Finding the Leftmost Critical Factorization on Unordered Alphabet

Dmitry Kosolobov
Ural Federal University, Ekaterinburg, Russia

Abstract
We present a linear time and space algorithm computing the leftmost critical factorization of a given string on an unordered alphabet.

Keywords: critical factorization, critical points, leftmost critical point, unordered alphabet, Crochemore–Perrin algorithm

1. Introduction
Stringology and combinatorics on words are closely related fields that intensively interact with each other. One of the most famous examples of their interaction is the surprising application of the so-called critical factorization, a notion that was created inside the field of combinatorics on words for purely theoretic reasons (the precise definition is presented below). Critical factorizations are at the core of the constant space string matching algorithm by Crochemore and Perrin \cite{crochemore-perrin} and its real time variation by Breslauer, Grossi, and Mignosi \cite{breslauer-grossi-mignosi}, which are, perhaps, the most elegant and simple string matching algorithms with such time and space bounds.

It is known that a critical factorization can be found in linear time and constant space when the input string is drawn from an ordered alphabet, i.e., when the alphabet is totally ordered and we can use symbol comparisons that test for the relative order of symbols (see \cite{crochemore-perrin,crochemore-durand}). In \cite{breslauer-grossi-mignosi} it was posed as an open problem whether it is possible to find in linear time a critical factorization of a given string over an arbitrary unordered alphabet, i.e., when our algorithm is allowed to perform only equality comparisons. In this paper we answer this question affirmatively; namely, we describe a linear time algorithm finding the leftmost critical factorization of a given string on an unordered alphabet. A similar result is known for unbordered conjugates, a concept related to the critical factorizations: Duval et al. \cite{duval-et-al} proposed a linear algorithm that allows to find an unbordered conjugate of a given string on an arbitrary unordered alphabet. It is worth noting that all known so far algorithms working on general alphabets could find only some critical factorization while our algorithm always finds the leftmost one. However, for the case of integer alphabet, there is a linear algorithm finding the leftmost critical factorization \cite{kosolobov} but it uses some structures (namely, the Lempel–Ziv decomposition) that cannot be computed in linear time on a general (even ordered) alphabet \cite{kozlov-kosolobov-min luxe}.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 contains some basic definitions and facts used throughout the text. In Section 3 we present our first algorithm and prove that its running time is $O(n \log n)$ in Section 4, where $n$ is the length of the input string. A more detailed analysis of this algorithm is given in Section 5. In Section 6 we improve our first solution to obtain a linear algorithm. Finally, we conclude with some remarks in Section 7.

2. Preliminaries
We need the following basic definitions. A string $w$ over an alphabet $\Sigma$ is a map $\{1, 2, \ldots, n\} \rightarrow \Sigma$, where $n$ is referred to as the length of $w$, denoted by $|w|$. We write $w[i]$ for the $i$th letter of $w$ and $w[i..j]$ for...
Lemma 1. Let \( w[i,j] \) be the empty string for any \( i > j \). A string \( u \) is a substring (or a factor) of \( w \) if \( u = w[i..j] \) for some \( i \) and \( j \). The pair \((i, j)\) is not necessarily unique; we say that \( i \) specifies an occurrence of \( u \) in \( w \). A string can have many occurrences in another string. A substring \( w[1..j] \) [respectively, \( w[i..n] \)] is a prefix [respectively, suffix] of \( w \). For integers \( i \) and \( j \), the set \( \{ k \in \mathbb{Z} : i \leq k \leq j \} \) (possibly empty) is denoted by \([i..j]\). Denote \([i..j] = [i..j-1] \), \([i..j] = [i+1..j] \), and \([i..j] = [i+1..j-1] \). Our notation for arrays is similar to that for strings: for example, \( a[i..j] \) denotes an array indexed by the numbers \( i, i+1, \ldots, j \).

Throughout the paper, we intensively use different periodic properties of strings. A string \( u \) is called a border of a string \( w \) if \( u \) is both a prefix and a suffix of \( w \). A string is unbordered if it has only trivial borders: the empty string and the string itself. An integer \( p \) is a period of \( w \) if \( 0 < p \leq |w| \) and \( w[i] = w[i+p] \) for all \( i = 1, 2, \ldots, |w| - p \). It is well known that \( p > 0 \) is a period of \( w \) if \( w \) has a border of the length \( |w| - p \). A string of the form \( xx \), where \( x \) is a nonempty string, is called a square. Let \( w[i..j] = xx \) for some \( i, j \) and a nonempty string \( x \); the position \( i + |x| \) is called the center of the square \( w[i..j] \). A string \( w \) is primitive if \( w \neq x^k \) for any string \( x \) and any integer \( k > 1 \). A string \( v \) is a conjugate of a string \( w \) if \( v = w[i..|w|][i..i-1] \) for some \( i \).

Lemma 1 (see [12]). A string \( w \) is primitive iff \( w \) has an unbordered conjugate.

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c}
\mu(i) = 1 & \mu(i) = 3 & \mu(i) = 4 \\
abbaabba & abbaabba & abbaabba \\
i = 1 & i = 8 & i = 4
\end{array}
\]

Figure 1: Internal, right external, and left external local periods of the string \( abbaabba \).

Now we can introduce the main notion of this paper. The local period at a position \( i \) (or centered at a position \( i \)) of \( w \) is the minimal positive integer \( \mu(i) \) such that the substring \( w[i..i+\mu(i)-1] \) has the period \( \mu(i) \) (see Figure 1). Informally, the local period at a given position is the size of the smallest square centered at this position. We say that the local period \( \mu(i) \) is left external [respectively, right external] if \( i - \mu(i) < 1 \) [respectively, \( i + \mu(i) - 1 > |w| \)]; the local period is external if it is either left external or right external. The local period is internal if it is not external. Obviously, the local period at any position of \( w \) is less than or equal to the minimal period of \( w \). A position \( i \) of \( w \) with the local period that is equal to the minimal period of \( w \) is called a critical point; the corresponding factorization \( w[i..i-1] \cdot w[i..|w|] \) is called a critical factorization. The following remarkable theorem holds.

Theorem 1 (see [2][12]). Let \( w \) be a string with the minimal period \( p > 1 \). Any sequence of \( p-1 \) consecutive positions of \( w \) contains a critical point.

Theorem 1 implies that any string with the minimal period \( p \) has a critical point among the positions \( 1, 2, \ldots, p \). Clearly, the local period corresponding to any such critical point is left external. The following lemmas are straightforward.

Lemma 2. If the local period at a position of a given string is both left external and right external, then this position is a critical point.

Lemma 3. If the local period \( \mu(i) \) at a position \( i \) of a given string \( w \) is not right external [respectively, left external], then the string \( w[i..i+\mu(i)-1] \) [respectively, \( w[i-\mu(i)..i-1] \)] is unbordered.

3. \( O(n \log n) \) Algorithm

Our construction is based on the following observation.

Lemma 4. Let \( w \) be a string with the minimal period \( p > 1 \). Denote \( k = \max\{l : w[1..l] = w[j..j+l-1] \} \) for some \( j \in (1..p) \). The leftmost critical point of \( w \) is the leftmost position \( i > k + 1 \) with external local period.
Lemma 6. Fix an integer \( i < x \). Let us first describe an algorithm that finds \( \mu(i) \) in \( O(x) \) time and space provided \( \mu(i) \leq x \). Using Lemma 5 our algorithm constructs in \( O(x) \) time an array \( b[i..x..i-1] \) (for clarity, the indices start with \( i-x \)) of the length \( x \) such that \( b[j] = \max\{l: l \leq x \text{ and } w[j..j+l-1] = w[i..i+l-1]\} \) for \( j \in [i-x..i] \). It is straightforward that \( \mu(i) = i - j \) for the rightmost \( j \in [i-x..i] \) such that \( b[j] \geq i - j \).
Now, to compute \( \mu(i) \), we consecutively execute the above algorithm for \( x = 2^0, 2^1, 2^2, \ldots, 2^{\lceil \log(i-1) \rceil} \) and, finally, for \( x = i-1 \) until we find \( \mu(i) \). Thus, the algorithm runs in \( O(\sum_{j=0}^{\lceil \log \mu(i) \rceil} 2^j) = O(\mu(i)) \) time and space.

4. \( O(n \log n) \) Time Bound

During the execution, Algorithm 1 calculates local periods at some positions. Let \( S \) be the sequence of all such positions in the input string \( w \) in increasing order. It is easy to see that the running time of the whole algorithm is \( O(n + \sum_{i \in S} \mu(i)) \). Thus, to prove that Algorithm 1 works in \( O(n \log n) \) time, it suffices to show that \( \sum_{i \in S} \mu(i) = O(n \log n) \). Simplifying the discussion, we exclude from \( S \) all positions \( i \) such that \( \mu(i) = 1 \).

Fix an arbitrary number \( q \). Denote by \( T(q) \) the maximal sum \( \sum_{i \in S'} \mu(i) \) among all contiguous sub-sequences \( S' \) of \( S \) such that \( \mu(i) \leq q \) for each \( i \in S' \). We are to show that \( T(q) = O(q \log q) \), which immediately implies \( \sum_{i \in S} \mu(i) = O(n \log n) \) since the number \( q \) is arbitrary and \( T(n) = \sum_{i \in S} \mu(i) \).

For further investigation, we need three additional combinatorial lemmas. Consider a position \( i \) of \( w \) with internal local period \( \mu(i) > 1 \). Informally, Lemma 7 shows that at the positions \( (i..i+\mu(i)) \) any internal local period that “intersects” the position \( i \) and is not equal to \( \mu(i) \) is either “very short” \((< \frac{1}{2} \mu(i))\) or “very long” \((\geq 2 \mu(i))\). Lemma 8 claims that always there is a “long” local period centered at \( (i..i+\mu(i)) \); moreover, this local period either is equal to \( \mu(i) \) or “very long” \((\geq 2 \mu(i))\). Lemma 9 connects the bounds on the internal local periods that “intersect” the position \( i \), as in Lemma 7 and those local periods that do not “intersect” the position \( i \). Now let us formulate these facts precisely.

Lemma 7. Let \( i \) be a position of \( w \) with internal local period \( \mu(i) > 1 \). For any \( j \in (i..i+\mu(i)) \) such that \( j - \mu(j) < i \) and \( \mu(j) \neq \mu(i) \), we have either \( \mu(j) < \frac{1}{2} \mu(i) \) or \( \mu(j) \geq 2 \mu(i) \).

Proof. The proof is essentially the same as in [14, Lemma 2]. Let \( \mu(j) \geq \frac{1}{2} \mu(i) \). Suppose \( \mu(j) = \frac{1}{2} \mu(i) \).

Since, by Lemma 3, the string \( w[i..i+\mu(i)-1] \) is unbordered and hence cannot have the period \( \mu(j) < \mu(i) \), we obtain \( j + \mu(j) < i + \mu(i) \). The string \( w[j-\mu(j)..j+\mu(j)-1] \) is not primitive and has the length \( \mu(i) \).

Thus, the string \( w[i..i+\mu(i)-1] \) is a conjugate of \( w[j-\mu(j)..j+\mu(j)-1] \) and therefore is not primitive, a contradiction.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{a) } \mu(i)/2 < \mu(j) < \mu(i) \\
\text{b) } \mu(i) < 2 \mu(j) < \mu(i) \\
\end{array}
\]

Figure 3: Two impossible cases in Lemma 7 (a) \( \mu(i)/2 < \mu(j) < \mu(i) \), (b) \( \mu(i) < \mu(j) < 2 \mu(i) \).

Now suppose \( \mu(i)/2 < \mu(j) < \mu(i) \). As above, we have \( j + \mu(j) < i + \mu(i) \). Thus, the string \( w[j-\mu(j)..j+\mu(j)-1] \) has an occurrence \( w[j-\mu(i)..j-\mu(i)+\mu(j)] \) that overlaps the string \( w[j-\mu(j)..j-1] = w[j-\mu(j)+\mu(j)-1] \) because \( 2 \mu(j) > \mu(i) \) (see Figure 3a). But, by Lemma 3, \( w[j-\mu(j)..j-1] \) is unbordered and therefore cannot overlap its own copy. This is a contradiction.

Finally, suppose \( \mu(j) > \mu(i) \). By Lemma 3, \( w[j-\mu(j)..j-1] \) is unbordered. If \( j - \mu(j) \geq i - \mu(i) \), then \( w[j-\mu(j)..j-1] \) has the period \( \mu(i) < \mu(j) \), a contradiction. Hence, we have \( j - \mu(j) < i - \mu(i) \).

If \( \mu(j) < 2 \mu(i) \), then the string \( w[j..i+\mu(i)-1] \), which is a suffix of \( w[i..i+\mu(i)-1] \), has an occurrence \( w[j-\mu(j)..i+\mu(i)-\mu(j)] \) that overlaps \( w[i-\mu(i)..i-1] = w[i..i+\mu(i)-1] \) (see Figure 3b). This is a contradiction because, by Lemma 3, \( w[i-\mu(i)..i-1] \) is unbordered. □

4
Lemma 8. Let $i$ be a position of $w$ with internal local period $\mu(i) > 1$. Then there exists $j \in (i..i+\mu(i))$ such that either $\mu(j) = \mu(i)$ or $\mu(j) \geq 2\mu(i)$.

Proof. By Lemma 3 the string $w[i..i+\mu(i)-1]$ is unbordered and its minimal period is $\mu(i)$. For any position $j \in (i..i+\mu(i))$, denote by $\mu'(j)$ the local period in $j$ with respect to the substring $w[i..i+\mu(i)-1]$. Observe that $\mu'(j) \leq \mu(j)$. By Theorem 1 there is $j \in (i..i+\mu(i))$ such that $\mu'(j) = \mu(i)$ and $j - \mu'(j) < i$. Hence, we have $\mu(j) \geq \mu(i)$ and, moreover, if $\mu(j) > \mu(i)$, then, by Lemma 7 $\mu(j) \geq 2\mu(i)$.

Lemma 9. Let $i$ be a position of $w$ with internal local period $\mu(i) > 1$. Fix $j \in (i..i+\mu(i))$. Then, for any $h \in (i..j]$ such that $\mu(h) > 1$, we have $\mu(h) \leq \max\{\mu(h') : h' \in (i..j] \text{ and } h' - \mu(h') < i\}$.

Proof. Suppose, to the contrary, there is $h \in (i..j]$ such that $\mu(h) > 1$ and $\mu(h) > \max\{\mu(h') : h' \in (i..j] \text{ and } h' - \mu(h') < i\}$; let $h$ be the leftmost such position. Then, we have $h - \mu(h) \geq i$. Using a symmetrical version of Lemma 8 we obtain $h' \in (h-\mu(h),h]$ such that $\mu(h') \geq \mu(h)$. Since $\mu(h') \geq \mu(h)$, by the definition of $h$, we have $h' - \mu(h') \geq i$. This contradicts to the choice of $h$ as the leftmost position with the given properties because $h' < h$ and $h' \in (i..j]$.

Hereafter, $S' = \{i_1, i_2, \ldots, i_{t-1}\}$ denotes a contiguous subsequence of $S$ such that $\mu(i_j) \leq q$ for each $j \in [1..t]$ and $T(q) = \sum_{j=1}^{t} \mu(i_j)$. We associate with each $i_j$ the numbers $r_j = \max\{r : w[i_r..i_r+\mu(i_j)-1] \text{ has the period } \mu(i_j)\}$ and $c_j = \max\{r : r \leq r_j - \mu(i_j) : w[c..c+\mu(i_j)-1] \text{ is unbordered}\}$ (see Figure 4). By Lemma 3, the string $w[i..i+\mu(i)-1]$ is unbordered and therefore $c_j \geq i_j$. Since $w[c_j..c_j+\mu(i_j)-1]$ is unbordered and $w[c_j..c_j+\mu(i_j)-1] = w[c_j..c_j+\mu(i_j)-1]$, we have $\mu(c_j) = \mu(i_j)$. Since $w[r_j-\mu(i_j),r_j-1]$ is primitive, it follows from Lemma 4 that $c_j > r_j - 2\mu(i_j)$. Algorithm 1 skips the positions $i_j + 1, i_j + 2, \ldots, r_j - \mu(i_j)$ in the loop in lines 5-9.

![Figure 4: The positions $i_j+1, i_j+2, \ldots, r_j-\mu(i_j)$ are shaded.](image)

Lemma 10. For any $j \in [1..z]$ and $i \in (c_{j-1}+\mu(c_{j-1}))$, we have $\mu(i) \neq \mu(c_j)$.

Proof. For converse, suppose $\mu(i) = \mu(c_j)$. Since $w[i-\mu(i),i-1] = w[i..i+\mu(i)-1]$ and $\mu(i) = \mu(c_j) = \mu(i_j)$, by the definition of $r_j$, we have $i \leq r_j - \mu(i_j)$. It follows from Lemma 3 that $w[i..i+\mu(i)-1]$ is unbordered. This contradicts the definition of $c_j$ because $c_j < i \leq r_j - \mu(i_j)$.

To estimate the sum $\sum_{j=1}^{z} \mu(i_j)$, we construct a subsequence $i_{s_1}, i_{s_2}, \ldots, i_{s_t}$ by the following inductive process. Choose $i_{s_1} = i_1$. Suppose we have already constructed a subsequence $i_{s_1}, i_{s_2}, \ldots, i_{s_t}$. Choose the minimal number $i' \in (c_{s_{t-1}}+\mu(c_{s_{t-1}}),c_{s_{t}}) \text{ such that } \mu(i') \leq \mu(c_{s_{t}})$. By Lemma 8 such number always exists. If $i' > i_{s_t}$, we set $t = j$ and stop the process. Let $i' \leq i_{s_t}$. It follows from Lemma 10 that $\mu(i') \neq \mu(c_{s_t})$. Hence, by Lemma 8 $\mu(i') \geq 2\mu(c_{s_t}) = 2\mu(i_{s_t})$. Since $\mu(i') > \mu(i_{s_t})$, it follows from the definition of $r_{s_{t-1}}$ that $i' > r_{s_{t-1}} - \mu(i_{s_{t-1}})$. Therefore, Algorithm 1 does not skip $i'$ and $i' \in S$. Since $\{i_1, i_2, \ldots, i_{t-1}\}$ is a contiguous subsequence of $S$, we have $i' = i_j$ for some $j' \in [1..z]$. Set $i_{s_{t+1}} = i_{j'}$. Now we can prove that the running time of Algorithm 1 is $O(n\log n)$. For any $j \in [1..t]$, we have $\mu(i_{s_{j+1}}) \geq 2\mu(i_{s_{j}})$ and therefore $\sum_{j=1}^{t} \mu(i_{s_{j}}) \leq \mu(i_{s_{1}}) + \frac{1}{2}\mu(i_{s_{1}}) + \frac{1}{2^2}\mu(i_{s_{1}}) + \cdots \leq 2\mu(i_{s_{1}})$ for some $j \in [1..t]$. Further, let $h \in [1..z]$ and $i_{s_{j}} < i_h < i_{s_{j+1}}$ for some $j \in [1..t]$. Since Algorithm 1 skips the positions $(i_{s_{1}},c_{s_{1}})$ and $i_{s_{j+1}} \in (c_{s_{j}}+\mu(c_{s_{j}}),c_{s_{j+1}})$, it follows that $i_h \in (c_{s_{j}}+\mu(c_{s_{j}}),c_{s_{j+1}})$. Recall that $i_{s_{j+1}}$ is the minimal number from $(c_{s_{j}}+\mu(c_{s_{j}}),c_{s_{j+1}})$ such that $\mu(i_{s_{j+1}}) \geq \mu(c_{s_{j+1}})$. Thus, by Lemmas 7 and 9 we have $\mu(i_h) < \frac{1}{2}\mu(c_{s_{j+1}}) = \frac{1}{2}\mu(i_{s_{j+1}})$. In the same way, for $h \in [1..z]$ such that $i_h > i_{s_{j}}$, we have $\mu(i_h) < \frac{1}{2}\mu(i_{s_{j}})$. So, we obtain the following recursion:

$$T(q) \leq 2q + T\left(\frac{1}{2}\mu(i_{s_{j}})\right) + T\left(\frac{1}{2}\mu(i_{s_{j+1}})\right) + \cdots + T\left(\frac{1}{2}\mu(i_{s_{t}})\right).$$  (1)
Consider a recursion $T(q) = O(q) + \sum_{j=1}^{t} T(q_j)$. It is well known that if the sum of the terms from the parentheses of $T(\ldots)$ in the right hand side of this recursion (i.e., $\sum_{j=1}^{t} q_j$) is less than or equal to $q$ and each of those terms (i.e., each $q_j$) is less than or equal to $\frac{1}{4}q$, then the recursion has a solution $T(q) = O(q \log q)$. Thus, since the sum of the terms from the parentheses of $T(\ldots)$ in the right hand side of (1) is equal to $\frac{1}{4} \sum_{j=1}^{t} \mu(i_s) \leq q$ and each of these terms is less than or equal to $\frac{1}{4}q$, we obtain $T(q) = O(q \log q)$.

5. Problems with Linearity

To obtain $T(q) = O(q)$, we might prove that if $2\mu(i_{s_{i-1}})$ and $\mu(i_s)$ are close enough (namely, $\frac{7}{2} \mu(i_{s_{i-1}}) > \mu(i_s)$), the term $T\left(\frac{1}{2} \mu(i_{s_{i-1}})\right)$ in (1) is actually $T\left(\frac{7}{2} \mu(i_{s_{i-1}})\right) \leq T\left(\frac{1}{2} \mu(i_{s_{i-1}})\right)$; this fact would imply that the sum of the terms in the parentheses of $T(\ldots)$ in the right hand side of (1) is less than $aq$ for some constant $\alpha < 1$ and therefore $T(q) = O(q)$. Unfortunately, this is not true for Algorithm 1. Nevertheless, we prove a restricted version of the mentioned claim. It reveals problems that may arise in the current solution and points out a way to improvements.

Lemma 11. Let $i \in (c_{s_{i}}, \ldots, c_{s_{i}} + \mu(c_{s_{i}}))$. Suppose $\mu(i') < \mu(c_{s_{i}})$ and $\mu(i') \neq \mu(i_{s_{i-1}})$ for each $i' \in (c_{s_{i}}, \ldots, i_{s_{i}}]$. If $\frac{7}{2} \mu(i_{s_{i-1}}) > \mu(i_s)$, then $\mu(i) < \frac{7}{2} \mu(i_{s_{i-1}})$.

Proof. Recall that $2\mu(c_{s_{i-1}}) \leq \mu(i_{s_{i}})$. Denote $a = w[c_{s_{i-1}}, c_{s_{i}} + \mu(c_{s_{i}}) - 1]$ and $b = w[c_{s_{i}}, a + \mu(c_{s_{i}}) - 1]$ (see Figure 5). Note that $\mu(c_{s_{i}}) = |a|$ and $\mu(c_{s_{i}}) = |aab|$. It follows from Lemma 3 that $a$ is unbordered. Since, by Lemma 3, the string $w[i_{s}, \ldots, i_{s} + \mu(i_{s}) - 1]$ is unbordered, the string $b$ is not empty. The inequality $\frac{7}{2} |a| = \frac{7}{2} \mu(i_{s_{i-1}}) > \mu(i_s) = |baa|$ implies $|b| < \frac{7}{2} |a|$.

![Image](5.png) Figure 5: The strings $a$ and $b$.

In view of Lemma 3, it suffices to prove the lemma only for the positions $i$ such that $i - \mu(i) < c_{s_{i}}$. So, assume $i - \mu(i) < c_{s_{i}}$. Since $\mu(i) < \mu(c_{s_{i}})$, it follows from Lemma 2 that $\mu(i) < \frac{1}{2} \mu(c_{s_{i}}) = \frac{1}{2} \mu(c_{s_{i}}) < |ab|$. Since, by Lemma 3, $w[c_{s_{i}}, c_{s_{i}} + \mu(c_{s_{i}}) - 1]$ is unbordered and thus cannot have the period $\mu(i) < \mu(c_{s_{i}})$, we obtain $i + \mu(i) < c_{s_{i}} + \mu(c_{s_{i}})$. So, $w[i - \mu(i), i + \mu(i) - 1]$ is a substring of the string $w[i_{s}, \ldots, i_{s} + \mu(i_{s}) - 1]$. Therefore, since $w[i_{s}, \ldots, i_{s} + \mu(i_{s}) - 1]$ has the period $\mu(i_{s}) = \mu(c_{s_{i}})$, $|aab|$, the string $w[i - \mu(i), i + \mu(i) - 1]$ is a substring of the string $u = aabaabaab$ (see Figure 5). Thus, to finish the proof, it suffices to prove the following claim.

Claim. Let $i$ be a position of $u$ with internal local period $\mu(i)$ (the local period at $i$ is with respect to the string $u$). If $\mu(i) < |ab|$ and $\mu(i) \neq |ab|$, then $\mu(i) < \frac{7}{2} |a|$.

Let $i$ be a position of $u$ with internal local period $\mu(i)$ such that $\mu(i) < |ab|$ and $\mu(i) \neq |ab|$. Consider two cases.

1) Suppose $i$ lies in an occurrence of $a$ in $u = aabaabaab$. Without loss of generality, consider the case $i \in ([aab], [aab])$: all other cases are similar. If $i - \mu(i) \leq |aab|$, then, by Lemma 7, we have either $\mu(i) < \frac{1}{2} |a|$ or $\mu(i) \geq 2 |a|$. The latter is impossible because $\mu(i) < |ab| < 2 |a|$ while the former implies $\mu(i) < \frac{7}{2} |a|$ as required. Now let $i - \mu(i) > |aab|$. Assume, by a contradiction, that $\mu(i) \geq \frac{7}{2} |a|$. Then $w[i - \mu(i), i - 1]$ is a substring of $a$ and thus it has an occurrence $v = w[i - \mu(i), i - 1 + |ab|]$ (see Figure 2.4). Since $2\mu(i) \geq \frac{7}{2} |a| > |ab|$, the string $w[i, i + \mu(i) - 1]$, which is also an occurrence of $w[i - \mu(i), i - 1]$, overlaps $v$. This is a contradiction because $w[i - \mu(i), i - 1]$ is unbordered by Lemma 3.

2) Suppose $i$ lies in an occurrence of $b$ in $u = aabaabaab$. Without loss of generality, consider the case $i \in ([aab], [aab])$. Assume, by a contradiction, that $\mu(i) \geq \frac{7}{2} |a|$. Suppose $i - \mu(i) > |a|$ (see Figure 2.4). Then the string $w[i - \mu(i), [aa]]$, which is a suffix of $a$, has an occurrence $v = w[i, [aa] + \mu(i)]$. Since $\mu(i) \geq \frac{7}{2} |a| > |b|$, $v$ overlaps $w[[aab] + 1, [aab]] = a$. Hence, $a$ has a nontrivial border, clearly a contradiction. Suppose $i - \mu(i) \leq |a|$ (see Figure 2.4). Then the string $w[[a] + 1, [aa]] = a$ has an occurrence $v = w[[a] + 1 + \mu(i), [aa] + \mu(i)]$.
Since |ab| < µ(|ab|) and µ(|ab|) + |a| ≥ \frac{3}{2}|a| > |ab|, the string w[|aab|+1..|aabaa]| = a overlaps v = a. This is a contradiction because a is unbordered.

\[ T(q) \leq \sum_{i=1}^{t} \mu(i_s) + T\left(\frac{1}{2}\mu(i_s)\right) + \cdots + T\left(\frac{1}{2}\mu(i_{s-1})\right) + T\left(\frac{1}{3}\mu(i_s)\right). \]  

Let us estimate the sum of the terms from the parentheses of T(...) in the right hand side of (2). Since \[ \sum_{j=1}^{t-1} \mu(i_s) \leq q, \] we have \[ \frac{1}{2}\mu(i_s) + \cdots + \frac{1}{2}\mu(i_{s-1}) + \frac{3}{5}\mu(i_s) \leq \frac{1}{2}q + \frac{1}{2}q + \frac{3}{5} = \frac{2}{5}q. \] The sum \[ \sum_{j=1}^{t-1} \mu(i_s) \] is bounded by 2q. It is well known that such recursion has a solution \[ T(q) \leq 2q + \frac{q}{2} + \frac{q}{2} + \cdots = O(q). \]

Unfortunately, a fatal problem arises when there is \( i \in (a,|aab|) \) in the proof of Lemma 11. Let us consider how one might use Lemma 11 to obtain \( T(q) = O(q) \). Suppose \( t > 1 \), \( \frac{7}{2} \mu(i_{s-1}) > \mu(i_s) \), and \( \mu(i_h) \neq \mu(i_{s-1}) \) for all \( h \in (s_1,z) \). Lemma 11 implies that \( \mu(i_h) < \frac{7}{2} \mu(i_{s-1}) \leq \frac{1}{3} \mu(i_s) \) for each \( h \in (s_1,z) \). So, combining Lemmas 7, 8, 11, one can deduce the following recursion:

\[ a_{i+1} = a_i(\#_{a_{i+1}}) \] is a unique special letter. Clearly, the minimal period of \( w \) is \(|w| - 1 \). Since \( w = \#_{a_{i+1}}b_{i+1}a_{i+1} \#_{a_{i+1}} \), it is easy to see that the number \( k = \max\{i: w[1..i] = w[j..j+i-1]\} \) for some \( j \in (1,|w|) \) is equal to \(|a_{i+1}| + 2 \). So, Algorithm 1 starts with the position \(|a_{i+1}| + 2 \).

Now consider some combinatorial properties of \( w_k \).

**Lemma 12.** The string \( w_k = a_i b_i a_i \) satisfies the following conditions:

1. the local period at each of the positions \([|a_i|+2,|a_i|+1]\) is internal;
2. the local period at position \(|a_i|+1\) is right external.

**Proof.** The proof is by induction on \( i \). The base case \( w_0 = aba \) is obvious. The inductive step is \( w_{i+1} = a_{i+1}b_{i+1}a_{i+1} = a_i a_i b_i a_i b_i a_i a_i b_i \cdot a_i a_i a_i = a_i w_i a_i w_i a_i \). Consider condition (1). The positions \([|a_i|+2,|a_i|+1]\) correspond to the positions \([|a_i|+2,|a_i|+1]\) of the first occurrence of the string \( w_k = a_i b_i a_i \) in \( w_{i+1} \). Hence, by the inductive hypothesis, the local periods at these positions are internal. It is obvious that \( p = |a_i a_i b_i | \) is a period of \( w_{i+1} \) and therefore the positions \(|p,|w|−p+1| \) all have internal local periods. So, it suffices to consider the positions \([|w|−p+2,|a_{i+1}|+1]\) = \([|a_{i+1}|+2,|a_{i+1}|+1]\) in the position \(|a_{i+1}|+2\) of the second occurrence of the substring \( w_k = a_i b_i a_i \) in
w$. Therefore, by the inductive hypothesis, all these positions have internal local periods. Consider condition (2). Denote $j = |a_i b_{i+1}|$. By the inductive hypothesis, $\mu(j) > |a_i|$. Now since $w[j+|a_i|] = $, it is easy to see that $\mu(j) > |a_i|$, i.e., $\mu(j)$ is right external.

The main loop of Algorithm 1 starts with the position $|a_{i+1}|+2 = |a_i |+2$, i.e., with the position $|a_i|+2$ inside the first occurrence of $w_i$ in $w_{i+1} = a_1 s_i w_i w_{i+1}$. By Lemma 12 we process $w_i$ until the position $|a_i b_i|+1$ in $w_i$ that corresponds to the position $j = |a_i |a_i b_i|+1$ in $w$ is reached. By Lemma 12 we have $\mu(j) > |a_i|$. Hence, it is straightforward that $\mu(j) = |a_i |a_i b_i|$, which is a period of the whole string $w_{i+1}$. Algorithm 1 calculates $\mu(j)$ and then skips some positions in the loop in lines 5 until it reaches the position $j' = |a_i |a_i b_i|+2$, all in $\Theta(|w_{i+1}|)$ time. The position $j'$ corresponds to the position $|a_i|+2$ inside the second occurrence of $w_i$ in $w_{i+1} = a_1 s_i w_i w_{i+1}$. So, we have some kind of recursion here. Denote by $t_{i+1}$ the time required to process the substring $w_{i+1}$ of $w$; it follows from our discussion that $t_{i+1}$ can be expressed by the following recursive formula: $t_{i+1} = \Theta(|w_{i+1}|) + 2t_i$ (with $t_0 = 0$). For simplicity, assume that the constant under the $\Theta$ is 1, so, $t_{i+1} = |w_{i+1}| + 2t_i$.

To estimate $t_{i+1}$, we first solve the following recurrences: $a_{i+1} = 2|a_i| + 1$, $b_{i+1} = 2|b_i| + 2|a_i| + 1$, $|w_i| = 2|a_i| + |b_i|$ (with $|a_0| = |b_0| = 1$). Obviously $|a_i| = 2^{i+1} - 1$. Then $|b_{i+1}| = 2^{i+2} - 1 + 2|b_i|$. By a simple substitution, one can show that $|b_i| = 2^{2i+1} + 1$. So, we obtain $|w_i| = 2^{2i+1} + 2^{i+2} - 2^{i+1} + 1$ and therefore $t_i = 2^{2i+1} + 2^{i+2} + 2^{i+2} + 1 + 2t_{i-1}$. By a substitution, one can prove that $t_i = (i-1)^2 2^{i+1} + 5(i-1)2^{i+1} - 2^{i+1} + 1$, so $t_{i+1} = (i+1)^2 2^{i+1} + 5(i+1)2^{i+1} - 2^{i+1} + 1 = \Theta(i2^i)$ and $\log |w_{i+1}| = \Theta(i)$, we obtain $t_{i+1} = (i+1)^2 2^{i+1} + 5(i+1)2^{i+1} - 2^{i+1} + 1 = \Theta(i2^i)$ and $\log |w_{i+1}| = \Theta(i)$. Finally, since $|w_{i+1}| = (i+1)^2 2^{i+1} + 2^{i+3} - 1 = \Theta(i2^i)$ and $\log |w_{i+1}| = \Theta(i)$, we obtain $t_{i+1} = (i+1)^2 2^{i+1} + 5(i+1)2^{i+1} - 2^{i+1} + 1 = \Theta(i2^i)$ and $\log |w_{i+1}| = \Theta(i)$.

6. Linear Algorithm

To overcome the issues addressed in the previous section, we introduce two auxiliary arrays $m[1..n]$ and $r[1..n]$ that are initially filled with zeros; their meaning is clarified by Lemma 13 below. In Algorithm 2 below we use the three-operand for loop like in the C language.

**Lemma 13.** If $m[i] \neq 0$ for some position $i$ during the execution of Algorithm 2, then $m[i] = \mu(i)$ and $r[i] = \max \{r: w[i..r-1] has the period \mu(i)\}$.

**Proof.** For each position $j$, denote $r_j = \max \{r: w[j..r-1] has the period \mu(j)\}$. It suffices to show that the assignments in lines 14-15 always assign $\mu(j+m[i])$ to $m[j+m[i]]$ and $r_j + m[i]$ to $r[j+m[i]]$. Suppose Algorithm 2 performs line 14 for some $j$. Evidently, the string $w[i-m[i]..r[j]-1]$ has the period $m[i]$ (see Figure 8). Further, by the condition in line 13, the strings $w[j-m[j]..r[j]-1]$ and $w[j-m[j]+m[i]..r[j]+m[i]]$ are substrings of $w[i-m[i]..r[i]-1]$ and therefore they are equal. Hence, we have $\mu(j) = \mu(j+m[i])$ and $r_j + m[i] = r_j + m[i]$ provided $\mu(j) = m[j]$ and $r_j = r[j]$. Now one can prove the desired claim by a simple induction.

![Figure 8](image)

Figure 8: $j - m[i] \geq i - m[i]$ and $r[j] + m[i] < r[i]$. 

8
Thus, to prove that Algorithm 2 is linear, it suffices to show that the sequence S of positions exclude from iterations for an appropriate Algorithm 1 and hence are correct. However, now we do not compute some m Algorithm 1. Thus, Lemma 13 implies that the values the same values computed by Algorithm 2 coincide with the same values computed by Algorithm 1 and hence are correct. However, now we do not compute some local periods but copy them from the array m instead. It turns out that this is crucial for the time analysis.

As above, let S be the sequence of all positions that Algorithm 2 does not skip in line 16. Again, we exclude from S all positions i such that µ(i) = 1. Evidently, the resulting sequence is exactly the same as the sequence S in Section 4 but, in contrast to Algorithm 1, the new algorithm copies local periods at some positions of S from the array m rather than calculates them explicitly. Denote by S the subsequence of all positions of S for which Algorithm 2 computes local periods explicitly in line 5.

Due to the assignment in line 16 obviously, the loop in lines 10–11 performs at most n iterations in total. The loop in lines 12–15 performs exactly the same number of iterations as the loop in lines 10–11 plus µ(i) iterations for an appropriate i ∈ Ŝ. Hence, the running time of the whole algorithm is O(n + ∑i∈Ŝ µ(i)). Thus, to prove that Algorithm 2 is linear, it suffices to show that ∑i∈Ŝ µ(i) = O(n).

Fix an arbitrary number q. Denote by T(q) the maximal sum ∑i∈S∩Ŝ µ(i) among all contiguous subsequences S′ of S such that µ(i) ≤ q for each i ∈ S′ (note that we sum only through the positions of Ŝ). We are to show that T(q) = O(q), which immediately implies ∑i∈Ŝ µ(i) = O(n) since the number q is arbitrary and T(n) = ∑i∈Ŝ µ(i).

We need one additional combinatorial fact.

Lemma 14. Let i be a position of w with internal local period µ(i) > 1. Suppose j is a position from (i..i+µ(i)) such that µ(j′) < µ(i) for each j′ ∈ (i..j); then w[i+µ(j)..i+µ(j)+µ(j)+1] is a substring of w[i−µ(i)..i+µ(i)−1].

Proof. Assume, by a contradiction, that j + µ(j) > i + µ(i). For each h ∈ [i..i+µ(i)), denote by µ′(h) the local period at the position h with respect to the substring w[i..i+µ(i)−1]. Clearly µ′(h) ≤ µ(h). By Lemma 3 w[i..i+µ(i)−1] is unbordered and hence its minimal period is µ(i). By Theorem 1 there is h ∈ [i..i+µ(i)) such that µ′(h) = µ(i). But for each h ∈ [i..j], we have µ′(h) < µ(i) and moreover, for each h ∈ (j..i+µ(i)), µ′(h) ≤ µ(j) < µ(i) because the local period µ′(j) is right external with respect to w[i..i+µ(i)−1], a contradiction. □

Choose a contiguous subsequence S′ = {i₁, i₂, ..., i_z} of S such that µ(i_j) ≤ q for each j ∈ [1..z] and ∑i∈S∩Ŝ µ(i) = T(q). As above, we associate with each i_j the values c_j and r_j defined in Section 4. By an
inductive process described in Section 4 we construct a subsequence \( \{i_s\}_{j=1}^\infty \) of \( S' \). The resulting form complements Lemma 11.

**Lemma 15.** Let \( h \in (s_t..z) \) and \( \mu(i_h) = \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) \). If \( \frac{7}{5} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) > \mu(i_s) \), then for each \( h' \in (h..z) \), we have \( i_{h'} \notin S' \).

**Proof.** We are to show that, informally, Algorithm 2 processes the position \( v \) over, since \( i_{s_{t-1}} \), and the loop in lines 12 copies all required local periods \( \mu(i_{h'}) \) for \( h' \in (h..z) \) to the array \( m \) immediately after the computation of \( r[i_s] \). (Thus \( i_{h'} \notin S' \) for \( h' \in (h..z) \).)

Denote \( a = \lfloor c_{s_{t-1}} + 1 + \mu(c_{s_{t-1}}) \rfloor \) and \( b = \lfloor c_{s_{t-1}} + 1 + \mu(c_{s_{t-1}}) - \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) + \mu(i_s) - 1 \rfloor \) (see Figure 9). Note that \( \mu(c_{s_{t-1}}) = \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) = |a| \) and \( \mu(c_s) = \mu(i_s) = |aab| \). Since \( \frac{7}{5}|a| = \frac{7}{5} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) > \mu(i_s) = |aab| \), we have \( |b| < \frac{7}{5}|a| \). By Lemma 3, the string \( a \) is unbordered. Denote \( x = \lfloor i_s - |aab|, c_s, |aab| - 1 \rfloor \) (see Figure 9). Clearly, \( x \) is a substring of the infinite string \( \text{aab} \cdot \text{aab} \cdot \text{aab} \cdots \) and the length of \( x \) is at least \( 2|aab| \) (recall that \( c_s \) can coincide with \( i_s \)). Notice that the distance between \( i_s \) and \( c_s \) can be arbitrarily large.

![Figure 9: The internal structure of the string x](image)

Without loss of generality, assume that \( i_h \) is equal to the leftmost position \( i > c_s \) such that \( \mu(i) = \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) = |a| \). (Since \( \{i_1, \ldots, i_z\} \) is a contiguous subsequence of \( S, i \) is certainly equal to \( i_h \) for some \( h \in (s_t..z) \).) Obviously \( i_h \in (c_{s_{t-1}}, c_s + |aab|) \). It follows from the definition of \( i_h \) and from Lemma 11 that for each \( i \in (c_{s_{t-1}}, i_h) \), we have \( \mu(i) < \frac{7}{5}|a| \). So, Lemma 9 implies that \( i_h - \mu(i_h) = i_h - |a| < c_s \). Since by Lemma 3 the string \( \lfloor c_{s_{t-1}}, c_s, |aab| - 1 \rfloor \) is unbordered and thus cannot have the period \(|a| < |aab| \), we obtain \( r_h < c_s + |aab| \). Thus, the string \( \lfloor i_h - |a|, r_h \rfloor \) is a substring of \( x \) (see Figure 10). Now we must specify where the position \( i_h \) can occur in \( x \).

![Figure 10: A location of \( i_h, c_s \), and \( r_h \) inside \( x \) from the proof of Lemma 15](image)

By Lemma 10, for any \( i \in (c_{s_{t-1}}, c_{s_{t-1}} + |a|) \), we have \( \mu(i) \neq |a| \). Hence \( i_h \notin (c_{s_{t-1}}, c_{s_{t-1}} + |a|) \). Moreover, since \( x \) is a substring of the infinite string \( \text{aab} \cdot \text{aab} \cdot \text{aab} \cdots \), and \( \lfloor i_h - |a|, c_s + |aab| - 1 \rfloor \) is a substring of \( x \), in the same way one can prove that \( i_h \) does not lie in the segments \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |aba|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |aba|) \), \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaaba|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaaba|) \), \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaab|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaab|) \), \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaabaab|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaabaab|) \), \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaabaabaab|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaabaabaab|) \); in other words, \( i_h \) cannot lie in an occurrence of \( |aa| \) in \( x \).

Suppose \( i_h \in (c_{s_{t-1}} + |a|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |aab|) \). Then, the string \( \lfloor i_h - |a|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |aab| \rfloor \), which is a suffix of \( a \), has an occurrence \( v = \lfloor i_h, c_{s_{t-1}} + |aab| \rfloor \) (see Figure 7a with \( i = i_h \)). Since \( \mu(i_h) = |a| > |b| \), \( v \) overlaps \( \lfloor c_{s_{t-1}} + |aab|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |aba| - 1 \rfloor = |a| \). Thus, \( a \) has a nontrivial border, a contradiction. By the same argument, one can show that \( i_h \) does not lies in the segments \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |aba|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |aba|) \), \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaaba|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaaba|) \), \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaab|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaab|) \); in other words, \( i_h \) cannot lie in an occurrence of \( |b| \) in \( x \).

We have proved that \( i_h \) lies in the left half of an occurrence of \( |aa| \) in \( x \), precisely, in one of the segments \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |aab|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |aab|) \), \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaaba|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaaba|) \), \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaab|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaab|) \), \( (c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaabaab|, c_{s_{t-1}} + |abaabaabaab|) \); all other cases are similar. First, we show that \( c_h \) is equal to \( c_{s_{t-1}} + |aba| \), i.e.,
$c_h$ is the center of an occurrence of $aa$ in $x$ (see Figure 10). Obviously, the string $w[i_h-\lceil a\rceil-1] + [aaba] - 1$ has the period $|a|$ and therefore $c_{s_{t-1}} + |aaba| \leq r_h$. The strings $w[c_{s_{t-1}} + [aaba] - 1] + w[i_h-\lceil a\rceil-1]$ and $w[c_{s_{t-1}} + [aaba] - 1]$ are similar: they both have the period $|a|$, and $w[r_h] \neq w[r_h-\lceil a\rceil-1]$ and $w[r_{s_{t-1}}] \neq w[r_{s_{t-1}}-\lceil a\rceil-1]$. Note that the starting positions of these strings differ by $|aaba|$. Furthermore, since $r_h < c_{s_{t-1}} + |aaba|$, the strings $w[c_{s_{t-1}} + [aaba] - 1]$ and $w[c_{s_{t-1}} + [aaba] - 1]$ both are substrings of $x$ and hence they are equal because $x$ has the period $|aaba|$. Now since $w[c_{s_{t-1}} + [aaba] - 1]$ is a suffix of $w[i_h-\lceil a\rceil-1]$, it is straightforward that $c_h = c_{s_{t-1}} + |aaba| - 1$.

To finish the proof, it suffices to show that Algorithm 2 does not compute explicitly the local periods at the positions $i_{h+1}, i_{h+2}, \ldots, i_z$ but obtains those local periods from the array $m$. For this purpose, let us first prove that for each $h' \in (h..z)$, the string $w[i_{h'}-\mu(i_{h'}), i_{h'} + \mu(i_{h'})-1]$ is a substring of $w[c_{s_{t-1}}+c_{s_{t-1}}-1]$. This fact implies that, in a sense, after the processing of the position $c_h$, Algorithm 2 is in a situation that locally resembles the situation in which the algorithm was after the processing of the position $c_{s_{t-1}}$ (see Figure 11), i.e., Algorithm 2 examines exactly the same positions $i_{h+1}, i_{h+2}, \ldots, i_z$ shifted by $\delta = c_h - c_{s_{t-1}}$ or, more formally, $i_{s_{t-1}}+1 = i_{h+1} - \delta, i_{s_{t-1}}+2 = i_{h+2} - \delta, \ldots, i_{s_{t-1}}+2 - h = i_z - \delta$.

The following summing up the established facts, we obtain that since $\delta = c_h - c_{s_{t-1}}$ is a multiple of $\mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) = |aaba|$, the loop in lines 12-15 performed immediately after the computation of the local period at the position $i_{s_{t-1}}$ in line 5 copies $m[i_{h+1} - \delta], m[i_{h+2} - \delta], \ldots, m[i_z - \delta]$, which are certainly filled with nonzero values, to $m[i_{h+1}], m[i_{h+2}], \ldots, m[i_z]$, respectively. Thus, Algorithm 2 does not compute explicitly the local periods at the positions $i_{h+1}, i_{h+2}, \ldots, i_z$.

Suppose $i_{s_{t-1}} \notin S$, i.e., $m[i_{s_{t-1}}]$ and $r[i_{s_{t-1}}]$ are nonzero at the time the algorithm reaches $i_{s_{t-1}}$. It follows from Algorithm 2 that the values $m[i_{s_{t-1}}]$ and $r[i_{s_{t-1}}]$ are obtained from values $m[i']$ and $r[i']$ for some position $i' < i_{s_{t-1}}$ such that $w[i'-\mu(i')-1] = w[i_{s_{t-1}}-\mu(i_{s_{t-1}})-1]$. Suppose $i' \in S$. Thus, when Algorithm 2 had calculated $\mu(i')$, it passed through the positions $i_{s_{t-1}} + 1$, $i_{s_{t-1}} + 2$, $\ldots$, $i_z$, where $\delta = i_s - i_{s_{t-1}}$, stored the corresponding local periods to $m[i_{s_{t-1}} + 1], m[i_{s_{t-1}} + 2], \ldots, m[i_z - \delta]$, and then copied those values to $m[i_{s_{t-1}} + 1], m[i_{s_{t-1}} + 2], \ldots, m[i_z]$, respectively, when copied $i' \in |m[i_{s_{t-1}}]|$. Finally, suppose $i' \notin S$. By an obvious induction, one can prove that in this case $m[i_{s_{t-1}} + 1], m[i_{s_{t-1}} + 2], \ldots, m[i_z - \delta]$ are also filled with correct values and thus the same argument shows that $m[i_{s_{t-1}} + 1], m[i_{s_{t-1}} + 2], \ldots, m[i_z]$ are eventually set to nonzero values.

Suppose $t > 1$ and $\frac{3}{2} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) \leq \mu(i_{s_{t-1}})$. As in Section 3, $T(g)$ is determined by the recursion (1). Let us estimate the sum of the terms from the parentheses of $T(\ldots)$ in the right hand side of (1). Since $\mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) \leq \frac{3}{2} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}})$, we have $\frac{1}{2} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) + \cdots + \frac{3}{2} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) \leq \frac{3}{2} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}})(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} + \cdots + \frac{3}{2}) \leq \frac{3}{4} g + \frac{13}{12} y$.

Suppose $t > 1$, $\frac{3}{2} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) > \mu(i_{s_{t-1}})$. Let be the minimal number from $(s_{t-1}..z)$ such that $\mu(i_h) = \mu(i_{s_{t-1}})$ (if it does not exist, assume that $h = z$). By the definition of the subsequence $\{i_{s_{t-1}}\}_{j=1}^t$, we have $i_h \in (c_{s_{t-1}}..c_{s_{t-1}}+\mu(c_{s_{t-1}}))$. Lemma 11 implies that $\mu(i) < \frac{3}{4} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) \leq \frac{3}{4} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}})$ for each $i \in (c_{s_{t-1}}..i_h)$. Further, by Lemma 15, we have $i_{h'} \notin S$ for each $h' \in (h..z)$ and thus we can ignore these positions in our analysis.
combining Lemmas 7, 9, 11, 15 one can deduce the following recursion:

$$T(q) \leq \sum_{j=1}^t \mu(i_{s_j}) + \mu(i_h) + T\left(\frac{1}{2} \mu(i_{s_1})\right) + \cdots + T\left(\frac{1}{2} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}})\right) + T\left(\frac{1}{3} \mu(i_{s_t})\right).$$  \hspace{1cm} (3)

Let us estimate the sum of the terms from the parentheses of $T(\ldots)$ in the right hand side of (3). Since $\sum_{j=1}^{t-1} \mu(i_{s_j}) \leq q$, we have $\frac{1}{2} \mu(i_{s_1}) + \cdots + \frac{1}{2} \mu(i_{s_{t-1}}) + \frac{1}{3} \mu(i_{s_t}) \leq \frac{1}{2} q + \frac{1}{3} q = \frac{5}{6} q$. Clearly, the sum $\sum_{j=1}^t \mu(i_{s_j}) + \mu(i_h)$ is bounded by $3q$.

Finally, in the case $t = 1$ we have, by Lemmas 7 and 9, $T(q) \leq \mu(i_{s_1}) + T(\frac{1}{2} \mu(i_{s_1}))$. Obviously, $\frac{1}{2} \mu(i_{s_1})$, the term from the parentheses of $T(\ldots)$, is less than or equal to $\frac{1}{2} q$.

Putting everything together, it is easy to see that $T(q)$ is determined by the recursion $T(q) \leq 3q + \sum_{j=1}^t T(q_j)$ for some terms $\{q_j\}_j$ such that $\sum_{j=1}^t q_j \leq \alpha q$, where $\alpha = \min\{\frac{14}{12}, \frac{3}{4}, \frac{1}{2}\} < 1$. It is well known that such recursion has the solution $T(q) \leq 3q + \alpha 3q + \alpha^2 3q + \cdots = \frac{3q}{1 - \alpha} = O(q)$. Thus, the above analysis of Algorithm 2 proves the following theorem.

**Theorem 2.** There is a linear time and space algorithm finding the leftmost critical point of a given string on an arbitrary unordered alphabet.

7. Conclusion

We have shown that the problems of the computation of a critical factorization on unordered and ordered alphabets both have linear time solutions. This is in contrast with the seemingly related problem of finding repetitions in strings (squares, in particular) for which it is known that in the case of unordered alphabet one cannot even check in $o(n \log n)$ time whether the input string of length $n$ contains some repetitions while in the case of ordered alphabet there are fast $o(n \log n)$ time checking algorithms (see [2, 10, 11, 13]). The search of similarities between those problems was actually our primary motivation for the present work although our result shows that the restriction to the case of unordered alphabets does not add considerable computational difficulties to the problem of the calculation of a critical factorization unlike the problem of finding repetitions, so, they are not similar in this aspect.

As a byproduct, we have obtained the first generalization of the constant space string matching algorithm of Crochemore and Perrin [3] to unordered alphabets. However, this generalization requires nonconstant space in the preprocessing step. So, it is still an open question to find a linear time and constant space algorithm computing a critical factorization (not necessarily the leftmost one) of a given string on an arbitrary unordered alphabet. Using such tool, one can possibly obtain a constant space string matching algorithm that is simpler and faster than the well-known algorithm of Galil and Seiferas [7].

**Acknowledgement.** The author would like to thank Arseny M. Shur for helpful discussions and the invaluable help in the preparation of this paper.

References

References

[1] D. Breslauer, R. Grossi, F. Mignosi, Simple real-time constant-space string matching, in: CPM 2011, Springer, 2011.
[2] Y. Césari, M. Vincent, Une caractérisation des mots périodiques, CR Acad. Sci. Paris 286 (A) (1978) 1175–1177.
[3] M. Crochemore, D. Perrin, Two-way string-matching, Journal of the ACM (JACM) 38 (3) (1991) 650–674.
[4] J.-P. Duval, Factorizing words over an ordered alphabet, Journal of Algorithms 4 (4) (1983) 363–381.
[5] J.-P. Duval, R. Kolpakov, G. Kucherov, T. Lecroq, A. Lefebvre, Linear-time computation of local periods, Theoretical Computer Science 326 (1) (2004) 229–240.
[6] J.-P. Duval, T. Lecroq, A. Lefebvre, Linear computation of unbordered conjugate on unordered alphabet, Theoretical Computer Science 522 (2014) 77–84.
[7] Z. Galil, J. Seiferas, Time-space-optimal string matching, Journal of Computer and System Sciences 26 (3) (1983) 289–294.
[8] D. Gusfield, Algorithms on strings, trees and sequences: computer science and computational biology, Cambridge university press, 1997.
[9] D. Kosolobov, Computing runs on a general alphabet, arXiv preprint arXiv:1507.01231.
[10] D. Kosolobov, Lempel-Ziv factorization may be harder than computing all runs, in: STACS 2015, vol. 30 of LIPIcs, Schloss Dagstuhl–Leibniz-Zentrum fuer Informatik, 2015.

[11] D. Kosolobov, Online detection of repetitions with backtracking, in: CPM 2015, Springer, 2015.

[12] M. Lothaire, Combinatorics on words, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

[13] M. G. Main, R. J. Lorentz, Linear time recognition of squarefree strings, in: Combinatorial Algorithms on Words, Springer, 1985, pp. 271–278.

[14] A. M. Shur, E. A. Petrova, On the tree of ternary square-free words, in: Proc. 10th Internat. Conf. on Words (WORDS 2015), vol. 9304 of LNCS, Springer, 2015, pp. 223–236.