TM}$  is undecidable too.
- The key underlying concept is an idea called **Reduction**.



# Reduction

Generally,

- A language ***A*** **reduces to** another language ***B*** ( $A \leq B$ ) iff we can **build a solver for *A* using a solver for *B***
- In terms of computability, suppose using *B* we can compute *A*. Then, if ***A* is undecidable then so is *B***.
- So, in the last proof we showed:  $A_{TM} \leq HALT_{TM}$  to prove that  $HALT_{TM}$  is undecidable.



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- This is a common technique to show that certain problems are decidable/undecidable.

Suppose,  $A \leq B$  and

- **$A$  is undecidable. Then  $B$  is undecidable.**

For example, we can prove that a problem  $P$  is undecidable by reducing the Halting problem to  $P$ .

$$HALT_{TM} \leq P \Rightarrow P \text{ is undecidable}$$



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- Intuitively, this means  **$B$  is at least as hard as  $A$** .
- So, if  $A \notin R \Rightarrow B \notin R$
- $A \notin RE \Rightarrow B \notin RE$
- $A \notin co RE \Rightarrow B \notin co RE$

$HALT_{TM} \leq P \Rightarrow P$  is undecidable. Also,  $P \notin R$

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- This is a common technique to show that certain problems are decidable/undecidable.

Suppose,  $A \leq B$  and

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- Intuitively, this means ***A* is not harder than *B***.
- So, if  $B \in R \Rightarrow A \in R$
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# Reduction

- A language  **$A$**  **reduces to** another language  **$B$**  ( $A \leq B$ ) iff we can **build a solver for  $A$  using a solver for  $B$** .
- If  **$A$  is undecidable then so is  $B$** , i.e.  **$B$  is at least as hard as  $A$** .
- If  **$B$  is decidable, then so is  $A$** . Intuitively, this means  **$A$  is not harder than  $B$** .
- This is a common technique to show that certain problems are decidable/undecidable.

This is how we can prove several problems are undecidable: by **reducing some known undecidable problem to these problems**.

## Examples:

- $E_{TM} = \{\langle M \rangle \mid M \text{ is a Turing Machine and } L(M) = \Phi\}$
- $EQ_{TM} = \{\langle M_1, M_2 \rangle \mid M_1 \text{ and } M_2 \text{ are Turing Machines having } L(M_1) = L(M_2)\}$
- $ALL_{TM} = \{\langle M \rangle \mid M \text{ halts on all inputs}\}$
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## Generic strategy for proof:

- Consider that a Total TM for the given problem exists (say  $T_M$ ).
- Build a total TM that can decide some undecidable problem (e.g.  $HALT_{TM}$ ,  $A_{TM}$ ) using  $T_M$  as a subroutine.

This reduction would prove that  **$E_{TM}$ ,  $EQ_{TM}$ ,  $ALL_{TM}$  are undecidable**.

# Undecidability

$$E_{TM} = \{\langle M \rangle \mid M \text{ is a Turing Machine and } L(M) = \Phi\}$$

**Proof:** Let  $T_E$  be the Turing Machine that decides  $E_{TM}$ . We shall prove that  $\overline{A_{TM}} \leq E_{TM}$  by constructing a Turing Machine  $N$  that decides  $\overline{A_{TM}}$  using  $T_E$ .

What is  $\overline{A_{TM}}$  ?

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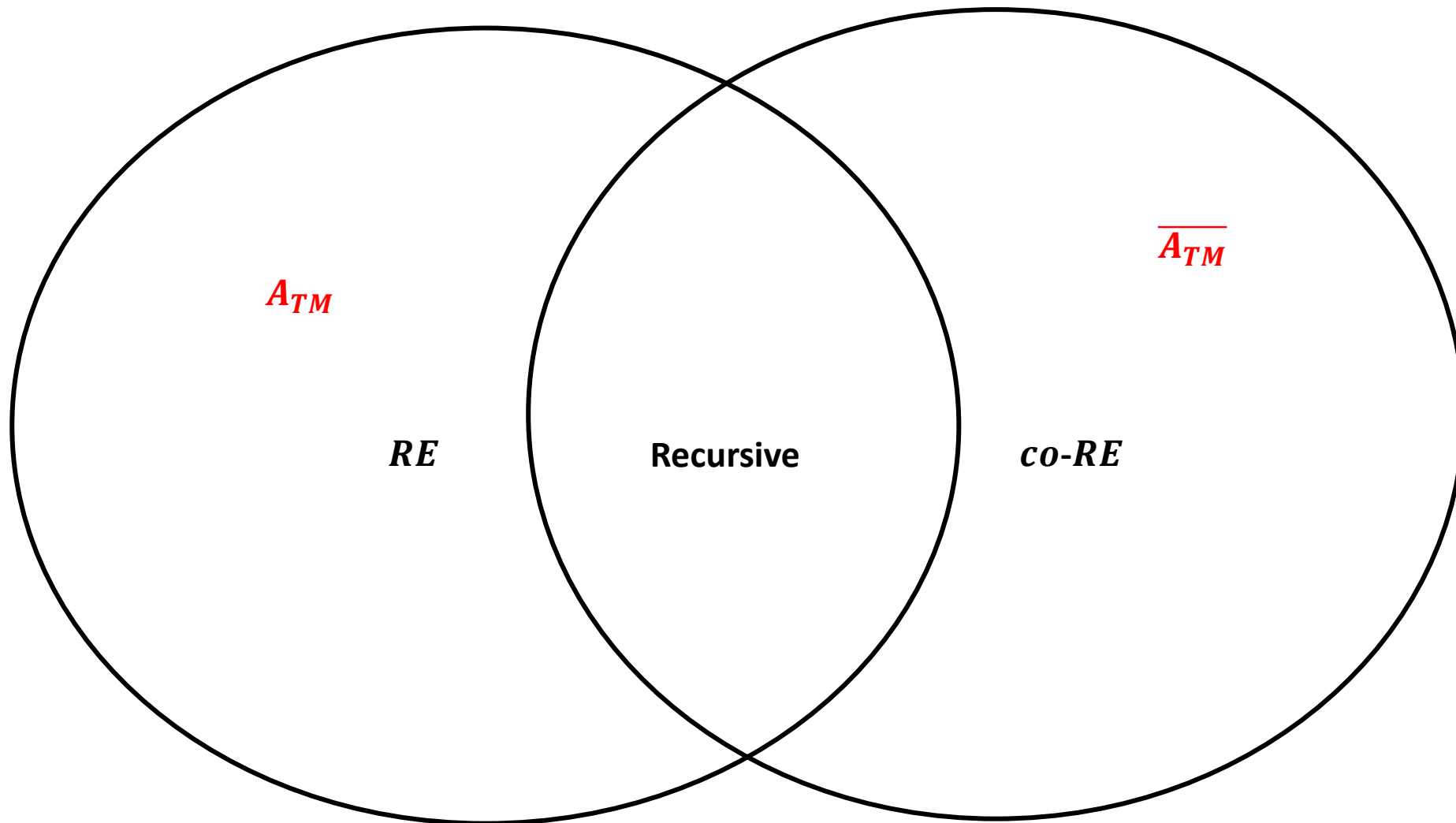
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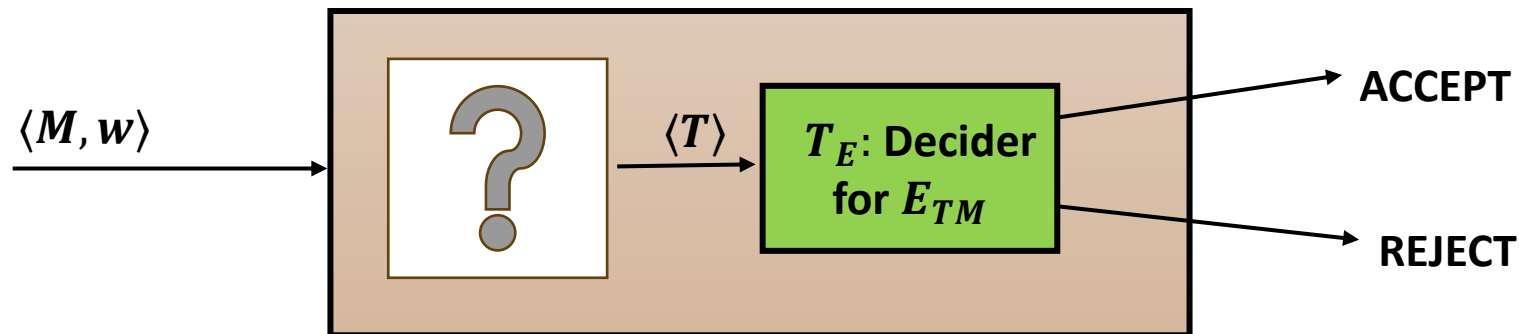
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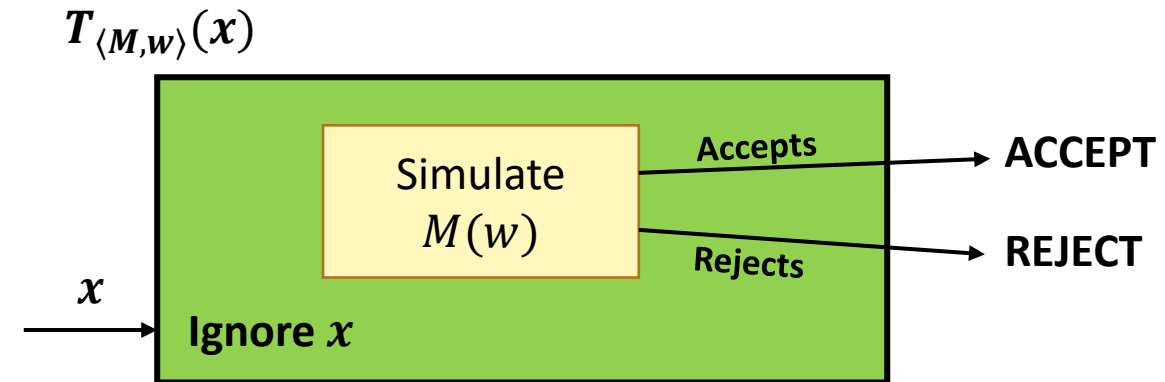
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## Key idea:

- $N(\langle M, w \rangle)$  first builds the encoding of a TM  $T_{\langle M, w \rangle}$ .
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- That is, running  $T_{\langle M, w \rangle}(x)$  on **ANY** input  $x$ , runs  $M$  on  $w$ .



What does this achieve??

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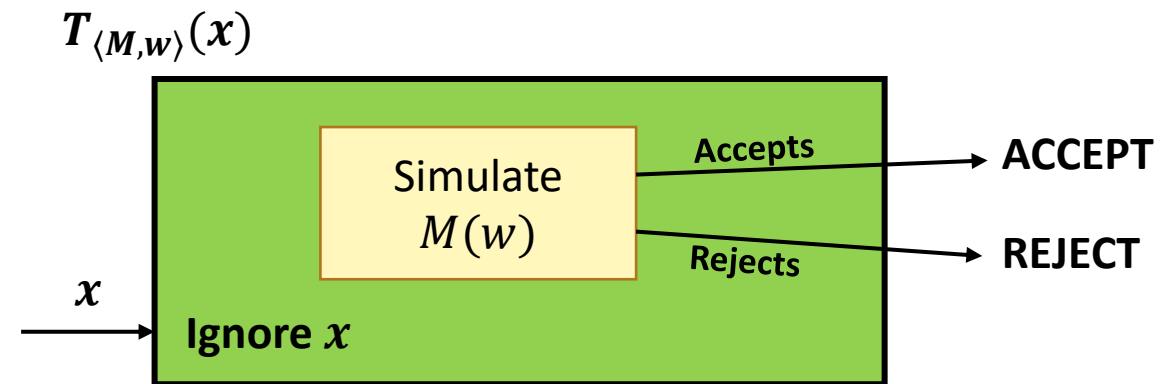
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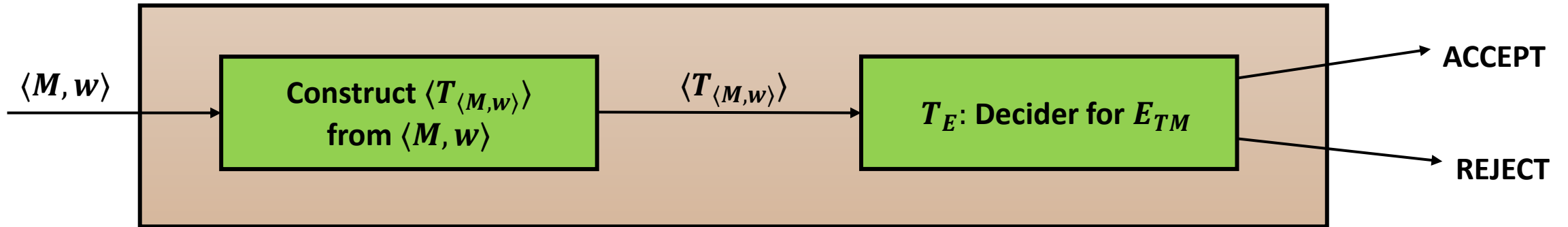
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- **Deciding  $\overline{A_{TM}}$  is tied to whether  $L(T) = \Phi$ !**

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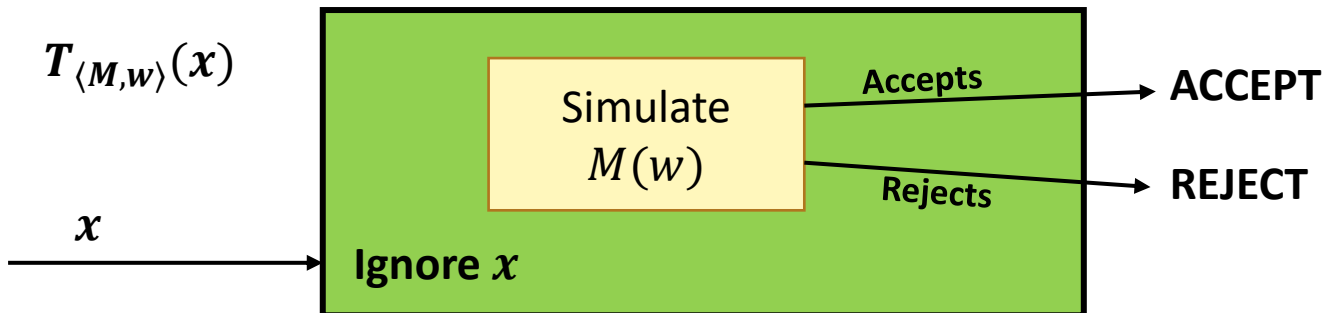
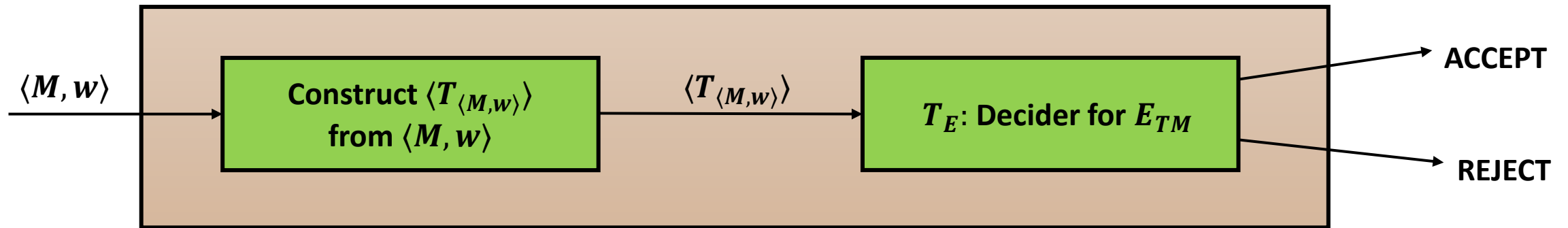
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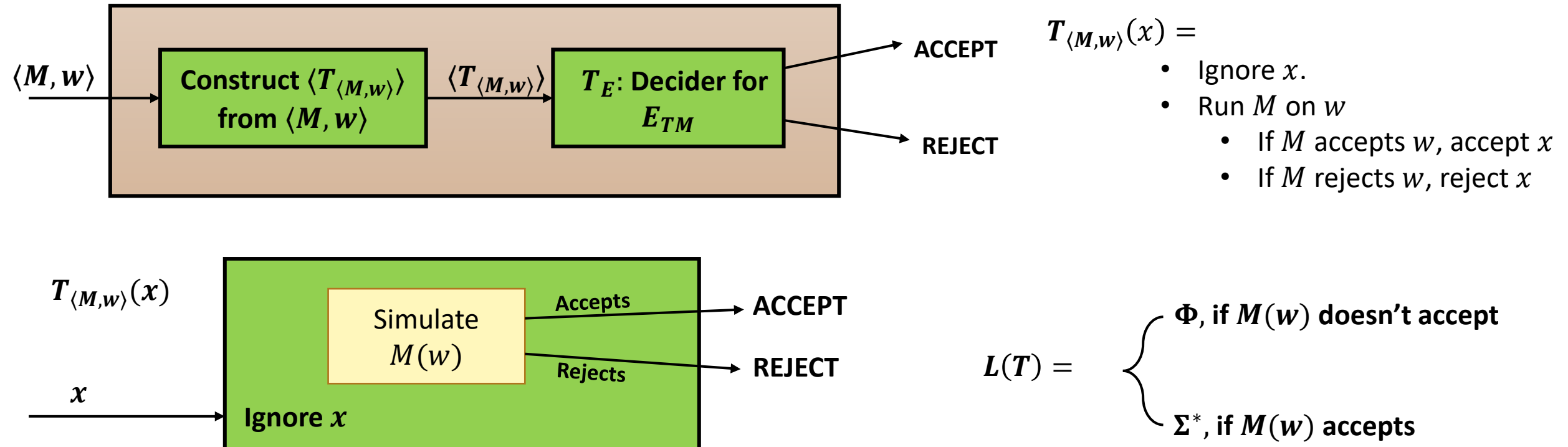
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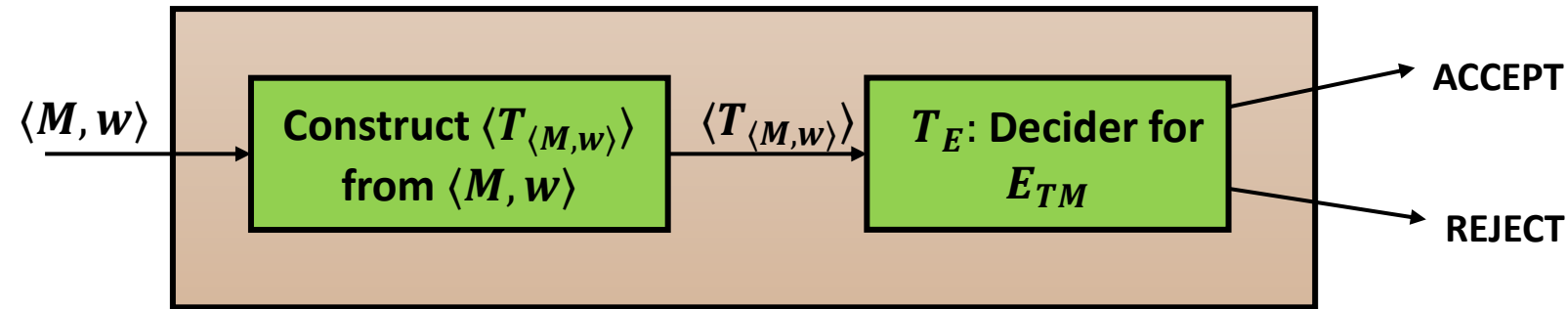
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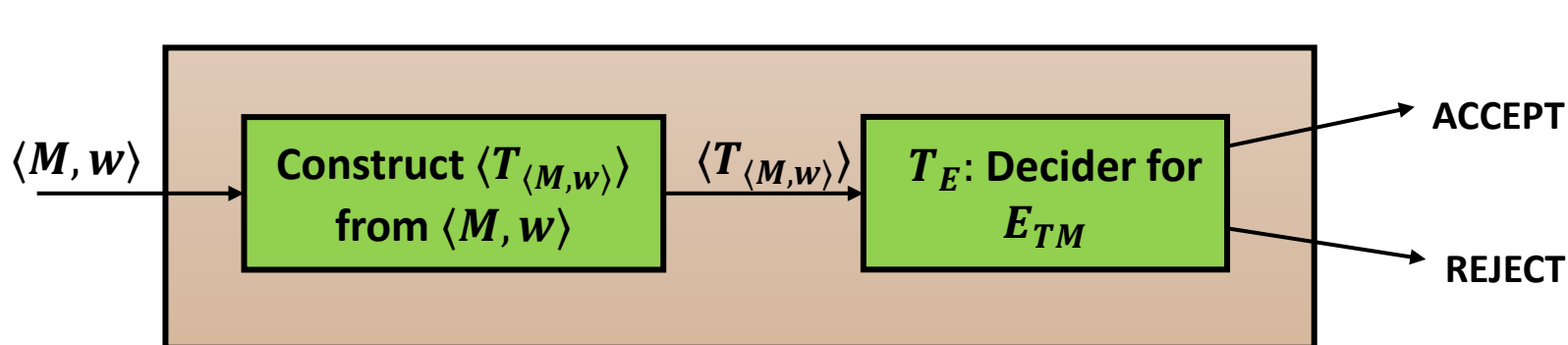
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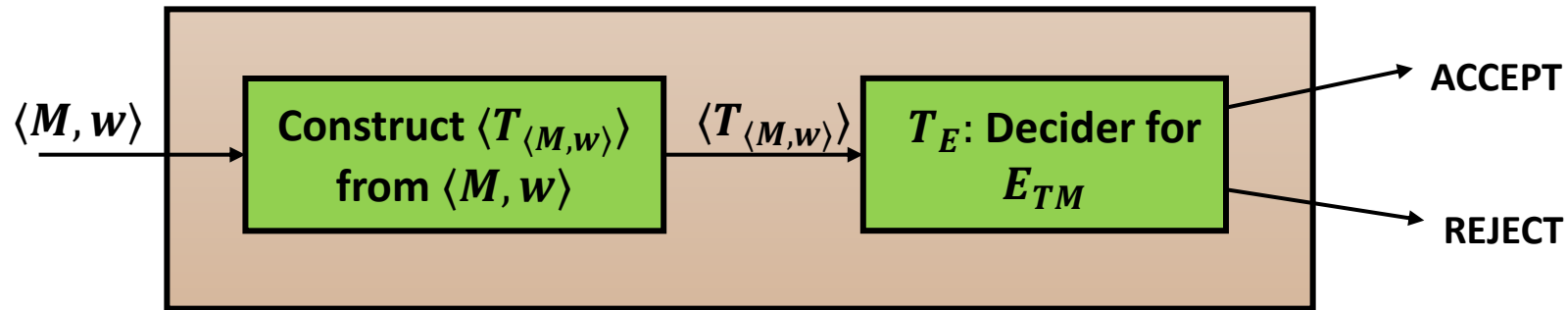
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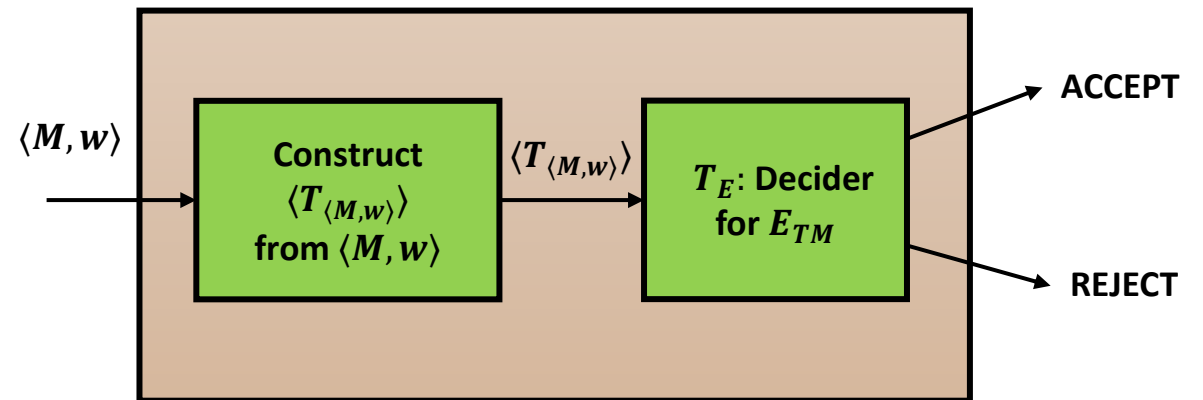
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$$E_{TM} = \{\langle M \rangle \mid M \text{ is a Turing Machine and } L(M) = \Phi\}$$

**Proof:** Let  $T_E$  be the Turing Machine that decides  $E_{TM}$ . We shall prove that  $\overline{A_{TM}} \leq E_{TM}$  by constructing a Turing Machine  $N$  that decides  $\overline{A_{TM}}$  using  $T_E$ .

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ACCEPT if  $T_E$  accepts  
REJECT if  $T_E$  rejects



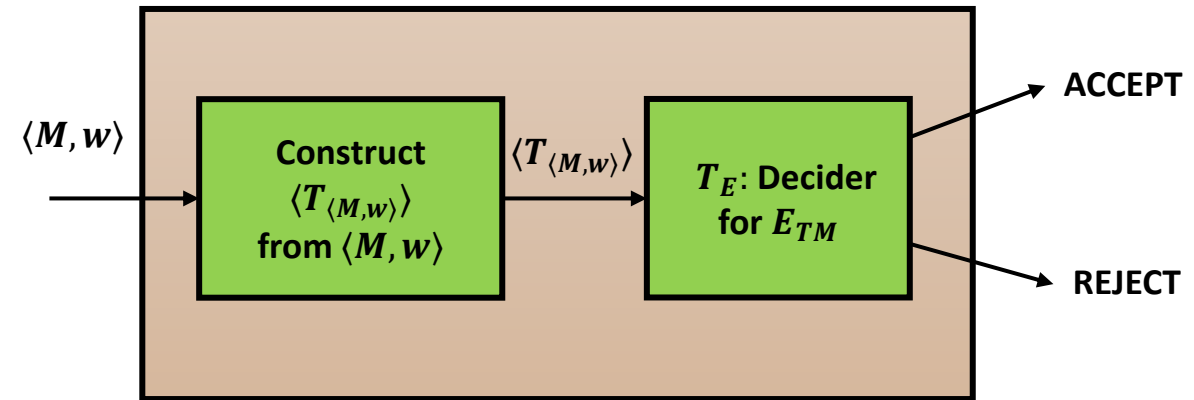
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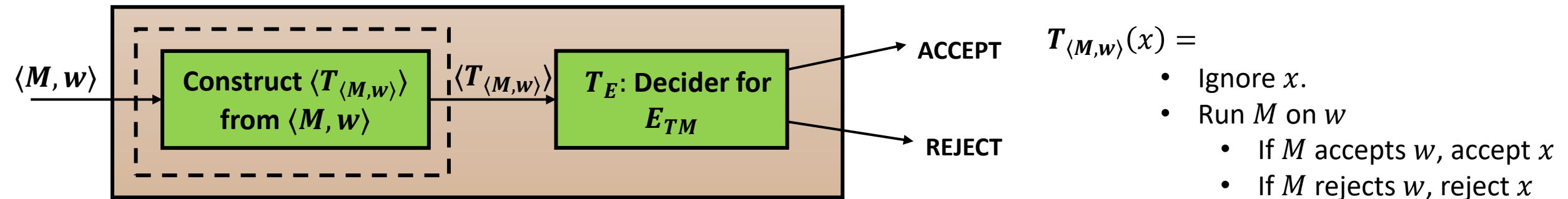


- $\overline{A_{TM}} \leq E_{TM}$
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# Undecidability

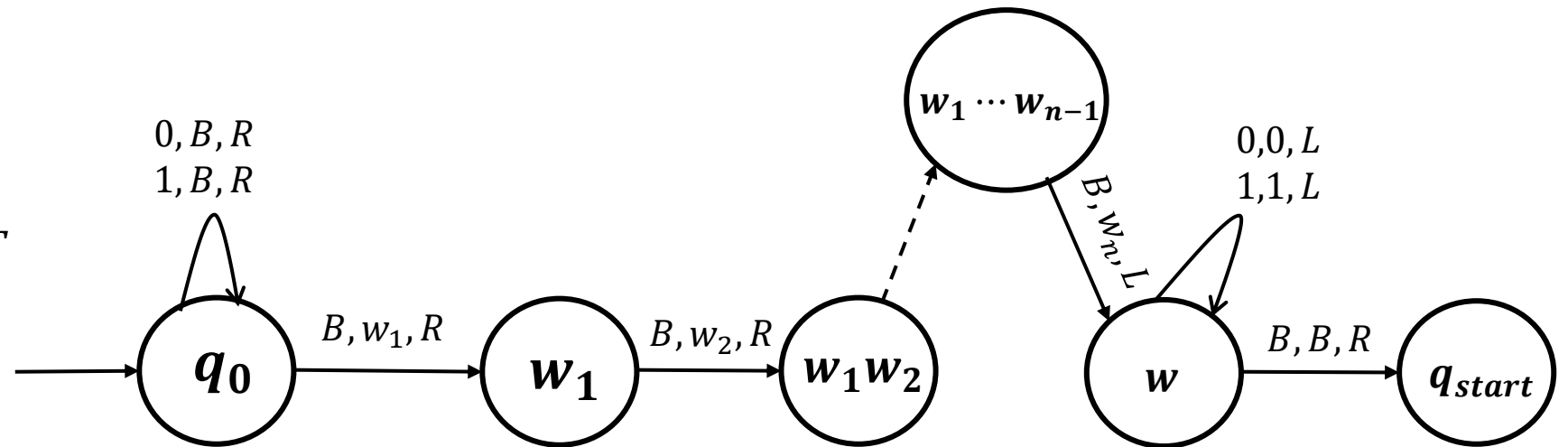
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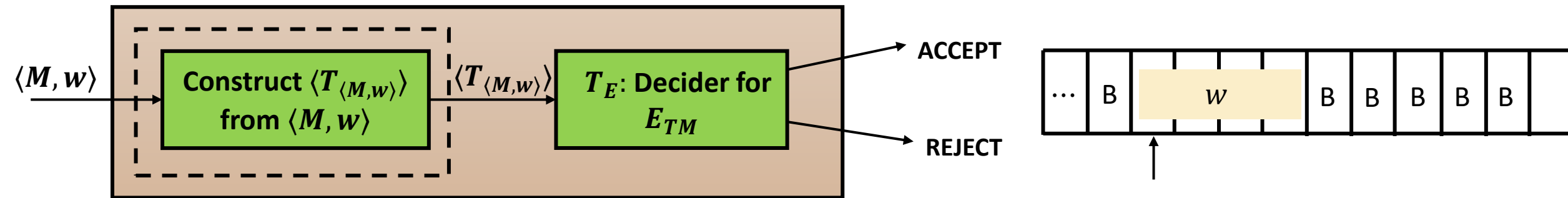
- Remove i/p  $x$  from the tape of  $T$
- 'Embed'  $w$  into the TM of  $M$



# Undecidability

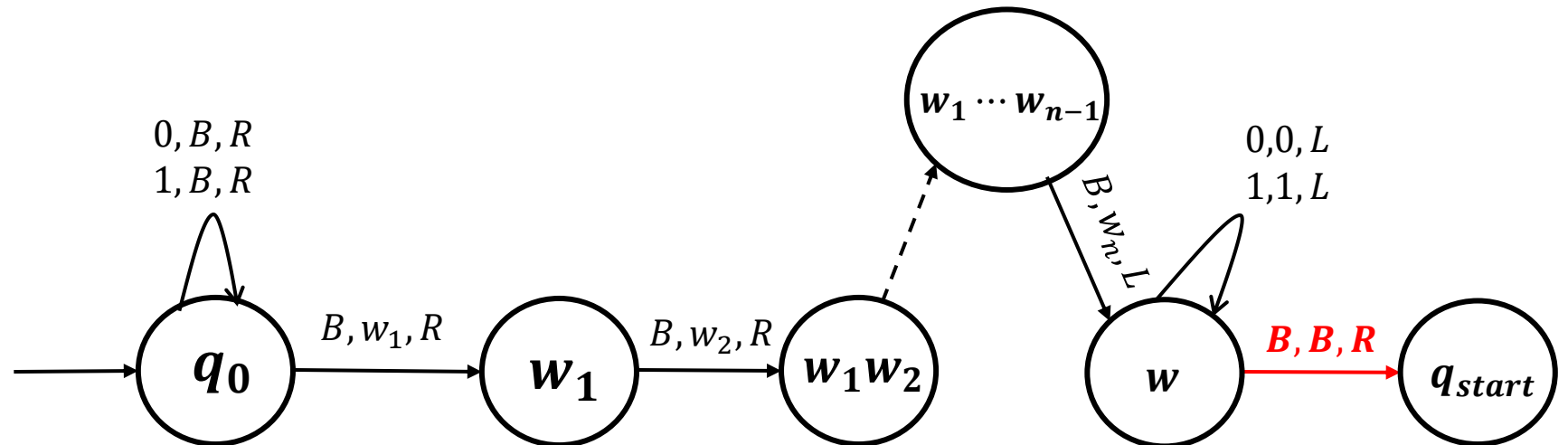
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# Undecidability

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- $\overline{A_{TM}} \leq E_{TM}$
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- $E_{TM}$  is undecidable!

**Claim:**  $E_{TM} \in \text{co-RE} - R$

**WHY?**

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$$E_{TM} \in \text{co-RE} - R$$

**Proof idea:** We can build a co-recognizer for  $E_{TM}$ .

$C =$  On input  $\langle M \rangle$

- For  $i = 1, 2, 3, \dots$ 
  - For  $j = 1, 2, 3, \dots i$   
Run  $M$  on  $s_j$  for  $i$  steps.  
If  $M$  accepts  $s_j$ , REJECT.

Thank You!