



# ON DECIDING CONSTANT RUNTIME OF LINEAR LOOPS

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Florian Frohn, Jürgen Giesl, Peter Giesl, and Nils Lommen

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## Applications in ...

- automatic complexity analysis
- no “approximation” of loops needed in abstract interpretation, symbolic execution, recurrence analysis, loop summarization, ...
- synthesis of multiphase-ranking functions (Ben-Amram et al. (SAS 2019))

## Termination of Linear Programs

Ashish Tiwari\*

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**Abstract.** We show that termination of a class of linear loop programs is decidable. Linear loop programs are discrete-time linear systems with a loop condition governing termination, that is, a while loop with linear assignments. We relate the termination of such a simple loop, on all initial values, to the eigenvectors corresponding to only the positive real eigenvalues of the matrix defining the loop assignments. This characterization of termination is reminiscent of the famous stability theorems in control theory that characterize stability in terms of eigenvalues.

### 1 Introduction

Dynamical systems have been studied by both computer scientists and control theorists, but both the models and the properties studied have been different. However there is one class of models, called “discrete-time linear systems” in the control world, where there is a considerable overlap. In computer science, these are unconditional **while** loops with linear assignments to a set of integer or rational variables; for example,

```
while (true) {  $x := x - y$ ;  $y := y$  }.
```

The two communities are interested in different questions: stability and controllability issues in control theory against reachability, invariants, and termination issues in computer science. In recent years, computer scientists have begun to ap-

## Termination of Integer Linear Programs

Mark Braverman\*

Department of Computer Science  
University of Toronto

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cases are given as piecewise  
the loop remains unde-  
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## On Termination of Integer Linear Loops

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conjunction of linear inequalities and the loop body consists of a simultaneous affine assignment to  $\mathbf{x}$ . If the vectors  $\mathbf{a}$  and  $\mathbf{c}$  are both zero then we say that the loop is *homogeneous*.

Suppose that the vector  $\mathbf{x}$  has dimension  $d$ . We say that  $P1$  *terminates* on a set  $S \subseteq \mathbb{R}^d$  if it terminates for all initial vectors  $\mathbf{u} \in S$ . Tiwari [38] gave a procedure to decide whether a given simple linear loop terminates on  $\mathbb{R}^d$ . Later Braverman [8] showed decidability of termination on  $\mathbb{Q}^d$ . However the most natural problem from the point of view of program verification is termination on  $\mathbb{Z}^d$ .

While termination on  $\mathbb{Z}^d$  reduces to termination on  $\mathbb{Q}^d$  in the homogeneous case (by a straightforward scaling argument), termination on  $\mathbb{Z}^d$  in the general case is stated as an open problem in [5, S. 38]. The main

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conjunction of linear inequalities and equalities, that  $P1$  terminates on a set of initial vectors  $\mathbf{u} \in \mathbb{R}^d$ , for all initial vectors  $\mathbf{u} \in \mathbb{R}^d$ , the vectors  $\mathbf{a}$  and  $\mathbf{c}$  are integer matrices. The loop is *homogeneous*.

Suppose that the vector  $\mathbf{u}$  is a vector of variables,  $\mathbf{u}$ ,  $\mathbf{a}$ , and  $\mathbf{c}$  are vectors, and  $A$  and  $B$  are integer matrices. We give a procedure for the problem of whether, for all integer vectors  $\mathbf{u}$ , such a loop terminates. The essence of our algorithm relies on sophisticated tools from algebraic number theory, Diophantine approximation, and real algebraic geometry.

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Nils Lommen (RWTH Aachen – PLV)

## Termination of Linear Loops over the Integers

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### Abstract

We consider the problem of deciding termination of single-path while loops with integer variables, affine updates, and affine guard conditions. The question is whether such a loop terminates on all integer initial values. This problem is known to be decidable for the subclass of loops whose update matrices are diagonalisable, but the general case has remained open since being conjectured to be undecidable by Tiwari in 2004. In this paper we show decidability of determining termination for arbitrary update matrices, confirming Tiwari's conjecture. For the class of loops considered in this paper, the question of deciding termination on a specific initial value is a longstanding open problem in the theory of linear loops. The key to our decision procedure is in showing how to circumvent the difficulties of deciding termination on a fixed initial value.

Classification Computing methodologies → Algebraic algorithms; Theory of verification. Loop Termination, Linear Integer Programs, Affine Verification.

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Theory of Programming

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## Termination of Polynomial Loops

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Joël Ouak  
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**Abstract.** We consider the termination problem for triangular weakly non-linear loops (*twm*-loops) over some ring  $S$  like  $\mathbb{Z}$ ,  $\mathbb{Q}$ , or  $\mathbb{R}$ . Essentially, the guard of such a loop is an arbitrary Boolean formula over (possibly non-linear) polynomial inequations, and the body is a single assignment  $\begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ \vdots \\ x_d \end{bmatrix} \leftarrow \begin{bmatrix} c_1 \cdot x_1 + p_1 \\ \vdots \\ c_d \cdot x_d + p_d \end{bmatrix}$  where each  $x_i$  is a variable,  $c_i \in S$ , and each  $p_i$  is a (possibly non-linear) polynomial over  $S$  and the variables  $x_{i+1}, \dots, x_d$ .

We present a reduction from the question of termination to the existential fragment of the first-order theory of  $S$  and  $\mathbb{R}$ . For loops over  $\mathbb{R}$ , our reduction entails decidability of termination. For loops over  $\mathbb{Z}$  and  $\mathbb{Q}$ , it proves semi-decidability of non-termination.

Furthermore, we present a transformation to convert certain non-*twm*-loops into *twm*-form. Then the original loop terminates iff the transformed loop terminates over a specific subset of  $\mathbb{R}$ , which can also be checked via our reduction. This transformation also allows us to prove *tight* complexity bounds for the termination problem for two important classes of loops which can *always* be transformed into *twm*-loops.

## 1 Introduction

Let  $\mathbb{R}_A$  denote the real algebraic numbers. We consider loops of the form

$$\text{while } \varphi \text{ do } \vec{x} \leftarrow \vec{a}. \quad (1)$$



## Termination of Triangular Integer Loops is Decidable

Florian Frohn<sup>1</sup> and Jürgen Gies<sup>2</sup>  
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<sup>1</sup> Max Planck Institute for Informatics, Saarbrücken, Germany  
<sup>2</sup> LuFG Informatik 2, RWTH Aachen University, Aachen, Germany  
gies@informatik.rwth-aachen.de

**Abstract.** We consider the problem whether termination of affine integer loops is decidable. Since Tiwari conjectured decidability in 2004 [15], only special cases have been solved [3,4,14]. We complement this work by proving decidability for the case that the update matrix is triangular.

### 1 Introduction

We consider affine integer loops of the form

Here,  $A \in \mathbb{Z}^{d \times d}$  for some dimension  $d \geq 1$ ,  $\vec{x}$  is a column vector of different variables  $x_1, \dots, x_d$ ,  $\vec{a} \in \mathbb{Z}^d$ , and  $\varphi$  is a conjunctive formula over  $\vec{x}$  (i.e.,  $A\vec{x} = [c^T \vec{x} + c]$  is an affine expression where  $\vec{0}$  is the vector containing  $k$  zeros,  $c \in \mathbb{Q}^d$ ,  $c \in \mathbb{Q}$ ). Definition 1 formalizes the intuitive notion of a triangular update matrix.

# Analyzing Single-Path Loops

- Termination and complexity analysis of programs are undecidable
- **Goal:** Find classes of programs where these problems are decidable
  - Tiwari (CAV 2004)
    - **termination** is decidable over  $\mathbb{R}$
  - Braverman (CAV 2006)
    - **termination** is decidable over  $\mathbb{Q}$
    - **termination** is decidable over  $\mathbb{Z}$  if  $\mathbf{b} = \mathbf{0}$
  - Frohn, Giesl, and Hark (CAV 2019; SAS 2020)
    - **termination** is decidable if  $A$  has real spectrum
  - Hosseini, Ouaknine, and Worrell (ICALP 2019)
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while ( $\varphi(\mathbf{x})$ ) do  $\mathbf{x} \leftarrow A\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b}$ 
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while ( $0 \leq x + y \leq 10$ ) do  
   $\begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \end{pmatrix} \leftarrow \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$ 
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- **Main Result:** **Constant runtime** is decidable over  $\mathbb{R}$  if  $A$  has real spectrum

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if and only if

`while ( $\varphi(\mathbf{x}) \wedge \varphi(A\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b})$ ) do  $\mathbf{x} \leftarrow A(A\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b}) + \mathbf{b}$`  has constant runtime

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$\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_k$  eigenvalues of  $A \implies \lambda_1^2, \dots, \lambda_k^2$  eigenvalues of  $A^2$

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$$cf(n, \mathbf{x}) = \sum_i \alpha_i(\mathbf{x}) \cdot n^{\alpha_i} \cdot \lambda_i^n \text{ with polynomials } \alpha_i \text{ over } \mathbf{x}, \alpha_i \in \mathbb{N}, \text{ and } \lambda_i \in \mathbb{R}_{>0}$$

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## Example:

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there exists  $C \in \mathbb{N}$ .  $\forall \mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^d$ .  $\exists n \in \{0, \dots, C-1\}$ .  $\neg \varphi(cf(n, \mathbf{x}))$

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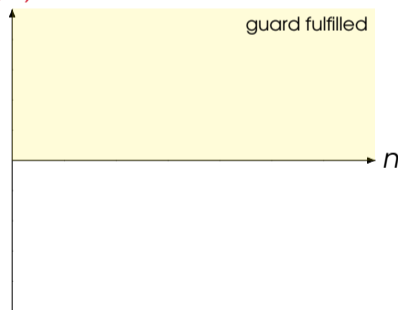
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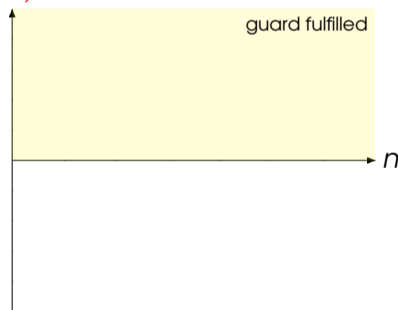
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## Properties of $cf(n, \mathbf{x})$ :

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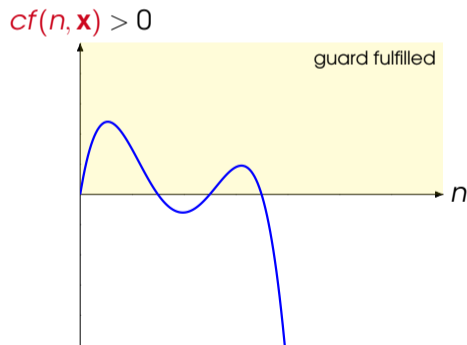
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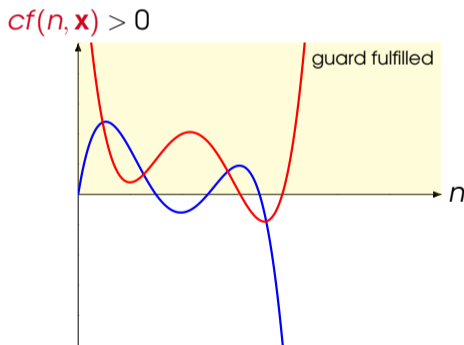
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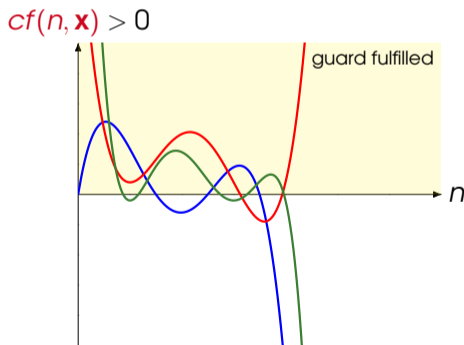
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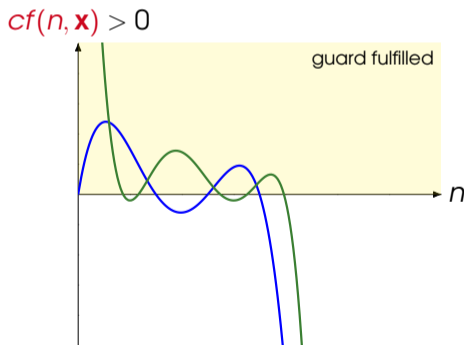
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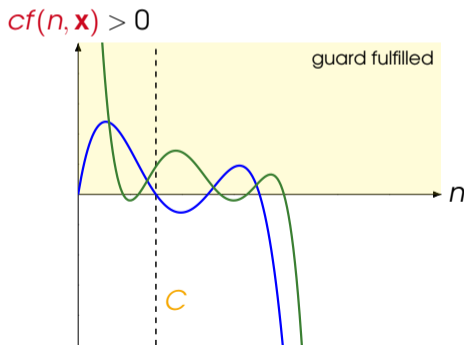
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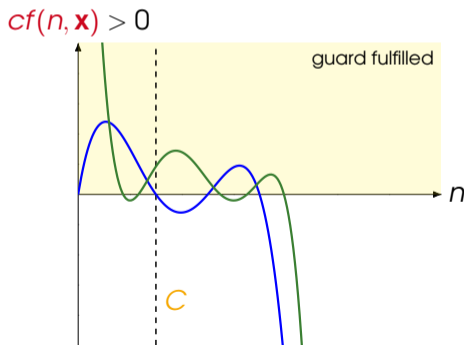
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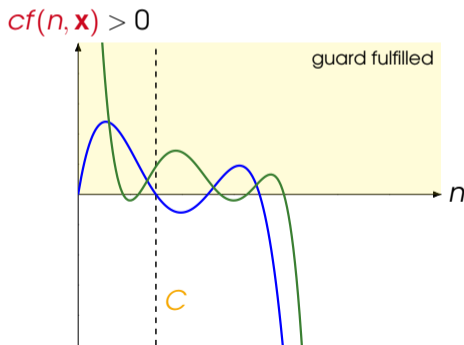
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`while ( $\varphi(\mathbf{x})$ ) do  $\mathbf{x} \leftarrow A\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b}$`  has constant runtime

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Comparison to complexity analysis tools

- lower bounds: LoAT
- upper bounds: CoFloCo and KoAT

<b>Tool</b>	$\mathcal{O}(1)$	$\neq \mathcal{O}(1)$
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KoAT	6	—
CoFloCo	5	—
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# Conclusion

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