CS201 Assignment 1: The Concept of Numbers

Maximum Marks: $20 \times 5 = 100$

Before we start discussion on numbers, let us examine the axioms of set theory and why they are required. Define U to be the collection of all sets.

- Show that U is not a set as per the Zermalo Fraenkel Axioms.

The motivation to define these axioms was a paradox discovered by Bertrand Russell: Suppose we allow U to be a set. Then $U \in U$ by definition. Define:

$$V = \{A \mid A \notin A\}.$$

- Derive a contradiction using the question "is $V \in V$?".

This is the reason that circularity in definition of sets was explicitly not permitted by the axioms.

Let us now move to numbers. In the class, we discussed the definition of natural numbers through Peano's Axioms. How does one define numbers in general? One possible way is to define numbers as any set that admits four arithmetic operations: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. But to define arithmetic operations, we need numbers! This is resolved by defining both together. Let us develop axioms for this. Consider addition and subtraction first.

Define set of *numbers with addition* $(N, +)$ as:

1. $+ : N \times N \mapsto N$. We will write $+(a, b)$ as $a + b$.
2. $(a + b) + c = a + (b + c)$ for all $a, b, c \in N$.
3. There is an element $0 \in N$ such that $a + 0 = 0 + a = a$ for all $a \in N$.
4. For all $a \in N$, there is an element $b \in N$ such that $a + b = 0$.
5. $a + b = b + a$ for all $a, b \in N$.

With above definition, subtraction can be defined as: $a - b = a + c$ where c is such that $b + c = 0$. Does this capture the addition and subtraction properly? Show that:

- There is a unique number 0 satisfying third axiom.
- For every $a \in N$, there is a unique b satisfying fourth axiom.
- Define $-a$ to be the number such that $a + (-a) = 0$. For every $a, b \in N$, $a - b = -(b - a)$.

Now let us add multiplication and division. Define set of *numbers with multiplication* $(N, *)$ as:

1. $* : N \times N \mapsto N$. We will write $*(a, b)$ as $a * b$.
2. $(a * b) * c = a * (b * c)$ for all $a, b, c \in N$.
3. There is an element $1 \in N$ such that $a * 1 = 1 * a = a$ for all $a \in N$.
4. For all $a \in N$, there is an element $b \in N$ such that $a * b = 1$.
5. $a * b = b * a$ for all $a, b \in N$.

These axioms are identical to first ones except for the name of operation and replacement of 0 by 1. Division operation is defined analogously to subtraction. It is easy to see that the definition of '$-$' and '$/$' is entirely determined by the definition of $+$ and $*$ respectively.

Finally define set of *numbers with addition and multiplication* $(N, +, *)$ as:

1. $(N, +)$ is a set of numbers with addition.
2. $(N \backslash \{0\}, *)$ is a set of numbers with multiplication.
3. For all $a, b, c \in N$, $a * (b + c) = a * b + a * c$.

Why is the number '0' excluded from N in second axiom above? It is to avoid division by zero. Show that:

- If 0 is included in N for the second axiom, then $1 = 0$.

The addition and multiplication operations can be different for different sets of numbers:

- Give two examples of sets of numbers with different addition and multiplication operations.

Does a set of numbers defined as above contains natural numbers? Show that:

- There is a set of numbers $(N, +, *)$ such that N is finite.

Does this mean that we have not been able to capture the notion of numbers properly? Later in the course, we will show that it is not so. A set of numbers *can* be finite, and such numbers are extremely useful!

In order to identify set of numbers that contain $\mathbb{N}$, define *multiplicity* of set $(N, +, *)$ to be the smallest k for which $\underbrace{1 + 1 + \cdots + 1}_{k \text{ times}} = 0$. When there is no such k, then we set multiplicity of $(N, +, *)$ to 0. Show that:

- Multiplicity of $(N, +, *)$ is either 0 or a prime number.

- Any set of numbers $(N, +, *)$ of multiplicity 0 contains $\mathbb{N}$.
- For any set of numbers $(N, +, *)$ of multiplicity 0, for any $k \in \mathbb{N} \subseteq N$, for any $a \in N$, $k * a = \underbrace{a + a + \cdots + a}_{k \text{ times}}$.

As was done in the class with $\mathbb{N}$, is there way to identify a unique set of numbers using equivalence classes? The answer is no, as there can be finite as well as infinite set of numbers. Moreover, there are binary operations defined on numbers and any equivalence between two sets of numbers must equate the operations as well. Define an *isomorphism* h between two sets of numbers $(N_1, +_1, *_1)$ and $(N_2, +_2, *_2)$ as:

1. $h : N_1 \mapsto N_2$ is a bijection,
2. For all $a, b \in N_1$, $h(a +_1 b) = h(a) +_2 h(b)$,
3. For all $a, b \in N_1$, $h(a *_1 b) = h(a) *_2 h(b)$.

Show that:

- The relation defined by isomorphism between two sets of numbers is an equivalence relation on the set of all sets of numbers.
- If h is an isomorphism from $(N_1, +_1, *_1)$ to $(N_2, +_2, *_2)$ then $h(0_1) = 0_2$ and $h(1_1) = h(1_2)$.
- If h is an isomorphism from $(N_1, +_1, *_1)$ to $(N_2, +_2, *_2)$ then $h(a -_1 b) = h(a) -_2 h(b)$ and $h(a /_1 b) = h(a) /_2 h(b)$.

Do two sets of numbers of same cardinality always have isomorphism between them? The answer is no. Define a 0-1 polynomial to be $\sum_{i=0}^{k} c_i x^i$ with $c_i = 0, 1$. Define addition of these polynomials as $x^i + x^i = 0$ for every i.

- Prove that the set of 0-1 polynomials with addition defined as above and usual multiplication of polynomials is a set of numbers. It is represented as $F_2(x)$.
- Show that there is a bijection between rational numbers $\mathbb{Q}$ and $F_2(x)$.
- Show that there is no isomorphism between $\mathbb{Q}$ and $F_2(x)$.

As per the definition above, the set of integers $\mathbb{Z}$ is not a set of numbers. This is unsatisfactory. The problem is that division is generally not possible in $\mathbb{Z}$. To address this, define a set of *numbers without division* $(N, +, *)$ to be a set of numbers in which the fourth axiom for $(N, *)$ is removed. Show that:

- $(\mathbb{Z}, +, *)$ is a set of numbers without division.

Such set of numbers can also have unexpected properties. Show that:

- There is a set of numbers without division $(N, +, *)$ such that there are $a, b \in N$, $a \neq 0$, $b \neq 0$, but $a * b = 0$.
- There is a set of numbers without division $(N, +, *)$ such that there is $a \in N$, $a \neq 0$, but $a^3 = a * a * a = 0$.

Later in the course, we will see utility of these types of numbers as well.