UMB CS420

Nondeterministic TMs

Wednesday, April 3, 2024
Announcements

• HW 7 out
  • due Mon 4/8 12pm noon EST
Last Time: Turing Machines

- **Turing Machines** can **read and write** to arbitrary “tape” cells
  - Tape initially contains input string

- The tape is infinite
  - (to the right)

- On a transition, “head” can move left or right **1 step**

Call a language **Turing-recognizable** if some Turing machine recognizes it.
Turing Machine: High-Level Description

- $M_1$ accepts if input is in language $B = \{ w\#w \mid w \in \{0,1\}^* \}$

$M_1 = \text{“On input string } w:\text{ “}$

1. Zig-zag across the string, keeping track of corresponding positions on either side of the # symbol. Cross off symbols on one side and note the same symbols on the other side. Cross off symbols on both sides and note to keep track of which symbols correspond.

2. When all symbols cross off, check for any remaining symbols on either side. If any symbols remain, reject; otherwise, accept.

We will (mostly) define TMs using high-level descriptions, like this one (But it must always correspond to some formal low-level tuple description)

Analogy: High-level (e.g., Python) function definitions vs Low-level assembly language
A Turing machine is a 7-tuple, $(Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, q_{\text{accept}}, q_{\text{reject}})$, where $Q$, $\Sigma$, $\Gamma$ are all finite sets and

1. $Q$ is the set of states,
2. $\Sigma$ is the input alphabet not containing the blank symbol \(\square\),
3. $\Gamma$ is the tape alphabet, where $\square \in \Gamma$ and $\Sigma \subseteq \Gamma$,
4. $\delta : Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow Q \times \Gamma \times \{\text{L}, \text{R}\}$ is the transition function,
5. $q_0 \in Q$ is the start state,
6. $q_{\text{accept}} \in Q$ is the accept state, and
7. $q_{\text{reject}} \in Q$ is the reject state, where $q_{\text{reject}} \neq q_{\text{accept}}$. 

The symbols read, write, and move are used to describe the actions of the Turing machine.
Flashback: DFAs vs NFAs

A finite automaton is a 5-tuple \((Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)\), where

1. \(Q\) is a finite set called the **states**,
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**, and
5. \(F \subseteq Q\) is the **set of accept states**.

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. \(\delta: Q \times \Sigma_\varepsilon \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(Q)\) is the **transition function**,
4. \(q_0 \in Q\) is the **start state**, and
5. \(F \subseteq Q\) is the **set of accept states**.

Nondeterministic transition produces set of possible next states
Remember: Turing Machine Formal Definition

A Turing machine is a 7-tuple, $(Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, q_{\text{accept}}, q_{\text{reject}})$, where $Q$, $\Sigma$, $\Gamma$ are all finite sets and

1. $Q$ is the set of states,
2. $\Sigma$ is the input alphabet not containing the blank symbol $\sqcup$,
3. $\Gamma$ is the tape alphabet, where $\sqcup \in \Gamma$ and $\Sigma \subseteq \Gamma$,
4. $\delta : Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R\}$ is the transition function,
5. $q_0 \in Q$ is the start state,
6. $q_{\text{accept}} \in Q$ is the accept state, and
7. $q_{\text{reject}} \in Q$ is the reject state, where $q_{\text{reject}} \neq q_{\text{accept}}$. 
Nondeterministic Turing Machine Formal Definition

A nondeterministic Turing Machine is a 7-tuple, \((Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, q_{\text{accept}}, q_{\text{reject}})\), where \(Q\), \(\Sigma\), \(\Gamma\) are all finite sets and

1. \(Q\) is the set of states,
2. \(\Sigma\) is the input alphabet not containing the blank symbol \(\sqcup\),
3. \(\Gamma\) is the tape alphabet, where \(\sqcup \in \Gamma\) and \(\Sigma \subseteq \Gamma\),
4. \(\delta: Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R\}\) (for the new definition, \(\delta: Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R\})\))
5. \(q_0 \in Q\) is the start state,
6. \(q_{\text{accept}} \in Q\) is the accept state, and
7. \(q_{\text{reject}} \in Q\) is the reject state, where \(q_{\text{reject}} \neq q_{\text{accept}}\).
Thm: Deterministic TM $\iff$ Non-det. TM

$\Rightarrow$ If a deterministic TM recognizes a language, then a non-deterministic TM recognizes the language
   • Convert: Deterministic TM $\rightarrow$ Non-deterministic TM ...
   • ... change Deterministic TM $\delta$ fn output to a one-element set
     • $\delta_{ntm}(q, a) = \{\delta_{dtm}(q, a)\}$
     • (just like conversion of DFA to NFA --- HW 3, Problem 1)
   • DONE!

$\Leftarrow$ If a non-deterministic TM recognizes a language, then a deterministic TM recognizes the language
   • Convert: Non-deterministic TM $\rightarrow$ Deterministic TM ...
   • ... ???
Review: Nondeterminism

Deterministic computation

- start
- ...
- accept or reject

Nondeterministic computation

In nondeterministic computation, every step can branch into a set of “states”

What is a “state” for a TM?

\[ \delta: Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R\}) \]
Flashback: PDA Configurations (IDs)

- A configuration (or ID) is a “snapshot” of a PDA’s computation.

- 3 components \((q, w, \gamma)\):
  - \(q\) = the current state
  - \(w\) = the remaining input string
  - \(\gamma\) = the stack contents

A sequence of configurations represents a PDA computation.
A Turing machine is a 7-tuple, \((Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, q_{\text{accept}}, q_{\text{reject}})\), where 
1. \(Q\) is the set of states, 
2. \(\Sigma\) is the input alphabet not containing the blank symbol \(\sqcup\), 
3. \(\Gamma\) is the tape alphabet, where \(\sqcup \in \Gamma\) and \(\Sigma \subseteq \Gamma\), 
4. \(\delta: Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R\}\) is the transition function, 
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TM Configuration = State + Head + Tape

States

Starting configuration

Config after 1 step

Config after 2 steps

accept
TM Configuration = State + Head + Tape

Textual representation of “configuration” (use this in HW)

1st char after state is current head position
TM Computation, Formally

Single-step

(Right) \[ \alpha q_1a\beta \vdash \alpha xq_2\beta \]

if \( q_1, q_2 \in Q \)
\[ \delta(q_1, a) = (q_2, x, R) \]
\( a, x \in \Gamma \), \( \alpha, \beta \in \Gamma^* \)

(Left) \[ \alpha bq_1a\beta \vdash \alpha q_2bx\beta \]

if \( \delta(q_1, a) = (q_2, x, L) \)

write

Multi-step

• Base Case

\[ I \vdash^* I \text{ for any ID } I \]

• Recursive Case

\[ I \vdash^* J \] if there exists some ID \( K \) such that \( I \vdash K \) and \( K \vdash^* J \)

Edge cases:

Head stays at leftmost cell

Add blank symbol to config

(L move, when already at leftmost cell)

(R move, when at rightmost filled cell)
Nondeterminism in TMs

Deterministic computation

Nondeterministic computation

For TMs, each node is a configuration

start

accept or reject

reject

accept
Nondeterministic TM $\rightarrow$ Deterministic

1st way

- Simulate NTM with Det. TM:
  - Det. TM keeps multiple configs on single tape
    - Like how single-tape TM simulates multi-tape
  - Then run all computations, **concurrently**
    - i.e., 1 step on one config, 1 step on the next, ...
  - Accept if any accepting config is found

- **Important:**
  - Why must we step configs **concurrently**?
    Because any one path can go on forever!
Interlude: Running TMs inside other TMs

Remember analogy: TMs are like function definitions, they can be “called” like functions ...

Exercise:
• Given: TMs $M_1$ and $M_2$
• Create: TM $M$ that accepts if either $M_1$ or $M_2$ accept

Possible solution #1:
$M = \text{ on input } x,$
1. Call $M_1$ with arg $x$; accept $x$ if $M_1$ accepts
2. Call $M_2$ with arg $x$; accept $x$ if $M_2$ accepts

Possible Results for $M$

Note: This solution would be ok if we knew $M_1$ and $M_2$ were deciders (which halt on all inputs)

“loop” means input string not accepted (but it should be)
Interlude: Running TMs inside other TMs

Just an analogy: “calling” TMs actually means “computing” its computation ...

... with concurrency!

Exercise:
- Given: TMs $M_1$ and $M_2$
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Possible solution #1:
$M = \text{on input } x$,
1. Call $M_1$ with arg $x$; accept $x$ if $M_1$ accepts
2. Call $M_2$ with arg $x$; accept $x$ if $M_2$ accepts

Possible solution #2:
$M = \text{on input } x$,
1. Call $M_1$ and $M_2$, each with $x$, concurrently, i.e.,
   a) Run $M_1$ with $x$ for 1 step; accept $x$ if $M_1$ accepts
   b) Run $M_2$ with $x$ for 1 step; accept $x$ if $M_2$ accepts
   c) Repeat

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
M_1 & M_2 & M \\
\hline
\text{reject} & \text{accept} & \text{accept} \\
\text{accept} & \text{reject} & \text{accept} \\
\text{accept} & \text{loops} & \text{accept} \\
\text{loops} & \text{accept} & \text{loops} \\
\hline
\end{array}
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\hline
\end{array}
\]
Nondeterministic TM $\Rightarrow$ Deterministic

- Simulate NTM with Det. TM:
  - Number the nodes at each step
  - Check all tree paths (in breadth-first order)
    - 1
    - 1-1

2nd way (Sipser)
Nondeterministic TM $\rightarrow$ Deterministic

- Simulate NTM with Det. TM:
  - Number the nodes at each step
  - Check all tree paths (in breadth-first order)
    - 1
    - 1-1
    - 1-2
Nondeterministic TM $\rightarrow$ Deterministic

- Simulate NTM with Det. TM:
  - Number the nodes at each step
  - Check all tree paths (in breadth-first order)
    - 1
    - 1-1
    - 1-2
    - 1-1-1
Nondeterministic TM $\rightarrow$ Deterministic

2nd way (Sipser)

Use 3 tapes

Always has input, never changes

“Work tape” when checking each path (re-copy input here each time)

Tracks which node we are on, e.g., 1-1-2, etc.

$D$

input tape

simulation tape

address tape
Nondeterministic TM $\iff$ Deterministic TM

$\Rightarrow$ If a deterministic TM recognizes a language, then a nondeterministic TM recognizes the language
  • Convert Deterministic TM $\rightarrow$ Non-deterministic TM

$\Leftarrow$ If a nondeterministic TM recognizes a language, then a deterministic TM recognizes the language
  • Convert Nondeterministic TM $\rightarrow$ Deterministic TM
Conclusion: These are All Equivalent TMs!

- Single-tape Turing Machine
- Multi-tape Turing Machine
- Non-deterministic Turing Machine
Interlude: Running TMs inside other TMs

Just an analogy: “calling” TMs actually means “computing” its computation ...

Exercise:
- Given: TMs $M_1$ and $M_2$
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1. Call $M_1$ with arg $x$; accept $x$ if $M_1$ accepts
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Possible solution #2:
$M = \text{on input } x,$
1. Call $M_1$ and $M_2$, each with $x$, concurrently, i.e.,
   a) Run $M_1$ with $x$ for 1 step; accept $x$ if $M_1$ accepts
   b) Run $M_2$ with $x$ for 1 step; accept $x$ if $M_2$ accepts
   c) Repeat

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Flashback: HW 1, Problem 1

Figuring out this HW problem about a DFA’s computation ... is itself (meta) computation!

What kind of computation is it?

Could you write a program (function) to do it?

A function: DFAaccepts(B, w) returns TRUE if DFA B accepts string w

1) Define “current” state \(q_{\text{current}} = \text{start state } q_0\)
2) For each input char \(a_i \ldots \text{ in } w\)
   a) Define \(q_{\text{next}} = \delta(q_{\text{current}}, a_i)\)
   b) Set \(q_{\text{current}} = q_{\text{next}}\)
3) Return TRUE if \(q_{\text{current}}\) is an accept state (of B)

Remember: TMs = program (functions)

You had to “compute” how a DFA computes

This is “computing” the accepting computation \(\hat{\delta}(q_0, w) \in F!!\)
The language of \textbf{DFAaccepts}

\[ A_{\text{DFA}} = \{ \langle B, w \rangle \mid B \text{ is a DFA that accepts input string } w \} \]

\textbf{The set of strings that a Turing Machine accepts is a language ...}

\textbf{Is this language a set of strings???}

\textbf{A function: DFAaccepts(B, w) returns \texttt{TRUE} if DFA B accepts string w}
Interlude: Encoding Things into Strings

Definition: A Turing machine’s input is always a string

Problem: We sometimes want TM’s (program’s) input to be “something else” ...
  • set, graph, DFA, ...?

Solution: allow encoding other kinds of TM input as a string

Notation: <SOMETHING> = string encoding for SOMETHING
  • A tuple combines multiple encodings, e.g., <B, w> (from prev slide)

Example: Possible string encoding for a DFA?

Or:

\((Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F)\)

(written as string)
Interlude: High-Level TMs and Encodings

A high-level TM description:
1. Needs to say the **type** of its input
   - E.g., graph, DFA, etc.
2. Doesn’t need to say **how** input string is encoded
3. Assumes TM **knows** how to parse and extract parts of input
4. Assumes input is a **valid** encoding
   - Invalid encodings implicitly rejected

\[ M = \text{“On input } (B, w), \text{ where } B \text{ is a DFA and } w \text{ is a string:} \]

Description of \( M \) can refer to \( B \)'s \( (Q, \Sigma, \delta, q_0, F) \)
A function: $\text{DFAaccepts}(B, w)$ returns $\text{TRUE}$ if DFA $B$ accepts string $w$

1) Define “current” state $q_{\text{current}} = \text{start state } q_0$
2) For each input char $a_i$ ... in $w$
   a) Define $q_{\text{next}} = \delta(q_{\text{current}}, a_i)$
   b) Set $q_{\text{current}} = q_{\text{next}}$
3) Return $\text{TRUE}$ if $q_{\text{current}}$ is an accept state

$A_{\text{DFA}} = \{ <B, w> | B \text{ is a DFA that accepts input string } w \}$
The language of **DFAaccepts**

\[ A_{DFA} = \{ \langle B, w \rangle \mid B \text{ is a DFA that accepts input string } w \} \]

- \( A_{DFA} \) has a Turing machine
- But is that TM a **decider** or **recognizer**?
  - I.e., is it an **algorithm**?
- To show it’s an algo, need to prove: \( A_{DFA} \) is a decidable language
How to prove that a language is decidable?
How to prove that a language is decidable?

**Statements**

1. If a **decider** decides a lang $L$, then $L$ is a **decidable** lang

2. Define **decider** $M = \text{On input } w \ldots$, $M$ decides $L$

3. $L$ is a **decidable** language

**Justifications**

1. Definition of **decidable** langs

2. See $M$ def, and Examples Table

3. By statements #1 and #2
How to Design Deciders

• A Decider is a TM ...
  • See previous slides on how to:
    • write a high-level TM description
    • Express encoded input strings
  • E.g., \( M = \) On input \(<B, w>\), where \( B \) is a DFA and \( w \) is a string: ...

• A Decider is a TM ... that must always halt
  • Can only accept or reject
  • Cannot go into an infinite loop

• So a Decider definition must include an extra termination argument:
  • Explains how every step in the TM halts
  • (Pay special attention to loops)

• Remember our analogy: TMs ~ Programs ... so Creating a TM ~ Programming
  • To design a TM, think of how to write a program (function) that does what you want
Next Time: $A_{DFA}$ is a decidable language

$$A_{DFA} = \{ \langle B, w \rangle | \text{B is a DFA that accepts input string } w \}$$

Decider for $A_{DFA}$: