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1.

1) Brute-force algorithm is to check all possibilities. We use  $\sum_i$  denotes the  $i^{th}$  symbol in set  $\sum$ ,  $t$  denotes the representative,  $s_i$  represents  $i^{th}$  sequence is  $S$

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1  Boolean Brute-force Search( $S, \sum$ ) {
2      for each  $\sum_i$  in  $\sum$  do  $t[1] = \sum_i$ 
3          for each  $\sum_i$  in  $\sum$  do  $t[2] = \sum_i$ 
4              ...
5                  for each  $\sum_i$  in  $\sum$  do  $t[m-1] = \sum_i$ 
6                      for each  $\sum_i$  in  $\sum$  do  $t[m] = \sum_i$ 
7                          for each  $s_i$  in  $S$ :
8                              if ( $dis = distance(t, s_i) > d$ ) break
9                              if ( $dis \leq d$ ) return TRUE // all distance  $\leq d$ 
10                     return FALSE
11 }
```

2) Use  $|\sum|$  to denote the number of symbol set  $\sum$ . The distance computation for all the  $n$  sequences requires  $nm$  (calculated position by position). The run time for the Brute force algorithm is  $O(|\sum|^m nm)$ , which can be simplified as  $O(|\sum|^m)$ .

2.

For the  $m$  columns, check the same column of the  $n$  sequences each time, the greedy decision is to select the symbol which has the highest frequency to the current position. If for some positions, all the symbols from different sequences are the same, then the decision reaches the optimal.

3.

If there is a representative  $t$  for set  $S$ , then for each  $s_i$  in  $S$ , it holds that  $dist(s_i, t) \leq d$ . The total distance is  $n * dist(s_i, t) \leq nd$  which indicates  $nd$  is the maximum of positions where not all  $S$  sequences have the same symbol, as shown in the table below. Red symbols in each sequence stand for symbols that are different from the representative.

Intuitively, for  $m \leq nd$ , the maximum positions where not all sequences have the same number will not exceed  $nd$ .

For  $m > nd$ , if the positions where not all sequences have the same number is larger than  $nd$ , then there is at least one sequence which has a distance to the representative is larger than  $d$ . This means there exists no representative for set  $S$ .

Representative	$T_1$	...	$T_d$	$T_{d+1}$	...	$T_{2d}$	...	$T_{(n-1)d+1}$	...	$T_{nd}$	$T_{nd+1}$	...	$T_m$
$S_1$	$S_{11}$	...	$S_{1d}$	$S_{1(d+1)}$	...	$S_{1(2d)}$	...	$S_{1[(n-1)d+1]}$	...	$S_{1(nd)}$	$S_{1(nd+1)}$	...	$S_{1m}$
$S_2$	$S_{21}$	...	$S_{2d}$	$S_{2(d+1)}$	...	$S_{2(2d)}$	...	$S_{2[(n-1)d+1]}$	...	$S_{2(nd)}$	$S_{2(nd+1)}$	...	$S_{2m}$
.	.												
.	.												
.	.												
$S_n$	$S_{n1}$	...	$S_{nd}$	$S_{n(d+1)}$	...	$S_{n(2d)}$	...	$S_{n[(n-1)d+1]}$	...	$S_{n(nd)}$	$S_{n(nd+1)}$	...	$S_{nm}$

4.

If there exists representative  $t$  for set  $S$ , each  $s_i$  in  $S$  has distance  $dist(s_i, t) \leq d$  which means there are at most  $d$  different positions between  $s_i$  and  $t$ . Thus, when we randomly pick a sequence, if we change the  $d$  different positions, the sequence becomes the representative. Thus, at most  $d$  positions need to be changed.

5.

A recursive algorithm can be defined as following: the sequences are treated as the string type for describing purpose.

As there are at most  $l$  changes and one position is changed at each level of the tree. Thus, search tree's depth is  $l$ .

Changes on  $0, 1, \dots, l$  (up-to  $l$ ) positions are possible. To find all the situations, the algorithm follows sequential orders of the  $m$  positions  $0, 1, 2, \dots, m$  where changes at position 0 means nothing changes.

For the first level of the tree, there are  $m+1$  branches include  $m$  possible positions and one situation where nothing changed. The branches of different nodes in the next level of tree is decided on the position choosed at father nodes. For example, if we choose to modify symbol at position  $m$ , then we could choose to modify from the remain positions from 0 to  $m-1$ .

For each position, we have  $|\sum|$  possible symbols to select where  $n$  is the maximum number of different symbols in the same column.

$l$ : allowed changes  $t$ : candidate representative randomly selected from  $S$

$|\sum|$ : the number of symbols in  $\sum$   $\sum_i$ : the  $i^{th}$  symbol in  $\sum$

```

1 String Representative(m, l, t, S, d){
2   if(l<=0){          // base case
3     for(each  $s_i$  in S){if( $dist(s_i, t) > d$ ) return NULL}    //not all distance satisfy  $\leq d$ 
4     return t          //all satisfy, return representative t
5   }
6   // recursive and for-loop
7   for (p = 0 to m){    // m+1 possibilities (keep or change on position 1 to m)
8     if(p == 0) a = representation(p-1, p-1, t, S, d)    //no further changes
9     for (update =  $\sum_1$  to  $\sum_{|\sum|}$ ){          //select symbol to update candidate
10      t[p] = update
11      if(p  $\geq l$ ) a = representation(p-1, l-1, t, S, d)
12      else b = representative(p-1, p-1, t, S, d)
13    }
14  }
15  return a
16 }
```

6.

As the algorithm enumerates all the possible situations of positions need to be changed. And for each position, we try every possible symbols which may be selected. Thus, the algorithm tries every possible way for changing the candidate representative in  $l$  steps, which is theoretically similar to Brute-force algorithms. This proves the correctness for the algorithm.

7.

$$T(m, l) = \begin{cases} = nm & l \leq 0 \text{ (calculating distance position by position )} \\ \leq m! \sum |T(m-1, l-1)| & l > 0 \end{cases}$$

The run time is  $O(m^l \sum l^l * nm)$ , thus  $O^*(m^l \sum l^l)$ . As shown, the algorithm satisfies  $O(p(n) * f(l))$  with the exponential part bounded by fixed parameter  $l$ . Thus, the algorithm is fixed-parameter tractable.