Decidable Theories of Cayley-graphs*

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Abstract. We prove that a connected graph of bounded degree with only finitely many orbits has a decidable MSO-theory if and only if it is context-free. This implies that a group is context-free if and only if its Cayley-graph has a decidable MSO-theory. On the other hand, the first-order theory of the Cayley-graph of a group is decidable if and only if the group has a decidable word problem. For Cayley-graphs of monoids we prove the following closure properties. The class of monoids whose Cayley-graphs have decidable MSO-theories is closed under free products. The class of monoids whose Cayley-graphs have decidable first-order theories is closed under general graph products. For the latter result on first-order theories we introduce a new unfolding construction, the factorized unfolding, that generalizes the tree-like structures considered by Walukiewicz. We show and use that it preserves the decidability of the first-order theory.
Most of the proofs are omitted in this paper, they can be found in the full version [17].

1 Introduction

The starting point of our consideration was a result by Muller and Schupp [21] showing that the Cayley-graph of any context-free group has a decidable monadic second-order theory (MSO-theory). The questions we asked ourselves were: is there a larger class of groups with this property? Can one show similar results for first-order theories (FO-theories) of Cayley-graphs? Are there analogous connections in monoid theory? Similarly to Muller and Schupp's work, this led to the investigation of graph classes with decidable theories that now forms a large part of the paper at hand. Due to potential applications for the verification of infinite state systems, recently such graph classes have received increasing interest, see [28] for an overview.

Courcelle showed that the class of graphs of tree-width at most b has a decidable MSO-theory (for any $b \in \mathbb{N}$) [5]. A partial converse was proved by Seese [24]

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(in conjunction with another result by Courcelle [6]) showing that any class of graphs of bounded degree whose MSO-theory is decidable is of bounded tree-width. On the other hand, there are even trees with an undecidable FO-theory. We therefore restrict attention to connected graphs of bounded degree whose automorphism group has only finitely many orbits. If such a graph G has finite tree-width, then it is context-free (Theorem 3.1). Our proof of this fact is based on the construction of a tree decomposition with quite strong combinatorial properties, using techniques from the theory of groups acting on graphs [10]. By another result of Muller and Schupp [21], G has a decidable MSO-theory.

Using this general result on graphs, we can show that Muller and Schupp's result on Cayley-graphs of context-free groups is optimal: any finitely generated group whose Cayley-graph has a decidable MSO-theory is context-free (Corollary 4.1). A similar result will be also shown for first-order logic: the FO-theory of the Cayley-graph of a group is decidable if and only if the word problem of the group is decidable (Proposition 4.2). One implication is simple since one can express by a first-order sentence that a given word labels a cycle in the Cayley-graph. The other implication follows from Gaifman's locality theorem for first-order logic [14] which allows to restrict quantifications over elements of the Cayley-graph to certain spheres around the unit.

These results for groups do not carry over to monoids, e.g., there is a monoid with a decidable word problem whose Cayley-graph has an undecidable FO-theory (Proposition 6.1). On the other hand, we are able to prove some closure properties of the classes of monoids whose Cayley-graphs have decidable theories. Using a theorem of Walukiewicz [31] (the original statement goes back to work by Stupp [27], Shelah [26], Muchnik, and Semenov, see [31] for an account) on MSO-theories of unfoldings, we prove that the class of finitely generated monoids whose Cayley-graphs have decidable MSO-theories is closed under free products (Theorem 6.3(2)). Moreover, we show that the class of finitely generated monoids whose Cayley-graphs have decidable FO-theories is closed under graph products (Theorem 6.3(1)) which is a well-known construction in mathematics, see e.g. [15, 30]; it generalizes both, the free and the direct product of monoids. In order to show this closure property, we introduce the notion of a factorized unfolding in Section 5, which is also of independent interest (see the discussion in Section 5): Walukiewicz's unfolding of a structure $\mathcal{A}$ consists of the set of words over the set of elements of $\mathcal{A}$. This set of words is equipped with the natural tree structure. Hence the successors of any node of the tree can be identified with the elements of $\mathcal{A}$ and can therefore naturally be endowed with the structure of $\mathcal{A}$. Basically, a factorized unfolding is the quotient of this structure with respect to Mazurkiewicz's trace equivalence (in fact, it is a generalization of this quotient). We show that the FO-theory of a factorized unfolding can be reduced to the FO-theory of the underlying structure (Theorem 5.7). The proof of this result uses techniques of Ferrante and Rackoff [13] and a thorough analysis of factorized unfoldings using ideas from the theory of Mazurkiewicz traces [8]. From this result on factorized unfoldings, we obtain the closure under graph products similarly to the closure under free products.

Our results on FO-theories of Cayley-graphs should be also compared with the classical results about FO-theories of monoids: the FO-theory of a monoid $\mathcal{M}$ contains all true first-order statements about $\mathcal{M}$ that are built over the signature containing the monoid operation and all monoid elements as constants. Thus the FO-theory of the Cayley-graph of $\mathcal{M}$ can be seen as a fragment of the whole FO-theory of $\mathcal{M}$ in the sense that only equations of the form $xa = y$, with x and y variables and $a \in \mathcal{M}$ are allowed. In this context we should mention the classical results of Makanin, stating that the existential FO-theory of a free monoid [18] or free group [19] is decidable, see [7] for a more detailed overview.

2 Preliminaries

Let $\mathcal{A} = (A, (R_i)_{i\in K})$ be a relational structure with carrier set A and relations R_i of arbitrary arity. *First-order logic* (FO) and *monadic second-order logic* (MSO) over the structure $\mathcal{A}$ are defined as usual. The *FO-theory* (resp. *MSO-theory*) of $\mathcal{A}$ is denoted by $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathcal{A})$ (resp. $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\mathcal{A})$).

A *Σ-labeled directed graph* (briefly graph) is a relational structure $G = (V, (E_a)_{a\in\Sigma})$, where Σ is a finite set of labels, and $E_a \subseteq V \times V$ is the set of all a-labeled edges. The undirected graph that results from G by forgetting all labels and the direction of edges is denoted by $\mathrm{undir}(G)$. We say that G is *connected* if $\mathrm{undir}(G)$ is connected. We say that G has *bounded degree*, if for some constant $c \in \mathbb{N}$, every node of G is incident with at most c edges in $\mathrm{undir}(G)$. The *diameter* of $U \subseteq V$ in G is the maximal distance in $\mathrm{undir}(G)$ between two nodes $u, v \in U$ (which might be ∞).

In Section 3 we will consider graphs of bounded tree-width. We will omit the formal definition of tree-width (see e.g. [9]) since we are mainly interested in the stronger notion of *strong tree-width.* A *strong tree decomposition* of an undirected graph $G = (V, E)$ is a partition $P = \{V_i \mid i \in K\}$ of V such that the quotient graph $G/_P = (P, E/_P)$, where $E/_P = \{(V_i, V_j) \in P \times P \mid V_i \times V_j \cap E \neq \emptyset\}$, is a forest, i.e., acyclic [23]. The *width of* P is the supremum of the cardinalities $|V_i|$, $i \in K$. If there exists a strong tree decomposition P of G of width at most b then G has *strong tree-width at most* b.

3 Graphs with a decidable MSO-theory

In [21], Muller & Schupp gave a graph-theoretical characterization of the transition graphs of pushdown automata, which are also called *context-free graphs.* Moreover, in [21] it is shown that the MSO-theory of any context-free graph is decidable. In this section, we outline a proof of the converse implication for graphs with a high degree of symmetry. More precisely, we consider graphs with only *finitely many orbits.* Here the orbits of a graph $G = (V, (E_a)_{a\in\Sigma})$ are the equivalence classes with respect to the equivalence $\sim$ defined as follows: $u \sim v$ for $u, v \in V$ if and only if there exists an automorphism f of G with $f(u) = v$.

Theorem 3.1. *Let $G = (V, (E_a)_{a \in \Sigma})$ be a connected graph of bounded degree with only finitely many orbits. Then* $\mathrm{MSOTh}(G)$ *is decidable if and only if* $\mathrm{undir}(G)$ *has finite tree-width if and only if G is context-free.*

Proof (sketch). Assume that $\mathrm{MSOTh}(G)$ is decidable. Notice that MSO only allows quantification over sets of nodes, whereas quantification over sets of edges is not possible. On the other hand, for graphs of bounded degree, Courcelle [6] has shown that the extension of MSO by quantification over sets of edges, which is known as MSO_2, can be defined within MSO. Thus the MSO_2-theory of G is decidable. A result of Seese [24] implies that $\mathrm{undir}(G)$ has finite tree-width.

Thus, assume that $H = \mathrm{undir}(G)$ has tree-width at most b for some $b \in \mathbb{N}$. Then also any finite subgraph of H has tree-width at most b. Since the degree of H is bounded by some constant d, the same holds for its finite subgraphs. Hence, by a result from [3], any finite subgraph of H has strong tree-width at most $c = (9b+7)d(d+1)$. From these strong tree decompositions of the finite subgraphs of H, one can construct a strong tree decomposition P of H of width at most c as follows. Since H is connected and of bounded degree, H must be countable. Thus we can take an ω-sequence $(G_i)_{i \in \mathbb{N}}$ of finite subgraphs of H whose limit is H. From the non-empty set of all strong-tree decompositions of width at most c of the graphs G_i, $i \in \mathbb{N}$, we construct a finitely branching tree as follows. Put an edge between a strong tree decomposition P_i (of width at most c) of G_i and a strong tree decomposition P_{i+1} (of width at most c) of G_{i+1} if P_i results from P_{i+1} by restriction to the nodes of G_i. By König's Lemma, this tree contains an infinite path. Taking the limit along this path results in a strong tree decomposition P of H of width at most c.

By splitting some of the partition classes of P, we can refine P into a strong tree decomposition Q of width at most c with the following property: for all edges (V_1, V_2) of the quotient graph $H/_Q$, removing all edges between V_1 and V_2 (note that there are at most c^2 such edges) splits H into exactly two connected components. In the terminology of [10, 29], the set of edges connecting V_1 and V_2 is called a *tight c^2-cut* of H. By [10, Paragraph 2.5] (see also [29, Prop. 4.1] for a simplified proof), every edge of H is contained in only finitely many tight c^2-cuts. From this fact and the assumption that G, and hence also H, has only finitely many orbits, one can deduce that the diameter of every partition class in Q is bounded by some fixed constant $\gamma \in \mathbb{N}$. Using this, one can show that the graph G can be $(2\gamma+1)$-triangulated [20], this step is similar to the proof of [2, Thm. 8]. Then essentially the same argument that was given in the proof of [21, Thm. 2.9] for a vertex-transitive graph (i.e., a graph that has only one orbit) shows that G is context-free.

The remaining implication "G context-free $\Rightarrow$ $\mathrm{MSOTh}(G)$ decidable" was shown in [21]. □

Remark 3.2. In [25] it was shown that if G is context-free then also $G/_\sim$ is context-free. Thus, a natural generalization of the previous theorem could be the following: Let G be a connected graph of bounded degree such that the quotient graph $G/_\sim$ is context-free with finitely many orbits. Then G has a decidable

MSO-theory if and only if G is context-free. But this is false: take $\mathbb{Z}$ together with the successor relation and add to every number $m = \frac{1}{2}n(n+1)$ ($n \in \mathbb{Z}$) a copy m' together with the edge (m, m'), whereas for every other number m we add two copies m' and m'' together with the edges (m, m') and (m, m''). The resulting graph is not context-free, but it has a decidable MSO-theory [11] (see also [21]) and $G/_{\sim}$ is context-free with just two orbits.

4 Cayley-graphs of groups

Let $\mathcal{G}$ be a group generated by the finite set Γ. Its *Cayley graph* $\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{G}, \Gamma)$ has as vertices the elements of $\mathcal{G}$ and as a-labeled edges the pairs (x, xa) for $x \in \mathcal{G}$ and $a \in \Gamma$. The word problem of $\mathcal{G}$ wrt. Γ is the set of words over $\Gamma \cup \{a^{-1} \mid a \in \Gamma\}$ that represent the identity of $\mathcal{G}$. It is well known that the decidability of the word problem does not depend on the chosen generating set; henceforth we will speak of *the* word problem regardless of the generators. The group $\mathcal{G}$ is called *context-free* if its word problem is a context free language [1, 20]. By [21] this is equivalent to saying that $\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{G}, \Gamma)$ is a context-free graph. The automorphism group of any Cayley-graph acts transitively on the vertices (i.e., has just one orbit). Furthermore, Cayley-graphs are always connected. If the group is finitely generated, then moreover its Cayley-graph has bounded degree. Thus, from Theorem 3.1, we get the following (the implication "$\Rightarrow$" is due to Muller & Schupp)

Corollary 4.1. *Let $\mathcal{G}$ be a group finitely generated by Γ. Then $\mathcal{G}$ is context-free if and only if* $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{G}, \Gamma))$ *is decidable.*

For FO-theories we obtain

Proposition 4.2. *Let $\mathcal{G}$ be a group finitely generated by Γ. Then the following are equivalent:*

(1) The word problem of $\mathcal{G}$ is decidable.
(2) $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{G}, \Gamma))$ *is decidable.*
(3) The existential FO-theory of the Cayley-graph $\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{G}, \Gamma)$ *is decidable.*

Proof (sketch). The implication (2) $\Rightarrow$ (3) is trivial. The implication (3) $\Rightarrow$ (1) is easily shown since a word over $\Gamma \cup \{a^{-1} \mid a \in \Gamma\}$ represents the identity of $\mathcal{G}$ if and only if it labels some cycle in the Cayley-graph, an existential property expressible in first-order logic. The remaining implication is shown using Gaifman's theorem [14]: since the automorphism group of $\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{G}, \Gamma)$ acts transitively on the vertices, it implies that it suffices to decide first-order properties of spheres in $\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{G}, \Gamma)$ around the identity of $\mathcal{G}$. But these spheres are finite and effectively computable since the word problem is decidable. $\square$

In the complete version of this extended abstract [17], we prove that every FO-sentence is equivalent in $\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{G}, \Gamma)$ to the same sentence but with all quantifiers restricted to spheres around the unit of at most exponential diameter. This proof uses techniques developed by Ferrante and Rackoff [13]. In addition to the above result, it provides a tight relationship between the word problem of $\mathcal{G}$ and $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{G}, \Gamma))$ in terms of complexity: the space complexity of $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{G}, \Gamma))$ is bounded exponentially in the space complexity of the word problem of $\mathcal{G}$ [17].

5 Factorized unfoldings

In [31], Walukiewicz proved that the MSO-theory of the tree-like unfolding of a relational structure can be reduced to the MSO-theory of the underlying structure. The origin of this result goes back to [26, 27]. Tree-like unfoldings are defined as follows:

Definition 5.1. *Let $\mathcal{A} = (A, (R_i)_{1\le i\le n})$ be a relational structure where the relation R_i has arity p_i. On the set of finite words A^*, we define the following relations:*

$$\begin{aligned}\widehat{R_i} &= \{(ua_1, ua_2, \ldots, ua_{p_i}) \mid u \in A^*, (a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_{p_i}) \in R_i\}\\ \mathrm{suc} &= \{(u, ua) \mid u \in A^*, a \in A\}\\ \mathrm{cl} &= \{(ua, uaa) \mid u \in A^*, a \in A\}\end{aligned}$$

Then the relational structure $\widehat{\mathcal{A}} = (A^*, (\widehat{R_i})_{1\le i\le n}, \mathrm{suc}, \mathrm{cl})$ is called the tree-like unfolding *of $\mathcal{A}$.*

Theorem 5.2 (cf. [31]). *Let $\mathcal{A}$ be a relational structure. Then $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\widehat{\mathcal{A}})$ can be reduced to $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\mathcal{A})$.*

We will in particular use the immediate consequence that $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\widehat{\mathcal{A}})$ is decidable whenever the MSO-theory of $\mathcal{A}$ is decidable. The main result of this section is a FO-analogue of the above result (Theorem 5.7).

The relations of the tree-like unfoldings are instances of a more general construction that will be crucial for our notion of factorized unfoldings. Let $\varphi(x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n)$ be a first-order formula over the signature of $\mathcal{A}$ with n free variables. For a word $w = a_1a_2\cdots a_n \in A^*$ of length n we write $\mathcal{A} \models \varphi(w)$ if $\mathcal{A} \models \varphi(a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_n)$. An n-ary relation R over A^* is *k-suffix definable* in $\mathcal{A}$ if there are $k_1, \ldots, k_n \le k$ ($k_i = 0$ is allowed) and a first-order formula φ over the signature of $\mathcal{A}$ with $\sum_{i=1}^{n} k_i$ free variables such that

$$R = \{(uu_1,\, uu_2,\, \ldots, uu_n) \mid u, u_i \in A^*, |u_i| = k_i, \mathcal{A} \models \varphi(u_1u_2\cdots u_n)\}.$$

Obviously, all relations of $\widehat{\mathcal{A}}$ are 2-suffix definable in $\mathcal{A}$. On the other hand, there exist 2-suffix definable relations such that adding them to $\widehat{\mathcal{A}}$ makes Theorem 5.2 fail. To see this, let

$$\mathrm{eq} = \{(ua, uba) \mid u \in A^*, a, b \in A\},$$

which is 2-suffix definable in $\mathcal{A}$. Define the prefix order $\preceq$ on A^* by $\preceq = \{(u, uv) \mid u, v \in A^*\}$, it is the reflexive transitive closure of the relation suc from $\widehat{\mathcal{A}}$, thus it is MSO-definable in $\widehat{\mathcal{A}}$. Let $A = \mathbb{N} \cup \{a, b\}$ be the set of natural numbers together with two additional elements. On A we define the predicates $S = \{(n, n+1) \mid n \in \mathbb{N}\}$, $U_a = \{a\}$, and $U_b = \{b\}$. Then the structure $\mathcal{A} = (A, S, U_a, U_b)$ has a decidable MSO-theory. We consider the structure $\mathcal{B} = (A^*, \widehat{S}, \widehat{U_a}, \widehat{U_b}, \mathrm{suc})$, which is a reduct of the tree-like unfolding of $\mathcal{A}$. Using FO-logic over $(\mathcal{B}, \mathrm{eq}, \preceq)$, we can express that a given 2-counter machine terminates. Thus we obtain

Proposition 5.3. $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathcal{B}, \mathrm{eq}, \preceq)$ *is undecidable.*

In particular, the MSO-theory of $(\mathcal{B}, \mathrm{eq})$ is undecidable. Thus, the presence of the relation eq makes Walukiewicz's result fail.

Recall that the underlying set of the tree-like unfolding of a structure $\mathcal{A}$ is the set of words over the carrier set of $\mathcal{A}$. In factorized unfoldings that we introduce next, this underlying set consists of equivalence classes of words wrt. Mazurkiewicz's trace equivalence:

A (not necessarily finite) set A together with an irreflexive and symmetric relation $I \subseteq A \times A$ is called *independence alphabet*, the relation I is the *independence relation*. With any such independence alphabet, we associate the least congruence $\equiv_I$ on A^* identifying ab and ba for $(a, b) \in I$. The quotient $\mathbb{M}(A, I) = A^*/{\equiv_I}$ is the *free partially commutative* or *(Mazurkiewicz) trace monoid* generated by (A, I). The trace that is represented by the word $w \in A^*$ is denoted by $[w]_I$. Note that for $I = \emptyset$, the trace monoid $\mathbb{M}(A, I)$ is isomorphic to the free monoid A^*. In the other extreme, i.e., if $I = (A \times A) \setminus \{(a, a) \mid a \in A\}$, we have $\mathbb{M}(A, I) \cong \mathbb{N}^A$, i.e., the trace monoid is free commutative generated by A. For a trace $t \in \mathbb{M}(A, I)$, we let $\min(t) = \{a \in A \mid \exists s \in A^* : t = [as]_I\}$ the set of minimal symbols of t. The set $\max(t)$ of maximal symbols of t is defined analogously. For an n-ary relation R over A^*, we define its I-quotient

$$R/_I = \{([u_1]_I, \ldots, [u_n]_I) \mid (u_1, \ldots, u_n) \in R\}.$$

Definition 5.4. *Let $\mathcal{A}$ be a relational structure with carrier set A. Let furthermore*

- *$I \subseteq A \times A$ be an independence relation which is first-order definable in $\mathcal{A}$,*
- *$\eta : \mathbb{M}(A, I) \to S$ be a monoid morphism into some finite monoid S such that $\eta^{-1}(s) \cap A$ is first-order definable in $\mathcal{A}$ for all $s \in S$.*
- *R_i be a k_i-suffix definable relation in $\mathcal{A}$ for $1 \leq i \leq n$.*

Then the structure $\mathcal{B} = (\mathbb{M}(A, I), (\eta^{-1}(s))_{s \in S}, (R_i/_I)_{1 \leq i \leq n})$ is a factorized unfolding *of $\mathcal{A}$.*

Note that in contrast to the tree-like unfolding there are many different factorized unfoldings of $\mathcal{A}$. The notion of a factorized unfolding is a proper generalization of the tree-like unfolding even in case $I = \emptyset$: by Proposition 5.3, the relation eq cannot be defined in the tree-like unfolding, but since it is 2-suffix definable it may occur in a factorized unfolding. On the other hand, if $I = \emptyset$, then, since $\eta^{-1}(s) \cap A$ is first-order definable in $\mathcal{A}$, the set $\eta^{-1}(s) \subseteq \mathbb{M}(A, I) = A^*$ is MSO-definable in the tree-like unfolding of $\mathcal{A}$. Since Walukiewicz was interested in the MSO-theory of his unfolding, the relations $\eta^{-1}(s)$ are "effectively present" in $\widehat{A}$.

The structure $(\mathcal{B}, \mathrm{eq}, \preceq)$ from Proposition 5.3 has an undecidable FO-theory. Thus, allowing the relation $\preceq/_I$ in factorized unfoldings would make the main result of this section (Theorem 5.7) fail. In Theorem 5.7, we will also assume that there are only finitely many different sets $I(a) = \{b \in A \mid (a, b) \in I\}$, which roughly speaking means that traces from $\mathbb{M}(A, I)$ have only "bounded parallelism". The reason is again that otherwise the result would fail:

Proposition 5.5. *There exists an infinite structure $\mathcal{A}$ and a factorized unfolding $\mathcal{B}$ of $\mathcal{A}$ such that* $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathcal{A})$ *is decidable but* $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathcal{B})$ *is undecidable.*

Proof (sketch). Let $(V, E) = K_{\aleph_0}$ be a countable complete graph, $A = V \dot{\cup} E$, and $R \subseteq (V \times E)$ be the incidence relation. Furthermore, $I = (A \times A) \setminus \mathrm{id}_A$. Then we think of a trace $t \in \mathbb{M}(A, I)$ as representing the subgraph $\max(t) \subseteq A$ of $K_{\aleph_0}$. This allows to reduce the FO-theory of all finite graphs to the FO-theory of the factorized unfolding $(\mathbb{M}(A, I), \mathrm{cl}/_I, R/_I)$ of $\mathcal{A}$. The former theory is undecidable by a result of Trakhtenbrot. □

In Proposition 5.3 and 5.5 we used infinite structures $\mathcal{A}$. Infinity is needed as the following shows:

Proposition 5.6. *Let $\mathcal{A}$ be a finite structure and $\mathcal{B}$ be a factorized unfolding of $\mathcal{A}$. Then $(\mathcal{B}, \preceq/_I)$ is an automatic structure [16]; hence its FO-theory is decidable.*

Proof (sketch). The underlying set of the structure $\mathcal{B}$ is the set of traces $\mathbb{M}(A, I)$. For these traces, several normal forms are known [8], here we use the Foata normal form. Since $\mathcal{A}$ is finite, all the relations in $(\mathcal{B}, \preceq/_I)$ (more precisely: their Foata normal form incarnations) are synchronized rational relations. □

Now we finally formulate the main result of this section:

Theorem 5.7. *Let $\mathcal{A}$ be a relational structure and consider a factorized unfolding $\mathcal{B} = (\mathbb{M}(A, I), (\eta^{-1}(s))_{s \in S}, (R_i/_I)_{1 \le i \le n})$ of $\mathcal{A}$ where $\{I(a) \mid a \in A\} \subseteq 2^A$ is finite. Then* $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathcal{B})$ *can be reduced to* $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathcal{A})$.

Proof (sketch). For a trace $t \in \mathbb{M}(A, I)$, let $|t|$ be the length of any word representing t. We will write $\exists x \le n : \psi$ as an abbreviation for $\exists x : |x| \le n \wedge \psi$, i.e., $\exists x \le n$ restricts quantification to traces of length at most n. In order to use techniques similar to those developed by Ferrante and Rackoff [13], one then defines a computable function $H : \mathbb{N} \times \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}$ with the following property:

Let $\varphi = Q_1 x_2\, Q_2 x_2\, \ldots Q_d x_d\, \psi$ be a formula in prenex normal form over the signature of $\mathcal{B}$, where $Q_i \in \{\forall, \exists\}$. Then $\mathcal{B} \models \varphi$ if and only if

$$\mathcal{B} \models Q_1 x_1 \le H(1, d)\, Q_2 x_2 \le H(2, d) \ldots Q_d x_d \le H(d, d) : \psi \qquad (1)$$

In order to be able to define H, the assumption that there are only finitely many sets $I(a)$ is crucial.

At this point we have restricted all quantifications to traces of bounded length. Now a variable x that ranges over traces of length n can be replaced by a sequence of first-order variables $y_1 \cdots y_n$ ranging over A. Since I is FO-definable in $\mathcal{A}$, we can express in FO-logic over $\mathcal{A}$ that two such sequences represent the same trace. Since also $\eta^{-1}(s)$ is first-order definable in $\mathcal{A}$ for every $s \in S$ and all other relations in $\mathcal{B}$ result from k-suffix definable relations, it follows that (1) can be translated into an equivalent first-order statement about $\mathcal{A}$. □

Remark 5.8. The function $H : \mathbb{N} \times \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}$ refered to in the above proof satisfies $H(i, d) \le H(i+1, d)$ and $H(d, d) \in 2^{O(d)}$ (values for $H(i, d)$ with $i > d$ are not used in the proof). This allows to show that this procedure transforms a formula φ over the signature of $\mathcal{B}$ into a formula of size $2^{2^{O(|\varphi|)}}$ over the signature of $\mathcal{A}$.

6 Cayley-graphs of monoids

The Cayley-graph $\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma)$ of a monoid $\mathcal{M}$ wrt. some finite set of generators Γ can be defined analogously to that of a group. It will turn out to be convenient to consider the *rooted Cayley-graph* $(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ that in addition contains a constant 1 for the unit element of the monoid $\mathcal{M}$.

It is easily checked that the implications (2) $\Rightarrow$ (3) $\Rightarrow$ (1) from Proposition 4.2 carry over to monoids, but the situation for the remaining implication is different. The following proposition follows from [22, Thm. 2.4].

Proposition 6.1. *There is a finitely presented monoid $\mathcal{M}$ with a decidable word problem such that $\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma)$ has an undecidable existential FO-theory.*

On the decidability side let us mention that Cayley-graphs of automatic monoids [4] have decidable FO-theories since they are automatic structures [16].

In the sequel, we will prove closure properties of classes of monoids with decidable theories. Using simple MSO-interpretations it is easy to see that the class of finitely generated monoids, whose Cayley-graphs have decidable MSO-theories, is closed under finitely generated submonoids and Rees-quotients w.r.t. rational ideals. Moreover, if $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ is decidable and S is a finite monoid then also $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M} \times S, \Gamma \cup S), 1)$ is easily seen to be decidable.

Now, we consider graph products of monoids [15] which generalize both, the direct and the free product. In order to define it, let (Σ, J) be some finite independence alphabet and let $\mathcal{M}_\sigma$ be a monoid for $\sigma \in \Sigma$. Then the *graph product* $\prod_{(\Sigma,J)} \mathcal{M}_\sigma$ is the quotient of the free product of the monoids $\mathcal{M}_\sigma$ subject to the relations $ab = ba$ for $a \in \mathcal{M}_\sigma$, $b \in \mathcal{M}_\tau$ and $(\sigma, \tau) \in J$. If $J = \emptyset$, then there are no such relations, i.e., the graph product equals the free product $*_{\sigma\in\Sigma}\mathcal{M}_\sigma$. If, in the other extreme, $J = (\Sigma \times \Sigma) \setminus \{(\sigma, \sigma) \mid \sigma \in \Sigma\}$, then the graph product equals the direct product $\prod_{\sigma\in\Sigma} \mathcal{M}_\sigma$. For the subsequent discussions, fix some finite independence alphabet (Σ, J) and for every $\sigma \in \Sigma$ a monoid $\mathcal{M}_\sigma = (\mathcal{M}_\sigma, \circ_\sigma, 1_\sigma)$, which is generated by the finite set Γ_σ. Furthermore, let $\mathcal{M} = (\mathcal{M}, \circ, 1) = \prod_{(\Sigma,J)} \mathcal{M}_\sigma$ be the graph product of these monoids wrt. (Σ, J). This monoid is generated by the finite set $\Gamma = \bigcup_{\sigma\in\Sigma} \Gamma_\sigma$.

We will prove decidability results for the theories of the rooted Cayley-graph $(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ using Theorems 5.2 and 5.7. In these applications, the underlying structure $\mathcal{A}$ will always be the disjoint union of the rooted Cayley-graphs $(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}_\sigma, \Gamma_\sigma), 1_\sigma)$. Hence the carrier set A of the structure $\mathcal{A}$ is the disjoint union of the monoids $\mathcal{M}_\sigma$. It has binary edge-relations $E_a = \{(x, x \circ_\sigma a) \mid x \in \mathcal{M}_\sigma\} \subseteq \mathcal{M}_\sigma \times \mathcal{M}_\sigma$ for all $\sigma \in \Sigma$ and $a \in \Gamma_\sigma$, as well as unary relations $A_\sigma \subseteq A$ comprising all elements of the monoid $\mathcal{M}_\sigma$, and unary relations $U_\sigma = \{1_\sigma\}$. We now define a factorized unfolding $\mathcal{B}$ of this disjoint union $\mathcal{A}$: the independence relation

$$I = \bigcup_{(\sigma,\tau)\in J} \mathcal{M}_\sigma \times \mathcal{M}_\tau$$

is FO-definable in $\mathcal{A}$ using the unary predicates A_σ. Since Σ is finite, there are only finitely many sets $I(a)$ for $a \in A$. The relations $\widehat{E_a}, \widehat{U_\sigma}$, suc, and $\mathrm{suc}_a =$

$\{(x, xa) \mid x \in A^*\}$, where $\sigma \in \Sigma$ and $a \in \Gamma \subseteq A$, are 1-suffix definable in $\mathcal{A}$ (note that every $a \in \Gamma$ is FO-definable in $\mathcal{A}$). We define the monoid morphism η in such a way that we are able to interpret the rooted Cayley-graph $(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ in the factorized unfolding $\mathcal{B}$. In particular, elements of the graph product $\mathcal{M}$ will be represented by traces over (A, I). To this aim, the following paragraph defines the mapping η as follows:

For $a \in A$, let $\mu(a) \in \Sigma$ be the unique index with $a \in \mathcal{M}_{\mu(a)}$ and define $\mu(t) = \{\mu(a) \mid a \text{ occurs in } t\}$ for $t \in \mathbb{M}(A, I)$. Then set $\eta(t) = \bot$ if there is $\sigma \in \Sigma$ such that 1_σ is a factor of the trace t, or if there are $a, b \in \mathcal{M}_\sigma$ such that the trace ab is a factor of the trace t. If this is not the case, let $\eta(t) = (\mu(\min(t)), \mu(t), \mu(\max(t)))$. Thus, η is a mapping from $\mathbb{M}(A, I)$ into some finite set S. Then the kernel $\{(s, t) \in \mathbb{M}(A, I) \times \mathbb{M}(A, I) \mid \eta(s) = \eta(t)\}$ of η is a monoid congruence. In other words, the set S can be endowed with a monoid structure such that η is actually a monoid morphism into some finite monoid.

Now we have collected all the ingredients for our factorized unfolding of $\mathcal{A}$:

$$\mathcal{B} = (\mathbb{M}(A, I),\ (\eta^{-1}(s))_{s \in S},\ (\widehat{E_a}/_I)_{a \in \Gamma},\ (\widehat{U_\sigma}/_I)_{\sigma \in \Sigma},\ \mathrm{suc}/_I,\ (\mathrm{suc}_a/_I)_{a \in \Gamma})$$

is a factorized unfolding of $\mathcal{A}$. Note that it does not contain the relation $\mathrm{eq}/_I$. Therefore, in case $J = \emptyset$ (i.e., $I = \emptyset$) $\mathcal{B}$ is MSO-definable in the tree-like unfolding $\widehat{\mathcal{A}}$, which will allow to apply Theorem 5.2. A major step towards a proof of Theorems 6.3 is

Lemma 6.2. *There is a first-order interpretation of the rooted Cayley-graph $(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ in the factorized unfolding $\mathcal{B}$ of $\mathcal{A}$.*

Proof (sketch). The elements of the graph product $\mathcal{M}$ can be identified with those traces t that satisfy $\eta(t) \neq \bot$ (in the terminology of [30], they are Γ-equivalence classes of words of the form $S(u)$). In order to define the edges of the rooted Cayley-graph $(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ within $\mathcal{B}$, let us take $s, t \in \mathbb{M}(A, I)$ with $\eta(s) \neq \bot \neq \eta(t)$ and let $\sigma \in \Sigma$, $a \in \Gamma_\sigma$. Then one can show that $s \circ a = t$ (here we view s and t as elements of $\mathcal{M}$) if and only if the following holds in $\mathbb{M}(A, I)$:

- $sa = t$, or
- there is $b \in \mathcal{M}_\sigma$ such that $b \circ_\sigma a = 1_\sigma$ and $tb = s$, or
- there is $b \in \mathcal{M}_\sigma$ and $u \in \mathbb{M}(A, I)$ with $s = ub$, $b \circ_\sigma a \neq 1_\sigma$, and $t = u\,(b \circ_\sigma a)$.

All these properties can be easily expressed in first-order logic over $\mathcal{B}$. $\square$

Now we can show the main result of this section:

Theorem 6.3. *Let $\mathcal{M} = \prod_{(\Sigma,J)} \mathcal{M}_\sigma$, where (Σ, J) is a finite independence alphabet and $\mathcal{M}_\sigma$ is a monoid finitely generated by Γ_σ ($\sigma \in \Sigma$). Let $\Gamma = \bigcup_{\sigma \in \Sigma} \Gamma_\sigma$.*

(1) If $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}_\sigma, \Gamma_\sigma), 1_\sigma)$ is decidable for all $\sigma \in \Sigma$, then $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ is decidable as well.

(2) If $J = \emptyset$ and $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}_\sigma, \Gamma_\sigma), 1_\sigma)$ is decidable for all $\sigma \in \Sigma$, then $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ is decidable as well.

Proof. First assume that $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}_\sigma, \Gamma_\sigma), 1_\sigma)$ is decidable for all $\sigma \in \Sigma$. Lemma 6.2 implies that we can reduce $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ to the FO-theory of the factorized unfolding $\mathcal{B}$, which is decidable by Theorem 5.7 since $\mathrm{FOTh}(\mathcal{A})$ is decidable by [12]. The second statement on MSO-theories follows similarly by refering to [31] and [26] instead of Theorem 5.7 and [12], respectively. □

Statement (2) from Theorem 6.3 does not generalize to graph products.

Proposition 6.4. *Let* (Σ, J), $\mathcal{M}_\sigma$, Γ_σ, $\mathcal{M}$, *and* Γ *as in Theorem 6.3 with* $\mathcal{M}_\sigma$ *non-trivial. Assume furthermore that* $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ *is decidable. Then*

(a) (Σ, J) *does not contain an induced cycle of length 4 (also called C4),*
(b) if $(\sigma, \tau) \in J$ *and* $\mathcal{M}_\sigma$ *is infinite, then* $\mathcal{M}_\tau$ *is finite,*
(c) if $(\sigma, \sigma_1), (\sigma, \sigma_2) \in J$, $\sigma_1 \neq \sigma_2$, *and* $\mathcal{M}_\sigma$ *is infinite, then* $(\sigma_1, \sigma_2) \in J$,
(d) $\mathrm{MSOTh}(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}_\sigma, \Gamma_\sigma), 1_\sigma)$ *is decidable for every* $\sigma \in \Sigma$.

Proof (sketch). Condition (a), (b), and (c) hold, since otherwise $\mathcal{M}$ contains a direct product of two infinite monoids and thus $(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$ contains an infinite grid. In order to show (d), one defines $(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}_\sigma, \Gamma_\sigma), 1_\sigma)$ in $(\mathbb{C}(\mathcal{M}, \Gamma), 1)$. □

It remains open whether the four conditions in Proposition 6.4 characterize graph products, whose corresponding Cayley-graphs have decidable MSO-theories.

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