# Contents

# Chapter 12

# Infinitary rewriting

In this chapter we will give the basic definitions and properties of infinite terms and infinite reduction sequences, for both term rewriting systems and the $\lambda$-calculus. We will then study confluence properties in orthogonal systems, which turns out to be significantly more complicated than in the finitary case. In general, these systems are only confluent up to an identification of a certain class of terms. The breakdown of confluence leads us to consider the concept of a meaningless term, which further suggests a link with the $\lambda$-calculus concept of Böhm reduction (Barendregt [1984]), and to denotational semantics for TRSs.

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## 12.1. Introduction

In the previous chapters terms were finite and the focus was on finite computations. Computations are supposed to produce an outcome in a finite amount of time. However, we can imagine infinite computations: think of a computation calculating the decimal expansion of $\sqrt{2}$. Infinite terms also make an intuitive sense in lazy functional programming. Lazy evaluation allows functional programmers to write down expressions which denote infinite data structures, such as a list of all primes. Although only a finite number will ever be evaluated, one can consider an infinite computation as tending to a limit in which the entire infinite list has been built. The following rewrite rules illustrate this.

$$
\begin{array}{rcl}
\mathit{filter}(x : y, 0, m) & \to & 0 : \mathit{filter}(y, m, m) \\
\mathit{filter}(x : y, s(n), m) & \to & x : \mathit{filter}(y, n, m) \\
\mathit{sieve}(0 : y) & \to & \mathit{sieve}(y) \\
\mathit{sieve}(s(n) : y) & \to & s(n) : \mathit{sieve}(\mathit{filter}(y, n, n)) \\
\mathit{nats}(n) & \to & n : \mathit{nats}(s(n)) \\
\mathit{primes} & \to & \mathit{sieve}(\mathit{nats}(s(s(0))))
\end{array}
$$

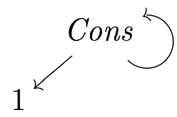


Figure 12.1: A cyclic graph

This is a version of the sieve of Eratosthenes in which the filter function replaces struck-out members of the list by zeros, which are subsequently deleted by the sieve function. (It is a natural implementation of the hand-calculation one would perform on a blackboard, avoids the necessity of doing any arithmetic other than counting, and is as efficient as the usual method of performing division tests. Despite its simplicity it appears to be novel.)

Although the lazy order of evaluation will produce each prime after computing only a finite part of the list of all natural numbers, the expression $nats(s(s(0)))$ can be thought of as denoting the infinite list of all natural numbers. Longer and longer evaluations of the term approximate closer and closer to that value.

Another situation in which infinite terms may arise is in graph rewriting. Representing terms by directed acyclic graphs allows repeated subterms to be represented by pointers to the same subgraph, with a saving of both space and time, since reductions performed within that subgraph are equivalent to two or more reductions of the corresponding term. However, once one begins to use graphs to represent terms, the possibility arises of using cyclic graphs to represent infinite terms. The infinite list $Cons(1, Cons(1, Cons(1, \ldots)))$ can be more compactly represented by the cyclic graph in Figure 12.1, which we can write with the notation $x : Cons(1, x)$. The relation between cyclic graphs and the rewriting of infinite terms is explored in Kennaway et al. [1994].

It is therefore natural to inquire whether one can extend the theory of rewriting to allow infinite terms and infinite reduction sequences which converge to limits.

As an example of the kind of infinite reductions we have in mind, consider the rule

$$C \to B(C, C)$$

Parallel–outermost reduction of the term $C$ gives an infinite reduction to a binary tree, as shown in Figure 12.2. This limit is reached in infinitely many reduction steps and is clearly a normal form. However, leftmost–innermost reduction leads in infinitely many steps to the term on the right in Figure 12.3. This limit is not a normal form and can be reduced further, which gives a reduction sequence of length greater than $\omega$.

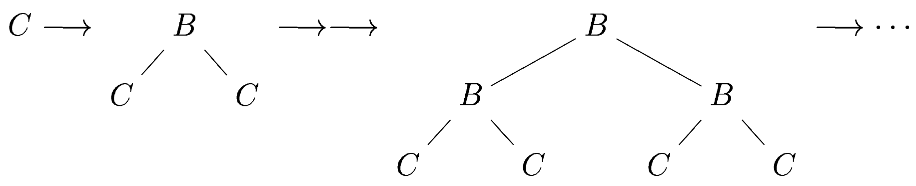


Figure 12.2: An infinite reduction

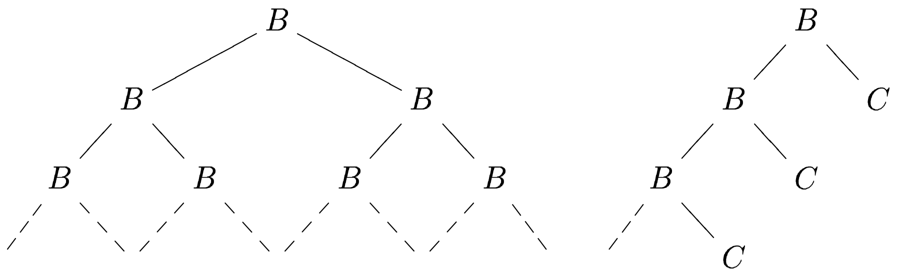


Figure 12.3: Two infinite terms

## 12.2. Infinitary term rewriting systems

As in the finitary setting, an infinitary term rewriting system will be given by a signature and a set of rewrite rules, but the signature is now understood to generate a class of finite and infinite terms. The signature may also contain infinitely many symbols.

In this setting it may seem natural to consider rewrite rules which are pairs of possibly infinite terms. However, based on the computational intuition that performing a reduction should require only a finite amount of work, we will consider rewrite rules with finite left- and right-hand sides only. We also restrict attention to left-linear systems, since the test for syntactic equality required by a non-left-linear rule cannot always be done in finite time when terms are infinite.

But first, we must define infinite terms. A finite term can be described as the set of its positions, together with a function from that set to the function symbol at each position. The set of positions must be finite and prefix-closed, and if position $u$ maps to symbol $F$, then $u \cdot i$ must be in the set of positions if and only if $i$ is between 1 and the arity of $F$. The class of finite and infinite terms can be obtained simply by dropping the requirement that there be only finitely many positions. Each position is still finite, but the set of positions can be unbounded in length. This yields infinite terms such as those illustrated in Figure 12.3. We allow the signature to be an infinite set, but still require that the arity of each symbol be finite, although the set of arities is allowed to be unbounded. The set of such terms over a signature $\Sigma$ is denoted $Ter^{\infty}(\Sigma)$.

A more formal mathematical construction of the set of finite and infinite terms can be given by defining a metric on finite terms and taking the metric completion. The set $Ter(\Sigma)$ of finite terms over $\Sigma$ can be provided with a metric $d : Ter(\Sigma) \times Ter(\Sigma) \to [0,1]$. Define $d(t,t') = 0$ if the terms are identical, otherwise $d(t,t') = 2^{-k}$, where $k$ is the length of the shortest position at which the two terms differ.

12.2.1. THEOREM. *The metric completion of* $Ter(\Sigma)$ *is isomorphic to* $Ter^{\infty}(\Sigma)$.

PROOF. The definition of the metric can be applied verbatim to $Ter^{\infty}(\Sigma)$ and yields a metric on that set. Since the metric completion is unique up to isomorphism, we need only show that $Ter^{\infty}(\Sigma)$ with this metric is complete.

Suppose we have a Cauchy sequence of finite or infinite terms $\{ t_i \mid i \in \mathcal{N} \}$. Let $p_i$ be the set of positions of $t_i$, and $f_i$ map $p_i$ to the function symbols of $t_i$. If $d(t_i, t_j) < 2^{-k}$, then $p_i$ and $p_j$ must have the same members of lengths up to $k$, and $f_i$ and $f_j$ must agree on those members. Define $p = \bigcup_i \bigcap_{j \geq i} p_j$, which by the above must be the same as $\bigcap_i \bigcup_{j \geq i} p_j$. For each $u \in p$, there must be an $i$ such that for $j \geq i$, $u \in p_j$ and $f_j(u) = f_i(u)$. Define $f(u) = f_i(u)$. The conditions for $p$ and $f$ to define a (possibly infinite) term $t$ are easily verified, as is the property that if $d(t_i, t_j) < 2^{-k}$, then $d(t_i, t) < 2^{-k}$. Therefore $t$ is the limit of the sequence. []

$Ter^{\infty}(\Sigma)$ includes the finite terms, and infinite terms like those of Figures 12.2 and 12.3. Note that there are no nodes at the end of an infinite path in a term. The position of each node in a term is a finite string, and we do not need to consider infinite positions. There is in this framework no such term as $A(A(A(\ldots \text{infinitely many } A\text{s} \ldots (B) \ldots)))$; such terms have no obvious computational meaning and do not appear in the metric completion of $Ter(\Sigma)$.

12.2.2. DEFINITION. An *infinitary reduction rule* (or rewrite rule) is a pair $(t, s)$ where $t \in Ter(\Sigma)$ and $s \in Ter^{\infty}(\Sigma)$, such that $t$ is not a variable, and every variable in $s$ occurs in $t$.

An *infinitary term rewriting system*, or *iTRS*, is a pair $\mathcal{R} = (\Sigma, R)$ of a signature $\Sigma$ and a set of infinitary reduction rules $R$.

Many concepts generalize immediately to the infinitary setting: context, position, redex, reduction step, normal form left-linear rule, non-duplicating rule, and (non-)overlapping rules, orthogonality. Many results also carry over.

Proofs must sometimes be changed, since structural induction over terms is not well-founded for infinite terms. In many cases, such inductions can be replaced by inductions over positions of a term, since positions are always finite. For example, to prove that two terms are equal, in the finitary case one can prove that they have the same symbol and same arity at the root, and assume by induction that their corresponding subterms are equal. In the infinitary case, one could instead prove that for every position common to both terms, the terms have the same symbol and same arity at that position. Induction over the length of positions, with the base case being the root position, establishes that all corresponding finite prefixes of the terms are identical, hence the terms themselves are identical. Similarly, if a proof requires the construction of some term, in the finitary case it can be constructed from the leaves upwards or from the root downwards. In the infinitary case, only the latter construction is valid.

We shall henceforth drop the word 'infinitary'; all TRSs we consider in this chapter will be infinitary. The TRSs of previous chapters will be referred to as finitary TRSs.

12.2.3. EXERCISE. Recall that finitary orthogonal TRSs are finitely confluent, that is, $\twoheadrightarrow \cdot \twoheadleftarrow \;\subseteq\; \twoheadleftarrow \cdot \twoheadrightarrow$. Give an example of an orthogonal iTRS which is not finitely confluent. Show that if all its reduction rules are finitary, then an orthogonal iTRS is finitely confluent.

## 12.3. Strongly converging reductions

As well as infinite terms, we wish to consider infinitely long reduction sequences which may converge to limits.

In our construction of infinite terms, we required each occurrence of a function symbol to be at finite depth, i.e. distance from the root, considering terms containing positions of length $\omega$ or greater to be without computational meaning. A similar criticism might be raised against reduction sequences longer than $\omega$. However, the infinite terms as we have defined them do not require us to consider any larger set, since the limit of any sequence of terms in $Ter^{\infty}(\Sigma)$ is another term in $Ter^{\infty}(\Sigma)$. Terms with function symbols at infinite depth do not arise. In contrast, there is no reason to expect the limit of an infinite reduction sequence to be in normal form. Reducing a redex in the limit term at once gives a sequence of length $\omega + 1$. Thus reductions of length greater than $\omega$ cannot be ruled out of consideration. In general, a reduction sequence might be of any ordinal length (although we will later prove that according to the definition we are about to give, they will never be of uncountable length). As for their computational meaning, for orthogonal systems the Compression Lemma (Theorem 12.7.1) shows that they are equivalent to sequences of length no longer than $\omega$.

12.3.1. DEFINITION. A *transfinite reduction sequence* of length $\alpha$, where $\alpha$ is any ordinal number, is a sequence of reduction steps $(t_\beta \to t_{\beta+1})_{\beta<\alpha}$. In the step $t_\beta \to t_{\beta+1}$, let the redex be reduced at position $u_\beta$ of $t_\beta$. Let $d_\beta$ be the length of $u_\beta$ (called the *depth* of the redex).

The sequence is *weakly continuous* if, for every limit ordinal $\lambda < \alpha$, the distance $d(t_\beta, t_\lambda)$ tends to 0 as $\beta$ approaches $\lambda$ from below.

It is *strongly continuous* if in addition, $d_\beta$ tends to infinity as $\beta$ approaches $\lambda$ from below.

It is *weakly convergent* or *strongly convergent* if the corresponding continuity condition holds for every limit ordinal $\lambda \leq \alpha$. (Thus convergence is only distinct from continuity when $\alpha$ is itself a limit ordinal.)

We write $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow t'$ for a strongly convergent reduction of any finite or infinite length, and $t \rightarrow^{\alpha} t'$ for a strongly convergent reduction of ordinal length $\alpha$; $t \rightarrow^{\leq\alpha} t'$ and $t \rightarrow^{<\alpha} t'$ denote strongly convergent reductions whose lengths satisfy the indicated condition. As in previous chapters, the notation $t \twoheadrightarrow t'$ still refers to reduction sequences that are at most finitely long (of possibly infinite terms).

12.3.2. REMARK. Readers familiar with ordinal topology will recognize that a weakly continuous or convergent sequence is one which is continuous or convergent with respect to the usual topology on ordinals and the metric on terms.

This concise definition may become clearer in the light of some examples. Firstly, all finitely long reductions are (trivially) strongly convergent. Now consider a reduction $t_0 \rightarrow t_1 \rightarrow \cdots$ of length $\omega$. For this to be weakly convergent to a limit $t_\omega$ requires that for every depth $d$, there is some $n$ such that all the terms of the sequence after $t_n$ are identical down to depth $d$. For it to be strongly convergent requires, in addition, not only that those terms are identical down to depth $d$, but that the position of each reduction from that point onwards has depth greater than $d$.

Figures 12.4 and 12.5 give an example of the distinction between weak and strong convergence. Both of these sequences are weakly convergent, since larger and larger prefixes of the terms are identical as one proceeds along the sequences. The first is not strongly convergent, since every reduction step takes place at depth 0. The second is strongly convergent, since the depths of the reduction steps tend to infinity.

Now consider a reduction $t \rightarrow^{\omega} t' \rightarrow^{\omega} t''$, of length $\omega + \omega$. This is weakly or strongly convergent if and only if both of its $\omega$-long halves have that property. In general any concatenation of finitely many weakly or strongly convergent sequences will be weakly or strongly convergent respectively.

For a reduction $t_0 \rightarrow^{\omega} t_1 \rightarrow^{\omega} \cdots$ of length $\omega^2$ to be weakly or strongly convergent, it is necessary for each of the $\omega$-long segments to be so. This is not sufficient: we also require that the continuity condition hold at $\omega^2$, and for strong convergence, the depth condition also. This amounts to the condition that for every depth $d$, there is an $\alpha < \omega^2$ such that all terms in the sequence $t_\alpha \rightarrow^{\omega^2} t_{\omega^2}$ must be identical down to depth $d$, and all reduction steps in that sequence must be at depths greater than $d$.

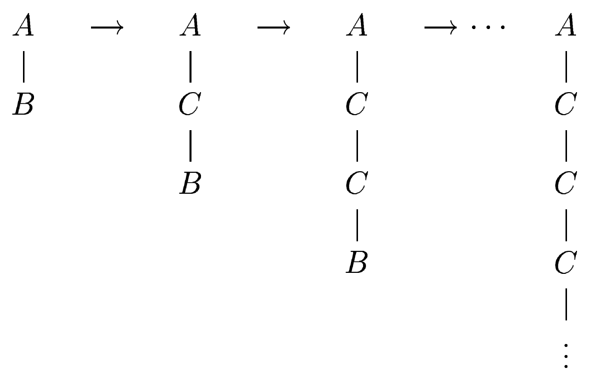


Figure 12.4: Weakly but not strongly convergent reduction with the rule $A(x) \to A(C(x))$

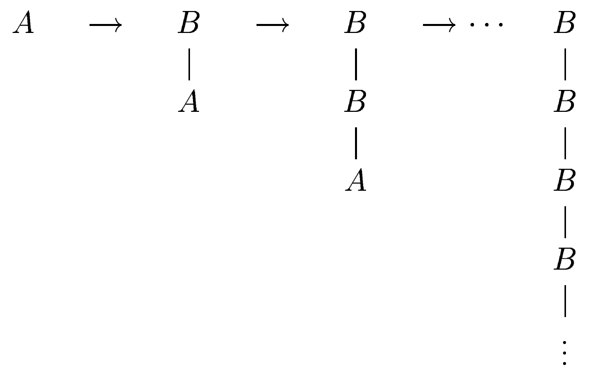


Figure 12.5: Strongly convergent reduction with the rule $A \to B(A)$

Weak convergence (also called *Cauchy convergence*) is studied by Dershowitz et al. [1991]. However, without imposing further restrictions it does not have good properties. From a computational point of view it is intuitively lacking, since a reduction sequence may weakly converge to a limit even although every step in the sequence is performed at the root, and the term can be thought of as still changing, even although in the limit it is being reduced to itself. More precisely, weakly convergent reduction in orthogonal systems does not satisfy the Compression Lemma (Theorem 12.7.1). The construction of tiling diagrams and projection (Definition 12.6.1) also cannot be performed, because when one passes to a weakly convergent limit, information about the subterm structure is lost. This is illustrated by the following two examples.

12.3.3. Example. Consider the rules $A(x, y) \to A(y, x)$ and $C \to D$. The term $A(C, C)$ reduces to itself in one step, and therefore also by a weakly convergent reduction of length $\omega$. However, it is impossible to say which of the two occurrences of $C$ in the limit term descends from which of the two occurrences in the initial term. This can be seen by reducing the left-hand occurrence to $D$ in the initial term, and performing the same sequence of reductions. This gives a divergent sequence $A(D,C) \to A(C,D) \to A(D,C) \to A(C,D) \to \cdots$.

12.3.4. EXAMPLE. Consider the rule $I(x) \to x$ and the term $I(I(I(\ldots)))$, which we will abbreviate to $I^\omega$. Suppose we try to perform a complete development of each of the infinitely many redexes in this term, outermost first. We obtain the sequence $I^1(I^2(I^3(\ldots))) \to I^2(I^3(I^4(\ldots))) \to I^3(I^4(I^5(\ldots))) \to \cdots$, where we have attached labels to show how each subterm is derived from the subterms of the previous term. The sequence weakly converges to $I(I(I(\ldots)))$. In the process, every redex of the initial term gets reduced, yet in the limit, we appear to still have all of them left. Where did they come from?

For this reason we do not further consider weak continuity or convergence. When we talk of reduction sequences, they will be assumed to be strongly continuous, and if they have limits, they will be assumed to strongly converge to them. The condition on depths of reduction which strong convergence adds was first stated (for sequences of length up to $\omega^2$) by Farmer and Watro [1990].

12.3.5. EXERCISE. (i) Show that all finite reductions are strongly converging.

(ii) Give an example of a non-converging reduction.

(iii) Show that all reductions in the binary tree iTRS given by the rule $C \to B(C,C)$ are strongly convergent and that they can be of any countable length.

(iv) Show that all reductions in the iTRS with the single rule $A \to A$ are weakly convergent and that for each ordinal there is a weakly converging reduction of that length. Prove that no infinite reductions are strongly convergent.

(v) Describe the normal form by strongly convergent transfinite reduction of $F(A,B)$, given the rule $F(x,y) \to G(x, F(y, H(x,y)))$.

(vi) Consider the iTRS $J(x) \to J(x)$. Let $J^\omega \to^\omega_{SC} J^\omega$ abbreviate the strongly convergent reduction $J^\omega \to J^\omega \to \cdots$ in which the redex contracted at the $n$th step is at depth $n$. Why is the long sequence $J^\omega \to^\omega_{SC} J^\omega \to^\omega_{SC} J^\omega \to^\omega_{SC} J^\omega \to^\omega_{SC} \cdots$ of length $\omega^2$ not strongly converging?

12.3.6. EXERCISE. Sh ow that in any iTRS, a reduction sequence is strongly convergent if and only if for every natural number $n$, the number of steps of the sequence which reduce a redex at depth less than $n$ is finite.

Use the preceding exercise to prove

12.3.7. PROPOSITION. *Every strongly converging reduction has countable length.*

The major difference between finitary and transfinite reduction is that for orthogonal systems, the transfinite Church–Rosser property fails. That is, $s \twoheadleftarrow\!\!\!\twoheadleftarrow \cdot \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t$ does not imply $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow \cdot \twoheadleftarrow\!\!\!\twoheadleftarrow t$. As this fact has inspired many of our results about transfinite rewriting, we exhibit here the canonical counterexample.

Take the rules $A(x) \to x$ and $B(x) \to x$, and the term $A(B(A(B(\ldots))))$. This can be transfinitely reduced to both $A(A(A(\ldots)))$ and $B(B(B(\ldots)))$, each of which reduces only to itself.

The failure of the Church–Rosser property is not confined to specially constructed pathological cases, but occurs also for such standard systems as combinatory logic, or the rules for describing lists with head and tail operators.

12.3.8. EXERCISE. (i) Find a counterexample to the Church–Rosser property for the rules $\mathit{Head}(\mathit{Cons}(x,y)) \to x$ and $\mathit{Tail}(\mathit{Cons}(x,y)) \to y$.

(ii) Combinatory logic has the rules $Sxyz \to xz(yz)$ and $Kxy \to x$. Find a finite closed term $t$ and two infinite reductions $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow t_0$ and $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow t_1$ such that $t_0$ and $t_1$ have no common reduct.

(iii) With just the rule $Kxy \to x$, find a closed term $t$ and two infinite reductions $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow t_0$ and $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow t_1$ such that $t_0$ and $t_1$ have no common reduct.

In Theorem 12.8.2 we will see that examples like these are the only way in which the Church–Rosser property fails.

## 12.4. Infinitary lambda calculus

The theory of infinite rewriting can also be carried out for $\lambda$-calculus, and as most of the results and proofs are common to both, we shall now describe infinitary $\lambda$-calculus.

Infinite $\lambda$-expressions can be defined in the same way as infinite terms are defined. We take the function symbols to be the binary application operator, the unary symbol $\lambda x$ and the nullary symbol $x$ for each variable $x$. However, the question of $\alpha$-conversion raises a slight complication. It is customary to define finite $\lambda$-expressions up to $\alpha$-equivalence. In the infinitary case, we must deal with renamings of infinite sets of variables, and substitutions applied to infinitely large terms. The desired result is that we can write expressions using explicit variables, but assume that $\alpha$-conversion is implicitly performed to avoid variable capture. To achieve this formally requires a certain amount of care.

The most direct way to proceed is to define infinite $\lambda$-terms exactly as for ordinary terms, without regard to $\alpha$-conversion. Then define $\alpha$-equivalence for finite and infinite terms, and finally define the distance between two $\alpha$-equivalence classes as the infimum of the distances between pairs of respective members.

Alternatively, we can define the distance metric on $\alpha$-equivalence classes of finite terms, and then take the metric completion. This gives us a space in which the finite elements are $\alpha$-equivalence classes of finite terms, and in which the infinite elements can be identified with the $\alpha$-equivalence classes of infinite terms as previously defined.

To carry out the first method, we must define $\alpha$-equivalence for infinite terms. We will assume that a textual replacement of a variable $x$ by a variable $x'$ without regard to binding is unproblematic, even for infinite terms. We denote this operation by $[x \to x']$.

12.4.1. Definition. A *conflict* between (finite or infinite) $\lambda$-terms $s$ and $t$ is a common occurrence $u$ such that one of the following holds:

1. $u = \langle\,\rangle$ and $s$ and $t$ are not identical variables, not both applications, and not both abstractions;
2. $u = n \cdot v$, $s = s_1 s_2$, $t = t_1 t_2$, and $v$ is a conflict of $s_n$ and $t_n$ ($n = 1$ or $2$);
3. $u = 1 \cdot v$, $s = \lambda x.s'$, $t = \lambda x'.t'$, and $v$ is a conflict of $s'[x \to x'']$ and $t'[x' \to x'']$, where $x''$ is a variable not occurring in $s'$ or $t'$.

We say $s$ and $t$ are *$\alpha$-equivalent* if there is no conflict between them.

This definition also gives us a convenient way of defining the metric.

12.4.2. Definition. If $s$ and $t$ have no conflict, then $d(s,t) =_{df} 0$. Otherwise, $d(s,t) =_{df} 2^{-n}$, where $n$ is the minimum depth of any conflict between them.

12.4.3. Exercise. (i) Prove that for finite terms, the above definition of $\alpha$-equivalence coincides with the classical definition.

(ii) Prove that $d$ gives a metric on $\alpha$-equivalence classes of terms, by establishing the following:

(1) if $s$ and $s'$ are $\alpha$-equivalent, then $d(s,t) = d(s',t)$ for every term $t$;

(2) $d(s,t) = 0$ if and only if $s$ and $t$ are $\alpha$-equivalent.

The second method of defining the space of infinite terms begins by ignoring issues of $\alpha$-equivalenceand considering the metric on finite terms given by considering them as terms over a signature in which $\lambda x$ is a unary operator for every variable $x$. Call this metric $d'$. Then define a metric on $\alpha$-equivalence classes of finite terms by defining $d'(S,T) = \min\{\, d'(s,t) \mid s \in S \wedge t \in T\,\}$ for $\alpha$-equivalence classes $S$ and $T$. Finally, take the metric completion of the space.

12.4.4. Exercise. Prove that this gives a space isomorphic to the space of $\alpha$-equivalence classes of finite and infinite terms with metric $d$.

In the finitary theory, it is customary to introduce the variable convention at this point, to avoid dealing explicitly with $\alpha$-conversion. This convention stipulates that the free variables of a term are distinct from its bound variables, and that when a substitution of a term for a variable in another term is made, bound variables are implicitly renamed to avoid variable capture. In the infinitary case it is slightly more complicated, since if there are only countably many variables, a term might include all of them free, leaving no room to pick new variables. We solve this problem by the 'Hilbert hotel' trick. If all of the variables are in use at some point in an argument, and we still need more, then an implicit renaming of every variable $x_i$ by $x_{2i}$ is performed, which frees an infinite number of variables for reuse.

In Section 12.2 we remarked on the way that inductive constructions on infinitary terms must proceed coinductively from the root downwards rather than inductively from the leaves upwards. As an example, here is a formal definition of substitution and a proof of the Substitution Lemma.

12.4.5. DEFINITION. The result of substituting $N$ for $x$ in $M$, notated $M[x := N]$, is defined to be the term whose positions and symbols are as follows.

The positions of $M[x := N]$ are the positions of $M$ other than the free occurrences of $x$, and the positions $u \cdot v$ where $M|_u = x$ and $v$ is a position of $N$.

In the first case, the root symbol of $M[x := N]|_u$ is that of $M|_u$. In the second case, the root symbol of $M[x := N]|_{u \cdot v}$ is that of $N|_v$.

12.4.6. LEMMA (Substitution Lemma, see Barendregt [1984] 2.1.16.). *If $x \neq y$ and $x$ is not free in $L$, then*

$$M[x := N][y := L] \quad \equiv \quad M[y := L][x := N[y := L]]$$

PROOF. Let $u$ be any common position of two terms of the above form. We will show by induction on the length of $u$ that $u$ is not a conflict between those terms.

We proceed by cases of the form of $M$. If $M$ is $x$ then both sides are $N[y := L]$. If $M$ is $y$, then both sides are $L$. If $M$ is any other variable, both sides are $M$. In all these cases, the two sides are identical and therefore have no conflict.

If $M$ is $\lambda z.M_1$, we may assume by the variable convention that $z$ is not $x$ or $y$ and is not free in $N$. Then the two terms are $\lambda z.M_1[x := N][y := L]$ and $\lambda z.M_1[y := L][x := N[y := L]]$. Now $\langle\,\rangle$ is not a conflict of these terms, and $i \cdot v$ is a conflict if and only if $i = 1$ and $v$ is a conflict of $M_1[x := N][y := L]$ and $M_1[y := L][x := N[y := L]]$. By induction, it cannot be.

If $M = M_1 M_2$, then the two terms are $(M_1[x := N][y := L])(M_2[x := N][y := L])$ and $(M_1[y := L][x := N[y := L]])(M_2[y := L][x := N[y := L]])$. Now $\langle\,\rangle$ is not a conflict of these terms, and $i \cdot v$ is a conflict if and only if $i = 1$ and $v$ is a conflict of $M_1[x := N][y := L]$ and $M_1[y := L][x := N[y := L]]$, or $i = 2$ and $v$ is a conflict of $M_2[x := N][y := L]$ and $M_2[y := L][x := N[y := L]]$. By induction, neither alternative is possible. []

Both $\beta$- and $\eta$-reduction are defined for infinitary $\lambda$-calculus in terms of substitution in the same way as for the finitary calculus. However, $\eta$-reduction has a property that is unsatisfactory from a computational point of view. To determine whether a term $\lambda x.(Mx)$ is an $\eta$-redex, one may have to inspect the whole of $M$ to determine whether $x$ occurs free. If $M$ is infinite, this is an infinite amount of work that must be completed before the redex can be reduced. In effect, the pattern of the $\eta$-rule is infinite. A $\beta$-redex, in contrast, can be recognized by seeing just two nodes of the parse tree: an application with an abstract on its left. Although a $\beta$-redex may require an infinite amount of work to reduce, one may devise computational schemes (such as explicit substitution – Abadi et al. [1991]) which allow any finite part of the reduct to be computed in finite time.

From now on, we will deal with iTRSs and infinitary $\lambda$-calculus together. The primary differences between them will be seen to arise from the more complicated way in which in the $\lambda$-calculus, descendants of a single redex can become nested inside each other, whereas they always remain disjoint in term rewriting.

By 'orthogonal systems' we mean orthogonal (i)TRSs and the $\lambda$-calculus; by 'left-linear systems' we mean left-linear (i)TRSs and the $\lambda$-calculus.

12.4.7. Exercise. Based on the exercises in the previous section, or otherwise, find a counterexample to the Church–Rosser property for the infinitary $\lambda$-calculus with $\beta$-reduction.

## 12.5. Descendants and developments

The concepts of descendant and development extend in a straightforward manner to the transfinite context. For a single-step reduction with infinite terms, there is nothing new, but to deal with infinite sequences we must define how to take the limit of a sequence of sets of descendants.

12.5.1. Definition. Let $\sigma : t_0 \to^{\alpha} t_\alpha$ be a strongly convergent sequence. Let $U$ be a set of positions of $t_0$. The set of *descendants* of $U$ by $\sigma$ is a set of positions of $t_\alpha$ denoted by $U/\sigma$, and defined by induction as follows.

- If $\alpha = 0$, then $\sigma$ is the empty sequence and $U/\sigma$ is just $U$.
- If $\alpha = 1$, let the redex $R$ reduced in $t_0 \to t_1$ be at position $v$. Take any $u \in U$. If $v$ is not a proper prefix of $u$, then $u/R = \{u\}$.

  (For term rewriting) If $u$ is one of the positions pattern-matched by $R$, that is, a function symbol in the left-hand side of $R$ is matched to the node of the term at $u$, then $u/R = \varnothing$. Otherwise, if $u = v \cdot w \cdot x$, where $w$ is the position of a variable in the left-hand side of $R$, then $u/R$ consists of all positions of the form $v \cdot w' \cdot x$, where $w'$ is a position of the same variable in the right-hand side of $R$. $U/R$ is the union of all $u/R$ for $u \in U$.

(For $\lambda$-calculus) If $u = v \cdot 1$, then $u/R = \varnothing$. If $u = v \cdot 1 \cdot 1 \cdot w$, then $u/R = \{v \cdot w\}$. If $u = v \cdot 2 \cdot w$, then $u/R$ is the set of all $u \cdot w' \cdot w$, where $u \cdot w'$ is the position of any occurrence of the bound variable of the abstraction of the redex.

- If $\alpha = \beta + 1$, then $U/\sigma = (U/(t_0 \to_\beta t_\beta))/(t_\beta \to t_{\beta+1})$.
- If $\alpha$ is a limit ordinal, then $u \in U/\sigma$ iff $u \in U/(t_0 \to_\beta t_\beta)$ for all large enough $\beta < \alpha$.

12.5.2. Exercise. Prove that in the last case of the above definition, the condition 'for all large enough $\beta < \alpha$' can equivalently be replaced by 'for arbitrarily large $\beta < \alpha$'.

12.5.3. Definition. In an orthogonal system, let $\sigma : t_0 \to^\alpha t_\alpha$ be a strongly convergent sequence. Let $R$ be a set of redexes of $t_0$, whose positionsare the set $U$. $R/\sigma$ denotes the set of redexes of $t_\alpha$ at positions in $U/\sigma$.

In the above definition, orthogonality ensures that there is a redex at each position in $U/\sigma$, and that each redex is a redex of the same rule as its ancestor.

12.5.4. Lemma. *In a left-linear system, let $\sigma$ be a reduction whose length is a limit ordinal. Every redex in the final term of $\sigma$ is the unique descendant of a redex in some earlier term.*

Proof. Let there be a redex at position $u$ in the final term. Let $d$ be the depth of the left-hand side of a rule which matches at $u$. By strong convergence, every step of $\sigma$ after some point must be at depth at least $|u| + d$. In every term from that point on, there must be a redex of the same rule at $u$. The redex in the final term is the unique descendant of all of them. []

The following proposition is immediate from the definition of descendants.

12.5.5. Proposition. *In an iTRS, if $\mathcal{R}$ is a set of pairwise disjoint redexes, then so is $\mathcal{R}/\sigma$ for any strongly converging reduction sequence $\sigma$. For the $\lambda$-calculus this is true when $\sigma$ is a single step and $\mathcal{R}$ is a single redex.*

12.5.6. Definition. A *development* of a set of redexes $\mathcal{R}$ of a term $t_0$ is a strongly converging reduction $t_0 \to^\alpha t_\alpha$ such that for any $\beta \leq \alpha$ the step $t_\beta \to t_{\beta+1}$ reduces a descendant of a member of $\mathcal{R}$ by $t_0 \to_\beta t_\beta$. If $t_\alpha$ contains no descendant of $\mathcal{R}$, then the development is said to be *complete*.

Our examples of the failure of the Church–Rosser property also demonstrate that the Complete Developments Theorem fails: not every set of redexes has a complete development. For example, given the rule $I(x) \to x$ and the term $I(I(I(\ldots)))$, the set of redexes in this term has no complete development, since any reduction which attempts to reduce all of the redexes will not be strongly convergent. (See Example 12.3.4.) However, we can prove a restricted version of the theorem.

Let $S$ be a set of redexes in a term $t$ of an orthogonal iTRS or $\lambda$-calculus. We will begin by exhibiting a construction of which we will later prove that, when it exists, it constructs the final term of every complete development of $S$, and when it does not, $S$ has no complete development.

We first informally describe the basic idea, in the setting of iTRSs. We use the notion of a *path* in a term, which in the $\lambda$-calculus has been used in Asperti et al. [1994] and Asperti and Laneve [1995] for characterizing Lévy's redex families. A path starts from the root of $t$ and proceeds from each node to an immediate descendant, until we encounter the root of a redex in $S$, at some position $u$. All the nodes traversed before this point will be nodes of the result $\mathcal{F}(t, S)$ of a complete development of $S$; $u$ will also be a position of $\mathcal{F}(t, S)$, but to determine the symbol there we must jump to the root of the term $r$, the right-hand side of the rule $l \to r$ that applies at $u$. We continue by traversing $r$, with each non-variable node we reach corresponding to a node of $\mathcal{F}(t, S)$. When we reach an occurrence in $r$ of a variable $x$, we must jump back to $t$ at the position corresponding to the occurrence of $x$ in $l$.

For $\lambda$-expressions, the method is similar. When we reach the root of a $\beta$-redex in $S$, we jump to the root of its body; when we encounter within the body an occurrence of the bound variable, we must jump to the root of the right-hand side of the redex.

This construction will fail if we find ourselves making an infinite sequence of jumps without passing along an edge of $t$ or of a right-hand side. It is precisely in such cases that $S$ will fail to havea complete development.

We now give a formal description and a proof that it yields a term with the claimed properties.

12.5.7. Definition. For a given term $t$ in an iTRS and a set of redexes $S$ of $t$, define a *path* as a certain kind of finite sequence of nodes and edges. Each node is labelled by a term and a position of that term, and each edge is either unlabelled or labelled by an integer. The term labelling a node is either $t$ or the right-hand side of some rule.

Every path of $t$ begins with a node labelled by $(t, \langle\,\rangle)$. Suppose the final node of a path is labelled with $(s, u)$. The path may be extended in any of the following ways.

1. Either $s$ is $t$, and $u$ is not the position of a redex in $S$, or $s$ is a right-hand side $t'$, and $u$ is any position of $t'$. If $u \cdot i$ is a position of $t$ or $t'$

respectively, then the path can be extended with an edge labelled $i$ and a node labelled $(t, u \cdot i)$ or $(t', u \cdot i)$ respectively.

2. Alternatively, $s$ is $t$, and $u$ is the position of a redex in $S$, the right-hand side of whose rule is $t'$. Then the path can be extended by an unlabelled edge and a node labelled with $(t', \langle\,\rangle)$.

3. Otherwise, $s$ is a right-hand side $t'$, and $t'|_u$ is a variable $x$. Let the last occurrence of $t$ in a node label of $s$ be with position $v$. Then $v$ will be the position of a redex in $S$ having a rule $t'' \to t'$, and the path may be extended by an unlabelled edge and a node labelled with $(t, v \cdot w)$, where $w$ is the position of the (unique) occurrence of $x$ in $t''$.

For a $\lambda$-expression $t$, the construction is similar, the cases being:

1. Let $s$ is $t$, and $u$ is not the position of a redex in $S$. If $u \cdot i$ is a position of $t$, then $s$ can be extended with an edge labelled $i$ and a node labelled $(t, u \cdot i)$.

2. Alternatively $s$ is $t$, and $u$ is the position of a $\beta$-redex in $S$. Then $s$ can be extended by an unlabelled edge and a node labelled by $(t, u \cdot 1 \cdot 1)$.

3. Otherwise, $s$ is $t$, and $u$ is the position of a variable of $t$ bound by a redex in $S$ at position $v$. Then $s$ can be extended by an unlabelled edge and a node labelled by $(t, v \cdot 2)$.

Let $\mathcal{P}(t, S)$ be the set of all such paths. Define $U(t, S)$ to be the set of sequences of edge labels of the paths. For any $u \in U(t, S)$, let $s$ be a path of maximal length for which $u$ is its sequence of edge labels. Then $s$ is uniquely determined. It may be finite or infinite. If $s$ is always finite, we will say that $S$ has *finite jumps*. When $s$ is finite, it has a final node. Let its label be $(t', v)$. Define $F(u)$ to be the symbol of $t'$ at $v$. Thus the domain of $F$ is all of $U(t, S)$ if and only if $S$ has finite jumps.

12.5.8. PROPOSITION. *If the domain of $F$ is all of $U(t, S)$, then $U(t, S)$ and $F$ together define a term, which we will denote by $\mathcal{F}(t, S)$.*

PROOF. $U(t, S)$ is prefix-closed by definition. $u \cdot i$ is in $U(t, S)$ if and only if $i$ is no more than the arity of $F(u)$. Therefore the set of positions $U(t, S)$ and the labelling $F$ define a term. []

12.5.9. PROPOSITION (Finite Jumps Developments Theorem). *In an orthogonal system, let $S$ be a set of redexes in a term $t$ having finite jumps.*

(i) *Every complete development of $S$ has $\mathcal{F}(t, S)$ as its final term.*

(ii) *For any position $u$ of $t$, the set of descendants of $u$ by a complete development of $S$ is independent of the choice of development.*

(iii) *The same is true for the descendants of any redex of $t$.*
(iv) *$S$ has a complete development.*

PROOF. (i) Let $t$ and$S$ be as described. Suppose that we are given a complete development of $S$. We will show by induction that for every term $t_\alpha$ in the sequence, containing descendants $S_\alpha$ of $S$, $\mathcal{P}(t_\alpha, S_\alpha)$ is obtainable from $\mathcal{P}(t, S)$ by deleting some unlabelled edges (or perhaps none of them), and hence that $S_\alpha$ has the finite jumps property, and $\mathcal{F}(t_\alpha, S_\alpha) = \mathcal{F}(t, S)$.

For $t_0 = t$ this is immediate.

For the successor case, let $t_{\alpha+1}$ result from reducing a redex $s$ in $t_\alpha$. By tracing through the $\mathcal{P}$ construction, one can (tediously) verify that $\mathcal{P}(t_{\alpha+1}, S_{\alpha+1})$ is obtainable from $\mathcal{P}(t_\alpha, S_\alpha)$ by deleting some unlabelled edges. Therefore $S_{\alpha+1}$ has the finite jumps property, and $\mathcal{F}(t_{\alpha+1}, S_{\alpha+1}) = \mathcal{F}(t_\alpha, S_\alpha) = \mathcal{F}(t, S)$.

For the limit case, assume that the claim holds up to a limit ordinal $\lambda$. $\mathcal{P}(t_\lambda, S_\lambda)$ results from $\mathcal{P}(t, S)$ by deleting all the unlabelled edges that were deleted in any of the previous $\mathcal{P}(t_\alpha, S_\alpha)$. Therefore $S_\lambda$ has the finite jumps property, and $\mathcal{F}(t_\lambda, S_\lambda) = \mathcal{F}(t, S)$.

We conclude that this holds for the final term $t'$. But then $\mathcal{F}(t, S) = \mathcal{F}(t', \varnothing) = t'$, and $t'$ is thus independent of the development.

(ii) We leave it to the reader to carry through a similar argument to show how the descendant relationships between $t$ and $t'$ can also be determined from $\mathcal{P}(t, S)$, and are therefore also independent of the development.

(iii) Similar to (ii) above.

(iv) Let $p \in \mathcal{P}(t, S)$. Let $r \in S$ be a redex encountered in $p$. Let $d(p, r)$ be the number of labelled edges from the beginning of $p$ up to $r$. This is the depth at which some descendant of $r$ can be reduced in an outermost development of $S$ (as is easily proved by induction along the sequence of redexes preceding $r$ in $p$). Conversely, every descendant of $r$ reduced in an outermost development is reduced at a depth obtained in this way. Since $\mathcal{P}(t, S)$ is finitely branching, there are only finitely many occurrences $(r, p)$ of redexes $r$ in $\mathcal{P}(t, S)$ having a given value of $d(r, p)$. Therefore in an infinite outermost development, the depth of reductions must tend to infinity. That is, the sequence is strongly convergent. Outermost reduction can therefore be continued until a complete development is obtained. []

A concrete example of a class of sets of redexes having the finite jumps property is the *finitely nesting* sets of redexes, i.e. those sets of redexes whose positions contain no infinite chain $u_1 < u_2 < u_3 < \cdots$.

12.5.10. PROPOSITION (Finitely Nesting Developments Theorem). *Let $S$ be a set of finitely nesting redexes in a term $t$.*

(i) *Every development of $S$ is strongly convergent.*

(ii) *If $S$ and $T$ are sets of finitely nesting redexes in a term $t$, then $T/S$ is finitely nesting, where $T/S$ is the set of descendants of $T \cup S$ after a complete development of $S$.*

PROOF. (i) A non-strongly convergent reduction must contain a subsequence of reductions all at the same position. In an iTRS, this is impossible for the descendants of a set of finitely nesting redexes, since a reduction in an iTRS can never change the nesting relationship between two redexes. For $\lambda$-calculus, this argument is insufficient, since reduction of one redex can cause descendants of non-nested redexes to be nested. To deal with this, consider the following relation on $S$: $r_1 < r_2$ if either $r_1$ contains $r_2$, or there is a redex $r_3 \in S$ of the form $\lambda x.t_1 t_2$ such that $r_1$ iscontained in $t_1$, $r_1$ contains $x$ free, and $r_2$ is contained in $t_2$. We extend this to its transitive closure. Since $r_1 < r_2$ implies that their positions $u_1$ and $u_2$ satisfy $u_1 < u_2$ in the lexicographic partial order, this relation on $S$ is (the irreflexive part of) a partial order. If a descendant of $r_1$ can contain a descendant of $r_2$ in some development of $S$, then $r_1 < r_2$. Therefore if this relation has no infinite chains, $S$ cannot have a non-strongly-convergent development. That it has no infinite chains follows from Lemma **??** below.

(ii) $T/S$ is well-defined because of Proposition 12.5.9. Thus it is sufficient to demonstrate that the set of descendants remaining after any development of a finitely nesting set $S$ is finitely nesting. This follows from the same partial ordering as in the first part: that partial ordering includes all the nesting relationships that can hold among descendants of $S$. []

12.5.11. LEMMA. *Let $T$ be a finitely branching tree. Let $N$ be a subset of the nodes of $T$. The prefix ordering restricted to $N$ is a partial ordering which we will denote by $n_0 < n_1$. Define a second relation on $N$ by $n_0 <' n_1$ if $n_0$ is before $n_1$ in the lexicographic ordering of positions, and some common prefix of $n_0$ and $n_1$ is in $N$. Then if $<$ has no infinite chains, neither does $< \cup <'$.*

PROOF. By König's Lemma, the absence of infinite chains in $N$ implies that $N$ under the prefix ordering consists of a finite or infinite set of finite trees. The definition of $<'$ implies that when $n_0 <' n_1$, they belong to the same such tree. The same is trivially true of $<$. Therefore every chain of $< \cup <'$ is contained in one of those trees, and is finite. []

The above theorems may be generalizable to various types of higher-order rewriting. Lemma **??** was required to establish them for $\lambda$-calculus, due to the possibility of nesting of descendants. Higher-order systems can in general create more complicated forms of nesting, and would likely require stronger forms of the lemma. The remainder of the proofs of Propositions 12.5.9 and **??** is largely independent of the details of rewriting.

The importance of the Finite Jumps and Finitely Nesting Developments Theorems is that they allow us to construct *elementary tiles*: diagrams of the form of Figure 12.6. $H$ and $V$ are complete developments of finitely nesting sets $\mathcal{H}$ and $\mathcal{V}$. $H/V$ is a complete development of the finitely nesting set $\mathcal{H}/V$, and $V/H$ is defined similarly. The theorems tell us that $H/V$ and $V/H$

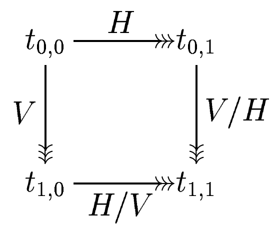


Figure 12.6: Elementary tile

have the same final term, since $H \cdot (V/H)$ and $V \cdot (H/V)$ are both complete developments of the finitely nesting set $\mathcal{H} \cup \mathcal{V}$.

12.5.12. LEMMA. *Let $U$ be a set of positions of a term $t$ and $S : t \twoheadrightarrow t'$ be a reduction sequence. Suppose that every step of $S$ has depth greater than $d$. Then $U$ and $U/S$ have exactly the same members of depth at most $d$.*

PROOF. This is immediate from the fact that a reduction cannot affect any part of the term at lesser depth than itself. []

## 12.6. Tiling diagrams

Extending to transfinite rewriting the notion of projection of one sequence over another requires some extra work to deal with limit ordinals. Unlike the finitary case, projections need not exist, even in orthogonal systems, for the same reason that the Church–Rosser property does not always hold.

In this section we reconstruct the theory of projectionsand tiling diagrams for transfinite rewriting. In the next section we will use these results to establish approximate Church–Rosser properties, and exact properties for a restricted class of orthogonal iTRSs.

12.6.1. DEFINITION. A *tiling diagram* for two strongly converging reductions $V : t_{0,0} \to^{\alpha} t_{\alpha,0}$ and $H : t_{0,0} \to^{\beta} t_{0,\beta}$ consists of a rectangular arrangement of strongly convergent reduction sequences as in Figure 12.7, subject to certain conditions.

- Each component reduction $H_{\gamma,\delta} : t_{\gamma,\delta} \twoheadrightarrow t_{\gamma,\delta+1}$ is a complete development of a set of redexes $\mathcal{H}_{\gamma,\delta}$ of $t_{\gamma,\delta}$. Each $V_{\gamma,\delta}$ is similarly related to a set $\mathcal{V}_{\gamma,\delta}$.
- $\mathcal{H}_{0,\delta}$ is the redex reduced in step $\delta$ of $H$, and $\mathcal{V}_{\gamma,0}$ is the redex reduced in step $\gamma$ of $V$.
- Let $H_{\gamma,[\delta,\delta']} : t_{\gamma,\delta} \twoheadrightarrow t_{\gamma,\delta'}$ be the (strongly convergent) concatenation of all $H_{\gamma,\delta''}$ for $\delta \leq \delta'' < \delta'$. If $\delta'$ is a limit ordinal, $H_{\gamma,[\delta,\delta')}$ is the result of omitting the final term of $H_{\gamma,[\delta,\delta']}$. Define $V_{[\gamma,\gamma'],\delta}$ and $V_{[\gamma,\gamma'),\delta}$ similarly.

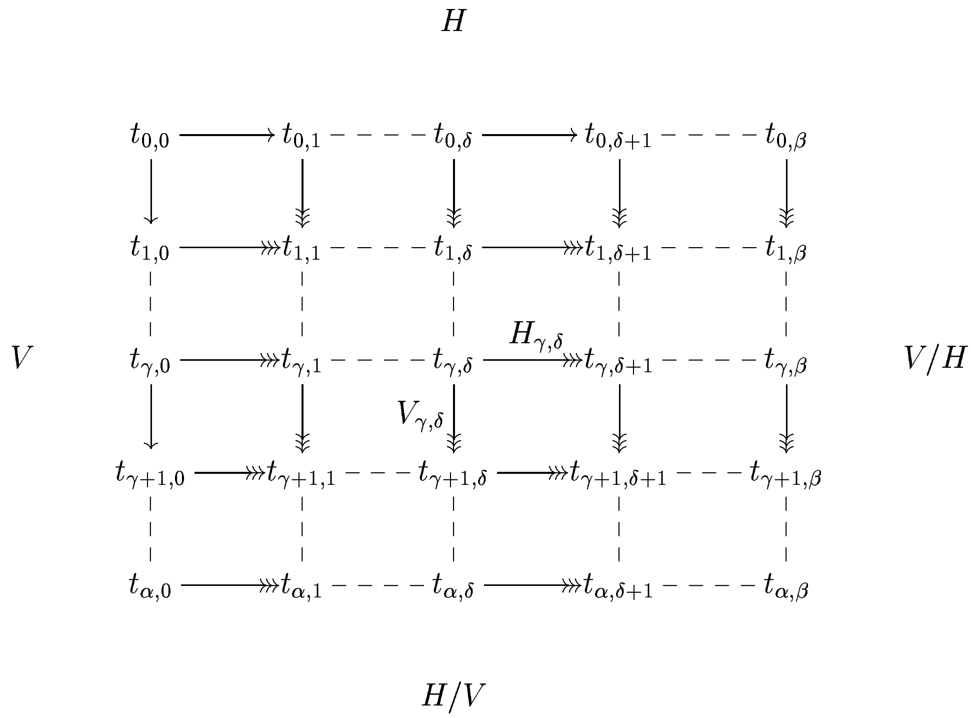


Figure 12.7: Tiling diagram

Then $\mathcal{H}_{\gamma,\delta} = \mathcal{H}_{0,\delta}/V_{[0,\gamma],\delta}$ and $\mathcal{V}_{\gamma,\delta} = \mathcal{V}_{\gamma,0}/H_{\gamma,[0,\delta]}$.

A partial tiling diagram for $H$ and $V$ is defined similarly, except that the diagram is only required to include $H$ and $V$, and if it includes $t_{\gamma,\delta}$, it also includes $t_{\gamma',\delta'}$, $H_{\gamma,\delta'}$, and $V_{\gamma',\delta}$ for all $\gamma' < \gamma$ and $\delta' < \delta$. The conditions must hold whenever all the objects they refer to exist.

If $H$ and $V$ have a tiling diagram, then the strongly convergent sequences along the bottom and right edges will be denoted by $H/V$ and $V/H$ respectively.

Not all pairs of sequences have tiling diagrams, as illustrated by the counterexample to the Church–Rosser property. The next few theorems establish some sufficient conditions for a tiling diagram to exist.

12.6.2. LEMMA. *Let $U$ be a set of positions of redexes in a term $t$. For each $u \in U$, define $l_u$ to be the maximum depth of any variable occurrence in the left-hand side of the rule for the redex at $u$ in $t$. Then as $|u| + l_u$ tends to infinity, so does $|u|$.*

PROOF. In an orthogonal iTRS and in infinitary $\lambda$-calculus, distinct redexes of the same term must be at different positions. There are only finitely many positions $u$ of a given depth, and so only finitely many values of $|u| + l_u$ for any given $|u|$. []

Note that since arities and left-hand sides are unbounded, the condition that $U$ is a set of positions of a single term is essential, although $t$ plays no other part in the lemma. For $\lambda$-calculus, the lemma is trivial, since $l_u$ is always 2.

The next result is a standard finitary result which holds for orthogonal iTRSs unchanged, but for which only a limited version holds for infinitary $\lambda$-calculus.

12.6.3. THEOREM (Strip Lemma). (i) *In an orthogonal iTRS, let $H$ and $V$ be strongly convergent reductions with the same initial term, with $V$ being one step long. Then $H$ and $V$ have a tiling diagram.*

(ii) *In $\lambda$-calculus, (i) will hold given any one of the following additional assumptions: $H/V$ is strongly convergent, $V$ is a head reduction, or $H$ is finite.*

PROOF. (i) If $H$ is empty this is trivial, and if the theorem holds for $H$ of length $\beta$, then by the Finitely Nesting Developments Theorem it also holds for $H$ of length $\beta+1$.

Let $H$ have limit ordinal length $\beta$, and consider Figure 12.7 with $\alpha = 1$. Let the one step of $V$ reduce a redex at position $u$. Choose a depth $d$. By Lemma 12.6.2, there is a $d'$ such that for $u \in \mathcal{V}_{0,\beta}$, if $|u| + l_u > d'$, we have $|u| > d$. Let $l$ be the maximum depth of any left-hand side for the redexes of $t_{0,\beta}$ at positions $u \in \mathcal{V}_{0,\beta}$ having length not more than $d'$. Since there are finitely many such redexes, $l$ is finite. Choose $\gamma$ such that every step of $H_{0,[\gamma,\beta]}$ has depth at least $d'+l$. Then for any $\epsilon \geq \gamma$, the positions in $\mathcal{V}_{0,\epsilon}$ of depth at most $d'$ are the same as those of $\mathcal{V}_{0,\beta}$, and the redexes there are redexes by the same rules. These redexes are descendants of a single redex, therefore pairwise disjoint (which need not be true in $\lambda$-calculus). Therefore every member of $\mathcal{H}_{0,\epsilon}$ is contained in at most one member of $\mathcal{V}_{0,\epsilon}$, and so every member of $\mathcal{H}_{0,\epsilon}/\mathcal{V}_{0,\epsilon}$ must have depth at least $d$. It follows that every step of $H_{1,[\gamma,\beta)}$ has depth at least $d$. Therefore $H/V$ is strongly convergent, and converges to $t_{1,\beta}$.

(ii) Suppose that $V/H$ has no strongly convergent complete development. Then for some position $u$, there is a development of $V/H$ performing infinitely many steps at $u$. Let $u$ have depth $d$. Since $H$ and $H/V$ are strongly convergent, there is a $\alpha$ such that every step of these sequences from $t_{0,\alpha}$ or $t_{1,\alpha}$ respectively has depth at least $d$.

The sets $\mathcal{V}_{0,\beta}$ for $\beta \geq \alpha$ must have complete developments which perform larger and larger numbers of reductions at $u$ as $\beta$ increases. This implies that for arbitrarily large values of $\beta$, $H_{0,\beta}/V_{0,\beta}$ must include a redex at $u/V_{0,\beta}$. Because $H$ is strongly convergent, $u/V_{0,\beta}$ must be eventually constant as $\beta$ increases. But this contradicts the strong convergence of $H/V$.

If $V$ is a head reduction, then the set of its descendants by any reduction is either empty, or a single descendant in the same position as $V$. A descendant of a step of $H$ at depth $d$ by the descendant (if any) of $V$ must have depth at least $d-2$. Therefore when $V$ is a head reduction, $H/V$ is strongly convergent and the previous case applies.

Lastly, if $H$ is finite then the set of descendants of $V$ byevery initial segment of $H$ is finitely nesting. The Finitely Nesting Developments Theorem then assures that each of the finitely many tiles of the tiling diagram exists. []

Here is a counterexample showing that the iTRS part of the Strip Lemma fails for the $\lambda$-calculus. Let $t$ be a finite term with the property that $tx \to^* x(tx)$. Such a $t$ is easily constructed by means of a fixed-point operator. Consider the term $tr$, where $r = \lambda x.(\lambda y.x)w$. This reduces to $r(tr)$, and then to $(\lambda y.(tr))w$, and so in infinitely many steps to the infinite term $s$ such that $s \equiv (\lambda y.s)w$. The term $tr$ also reduces in one step to $t(\lambda x.x)$. These cannot have any common reduct, because $w$ is free in every reduct of $s$, but every reduct of $t(\lambda x.x)$ is closed. Notice that the infinite chain of redexes in $s$ are all descendants of the single redex $(\lambda y.x)w$. If we try to construct the Strip Lemma tiling diagram, we find that $H/V$ consists of an infinite repetition of the sequence $t(\lambda x.x) \to^* (\lambda x.x)(t(\lambda x.x)) \to t(\lambda x.x)$, which is not strongly convergent.

12.6.4. THEOREM. *Let $H$ and $V$ be strongly convergent reductions with the same initial term. Using the notation of Definition 12.6.1, suppose that a tiling diagram exists for $H_{0,[0,\delta]}$ and $V_{[0,\gamma],0}$ with $\gamma < \alpha$. In an orthogonal iTRS, a tiling diagram exists for $H_{0,[0,\delta]}$ and $V_{[0,\gamma+1],0}$. In $\lambda$-calculus, it will exist provided that $H_{0,[0,\delta]}/V_{[\gamma,\gamma+1],0}$ is strongly convergent, $V_{[\gamma,\gamma+1],0}$ is a head reduction, or $\delta$ is finite.*

PROOF. Apply the Strip Lemma to the reductions $H_{\gamma,[0,\delta]}$ and $V_{[\gamma,\gamma+1],0}$. []

12.6.5. THEOREM. *In an orthogonal iTRS or $\lambda$-calculus, let $H$ and $V$ be strongly convergent reductions with the same initial term, whose lengths are limit ordinals $\beta$ and $\alpha$ respectively. Suppose that all of the data for a tiling diagram for $H$ and $V$ exists, except that $t_{\alpha,\beta}$ is not known to exist, and the sequences $H/V$ and $V/H$ are not known to be strongly convergent, although every proper initial segment of them is. Then the following conditions are equivalent.*

1. *The tiling diagram can be completed, i.e. $H/V$ and $V/H$ are strongly convergent and have the same limit.*
2. *$H/V$ is strongly convergent.*
3. *$V/H$ is strongly convergent.*
4. *The sequence of rows is uniformly strongly convergent, by which is meant that for every depth $d$ there is a $\delta < \beta$ such that for all $\gamma < \alpha$, every step of $H_{\gamma,[\delta,\beta]}$ has depth at least $d$.*

5. *The sequence of columns is uniformly strongly convergent.*

PROOF. Suppose that the rows are uniformly strongly convergent. Choose a depth $d$. There is a $\delta < \beta$ such that for all $\gamma < \alpha$, every redex in $\mathcal{H}_{\gamma,\delta}$ has depth at least $d$. Since $\mathcal{H}_{\alpha,\delta}$ is the limit of $\mathcal{H}_{\gamma,\delta}$ for $\gamma < \alpha$, it follows that every redex in $\mathcal{H}_{\alpha,\delta}$ has depth at least $d$, and therefore so does every step of $H_{\alpha,[\delta,\beta]}$. Therefore $H/V$ is strongly convergent. This proves that (4) implies (2), and therefore by symmetry that (5) implies (3).

Suppose that $V/H$ is strongly convergent. Choose any depth $d$. Then for some $\gamma$, every step of $V_{[\gamma,\alpha],\beta}$ has depth at least $d$. By strong convergence of each row of the diagram, we can find a $\delta$ such that every step of $H_{\gamma,[\delta,\beta]}$ has depth at least $d$. Therefore by Lemma 12.5.12, every horizontal or vertical step in the diagram below and to the right of $(\gamma, \delta)$ has depth at least $d$. This demonstrates horizontal and vertical uniform strong convergence, strong convergence of the right and bottom edges, and their convergence to the same limit. This proves that (3) implies (4), (5), and (1).

It is clear that (1) implies all the others. Combining these implications shows that all the items are equivalent. []

12.6.6. EXERCISE. Consi der the counterexamples given earlier to the Church–Rosser property. Show that they satisfy the hypothesis of Theorem **??**, and that all of the enumerated properties are false.

12.6.7. THEOREM. *Let $H$ and $V$ be reduction sequences having the tiling diagram of Figure 12.7. Let $u$ be a position of $t_{0,0}$. Then the set of descendants of $u$ by any path in the diagram from $(0,0)$ to $(\gamma, \delta)$ is independent of the path and of the choice of complete developments for the edges of the tiles. The same holds for the descendants of any redex $r$ of $t_{0,0}$.*

PROOF. By Proposition 12.5.10 this is true for each path consisting of a single tile-edge. The theorem follows. []

## 12.7. The Compression Lemma

To perform an infinite number of computational steps to obtain some final result may reasonably be thought of as an idealisation of the notion of computing indefinitely to obtain more and more of the final result. To perform an infinite number of steps, and then to perform more steps, looks less reasonable. Reduction sequences of length greater than $\omega$ might therefore be considered to have no computational significance. The Compression Lemma gives such sequences computational meaning. This property, which holds for left-linear iTRSs and for $\lambda$-calculus, is that for every sequence of length greater than $\omega$, there is another sequence with the same endpoints of length at most $\omega$.

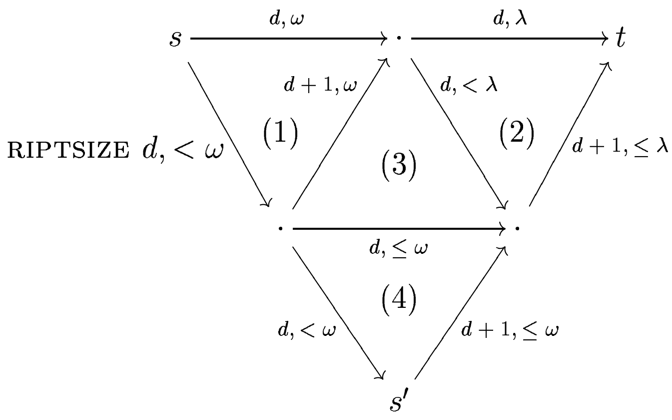


Figure 12.8: $(\omega + \lambda)$-compression

12.7.1. THEOREM (Compression Lemma). *In every left-linear iTRS, if* $s \to^{\alpha} t$ *then* $s \to^{\leq \omega} t$.

PROOF. This is proved by induction on $\alpha$. It is trivial for $\alpha < \omega$.

Suppose $\alpha = \omega + 1$. We have $s_0 \to^{\omega} s_{\omega} \to t$. The redex reduced in the final step must be the unique descendant by $s_n \to^{\omega} s_{\omega}$ of a redex $r$ in $s_n$ at the same position $u$. Every step of $s_n \to^{\omega} s_{\omega}$ has depth greater than $d$ plus the depth of the pattern of $r$. Thus there can be no conflicts between that sequence and the descendants of $r$, so its projection over $r$ can be constructed exactly as in the orthogonal case. It can be considered as an interleaving of a number of copies of subsequences of that sequence, each of length at most $\omega$, and acting on disjoint parts of $s'_n$. That interleaving might have length $\omega^2$, but there clearly also exists an interleaving of length at most $\omega$.

Suppose $\alpha = \beta + 1 > \omega + 1$, and the theorem has been proved for $\beta$. Then by applying the theorem for the first $\beta$ steps, we reduce this to the case of $\omega + 1$.

Suppose $\alpha$ is a limit ordinal greater than $\omega$, and the theorem has been proved for all smaller ordinals. Then $\alpha = \omega + \lambda$ where $\lambda$ is a limit ordinal. Let $d$ be the minimum depth of any step of the given sequence. We can construct Figure 12.8, where the first label on each arrow is a lower bound on the depth of its reductions, and the second indicates its length. Subdiagrams (1), (2), and (4) exist by strong convergence. Subdiagram (3) exists by the Compression Lemma for ordinals less than $\lambda$.

This transforms the sequence into a finite initial segment of depth $d$ ending at some term $u$, followed by a final segment from $u$ to $t$ of length at most $\omega + \lambda$ and of depth at least $d+1$. The latter segment is not necessarily shorter than the sequence we started with, in the sense of number of steps, but it is shorter in terms of the metric, lying entirely within a ball of diameter $2^{-d-1}$. We can repeat this construction starting with the reduction of $s'$ to $t$. By concatenating the finite segments $s \to^{d,*} s' \to^{d+1,*} s' \to^{d+2,*} \cdots$ we obtain a sequence of length at most $\omega$ strongly converging to $t$. []

12.7.2. Theorem. *In $\lambda$-calculus, if $s \to^{\alpha} t$ then $s \to^{\leq\omega} t$.*

Proof. The only change required to the proof of the preceding theorem is in establishing the case $\alpha = \omega + 1$, since the argument in every other case is independent of the details of rewriting.

Let $s \to^{\omega} s_1 \to t$ be a sequence of length $\omega + 1$. We can split $s \to^{\omega} s_1$ into $s \to^{<\omega} s_2 \to^{\omega} s_1$ in such a way that the redex reduced in $s_1 \to t$ is present at the same position in $s_2$, and every step of $s_2 \to^{\omega} s_1$ takes place at greater depth. All that is then required is to reduce that redex in $s_2$ to give a term $s_3$, and demonstrate that the remainder of the sequence $s_2 \to^{\omega} s'$ can be performed beginning from $s_3$ and permuted into an order of length not more than $\omega$. The detailed construction can be found in Kennaway et al. [1997]. []

It can be proved that the compressed sequence is Lévy equivalent to the given sequence, in the sense that a tiling diagram for the two sequences exists, and its right and bottom sides are empty. Thus the shorter sequence is just a reordering of the longer one.

To demonstrate the necessity of left-linearity for the Compression Lemma, consider the system whose rules are $F(x) \to A(F(x))$ and $G(x,x) \to H$. The term $G(F(C), F(D))$ reduces in $\omega$ steps to the term $G(A(A(A(\ldots))), A(A(A(\ldots))))$, and then in one step to $H$. But there is no reduction of $G(F(C), F(D))$ to $H$ in fewer than $\omega + 1$ steps.

Compression is technically useful, as it can be used to simplify proofs about transfinite rewriting systems.

Compression fails for weakly convergent reduction. An example is the rules $A(x) \to A(B(x))$ and $B(x) \to C(x)$. These allow a weakly convergent reduction $A(D) \to A(B(D)) \to A(B(B(D))) \to \cdots \to A(B^{\omega}) \to A(C(B^{\omega}))$ of length $\omega + 1$. There is clearly no reduction of $A(D)$ to $A(C(B^{\omega}))$ in $\omega$ or fewer steps.

In $\lambda$-calculus, compression fails for $\beta\eta$-reduction Let $M = \lambda x.M'xx$, where $M' = Y\lambda mx.y(mx)$ and $Y = \lambda f.(\lambda x.f(xx))(\lambda x.f(xx))$. Then $M$ contains no $\eta$-redex, but the subexpression $(M'x)$ reduces in $\omega$ steps to the term $y^{\omega} = y(y(y(\ldots)))$, following which we can eta-reduce $\lambda x.y^{\omega}x$ to $y^{\omega}$. $M$ does not $\beta\eta$-reduce to this term in $\omega$ or fewer steps. The infinite reduction of $(M'x)$ pushes the free variable $x$ down to infinity, creating an $\eta$-redex in the limit.

## 12.8. A partial Church–Rosser property

We shall now show that the failure of the Church–Rosser property is due to a certain class of terms, the hypercollapsing terms.

12.8.1. DEFINITION. A *collapsing* redex is a redex whose reduct is the descendant of a proper subterm of the redex. A *collapsing* rule is a rewrite rule, every redex of which is collapsing. A term $t$ is *hypercollapsing* if every term it can reduce to can be reduced to a collapsing redex. $\mathcal{H}$ denotes the set of hypercollapsing terms. A *hypercollapsing* reduction is one which contains infinitely many collapsing reduction steps at the root of the term.

For term rewriting systems, a collapsing rule is one whose right-hand side is a variable. For $\lambda$-calculus, the $\beta$- and $\eta$-rules are collapsing.

12.8.2. THEOREM. *If an iTRS has two or more collapsing rules, or it has a single collapsing rule whose left-hand side contains a variable not occurring on the right, then it is not Church–Rosser.*

PROOF. In the first case, let the left-hand sides of the two-rules be $C_1[x]$ and $C_2[y]$, where $x$ and $y$ are the variables on their respective right-hand sides. In the second case, let $C[x, y]$ be the left-hand side, where $x$ is the variable occurring on the right and $y$ is a variable occurring on the left but not the right. Then define $C_1[x] = C[x, a]$ and $C_2[x] = C[x, b]$ where $a$ and $b$ are distinct variables. Now consider the term $C_1[C_2[C_1[C_2[\ldots]]]]$. This transfinitely reduces to both $C_1[C_1[C_1[\ldots]]]$ and $C_2[C_2[C_2[\ldots]]]$, which are distinct but reduce only to themselves. []

We now establish a limited version of the Church–Rosser property. Firstly, we establish an important characterization of hypercollapsing terms.

12.8.3. THEOREM. *If there is a hypercollapsing reduction starting from $t$ then $t$ is hypercollapsing.*

We will prove this with the following series of lemmas. The argument for iTRSs is slightly different from the argument for $\lambda$-calculus.

12.8.4. LEMMA. *In an iTRS, if $t$ has a hypercollapsing reduction and $t \to s$, then $s$ has a hypercollapsing reduction. In the $\lambda$-calculus, this is true if $t \to s$ reduces the head redex.*

PROOF. By the Strip Lemma (applied to $t \to s$ and the strongly convergent initial segments of the given hypercollapsing reduction $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdots$), we can build a tiling diagram for $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdots$ and $t \to s$, except that it will have no right-hand edge. See Figure 12.9. The set of descendants of $r$ in $t'$ must be either a single redex at the root of $t'$, or a set of pairwise disjoint redexes below the root. (In the $\lambda$-calculus, in the latter case the set is empty.)

In the first case, that descendant at the root will cancel out the next root-collapsing step of $t' \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdots$. From that point on, the bottom line of the diagram will be identical to the top, giving a hypercollapsing reduction for $s$.

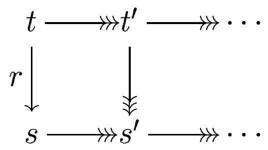


Figure 12.9: Proof of Lemma 12.8.4

If the first case never happens, then the descendants of $r$ are always below the root, and all of the collapsing root-reductions in $t \to\!\!\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow \cdots$ project to collapsing root-reductions in $s \to\!\!\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow \cdots$, again giving a hypercollapsing reduction of $s$. []

For the $\lambda$-calculus we nowneed the following lemma, which carries a finitary result over to the infinitary setting.

12.8.5. Lemma. *In the infinitary $\lambda$-calculus, if a term is reducible to a redex, it is so reducible by head reduction.*

Proof. Let $t$ be reducible to a redex. By the Compression Lemma this can be done in at most $\omega$ steps, and by strong convergence, $t$ must already reduce to a redex $r$ within finitely many steps. A finitely long reduction can only depend on a finite prefix of $t$. More precisely, we can write $t$ as $t_0 = C[t_1, \ldots, t_n]$, where $C[x_1, \ldots, x_n]$ (where $x_1, \ldots, x_n$ are new) is a finite term which reduces to a redex $r_0 = C'[x_1, \ldots, x_n]$, such that $r = C'[t'_1, \ldots, t'_n]$ and each $t'_i$ is a substitution instance of $t_i$. From Barendregt [1984]Lemma 11.4.6, there is a reduction in the finitary $\lambda$-calculus of the form $t_0 \twoheadrightarrow s \twoheadrightarrow r_0$ where $t_0 \twoheadrightarrow s$ consists of head reductions and $s \twoheadrightarrow r_0$ consists of non-head reductions. Since a non-head reduction cannot create a root redex, $s$ is a redex. $t$ therefore reduces to a substitution instance of $s$ by head reduction. []

12.8.6. Lemma. *If $t$ reduces to a collapsing redex, and $t \to\!\!\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow s$ by a reduction containing no collapsing steps at the root, then $s$ reduces to a collapsing redex.*

Proof. We have that $t$ must reduce to a collapsing redex in finitely many steps, none of which are collapsing reductions at the root: $t \twoheadrightarrow r$. In the $\lambda$-calculus, these can be assumed to be head reductions. By the Strip Lemma we can form a complete tiling diagram for $t \twoheadrightarrow r$ and $t \to\!\!\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow s$, reducing both $r$ and $s$ to a term $q$. Because the two sequences contain no collapsing reductions at the root, neither can the entire diagram. Since $r$ is a collapsing redex, so is $q$. Therefore $s$ reduces to a collapsing redex. []

12.8.7. Lemma. *In the $\lambda$-calculus, if $t$ has a hypercollapsing reduction, its head reduction is hypercollapsing.*

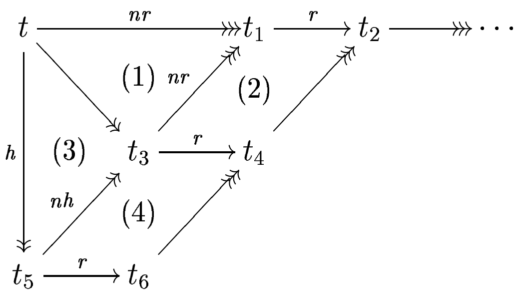


Figure 12.10: Proof of Lemma 12.8.7

Proof. Suppose we have a reduction $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow t_1 \rightarrow t_2 \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdots$, where $t_1 \rightarrow t_2$ is a root reduction. We can construct Figure **??**. The annotations are $r$, reduction at the root, $h$, head reduction, $nr$, not a reduction at the root, $nh$, not a head reduction. Compression lets us assume that $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow t_1$ has length at most $\omega$. By strong convergence, this reduction must arrive at a redex in finitely many steps, giving (1). Subdiagram (2) follows from the Strip Lemma, since a redex at the root is a head redex. Subdiagram (3) is given by Lemma 12.8.5. The term $t_5$ must be a redex. Reducing it and applying the Strip Lemma gives (4). We then have a head reduction of $t$ to a redex $t_6$, followed by a hypercollapsing reduction $t_6 \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow t_4 \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow t_2 \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdots$ Repeating the construction on the latter sequence generates a hypercollapsing head reduction of $t$. []

Proof of Theorem 12.8.3. By the Compression Lemma, we may assume that the given hypercollapsing reduction $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow s$ has length at most $\omega$. Divide it into $t \twoheadrightarrow t' \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow s$, where all the root-reductions take place in $t \twoheadrightarrow t'$. By Lemma 12.8.4, $t'$ has a hypercollapsing reduction. By Lemma 12.8.6, $s$ reduces to a collapsing redex $r$. Repeating the argument on the reduction $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow r$ generates a hypercollapsing reduction from $s$. []

12.8.8. Remark. We note for later reference that nothing in this proof depends on the particular nature of collapsing redexes: the proof applies equally well to the class of reductions which perform infinitely many steps at the root by any given subset of the rewrite rules.

We now investigate the Church–Rosser property and its relation to hypercollapsing terms.

12.8.9. Definition. We write $s \xrightarrow{in\ \mathcal{H}} t$ for a reduction step in a hypercollapsing subterm of $s$, and $s \xrightarrow{out\ \mathcal{H}} t$ for a reduction step outside all hypercollapsing subterms of $s$. Every reduction step is of exactly one of these types. The corresponding types of reduction sequence are written $s \xrightarrow{in\ \mathcal{H}}\!\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t$ and $s \xrightarrow{out\ \mathcal{H}}\!\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t$.

12.8.10. DEFINITION. A *collapsing tower* of redexes in a term is a set of collapsing redexes $\{r_1, r_2, \ldots\}$ such that the descendant of any $r_{i+1}$ by $r_i$ is at the same position as $r_i$.

12.8.11. LEMMA. *Let $R$ be a set of redexes in a term $t$, and $r \in R$. If $R/r$ contains a collapsing tower, so does $R$.*

PROOF. This is trivial for term rewriting, due to the fact that reductions cannot create new containment relations between descendants. For $\lambda$-calculus it is almost trivial: a single reduction step has only a limited capacity to create containment relations. If $u$, $v$, and $w$ are positions of $t$, with respective descendants $u'$, $v'$, and $w'$ by $r$ such that $u' < v' < w'$, then either $u < v$ or $v < w$. An infinite chain of containment relations therefore cannot be created in a single step. []

12.8.12. REMARK. Note that it is possible for a collapsing tower of new redexes to be created in a single step, as demonstrated by the term $(\lambda x.(x(x(x(\ldots)))))(\lambda z.z)$.

12.8.13. LEMMA. *If a set of redexes has no complete development, then it contains a collapsing tower.*

PROOF. Let $R$ be a set of redexes with no complete development. Perform a maximally long development of $R$, reducing a descendant of minimum depth at each step. The depths of successive steps are thus non-decreasing. If they increased to infinity, this would give a strongly convergent complete development, contrary to hypothesis. Therefore after finitely many steps, we must reach a term $t'$ such that every subsequent step is at depth $d$. Furthermore, there must be a position $u$ of $t'$ at depth $d$ at which infinitely many reductions are performed. This implies that there is a collapsing tower at $u$ in $t'$. Let $R'$ be the set of descendants of $R$ in $t'$. By Lemma 12.8.11, $R$ has a collapsing tower. []

12.8.14. LEMMA. *In an orthogonal system, if $s \xrightarrow{out\ \mathcal{H}}\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t_0$ and $s \xrightarrow{out\ \mathcal{H}}\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t_1$, then for some $q$, $t_0 \twoheadrightarrow q$ and $t_1 \twoheadrightarrow q$.*

PROOF. Let the two given reductions be $S$ and $T$. We will prove that $S$ and $T$ have a tiling diagram. We know this is true when $S$ and $T$ are at most one step each. An inductive argument over ordinals requires us to prove it when $S$ is one step and $T$ has limit ordinal length, and when both $S$ and $T$ have limit ordinal length. We may assume that for $S$ and $T$ shorter than those being considered, the theorem is known to hold.

The first of these cases is covered by the Strip Lemma for iTRSs, which does not require the *out* $\mathcal{H}$ restriction. For $\lambda$-calculus, we must show that the set of descendants of (the redex) $S$ by $T$ has a strongly convergent complete

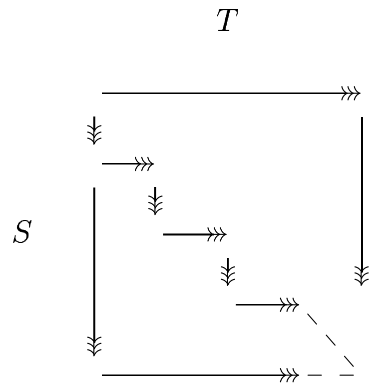


Figure 12.11: Non-strongly-convergent zig-zag path in a tiling diagram

development. Suppose it does not. By Lemma 12.8.13, $S/T$ must contain a collapsing tower. Let it be at position $u$. Consider a non-empty final segment $T' : t \overset{out\,\mathcal{H}}{\twoheadrightarrow} t'$ of $T$ which performs no reductions at positions which are prefixes of $u$ (possible by strong convergence and limit length of $T$). Then $t|_u \overset{out\,\mathcal{H}}{\twoheadrightarrow} t'|_u$. Since $t'|_u$ is hypercollapsing, so is $t|_u$. Therefore $t|_u \overset{out\,\mathcal{H}}{\twoheadrightarrow} t'|_u$ is the empty sequence and $t|_u = t'|_u$. But then $t|_u$ contains a set of descendants of $s$ having no complete development, contradicting the inductive assumption.

We now consider the case where $S$ and $T$ both have limit ordinal length. Assume the notation of Definition 12.6.1 for the terms and sequences appearing in their tiling diagram. We have to show that the right and bottom sides of the diagram are strongly convergent and have the same limit.

Suppose that this is false. By Theorem **??**, this implies that neither the right nor the bottom edge is strongly convergent, and the diagram is neither vertically nor horizontally uniformly convergent. From this we will demonstrate the presence of a reduction within a hypercollapsing subterm in the top edge, contradicting the hypotheses.

From the non-convergence properties, we can construct a zig-zag reduction path through the diagram, starting from the top left corner, and proceeding through infinitely many horizontal and vertical segments, which is not strongly convergent. See Figure 12.11.

Let $d$ be the smallest depth for which such a path can be found containing infinitely many steps of depth $d$. Then some lower right segment of the diagram will contain no steps of depth less than $d$. By choosing a suitable subterm of the top left term of depth $d$, and considering the reduction sequences restricted to that subterm, we can assume without loss of generality that $d = 0$. Finally, by symmetry we can assume that the path contains infinitely many vertical steps of depth 0.

When the right edge of an elementary tile contains a redex of depth 0, either the left edge also contains such a redex, or if it does not, the top

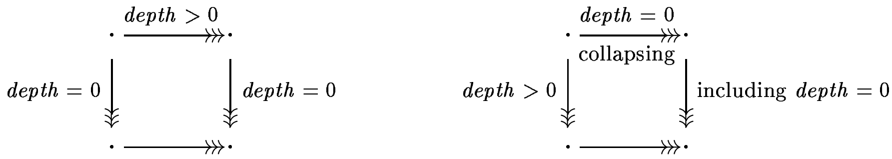


Figure 12.12: The arising of descendants of depth zero

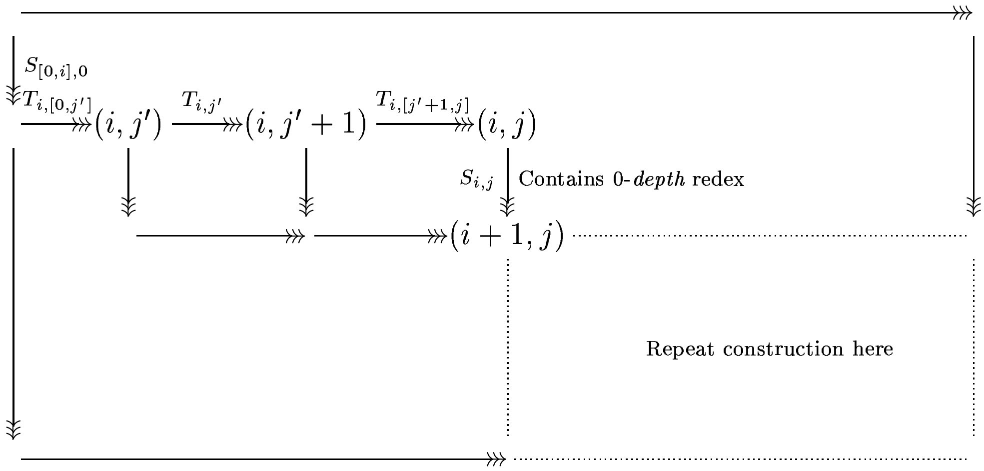


Figure 12.13: Construction for Lemma 12.8.14

edge must contain a collapsing redex of depth 0, as in Figure 12.12. Since $S$ contains no steps of depth zero, wherever there is a vertical redex of depth 0 in the term $t_{(i,j)}$, there must be a $j' < j$ such that $\mathcal{T}_{i,j'}$ includes a collapsing redex of depth 0. See Figure 12.13.

We now change the path so as to begin with $S_{[0,i],0} \cdot T_{i,[0,j]} \cdot S_{i,j}$. This gives us a path which contains a collapsing redex at depth 0, and then continues to later perform infinitely many steps at depth 0. Consider the subdiagram whose top left corner is at $(i+1, j)$. We have a path from $(i+1, j)$ containing infinitely many redexes of depth 0, and therefore a similar path in the diagram from $(i', j)$ for some $i' \geq i$ such that the left edge of that diagram contains no steps of depth 0. Thus we can repeat the argument to show that we can find a path from $(i+1, j)$ onwards that also contains a collapsing step of depth 0.

Therefore the path contains infinitely many collapsing steps of depth 0. By Theorem 12.8.3, this implies that $t_{0,0}$ is hypercollapsing, contradicting the assumption that $S$ and $T$ reduce no redexes in hypercollapsing subterms. []

Note that in both iTRSs and $\lambda$-calculus the reductions from $t_0$ and $t_1$ to $q$ in the above lemma need not be $(out\ \mathcal{H})$-reductions, because there is no particular reason that a descendant of an $(out\ \mathcal{H})$-redex by an $(out\ \mathcal{H})$-redex would be $(out\ \mathcal{H})$.

12.8.15. COROLLARY. *An orthogonal iTRS containing no collapsing rules is transfinitely Church–Rosser.*

PROOF. Since there are no hypercollapsing terms, $\xrightarrow{out\ \mathcal{H}}\!\!\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow$ coincides with $\twoheadrightarrow$.
[]

In the next section we will establish more refined Church–Rosser properties in a more general setting.

## 12.9. Meaningless terms

### 12.9.1. Concepts of meaninglessness

The hypercollapsing terms do not have any obvious meaning. The function symbols $A$ and $B$ in the canonical counterexample both represent the identity function, and the two limit terms $A(A(A(\ldots)))$ and $B(B(B(\ldots)))$ can both be interpreted as least fixed points of the identity. The terms in the other examples are of a similar nature.

In a denotational semantics the hypercollapsing terms would usually be mapped to $\perp$ (called 'bottom'), the undefined element of a semantic domain. So it is natural to consider them 'meaningless' and to identify them with each other. When we do this, we find that a Church–Rosser property is restored, and that direct Lévy equivalence is once again an equivalence relation. These properties are not unique to the set of hypercollapsing terms. The same is true if we instead take certain other sets of terms and identify them with each other. For example, we may define the *root-active* terms to be those terms, each reduct of which can be reduced to a redex. Let $\mathcal{R}$ be the set of root-active terms. This set is also a candidate for a notion of 'undefinedness' in a term rewriting system.

In Kennaway et al. [1999] we have axiomatized some properties which such classes of terms should have, and proved that for classes satisfying them, certain standard theorems relating to the concept of undefinedness can be proved. In the past these theorems have only been proved for particular notions of undefinedness. These theorems are Genericity, an approximate Church–Rosser property, Relative Consistency, and the existence and uniqueness of Böhm trees. The last of these gives rise to denotational semantics for orthogonal term rewriting systems.

One of the axioms requires the following definition.

12.9.1. DEFINITION. Let $t$ be an instance $\sigma(l)$ of the left-hand side $l$ of some rewrite rule. Thus $t$ is a redex. This redex is said to *overlap* its subterm at position $u$ if $u$ is a non-empty position of $l$ and $l \mid u$ is not a variable.

This definition can be stated for the $\lambda$-calculus in more concrete terms: a redex $(\lambda x.s)t$ overlaps just the subterm $\lambda x.s$.

The following are the properties of a set of terms $\mathcal{U}$ which make it a suitable notion of undefinedness.

**Descendants:** Every descendant of a subterm in $\mathcal{U}$ is in $\mathcal{U}$.

**Overlap:** If a redex $t$ overlaps a subterm, and this subterm is in $\mathcal{U}$, then $t \in \mathcal{U}$. For $\lambda$-calculus, this is equivalent to: if $\lambda x.s \in \mathcal{U}$ then $(\lambda x.s)t \in \mathcal{U}$.

**Hypercollapse:** $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{U}$.

**Root-activeness:** $\mathcal{R} \subseteq \mathcal{U}$.

**Indiscernibility:** Define $s \stackrel{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow} t$ if $s$ can be transformed into $t$ by replacing a set of pairwise disjoint of subterms of $s$ in $\mathcal{U}$ by terms in $\mathcal{U}$. If $s \stackrel{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow} t$. then $s \in \mathcal{U}$ if and only if $t \in \mathcal{U}$.

These properties are essentially those studied in Kennaway et al. [1999], with some simplifications. and 5 and to Axioms 1 and 3 for $\lambda$-calculus. Note that since $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{R}$, the root-activeness axiom implies the hypercollapse axiom. For $\lambda$-calculus, both classes are identical, since the $\beta$-rule is a collapsing rule. For more details about classes of terms which have these properties, and many examples, we refer the reader to Kennaway et al. [1999] and Kennaway et al. [1997]. The latter paper demonstrates that many notions of meaningless term that have appeared in the $\lambda$-calculus literature satisfy the axioms. We will explain here the computational motivation for the axioms.

If computation is performed by reduction, then a meaningless term, or a meaningless subterm of a term, should not allow information to be obtained from it by reduction. Thus, its descendants in any computation should also be meaningless.

To extract information from a term $t$, one may reduce $t$; more generally, one may place $t$ in some context $C[\,]$ and reduce that. For example, $Print(t)$ might be intended to reduce to some sort of printable representation of $t$. In order for this to happen, $t$ must be reducible to a term which can be pattern-matched 'from outside', that is, a term which can be overlapped by a redex. If $t$ is meaningless, it should not be possible to extract information from $t$, therefore whenever such a $t$ is overlapped by a redex, that redex should also be meaningless. This gives the overlap property.

The Overlap property can also be related to Knuth–Bendix completion. If we have a rule which rewrites any member of $\mathcal{U}$ to the undefined symbol $\perp$ (as we will do later), then a redex which overlaps a subterm in $\mathcal{U}$ is an example of a conflict between that rule and the rule for the redex. The conflict is resolved if the redex itself is also in $\mathcal{U}$.

We have described above the motivation for considering all the hypercollapsing terms to be meaningless. The root-active terms represent computations which continue indefinitely without ever reaching even a partial final result, since further computation at the root of the term can always take place. These terms may reasonably be considered meaningless. Technically, the root-activeness axiom ensures the existence of Böhm normal forms for all terms. This class includes all the hypercollapsing terms. For $\lambda$-calculus the two classes coincide, since the $\beta$-rule is in effect a collapsing rule.

The indiscernibility axiom expresses that the meaningfulness of a term does not depend on the identity of its meaningless subterms.

The following lemma precisely relates the descendants property to the axioms of Kennaway et al. [1999].

12.9.2. LEMMA. *Consider the following two properties of a class of terms* $\mathcal{U}$*:*

**Closure:** $\mathcal{U}$ *is closed under reduction.*

**Substitution:** $\mathcal{U}$ *is closed under substitution.*

*For an iTRS, the descendants property is equivalent to closure, and for the* $\lambda$*-calculus, it is equivalent to closure and substitution.*

PROOF. In an iTRS, the possible descendants of a subterm are exactly all its possible reducts. In the $\lambda$-calculus, its possible descendants are exactly the possible reducts of all its substitution instances. []

We now state the properties which follow from these axioms.

### 12.9.2. Consequences of meaninglessness

*Genericity*

12.9.3. DEFINITION. A *totally meaningful* term is a term of which no subterm is in $\mathcal{U}$.

Suppose that for every term $s$ in $\mathcal{U}$ and every context $C[\,]$, if $C[s]$ reduces to a totally meaningful term $t$, then $C[r]$ reduces to $t$ for every $r$. Then $\mathcal{U}$ is called a *generic* set.

12.9.4. THEOREM. *In a left-linear system, if* $\mathcal{U}$ *has the descendants and overlap properties, it is generic.*

*Church–Rosser modulo* $\mathcal{U}$

12.9.5. DEFINITION. Given an equivalence relation $\approx$ on the terms of a rewriting system, the reduction relation is said to be *confluent up to* $\approx$ if

$s \twoheadleftarrow \cdot \twoheadrightarrow t$ implies $s \twoheadrightarrow \cdot \approx \cdot \twoheadleftarrow t$. It is said to be *confluent modulo* $\approx$ if $s \twoheadleftarrow \cdot \approx \cdot \twoheadrightarrow t$ implies $s \twoheadrightarrow \cdot \approx \cdot \twoheadleftarrow t$. The reduction relation is said to be *confluent up to (resp. modulo)* $\mathcal{U}$ if it is confluent up to (resp. modulo) $\stackrel{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=}$.

12.9.6. THEOREM. *In an orthogonal system, if $\mathcal{U}$ has the descendants, overlap, hypercollapse, and indiscernibility properties, the system is confluent modulo $\mathcal{U}$.*

For iTRSs, we can prove a weaker confluence property from just one of the axioms.

12.9.7. THEOREM. *In an orthogonal iTRS, if $\mathcal{U}$ has the hypercollapse property, the iTRS is confluent up to $\mathcal{U}$.*

### *Relative Consistency*

12.9.8. DEFINITION. A rewriting system is called *consistent* if it contains two normal forms which are not related by $(\twoheadrightarrow \cup \twoheadleftarrow)^*$.

For a set of terms $\mathcal{U}$, it is called $\mathcal{U}$*-consistent* if there exist two totally meaningful terms (with respect to $\mathcal{U}$) which are not related by $(\twoheadrightarrow \cup \twoheadleftarrow \cup \stackrel{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=})^*$.

The system is *relatively consistent* with respect to $\mathcal{U}$ if for all totally meaningful terms $s$ and $t$, $s(\twoheadrightarrow \cup \stackrel{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=} \cup \twoheadleftarrow)^* t$ implies $s(\twoheadrightarrow \cup \twoheadleftarrow)^* t$.

12.9.9. THEOREM. *In an orthogonal system, if $\mathcal{U}$ has the descendants, overlap, hypercollapse, and indiscernibility properties, the system is relatively consistent with respect to $\mathcal{U}$.*

### *Böhm trees*

In the $\lambda$-calculus, Böhm trees are used to represent 'normal forms' of terms which may be infinite and have undefined subterms (Barendregt [1984]). Roughly speaking, they are finite or infinite $\lambda$-expressions containing no redexes, and which may contain an extra nullary function symbol $\perp$ to represent undefined subterms.

We generalize this notion to iTRSs and infinitary $\lambda$-calculus provided with a class of undefined terms. In this setting, Böhm trees will be exactly normal forms with respect to transfinite reduction by the rules of the system, together with an extra rule rewriting undefined terms to $\perp$.

12.9.10. DEFINITION. Given a set of undefined terms $\mathcal{U}$, add a new nullary symbol $\perp$ to an infinitary system, and define $\mathcal{U}_\perp$ to be the set of terms $t$

(in the extended system) for which some replacement of occurrences of $\bot$ by terms in $\mathcal{U}$ (a $\bot$-*instance* of $t$) can yield a term in $\mathcal{U}$.

*Böhm reduction* (over a set $\mathcal{U}$) is reduction by the rules of the original system together with the $\bot$-rule: $t \to \bot$ if $t \in \mathcal{U}_\bot$ and $t \neq \bot$. We write $\to_{\mathcal{U},\bot}$ for reduction by the $\bot$-rule, and $\to_{\mathcal{B}_\mathcal{U}}$ for Böhm reduction. When $\mathcal{U}$ is clear from context we may write $\to_\bot$ and $\to_\mathcal{B}$.

A *Böhm tree* over a set $\mathcal{U}$ is a normal form of the extended system with respect to Böhm reduction.

A *Böhm tree* of a term $t$ over $\mathcal{U}$ is a normal form of $t$ by Böhm reduction over $\mathcal{U}$.

12.9.11. THEOREM. *In an orthogonal system, if $\mathcal{U}$ has the root-activeness property, then every term has a Böhm tree. If $\mathcal{U}$ also has the descendants, overlap, and indiscernibility properties, then every term has a unique Böhm tree.*

12.9.12. EXAMPLE. When $\mathcal{U}$ is the set of terms having no head normal form, the Böhm tree of a term as defined above is the classical Böhm tree defined in Barendregt [1984]. When it consists of the terms having no weak head normal form, it gives the Lévy–Longo trees (Lévy [1976], Longo [1983]), and when it consists of the root-active terms, it gives the Berarducci trees (Berarducci [1994]).

12.9.13. COROLLARY. *Every orthogonal system has the* UN *property.*

Undefined terms cast a further light on the relation between weak convergence and strong convergence. Write $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow^w s$ for a weakly convergent reduction, and define *weak Böhm reduction* to be the union of weak reduction and $\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow_\bot$.

12.9.14. THEOREM. (i) *Assume that $\mathcal{U}$ has the root-activeness property. If $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow^w s$, then the sequence of depths of out $\mathcal{U}$ steps tends to infinity.*

(ii) *Assume that $\mathcal{U}$ has the root-activeness, descendants, overlap, and indiscernibility properties. If $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow^w s$, then there are $s'$ and $s''$ such that $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow s'' \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\rightarrow_\bot s' \leftarrow\!\!\!\!\twoheadleftarrow_\bot s$.*

12.9.15. COROLLARY. *Theorem 12.9.11 also holds for weak Böhm reduction.*

### 12.9.3. Proofs

Our proofs of these properties are in the spirit of Barendregt [1984] Chapter 15 for the finitary $\lambda$-calculus. The proofs depend on a collection of commutation properties of certain relations constructed from $\mathcal{U}$.

Similarly to Definition 12.8.9, we write $\xrightarrow{in\,\mathcal{U}}$ and $\xrightarrow{out\,\mathcal{U}}$ to denote reduction steps inside a subterm of $\mathcal{U}$ or outside all such subterms.

12.9.16. DEFINITION. (i) Let $A$ be a set of pairwise disjoint positions of subterms of $s$ in $\mathcal{U}$. $s \xrightarrow{\mathcal{U}}_A t$ if $s$ can be transformed into $t$ by replacing thosesubterms by arbitrary terms.

(ii) With $A$ and $s$ as before, $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_A t$ if $s$ can be transformed into $t$ by replacing the subterms of $s$ at $A$ by terms in $\mathcal{U}$. We omit $A$ where it is not important to identify it. (This coincides with the definition of $\overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}$ introduced in the statement of the indiscernibility property.)

(iii) $\overset{\mathcal{U}}{=}$ is the transitive closure of the union of $\overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_A$ over all $A$.

12.9.17. LEMMA. *In any rewriting system, $\mathcal{U}$ has the indiscernibility property if and only if $\overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}$ is transitive.*

PROOF. Suppose that $\mathcal{U}$ has indiscernibility and $r \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_A s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_{A'} t$. Let $A''$ be the set of minimal members of $A \cup A'$. Indiscernibility implies that every subterm of $r$, $s$, and $t$ at positions in $A''$ is in $\mathcal{U}$. From this it follows that $r \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_{A''} t$.

Now suppose that $\overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}$ is transitive, $s \in \mathcal{U}$, $t \notin \mathcal{U}$, and $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_A t$. Let the minimum depth of members of $A$ be $d$. $s$ and $t$ are identical down to that depth. Choose any member $p$ of $A$. Trivially, we have $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow} s|p \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow} t|p$, since all of these terms are in $\mathcal{U}$. By transitivity and $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow} t$ we obtain $s|p \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_B t \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_C t|p$ for some sets $B$ and $C$. Since $t \notin \mathcal{U}$, $B$ and $C$ cannot be empty or contain $\langle\,\rangle$. Therefore $s|p$, $t$, and $t|p$ all have the same function symbol at the root, and their immediate subterms must all be respectively related by $\overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}$. Let $s|p = F(s_1, \ldots, s_n)$ and $t|p = F(t_1, \ldots, t_n)$. Then $s_i \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_{D_i} t_i$ for all $i$ and some $D_i$. Define $D = \{p.i.q \mid q \in D_i\}$. Every member of $D$ has depth greater than $d$. Letting $E = (A - \{p\}) \cup D$, we have $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_E t$.

If we perform this transformation for every $p \in A$ of depth $d$, we obtain a set $A'$ of positions of minimum depth $d' > d$, such that $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow}_{A'} t$. But then $s$ and $t$ are identical down to depth $d'$, so by repeating the argument, they are identical down to an arbitrarily large depth, i.e. $s = t$, contradiction. []

12.9.18. LEMMA. *In a left-linear system, if $\mathcal{U}$ has the descendants and indiscernibility properties then $s \overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow} t$ implies $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow} t$.*

PROOF. Suppose $s \overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow} t$. Let $A$ be the set of positions of maximal subterms of $s$ in $\mathcal{U}$. Suppose that some step of the sequence is performed at a position of which no member of $A$ is a prefix. There must be a first such step $s' \xrightarrow{in\,\mathcal{U}} t'$. Let its position be $u$. Since this is an (*in* $\mathcal{U}$)-step, $s'|_v \in \mathcal{U}$ for some prefix $v$ of $u$. Since all previous steps are within subterms at positions in $A$, the descendants property implies that $s'|_v \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow} s|_v$. By the indiscernibility property, $s|_v \in \mathcal{U}$. But this implies that some member of $A$ is a prefix of $u$, contrary to the choice of $u$. Therefore the entire reduction of $s$ to $t$ happens within the subterms at positions in $A$. By descendants, those subterms of $t$ are also in $\mathcal{U}$, and $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow} t$. []

12.9.19. LEMMA. *In a left-linear system, assume $\mathcal{U}$ has the overlap property.*

(i) *If* $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\leftarrow} \cdot \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t$*, then* $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdot \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\leftarrow} t$.

(ii) *If* $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow} \cdot \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t$*, then* $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdot \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\longleftrightarrow} t$.

(iii) *If* $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=} \cdot \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t$*, then* $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdot \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=} t$.

PROOF. (i) Suppose $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\leftarrow}_A r \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t$. By the overlap property, each reduction in the sequence $r \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t$ must reduce a redex whose pattern lies entirely outside the descendants of the positions in $A$. This implies that the sequence of positions of reductions in that sequence defines a reduction sequence starting from any $s$ for which $r \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\rightarrow} s$. (The hypothesis of left-linearity is required to ensure that those positions are still the positions of redexes after the substitution $r \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\rightarrow} s$.) Corresponding members $r'$ and $s'$ of the two sequences are related by $r' \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\rightarrow}_{A'} s'$, where $A'$ is the set of descendants of $A$ in $r$.

(ii) This is established by a proof similar to the previous item.

(iii) Immediate from the previous item. []

12.9.20. LEMMA. *In a left-linear system, assume $\mathcal{U}$ has the descendants and overlap properties.*

(i) *If* $s \overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} \cdot \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t$ *then* $s \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} \cdot \overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t$.

(ii) *If* $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow t$ *then* $s \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} \cdot \overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t$.

(iii) *If* $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow t$ *and* $t$ *is totally meaningful then* $s \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t$.

PROOF. (i) Let $A$ be the set of minimal positions of undefined subterms of $s$. Then the reduction $s \overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} r$ consists of an interleaving of reductions of each of those subterms. The proof then follows the same pattern as for that of Lemma 12.9.19(i). The required reductions of the form $s' \overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} r'$ are constructed by applying the same reductions to the subterms of $s'$ at $A'$ as were applied to their ancestors in $s$.

(ii) If $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow t$ consists of an alternation of finitely many $\overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow}$ and $\overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow}$ segments, then this is established by a finite number of applications of part (i). If there are infinitely many segments, a more complex argument is required. First, we use the compression property to assume without loss of generality that $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow t$ has length $\omega$, and hence that it can be expressed as an alternation of only $\omega$ $\overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow}$ and $\overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow}$ segments, each finitely long. We can then use the result of the previous part to construct all of Figure 12.14 except its right-hand edge. The given sequence forms the zig-zag edge of the diagram, and

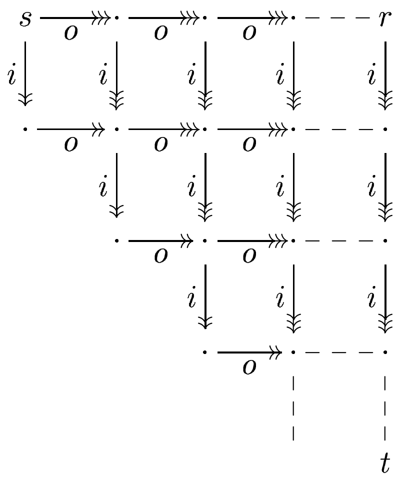


Figure 12.14: Diagram for the proof of Lemma 12.9.20(ii); $i = in\ \mathcal{U}$, $o = out\ \mathcal{U}$.

each square is given by part (i). To construct the right edge, the reduction of $r$ to $t$, we must show that each of the horizontal sequences is strongly convergent, and that their limits can be joined by suitable vertical segments, whose concatenation will strongly converge to $t$.

From the construction of part (i), Lemma12.5.12, each step of each horizontal sequence of the diagram is at the same depth as the corresponding horizontal step in the zig-zag. Since by hypothesis the latter is strongly convergent, so is the former.

Each segment of the right edge exists by the same argument as used in part (i).

Finally, we prove strong convergence of the whole right edge. Choose any depth $d$. By strong convergence of the given sequence, there is an $n$ such that every step of the zig-zag after the $n$th $\xrightarrow{out\ \mathcal{U}}\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow$ segment has depth greater than $d$. Therefore every step of the top row after the $n$th segment has depth greater than $d$, as do all the horizontal segments below those. Therefore every segment of the right edge after the $n$th is the projection of one sequence of depth greater than $d$ over another, and therefore has depth greater than $d$. Therefore the right edge is strongly convergent.

Furthermore, after $n$ segments, the terms of the right edge are within a distance of $2^{-d}$ of the corresponding terms of the zig-zag. Therefore the right edge has the same limit as the given sequence, $t$.

(iii) From the previous part we conclude that $s \xrightarrow{out\ \mathcal{U}}\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow \cdot \xrightarrow{in\ \mathcal{U}}\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t$. But since $t$ is totally meaningful, the descendants property implies that the $\xrightarrow{in\ \mathcal{U}}\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow$-reduction must be empty. []

PROOF OF THEOREM 12.9.4. Suppose $s \in U$, $t$ is totally meaningful, $C[\,]$ is a context, and $C[s] \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow t$.

$$\begin{array}{rcll} C[r] \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\leftarrow} C[s] \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow t & \Rightarrow & C[r] \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\leftarrow} C[s] \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t & \text{by Lemma 12.9.20(iii)} \\ & \Rightarrow & C[r] \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdot \overset{\mathcal{U}}{\leftarrow} t & \text{by Lemma 12.9.19(i)} \end{array}$$

Sinc e $t$ is totally meaningful, $C[r] \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow t$. []

12.9.21. LEMMA. *In a left-linear system, assume $\mathcal{U}$ has the descendants, overlap, and indiscernibility properties.*

(i) *If $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=} \cdot \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow t$ then $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdot \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=} t$.*

(ii) *If $s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=} \cdot \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow t$ and $t$ is totally meaningful then $s \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t$.*

PROOF. (i)

$$\begin{array}{rcll} s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=} \cdot \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow t & \Rightarrow & s \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=} \cdot \overset{out\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} \cdot \overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t & \text{by Lemma 12.9.20(ii)} \\ & \Rightarrow & s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdot \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=} \cdot \overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow} t & \text{by Lemma 12.9.19(iii)} \\ & \Rightarrow & s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdot \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=} t & \text{by Lemma 12.9.18} \end{array}$$

(ii) From the part (i), since a totally meaningful term is related by $\overset{\mathcal{U}}{=\!=}$ only to itself. []

12.9.22. LEMMA (postponement). *In a left-linear system, if $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow_{\mathcal{B}} t$ then $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow \cdot \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow_{\perp} t$. (No properties of $\mathcal{U}$ need be assumed.)*

PROOF. Let the steps of $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow_{\mathcal{B}} t$ be $s_\beta \rightarrow_{\mathcal{B}} s_{\beta+1}$, where $s = s_0$ and $t = s_\alpha$.

Define a new sequence by transfinite induction thus.

**Base case:** $s'_0 = s_0$.

**Successor case:** Suppose $s'_\beta$ has been defined. If $s_\beta \rightarrow_{\mathcal{B}} s_{\beta+1}$ is a $\perp$-reduction, define $s'_{\beta+1} = s'_\beta$. Otherwise let it be a reduction by a rewrite rule applied at position $u$. Define $s'_\beta \rightarrow s'_{\beta+1}$ by reduction at $u$.

**Limit case:** If $s'_\beta$ has been defined for all $\beta$ less than a limit ordinal $\lambda$, define $s'_\lambda$ to be the limit of the sequence.

To prove that this defines a reduction sequence, we must show that in the successor case, $s'_\beta$ has a redex at $u$, and in the limit case, the limit $s'_\lambda$ exists. We will also need to know that for all $\beta$, $s'_\beta \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow_{\perp} s_\beta$. These can be proved simultaneously by induction. Clearly, if $s'_\beta \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow_{\perp} s_\beta$ and $s_\beta \rightarrow s_{\beta+1}$, then $s'_\beta$ has a redex everywhere that $s_\beta$ does, and $s'_{\beta+1} \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow_{\perp} s_{\beta+1}$. Since $s'_\beta \rightarrow s'_{\beta+1}$ takes place at the same place as $s_\beta \rightarrow s_{\beta+1}$, the constructed sequence is strongly convergent, and therefore $s'_\lambda$ exists.

This also shows that $s'_\alpha \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow_{\perp} s_\alpha = t$. []

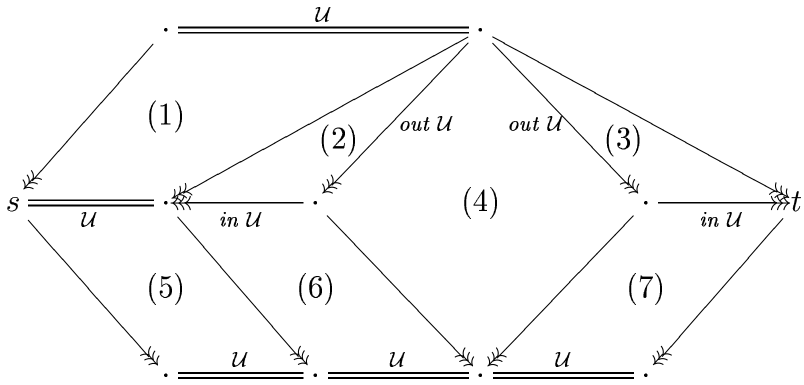


Figure 12.15: Proof of confluence up to $\mathcal{U}$ (Theorem **??**)

Proof of Theorem **??**. Suppose $s \twoheadleftarrow\!\!\twoheadleftarrow \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=} \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t$. We construct Figure **??**. Subdiagram (1) is given by the descendants, overlap, and indiscernibility properties, and Lemma 12.9.21(i). Subdiagram s (2) and (3) are given by the descendants and overlap properties, and Lemma 12.9.20(ii). Subdiagram (4) is given by the hypercollapse property and Lemma 12.8.14. The descendants and indiscernibility properties imply that $\overset{in\,\mathcal{U}}{\twoheadleftarrow\!\!\twoheadleftarrow} \subseteq \overset{\mathcal{U}}{=}$, so subdiagrams (5), (6), and (7) follow from the same hypotheses as (1). []

Proof of Theorem 12.9.7. This requires quite a complicated argument. We shall give an outline here and refer the reader to Kennaway et al. [1995] and Kennaway et al. [1997] for the details.

First, we transform the system into a system which is not merely non-collapsing, but also depth-preserving, that is, one in which the depth of any occurrence of a variable in the right-hand side of a rule is at least as great as its depth in the left-hand side. This is done by inserting a new nullary function symbol $\epsilon$ into the right-hand sides as necessary to make this so, and adding further rules with $\epsilon$s on the left-hand side as necessary to preserve the reduction relation. All reductions in such systems are strongly convergent, and orthogonal systems are confluent. Not all terms of the resulting system are translatable back to the original system: subterms of the form $\epsilon(\epsilon(\epsilon(\ldots)))$ cannot be translated. These subterms arise only from reductions in hypercollapsing subterms.

Thus, if we are given two reductions $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t_0$ and $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t_1$ in the original system, we can transform these into reductions $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t'_0$ and $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t'_1$ in the transformed system, extend them by confluence to a common endpoint $r$, and translate the resulting sequences back to sequences $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t_0 \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\twoheadrightarrow r_0$ and $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\twoheadrightarrow t_1 \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\twoheadrightarrow r_1$ by omitting from $t_i \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\twoheadrightarrow r$ all reductions within hypercollapsing subterms. The resulting $r_0$ and $r_1$ are related by $\overset{\mathcal{H}}{=}$. any larger $\mathcal{U}$. []

Proof of Theorem 12.9.9. The hypotheses, together with Theorem **??**, show that if $s$ and $t$ are in the relation $(\twoheadrightarrow \cup \stackrel{\mathcal{U}}{=} \cup \twoheadleftarrow)^*$ then for some $s'$ and $t'$, $s \twoheadrightarrow s' \stackrel{\mathcal{U}}{=} t' \twoheadleftarrow t$. But since $s$ and $t$ are totally meaningful, so are $s'$ and $t'$, which must therefore be identical. []

12.9.23. Lemma. *Let $\mathcal{U}$ have the indiscernibility property. If some $\bot$-instance of $t$ is in $\mathcal{U}$, then every $\bot$-instance is.*

*For each of the properties of descendants, overlap, hypercollapse, root-activeness, and indiscernibility, if $\mathcal{U}$ has that property, then so does $\mathcal{U}_\bot$.*

Proof. Let $t'$ and $t''$ be $\bot$-instances of $t$. Then they differ only by substitution of subterms in $\mathcal{U}$. By indiscernibility, $t' \in \mathcal{U}$ if and only if $t'' \in \mathcal{U}$.

For the second part, we prove the overlap property as an example. Proofs for the others are equally simple. Let $t \in \mathcal{U}_\bot$, and let $C[t]$ be a redex whose pattern includes the root of $t$. Let $t' \in \mathcal{U}$ result from a substitution of members of $\mathcal{U}$ for $\bot$ in $t$. Let $C'[\ ]$ result from $C[\ ]$ by making some substitution of members of $\mathcal{U}$ for occurrences of $\bot$. Then $C'[t']$ is a redex whose pattern overlaps the root of $t'$. By the overlap property for $\mathcal{U}$, $C'[t'] \in \mathcal{U}$. Therefore $C[t] \in \mathcal{U}_\bot$. []

Proof of Theorem 12.9.11. From root-activeness it follows that every $\xrightarrow{out\,\mathcal{U}}\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow$-reduction is strongly convergent, and that therefore every term $s$ is reducible by ordinary reduction to a term $t$ containing no redexes outside subterms in $\mathcal{U}$. Reducing all maximal such subterms by the $\bot$-rule gives a Böhm tree. Therefore every term has a Böhm tree.

For uniqueness, see Figure 12.16. Suppose that $s \to_{\mathcal{B}} t_0$ and $s \to_{\mathcal{B}} t_1$. By existence, these reductions can be extended to Böhm normal forms $u_0$ and $u_1$. Lemma 12.9.22 gives us subdiagrams (1) and (3) of the figure, where $v_0$ and $v_1$ have no redexes (by the ordinary rules) outside subterms in $\mathcal{U}$. Subdiagram (2) is given by Theorem **??**. The *in* $\mathcal{U}$ property of the reductions to $w_0$ and $w_1$ follows from the just-mentioned property of $v_0$ and $v_1$. By the indiscernibility property, $\xrightarrow{\bot}\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow$ is contained in $\stackrel{\mathcal{U}_\bot}{=}$. By the descendants and indiscernibility properties, and Lemma 12.9.18, $\xrightarrow{in\,\mathcal{U}}\!\!\!\twoheadrightarrow$ is contained in $\stackrel{\mathcal{U}_\bot}{=}$. By the indiscernibility property and Lemma 12.9.17, $\xleftrightarrow{\mathcal{U}_\bot}$ is transitive. Therefore $u_0 \stackrel{\mathcal{U}_\bot}{=} u_1$. Since these are Böhm normal forms, $u_0 = u_1$. []

Proof of Corollary 12.9.13. The UN property follows from Theorem 12.9.11, since normal forms are Böhm trees. []

Proof of Theorem 12.9.14.

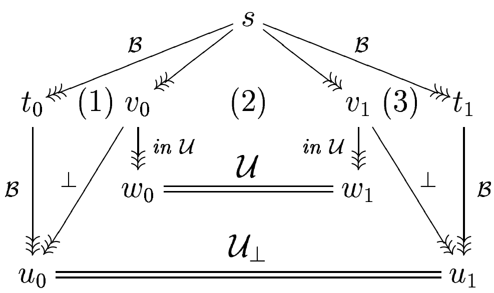


Figure 12.16: Proof of UN for Böhm reduction(Theorem 12.9.11)

(i) Given a reduction $t_0 \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow^w t_\alpha$, let $u$ be a position of minimum depth such that every final segment of the sequence contains a reduction at $u$. Then some final segment, starting from some $t_\beta$, will contain no reductions at any proper prefix of $u$. Therefore $t_\beta|u$ reduces to $t_\alpha|u$ by a weakly convergent reduction with infinitely many steps at the root. By the root-activeness and Theorem 12.8.3 (as extended by Remark **??**), every term of that sequence is in $\mathcal{U}$, and hence the corresponding steps of the original sequence are not *out* $\mathcal{U}$ steps.

(ii) Reduce each term $t_\beta$ in the sequence $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow^w s$ to its normal form $t'_\beta$ with respect to $\rightarrow_\bot$. Such reductions are strongly convergent. Theorem **??**, applied to $t_\beta \rightarrow t_{\beta+1}$ and $t_\beta \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow_\bot t'_\beta$, implies that if $t_\beta \xrightarrow{out\,\mathcal{U}} t_{\beta+1}$ then $t'_\beta \xrightarrow{out\,\mathcal{U}} \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow_\bot t'_{\beta+1}$, the first step being at the same position. By part (i), this gives a strongly convergent Böhm reduction from $t$ to $s'$, where $s \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow_\bot s'$. Lemma 12.9.22 implies there is a reduction $t \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow s'' \twoheadrightarrow\!\!\!\!\!\rightarrow_\bot s'$.

[]

Proof of Corollary 12.9.15. Theorem 12.9.14 implies that every weak Böhm reduction can be extended to a reduction with the same initial and final terms as some strongly convergent Böhm reduction. The UN property for the latter therefore implies UN for the former. []

### 12.9.4. Examples of classes of meaningless terms

For orthogonal systems, Kennaway et al. [1999] presents four candidates for notions of undefinedness in term rewriting systems: the opaque terms, the $\omega$-undefined terms, $\mathcal{H}$, and $\mathcal{R}$.

Call a term *opaque* if no reduct of the term can be overlapped by a redex. That is, no reduct of the term is an instance of a proper non-variable subterm of a left-hand side. This class is motivated by the idea that a meaningful term should be capable of being pattern-matched 'from outside', as described

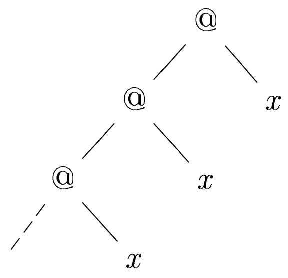


Figure 12.17: A paradoxical infinite term

in our justification for the overlap property. The overlap property requires that if a meaningless term is pattern-matched, the outer redex must also be meaningless. The class of opaque terms is based on the stronger idea, that the meaningless terms are precisely the terms which can never be pattern-matched.

A finite term is *$\omega$-undefined* if all terms reachable from it can be decomposed into 'redex compatible' parts. We add a nullary symbol $\omega$, and define a partial ordering on terms containing $\omega$ by stipulating that $\omega \leq t$ for all $t$, and that all function symbols are monotonic. Say that a term $t$ (which may contain $\omega$) is a *partial redex* if $t \leq t'$ for some redex $t'$. Define the $\omega$-rule: $t \to \omega$ if $t$ is a partial redex other than $\omega$. It is easy to show that every finite term $t$ has a unique normal form $\omega(t)$ by this rule. For an infinite term $t$, define $\omega(t)$ to be the least upper bound of $\omega(t')$ for all finite terms $t' < t$. A term $t$ is $\omega$-undefined if for every reduct $t'$ (by the ordinary rewrite rules of the system) of every instance of $t$, $\omega(t') = \omega$. This notion is based on ideas from Huet and Lévy [1991]. The $\omega$-rule embodies the idea of ignoring the right-hand sides of the given rewrite rules.

In an orthogonal system, each of these classes satisfies all the axioms, except that $\mathcal{H}$ does not always have the root-activeness property. The properties all either are immediate from the definitions, or follow by a simple argument from orthogonality. The theorems therefore all apply, except that Böhm trees are not necessarily unique for the class $\mathcal{H}$. See Kennaway et al. [1999] for proofs, and counterexamples for left-linear, non-orthogonal systems.

For $\lambda$-calculus, the same paper demonstrates that many concepts of undefinedness that have appeared in the literature satisfy all the axioms.

## 12.10. A refinement of infinitary lambda calculus

Some of the infinite $\lambda$-terms as defined earlier have paradoxical properties. Consider the term $(((\ldots x)x)x)x$. See Figure 12.17. This term has a combination of properties which is rather strange from the point of view of finitary $\lambda$-calculus. By the usual definition of head normal form – being of the form

$\lambda x_1 \ldots \lambda x_n . y t_1 \ldots t_m$ – it is not in head normal form. By an alternative formulation, trivially equivalent in the finitary case, it is in head normal form – it has no head redex. It is also a normal form, yet it is unsolvable (that is, there are no terms $t_1, \ldots, t_n$ such that $t\,t_1 \ldots t_n$ reduces to $I$). The problem is that application is in some sense strict in its first argument, and so an infinitely left-branching chain of applications has no obvious meaning. We can say much the same for an infinite chain of abstractions $\lambda x_1 . \lambda x_2 . \lambda x_3 . \ldots$

This suggests that we consider a different notion of depth, where all the nodes on the left spine of a term are considered to have depth 0. More generally, we can consider the three different contexts which the immediate subterms of a $\lambda$-term can have: the body of an abstraction, and the left and right components of an application. For each of these contexts, we can define the depth of the position of the subterm as either 0 or 1. This gives eight different notions of depth. We can label each with a string of three numbers *abc*. We then have a depth measure parameterized by $a$, $b$, and $c$ measuring the length of any position of a term:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} D^{abc}(t, \langle\,\rangle) & = & 0 \\ D^{abc}(\lambda x.t, 1 \cdot u) & = & a + D^{abc}(t, u) \\ D^{abc}(st, 1 \cdot u) & = & b + D^{abc}(s, u) \\ D^{abc}(st, 2 \cdot u) & = & c + D^{abc}(t, u) \end{array}$$

Using $D^{abc}$ as the notion of depth in Definition 12.4.2 gives eight different metrics $d^{abc}$ on the space of finite terms, each of which has a different metric completion. The metric $d^{111}$ is the metric we have been using up to now, and completion gives all possible infinite terms. Completion using each of the other metrics excludes all those infinite terms which contain an infinite path along which the depth does not increase to infinity. At the opposite extreme to $D^{111}$, $D^{000}$ allows no infinite terms at all and gives the discrete metric $d^{000}$ on finite terms. There are no strongly convergent infinite reductions. This is the ordinary finitary $\lambda$-calculus. Of the other six, only two have good properties. Measure 001 considers all nodes on the left spine of a $\lambda$-term to have depth 0, and therefore excludes terms having an infinite left spine. The examples we gave earlier of paradoxical terms are all excluded. Measure 101 has connexions with the lazy $\lambda$-calculus of Abramsky and Ong [1993]. It excludes infinite left-branching chains of applications, but allows infinitely nested lambdas.

Each depth measure gives a corresponding notion of Böhm tree, equivalent to those in Example 12.9.12.

12.10.1. Exercise. In the definition of $D^{abc}$, we could take $a$, $b$, and $c$ to be any non-negative numbers. Prove that the topology of the resulting complete metric space depends only on which of these numbers are non-zero.

The appropriate generalization of the class of root-active terms is the class of 0-*active* terms: those terms whose every reduct reduces to a term having a redex at depth 0. For the depth measures 111, 001, and 101, the class of 0-active terms satisfies all the axioms for a class of undefined terms. This immediately gives us the genericity property, confluence up to equality of 0-active subterms, relative consistency, and the existence and uniqueness of Böhm trees. For every other depth measure, the class violates at least one axiom.

12.10.2. EXERCISE. For each depth measure and each axiom for a class of meaningless terms, either prove that the class of 0-active terms for that measure satisfies that axiom, or exhibit a counterexample. With these results, verify the above claim.

The counterexample we gave to the Strip Lemma for the $\lambda$-calculus with measure 111 also works for the measure 101. It fails for the depth measure 001, since the infinite term $s \equiv (\lambda y.s)w$ does not exist for that measure, but we can find a similar counterexample. Let $t$ be (as with the earlier example) a finite term with the property that $tx \twoheadrightarrow x(tx)$ (by a finitely long $\beta$-reduction). Consider the term $tr$, where $r \equiv \lambda y.((\lambda x.x)(\lambda w.y))$. The term $tr$ reduces to $r(tr)$, and then to $(\lambda x.x)(\lambda w.tr)$, and so in infinitely many steps to an infinite term $s \equiv (\lambda x.x)(\lambda w.s)$. The same term also reduces in one step to $t(\lambda yw.y)$. Every reduct of $s$ contains subterms of the form $\lambda x.x$, because it is not possible to reduce all of these in a strongly convergent reduction. However, no reduct of $t(\lambda yw.y)$ contains such subterms. They therefore have no common reduct, and the Strip Lemma diagram cannot be completed.

## Historical remarks

The basic reference on transfinite rewriting is Kennaway et al. [1995] for term rewriting, and Kennaway et al. [1997] is that for the $\lambda$-calculus. The concepts have yet to be extended to higher-order rewriting systems. The link between transfinite term rewriting and term graph rewriting was explored in Kennaway et al. [1994]. The general axioms for notions of undefinedness in rewriting systems were established in Kennaway et al. [1999].

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