The Chomsky Hierarchy

Unrestricted Grammars:

Productions

$$u \rightarrow v$$

String of variables and terminals

String of variables and terminals

Example unrestricted grammar:

$$S \rightarrow aBc$$

$$aB \rightarrow cA$$

$$Ac \rightarrow d$$

Theorem:

A language L is recursively enumerable if and only if L is generated by an unrestricted grammar

Context-Sensitive Grammars:

Productions

$$u \rightarrow v$$

String of variables and terminals

String of variables and terminals

and: $|u| \leq |v|$

The language $\{a^n b^n c^n\}$

is context-sensitive:

$$S \rightarrow abc \mid aAbc$$

$$Ab \rightarrow bA$$

$$Ac \rightarrow Bbcc$$

$$bB \rightarrow Bb$$

$$aB \rightarrow aa \mid aaA$$

Theorem:

A language L is context sensistive

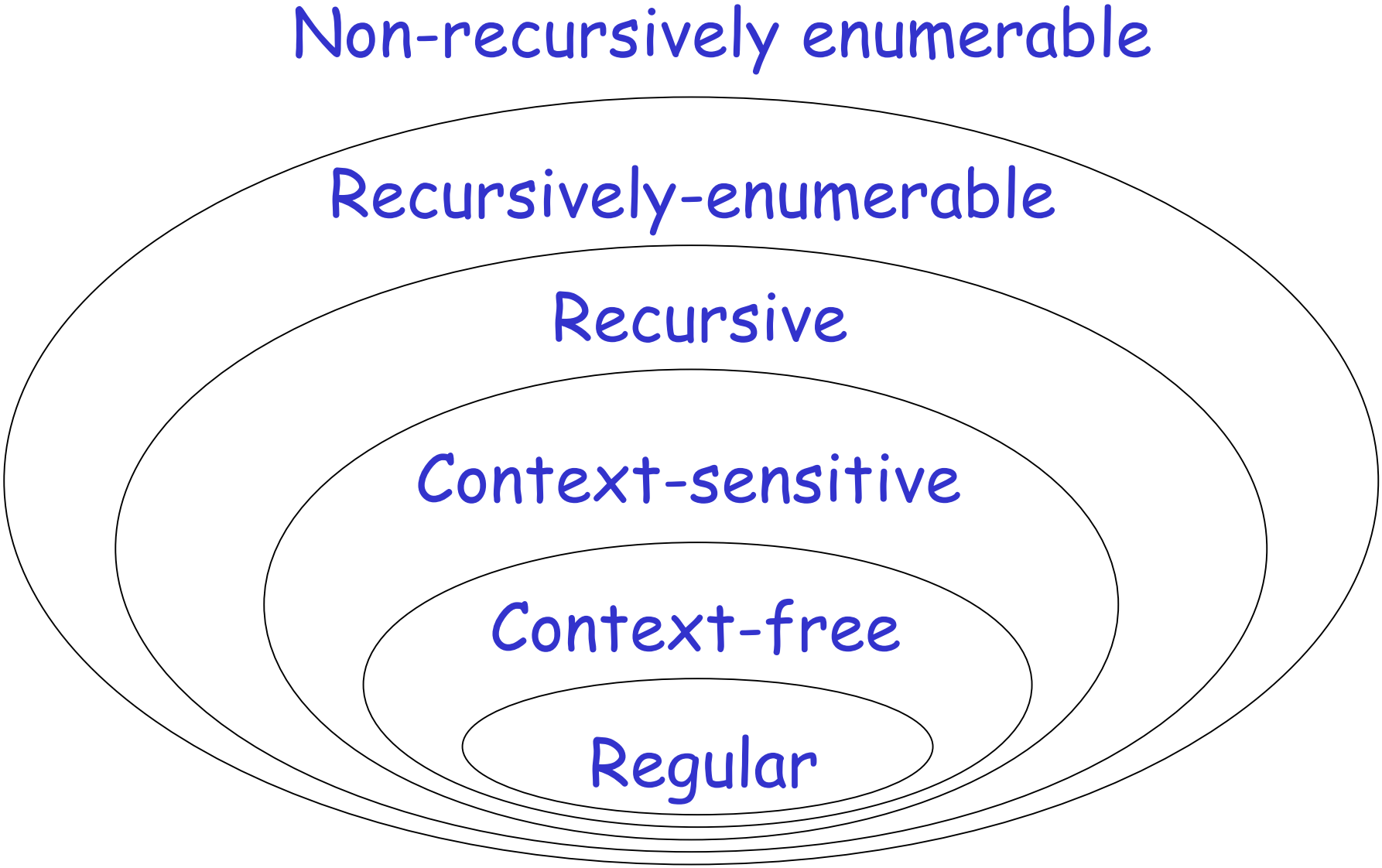
if and only if

L is accepted by a Linear-Bounded automaton

Observation:

There is a language which is context-sensitive but not recursive

The Chomsky Hierarchy



Decidability

Consider problems with answer YES or NO

Examples:

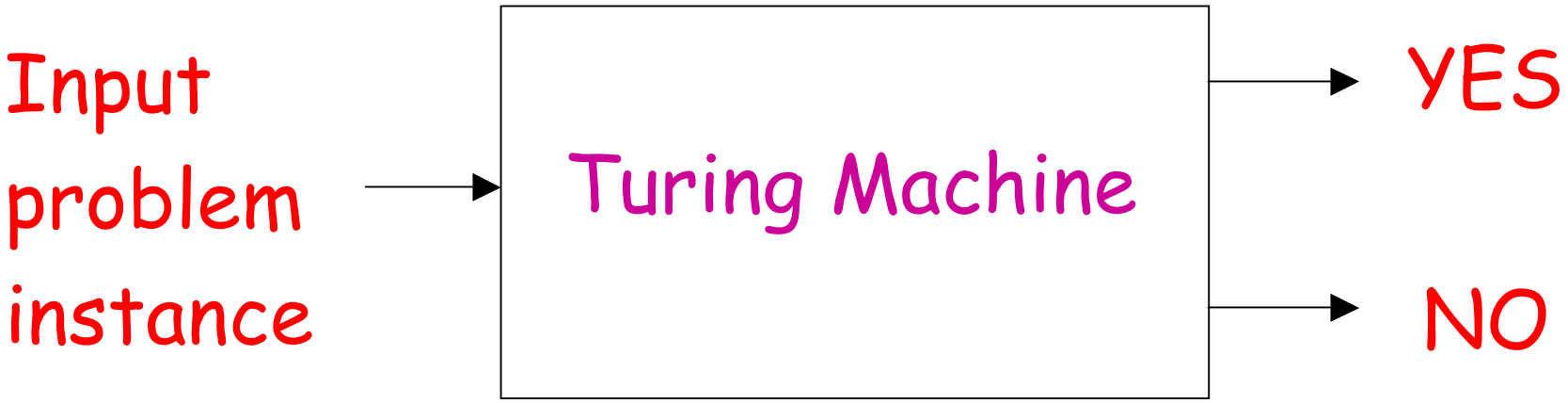
- Does Machine M have three states ?
- Is string w a binary number?
- Does DFA M accept any input?

A problem is decidable if some Turing machine Solves (decides) the problem

Decidable problems:

- Does Machine M have three states ?
- Is string w a binary number?
- Does DFA M accept any input?

The Turing machine that solves a problem answers YES or NO for each instance



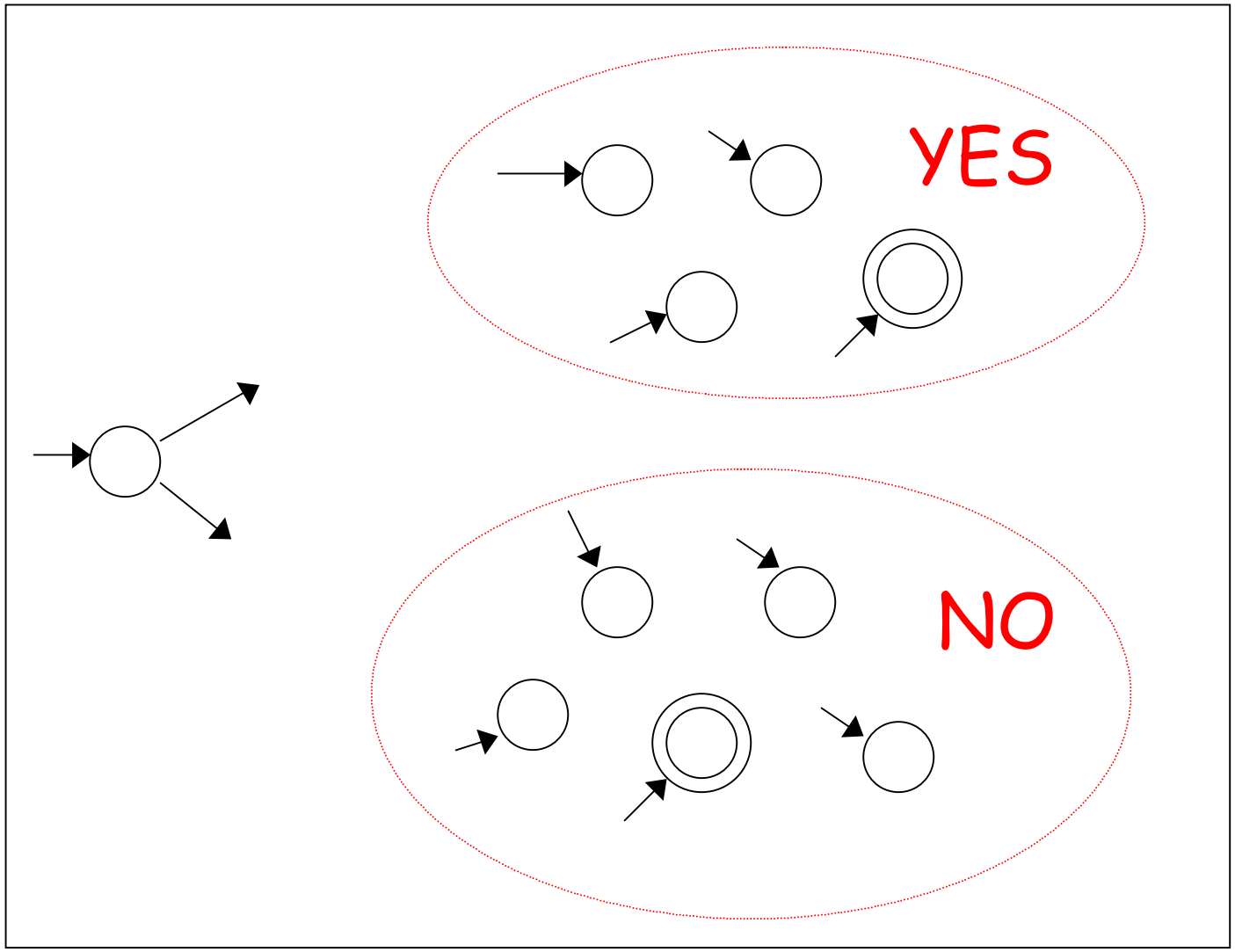
The machine that decides a problem:

- If the answer is YES
  then halts in a yes state

- If the answer is NO
  then halts in a no state

These states may not be final states

Turing Machine that decides a problem



YES and NO states are halting states

Difference between Recursive Languages and Decidable problems

For decidable problems:

The YES states may not be final states

Some problems are undecidable:

There is no Turing Machine that solves all instances of the problem

A simple undecidable problem:

The membership problem

The Membership Problem

Input:

- Turing Machine M
- String w

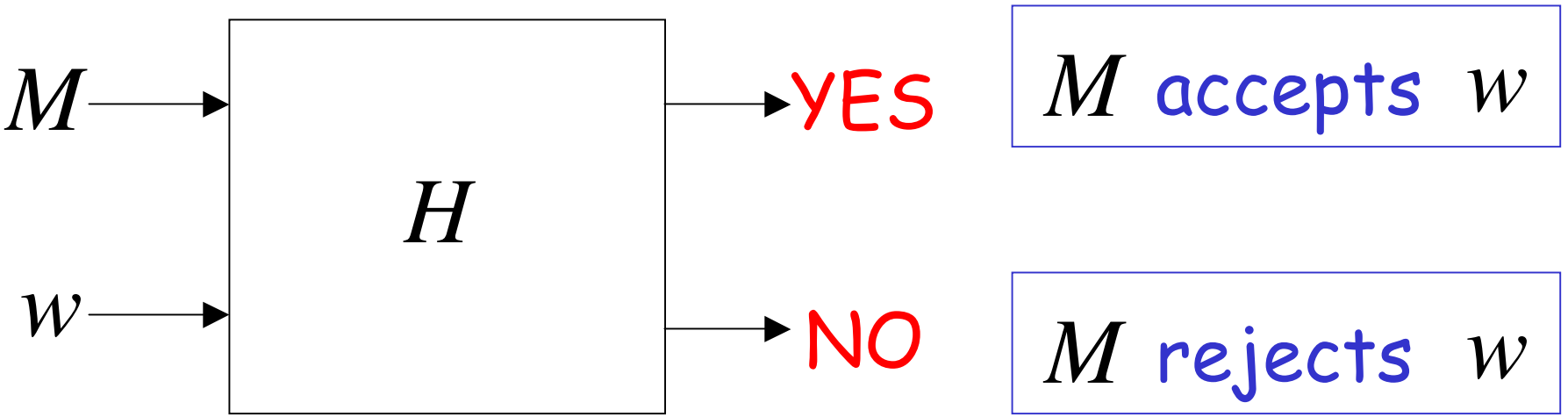
Question: Does M accept w ?

Theorem:

The membership problem is undecidable

Proof: Assume for contradiction that
the membership problem is decidable

There exists a Turing Machine H that solves the membership problem



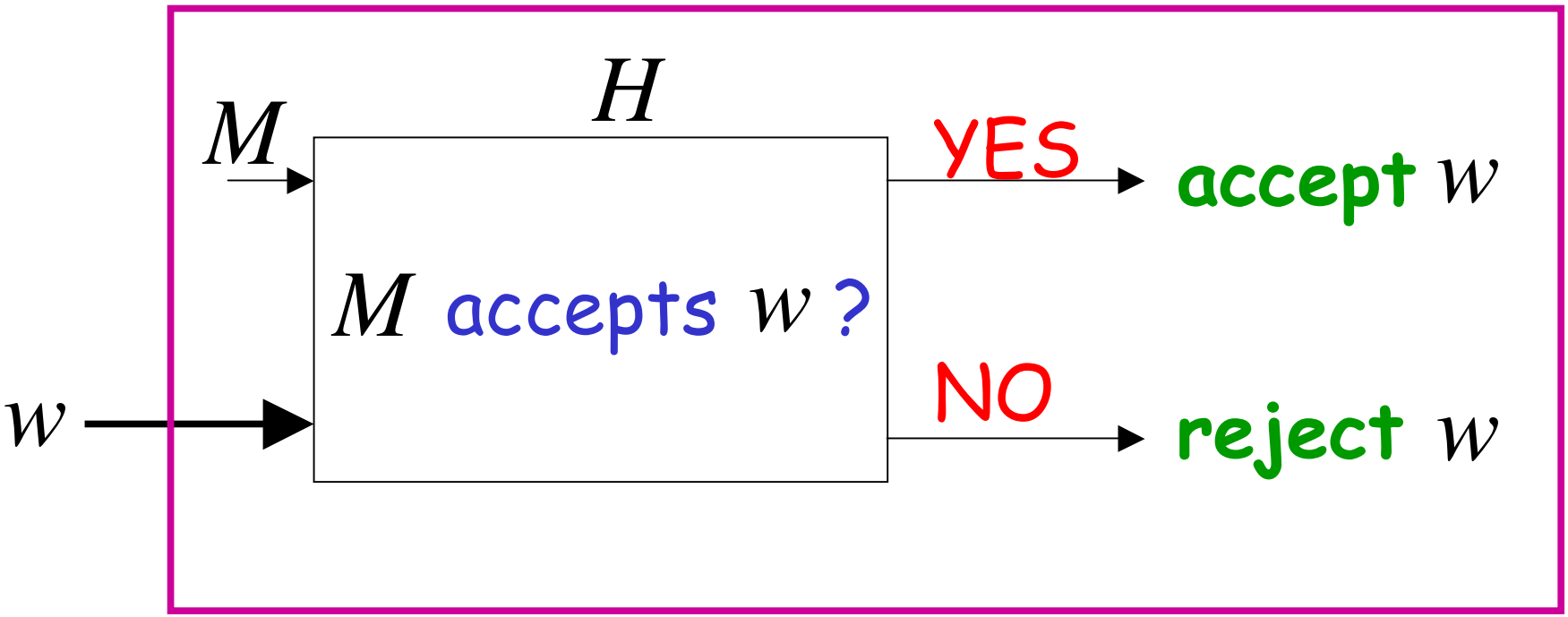
Let L be a recursively enumerable language

Let M be the Turing Machine that accepts L

We will prove that L is also recursive:

we will describe a Turing machine that accepts L and halts on any input

Turing Machine that accepts L and halts on any input



Therefore, L is recursive

Since L is chosen arbitrarily, we have proven that every recursively enumerable language is also recursive

But there are recursively enumerable languages which are not recursive

Contradiction!!!!

Therefore, the membership problem is undecidable

END OF PROOF

A famous undecidable problem:

The halting problem

The Halting Problem

Input:

- Turing Machine M
- String w

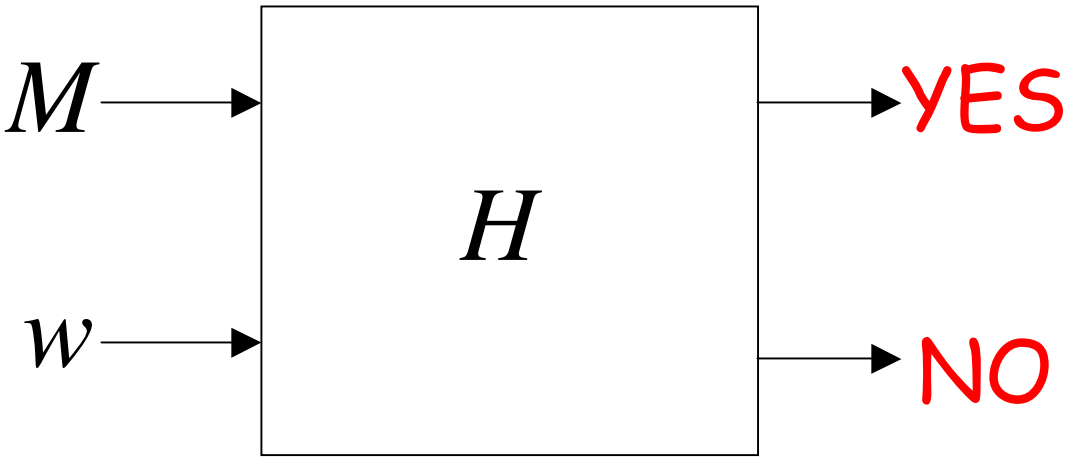
Question: Does M halt on w ?

Theorem:

The halting problem is undecidable

Proof: Assume for contradiction that the halting problem is decidable

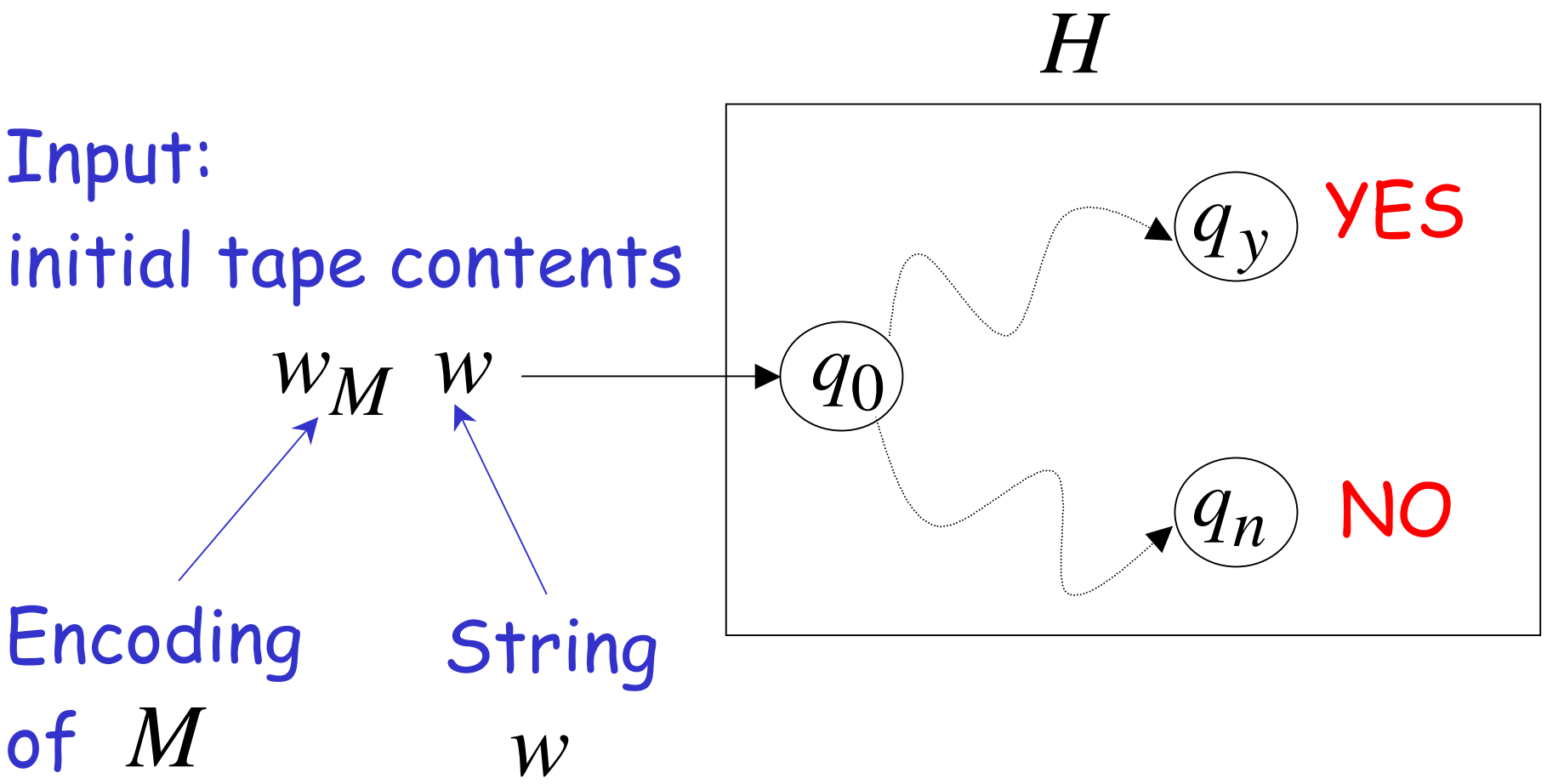
There exists Turing Machine H that solves the halting problem



M halts on w

M doesn't halt on w

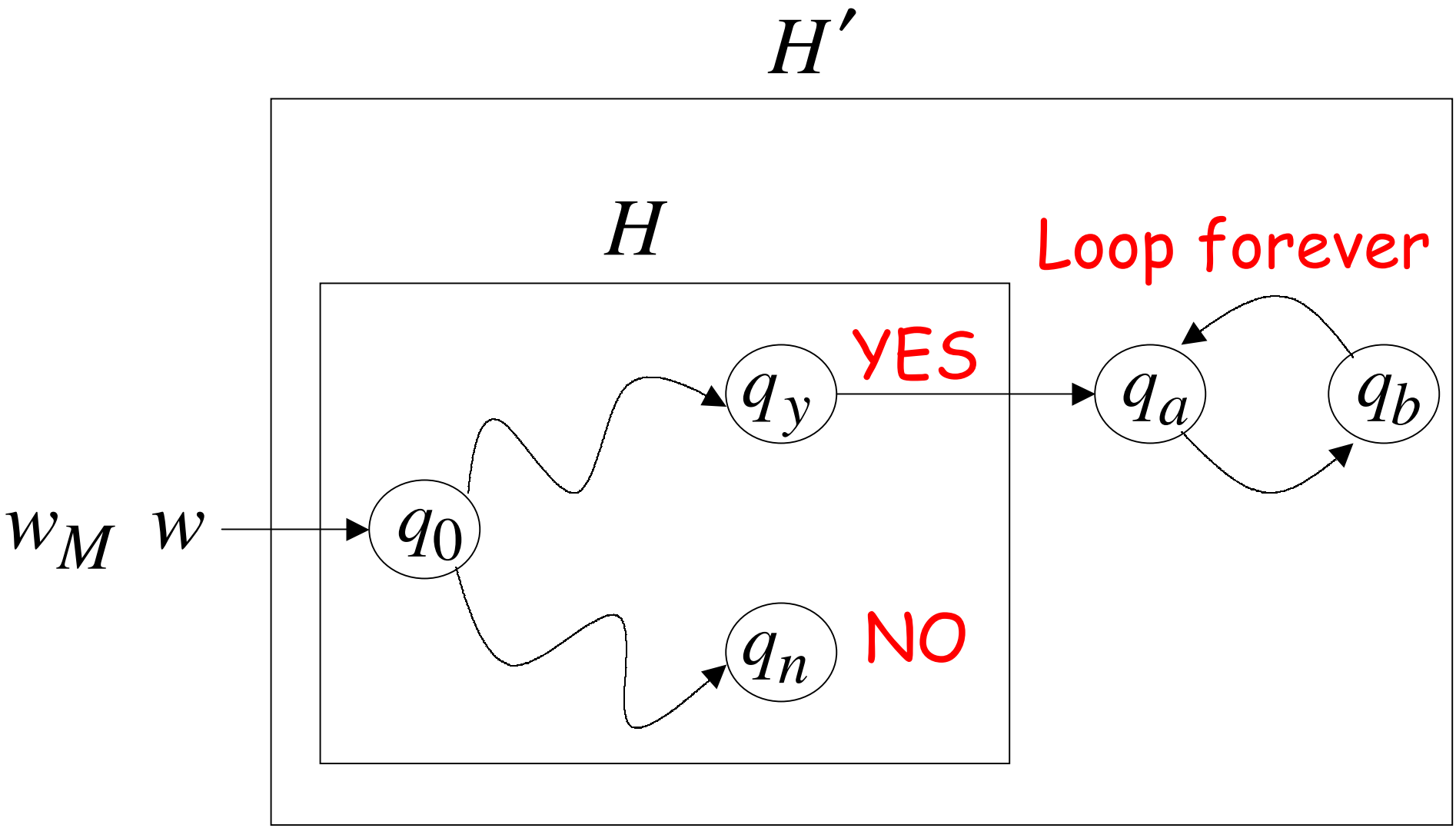
Construction of H



Construct machine H' :

If H returns YES then loop forever

If H returns NO then halt


H'
H
Loop forever
YES
NO
q_y
q_a
q_b
q_0
q_n
w_M w

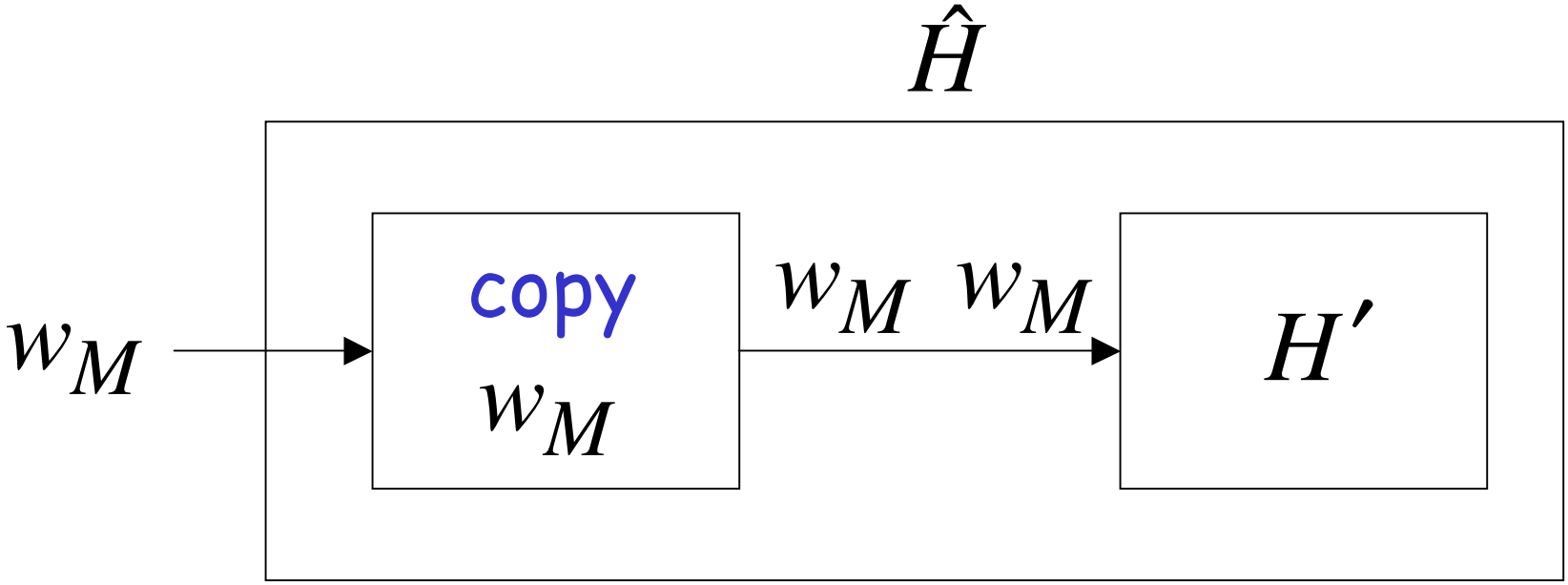
Construct machine $\hat{H}$:

Input: w_M (machine M)

If M halts on input w_M

Then loop forever

Else halt


$\hat{H}$
w_M
copy
w_M
w_M w_M
H'

Run machine $\hat{H}$ with input itself:

Input: $w_{\hat{H}}$ (machine $\hat{H}$)

If $\hat{H}$ halts on input $w_{\hat{H}}$

Then loop forever

Else halt

$\hat{H}$ on input $w_{\hat{H}}$:

If $\hat{H}$ halts then loops forever

If $\hat{H}$ doesn't halt then it halts

NONSENSE !!!!!

Therefore, we have contradiction

The halting problem is undecidable

END OF PROOF

Another proof of the same theorem:

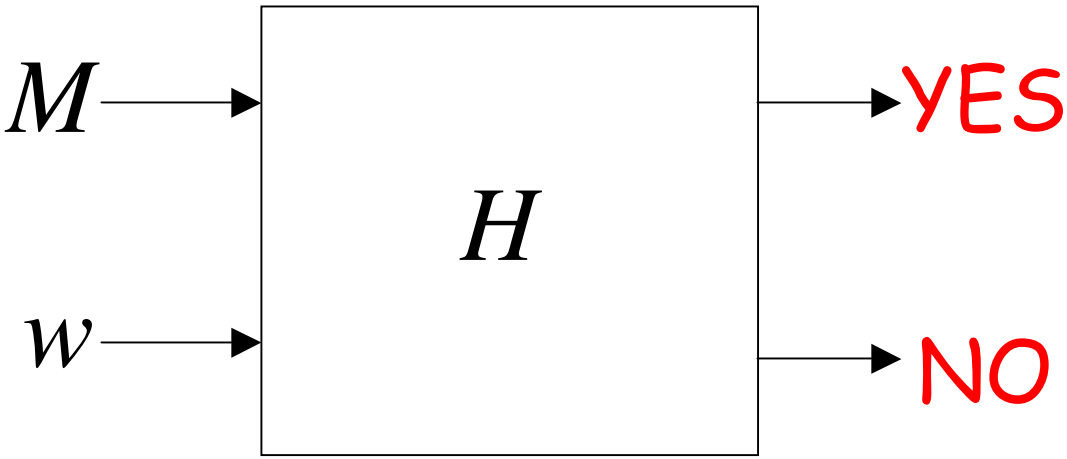
If the halting problem was decidable then every recursively enumerable language would be recursive

Theorem:

The halting problem is undecidable

Proof: Assume for contradiction that the halting problem is decidable

There exists Turing Machine H that solves the halting problem



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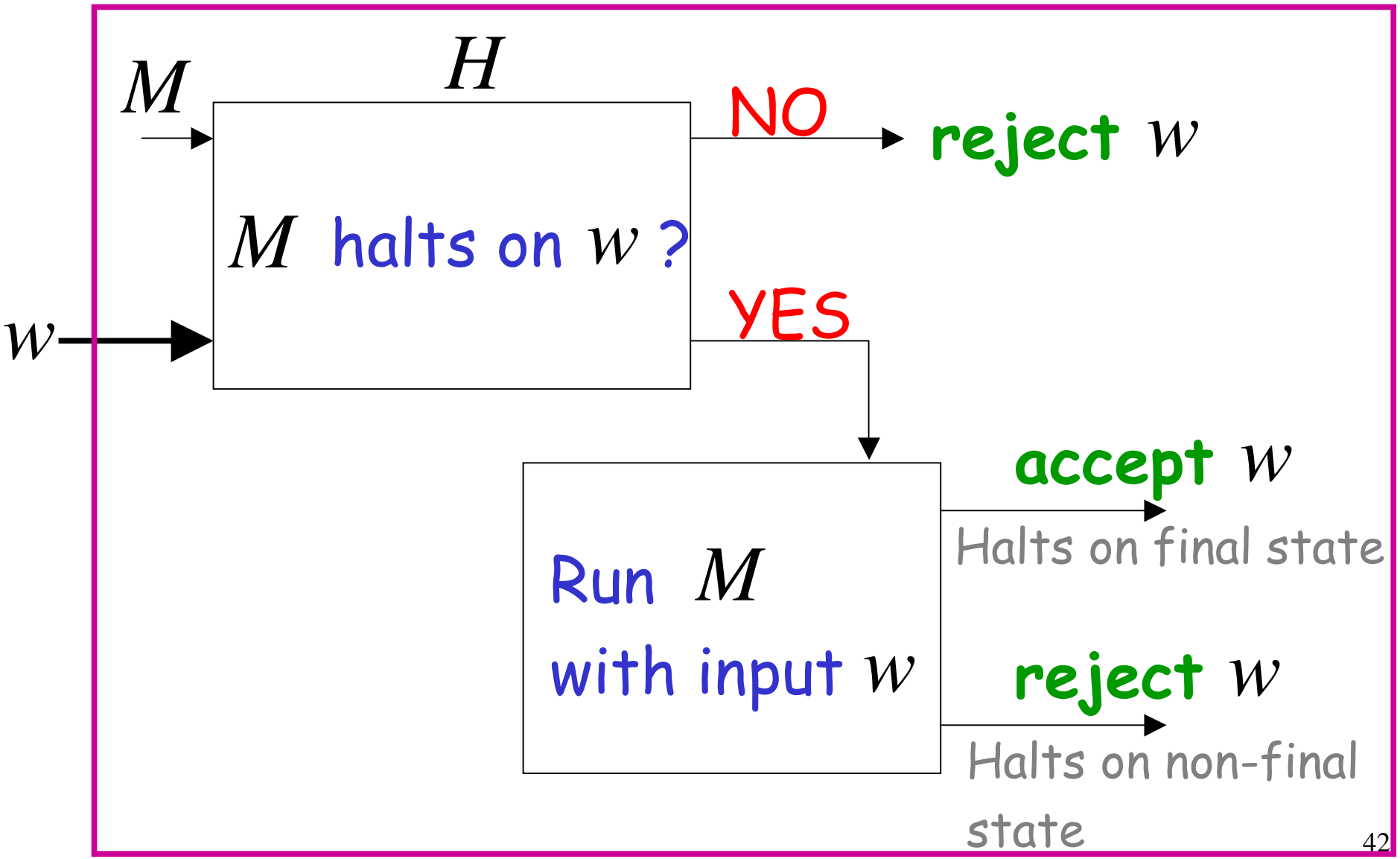

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Contradiction!!!!

Therefore, the halting problem is undecidable

END OF PROOF