

# ATL with Dependent Strategies

Jessica Newman

School of Electronics and Computer Science  
University of Southampton

April 14, 2025

# Overview

---

1. Motivation
2. ATLDS
3. Effectivity
4. Axiomatisation
5. Model Checking
6. Conclusion

# Motivation

# Modelling Multi-Agent Systems

---

Dynamic systems of multiple autonomous agents are common.

We want to model multi-agent systems and verify properties we can guarantee in them.

Specifically, what any group of agents can guarantee.

# Modelling Multi-Agent Systems

---

$$\varphi ::= p \mid \neg\varphi \mid (\varphi \wedge \varphi) \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle X\varphi \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle G\varphi \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle \varphi U \varphi$$

Alternating-Time Temporal Logic (ATL) models temporal properties in multi-agent systems.

Extends CTL with quantifiers indexed by sets of agents.

# Modelling Multi-Agent Systems

---

$$\varphi ::= p \mid \neg\varphi \mid (\varphi \wedge \varphi) \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle X\varphi \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle G\varphi \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle \varphi U \varphi$$

$\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle X \textit{ win}$

Coalition  $C$  has a strategy to win at the next step.

$\langle\langle \{a, b\} \rangle\rangle G(\textit{ req}_i \rightarrow \forall F \textit{ grant}_i)$ <sup>1</sup>

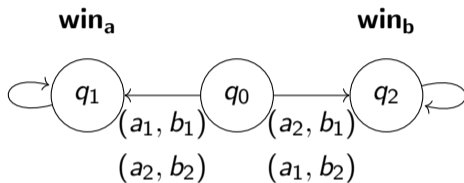
Coalition  $\{a, b\}$  has a strategy s.t. whenever request  $i$  is made, it is always granted at some point in the future.

---

<sup>1</sup> $\forall$  shorthand for  $\langle\langle \emptyset \rangle\rangle$

# Modelling Multi-Agent Systems

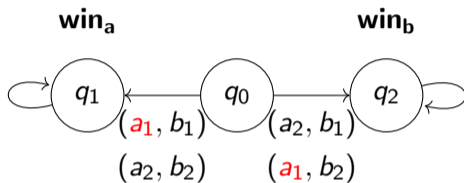
---



- $a$  has moves  $\{a_1, a_2\}$ ,  $b$  has moves  $\{b_1, b_2\}$
- Strategies chosen concurrently:
- $a$  chooses  $\alpha \in \{a_1, a_2\}$  without knowing what  $b$  chooses.
- $q_0 \models \neg \langle\langle \{a\} \rangle\rangle X \text{win}_a$

# Modelling Multi-Agent Systems

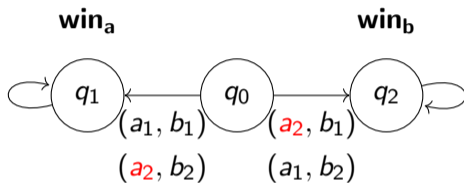
---



- $a$  has moves  $\{a_1, a_2\}$ ,  $b$  has moves  $\{b_1, b_2\}$
- Strategies chosen concurrently:
- $a$  chooses  $\alpha \in \{a_1, a_2\}$  without knowing what  $b$  chooses.
- $q_0 \models \neg \langle\langle \{a\} \rangle\rangle X \text{win}_a$



# Modelling Multi-Agent Systems



- $a$  has moves  $\{a_1, a_2\}$ ,  $b$  has moves  $\{b_1, b_2\}$
- Strategies chosen concurrently:
- $a$  chooses  $\alpha \in \{a_1, a_2\}$  without knowing what  $b$  chooses.
- $q_0 \models \neg \langle\langle \{a\} \rangle\rangle X \text{win}_a$

# Modelling Multi-Agent Systems

---

Concurrent games do not entirely describe strategic ability.

Some game theoretic properties require order:  $a$  moves after  $b$ .

e.g. Stackelberg games.

Want to allow agents to condition their strategy on other agents:

- Express things that are inexpressible in ATL.
- But maintain nice properties of ATL.

**ATLDS**

# Alternating-Time Temporal Logic with Dependent Strategies

---

ATLDS extends ATL by augmenting each  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle$  with a permutation  $P$  of  $Ag$ .

$$\varphi ::= p \mid \neg\varphi \mid (\varphi \wedge \varphi) \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X\varphi \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P \varphi U \varphi$$

$\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P \varphi$

'the agents in  $C$ , when selecting moves in the order of  $P$ , have a collective strategy to enforce  $\varphi$ '.

# Alternating-Time Temporal Logic with Dependent Strategies

---

ATLDS extends ATL by augmenting each  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle$  with a permutation  $P$  of  $Ag$ .

$$\varphi ::= p \mid \neg\varphi \mid (\varphi \wedge \varphi) \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X\varphi \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P \varphi \cup \varphi$$

$\langle\langle \{a, b\} \rangle\rangle_{(b,c,a)} X Goal$   
'agent  $b$  has a strategy,  
such that for all strategies of  $c$ ,  
agent  $a$  has a strategy  
that guarantees  $Goal$  is achieved at  
the next step'

# Alternating-Time Temporal Logic with Dependent Strategies

ATLDS extends ATL by augmenting each  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle$  with a permutation  $P$  of  $Ag$ .

$$\varphi ::= p \mid \neg\varphi \mid (\varphi \wedge \varphi) \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X\varphi \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P \varphi U \varphi$$

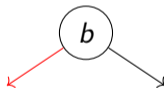
$\langle\langle \{a, b\} \rangle\rangle_{(b,c,a)} X Goal$

'agent  $b$  has a strategy,

such that for all strategies of  $c$ ,

agent  $a$  has a strategy

that guarantees  $Goal$  is achieved at  
the next step'



# Alternating-Time Temporal Logic with Dependent Strategies

ATLDS extends ATL by augmenting each  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle$  with a permutation  $P$  of  $Ag$ .

$$\varphi ::= p \mid \neg\varphi \mid (\varphi \wedge \varphi) \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X\varphi \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P \varphi U \varphi$$

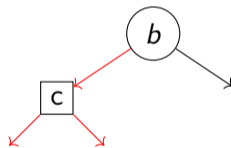
$\langle\langle \{a, b\} \rangle\rangle_{(b,c,a)} X Goal$

'agent  $b$  has a strategy,

such that for all strategies of  $c$ ,

agent  $a$  has a strategy

that guarantees  $Goal$  is achieved at  
the next step'



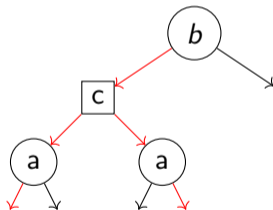
# Alternating-Time Temporal Logic with Dependent Strategies

ATLDS extends ATL by augmenting each  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle$  with a permutation  $P$  of  $Ag$ .

$$\varphi ::= p \mid \neg\varphi \mid (\varphi \wedge \varphi) \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X\varphi \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P \varphi U \varphi$$

$\langle\langle \{a, b\} \rangle\rangle_{(b,c,a)} X Goal$

'agent  $b$  has a strategy,  
such that for all strategies of  $c$ ,  
**agent  $a$  has a strategy**  
that guarantees  $Goal$  is achieved at  
the next step'





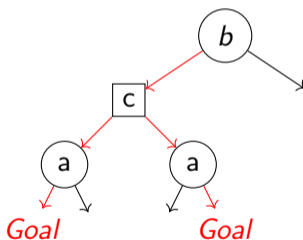
# Alternating-Time Temporal Logic with Dependent Strategies

ATLDS extends ATL by augmenting each  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle$  with a permutation  $P$  of  $Ag$ .

$$\varphi ::= p \mid \neg\varphi \mid (\varphi \wedge \varphi) \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X\varphi \mid \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P \varphi U \varphi$$

$\langle\langle \{a, b\} \rangle\rangle_{(b,c,a)} X Goal$

'agent  $b$  has a strategy,  
such that for all strategies of  $c$ ,  
agent  $a$  has a strategy  
that guarantees  $Goal$  is achieved at  
the next step'



# Alternating-Time Temporal Logic with Dependent Strategies

---

Now a strategy is a function from moves of previous agents.

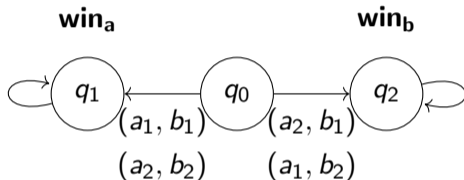
Under permutation  $(b, c, a)$ :

A strategy for  $b$  is just fixing an action.

A strategy for  $a$  is a function from actions of  $b$  and  $c$  to actions of  $a$ .

# Matching Pennies

---



$$q_0 \models \neg \langle\langle \{a\} \rangle\rangle X \text{win}_a$$

$$q_0 \models \langle\langle \{a\} \rangle\rangle_{(b,a)} X \text{win}_a$$

$$b_1 \mapsto a_1$$

$$b_2 \mapsto a_2$$

# Responding to Strategies

---

## Similarities:

The fixpoint characterisation of temporal formulae still hold, e.g.

$$\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P G\varphi \leftrightarrow \varphi \wedge \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P G\varphi$$

## Differences:

The fact of whether a coalition  $C$  can force  $\varphi$  under  $P$  is determined:

$$\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X\varphi \leftrightarrow \neg \langle\langle \bar{C} \rangle\rangle_P X\neg\varphi$$

ATLDS is more expressive for  $|Ag| > 2$ .

# Characterisation

---

- So we know ATLDS behaves a lot like ATL, but how exactly can we characterise the differences?
- It's hard to construct games with required properties...
- Idea: go from abstract description  $\rightarrow$  game

**Effectivity**

# Effectivity Functions

---

$$E(C, P) = \{X_1, X_2, \dots, X_k\}$$

$$X_i \subseteq Q$$

Map from  $C, P$  to sets of states  $C$  can enforce under  $P$ .

$$\{q_1, q_2\} \in E(\{a\}, (a, b, c))$$

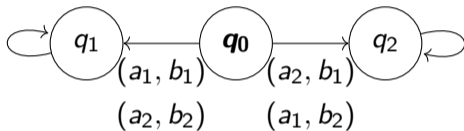
means  $a$  can guarantee either state  $q_0$  or  $q_1$  under permutation  $(a, b, c)$ .

We can construct an effectivity function  $E_q^\pi$  to represent the transition function at a state.

# Effectivity Functions

---

Can represent transition function at a state as a game:



↓

	<b>a<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>a<sub>2</sub></b>
<b>b<sub>1</sub></b>	$q_1$	$q_2$
<b>b<sub>2</sub></b>	$q_2$	$q_1$



## $\pi$ -Effectivity

---

For example, take  $C = \{a\}$  and  $P = (b, a)$  in the following game:

	<b>b<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>b<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>b<sub>3</sub></b>
<b>a<sub>1</sub></b>	x	z	z
<b>a<sub>2</sub></b>	y	x	x

A strategy for  $a$  is a choice of  $a_1$  or  $a_2$  for every move from  $b$ .

i.e. set of  $a$ 's strategies is set of functions from moves of  $b$  to moves of  $a$ .

## $\pi$ -Effectivity

---

For example, take  $C = \{a\}$  and  $P = (b, a)$  in the following game:

	<b>b<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>b<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>b<sub>3</sub></b>
<b>a<sub>1</sub></b>	x	z	z
<b>a<sub>2</sub></b>	y	x	x

Let us take the joint strategy where  $a$  chooses  $a_2$  and  $c$  chooses the following responses:

$$b_1 \mapsto a_2$$

$$b_2 \mapsto a_1$$

$$b_3 \mapsto a_1$$

No matter the choice of  $b$ , the outcome is  $x$ . So  $\{y, z\} \in E_q^\pi(\{a\}, (b, a))$

# Neighbourhood Models

---

So we can have an *effectivity function* at each state instead of a game:

$$\mathcal{S} = (Ag, Q, (E_q^\pi)_{q \in Q})$$

$$q \models \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \varphi \text{ iff } \llbracket \varphi \rrbracket \in E_q^\pi(C, P)$$

We get a neighbourhood model by calculating  $E_q^\pi$  at each state...

Much easier to construct models, but how can we get a game back from an effectivity function?

## $\alpha$ -Effectivity

---

Already known for ATL -

'Truly playable':

1. (outcome monotonic)  $X \in E(C)$  implies  $Y \in E(C)$  for all  $Y \supseteq X$
2. (superadditivity)  $X \in E(C)$  and  $Y \in E(S)$  implies  $X \cap Y \in E(C \cup S)$  for disjoint  $C, S$
3. (N-maximality)  $X \notin E(\emptyset) \implies \bar{X} \in E(N)$
4. (liveness)  $\emptyset \notin E(C)$
5. (safety)  $E(C) \neq \emptyset$
6. (regularity)  $X \in E(C) \implies \bar{X} \notin E(\bar{C})$
7. (crown condition)  $X \in E(N)$  implies there is some  $x \in X$  such that  $\{x\} \in E(N)$

# Back and Forth between Games and Effectivity

---

Existing construction that goes from truly playable effectivity function to a game  $G$ .

Theorem (Pauly's Representation Theorem [Goranko et al., 2013])

*An effectivity function  $E$  is truly playable iff  $E = E_G^\alpha$  for some normal-form game  $G$*



## $\pi$ -Effectivity

---

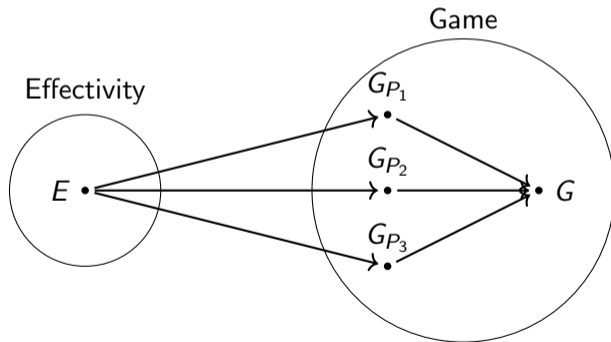
Truly playable + maximal + order monotonic:

1. (outcome monotonic)  $X \in E(C, P)$  implies  $Y \in E(C, P)$  for all  $Y \supseteq X$
2. (superadditivity)  $X \in E(C, P)$  and  $Y \in E(S, P)$  implies  $X \cap Y \in E(C \cup S, P)$  for disjoint  $C, S$
3. **(maximality)**  $X \notin E(C, P) \implies \bar{X} \in E(\bar{C}, P)$
4. (liveness)  $\emptyset \notin E(C, P)$
5. (safety)  $E(C, P) \neq \emptyset$
6. **(order monotonicity)**  $X \in E(C, P)$  implies  $X \in E(C, P')$  for  $P \leq_C P'$
7. (regularity)  $X \in E(C, P) \implies \bar{X} \notin E(\bar{C}, P)$
8. (crown condition)  $X \in E(N, P)$  implies there is some  $x \in X$  such that  $\{x\} \in E(N, P)$

# Back and Forth between Games and Effectivity

## Theorem

An ordered effectivity function  $E$  is order-monotonic, maximal, and truly playable iff  $E = E_G^\pi$  for some normal-form game  $G$



# Axiomatisation



# Effectivity Axioms into ATLDS Axioms

---

- (outcome monotonic)  $X \in E(C, P)$  implies  $Y \in E(C, P)$  for all  $Y \supseteq X$
- (superadditivity)  $X \in E(C, P)$  and  $Y \in E(S, P)$  implies  $X \cap Y \in E(C \cup S, P)$  for disjoint  $C, S$
- (maximality)  $X \notin E(C, P) \implies \bar{X} \in E(\bar{C}, P)$
- (liveness)  $\emptyset \notin E(C, P)$
- (safety)  $E(C, P) \neq \emptyset$
- (order monotonicity)  $X \in E(C, P)$  implies  $X \in E(C, P')$  for  $P \leq_C P'$

# Effectivity Axioms into ATLDS Axioms

---

- (X-Monotonicity)  $\frac{\varphi \implies \psi}{\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \varphi \implies \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \psi}$
- (S)  $\langle\langle C_1 \rangle\rangle_P X \varphi \wedge \langle\langle C_2 \rangle\rangle_P X \psi \implies \langle\langle C_1 \cup C_2 \rangle\rangle_P X (\varphi \wedge \psi)$  (for disjoint  $C_1, C_2$ )
- (M)  $\neg \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \varphi \implies \langle\langle \bar{C} \rangle\rangle_P X \neg \varphi$
- ( $\perp$ )  $\neg \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \perp$
- (T)  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \top$
- (Mon)  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \varphi \implies \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_{P'} X \varphi$  (for  $P \leq_C P'$ )

# Effectivity Axioms into ATLDS Axioms

- (X-Monotonicity)  $\frac{\varphi \implies \psi}{\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \varphi \implies \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \psi}$
- (S)  $\langle\langle C_1 \rangle\rangle_P X \varphi \wedge \langle\langle C_2 \rangle\rangle_P X \psi \implies \langle\langle C_1 \cup C_2 \rangle\rangle_P X (\varphi \wedge \psi)$  (for disjoint  $C_1, C_2$ )
- (M)  $\neg \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \varphi \implies \langle\langle \bar{C} \rangle\rangle_P X \neg \varphi$
- ( $\perp$ )  $\neg \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \perp$
- ( $\top$ )  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \top$
- (Mon)  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \varphi \implies \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_{P'} X \varphi$  (for  $P \leq_C P'$ )

+

- (FP)  $\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P \psi U \varphi \iff \varphi \vee (\psi \wedge \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P \psi U \varphi)$
- (LFP)  $\langle\langle \emptyset \rangle\rangle G((\varphi \vee (\psi \wedge \langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P X \chi)) \implies \chi) \implies \langle\langle \emptyset \rangle\rangle G(\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P \psi U \varphi \implies \chi)$
- (G-Necessitation)  $\frac{\varphi}{\langle\langle C \rangle\rangle_P G \varphi}$

# Soundness and Completeness

---

The ATLDS axioms do not guarantee the property:

(crown condition)  $X \in E(N, P)$  implies there is some  $x \in X$  such that  $\{x\} \in E(N, P)$

But on finite models this is guaranteed from the other axioms.

# Finite Model Property

---

More expressive fragment of Strategy Logic enjoys the finitely-branching tree model property [Mogavero et al., 2016].

So via a filtration-style process:

## Proposition

ATLDS has the finite model property

# Soundness and Completeness

---

## Theorem

*The axiomatic system for ATLDS is sound and weakly complete for order-monotonic, maximal, and (truly) playable effectivity models.*

And from the  $\pi$ -effectivity representation theorem, we get:

## Corollary

*The axiomatic system for ATLDS is sound and weakly complete for CGMs.*

# Model Checking

# Model Checking

---

Can adapt algorithm for ATL for PTIME model checking...

...But only when transition functions are listed explicitly ( $|Q| \times |A|^{|Ag|}$ )

We can look at *implicit* CGMs, where transition function is encoded polynomially.



# Model Checking

---

When restricted to implicit CGMs:

The model checking problem for ATLDS is PSPACE-complete.

The model checking problem for ATLDS with a fixed no. of agents is in  $NP \cap coNP$ .

The model checking problem for ATLDS restricted to formulae with  $k$  quantifier alternations is in  $\Delta_{k+1}^P$ .

# Conclusion

# Conclusion

---

- We can add in dependency/order required for certain game-theoretic concepts to ATL.
- Still behaves like ATL in appropriate ways.
- We incur a small cost for model checking in certain scenarios.

# Future Directions

---

- More efficient construction from neighbourhood models to games.
- Branching/Independence Friendly Quantifiers
- Where else can effectivity take us?

# References

---



Belardinelli, F., Jamroga, W., Kurpiewski, D., Malvone, V., and Murano, A. (2019).

Strategy logic with simple goals: Tractable reasoning about strategies.

*In Proceedings of the Twenty-Eighth International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence, IJCAI-19*, pages 88–94. International Joint Conferences on Artificial Intelligence Organization.



Goranko, V., Jamroga, W., and Turrini, P. (2013).

Strategic games and truly playable effectivity functions.

*Autonomous Agents and Multi-Agent Systems*, 26(2):288–314.



Mogavero, F., Murano, A., Perelli, G., and Vardi, M. (2016).

Reasoning about strategies: on the satisfiability problem.

*Logical Methods in Computer Science*, Vol. 13(1:9)2017, pp. 1–37.

**The End**