

## A Self-Programing System with Experiments

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### Introduction

It may be really challanging to imagine a computer which analyzes problems and generates programs by itself to solve them.

In this paper, we describe a certain self-programming system by which a computer gradually becomes clever using his past experiences, by the statistical learning procedure of Bush-Mosteller type<sup>1)</sup>, with aids of Man and finally he grows up to be able to solve some problems which he has never learned yet.

Approaches which have been tried toward our fascinating goal, ranges from the heuristic one<sup>2)</sup> to the deterministic one<sup>3)</sup> (i. e. automatic selection of suitable procedures).

Even in the heuristic approach, the computer is supposed to have been given highly organized power in advance. Incidentally, it must be more fascinating to imagine a general system i. e. self-programming system which educates a computer to acquire such power and bring up the computer to a programmer of any object computer.

In order to realize such a purpose, we prepared two computers: one is a programmer in embryo (called B-computer) and the other is a hypothetical computer (called H-computer) on which B-computer generates a program to solve a problem.

Table 1. The language of the H-computer in our Experiments.

Instruction	Function
CAD $n$	$(n) \rightarrow Acc$
CSB $n$	$-(n) \rightarrow Acc$
ADD $n$	$(Acc) + (n) \rightarrow Acc$
SUB $n$	$(Acc) - (n) \rightarrow Acc$
MUL $n$	$(Acc) \times (n) \rightarrow Acc$
DIV $n$	$(Acc) \div (n) \rightarrow Acc$
STR $n$	$(Acc) \rightarrow n$
<i>(Special)</i>	
LINK $n$	links to the program starting from address $n$
MACR $n$	excute the macro instruction $n$
HALT	halts the program

Note.  $Acc$ : Accumulator

$(Acc), (n)$ : the contents of  $Acc$  and address  $n$  respectively

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Both computers may be chosen arbitrarily. As a special system, suppose they are the same, then the B-computer will finally acquire an artificial intelligence which enables to answer the solution of a given problem.

The basic assumption underlying our self-programming system is that our B-computer does not know the meaning of the language of the H-computer at the beginning.

Then, in order to make our experiments easier, we restricted our problems to those which can be handled by the B-computer. The problems are composed of the arithmetic operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The language of the H-computer is shown in Table 1.

### 1. Structure of the Self-programming System

When *Man* shows a *Problem* to the B-computer, *Interpreter* tries to solve it, referring to *Memory*, that is, to create a program, written by the language of the H-computer, the execution of which may offer the answer of the *Problem*.

Then, if the *Problem* is solved, *Interpreter* shows the *Answer*. If it cannot be solved, *Interpreter* informs *Trainer*, *Analyzer*, and the *Learning Body* of the knowledge about the *Problem* and requests *Man* to supply *Advice* for solving the *Problem*.

After *Trainer* received *Advice* from *Man*, *Generator* generates one program in accordance with the status of *Learning Body*. Then the *Trainer* evaluates this program on the basis of the *Advice* and trains the *Learning Body*.

These processes of program generation, evaluation, and training are iterated until the *Generator* constructs successfully a correct program, then the *Analyzer* compares the matters just learned with the contents of *Memory* and then registers the comparison into the *Memory*.

Accumulating such learning on various *Problems*, our B-computer becomes clever. In the following sections, the components of the system will be described in detail.

#### 1.1. Problem

*Problem* should be expressed in the following syntax

```

<Problem> ::= <term>
<term> ::= <unary operator>(<operand>)|
          <binary operator>(<operand>, <operand>)
<operand> ::= <atom>|<term>
<unary operator> ::= <identifier>
<binary operator> ::= <identifier>
<atom> ::= <identifier>
<identifier> ::= <letter>|<identifier><letter>|
              <identifier><digit>
<letter> ::= A|B|C|D|E|F|G|H|I|J|K|L|M|N|O|
           P|Q|R|S|T|U|V|W|X|Y|Z
<digit> ::= 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9

```

#### 1.2. Memory

One element of *Memory* is composed of the pattern field and the definition field. The syntax of the pattern field is the same with that of *Problem* with the replacement of  $\langle \text{operand} \rangle ::= \langle \text{atom} \rangle | \langle \text{term} \rangle$  by  $\langle \text{operand} \rangle ::= \text{ATOM} | \text{TERM}$  where ATOM and TERM are pseudo operands. The definition field consists of a sequence of operand designators for TERM pseudo operands or pairs of operation codes and operand designators for ATOM pseudo operands.

### 1.3. *Interpreter*

*Interpreter* first creates a subproblem by replacing all  $\langle \text{atom} \rangle$  operands in *Problem* with ATOM pseudo operands. Comparing this subproblem with each element in *Memory*, it tries to find an element which is equal or matches with the subproblem in the pattern field ( $\langle \text{term} \rangle$  operand matches with a TERM pseudo operand).

(1) When there is a matching element (and there is no equal element), *Interpreter* sets up another subproblems next to be solved by extracting  $\langle \text{term} \rangle$  operands corresponding to the TERM pseudo operands from the subproblem.

(2) When there is an equal element, the solution of the subproblem can be obtained from the definition field of the element.

(3) If there is no equal or matching element, the effort of solving the subproblem is continued no more.

Thus, the *Interpreter* forms a tree of subproblems connected by AND or OR relation until the time he obtains the solution.

If he fails to solve the *Problem*, he informs the *Man*, of the *Main Program* of the *Problem* and also of the subproblem which makes the *Problem* unsolvable. When the subproblem itself consists of a tree of subproblems, the  $\langle \text{term} \rangle$  operands in the subproblem corresponding to solvably composed subproblems are replaced by TERM pseudo operands. The subproblem after this modification is called an *Unknown Problem*. The solution programs of the composing subproblems are sent to *Learning Body* as the macro states generated by *Interpreter*. Finally *Interpreter* requests *Advice*.

### 1.4. *Advice*

*Advice* should be composed of necessary and sufficient information to define the *Problem*. Naturally, it is meaningless if the B-computer at the time cannot understand this information. At the infant learning stage, we may suppose that the B-computer is able to understand only numerical information. Hence, *Trainer* first insert certain numerical information into some specially prepared locations which correspond to  $\langle \text{atom} \rangle$  operands in the *Problem* one by one and wait for the *Advice*.

There are two kinds of *Advice*: *Goal* and *Subgoal*. The latter is given to speed up learning and not always necessary. *Goal* is the the information which shows the status (the contents of those location) after the execution of solution program of the *Problem*. *Subgoal* is composed of partial information of *Goal*.

### 1.5. *Learning Body*

In the sequel, taking each operation code of the H-computer as a "state" (operation

code state) and using the macro states generated by *Interpreter*, we are able to regard the learning process of a program as that of a transition sequence of states which corresponds to the program. Hence, *Learning Body* consists of two matrices and two vectors as follows.

(1) State transition matrix (STM)

$$\begin{pmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} & \cdots & a_{1n} & b_1 \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & \cdots & a_{2n} & b_2 \\ \cdots & \cdots & \cdots & \cdots & \cdots \\ a_{n1} & a_{n2} & \cdots & a_{nn} & b_n \end{pmatrix} \quad \begin{aligned} d_i &= \sum_{j=1}^m a_{ij} \\ a_{ij} &> 0 \\ (i &= 1, 2, \dots, n \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, n). \end{aligned}$$

Where  $n$  is the number of states. The transition probability with which the process moves from state  $S_i$  to state  $S_j$  is expressed by

$$p_{ij} = a_{ij}/b_i.$$

(2) Initial state finding vector (ISFV)

$$\begin{aligned} &(a_{01}, a_{02}, \dots, a_{0n}, b_0) \\ b_0 &= \sum_{i=1}^n a_{0i}, \quad a_{0i} > 0 \\ &(i = 1, 2, \dots, n) \end{aligned}$$

where, the probability that the initial state (from which the process starts) is  $S_i$  is

$$p_{0i} = a_{0i}/b_0.$$

(3) Final state finding vector (FSFV)

$$\begin{aligned} &(a_{1f}, a_{2f}, \dots, a_{nf}, b_f) \\ b_f &= \sum_{j=1}^n a_{jf}, \quad a_{jf} > 0 \\ &(j = 1, 2, \dots, n) \end{aligned}$$

where the probability that the final state (at which the process ends) is  $S_j$  is

$$p_{jf} = a_{jf}/b_f.$$

(4) Operation code address corresponding matrix (OACM)

$$\begin{pmatrix} c_{11} & c_{12} & \cdots & c_{1m} & d_1 \\ c_{21} & c_{22} & \cdots & c_{2m} & d_1 \\ \cdots & \cdots & \cdots & \cdots & \cdots \\ c_{l1} & c_{l2} & \cdots & c_{lm} & d_l \end{pmatrix} \quad \begin{aligned} d_i &= \sum_{j=1}^m c_{ij} \\ c_{ij} &> 0 \\ (i &= 1, 2, \dots, l \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, m) \end{aligned}$$

where  $l$  is the total number of operation codes, and  $m$  is the total number of data locations, and the probability that the address  $AD_j$  is corresponding to the operation code state  $S_i$  is expressed as

$$g_{ij} = c_{ij}/d_i.$$

## 1.6. Generator

Suppose there are  $n$  branching ways from a certain branch point and the probability to select  $i$ -th way is  $p_i$ , then we can select the  $t$ -th way in proportion to  $P_t$ , by generating a random number  $r(0 \leq r < 1)$  and determinant satisfying the following relationship,

$$\sum_{i=0}^{t-1} p_i \leq r \leq \sum_{i=0}^t p_i, \quad p_0=0 \quad (1)$$

where  $t=1, 2, \dots, n$ .

Based upon such a procedure, *Generator* generates a program of H-computer (*Generated Program*) as follows. Firstly, we determine an initial state and a final state from ISFV and FSFV, and then we obtain a sequence of state transitions by STM, starting from the initial state, ending at the final state. Then, each time an operation code state is selected, the address corresponding to the state is determined by OACM.

### 1.7. *Trainer*

*Trainer* executes the *Main Program* for the first time. Since is the *Main Program* there is contained at least one link instruction to the *Generated Program*, the *Generated Program* is executed. Then, *Trainer* decides one out of the following three cases, that is, the *Goal* has been attained (called *Success*), some *Subgoals* has been attained (called *Subsuccess*), and none of them has been attained (called *Failure*). For all transitions in the *Generated Program* the transition probabilities are increased in case of the *Success* or the *Subsuccess* and decreased in case of the *Failure*. The details of reinforcing procedure will be mentioned in Section 2. *Trainer* usually switches his work to the *Generator* after finishing the education of the *Learning Body*, except the occasion where all the following three conditions are satisfied simultaneously. When the conditions are met, the *Trainer* judges the learning has been completed and switches his work to the *Analyzer*.

(1) The *Generated Program* has been judged as successful.

(2) The product of transition probabilities of all the state transitions in the *Generated Program*, and the probabilities of selecting the initial state and the final state is sufficiently close to one.

(3) The product of corresponding probabilities of all the operation code state and the address correspondences in the *Generated Program* is sufficiently close to one.

### 1.8. *Analyzer*

*Analyzer* reaches the element  $M_i$  in *Memory* whose pattern field differs from the *Unknown Problem* (UP) only in one <term> operand. If there is such element  $M_i$ , he can extract one common element and two different elements as follows. The pattern field of the common element is that of UP or  $M_i$  whose different <term> operand is replaced by TERM pseudo operand. Then, the definition field of the element is the common part of the definition fields of UP and  $M_i$ . The pattern fields of the two different elements are the different <term> operands themselves, and the definition field of each different element is the difference between the definition field of UP or  $M_i$  and that of the common element.

## 2. *Learning procedure*

In this section we will explain in detail the learning procedure of each component in the *Learning Body*. As the learning procedures of STM and OACM are almost similar and the learning procedure of ISFV and FSFV are also almost similar, we will mention the

learning procedure of STM and ISFV only. In the following description we denote the length by  $L$  and the state transition sequence of a Generated Program by

$$S_{t_1} \rightarrow S_{t_2} \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow S_{t_L}.$$

### 2.1. Learning procedure of STM

When a Generated Program has been judged as *Success* (or *Subsuccess*), learning of the following type is performed.

$$\begin{aligned} a_{t_i t_{i+1}} &\rightarrow a_{t_i t_{i+1}} + b_{t_i} \cdot k_S \\ b_{t_i} &\rightarrow b_{t_i} + b_{t_i} \cdot k_S \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

( $i=1, 2, \dots, L-1$ )

where  $k_S$  is a positive constant, which will be discussed later. Thus the transition probabilities will be changed as

$$\begin{aligned} p_{t_i t_{i+1}} &\rightarrow \alpha p_{t_i t_{i+1}} + (1-\alpha) \\ p_{t_i j} &\rightarrow \alpha p_{t_i j} \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

( $i=1, 2, \dots, L-1 \quad j=1, 2, \dots, n \neq t_{i+1}$ )

where

$$\alpha = \frac{1}{1+k_S} \quad (4)$$

Thus, a linear operator has been operated. Though there are various operators for changing probabilities, the linear operator seems to be the most useful one for our experiment because they promise effective learning and the analysis concerned is easy. In a matrix form, we employ the following BOSH-MOSTELLER's stochastic learning model<sup>1)</sup> for our linear operator.

$$\mathbf{T} = a\mathbf{I} + (1-a)\mathbf{\Lambda} \quad (5)$$

where,  $a$  is a positive number,  $\mathbf{I}$  is the  $n \times n$  identity matrix and  $\mathbf{\Lambda}$  is the following  $n \times n$  matrix.

$$\mathbf{\Lambda} = \begin{pmatrix} \lambda_1 & \lambda_1 & \dots & \lambda_1 \\ \lambda_2 & \lambda_2 & \dots & \lambda_2 \\ \dots & \dots & \dots & \dots \\ \lambda_n & \lambda_n & \dots & \lambda_n \end{pmatrix}$$

$$0 \leq \lambda_k \leq 1 \quad \sum_{k=1}^n \lambda_k = 1.$$

When we apply  $\mathbf{T}$  to the probability vector  $\mathbf{P}$ , we obtain

$$\mathbf{TP} = a\mathbf{P} + (1-a)\boldsymbol{\lambda}, \quad (6)$$

$$\text{where } \boldsymbol{\lambda} = (\lambda_1 \lambda_2 \dots \lambda_n).$$

Then, each component of  $\mathbf{P}$ , is changed as follows.

$$p_i \rightarrow ap_i + (1-a)\lambda_i \quad (7)$$

$$(i=1, 2, \dots, n).$$

After we apply  $\mathbf{T}$  to  $\mathbf{P}$   $N$  times repeatedly, we obtain

$$\mathbf{T}^N \mathbf{P} = a^N \mathbf{P} + (1-a^N)\boldsymbol{\lambda}. \quad (8)$$

Thus we know  $\mathbf{T}^N \mathbf{P}$  tends to  $\boldsymbol{\lambda}$  if  $0 < a < 1$  as  $N$  becomes large, i. e. the  $i$ -th component of  $\mathbf{T}^N \mathbf{P}$  tends to  $\lambda_i$ .

In case of (3),  $\lambda_i$  equals to one. When a *Generated Program* has been judged as *Failure*, the learning of the following type is performed.

$$\begin{aligned} a_{t_i t_{i+1}} &\rightarrow a_{t_i t_{i+1}} - b_{t_i k_f} \\ b_{t_i} &\rightarrow b_{t_i} - b_{t_i k_f} \end{aligned} \quad (9)$$

$(i=1, 2, \dots, L-1)$

where  $0 < k_f < 1$ . But, if  $a_{t_i t_{i+1}} - b_{t_i k_f} \leq 0$ ,  $a_{t_i t_{i+1}}$  and  $b_{t_i}$  are left unchanged.

Thus the transition probability which is larger than  $k_f$  will be changed as follows.

$$\begin{aligned} p_{t_i t_{i+1}} &\rightarrow \beta p_{t_i t_{i+1}} + (1-\beta) \\ p_{t_i j} &\rightarrow \beta p_{t_i j} \end{aligned} \quad (10)$$

$(i=1, 2, \dots, L-1 \quad j=1, 2, \dots, n \neq t_{i+1})$ ,

where

$$\beta = \frac{1}{1-k_f}$$

The criterion that a *Generated Program* is judged as *Success* (*Subsuccess*) will be equivalent to the fact that the state transition sequence corresponding the *Generated Program* contains the state transition sequence  $\bar{S}_{jk}$  which begins with state  $S_j$  and ends with state  $S_k$ , passing through an ordered state sequence (the probability of which is denoted by  $\bar{p}_{jk}$ ). The convergence of  $\bar{p}_{jk}$  can be proved if the effect of failure punishment is negligibly small (the proof is shown in [4]). In other words  $\bar{p}_{jk}$  tends to unity after a large number of the program generating trials.

In the previous discussion we presumed  $k_s$  is a constant. However, it will be better to make the value of  $k_s$  depend on the length  $L$  of a *Generated Program* judged as *Success* (*Subsuccess*), because, if we assume the minimum length of the solution program to be  $L_m$ ,  $L_m - 1 / L - 1$  transitions of all, the  $L$  transitions satisfy the following relationship, i. e.

$$1 - \alpha = k_s' \frac{L_m - 1}{L - 1}, \quad \text{where } 0 < k_s' \leq 1. \quad (11)$$

Since  $L$  is usually unknown, the minimum value 2 may be used. Then, obtain

$$k_s = \frac{k_s'}{L - 1 - k_s'} \quad \alpha = 1 - \frac{k_s'}{L - 1}. \quad (12)$$

Smaller value of  $k_s'$  may be desirable from the learning speed point of view, but the smaller  $k_s'$  the more redundant program will be experienced. Such situations were confirmed in the experiments shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The learning results of MINUS (TERM).

$k_s'$	$\alpha$	$\bar{N} = \frac{1}{20} \sum_{i=1}^{20} N_i$	$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{1}{20} \sum_{i=1}^{20} (N_i - \bar{N})^2}$	$\bar{T} = \frac{1}{20} \sum_{i=1}^{20} T_i$	$\bar{E} = \frac{1}{20} \sum_{i=1}^{20} E_i$
0.8	0.8	965	189	2.2 min.	9/20
0.4	0.9	1037	188	2.4	5/20
0.2	0.95	1192	180	2.7	0/20
0.1	0.675	1401	155	2.9	0/20

Note  $N_i$ : number of program generation trials required complete learning with the  $i$ -th experiment  
 $T_i$ : time required to complete learning with the  $i$ -th experiment  
 $E_i$ : number of useless states included in the learned program with the  $i$ -th experiment

## 2.2. Learning procedure of ISFV

Only when a *Success* (or *Subsuccess*) *Program* whose length is equal to or smaller than the minimum length of the post *Success* programs have been generated, ISFV performs the learning as follows.

$$\begin{aligned} a_{0t_1} &\rightarrow 1, \quad a_{0t_i} \rightarrow \prod_{j=1}^{i-1} (1 - p_{t_i t_{j+1}}) \\ b_0 &\rightarrow 1 + \sum_{i=2}^L \prod_{j=1}^{i-1} (1 - p_{t_j t_{j+1}}). \end{aligned} \quad (13)$$

Thus the probability to select  $S_{t_i}$  as an initial state is changed as follows.

$$\begin{aligned} p_{0t_i} &= p_{0t_{i-1}}(1 - p_{t_{i-1}t_i}) = p_{0t_1} \prod_{j=1}^{i-1} (1 - p_{t_j t_{j+1}}) \\ p_{0t_1} &= 1 / \left( 1 + \sum_{i=1}^L \prod_{j=1}^{i-1} (1 - p_{t_j t_{j+1}}) \right). \end{aligned} \quad (14)$$

Since the essential part of the state transition sequence of *Success* (*Subsuccess*) *Program* is  $\bar{S}_{jk}$ , the problem is to search for the true  $S_j$  among  $S_{t_i}$ 's. By such a learning procedure, the probability of taking  $S_{t_i}$  as  $S_j$  becomes smaller, as the transition probability of  $S_{t_{i-1}} \rightarrow S_{t_i}$  grows larger. We can prove the convergence of this learning procedure (the proof is shown in [4]). That is, the initial state will be uniquely determined finally.

## 2.3. Conclusion of the learning procedure

The probability with which *Generator* generates a *Success* (*Subsuccess*) program is given by

$$p_{SUC} = (p_{0j} + \sum_{i \neq k} p_{0i} h_{ij}^{(k)}) \bar{p}_{jk} - p_{kf} + \sum_{S_{t_i} \neq S_{jk}} (p_{0j} + \sum_{i \neq l} p_{0i} \cdot h_{ij}^{(l)}) \cdot \bar{p}_{jk} \cdot b_{kl} \cdot p_{lf},$$

where (as to the following notation refer to [5]).

$h_{ij}^{(k)}$ : the probability that the generating process, starting from state  $S_i$ , will ever reach state  $S_j$  without passing state  $S_k$ .

$b_{ij}$ : the probability that the generating process, starting from state  $S_i$ , goes to state  $S_j$  for the first time.

$$\mathbf{H}_k = (h_{ij}^{(k)}) = (\mathbf{N}_k - \mathbf{I}) \mathbf{N}_{1kad}^{-1}$$

$$\mathbf{B}_j = (b_{ij}) = \mathbf{N}_j \cdot \mathbf{R}_j$$

$$\mathbf{N}_k = (\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{Q}_k)^{-1}$$

$\mathbf{Q}_k$ :  $(n-1) \times (n-1)$  matrix deleting the  $k$ th row and the  $k$ th column from  $\mathbf{P}$ .

$\mathbf{N}_{kad}$ : diagonal matrix having the diagonal elements of  $\mathbf{N}_k$ .

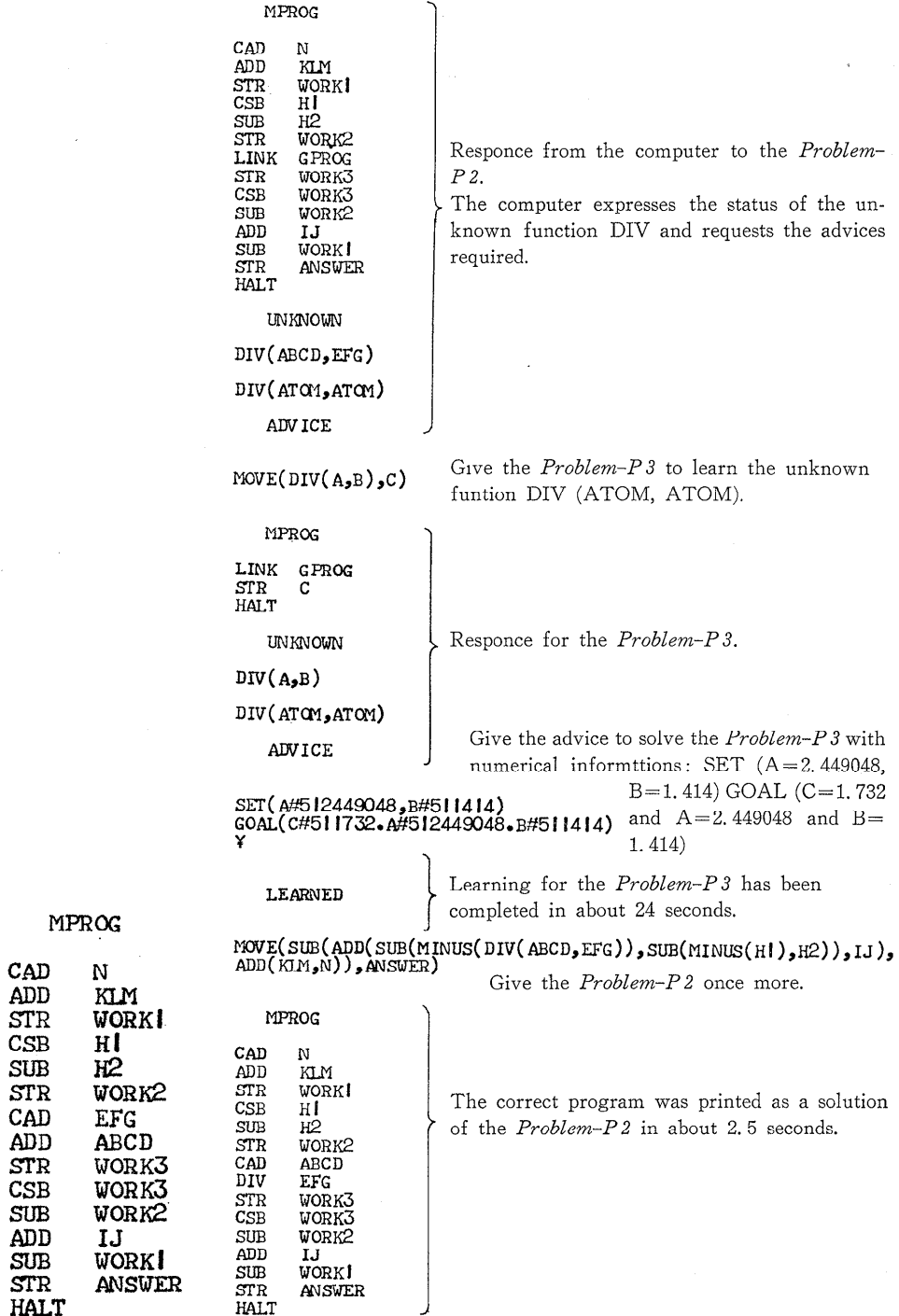
$\mathbf{R}_j$ :  $n-1$  component column vector which is made by deleting  $j$ th component from the  $j$ th column vector of  $\mathbf{P}$ .

$\mathbf{I}$ : unit matrix.

From the convergence of  $\bar{p}_{jk}$  and the learning of ISFV and FSFV, it will be obvious that  $p_{SUC}$  tends to unity after sufficiently many trials. Further, by considering the convergence of OACM we reach the following conclusion concerning our learning procedure.

By our learning procedure, the solution program will be certainly learned in the long run. The program obtained by such learning will not be always the best one, that is, the





Note. WORK *i* (*i*=1, 2, 3) denotes working area address. Fig. 1. Message for *Problem-pl* (solution).

Note. GPROG denotes *Generated Program* Fig. 2. An example of process of gaining the solution of *Problem-P2*.

length of the program may not be the minimum among the possible solution programs. However, when we choose the parameters of the learning procedure properly it will be possible to obtain the best program at a sacrifice of the learning speed.

### 3. *Examples of the experiment*

First we educated the B-computer to master 5 functions, MOVE, ADD, SUB, MINUS and PLUS, spending about 65 minutes by NEAC-2206, in which both the printing time and the manual operation time are included. After that we showed the *Problem-P1*,

```
MOVE(SUB(ADD(SUB(MINUS(ADD(ABCD, PLUS(EFG))),
SUB(MINUS(H1), H2)), IJ), ADD(KLM, N)), ANSWER),
```

then the B-computer printed out a program (solution) shown in Fig. 1 after about 1.5 seconds. However when we showed the *Problem-P2* which included unknown function DIV,

```
MOVE(SUB(ADD(SUB(MINUS(DIV(ABCD, EFG)), SUB(MINUS(H1),
(H2))), IJ), ADD(KLM, N)), ANSWER)
```

then the B-computer at once printed a message shown in Fig. 2 and halted requesting *Advice*. In Fig. 2 shows a sequence of messages printed out or typed in, by the time the solution program of the *Problem-P2* was obtained.

### 4. *Conclusion*

The system reported in this paper may be viewed as a compiler generating system in a sense, that is, in this system the B-computer learns the semantics of the syntax of *Problem* expressed in the language of the H-computer and grows up to a kind of a syntax directed compiler<sup>62</sup>. In order to extend our system more powerful, inclusion of a time dependent learning procedure, will be necessary, because, we can determine the state sequence uniquely by considering the time. Further, there are many problems still remained such as extending the *Problems* themselves and making the *Advice* of higher level. For the purpose of realizing an artificial intelligence, the language of the H-computer itself will be the object of further research. Anyway, we believe our self-programming system is a very meaningful one from our experiences, as an example of the artificial intelligence.

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