

Complexity Theory

Exercise 2: Undecidability and Rice's Theorem

27 October 2021

Exercise 2.1. Using an oracle that decides the halting problem, construct a decider for the language $\{ \langle \mathcal{M}, w \rangle \mid \mathcal{M} \text{ is a TM that accepts } w \}$.

Exercise 2.2. A *useless state* in a Turing machine is one that is never entered on any input string. Consider the problem of determining whether a Turing machine has any useless states. Show that this language is undecidable.

Exercise 2.3. Show the following: “If a language \mathbf{L} is Turing-recognisable and $\bar{\mathbf{L}}$ is many-one reducible to \mathbf{L} , then \mathbf{L} is decidable.”

Exercise 2.4. Let

$$\mathbf{L} = \{ \langle \mathcal{M} \rangle \mid \mathcal{M} \text{ a TM that accepts } w^r \text{ whenever it accepts } w \},$$

where w^r is the word w reversed. Show that \mathbf{L} is undecidable.

Exercise 2.5. Consider the following languages \mathbf{L} and \mathbf{L}' :

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{L} &= \{ \langle \mathcal{M}, w \rangle \mid \mathcal{M} \text{ is a TM that accepts } w \} \\ \mathbf{L}' &= \{ \langle \mathcal{M} \rangle \mid \mathcal{M} \text{ is a TM that does not accept any word} \} \end{aligned}$$

Show that there cannot exist a many-one reduction from \mathbf{L} to \mathbf{L}' .

Exercise 2.6. Show that every Turing-recognisable language can be mapping-reduced to the following language.

$$\{ \langle \mathcal{M}, w \rangle \mid \mathcal{M} \text{ is a TM that accepts the word } w \}$$