CH-231-A

Algorithms and Data Structures

ADS

Lecture 9

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Solving Recurrences

- Merge Sort analysis required us to solve the recurrence:

$$T(n) = \begin{cases} \Theta(1) & \text{if } n = 1, \\ 2T(n/2) + \Theta(n) & \text{if } n > 1. \end{cases}$$

- A recurrence (or recurrence relation) is an equation that recursively defines a sequence (given an initial term).
- How can we generally solve recurrences?

Three Recurrence Solving Methods

- Substitution method
- Recursion tree
- Master method

Substitution Method

- The substitution method is based on some intuition.
- It executes the following steps:
  - Guess the form of the solution.
  - Verify by induction.
  - Solve for constants.

Example (1)

- Consider the recurrence $T(n) = 4T(n/2) + n$ with the base case $T(1) = \Theta(1)$.
- Prove O and Ω separately.
- Guess that $T(n) = O(n^3)$.
- Verify by induction:
  - Check the base case $n = 1$.
  - Assuming $T(k) \leq ck^3$ for $k < n$ show $T(n) \leq cn^3$.

Example (2)

Induction step:

$$
\begin{aligned}
T(n) &= 4T(n/2) + n \\
&\leq 4c(n/2)^3 + n \\
&= (c/2)n^3 + n \\
&= cn^3 - ((c/2)n^3 - n) \longleftarrow \textit{desired} - \textit{residual} \\
&\leq cn^3 \longleftarrow \textit{desired}
\end{aligned}
$$

whenever $(c/2)n^3 - n \geq 0$, for example,
if $c \geq 2$ and $n \geq 1$.

residual

Example (3)

- Was our guess a good one?
- Was it tight enough?
- Make a new guess: $T(n) = O(n^2)$.
- Try to prove by induction.
  - Base step: as before
  - Induction step:
    Assuming $T(k) \leq ck^2$ for $k < n$, show $T(n) \leq cn^2$.

$$\begin{aligned} T(n) &= 4T(n/2) + n \\ &\leq 4c(n/2)^2 + n \\ &= cn^2 + n \\ &= cn^2 - (-n) \quad [\text{ desired} - \text{residual }] \\ &\leq cn^2 \quad \text{for } \textbf{\textit{no}} \text{ choice of } c > 0. \text{ Lose!} \end{aligned}$$

Example (4)

- Idea: Adjust hypothesis by subtracting a lower-order term.
- Induction step:
  Assuming $T(k) \leq c_1 k^2 - c_2 k$ for $k < n$
  show $T(n) \leq c_1 n^2 - c_2 n$.

$$\begin{aligned}
T(n) &= 4T(n/2) + n \\
&= 4(c_1(n/2)^2 - c_2(n/2)) + n \\
&= c_1 n^2 - 2c_2 n + n \\
&= c_1 n^2 - c_2 n - (c_2 n - n) \\
&\leq c_1 n^2 - c_2 n \quad \text{if } c_2 \geq 1.
\end{aligned}$$

Example (5)

Finally, solve for constants:

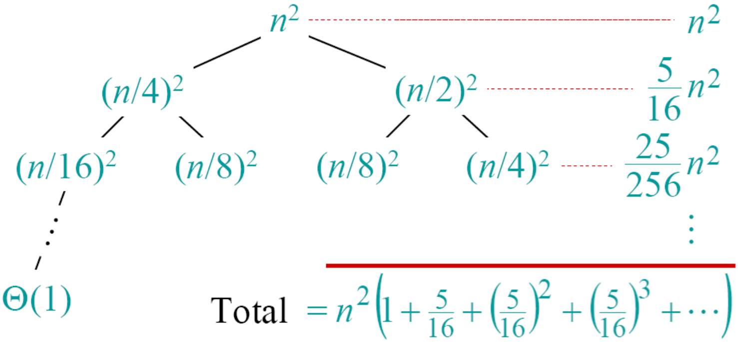
- Pick c_2 according to the induction proof from before ($c_2 > 1$).
- Pick c_1 large enough to handle the base case:
  - $T(1) = \Theta(1)$ implies $T(1) = O(1)$
  - $T(1) \leq c_1 1^2 - c_2 1 = c_1 - c_2$, where $c_2 > 1$
  - Therefore, $c_1 > c_2$

Recursion Tree

- For the Merge Sort analysis, we used a recursion tree
- A recursion tree models the costs (time) of a recursive execution of an algorithm
- This does not necessarily lead to a reliable solution
- However, the recursion-tree method promotes intuition
- It is good for generating guesses for the substitution method

Example (1)

Consider the recurrence $T(n) = T(n/4) + T(n/2) + n^2$ with the base case $T(1) = \Theta(1)$.



Example (2)

Considering the geometric series from below we get $T(n) = \Theta(n^2)$.

$$1 + x + x^2 + \cdots + x^n = \frac{1 - x^{n+1}}{1 - x} \text{ for } x \neq 1$$

$$1 + x + x^2 + \cdots = \frac{1}{1 - x} \quad \text{for } |x| < 1$$