

# Theory Of Computation

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### Abstract

The note is taken by studying 18.404J/6.5400 *Theory of Computation* course by professor Michael Sipser of MIT. The course material can be downloaded in [MIT OpenCourseWare](#). Meanwhile, most contents in this note will also be derived from his book *Introduction to the Theory of Computation, third edition*.

The course is divided into 2 parts, computational theory and complexity theory. Computational theory is developed during 1930s - 1950s. It concerns about what is computable. This note will be focused on the first part.

**Example.** Program verification, mathematical truth

**Example (Models of Computation).** Finite automata, Turing machines, ...

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction, Finite Automata, Regular Expressions

The theory of computation begins with a question: What is a computer. The real computer is too complicated to understand, to start with, we use an idealized computer called **computational model**.

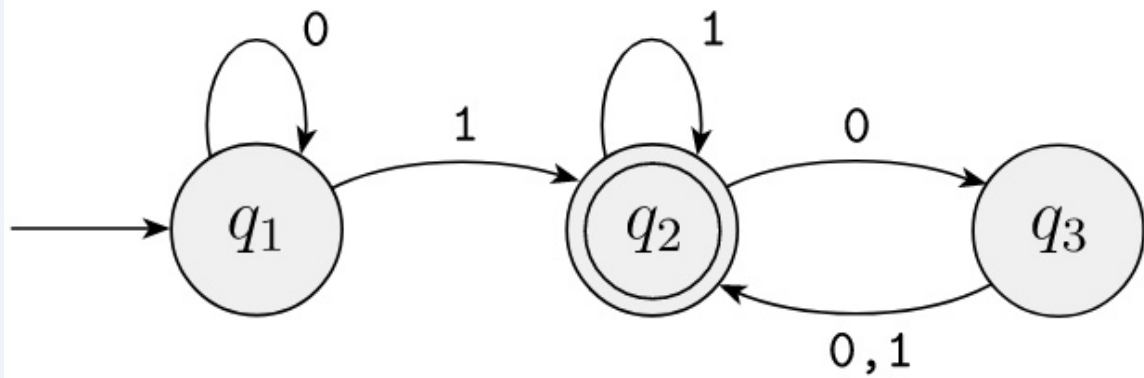
The simplest model among them is **finite state machine** or **finite automaton**.

### 1.1 Finite Automata

Finite automata are good models for computers with an extremely limited amount of memory.

Finite automata and their probabilistic counterpart **Markov chains** are useful tools when we're attempting to recognize patterns in data. Markov chains have even been used to model and predict price changes in financial markets.

**Example** (Finite Automata Example). Here's an example of finite automata:



- The figure is called **state diagram** of  $M_1$ .
- Three **states**:  $q_1$ ,  $q_2$  and  $q_3$ .
- **Start state**:  $q_1$ .
- **Accept state**:  $q_2$ .
- The arrows going from one state to another are called **transitions**.

When the automaton receives an input string such as 1101, it processes that string and produces an output. The output is either **accept** or **reject**:

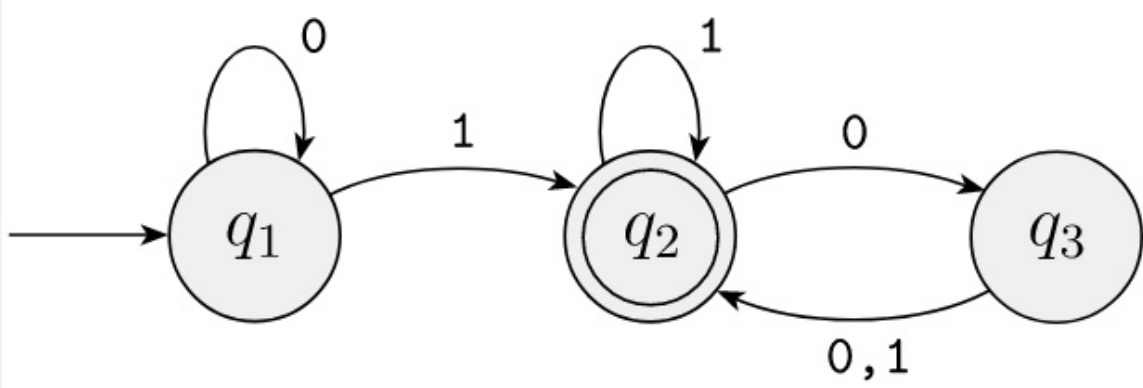
1. Start in state  $q_1$
2. Read 1, follow transition from  $q_1$  to  $q_2$

3. Read 1, follow transition from  $q_2$  to  $q_2$
4. Read 0, follow transition from  $q_2$  to  $q_3$
5. Read 1, follow transition from  $q_3$  to  $q_2$
6. *Accept* because  $M_1$  is in an accept state  $q_2$  at the end of the input

**Definition 1.1.1 (Formal Definition of A Finite Automaton).** A **finite automaton** is a 5-tuple  $(Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$ , where

1.  $Q$  is a finite set called **state**
2.  $\Sigma$  is a finite set called the **alphabet**
3.  $\delta : Q \times \Sigma \Rightarrow Q$  is the **transition function**
4.  $q_0 \in Q$  is the **start state**
5.  $F \subseteq Q$  is the **set of accept state**

**Example (Revisit Finite Automata Example).** Let's revisit the finite automata example  $M_1$  and see from the formal definition perspective:



We can describe  $M_1$  formally by writing  $M_1 = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_1, F)$ , where

1.  $Q = \{q_1, q_2, q_3\}$
2.  $\Sigma = \{0, 1\}$
3.  $\delta$  is described as

	0	1
$q_1$	$q_1$	$q_2$
$q_2$	$q_3$	$q_2$
$q_3$	$q_2$	$q_2$

4.  $q_1$  is the start state
5.  $F = \{q_2\}$

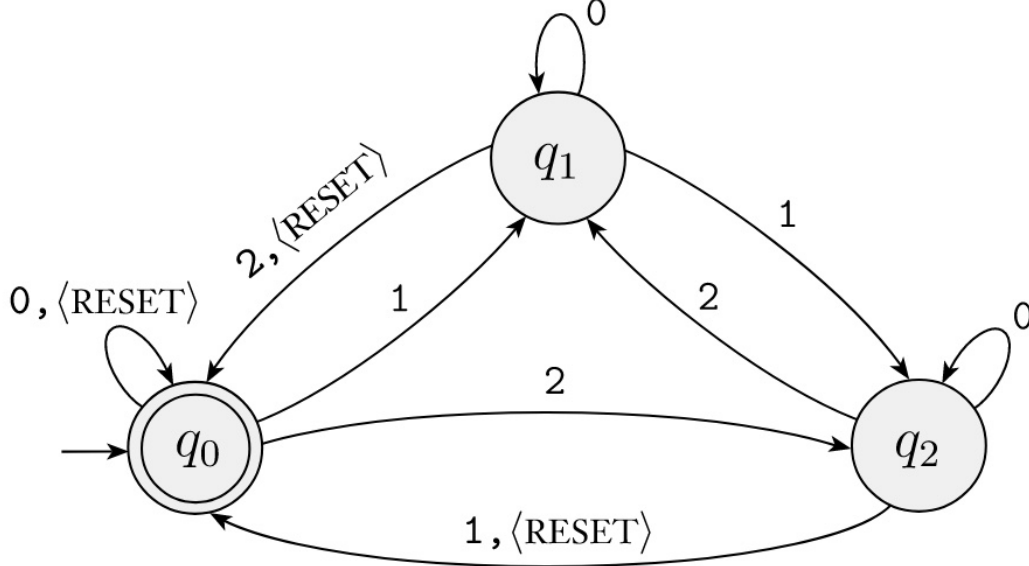
If  $A$  is the set of all strings that machine  $M$  accepts, we say that  $A$  is the **language of machine  $M$**  and write  $L(M) = A$ . We say that  **$M$  recognizes  $A$**  or that  **$M$  accepts  $A$** . Here because *accept* has different meaning, we use *recognize* for the language.

**Remark.** A machine may accept several strings, but it always recognizes only one language. If the machine accepts no strings, it still recognizes one language – namely, the empty language  $\emptyset$ .

**Example (Revisit Finite Automata Example: Language).** In our example, the language set  $A$  can be represented as:

$A = \{\omega \mid \omega \text{ contains at least one 1 and an even number of 0s follow the last 1}\}.$   
Then  $L(M_1) = A$ , or equivalently,  $M_1$  recognizes  $A$ .

**Example.** When describing such a machine:



The alphabet  $\Sigma = \{1, 2, 3, \langle RESET \rangle\}$ , we treat  $\langle RESET \rangle$  as a single symbol.

The machine keeps a running count of the sum of the numerical input symbols it reads, modulo 3. Every time it receives  $\langle RESET \rangle$  symbol, it resets the count to 0. It accepts if the sum is 0 modulo 3.

## 1.2 Formal Definition of Computation

Let  $M = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$  be a FA and let  $\omega = \omega_1\omega_2\cdots\omega_n$  be a string where each  $\omega_i$  is a member of alphabet  $\Sigma$ . Then  $M$  **accepts**  $\omega$  if a sequence of state  $r_0, r_1, \dots, r_n$  in  $Q$  exists with three conditions:

1.  $r_0 = q_0$  (machine starts at initial state)
2.  $\delta(r_i, \omega_{i+1}) = r_{i+1}$  (machine goes from state to state following the transition function)
3.  $r_n \in F$  (machine accepts its input if it ends up in an accept state)

We say that  $M$  recognizes language  $A$  if  $A = \{\omega \mid M \text{ accepts } \omega\}$

**Note.**  $A$  is the language,  $\omega$  is the accepted string.  $A$  is the set of all instances of  $\omega$ .

We say a machine "accepts" a string, and a machine "recognizes" a language.

**Definition 1.2.1 (Regular Language).** A language is called a **regular language** if some finite automaton recognizes it.

**Example.** Let  $B = \{\omega \mid \omega \text{ has even number of 1s}\}$   
 $B$  is a regular language.

**Example.** Let  $C = \{\omega \mid \omega \text{ has equal numbers of 0s and 1s}\}$   
 $C$  is not a regular language.

## 1.3 Regular Expressions

### 1.3.1 Regular Operations

**Definition 1.3.1.** Let  $A$  and  $B$  be languages, we define the regular operations **union**, **concatenation**, and **star** as follows:

- Union:  $A \cup B = \{x \mid x \in A \mid x \in B\}$
- Concatenation:  $A \circ B = \{xy \mid x \in A \& y \in B\}$
- Star:  $A^* = \{x_1 x_2 \cdots x_k \mid k \geq 0 \& x_i \in A\}$

Notice that  $\epsilon$  (empty language) always belongs to  $A^*$ .

**Example.**  $\Sigma^*1$  is the language end with 1

**Remark.** Show finite automata equivalent to regular expressions.

### 1.3.2 Closure Properties

**Theorem 1.3.1.** The class of regular language is closed under the union operation.  
In other words, if  $A_1$  and  $A_2$  are regular languages, so is  $A_1 \cup A_2$ .

**Proof.** Let  $M_1 = \{Q_1, \Sigma, \delta_1, q_1, F_1\}$  recognize  $A_1$ .  
Let  $M_2 = \{Q_2, \Sigma, \delta_2, q_2, F_2\}$  recognize  $A_2$ . (assuming in the same alphabet to make the proof simple)

Construct  $M = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$  recognizing  $A_1 \cup A_2$ .

$M$  should accept input  $w$  if either  $M_1$  or  $M_2$  accepts  $w$ .

Component of  $M$ :

- $Q = Q_1 \times Q_2$
- $q_0 = (q_1, q_2)$
- $\delta((q, r), a) = (\delta_1(q, a), \delta_2(r, a))$
- $F = (F_1 \times Q_2) \cup (Q_1 \times F_2)$
- not  $F = \underline{F_1} \times \cancel{F_2}$  (this gives intersection!)

■

**Example (What is close?).** Positive integers close under addition but not close under subtraction.

**Theorem 1.3.2.** The class of regular language is closed under the concatenation operation.  
In other words, if  $A_1$  and  $A_2$  are regular languages then so is  $A_1 \circ A_2$ .

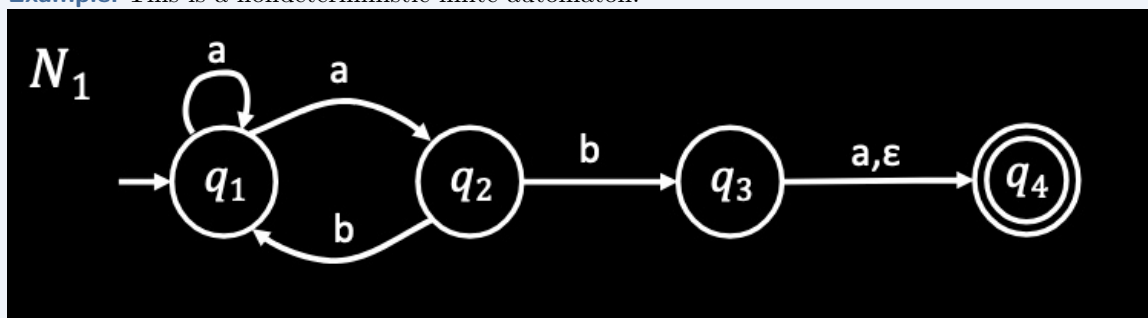


## Chapter 2

# Nondeterminism, Closure Properties, Regular Expressions $\rightarrow$ Finite Automata

### 2.1 Nondeterminism

**Example.** This is a nondeterministic finite automaton:



What's the difference with what we saw in the last lecture:

- in  $q_1$ , when accepting an  $a$ , you can either stay in  $q_1$  or go to  $q_2$
- in  $q_1$ , if getting  $b$  then there's nowhere to go
- ...

Example inputs

- **ab (accept )**
- **aa (reject )**

New features of nondeterminism:

- multiple paths possible (0, 1 or many at each step)
- $\epsilon$ -transition is a "free" move without reading input
- Accept input if some path leads to accept state (acceptance overrules rejection) (if one of possible ways to go accepts, then accepts)

Nondeterminism doesn't correspond to a physical machine we can build, however it is useful mathematically.

### 2.2 NFA

**Definition 2.2.1.** A **nondeterministic finite automaton** is a 5-tuple  $Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F$ , where

1.  $Q$  is a finite set of states
2.  $\Sigma$  is a finite alphabet
3.  $\delta : Q \times \Sigma \Rightarrow P(Q)$  is the transition function
4.  $q_0 \in Q$  is the start state
5.  $F \subseteq Q$  is the set of accept states

In which,  $\Sigma_\epsilon$  is a shorthand of  $\Sigma \cup \{\epsilon\}$ .  $P(Q)$  means the power set of  $Q$  which can be represented as  $P(Q) = \{R \mid R \subseteq Q\}$ , which is the set which contains all the subset of  $Q$ .

**Example.** Check the [NFA example](#), we can write transition function such as:

- $\delta(q_1, a) = \{q_1, q_2\}$
- $\delta(q_1, b) = \emptyset$

Ways to think about nondeterminism:

Computational view: Fork new parallel thread and accept if any thread leads to an accept state.

Mathematical view: Tree with branches, accept if any branch leads to an accept state.

Magical: Guess at each nondeterministic step which way to go. Machine always makes the right guess that leads to accepting, if possible.

**Theorem 2.2.1.** If an NFA recognizes  $A$  then  $A$  is regular.

**Proof.** By showing how to convert an NFA to an equivalent DFA.

Let NFA  $M = (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)$  recognize  $A$ , we're going to construct DFA  $M' = (Q', \Sigma, \delta', q'_0, F')$  recognizing  $A$ .

IDEA: DFA  $M'$  keeps track of the subset of possible states in NFA  $M$ .

Construct of  $M'$ :

- $Q' = P(Q)$  (States of  $M'$  is the power set of  $Q$ )
- $\delta'(R, a) = \{q \mid q \in \delta(r, a) \text{ for some } r \in R\}$  ( $R \in Q'$ )
- $q'_0 = \{q_0\}$
- $F' = \{R \in Q' \mid R \text{ intersects } F\}$

■

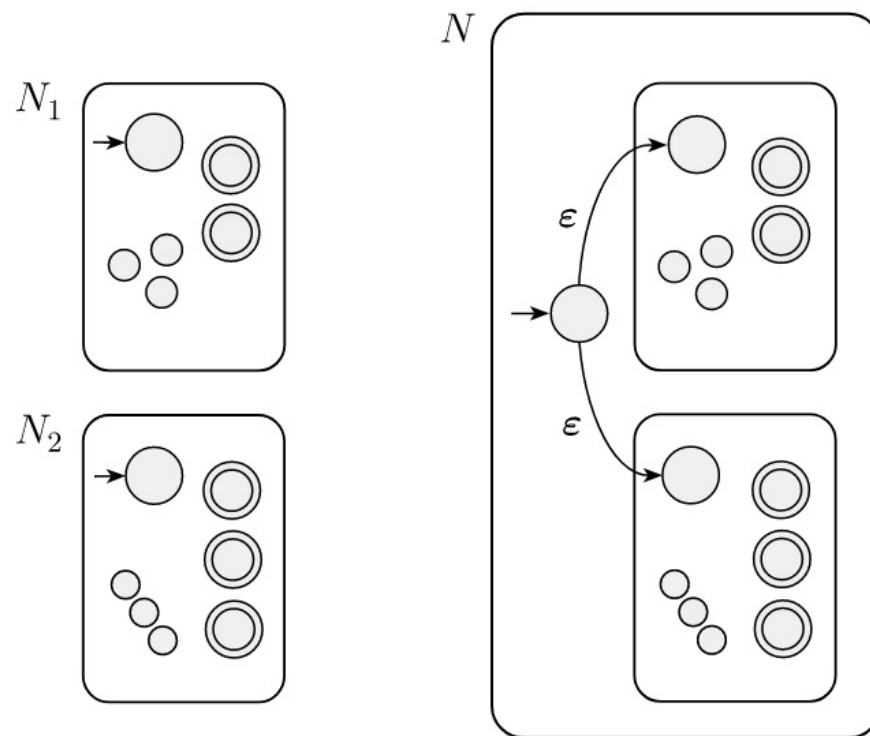
**Remark.** If  $M$  has  $n$  states, how many states does  $M'$  have by this construction?

The answer is  $2^n$ .

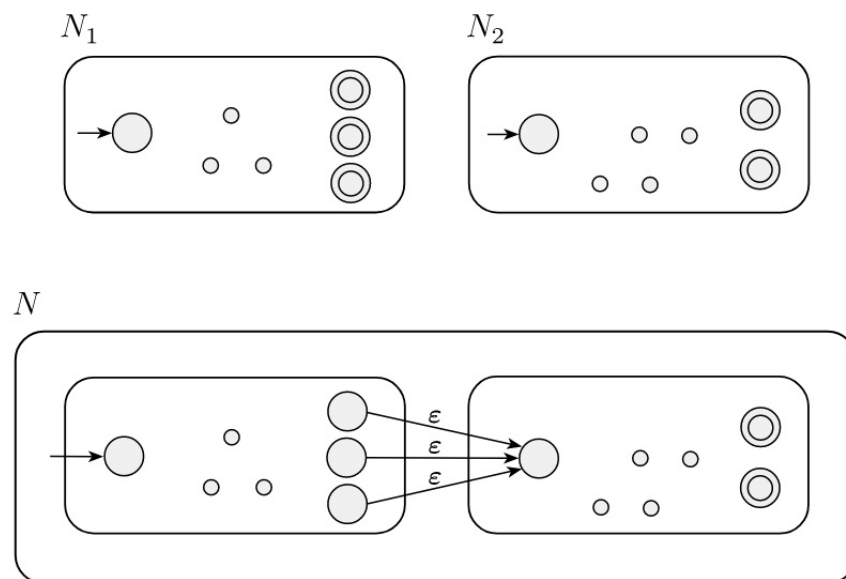
Return to [Union Closure Property](#) and [Concatenation Closure Property](#) by constructing an NFA to prove.

**Proof: Closure Properties Union.**  $N_1$  corresponds to the DFA  $M_1$  recognizes  $A_1$ , and  $N_2$  corresponds to an input of DFA  $M_2$  who recognizes  $A_2$ .

We can construct an NFA like following:

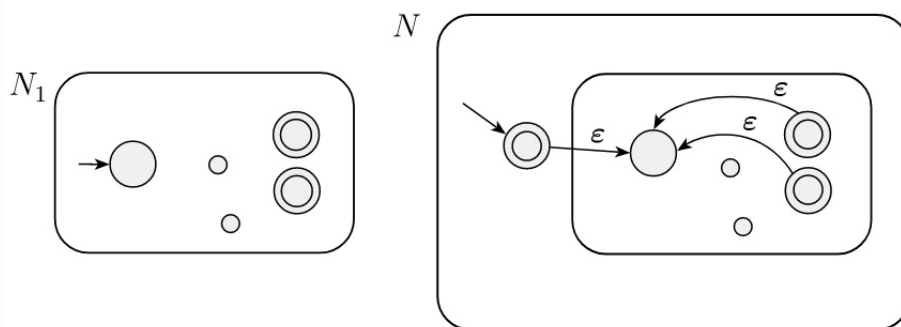


**Proof: Closure Properties Concat.** Similar with the last one, this one constructs an NFA recognizes  $A_1A_2$ :



**Theorem 2.2.2 (Closure Under Star).** If  $A$  is a regular language, so is  $A^*$ .

**Proof.** Given DFA  $M$  recognizing  $A$ , construct NFA  $M'$  recognizing  $A^*$ .



**Remark.**  $M'$  have  $n + 1$  states in this construction.

**Theorem 2.2.3.** If  $R$  is regular expression and  $A = L(R)$  then  $A$  is regular.

That is to say: A language is regular and only if some regular expression describes it.

This theorem has two directions:

**Lemma 2.2.1.** If a language is described by a regular expression, then it is regular

**Proof.** IDEA: Say that we have a regular expression  $R$  describing some language  $A$ . We show how to convert  $R$  into an NFA recognizing  $A$ .

When  $R$  is atomic, we can easily construct NFA for:

- $R = a$  for some  $a \in \Sigma$
- $R = \epsilon$
- $R = \emptyset$

When  $R$  is composite, as we have already constructed for them (closure properties).

**Note.** This proof works in a recursive way.

**Lemma 2.2.2.** If a language is regular, then it is described by a regular expression.

**Proof.** This will be proved in next lecture.

**Note.** Before going to prove this theorem, I need to make some clarifications here.

- **Regular language:** if some finite automaton recognizes a language, then it is called regular language.
- We say a machine recognizes a language if the language is the set contains all the string that can run the machine into an accept state.

Also we need the definition of **regular expression** here:

---

**Definition 2.2.2.** Say that  $R$  is a **regular expression** if  $R$  is

1.  $a$  for some  $a$  in the alphabet  $\Sigma$
2.  $\epsilon$
3.  $\emptyset$
4.  $R_1 \cup R_2$  where  $R_1$  and  $R_2$  are regular expressions
5.  $R_1 \circ R_2$  where  $R_1$  and  $R_2$  are regular expressions
6.  $R_1^*$  where  $R_1$  is a regular expression

## Chapter 3

# The Regular Pumping Lemma, Finite Automata $\rightarrow$ Regular Expressions, CFGs

### 3.1 GNFA

Let's go back to [the Lemma in the previous lecture](#):

**Theorem 3.1.1** (DFA  $\rightarrow$  Regular Expressions). If a language is regular, then it is described by a regular expression.

In another word, if  $A$  is regular then  $A = L(R)$  for some regular exp  $R$ .

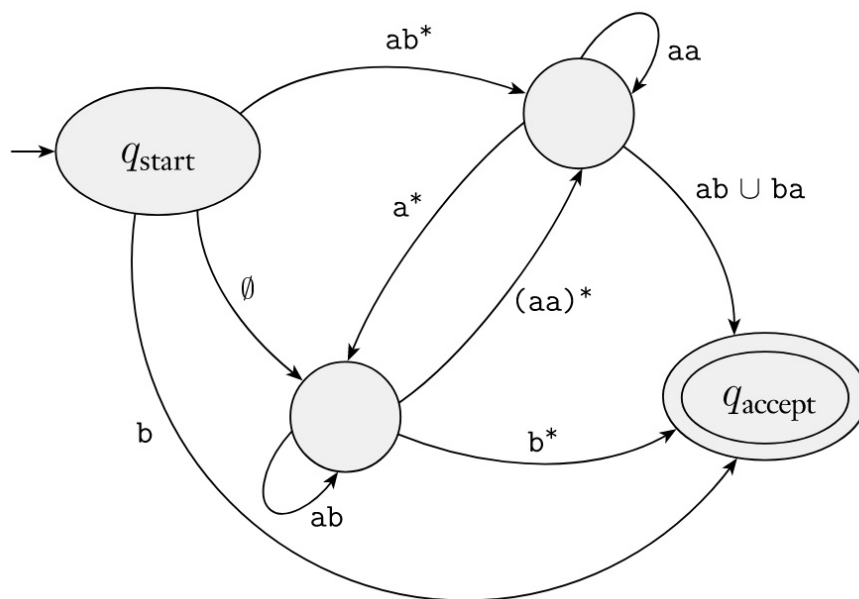
**Proof.** IDEA: Give conversion DFA  $M \rightarrow R$  We need new tool: Generalized NFA ■

**Definition 3.1.1** (Generalized NFA). A Generalized nondeterministic Finite Automaton(GNFA) is similar to an NFA, but allows regular expressions as transition labels.

The formal definition is that a **generalized nondeterministic finite automaton** is a 5-tuple,  $(Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_{start}, q_{accept})$ , where

1.  $Q$  is the finite set of states
2.  $\Sigma$  is the input alphabet
3.  $\delta : (Q - \{q_{accept}\}) \times (Q - \{q_{start}\}) \rightarrow R$  is the transition function
4.  $q_{start}$  is the start state
5.  $q_{accept}$  is the accept state

**Example** (Example of GNFA). Similar with NFA but transitions allow regular expressions



Now we're going to covert GNFA to regular expressions to proof [the Lemma](#).  
For convenience, we will assume (we can easily modify the machine to achieve):

- One accept state, separate from the start state.
- One arrow from each state to each state, except
  - only exiting the start state
  - only entering the accept state

**Lemma 3.1.1 (GNFA  $\rightarrow$  Regular Expressions).** Every GNFA  $G$  has an equivalent regular expression  $R$ .

**Proof.** By induction(recursion) on the number of states  $k$  of  $G$ .

Basis( $k = 2$ ):  $G$  can only looks like:

$G = \text{start} \rightarrow \text{accept}$

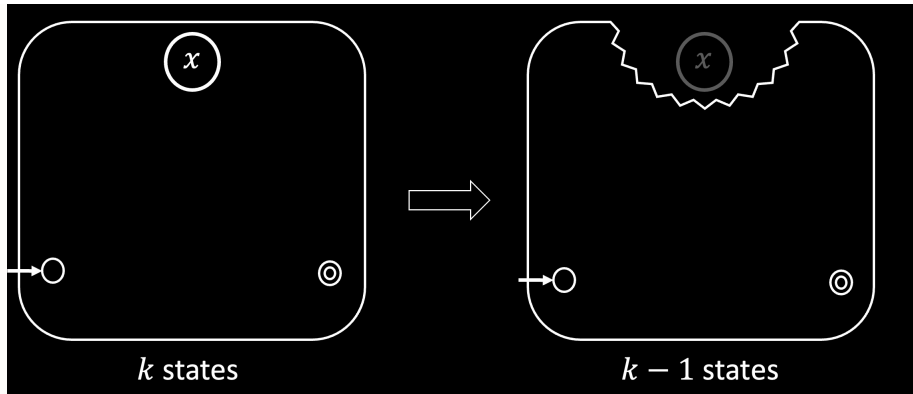
In this case,  $R = r$ .

Induction step( $k > 2$ ): Assume Lemma true for  $k - 1$  states and prove for  $k$  states

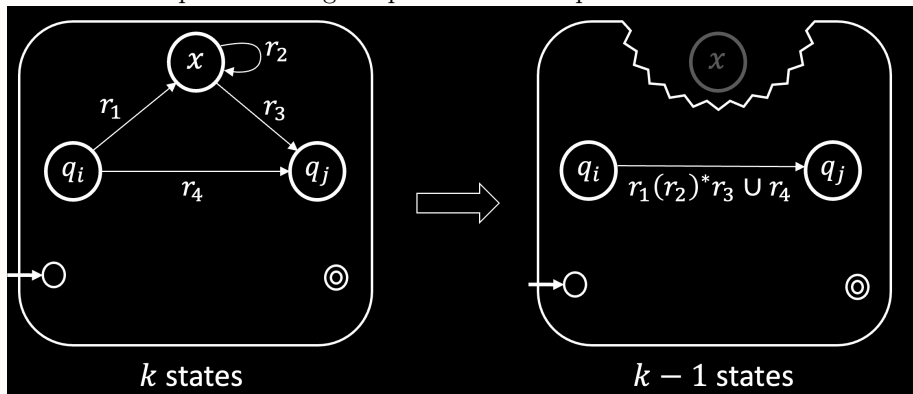
IDEA: Convert  $k$ -state GNFA to equivalent  $(k - 1)$ -state GNFA

1. First we pick any state  $x$  except the start and accept states.
2. Remove  $x$ .
3. Repair the damage by recovering all paths that went through  $x$ .
4. Make the indicated change for each pair of states  $q_i, q_j$ .

In the following example, this is how we remove a state  $x$ :



Then we replace the original paths with new paths:



We're already done, because DFAs are a type of GNFA. ■

## 3.2 Non-Regular Languages

How do we show a language is not regular?

- To show a language is regular we give a DFA.
- To show a language is not regular, we must give a proof (It is not enough to say that you couldn't find a DFA for it, therefore the language is not regular).

**Example.** Here  $\Sigma = \{0, 1\}$

1. B has equal numbers of 0 and 1  
Intuition: B is not regular because DFAs cannot count unboundedly.
2. C has equal numbers of 01 and 10 substrings.  
0101  $\notin C$   
0110  $\in C$   
Intuition: C is not regular because DFAs cannot count unboundedly. (Wrong! Actually, C is regular!)

Moral: You need a proof.

## 3.3 Pumping Lemma

Pumping lemma is the method for proving non-regularity.

**Lemma 3.3.1 (Pumping Lemma).** For every regular language A, there's a number  $p$  (the "pumping length") such that if  $s \in A$  and  $|s| \geq p$  then  $s = xyz$  where



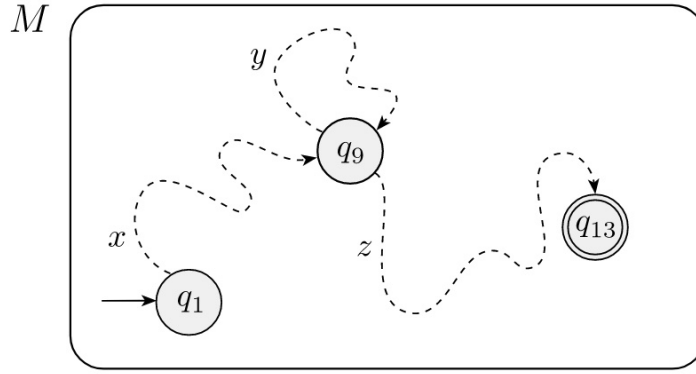
1.  $xy^iz \in A$  for all  $i \geq 0$      $y^i = yy \cdots y$  (i number of y)
2.  $y \neq \epsilon$
3.  $|xy| \leq p$

**Remark.**  $|s|$  means the length of the string  $s$ .

Informally:  $A$  is regular  $\rightarrow$  every long string in  $A$  can be pumped and the result stays in  $A$ .

**Proof.** Let DFA  $M$  recognize  $A$ . Let  $p$  be the number of states in  $M$ . Pick  $s \in A$  where  $|s| \geq p$ .

When you have a too long string, you inevitably have to revisit the same state again and again, forming the struct as following:



This is also known as The Pigeonhole Principle. ■

**Example (Prove Non-regularity).** Let  $D = \{0^k 1^k | k \geq 0\}$

**Proof.** Show:  $D$  is not regular

Proof by Contradiction:

Assume that  $D$  is regular, applying pumping lemma, let  $s = 0^p 1^p \in D$ .

Pumping lemma says that can divide  $s = xyz$  satisfying the 3 conditions.

But  $xyyz$  has excess 0s and thus  $xyyz \notin D$  contradicting the pumping lemma. ■

**Example.** Let  $F = \{ww | w \in \Sigma^*\}$ , Say  $\Sigma^* = \{0, 1\}$

**Proof.** Assume  $F$  is regular.

Try  $s = 0^p 10^p 1 \in F$ , show cannot be pumped  $s = xyz$  satisfying the 3 conditions. ■

Variant: Combine closure properties with the pumping lemma.

**Example.** Let  $B = \{w | w \text{ has equal number of 0s and 1s}\}$ .

**Proof.** Assume that  $B$  is regular.

We know that  $0^* 1^*$  is regular so  $B \cap 0^* 1^*$  is regular (closure under intersection).

But  $D = B \cap 0^* 1^*$  and we already showed  $D$  is not regular. Contradiction! ■

## 3.4 Context Free Grammars

It is a stronger computation model.

## Chapter 4

# Pushdown Automata, $\text{CFG} \leftrightarrow \text{PDA}$

### 4.1 CFG: Context Free Grammars

Using FA and regular expressions, some language such as  $\{0^n 1^n | n \geq 0\}$  can not be described.

**Context-free grammars** is a more powerful method of describing languages. Such grammar can describe certain features that have a recursive structure, which makes them useful in a variety of applications.

An important application of CFG occurs in the specification and compilation of programming languages. A number of methodologies facilitate the construction of a **parser** once a CFG is available. Some tools even automatically generate the parser from the grammar.

**Example (CFG example).** The following CFG we call  $G_1$ :

$$\begin{aligned}A &\rightarrow 0A1 \\A &\rightarrow B \\B &\rightarrow \#\end{aligned}$$

Shorthand:

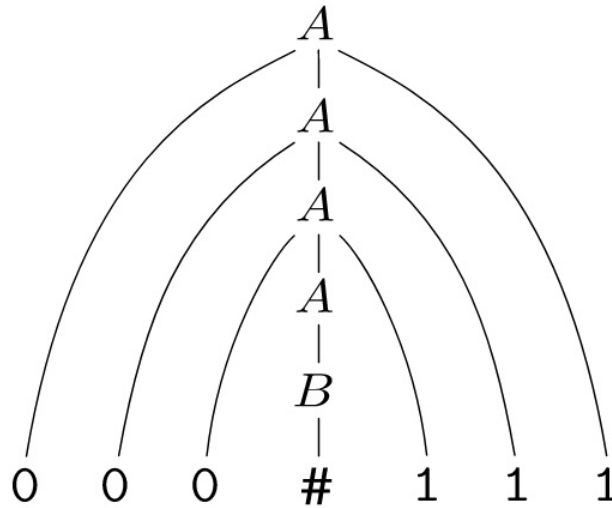
$$\begin{aligned}A &\rightarrow 0A1|B \\B &\rightarrow \#\end{aligned}$$

- It contains a collection of **substitution rules**, also called **productions**.
- Left side: **variable**, capital letters
- Right side: **terminals**, analogous to the input alphabet and often represented by lowercase letters, numbers or special symbols
- In this example,  $G_1$ 's variables are  $A$  and  $B$ , its terminals are 0, 1 and  $\#$ .

Example of using  $G_1$  to generate string 000#111:

$$A \Rightarrow 0A1 \Rightarrow 00A11 \Rightarrow 000A111 \Rightarrow 000B111 \Rightarrow 000\#111$$

The above information can be shown in a **parse tree**:



**Definition 4.1.1 (CFG).** A **context-free grammar** is a 4-tuple  $(V, \Sigma, R, S)$ , where

1.  $V$  is a finite set called the **variables**
2.  $\Sigma$  is a finite set, disjoint from  $V$ , called the **terminals**
3.  $R$  is a finite set of **rules**, with each rule being a variable and a string of variables and terminals (rule form:  $V \rightarrow (V \cup \Sigma)^*$ )
4.  $S \in V$  is the start variable

For  $u, v \in (V \cup \Sigma)^*$  write

1.  $u \Rightarrow v$  if can go from  $u$  to  $v$  with one substitution step in  $G$ .
  2.  $u \xRightarrow{*} v$  if can go from  $u$  to  $v$  with some number of substitution steps in  $G$ .
- $u \Rightarrow u_1 \Rightarrow u_2 \Rightarrow \dots \Rightarrow u_k = v$  is called a derivation of  $v$  from  $u$ .

**Definition 4.1.2 (Context Free Language).** Given  $L(G) = \{w | w \in \Sigma^* \text{ and } S \xRightarrow{*} w\}$

$A$  is a Context Free Language(CFL) if  $A = L(G)$  for some CFG  $G$ .

**Example.** We have 2 set of rules here:

$C_1$ :

$$\begin{aligned} B &\rightarrow 0B1 | \epsilon \\ B1 &\rightarrow 1B \\ 0B &\rightarrow B0 \end{aligned}$$

$C_2$ :

$$\begin{aligned} S &\rightarrow 0S | S1 \\ R &\rightarrow RR \end{aligned}$$

$C_1$  is not a CFG, because the left side is not pure variable, it has "context".

$C_2$ , on the other hand, even though we can not derive a string with all terminals, but it does not violate the rule, so  $C_2$  is a CFG.

**Example (CFG).**  $G_2$ :

$$E \rightarrow E + T|T$$

$$T \rightarrow T \times F|F$$

$$F \rightarrow (E)|_a$$

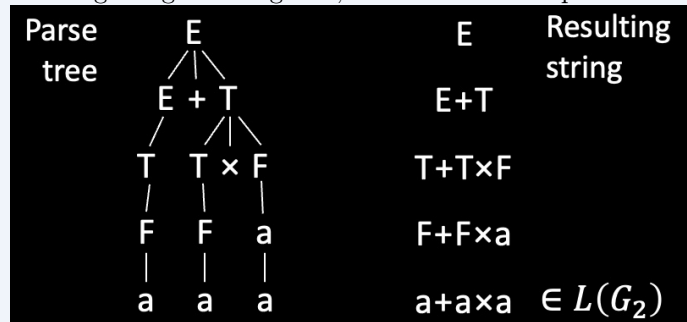
$$V = \{E, T, F\}$$

$$\Sigma = \{+, \times, (, ), a\}$$

$R =$  the 6 rules above

$$S = E$$

Showing the generating tree, it even shows the precedence of the operator  $\times$  is higher than  $+$ :



If a string has 2 different parse trees then it is derived **ambiguously** and we say that the grammar is ambiguous.

**Example** (Ambiguity).  $G_2$ :

$$E \rightarrow E + T|T$$

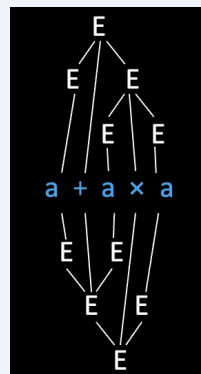
$$T \rightarrow T \times F|F$$

$$F \rightarrow (E)|_a$$

$G_3$

$$E \rightarrow E + E|E \times E|(E)|a$$

Both of them recognize the same language,  $L(G_2) = L(G_3)$ , however  $G_2$  is an unambiguous CFG and  $G_3$  is ambiguous.



This tree shows the ambiguity of  $G_3$ :

## 4.2 Pushdown Automata (PDA)

The **Pushdown Automaton** operates like an NFA except can write-add(push) or read-remove(pop) symbols from the top of stack.

**Example (PDA).** PDA for  $D = \{0^k 1^k \mid k \geq 0\}$

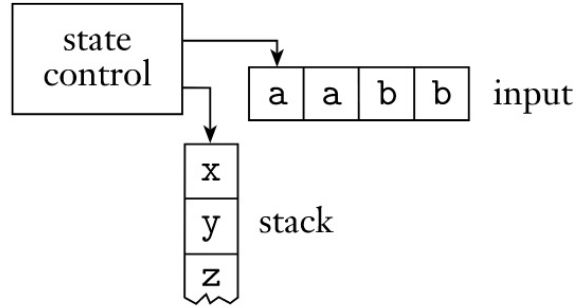


Figure 4.1: Schematic of a pushdown automaton

1. Read 0s from input, push onto stack until read 1.
2. Read 1s from input, while popping 0s from stack
3. Enter accept state if stack is empty (acceptance only at end of input)

**Definition 4.2.1 (PDA).** A **pushdown automaton** is a 6-tuple  $(Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, F)$ , where  $Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, F$  are all finite sets:

1.  $\Sigma$  input alphabet
2.  $\Gamma$  stack alphabet
3.  $\delta: Q \times \Sigma_\epsilon \times \Gamma_\epsilon \rightarrow P(Q \times \Gamma_\epsilon)$  ( $\Sigma_\epsilon = \Sigma \cup \{\epsilon\}$  and  $\Gamma_\epsilon = \Gamma \cup \{\epsilon\}$ , we allow nondeterminism here)  
Left side is the domain (the set of possible inputs to a function) of the transition function; The current state, and the reading (popping) from the top of the stack and reading from the input (can read  $\epsilon$ ) decide the input of the transition function  
Right side is the writing, the combination of the state and the writing to the top of the stack (can write  $\epsilon$ ) decide the output of the transition
4.  $q_0$ : the start state
5.  $F$ : the accept states

For a transition function like  $\delta(q, a, c) = \{(r_1, d), (r_2, e)\}$ , the current state is  $q$ , and reading an input  $a$  and popping from the stack  $c$ , then we might end up going to:

- state  $r_1$  and writing  $d$  to the top of stack
- state  $r_2$  and writing  $e$  to the top of the stack

One interesting thing about this definition is that we have no primitive to decide whether the stack is empty at the end.

The reason for that is **we don't need to!** Because we can write special symbol to the bottom of the stack at the beginning when the machine starts.

**Remark.** Should do some example here to understand deeper into the PDA.

**Theorem 4.2.1 (Equal of CFL and PDA).** A language is context free if and only if some pushdown automaton recognize it.

**Proof.** We need to prove it in 2 directions:

**Lemma 4.2.1 (CFL to PDA).** If a language is context free, then some pushdown automaton recognize it.

and:

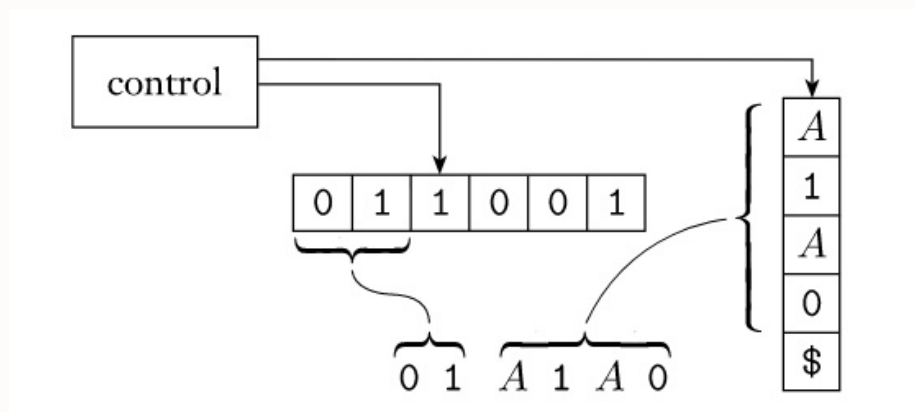
**Lemma 4.2.2 (PDA to CFL).** If a pushdown automaton recognize some language, then it is context free.

**CFL to PDA.** The idea is to use the stack to do partial substitution, and if the top of the stack matches the input string, we pop it out.

The reason that why we can always do the correct substitution is because of the nondeterminism nature of PDA, so actually we fork a lot of branches and there'll be the correct substitution in it.

Here's the informal description of the PDA P:

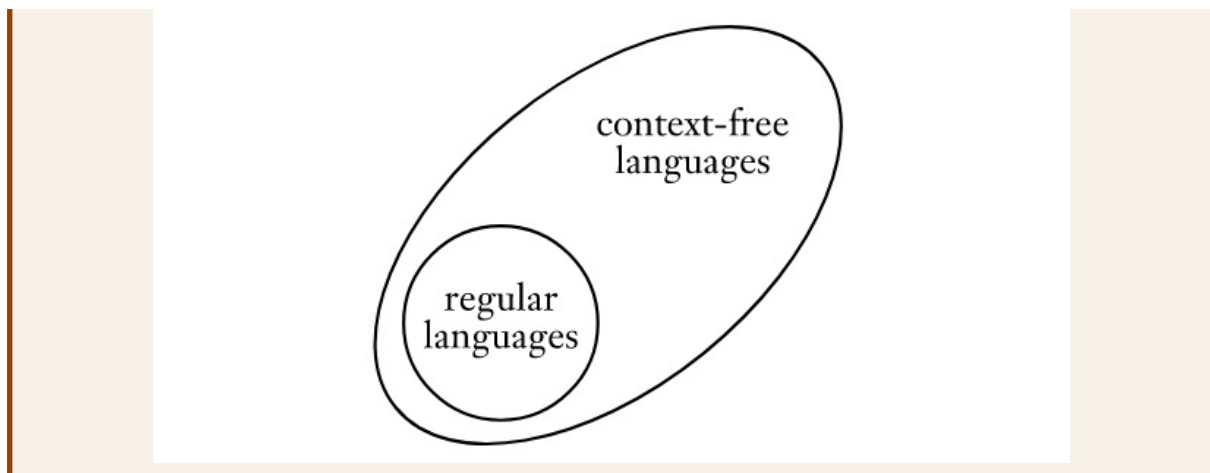
1. Place the marker symbol \$ and the start variable on the stack.
2. Repeat the following steps forever:
  - (a) If the top of the stack is a variable A, nondeterministically select one of the rules for A and substitute A by the string on the right-hand side of the rule.
  - (b) If the top of stack is a terminal symbol  $a$ , read the next symbol from the input and compare it to  $a$ . If match, repeat; if not, reject on this branch of the nondeterminism.
  - (c) If the top of stack is the symbol \$, enter the accept state. Doing so accepts the input if it has all been read.



**PDA to CFL.** I will omit this proof as it's too complicated and not included in the course. But there's a proof for that in the book for LEMMA 2.27.

Because every finite automaton is automatically a pushdown automaton that simply ignores its stack, we have:

**Corollary 4.2.1.** Every regular language is context free.



#### 4.2.1 Recap

	Recognizer	Generator
Regular language	DFA or NFA	Regular expression
Context Free language	PDA	Context Free Grammar

A Venn diagram on a black background with white outlines. It shows a large ellipse labeled "Context Free languages". Inside this ellipse, towards the bottom-left, is a smaller circle labeled "Regular languages". This diagram reinforces the concept that regular languages are a subset of context-free languages.

Figure 4.2: Recap until now

## Chapter 5

# The CF Pumping Lemma, Turing Machines

### 5.1 Non-context-free languages

Based on [the equivalence of CFGs and PDAs](#), there are some more corollaries we can see or easy to prove:

**Corollary 5.1.1.** Every regular language is a CFL

**Corollary 5.1.2.** If  $A$  is a CFL and  $B$  is regular then  $A \cap B$  is a CFL.

**Example.** A:  $A = \{a^n b^n | n \geq 0\}$  B:  $B = \{(ab)^*\}$

Proof sketch: while reading the input, the finite control of the PDA for  $A$  simulates the DFA for  $B$ .

Need to notice that the class of CFLs is not closed under  $\cap$  which is different from regular languages.

**Example.** I will show an example where the intersection of 2 CFLs is not a CFL.

$$L_1 = \{a^n b^n c^m | n, m \geq 0\}$$

$$L_2 = \{a^m b^n c^n | n, m \geq 0\}$$

$$L_1 \cap L_2 = \{a^n b^n c^n | n \geq 0\}$$

Intuitively, to recognize the intersection of  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  we need to compare the count of  $a, b, c$ . One stack can only handle the comparison of  $a$  and  $b$ , but we have no extra stack for comparing  $c$ .

But the class of CFLs is closed under  $\cup, \circ, *$ .

**Note.** Should try to prove its closed under union, concatenation and star!

#### 5.1.1 CF Pumping Lemma

To prove a language is **not context free**, we need another tool:

**Example.** Let  $B = \{0^k 1^k 2^k | k \geq 0\}$ , we will show that B is not a CFL.

The tool we'll use is **Pumping Lemma for CFLs**:

**Lemma 5.1.1 (Pumping Lemma for CFLs).** If  $A$  is a CFL, then there is a number  $p$  (the pumping length) where, if  $s$  is any string in  $A$  of length at least  $p$ , then  $s$  may be divided into **five pieces**  $s = uvxyz$  satisfying the conditions



- 
1. for each  $i \geq 0$ ,  $uv^i xy^i z \in A$
  2.  $|vy| > 0$
  3.  $|vxy| \leq p$

**Intuition.** Proof IDEA: let  $s$  be a *very long* string in  $A$ , then the parsing tree for  $s$  must be very tall. Then the parse tree must contain some long path from the start variable to the terminal symbol at a leaf. On this long path, because of the pigeonhole principle, some variable  $R$  must repeat.

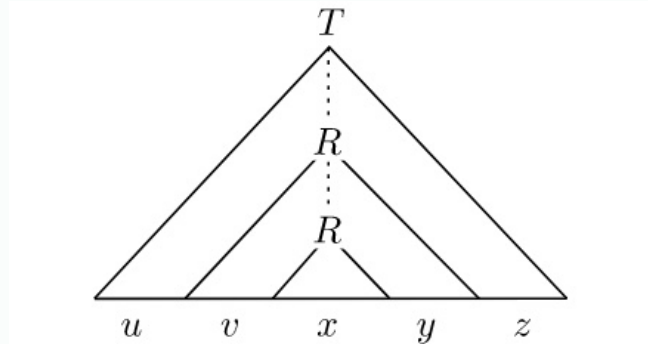


Figure 5.1: when  $s = uvxyz$

This repetition allows us to replace the subtree under the second occurrence of  $R$  with the subtree under the first occurrence of  $R$  and still get a legal parse tree.

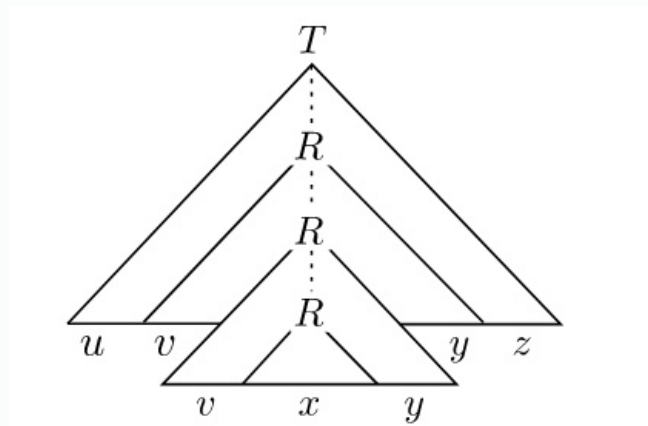


Figure 5.2: when  $s = uv^i xy^i z$

Also  $v$  and  $y$  can repeat 0 time:

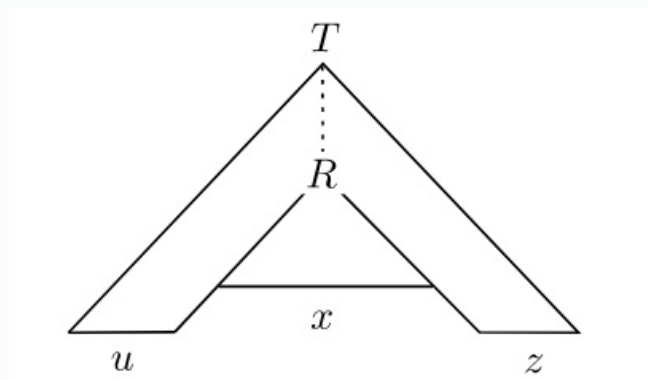


Figure 5.3: when  $s = uxz$

Let's go back to the [example](#):

**Example.**  $B = \{0^k 1^k 2^k | k \geq 0\}$

Proof by Contradiction: Assume that B is a CFL.

Based on CFL pumping lemma gives  $p$  as above, Let  $s = 0^p 1^p 2^p \in B$ .

Pumping lemma says that can divide  $s = uvxyz$  satisfying the 3 conditions.

Condition 3 ( $|vxy| \leq p$ ) implies that  $vxy$  can not contain both 0s and 2s.

So  $uv^2xy^2z$  has unequal numbers of 0s, 1s and 2s.

Another example:

**Example.** Let  $F = \{ww | w \in \Sigma^*\}$ .  $\Sigma = \{0, 1\}$ .

Show: F is not a CFL.

Suppose F is a CFL, we try to construct a string which violate the CFL pumping lemma.

- Try  $s_1 = 0^p 10^p 1$ , we can choose  $x = 1$  of the middle, and  $v$  and  $y$  the left and right 0, and we can pump to this string. → **This is a bad choice to try to find a contradiction**
- Try  $s_2 = 0^p 1^p 0^p 1^p$ , now we can find the contradiction!

## 5.2 Turing Machines(TMs)

Finite automata are good models for devices that have a small amount of memory. Pushdown automata are good models for devices that have an unlimited memory that is usable only in the last in, first out manner of stack.

We also have shown that some very simple tasks are beyond the capabilities of the models.

Alan Turing propose Turing Machine in 1936, it's similar to a finite machine but with an **unlimited and unstricted memory**. It is a much more accurate model of a general purpose computer. *A Turing machine can do anything that a real computer can do, but even a Turing machine cannot solve certain problems.*

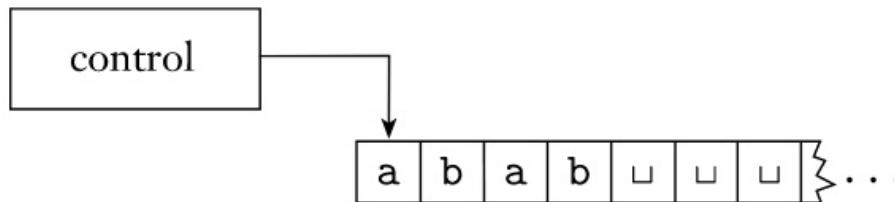


Figure 5.4: Schematic of a Turing machine

Important characteristics of it:

1. Head can read and write
2. Head is two way (can move left or right)
3. Tape is infinite (to the right)
4. Infinitely many blank follow input
5. Can accept or reject any time (not only at end of input)

**Example.** TM recognizing  $B = a^k b^k c^k | k \geq 0$ :

Example: aaabbbccc□□

1. Scan right until □ while checking if input is in  $a^*b^*c^*$ , *reject* if not

2. Return head to left
3. Scan right, crossing off single a, b and c:  $\cancel{a}\cancel{a}\cancel{b}\cancel{b}\cancel{c}\cancel{c}$
4. If the last one of each symbol, *accept*
5. If the last one of some symbol but not others, *reject*
6. If all symbols remain, return to left and repeat from step 3.

After step 6, it will go back to step 3, and the string will become  $\cancel{a}\cancel{a}\cancel{b}\cancel{b}\cancel{c}\cancel{c}$ . Then go to step 4, they are all last one of each symbol, so we *accept*.

The effect of "crossing off" is brought by use a tape alphabet like  $\Gamma = \{a, b, c, \cancel{a}, \cancel{b}, \cancel{c}, \sqcup\}$ .

**Definition 5.2.1 (Turing Machine).** A Turing Machine (TM) is a 7-tuple  $(Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \sigma, q_0, q_{acc}, q_{rej})$ .

- $\Sigma$  input alphabet
- $\Gamma$  tape alphabet ( $\Sigma \subseteq \Gamma$ )
- $Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R\}$  (L = left, R = right)

The transition function means that the head in a certain state  $q$  and the head is over a tape square containing a symbol  $a$ . And if  $\delta(q, a) = (r, b, L)$ , the machine writes the symbol  $b$  replacing  $a$ , and goes to state  $r$ . The third L means the head moves to left after writing.

On input  $w$  a TM  $M$  may halt (enter  $q_{acc}$  or  $q_{rej}$ ) or  $M$  may run forever ("loop").  
So  $M$  has 3 possible outcomes for each input  $w$ :

1. Accept  $w$  (enter  $q_{acc}$ )
2. Reject  $w$  by halting (enter  $q_{rej}$ )
3. Reject  $w$  by looping (running forever)

The above definition of TM is **deterministic**, but we can change it to be **nondeterministic** by change  $\delta$  to  $\delta : Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow P(Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R\})$

### 5.2.1 TM recognizers and deciders

**Definition 5.2.2.** A is Turing-recognizable if  $A = L(M)$  for some TM  $M$ .

**Definition 5.2.3.** TM  $M$  is a decider if  $M$  halts on all inputs. (no looping, meaning eventually the machine will halt to  $q_{acc}$  or  $q_{rej}$ )

**Definition 5.2.4.** A is Turing-decidable if  $A = L(M)$  for some TM decider  $M$ .

A Turing recognizable language can cause the machine reject by looping, but a Turing decidable language can always call the TM halt, thus we have the relationship:

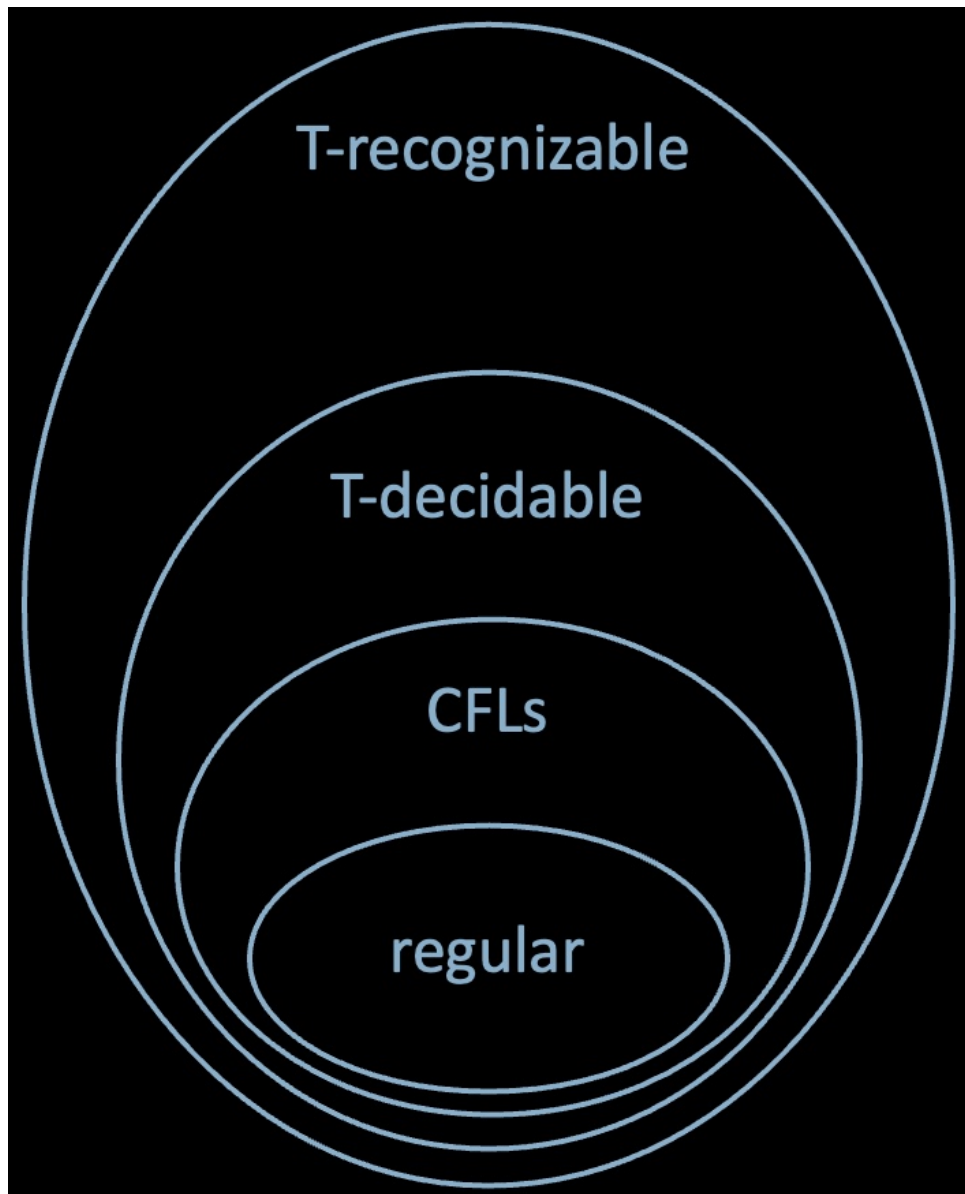


Figure 5.5: Summary of languages

## Chapter 6

# TM Variants, the Church-Turing Thesis

**Note.** What kind of models are suitable for general purpose computation?

### 6.1 Variants of the Turing Machine Model

Turing machine is picked as for the general purpose computation, but choice doesn't matter, all reasonable models are equivalent in power.

#### 6.1.1 Multi-tape TMs

Simple Turing machine has one tape, but we can also have multiple tapes.

One tape is for input, other tapes are work tapes, initially blank. All tapes can be read and write.

**Theorem 6.1.1.**  $A$  is T-recognizable iff some multi-tape TM recognizes  $A$ .

**Lemma 6.1.1.**  $A$  is T-recognizable then some multi-tape TM recognizes  $A$ .

**Proof. Proof.** This is trivial. Just use one tape. ■

**Lemma 6.1.2.** Multi-tape TM recognized  $A$  is also single tape recognizable.

**Proof.** We can simulate multi-tape TM in single-tape Turing Machine:

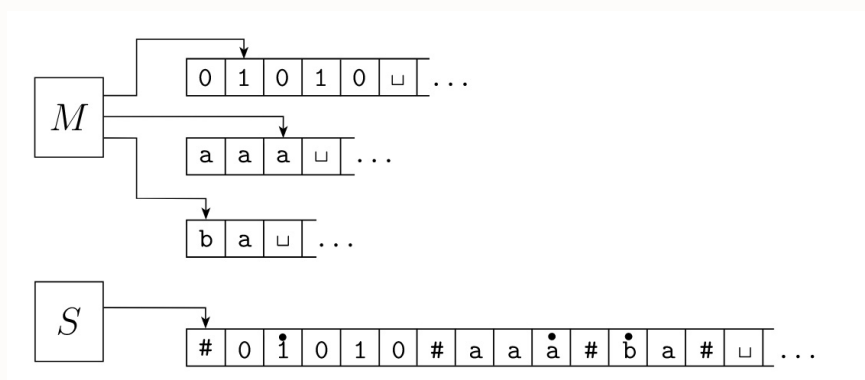


Figure 6.1:  $S$  simulates  $M$

$S$  simulates  $M$  by storing the contents of multiple tapes on a single tape in "block".  
Record head positions with dotted symbols, something like:  $b \rightarrow \dot{b}$   
If  $M$  writes to originally blank space,  $S$  has to shift room as needed. ■

### 6.1.2 Nondeterministic TMs

A *Nondeterministic TM* (NTM) is similar to a Deterministic TM except for its transition function  $\delta : Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow P(Q \times \Gamma \{L, R\})$ .

**Theorem 6.1.2.**  $A$  is T-recognizable iff some NTM recognizes  $A$ .

**Proof.** (omit the trivial direction)

**Lemma 6.1.3.** convert NTM to deterministic TM.

The lecture and the textbook use 2 different ways to simulate, I write down the proof of the lecture as it is easier to understand.

**Lecture Proof.** The lecture simulates this using a single tape, just like the proof:



Figure 6.2:  $M$  simulates  $N$

- $M$  simulates  $N$  by storing each thread in separate "block"
- Also need to store the head location
- Need to store status of each thread
- If a thread forks, then  $M$  copies the block
- If a thread accepts then  $M$  accepts.

### 6.1.3 Enumerators

**Definition 6.1.1 (informal).** A Turing Enumerator is a deterministic TM with a printer. The Turing machine can use that printer as an output device to print strings. Every time the Turing machine wants to add a string to the list, it sends the string to the printer.

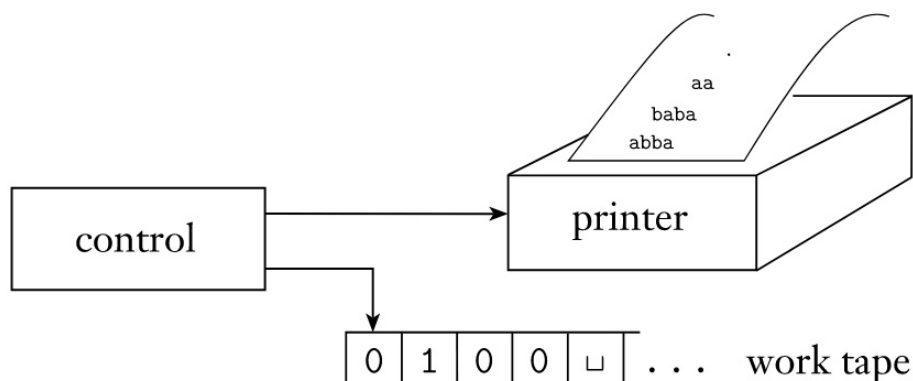


Figure 6.3: Schematic of an enumerator

The enumerator  $E$  starts with a blank input on its work tape. The language enumerated by  $E$  is the collection of all the strings that it eventually prints out.

**Theorem 6.1.3.**  $A$  is T-recognizable iff  $A = L(E)$  for some T-enumerator  $E$ .

**Lemma 6.1.4.** Convert  $E$  to equivalent TM  $M$ : If we have an enumerator  $E$  that enumerates a language  $A$ , a TM  $M$  recognizes  $A$ .

**Proof. Proof.** The TM  $M$  works in the following way:

$M =$  " On input  $w$ :

1. Run  $E$ . Every time that  $E$  outputs a string, compare it with  $w$ .
2. If  $w$  ever appears in the output of  $E$ , *accept*."

Clearly,  $M$  accepts those strings that appear on  $E$ 's list. ■

**Lemma 6.1.5.** If TM  $M$  recognizes a language  $A$ , we can construct the following enumerator  $E$  for  $A$ .

**Proof.** Say that  $s_1, s_2, s_3, \dots$  is a list of all possible strings in  $\Sigma^*$ .

$E =$  "Ignore the input.

1. Repeat the following for  $i = 1, 2, 3, \dots$
2. Run  $M$  for  $i$  steps on each input,  $s_1, s_2, \dots, s_i$
3. If any computations accept, print out the corresponding  $s_j$ "

**Intuition.** This is basically the  $E$  uses the TM it attaches to recognize the language, and print if the attached TM recognizes it.

It can be an infinite loop because all possible strings in  $\Sigma^*$  is infinite if it does not only contain  $\epsilon$ .

But when really run the TM, we have to run in parallel, as the TM might be looping. ■

The essential feature of TM is *unrestricted access to unlimited memory*, it distinguishes TMs from other weak models. Some other models also have the same power as TMs, and they also share the same feature.

## 6.2 Church-Turing Thesis

**Remark.** *Intuitive notion of algorithms* equals *Turing machine algorithms*

Church used a notational system called the  $\lambda$ -calculus to define algorithms. Turing did it with his "machines". The two definitions were shown to be equivalent. The connection between the informal notion of algorithm and the precise definition has come to be called **Church-Turing thesis**.

It has been used by Yuri Matijasevi to solve Hilbert's 10th problem:

to provide a general algorithm that, for any given Diophantine equation (a polynomial equation with integer coefficients and a finite number of unknowns), can decide whether the equation has a solution with all unknowns taking integer values. ([Wikipedia: Hilbert's tenth problem](#))



---

**Note.** The idea is to prove the language of Diophantine equations is TM recognizable but not decidable.

## 6.3 Notation for encodings and TMs

We're going to accept more types (even automaton) as input to Turing machine. But TM only accepts strings, so we need to encode objects into strings.

- If  $O$  is some object, we write  $\langle O \rangle$  to be an encoding of that object into a string.
- If  $O_1, O_2, \dots, O_k$  is a list of objects then we write  $\langle O_1, O_2, \dots, O_k \rangle$  to be an encoding of them together into a single string.

## Chapter 7

# Decision Problems for Automata and Grammars

We demonstrate certain problems can be solved algorithmically and others that cannot. Our objective is to explore the limits of algorithm solvability.

The importance of studying unsolvability:

1. Knowing a problem is algorithmically unsolvable *is* useful because you realize that the problem must be simplified or altered before you can find an algorithm solution.
2. Even you know the problem is solvable, a glimpse of the unsolvable can stimulate your imagination and help you gain an important perspective on computation.

**Remark (Computational Problem).** In theoretical computer science, a computational problem is one that asks for a solution in terms of an algorithm. ([Wikipedia](#))

**Example.** Some types of computational problem: decision problems, search problems, counting problems, optimization problems.

Questions like "what is the meaning of life?" and "do I look good in this outfit" are not computational problems.

(Unit 2: Computational Problems and Algorithms)

### 7.1 Acceptance Problem for DFAs

**Remark.** Sometimes distinguish a machine that is looping from one that is merely taking a long time is difficult. For this reason, we prefer Turing machines that halt on all inputs, such machines never loop.

Those machines are called **deciders**.

The **acceptance problem** for DFAs of testing whether a particular DFA accepts a given string can be expressed as a language,  $A_{DFA}$ . The language contains the encodings of all DFAs together with strings that the DFAs accept.

Why we are representing a pair like  $\langle B, w \rangle$  as a language? Because this is convenient as we have already set up terminology for dealing with languages.

**Theorem 7.1.1.** Let  $A_{DFA} = \{ \langle B, w \rangle \mid B \text{ is a DFA and } B \text{ accepts } w \}$   
 $A_{DFA}$  is decidable

This problem of "testing whether a DFA  $B$  accepts an input  $w$ " is the same with "whether a combination  $\langle B, w \rangle$  is a member of language  $A_{DFA}$ ".

In this way, we formulate the computational problem into "testing the membership in the language".

If the language is decidable, meaning we can use a TM to decide this problem in finite time (by the definition).

This theorem tells that the computational problem "testing whether a given finite automaton accepts a given string" is decidable.

**Proof.**  $M =$  "On input  $\langle B, w \rangle$ , where  $B$  is a DFA and  $w$  is a string:

1. Simulate  $B$  on input  $w$
2. If the simulation ends in an accept state, *accept*. If it ends in a nonaccepting state, *reject*.

"

■

## 7.2 Acceptance Problem for NFAs

**Theorem 7.2.1.** Let  $A_{NFA} = \{ \langle B, w \rangle \mid B \text{ is a NFA and } B \text{ accepts } w \}$

**Proof.** Given TM  $D_{A-NFA}$  that decides  $A_{NFA}$ .

$D_{A-NFA} =$  "On input  $\langle B, w \rangle$

1. Convert NFA  $B$  to equivalent DFA  $B'$
2. Run TM  $D_{A-DFA}$  on input  $\langle B', w \rangle$
3. *Accept* if  $D_{A-DFA}$  accepts, *Reject* if not.

"

■

## 7.3 Emptiness Problem for DFAs

**Theorem 7.3.1.** Let  $E_{DFA} = \{ \langle B \rangle \mid B \text{ is a DFA and } L(B) = \emptyset \}$ .

$E_{DFA}$  is decidable.

The problem is like asking us is it possible to write an algorithm to decide if  $B$  is a super dumb DFA and does not accept any string.

**Proof.** Given TM  $D_{E-DFA}$  that decides  $E_{DFA}$ .

$D_{E-DFA} =$  "On input  $\langle B \rangle$

1. Mark start state
2. Repeat until no new state is marked:  
Mark every state that has an incoming arrow from a previously marked state.
3. *Accept* if no accept state is marked. *Reject* if some accept state is marked.

"

■

## 7.4 Equivalence Problem for DFAs

**Theorem 7.4.1.** Let  $EQ_{DFA} = \{ \langle A, B \rangle \mid A \text{ and } B \text{ are DFAs and } L(A) = L(B) \}$

$EQ_{DFA}$  is decidable.

This problem mean whether we have an algorithm can decide 2 DFAs can accept same set of strings.

**Proof.** Given TM  $D_{EQ-DFA}$  that decides  $EQ_{DFA}$ .

$D_{EQ-DFA} =$  "On input  $\langle A, B \rangle$  [IDEA: Make DFA  $C$  that accepts  $w$  where  $A$  and  $B$  disagree]

1. Construct DFA  $C$  where  $L(C) = (L(A) \cap \overline{L(B)}) \cup (\overline{L(A)} \cap L(B))$  ( $L(C)$  is symmetric difference, we try to prove it is an empty set)
2. Run  $D_{E-DFA}$  on  $\langle C \rangle$  (we can do that because of [the empty decider](#))

3. *Accept* if  $D_{E-DFSA}$  accepts, *Reject* if not.

"

■

## 7.5 Acceptance Problem for CFGs

**Theorem 7.5.1.** Let  $A_{CFG} = \{\langle G, w \rangle \mid G \text{ is a CFG and } w \in L(G)\}$   
 $A_{CFG}$  is decidable

This is the same to ask does  $G$  generate  $w$ .

**Proof.** The intuition is that we can check all the strings this CFG has generated and check if  $w$  is one of them. But the problem is that we need to know that this process has a bound.

To prove this we need another theorem that has been proved:

**Theorem 7.5.2** (Chomsky Normal Form(CNF)). CNF only allows rules:

$$A \rightarrow BC$$

$$B \rightarrow b$$

**Lemma 7.5.1.** Can convert every CFG into CNF.

**Lemma 7.5.2.** If  $H$  is in CNF and  $w \in L(H)$  then every derivation of  $w$  has  $2|w| - 1$  steps.

The second lemma is important as it assures us that for any  $w$  we can use finite steps to generate it if it can be generated using the CFG.

Give TM  $D_{A-CFG}$  that decides  $A_{CFG}$ .

$D_{A-CFG} =$  "On input  $\langle G, w \rangle$

1. Convert  $G$  into CNF
2. Try all derivations of length  $2|w| - 1$
3. Accept if any generate  $w$ , Reject if not

■

**Corollary 7.5.1.** Every CFL is decidable.

## 7.6 Emptiness Problem for CFGs

**Theorem 7.6.1.** Let  $E_{CFG} = \{\langle G \rangle \mid G \text{ is a CFG and } L(G) = \emptyset\}$   
 $E_{CFG}$  is decidable.

**Proof.**  $D_{E-CFG} =$  "On input  $\langle G \rangle$  [IDEA: work backwards from terminals]:

1. **Mark** all occurrences of terminals in  $G$
2. Repeat until no new variables are marked  
Mark all occurrences of variable  $A$  if  
 $A \rightarrow B_1 B_2 \cdots B_k$  is a rule and all  $B_i$  were already marked.
3. Reject if the start variable is marked. Accept if not

■

**Example** (How the mark process work). Suppose we have:

$$\begin{aligned}S &\rightarrow RTa \\ R &\rightarrow Tb \\ T &\rightarrow a\end{aligned}$$

Step1: we can only mark T as we know that T generates only terminals

$$\begin{aligned}S &\rightarrow RTa \\ R &\rightarrow Tb \\ T &\rightarrow a\end{aligned}$$

Step2: because of step 1, we can also mark R, because we know T is marked.

$$\begin{aligned}S &\rightarrow RTa \\ R &\rightarrow Tb \\ T &\rightarrow a\end{aligned}$$

And so on...

## 7.7 Equivalence Problem for CFGs

**Theorem 7.7.1.** Let  $EQ_{CFG} = \{ \langle G, H \rangle \mid G, H \text{ are CFGs and } L(G) = L(H) \}$   
 $EQ_{CFG}$  is **NOT** decidable.

We'll do the proof in next lecture.

**Theorem 7.7.2.** Let  $AMBIG_{CFG} = \{ \langle G \rangle \mid G \text{ is an ambiguous CFG} \}$   
 $AMBIG_{CFG}$  is **NOT** decidable.

Homework.

**Remark.** Why we can not follow the same technique we used to show  $EQ_{DFA}$  is decidable?

Because CFLs are not closed under complementation and intersection. We can't make those symmetric difference.

## 7.8 Acceptance Problem for TMs

**Theorem 7.8.1.** Let  $A_{TM} = \{ \langle M, w \rangle \mid M \text{ is a TM and } M \text{ accepts } w \}$   
 $A_{TM}$  is **NOT** decidable.

Will be proved in next lecture

**Theorem 7.8.2.**  $A_{TM}$  is T-recognizable.

**Proof.** TM  $U$  recognizes  $A_{TM}$

$U = \text{"On input } \langle M, w \rangle$

1. Simulate  $M$  on input  $w$
2. Accept if  $M$  halts and accepts

- 
3. Reject if  $M$  halts and rejects
  4. ~~Reject if  $M$  never halts~~ (not a legal TM action, because we cannot tell).

"



# Chapter 8

## Undecidability

### 8.1 The Diagonalization Method

Cantor (1890s) had the following idea:

**Definition 8.1.1** (Same size of sets). Say that set  $A$  and  $B$  have the same size if there is a one-to-one("injective") and **onto**("surjective") function:  $f : A \rightarrow B$ .

**Example** (Countable Sets). Let  $N = \{1, 2, 3, \dots\}$  and let  $Z = \{\dots, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, \dots\}$ . Show  $N$  and  $Z$  have the same size.

**Example** (Countable Sets). Let  $Q^+ = \{m/n | m, n \in N\}$ , show  $N$  and  $Q^+$  has the same size.

**Definition 8.1.2** (Countable). A set  $A$  is countable if either it is finite or it has the same size as  $\mathbb{N}$ .

**Theorem 8.1.1** ( $\mathbb{R}$  is Uncountable). Let  $\mathbb{R}$  = all real numbers

**Proof.** Proof by contradiction via diagonalization: Assume  $\mathbb{R}$  is countable.

So there is a 1-1 correspondence  $f : N \rightarrow R$

Demonstrate a number  $x \in R$  that is missing from the list. It has  $i$ -th digit different from the  $i$ -th number in the list.

$n$	$f(n)$	
1	3. <u>1</u> 4159...	$x = 0.4641 \dots$
2	55.5 <u>5</u> 555...	
3	0.123 <u>4</u> 5...	
4	0.500 <u>0</u> 0...	
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	

Figure 8.1: Diagonalization

Let  $L$  = all languages, we have some corollaries:

**Corollary 8.1.1.**  $L$  is uncountable.

**Proof.** There's a 1-1 correspondence from  $L$  to  $R$  so they are the same size.

**Remark (Observation).**  $\Sigma^* = \{\epsilon, 0, 1, 00, 01, 10, 11, 000, \dots\}$  is countable.  
For each length, there are only finite numbers of strings.

**Remark (Observation).** The set of all Turing machines is countable because each Turing machine  $M$  has an encoding into a string  $\langle M \rangle$ .

**Why each  $M$  can encode?:** Because TM is a finite object with a well-defined structure.

A Turing machine  $M$  can be described as a 7-tuple  $Q, F, q_0, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, blank$ . This means that if someone gives you this 7-tuple, then the TM is well-defined, and you can precisely define how it behaves, etc. (CSStackExchange)

**Why this mean  $M$  is countable?:** This is my thought, because each TM can be encoded into a string. And because the encoding alphabet of the string is limited, for the same reason why  $\Sigma^*$  is countable, this is also countable.

**Theorem 8.1.2.** The set of all infinite binary sequences is uncountable.

**Proof.** This is easy to be proved by using diagonalization. ■

Let  $\mathcal{B}$  be the set of all infinite binary sequences. We can show that the set of all languages  $\mathcal{L}$  has the same size of  $\mathcal{B}$ :

$$\begin{array}{lcl} \Sigma^* = \{ & \epsilon, & 0, \quad 1, \quad 00, \quad 01, \quad 10, \quad 11, \quad 000, \quad 001, \quad \dots \} ; \\ A = \{ & & 0, \quad \quad 00, \quad 01, \quad \quad \quad 000, \quad 001, \quad \dots \} ; \\ \chi_A = & 0 & 1 \quad 0 \quad 1 \quad 1 \quad 0 \quad 0 \quad 1 \quad 1 \quad \dots \end{array}$$

For each kind of language  $A$ , according to whether a string exists in it, we can generate a bitmap  $\chi_A$  according to that. ■

**Corollary 8.1.2.** Some language is not decidable

**Proof.** There are more languages than Turing Machine! ■

**Remark.** Consider Hilbert's 1st question.

## 8.2 Undecidable Language

**Theorem 8.2.1.**  $A_{TM} = \{ \langle M, w \rangle \mid M \text{ is a TM and } M \text{ accepts } w \}$   
 $A_{TM}$  is not decidable.

**Proof.** Assume some TM  $H$  decides  $A_{TM}$ .

So  $H$  on  $\langle M, w \rangle =$

*Accept if  $M$  accepts  $w$*   
*Reject if not*

Use  $H$  to construct TM  $D$

$D =$  "On input  $\langle M \rangle$

1. Simulate  $H$  on input  $\langle M \langle M \rangle \rangle$



2. *Accept* if H rejects, *Reject* if H accepts."

$D$  accepts  $\langle M \rangle$  iff  $M$  doesn't accept  $\langle M \rangle$ .

$D$  accepts  $\langle D \rangle$  iff  $D$  doesn't accept  $\langle D \rangle$ .

Contradiction.

Where is the diagonalization?

All TMs ↓	All TM descriptions:					
	$\langle M_1 \rangle$	$\langle M_2 \rangle$	$\langle M_3 \rangle$	$\langle M_4 \rangle$	$\dots$	$\langle D \rangle$
$M_1$	acc	rej	acc	acc	$\dots$	
$M_2$	rej	rej	rej	rej		
$M_3$	acc	acc	acc	acc	$\dots$	
$M_4$	rej	rej	acc	acc		
$\vdots$			$\vdots$			
$D$	rej	acc	rej	rej		?

Figure 8.2

This implies that there is no TM that can always decide whether an arbitrary TM  $M$  will accept an input  $w$ . ■

**Theorem 8.2.2.** If  $A$  and  $\bar{A}$  are T-recognizable then  $A$  is decidable.

This theorem connects decidability and recognizability.

**Proof.** Let TM  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  recognize  $A$  and  $\bar{A}$ .

Construct TM  $T$  deciding  $A$ .

$T =$  "On input  $w$

1. Run  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  on  $w$  in parallel until one accepts.
2. If  $M_1$  accepts then *accept*, if  $M_2$  accepts then *reject*. "

**Corollary 8.2.1.**  $\overline{A_{TM}}$  is T-unrecognizable.

**Proof.**  $A_{TM}$  is T-recognizable but also undecidable (as we have proved [here](#)). If  $\overline{A_{TM}}$  is also recognizable, then  $A_{TM}$  should be decidable. ■

Here is the relationship:

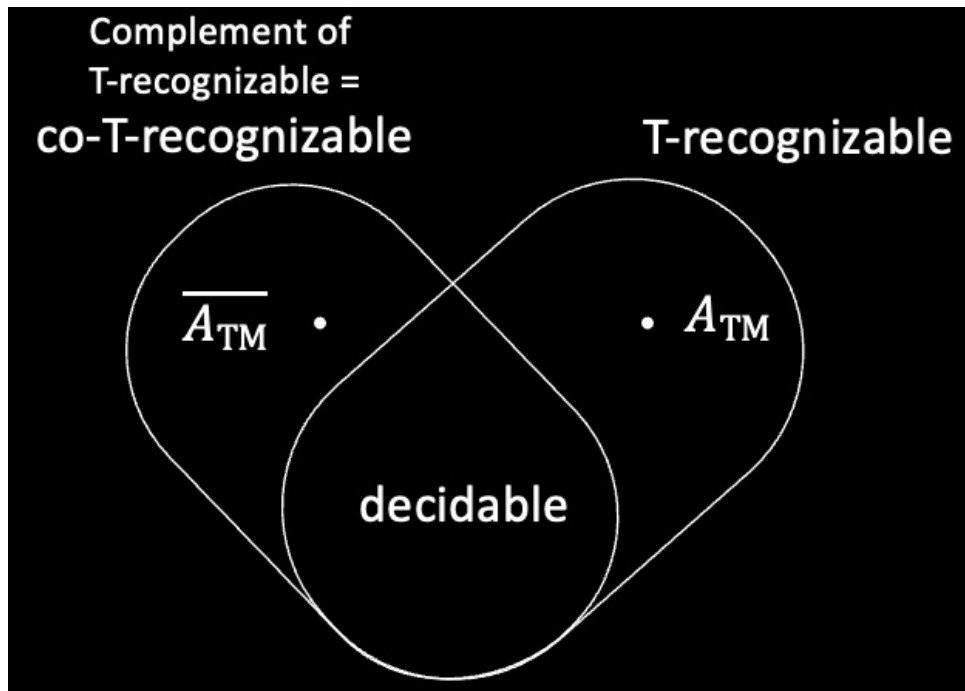


Figure 8.3

### 8.3 The Reducibility Method

Use our knowledge that  $A_{TM}$  is undecidable to show other problems are undecidable.

**Definition 8.3.1.**  $HALT_{TM} = \{ \langle M, w \rangle \mid M \text{ halts on input } w \}$

**Theorem 8.3.1.**  $HALT_{TM}$  is undecidable.

**Proof.** Assume that  $HALT_{TM}$  is decidable and show that  $A_{TM}$  is decidable (false!)

$A_{TM}$  is undecidable has been proved in [here](#).

Let TM  $R$  decide  $HALT_{TM}$ .

Construct TM  $S$  deciding  $A_{TM}$ .

$S = \text{"On input } \langle M, w \rangle$

1. Use  $R$  to test if  $M$  on  $w$  halts, if not, reject.
2. Simulate  $M$  on  $w$  until it halts (as guaranteed by  $R$ )
3. If  $M$  has accepted then *accept*, if  $M$  has rejected then *reject*."

TM  $S$  decides  $A_{TM}$ , a contradiction. Therefore  $HALT_{TM}$  is undecidable. ■

# Chapter 9

## Reducibility

### 9.1 The Reducibility Method

If we know that some problem (say  $A_{TM}$ ) is undecidable, we can use that to show other problems are undecidable.

**Remark.** Review the proof of HALT problem.

**Definition 9.1.1 (Reducibility).** If we have 2 languages (or problems)  $A$  and  $B$ , then  $A$  is reducible to  $B$  means that we can use  $B$  to solve  $A$ .

**Example.** Measuring the area of a rectangle is reducible to measuring the lengths of its sides.

**Example.** We showed that  $A_{NFA}$  is reducible to  $A_{DFA}$ .

If  $A$  is reducible to  $B$  then solving  $B$  gives a solution to  $A$ :

- then  $B$  is easy  $\rightarrow A$  is easy.
- then  $A$  is hard  $\rightarrow B$  is hard. (this is the form we will use)

### 9.2 General Reducibility

**Theorem 9.2.1.** Let  $E_{TM} = \{ \langle M \rangle \mid M \text{ is a TM and } L(M) = \emptyset \}$   
 $E_{TM}$  is undecidable.

**Proof.** Proof by contradiction. Show that  $A_{TM}$  is reducible to  $E_{TM}$ .

Assume that  $E_{TM}$  is decidable and show that  $A_{TM}$  is decidable.

Let TM  $R$  decide  $E_{TM}$

Construct TM  $S$  deciding  $A_{TM}$

**Remark.** A naive idea will be constructing  $S$  to run  $R$  on  $\langle M \rangle$ . But here is the problem, if  $R$  accepts  $\langle M \rangle$ , meaning  $M$  accepts no string, that is  $L(M) = \emptyset$ , this is good. But if  $R$  reject  $\langle M \rangle$ , we know  $M$  must accept some language, but we don't know what language.

That's why we need a modified  $M$ .

$S =$  "On input  $\langle M, w \rangle$

1. We can use  $M$  and  $w$  to construct a TM  $M_w$ .

$M_w =$  "On input  $x$

- (a) If  $x \neq w$ , reject

- (b) If  $x \neq w$ , run  $M$  on input  $w$  and accept if  $M$  does."
2. Run  $R$  on input  $\langle M_w \rangle$
  3. If  $R$  accepts, *reject*; if  $R$  rejects, *accept*."

■

## 9.3 Mapping Reducibility

**Definition 9.3.1.** A function  $f : \Sigma^* \rightarrow \Sigma^*$  is a computable function if there is a TM  $F$  where  $F$  on input  $w$  halts with  $f(w)$  on its tape for all strings  $w$ .

**Note (rephrase).**  $f : \Sigma^* \rightarrow \Sigma^*$  is **computable (or Turing computable)** if there is some TM  $M$  and for all  $w$ ,  $M$  will take  $w$  as input, and write  $f(w)$  on the tape.

**Example.** Arithmetic operations on integers are computable functions.

For example, we can make a machine that takes input  $\langle m, n \rangle$  and returns  $m + n$ .

**Definition 9.3.2.**  $A$  is mapping-reducible to  $B$  ( $A \leq_m B$ ) if **there is** a computable function  $f$  where  $w \in A$  iff  $f(w) \in B$ .

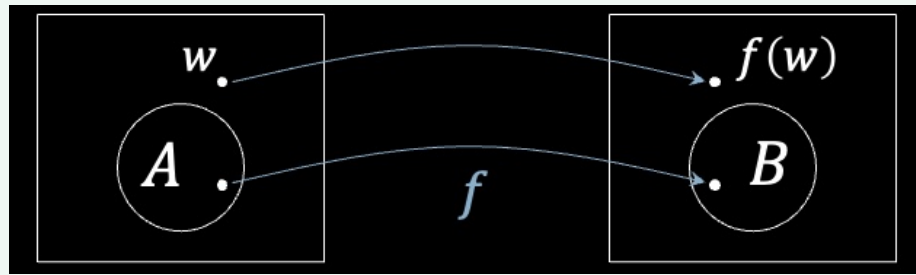


Figure 9.1: Function  $f$  reducing  $A$  to  $B$

**Example.**  $A_{TM} \leq_m \overline{E_{TM}}$

The computable reduction function  $f$  is  $f(\langle M, w \rangle) = \langle M_w \rangle$

**Remark.** Recall TM  $M_w =$  "On input  $x$

1. if  $x \neq w$ , reject
2. else run  $M$  on  $w$
3. Accept if  $M$  accepts"

Because  $\langle M, w \rangle \in A_{TM}$  iff  $\langle M_w \rangle \in \overline{E_{TM}}$  ( $M$  accepts  $w$  iff  $L(\langle M_w \rangle) \neq \emptyset$ )

### 9.3.1 Mapping Reductions - properties

**Theorem 9.3.1.** If  $A \leq_m B$  and  $B$  is decidable then so is  $A$

The theorem means there is a computable function (reduction function) which takes any input and produces an output where the input in  $A$  iff the output is in  $B$ .

**Proof.** Say TM  $R$  decides  $B$ .

Construct TM  $S$  deciding  $A$ :  $S =$  "On input  $w$

1. Compute  $f(w)$
2. Run  $R$  on  $f(w)$  to test if  $f(w) \in B$

**Remark.** Because  $R$  decides  $B$ , then  $R$  is a decider. A TM is a decider means this TM will halt on every input, no matter if the input is in  $B$ .

3. If  $R$  halts then output the same result."

■

**Remark.** According to this theorem, we can conclude that for [this example](#), if  $\overline{E_{TM}}$  is decidable, then  $A_{TM}$  is decidable. Because we all know that  $A_{TM}$  is not decidable, so  $\overline{E_{TM}}$  is not decidable.

**Corollary 9.3.1.** If  $A \leq_m B$  and  $A$  is undecidable then so is  $B$

**Theorem 9.3.2.** If  $A \leq_m B$  and  $B$  is T-recognizable then so is  $A$ .

**Proof.** Same as above

■

**Corollary 9.3.2.** If  $A \leq_m B$  and  $A$  is T-unrecognizable then so is  $B$ .

**Theorem 9.3.3.**  $A \leq_m B \Leftrightarrow \overline{A} \leq_m \overline{B}$

**Proof.** This is because  $A \leq_m B$  implies if there is an  $x$  in  $A$ , iff  $f(x)$  is in  $B$ .  
So if  $x$  not in  $A$ , only if  $f(x)$  is not in  $B$ . Which is the complement form.

■

**Corollary 9.3.3.** For the same reason, we know that  $A_{TM} \not\leq_m E_{TM}$ , so we can say  $\overline{A_{TM}} \not\leq \overline{E_{TM}}$ .

### 9.3.2 Mapping vs General Reducibility

They are not the same!

Mapping Reducibility of  $A$  to  $B$ : Translate  $A$ -questions to  $B$ -questions

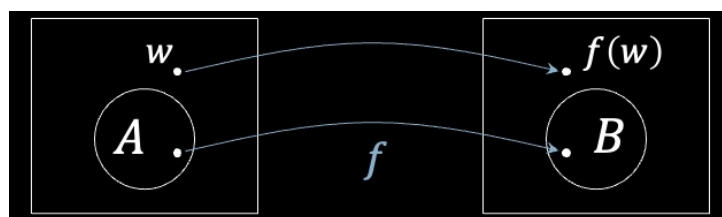


Figure 9.2: Showing Mapping Reducibility

- A special type of reducibility.
- Useful to prove T-unrecognizability.

(General) Reducibility of  $A$  to  $B$ : Use  $B$  solver to solve  $A$

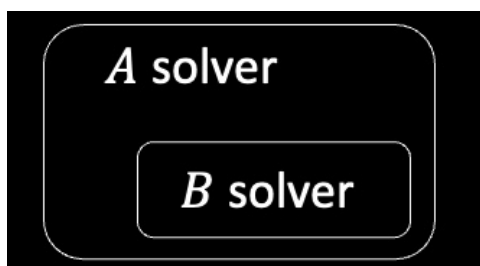


Figure 9.3: Showing General Reducibility

- May be conceptually simpler
- Useful to prove Undecidability

**Noteworthy difference:**

1.  $A$  is reducible to  $\overline{A}$
2.  $A$  may not be mapping reducible to  $\overline{A}$

**Example.**  $\overline{A_{TM}} \not\leq_m A_{TM}$

### 9.3.3 Reducibility - Templates

**To prove  $B$  is undecidable:**

- Show undecidable  $A$  is reducible to  $B$  (often  $A$  is  $A_{TM}$ )
- Template: Assume TM  $R$  decides  $B$ , Construct TM  $S$  deciding  $A$ . Contradiction.

**To prove  $B$  is T-unrecognizable:**

- Show T-unrecognizable  $A$  is mapping reducible to  $B$ . (often  $A$  is  $\overline{A_{TM}}$ ).
- Template: give reduction function  $f$

**Theorem 9.3.4.** Recall  $E_{TM} = \{ \langle M \rangle \mid M \text{ is a TM and } L(M) = \emptyset \}$   
 $E_{TM}$  is T-unrecognizable

**Proof.** (We have already shown it is undecidable)

Show  $\overline{A_{TM}} \leq_m E_{TM}$

Reduction function  $f(\langle M, w \rangle) = \langle M_w \rangle$ .


**Remark.**  $M_w$  is the same machine we have constructed before.

**Theorem 9.3.5.**  $EQ_{TM} = \{ \langle M_1, M_2 \rangle \mid M_1 \text{ and } M_2 \text{ are TMs and } L(M_1) = L(M_2) \}$   
Both  $EQ_{TM}$  and  $\overline{EQ_{TM}}$  are T-unrecognizable

**Proof.** 1.  $\overline{A_{TM}} \leq_m EQ_{TM}$

2.  $\overline{A_{TM}} \leq_m \overline{EQ_{TM}}$

For any  $w$  let  $T_w =$  "On input  $x$

- 
1. ignore  $x$
  2. Simulate  $M$  on  $w''$
  1.  $f(\langle M, w \rangle) = \langle T_w, T_{reject} \rangle$  ( $T_{reject}$  is a TM that always rejects)
  2.  $f(\langle M, w \rangle) = \langle T_w, T_{accept} \rangle$  ( $T_{accept}$  is a TM that always accepts)
- 

## 9.4 Problems

**Problem 9.4.1 (Rice's theorem).** Let  $P$  be any nontrivial property of the language of a Turing machine. Prove that the problem of determining whether a given Turing machine's language has property  $P$  is undecidable.

In more formal terms, let  $P$  be a language consisting of Turing machine descriptions where  $P$  fulfills two conditions. First,  $P$  is nontrivial – it contains some, but not all, TM descriptions. Second,  $P$  is a property of the TM's language – whenever  $L(M_1) = L(M_2)$ , we have  $\langle M_1 \rangle \in P \Leftrightarrow \langle M_2 \rangle \in P$ . Here,  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  are any TMs. Prove that  $P$  is an undecidable language.

## Chapter 10

# The Computation History Method

**Remark (Remember).** To prove some language  $B$  is undecidable, show that  $A_{TM}$  (or any known decidable language) is reducible to  $B$ .

### 10.1 Computation History

**Definition 10.1.1 (TM configuration).** A configuration of a TM is a triple  $(q, p, t)$  where

- $q$  = the state,
- $p$  = the head position,
- $t$  = tape contents

representing a snapshot of the TM at a point in time.

**Remark (Encode a configuration).** Encode configuration  $(p, q, t)$  as string  $t_1qt_2$  where  $t = t_1t_2$  and the head position is on the first symbol of  $t_2$ .

**Example.** Configuration:  $(q_3, 6, aaaaaabbbbb)$   
Encoding as string:  $aaaaaq_3abbbbb$

**Definition 10.1.2 (TM Computation History).** An (accepting) computation history for TM  $M$  on input  $w$  is a sequence of configurations  $C_1, C_2, \dots, C_{accept}$  that  $M$  enters until it accepts.

**Intuition.** It's like the log of the execution of the machine.

**Remark (Encode a computation history).** Encode a computation history as  $C_1\#C_2\#\dots\#C_{accept}$  where each configuration is encoded as a string.

### 10.2 Linearly Bounded Automata

**Definition 10.2.1 (Linealy Bounded Automata(LBA)).** A linearly bounded automata (LBA) is a 1-tape TM that cannot move its head off the input portion of the tape.

**Remark.** Tape size adjusts to the length of input.



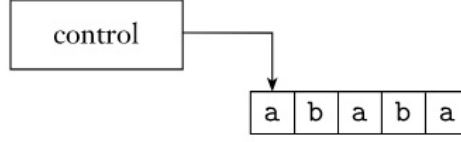


Figure 10.1: Schematic of an LBA

**Theorem 10.2.1.** Let  $A_{LBA} = \{ \langle B, 2 \rangle \mid LBA \text{ ; } B \text{ ; } accepts \text{ ; } w \}$   
 $A_{LBA}$  is decidable.

**Proof.** (idea) If  $B$  on  $w$  runs for long, it must be cycling.

**Remark.** For inputs of length  $n$ , an LBA can have only  $|Q| \times n \times |\Gamma|^n$  different configurations. Therefore, if an LBA runs for longer, it must repeat some configurations and thus will never halt.

**Theorem 10.2.2.** Let  $E_{LBA} = \{ \langle B \rangle \mid B \text{ is an LBA and } L(B) = \emptyset \}$   
 $E_{LBA}$  is undecidable.

**Proof.** Show  $A_{TM}$  is reducible to  $E_{LBA}$ .

Assume  $R$  decides  $E_{LBA}$ , we can construct a TM  $S$  deciding  $A_{TM}$  (which is contradiction):  
 $S =$  "on input  $\langle M, w \rangle$

1. Construct LBA  $B_{M,w}$  which tests whether its input  $x$  is an accepting computation history for  $M$  on  $w$ , and only accepts  $x$  if it is.
2. Use  $R$  to determine whether  $L(B_{M,w}) = \emptyset$ .
3. Accept if no. Reject if yes."

Why we can construct an LBA  $B_{M,w}$  like that? Because for the LBA, input  $x$  is the content on the tape, the LBA can move its header on the tape and follow this history and verify if it is a valid history of input  $w$ .

### 10.3 History Method for proving undecidability

**Example (Hilbert's 10<sup>th</sup> Problem).** Recall  $D = \{ \langle p \rangle \mid \text{polynomial } p(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_k) = 0 \text{ has integer solution} \}$

**Theorem 10.3.1.** Hilbert's 10<sup>th</sup> problem: Is  $D$  decidable? No.

**Proof.** Show  $A_{TM}$  is reducible to  $D$ .

Do toy problem instead which has a similar proof method: PCP. The method is The Computation History Method.

### 10.4 Post Correspondence Problem (PCP)

**Problem 10.4.1 (PCP problem).** Give a collection of pairs of strings as dominoes:

$$P = \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} t_1 \\ b_1 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t_2 \\ b_2 \end{bmatrix}, \dots, \begin{bmatrix} t_k \\ b_k \end{bmatrix} \right\}$$

A match is a finite sequence of dominoes in  $P$  (repeats allowed) where the concatenation of the  $t$ 's = the concatenation of the  $b$ 's.

**Example.** Match =  $\begin{bmatrix} t_{i_1} \\ b_{i_1} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} t_{i_2} \\ b_{i_2} \end{bmatrix} \cdots \begin{bmatrix} t_{i_l} \\ b_{i_l} \end{bmatrix}$  where  $t_{i_1}t_{i_2}\cdots t_{i_l} = b_{i_1}b_{i_2}\cdots b_{i_l}$

**Example.**

$$P = \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} ab \\ aba \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} aa \\ aba \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} ba \\ aa \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} abab \\ b \end{bmatrix} \right\}$$

Match:

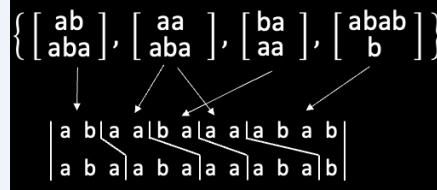


Figure 10.2: A match

Problem: Given  $P$ , is there a match?

**Theorem 10.4.1 (PCP problem).** The above problem is undecidable. (there's no problem to solve the problem)

Formalize the problem:

Let  $PCP = \{ \langle P \rangle \mid P \text{ has a match} \}$

**PCP problem.** IDEA: Show  $A_{TM}$  is reducible to  $PCP$ .

The main technique is reduction from  $A_{TM}$  via accepting computation histories.

How to do it? We try to make a connection that for any TM  $M$  and input  $w$ , we can construct an instance  $P$ :

$P \text{ has a match} \Rightarrow \text{An accepting computation history for } M \text{ on } w.$

We will give some assumptions to make the proof simpler, and we can eliminate those assumptions later.

**Problem 10.4.2 (Modified PCP (MPCP)).** We modify the PCP to require that a match starts with the first domino,  $\begin{bmatrix} t_1 \\ b_1 \end{bmatrix}$ .

$MPCP = \{ \langle P \rangle \mid P \text{ is an instance of the PCP with a match that starts with the first domino} \}$

**Proof.** We are given  $M$  and  $w$ , we're trying to make a set of dominoes, where a match will be a computation history for  $M$  on  $w$ .

How we make our dominoes?

**Part 1:** Starting domino:

$$\begin{bmatrix} u_1 \\ v_1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \# \\ \#q_0w_1 \cdots w_n\# \end{bmatrix}$$

■

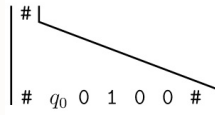


Figure 10.3: With Part 1 domino

**Cont. Part 2:** For each  $a, b \in \Gamma$  (alphabet in tape) and  $q, r \in Q$  (states) where our transition function be  $\delta(q, a) = (r, b, R)$  (If the TM in state  $q$ , and the head is  $a$ , it moves to state  $r$ , write  $b$  into it and its head move one step to the right). This information can be captured by domino:

$$\begin{bmatrix} q & a \\ b & r \end{bmatrix}$$

**Part 3:** For every  $a \in \Gamma$ , we put this domino:

$$\begin{bmatrix} a \\ a \end{bmatrix}$$

**Part 4:** We also need to have  $\#$ , it is not in  $\Gamma$ , so I make it different part:

$$\begin{bmatrix} \# \\ \# \end{bmatrix}$$

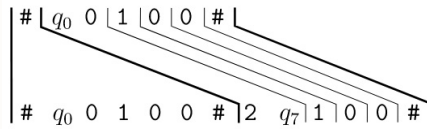


Figure 10.4: With Part 2, 3, 4 dominoes

When we're adding more states, the bottom will have  $q_{accept}$ , it is done for the perspective of the  $M$ ; but it is not a match yet! Notice that the bottom is like always a configuration ahead of the top.

**Part 5:** To make the match, we add dominoes like these:

$$\begin{bmatrix} aq_{accept} \\ q_{accept} \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} q_{accept}a \\ q_{accept} \end{bmatrix}$$

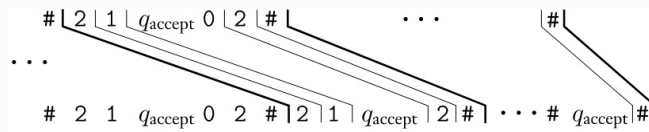


Figure 10.5: With Part 5 dominoes

**Part 6:** To end, we add:

$$\begin{bmatrix} q_{accept}\#\# \\ \# \end{bmatrix}$$

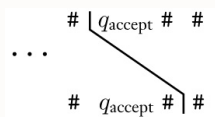


Figure 10.6: With Part 6 domino

**Remark.** Why we can have consecutive  $\#$ s? Because there are  $\epsilon$ .

Now we assume that TM  $R$  decides  $PCP$ .

We construct TM  $S$  deciding  $A_{TM}$ :

$S =$  "on input  $\langle M, w \rangle$

**Cont.** Construct  $PCP$  instance  $P_{M,w}$  (what we have done!) where a match corresponds to a computation history for  $M$  and  $w$ .

2. Use  $R$  to determine whether  $P_{M,w}$  has a match.
3. Accept if yes, Reject if no."

■

■

**Theorem 10.4.2.** Let  $ALL_{CFG} = \{ \langle G \rangle \mid G \text{ is a CFG and } L(G) = \Sigma^* \}$   
 $ALL_{CFG}$  is undecidable.

**Proof.** Show  $A_{TM}$  is reducible to  $ALL_{PDA}$  via the computation history method.

Assume TM  $R$  decides  $ALL_{PDA}$  and construct TM  $S$  deciding  $A_{TM}$ .

$S =$  "On input  $\langle M, w \rangle$

1. Construct PDA  $B_{M,w}$  which tests whether its input  $x$  is an accepting computation history for  $M$  and  $w$ , and only accepts  $x$  if it is NOT
2. Use  $R$  to determine whether  $L(B_{M,w}) = \Sigma^*$
3. Accept if no, Reject if yes."

■

# Chapter 11

## The Recursion Theorem and Logic

### 11.1 Self-reproduction Paradox

Suppose a Factory makes cars, meaning complexity of factory is greater than complexity of cars. But can a factory makes factories?

Similarly, can a program print itself?(YES!)

#### 11.1.1 A self-reproducing TM

**Theorem 11.1.1.** There is a TM *SELF* which (on any input) halts with  $\langle SELF \rangle$  on the tape.

**Lemma 11.1.1.** There is a computable function  $q : \Sigma^* \rightarrow \Sigma^*$  such that  $q(w) = \langle P_w \rangle$  for every  $w$ , where  $P_w$  is the TM  $P_w = \text{"Print } w \text{ on the tape and halt"}$ .  
( $q(w)$  is the description of a TM  $P_w$  who prints  $w$  and halts.)

**Note.** Computable function  $f$  means if there is a TM  $M$  for all input  $w$ , it halts with  $f(w)$  on the tape.

**Proof.** Straightforward, we can apparently make such kind of function. ■

**Proof.** *SELF* has 2 parts,  $A$  and  $B$ .

$A = P_{\langle B \rangle}$ , which makes  $A$  can print a  $\langle B \rangle$  on the tape:

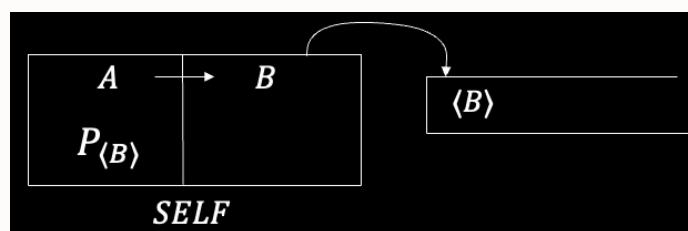


Figure 11.1:  $A$  print  $\langle B \rangle$  on the tape

**Intuition.** Can we also do the same in  $B$  and makes it print  $A$ ?

No! Because this is circular reasoning,  $A$  contains the serialization form of  $B$ , if  $B$  contains the serialization form of  $A$ , then the machine will be infinite large.

$B =$

1. "Compute  $q(\text{tape contents})$  to get  $A$  (The tape content happens to be  $\langle B \rangle$ , but it does not care)

2. Combine with  $B$  to get  $AB = SELF$
3. Halt with  $\langle SELF \rangle$  on tape."

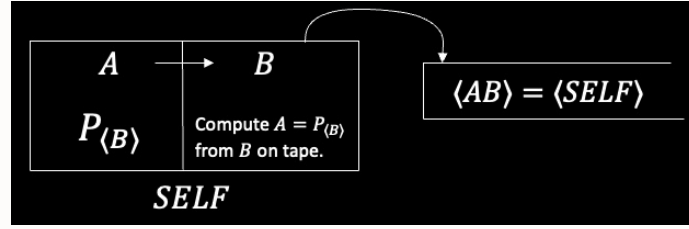


Figure 11.2: Print  $\langle AB \rangle$  on the tape

**Example (English Implementation).** Write "Hello World":

```
> Hello World
  Write the following twice, the second time in quotes "Hello World":
> Hello World "Hello World"
  Write the following twice, the second time in quotes
  "Write the following twice, the second time in quotes":
> Write the following twice, the second time in quotes
> "Write the following twice, the second time in quotes"
```

The upper phrase of the English example is called Action part, the  $B$  in the TM is the Action part.

## 11.2 The Recursion Theorem

**Theorem 11.2.1 (Compute your own description).** Let  $T$  be a TM that computes a function  $t : \Sigma^* \times \Sigma^* \rightarrow \Sigma^*$ . There is a TM  $R$  that computes a function  $r : \Sigma^* \rightarrow \Sigma^*$ , where for every  $w$ ,

$$r(w) = t(\langle R \rangle, w)$$

**Remark.**  $r$  works exactly like  $t$  except  $r$  provides the description of  $R$ .

**Proof.**  $R$  has 3 parts:  $A$ ,  $B$  and  $T$ .

$T$  is given.

$A = P_{\langle BT \rangle}$

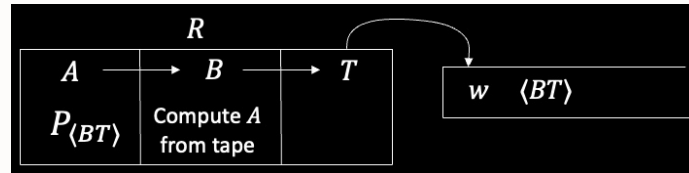


Figure 11.3: Print  $\langle BT \rangle$  on the tape

$B =$

1. "Compute  $q(\text{tape contents after } w)$  to get  $A$
2. Combine with  $BT$  to get  $ABT = R$

3. Pass control to  $T$  on input  $\langle w, R \rangle$ ."

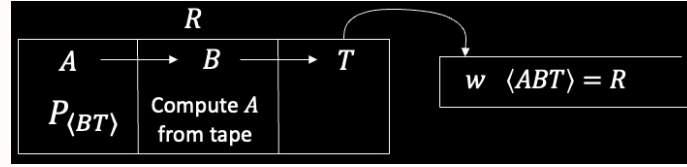


Figure 11.4: Print  $\langle ABT \rangle$  on the tape

**Note.** The recursion theorem provides the ability to implement the self-referential *this* into any programming language. With it, any program has the ability to refer to its own description, which has certain applications.

### 11.2.1 $A_{TM}$ is undecidable - new proof

$A_{TM}$  is not decidable is a very important conclusion, we used it to prove halting theorem.

**Theorem 11.2.2.**  $A_{TM}$  is not decidable.

**Proof.** Assume some TM  $H$  decides  $A_{TM}$ .

Consider the following TM  $R$ :  $R = \text{"On input } w$

1. Get own description  $\langle R \rangle$  (This is the content of the recursion theorem!)
2. Use  $H$  on input  $\langle R, w \rangle$  to determine whether  $R$  accepts  $w$  (This is the definition of  $A_{TM}$ , our assumption is that  $R$  can decide whether any TM can accept any input)
3. Do the opposite of what  $H$  says"

Suppose  $H$  reject  $\langle R, w \rangle$ ,  $R$  will accept the input  $w$ .

We can rephrase this into: if  $R$  reject  $w$ ,  $R$  will accept  $w$ : contradiction!

### 11.2.2 Fixed-point Theorem

A **fixed point** of a function is a value that isn't changed by the application of the function. In this case, we consider functions as computable transformations of TM descriptions. We show that for any such transformation, some TM exists whose behavior is unchanged.

**Theorem 11.2.3.** For any computable function  $f : \Sigma^* \rightarrow \Sigma^*$ , there is a TM  $R$  such that  $L(R) = L(S)$  where  $f(\langle R \rangle) = \langle S \rangle$ .

In other words, consider  $f$  to be a program transformation function. Then for some program  $R$ , its behavior is unchanged by  $f$ .

In this theorem,  $f$  plays the role of transformation,  $R$  is the fixed point.

**Proof.** Let  $R$  be the following TM.

$R = \text{"On input } w$

1. Get own description  $\langle R \rangle$  (recursion theorem)
2. Compute  $f(\langle R \rangle)$  and call the result  $\langle S \rangle$
3. Simulate  $S$  on  $w$ ."

Here we can see  $\langle F \rangle$  and  $f(\langle F \rangle) = \langle G \rangle$  describe equivalent TM.

**Note.** The step 2, why we can assume  $f(\langle R \rangle)$  is a valid description of another?  
By the definition of total computable function.

**Note.** I am not very satisfied with this proof, I still feel a gap why we can say the simulated is equivalent with the original.

■

### 11.2.3 $MIN_{TM}$ is T-unrecognizable

**Definition 11.2.1.**  $M$  is a minimal TM if  $|\langle M' \rangle| < |\langle M \rangle| \rightarrow L(M') \neq L(M)$ .

**Remark.** There is a shortest encoding form of TM, there's no shorter TM can do the same thing.

**Theorem 11.2.4.** Let  $MIN_{TM} = \{ \langle M \rangle | M \text{ is a minimal TM} \}$ ,  $MIN_{TM}$  is T-unrecognizable.

**Proof.** Assume some TM  $E$  enumerates  $MIN_{TM}$ .

Consider the following TM  $R$ :  $R = \text{"On input } w$

1. Get own description  $\langle R \rangle$
2. Run  $E$  until some TM  $B$  appears, where  $|\langle R \rangle| < |\langle B \rangle|$
3. Simulate  $B$  on  $w$ ."

Thus  $L(R) = L(B)$  and  $|\langle R \rangle| < |\langle B \rangle|$  so  $B$  is not minimal.  
But we assume  $E$  enumerates  $MIN_{TM}$ , so contradiction.

**Note.** Why there must be TM  $B$  has encoding form larger than  $E$ ?

■

Other applications:

1. Computer viruses
2. A true but unprovable Mathematical statement due to Kurt Godel:  
"This statement is unprovable."

## 11.3 Intro to Mathematical Logic

**Definition 11.3.1 (Goal).** A mathematical study of mathematical reasoning itself. (Formally defines the language of mathematics, mathematical truth, and provability.)

**Theorem 11.3.1 (Godel's First Incompleteness Theorem).** In any reasonable form system, some true statements are not provable.

**Proof.** We use 2 properties of formal proofs:

1. Soundness: If  $\phi$  has a proof  $\pi$  then  $\phi$  is true.
  2. Checkability: The language  $\{ \langle \pi, \phi \rangle | \pi \text{ is a proof of statement } \phi \}$  is decidable.
- Checkability implies the set of provable statements  $\{ \langle \phi \rangle | \phi \text{ has a proof} \}$  is T-recognizable.



---

Similarly, if we can always prove  $\langle M, w \rangle \in \overline{A_{TM}}$  when it is true, then  $\overline{A_{TM}}$  is T-recognizable. (false!)  
Therefore, some true statements of the form  $\langle M, w \rangle \in \overline{A_{TM}}$  are unprovable.  
Next, we use the recursion theorem to give a specific example of a true but unprovable statement. ■

# Chapter 12

## Time Complexity

### 12.1 Intro to Complexity Theory

- Computability theory (1930s - 1950s):  
Is  $A$  decidable?
- Complexity theory (1960s - present):  
Is  $A$  decidable with restricted resources? (time/memory/...)

In complexity theory, we concern only about decidable language, but the question is how?

**Example.** Let  $A = a^k b^k | k \geq 0$

Q: How many steps are needed to decide  $A$ ?

Depend on input.

We give an upper bound for all inputs of length  $n$ . (worst case complexity)

**Theorem 12.1.1.** A 1-tape TM  $M$  can decide  $A$  where, on inputs of length  $n$ ,  $M$  uses at most  $cn^2$  steps, for some fixed constant  $c$ .

**Remark (Terminology).**  $M$  uses  $O(n^2)$  steps.

**Proof.**  $M =$  "On input  $w$

1. Scan input to check if  $w \in a^*b^*$ , reject if not
2. repeat until all crossed off  
Scan tape, crossing off one  $a$  and one  $b$  Reject if only  $a$ 's or only  $b$ 's remain
3. Accept if all crossed off."

**Note.** This algorithm has been discussed when introducing TM.

In step 2, we have  $O(n)$  iterations and each iteration has  $O(n)$  steps.

**Note.** Can we do better than  $O(n^2)$  using 1-tape TM?  
We can do  $O(n \log n)$ .

■

**Theorem 12.1.2.** A 1-tape TM  $M$  can decide  $A$  by using  $O(n \log n)$  steps.

**Proof.**  $M =$  "On input  $w$

1. (The same as last proof, check alphabet)
2. Repeat until all crossed off  
Scan tape, crossing off every other  $a$  and  $b$   
Reject if even/odd parities disagree.
3. Accept if all crossed off"

**Note.** If we can keep record of parities, but why we cannot record the count?  
We can, but keeping count also takes steps. We can store the parities on the finite memory.

■

**Theorem 12.1.3.** A 1-tape TM  $M$  cannot decide  $A$  by using  $o(n \log n)$  steps.  
Regarding little  $o$ , here are the definitions of big-O and little-o:

**Definition 12.1.1 (Big-O).**  $f(n)$  is  $O(g(n))$  if  $f(n) \leq cg(n)$  for some fixed  $c$  independent of  $n$ .  
 $g(n)$  is an **(asymptotic) upper bound** for  $f(n)$ .

**Definition 12.1.2 (Little-o).**  $f(n)$  is  $o(g(n))$  if  $f(n) \leq \epsilon$  for all  $\epsilon > 0$  and large  $n$ .

**Remark.** We use small-o notation to say one function is asymptotically less than another.  
The difference between big-O and little-o is analogous to the difference between  $\leq$  and  $<$ .

Proof is not required for this course.

**Theorem 12.1.4.** A multi-tape TM  $M$  can decide  $A = \{a^k b^k \mid k \geq 0\}$  using  $O(n)$  steps.

**Proof.** We can copy  $a$ 's to the second tape.  
I'll omit this proof.

■

### 12.1.1 Model Dependence

Number of steps to decide  $A = \{a^k b^k \mid k \geq 0\}$  depends on the model.

- 1-tape TM :  $O(n \log n)$
- Multi-tape TM:  $O(n)$

**Computability theory:** model independence (Church-Turing Thesis).  
Therefore the choice of model does not matter. Mathematically nice.

**Complexity Theory:** model dependence.  
But dependence is low (polynomial) for reasonable deterministic models.  
We will focus on questions that do not depend on model choice.

**Note.** What does this "polynomial" mean?

We will continue using 1-tape TM.

## 12.2 TIME Complexity Class

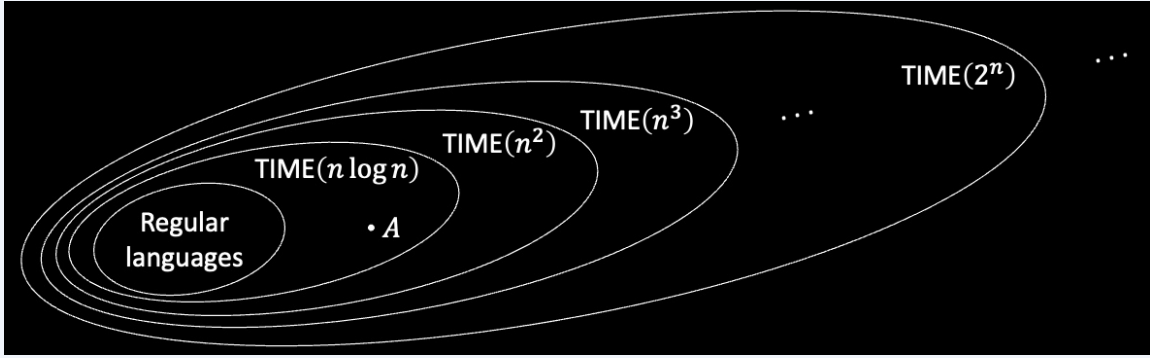
**Definition 12.2.1 (runs in time).** Let  $t : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ . Say TM  $M$  runs in time  $t(n)$  if  $M$  always halts within  $t(n)$  steps on all inputs of length  $n$ .

**Definition 12.2.2 ( $TIME(t(n))$ ).**  $TIME(t(n)) = \{B \mid \text{some deterministic 1-tape TM } M \text{ decides } B \text{ and } M \text{ runs in time } O(t(n))\}$   
This is a class of languages.

**Example.**  $A = \{a^k b^k \mid k \geq 0\} \in TIME(n \log n)$

**Remark.** All the regular languages only scan, so they are under  $TIME(n)$ .

Images of different class of languages regarding  $TIME$ :



**Note.** Is there gap between  $TIME(n \log n)$  and  $TIME(n)$ ?  
This will be answered later in **Time Hierarchy Theorem**.

**Problem 12.2.1.** Let  $B = \{ww^R \mid w \in \{a, b\}^*\}$ , what's the smallest function  $t$  that  $B \in TIME(t(n))$ ?

**Remark.**  $ww^R$  means the right part is the reverse of the left part.

Correct answer is  $O(n^2)$ .

## 12.3 Multi-tape vs 1-tape

**Theorem 12.3.1.** Let  $t(n) \geq n$ .

If a multi-tape TM decides  $B$  in time  $t(n)$ , then  $B \in TIME(t^2(n))$ .

**Proof.** Analysis conversion of multi-tape to 1-tape TMs.

To simulate 1-step of  $M$ 's computation,  $S$  uses  $O(t(n))$  steps. ( $S$  stores multiple tapes in 1-tape and it has to move back and forth).

So total simulation time is  $O(t(n) \times t(n)) = O(t^2(n))$  ■

**Definition 12.3.1 (polynomially related).** Two models of computation are polynomially related if each can simulate the other with a polynomial overhead:

So  $t(n)$  times  $\rightarrow t^k(n)$  time on the other model, for some  $k$ .

All reasonable deterministic models are polynomially related.

- 1-tape TMs
- multi-tape TMs

- multi-dimensional TMs
- random access machine (RAM)
- cellular automata

## 12.4 The Class P

**Definition 12.4.1 (Definition of P).** **P** is the class of languages that are decidable in polynomial time on a deterministic string-tape TM:

$$P = \bigcup_k TIME(n^k) = \text{Polynomial time decidable languages}$$

Why **P** is important:

- Invariant for all reasonable deterministic models.
- Corresponds roughly to realistically **solvable** problems. (For example, not safe for cryptography)

**Example.**  $PATH = \{ \langle G, s, t \rangle \mid G \text{ is a directed graph with a path from } s \text{ to } t \}$

**Theorem 12.4.1.**  $PATH \in P$

**Proof.**  $M$  making all the nodes until nothing new can be marked.  
Accept if  $t$  is marked, reject if not. ■

**Example.**  $HAMPATH = \{ \langle G, s, t \rangle \mid G \text{ is a directed graph with a path from } s \text{ to } t \text{ and the path goes through every node of } G \}$   
(This path is also called **Hamiltonian Path**).

**Problem 12.4.1.**  $HAMPATH \in P?$

**Remark.** This is a famous unsolved problem, equal to  $N = NP$

## 12.5 Other examples

**Theorem 12.5.1 (Theorem 7.16 in the book).** Every context-free language is a member of **P**.