Recall that a language $L$ is **recognizable** if there is a TM $M$ for which $L(M) = L$. $L$ is instead **co-recognizable** if $L(M) = \overline{L}$. If $L$ is both in $\text{RE}$ (the recognizable languages) and in $\text{co-RE}$ (the co-recognizable languages), then $L \in \text{DEC}$ (the decidable languages). If $L \notin \text{DEC}$, then at least one of $L \notin \text{RE}$ and $L \notin \text{co-RE}$ must be true.

We have seen that $A_{TM} \in \text{RE}$, $A_{TM} \notin \text{DEC}$ and $E_{TM} \in \text{co-RE}$ and $E_{TM} \notin \text{DEC}$. There are two more useful undecidable languages to look at before moving on to Rice’s Theorem, a general statement about decidability.

$$\text{HALT}_{TM} = \{ \langle M, w \rangle \mid M \text{ halts on } w \}$$

This is the halting problem. Like $A_{TM}$, it is recognizable. This is easy to show:

$$H = \text{"on input } \langle M, w \rangle, \text{ reject if improperly formatted}$$

1) Run $M(w)$
2) Accept

Clearly, $L(H) = \text{HALT}_{TM}$.

To see that $\text{HALT}_{TM}$ is not decidable, assume it is. Then there is a decider $D$ for $\text{HALT}_{TM}$, that is $L(D) = \text{HALT}_{TM}$ and $D$ halts on every input.

Using $D$, we can construct a decider $A$ for $A_{TM}$. This is, of course nonsense, so no such $D$ can exist.

Now let’s write down $A$. 


A = "On input \( \langle M, w \rangle \),
1) Run \( D(M, w) \)
2) IF \( D(M, w) \) rejects, reject
3) Run \( M(w) \)
4) IF \( M(w) \) accepts, accept
5) Reject"

Notice that \( A \) is guaranteed to halt, since if \( M(w) \) doesn't halt, we skip steps 3-5. Then we have \( L(A) = A_{TM} \), so \( A \) is a decider for \( A_{TM} \).

The other language of interest to look at is

\[ E_{TM} = \{ \langle M \rangle \mid L(M) = \emptyset \} \]

\( E_{TM} \) \( \notin \text{co-RE} \) is easy to show, just like \( \overline{EQ_{TM}} \notin \text{co-RE} \).

We give a \( TM \) \( N \) for which \( L(M) = E_{TM} \) below.

\( N = " \text{On input } \langle M \rangle, 
1) For \ i = 1 \ to \ \infty 
   a) For \ j = 1 \ to \ i 
       i) Run \ M(w_j) \ for \ i \ steps 
       ii) IF \ M(w_j) \ accepted, accept"

Eventually, if \( M \) accepts a string, \( N \) will find it and accept, i.e. \( L(M) \neq \emptyset \).

We now show that \( E_{TM} \) is not decidable by reducing an undecidable language to it, as usual. Let \( D \) be a decider such that \( L(D) = E_{TM} \).
Define the utility $T_M$ $R_{M,v}$ to be

$$R_{M,v} = "\text{On input } w,\"$$

1) If $w \neq v$, reject
2) Run $M(v)$ and accept if $M$ does "

Notice that $L(R_{M,v}) = \{v\}$ if $M(v)$ accepts.

We can now give a decider $D'$ for $A_{TM}$.

$$D' = "\text{On input } \langle M, v \rangle,\"$$

1) Run $D(R_{M,v})$
2) If $D(R_{M,v})$ accepts, reject
3) Accept "

$D(R_{M,v})$ accepts iff $M(v)$ does not accept. As such,

$$L(D) = \{ \langle M, v \rangle \mid M(v) \text{ accepts} \} = A_{TM}.$$

Moreover, every step of $D'$ is guaranteed to complete, so $D'$ decides $A_{TM}$

No such $D$ exists, hence $E_{TM} \notin \text{DEC}$.

Notice that this proof reduces $A_{TM}$ not to $E_{TM}$ but rather

$E_{\overline{TM}}$ (we query whether or not $R_{M,v}$ is not empty). In fact, there is no "proper" reduction from $A_{TM}$ to $E_{TM}$ since $A_{TM} \in \text{RE}$ and $E_{TM} \notin \text{RE}$. What we mean by "proper" will come later, but keep this in mind. We reduce problems in RE to problems in RE ($E_{\overline{TM}} \in \text{RE}$ by $E_{TM} \in \text{co-RE}$). Similarly, we reduce problems in co-RE to problems in co-RE.

Now you may have noticed that $A_{TM}$, $E_{TM}$, $E_{TM}$, and $HALT_{TM}$ are all questions about languages. This is no coincidence! Let's turn to Rice's Theorem.