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Distributed Systems, Summer Term 2020
Exercise Sheet 1

1. Schedules

Consider three nodes, v_1, v_2, and v_3, which are connected via FIFO channels, that is, messages between any two nodes are received in the same order they are sent. For example, if node v_1 sends first message m_1 then m_2 to node v_2, then v_2 will first receive m_1 and then m_2.
Devise **one** possible schedule S which is consistent with the following local restrictions to the three nodes.

- $S|1 = s_{1,3}\ s_{1,3}\ r_{1,2}\ r_{1,3}\ s_{1,2}\ r_{1,2}\ s_{1,3}$,
- $S|2 = s_{2,3}\ s_{2,1}\ r_{2,1}\ s_{2,1}$,
- $S|3 = r_{3,2}\ r_{3,1}\ s_{3,1}\ r_{3,1}\ r_{3,1}$.

$s_{i,j}$ denotes the send event from node i to node j and $r_{j,i}$ denotes the event that node j receives a message from node i.

2. The Level Algorithm

Consider the following algorithm between two connected nodes u and v:

The two nodes maintain levels ℓ_u and ℓ_v, which are both initialized to 0. One round of the algorithm works as follows:

1. Both nodes send their current level to each other
2. If u receives level ℓ_v from v, u updates its level to $\ell_u := \max\{\ell_u, \ell_v + 1\}$. If the message to node u is lost, node u does not change its level ℓ_u. Node v updates its level ℓ_v in the same (symmetric) way.

Argue that if the level algorithm runs for r rounds, the following properties hold:

a) At the end, the two levels differ by at most one.

b) If all messages succeed, both levels are equal to r.

c) The level of a node is at least 1 if and only if the node received at least one message.

3. (Variations) of Two Generals

In the lecture we considered the (deterministically unsolvable) **Two Generals** consensus problem:

- two deterministic nodes, synchronous communication, unreliable messages,
- **input**: 0 or 1 for each node,
- **output**: each node needs to decide either 0 or 1,
- **agreement**: both nodes must output the same decision (0 or 1),
- **validity**: if both nodes have the same input $x \in \{0, 1\}$ and no messages are lost, both nodes output x,
- **termination**: both nodes terminate in a bounded number of rounds.

In this exercise we consider three modifications of the model. For each of them, either give a (deterministic) algorithm or state a proof which shows that the variation cannot be solved deterministically.

a) There is the guarantee that within the first 7 rounds at least *one* message in *each* direction succeeds.

b) There is the guarantee that within the first 7 rounds at least *one* message succeeds (note that nodes are not allowed to stay silent).

c) Let $k \in \mathbb{N}$ be a natural number. The input for each node is a number $x_i \in \{0, \ldots, k\}$.

   Goal: If no message gets lost *and* both have the same input $x \in \{0, \ldots, k\}$, both have to output x. In all other cases the nodes should output numbers which do not differ by more than one. The algorithm still has to terminate in a finite number of rounds.

Hint: This last problem is solvable. You can use the level algorithm from task 2.