

# **Hierarchical Reinforcement Learning (Part II)**

**Mayank Mittal**

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# What are humans good at?

# Let's go and have lunch!



# Let's go and have lunch!



**1. Exit ETZ building**



**2. Cross the street**



**3. Eat at mensa**

# Let's go and have lunch!



## 1. Exit ETZ building

- Open door
- Walk to the lift
- Press button
- Wait for lift
- .....

## 2. Cross the street

- Find shortest route
- Walk safely
- Follow traffic rules
- .....

## 3. Eat at mensa

- Open door
- Wait in a queue
- Take food
- .....

# What are humans good at?

Temporal  
abstraction



# Let's go and have lunch!



## 1. Exit ETZ building

- Open door
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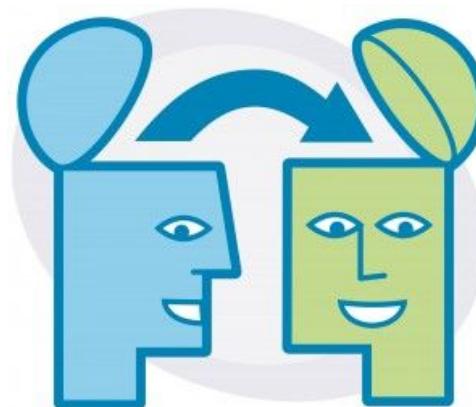
- Open door
- Wait in a queue
- Take food
- .....

# What are humans good at?

Temporal  
abstraction



Transfer/Reusability  
of Skills



# Let's go and have lunch!



## 1. Exit ETZ building

- Open door
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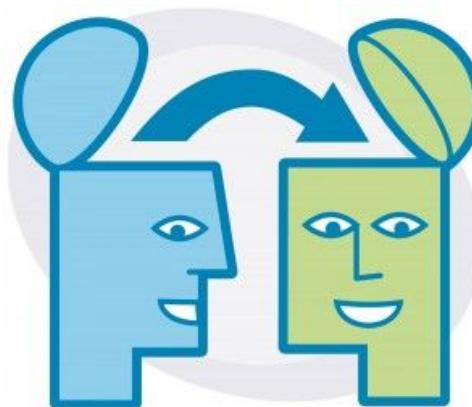
**How to represent these different goals?**

# What are humans good at?

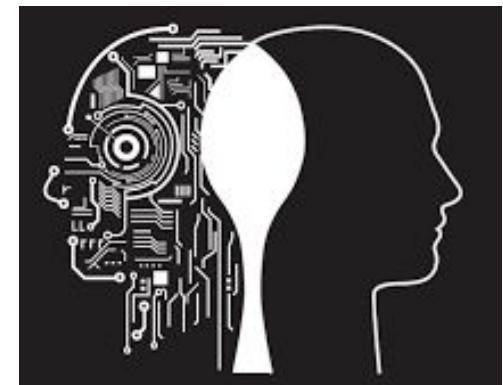
Temporal  
abstraction



Transfer/Reusability  
of Skills



Powerful/meaningful  
state abstraction

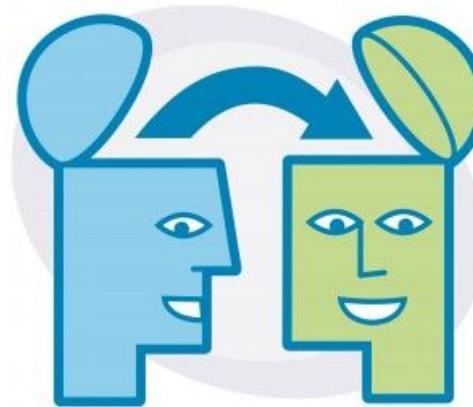


# What are humans good at?

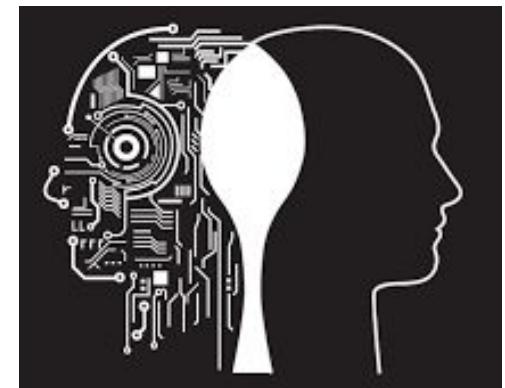
Temporal abstraction



Transfer/Reusability of Skills



Powerful/meaningful state abstraction



**Can a learning-based agent do the same?**

# Promise of Hierarchical RL

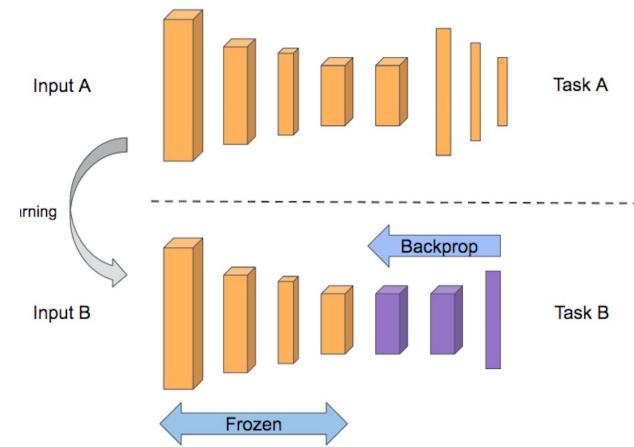
Structured exploration



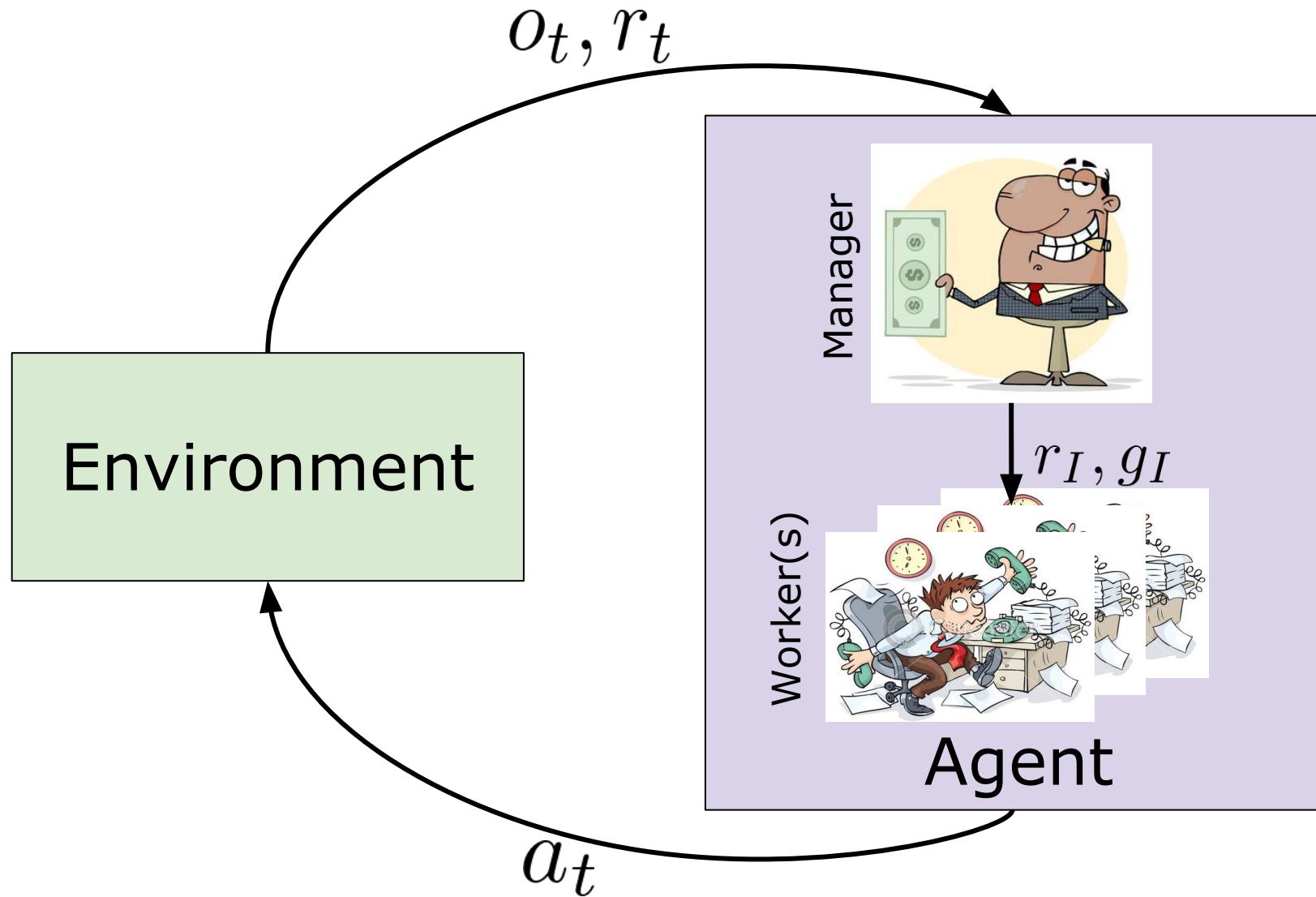
Long-term credit assignment (and memory)



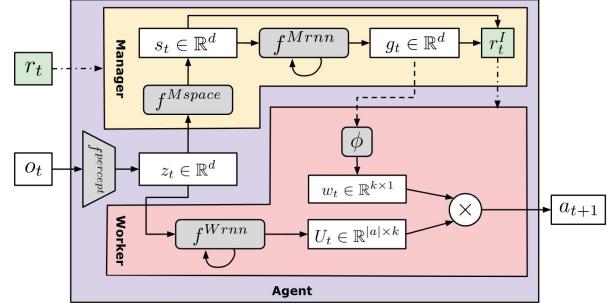
Transfer learning



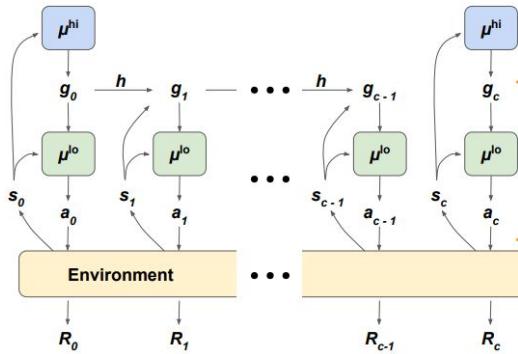
# Hierarchical RL



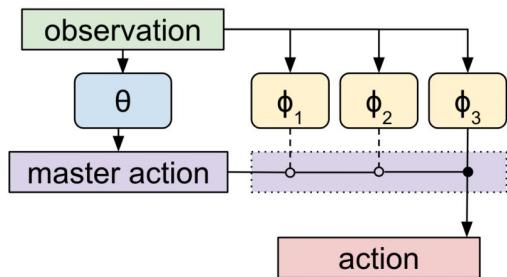
# Hierarchical RL



**FeUDal Networks for  
Hierarchical Reinforcement  
Learning** (ICML 2017)

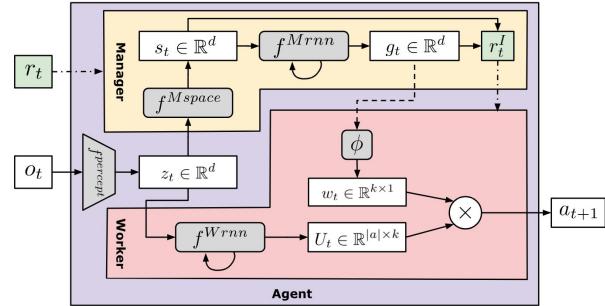


**Data-Efficient Hierarchical  
Reinforcement Learning**  
(NeurIPS 2018)

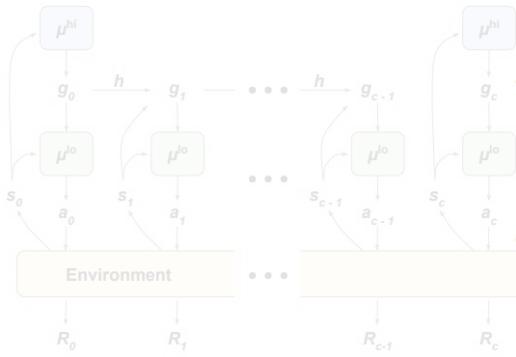


**Meta-Learning Shared  
Hierarchies** (ICLR 2018)

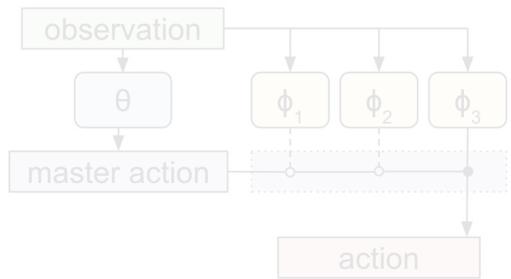
# Hierarchical RL



**FeUDal Networks for  
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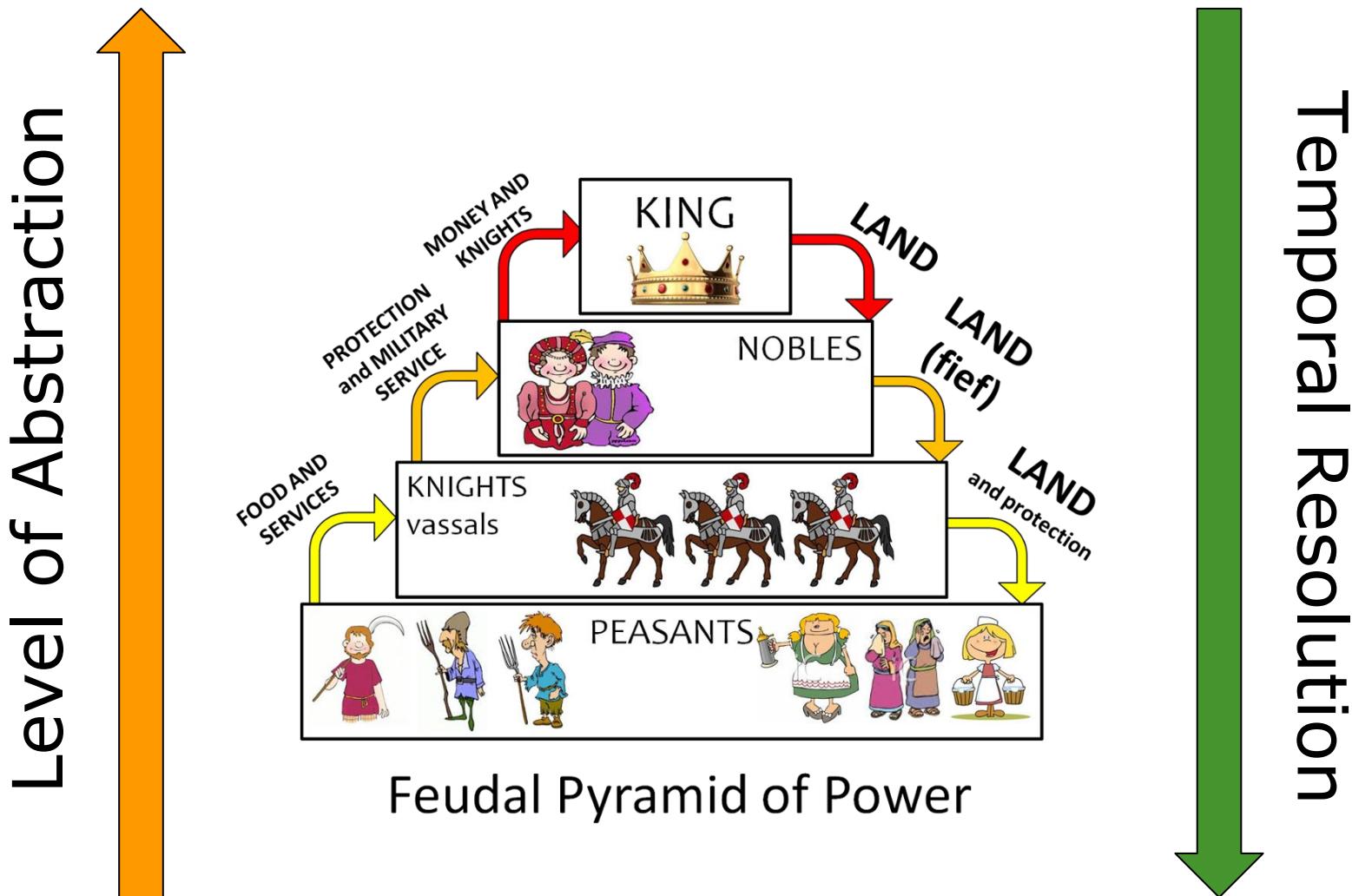
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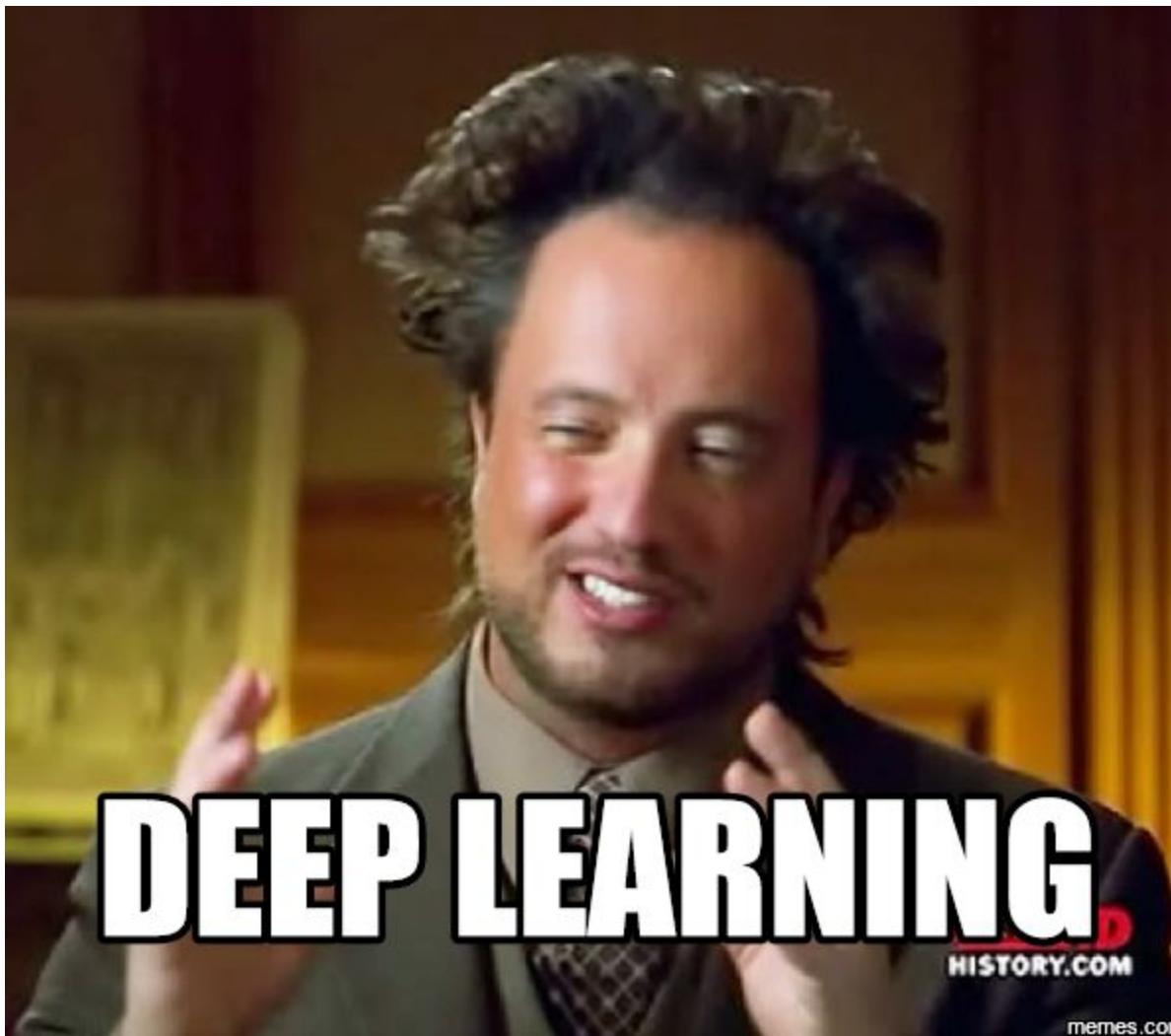
**Meta-Learning Shared  
Hierarchies** (ICLR 2018)

# **FeUdal Networks (FUN)**

# FeUDal Networks (FUN)

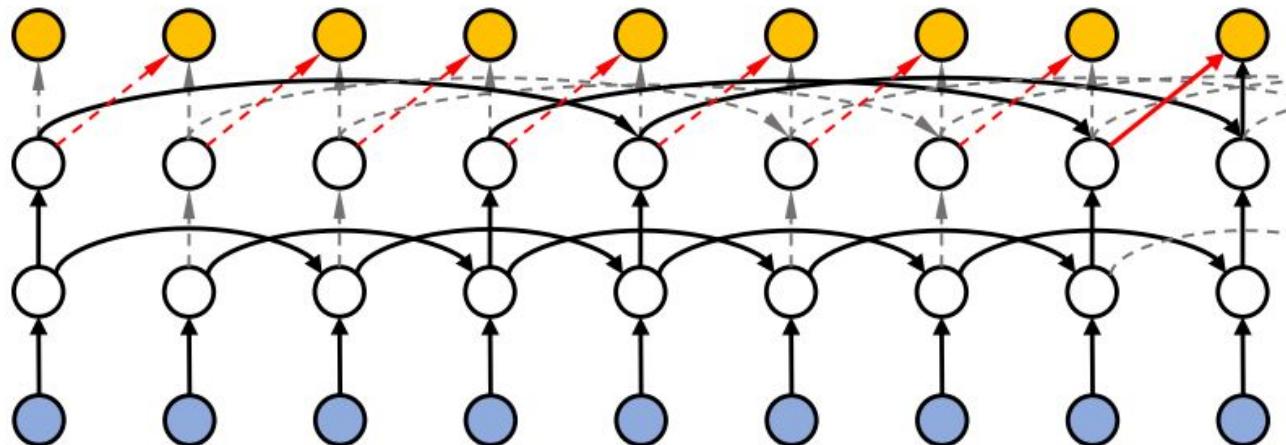


# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

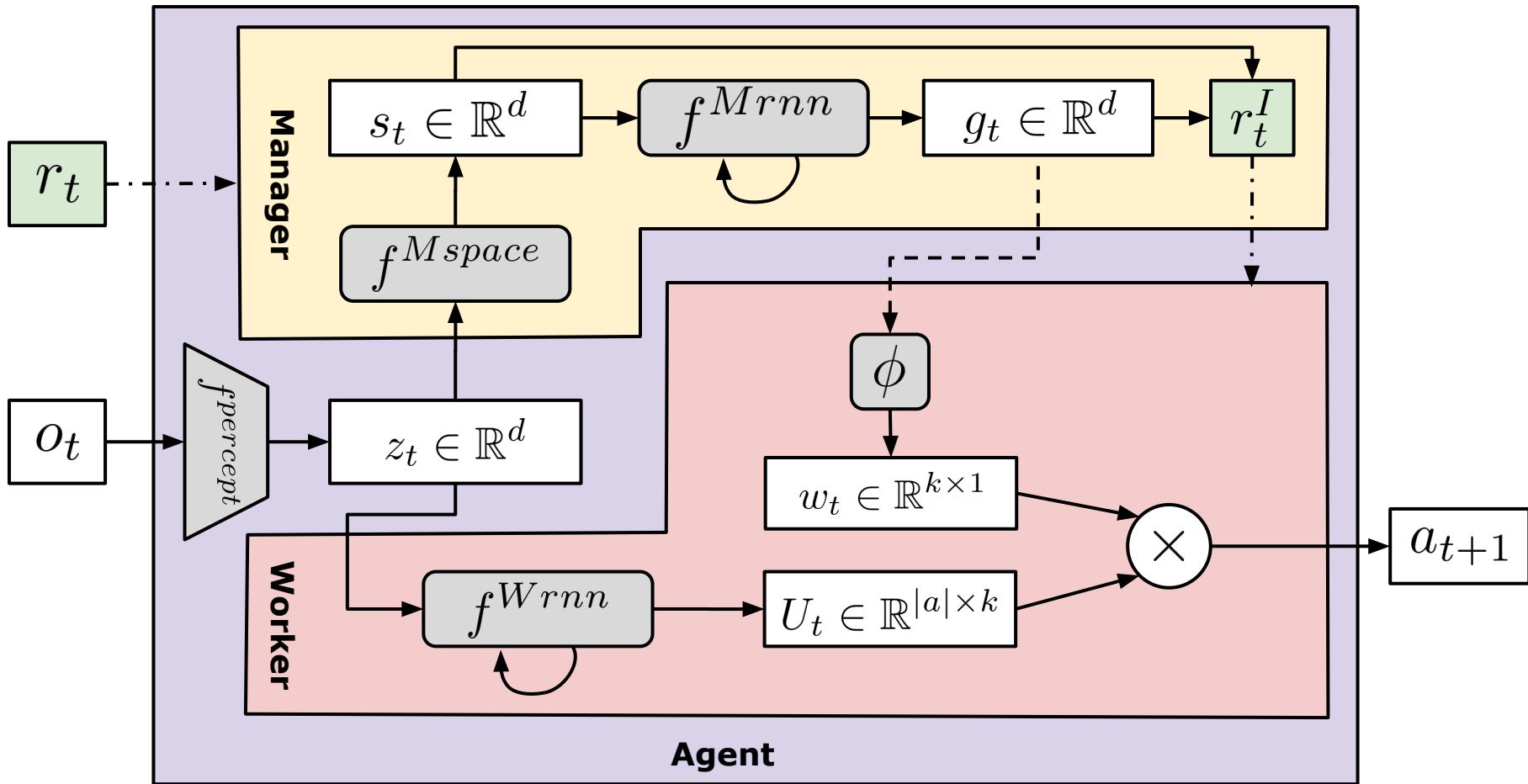


# Detour: Dilated RNN

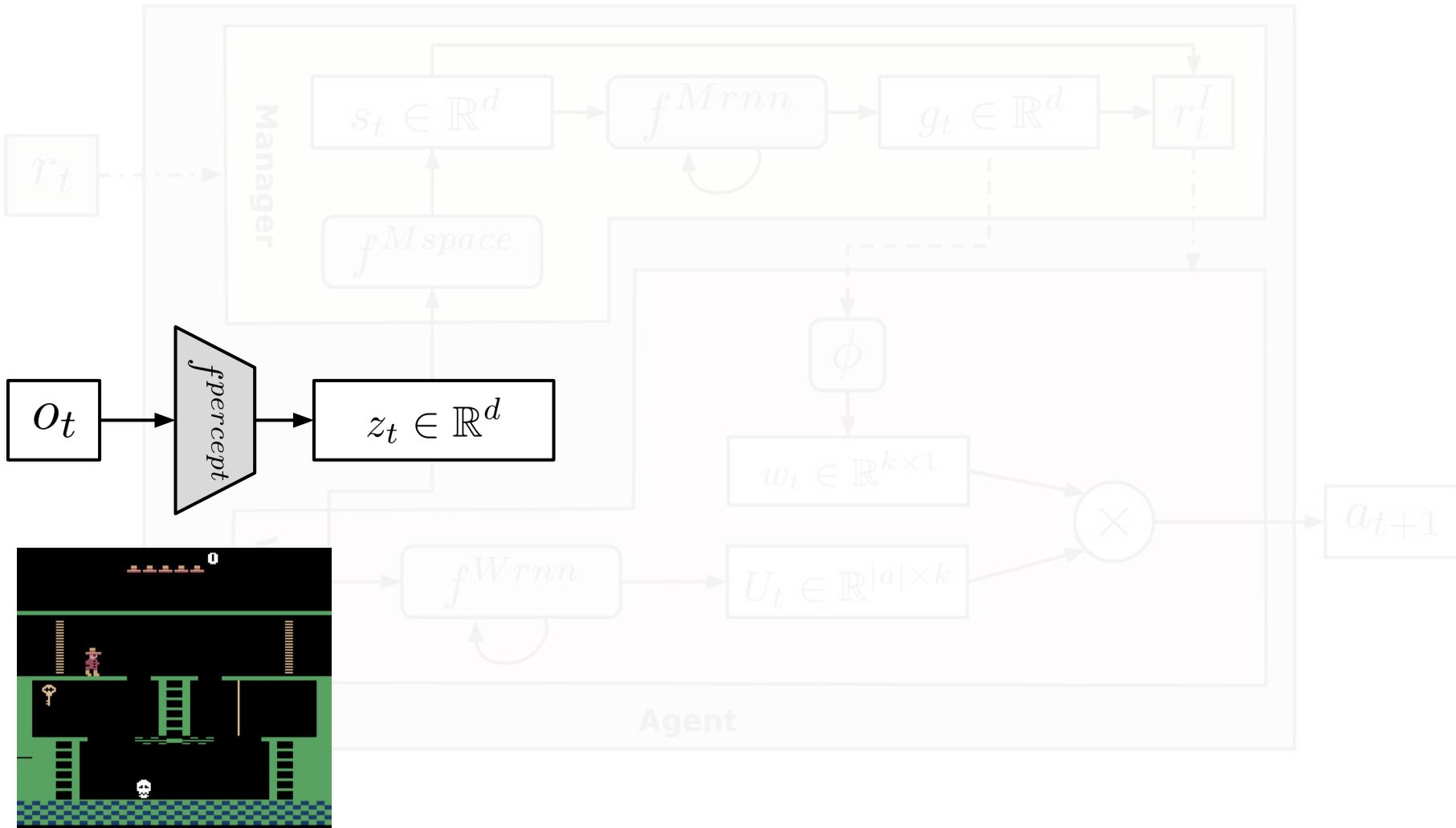
- Able to preserve memories over longer periods



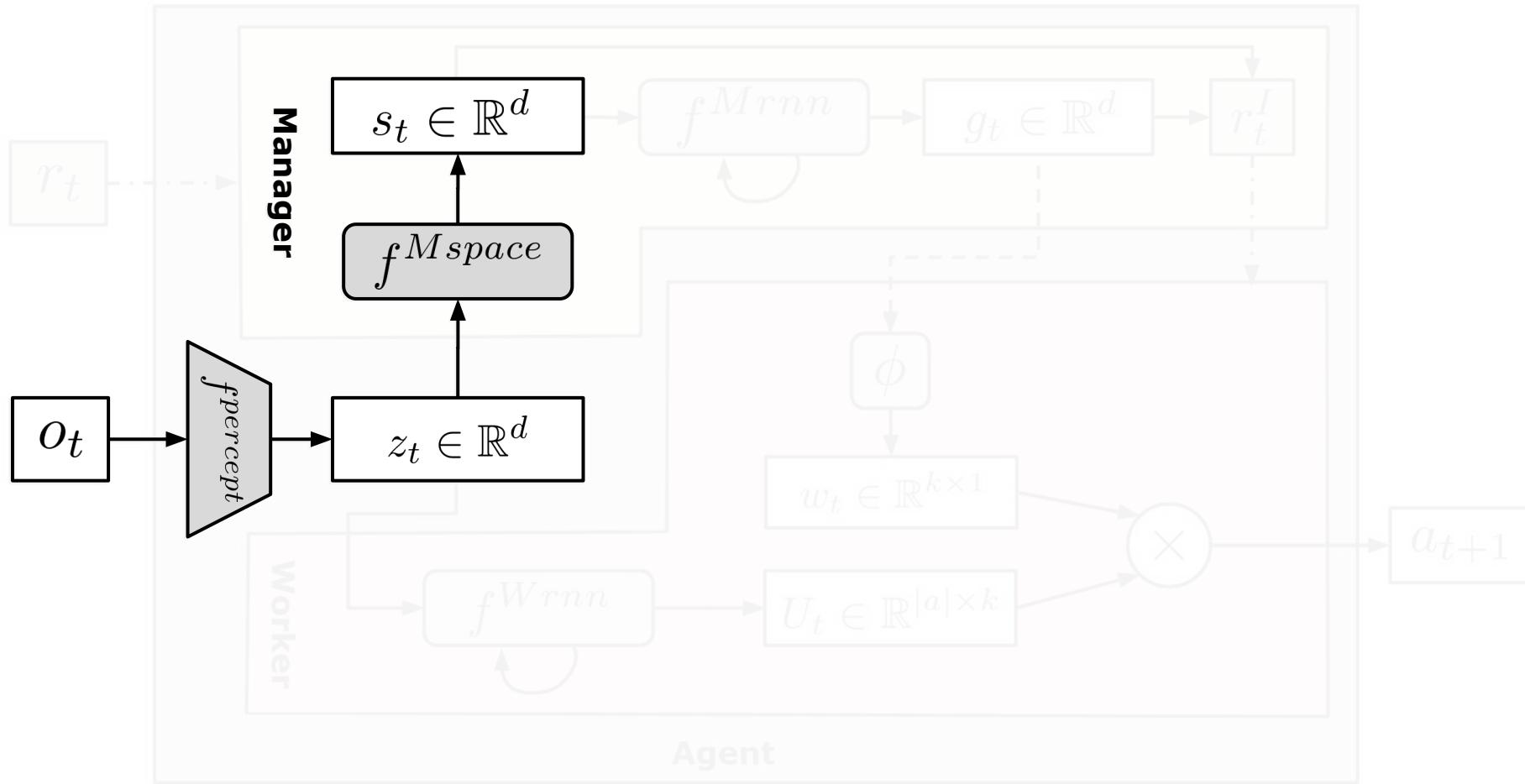
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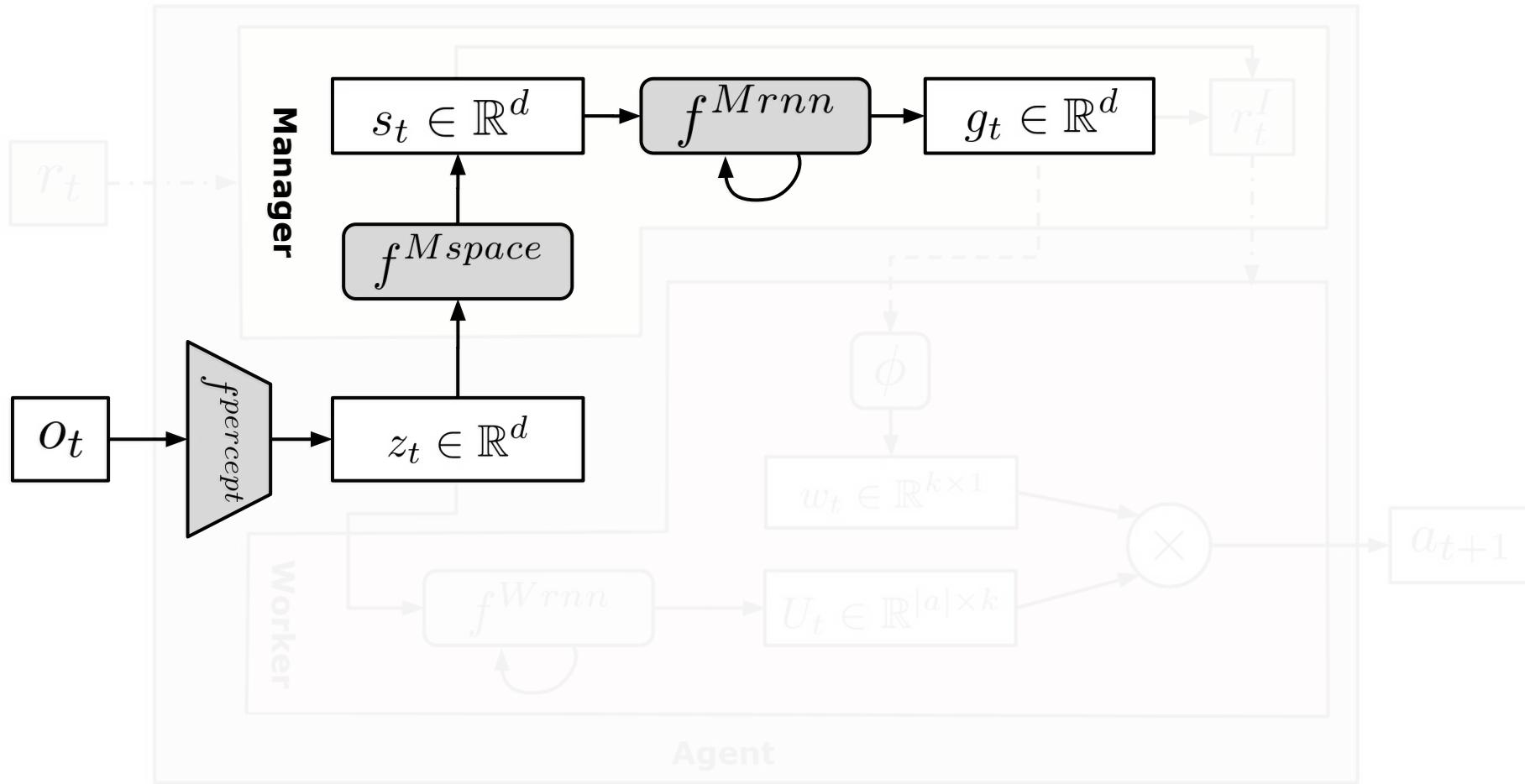
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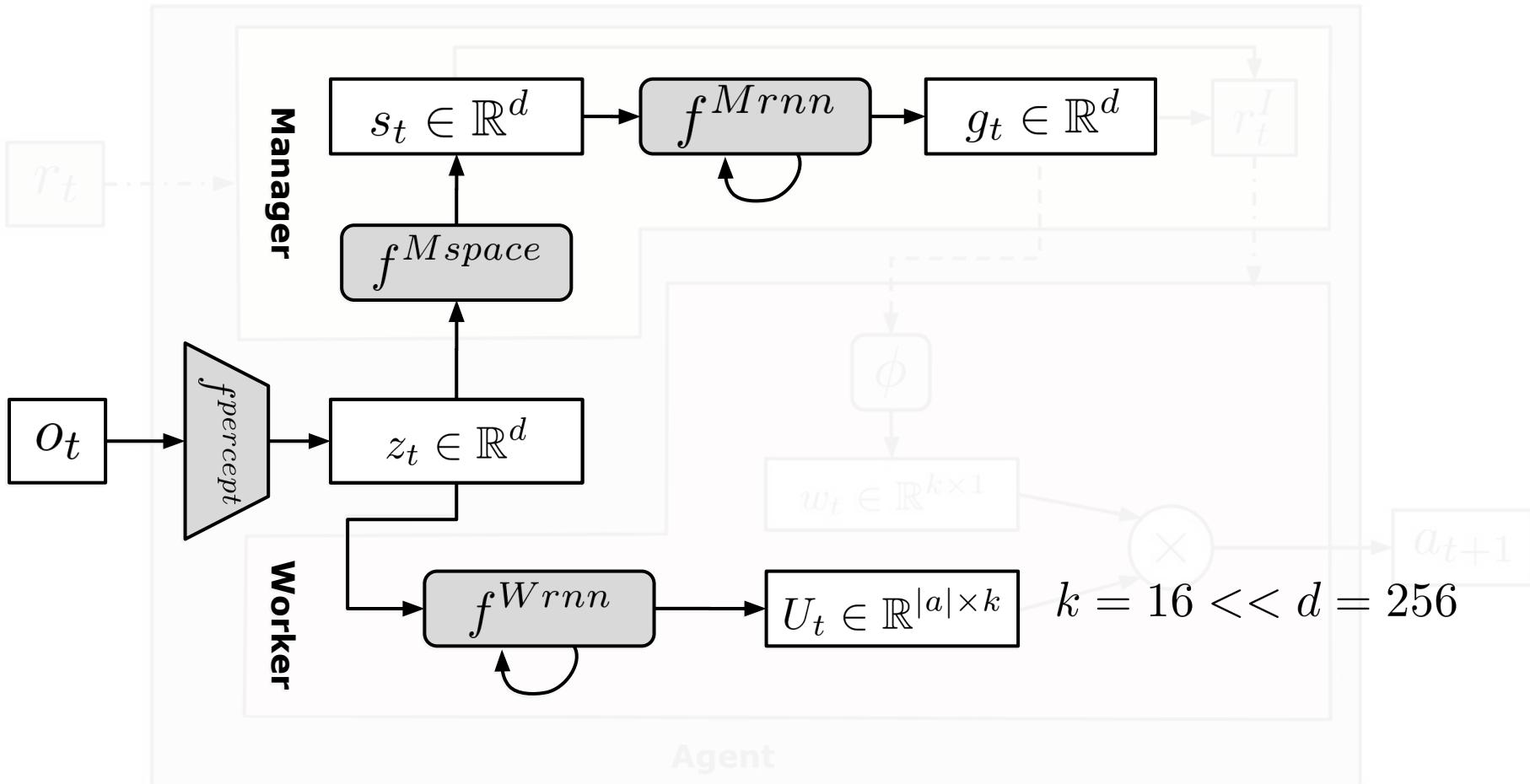
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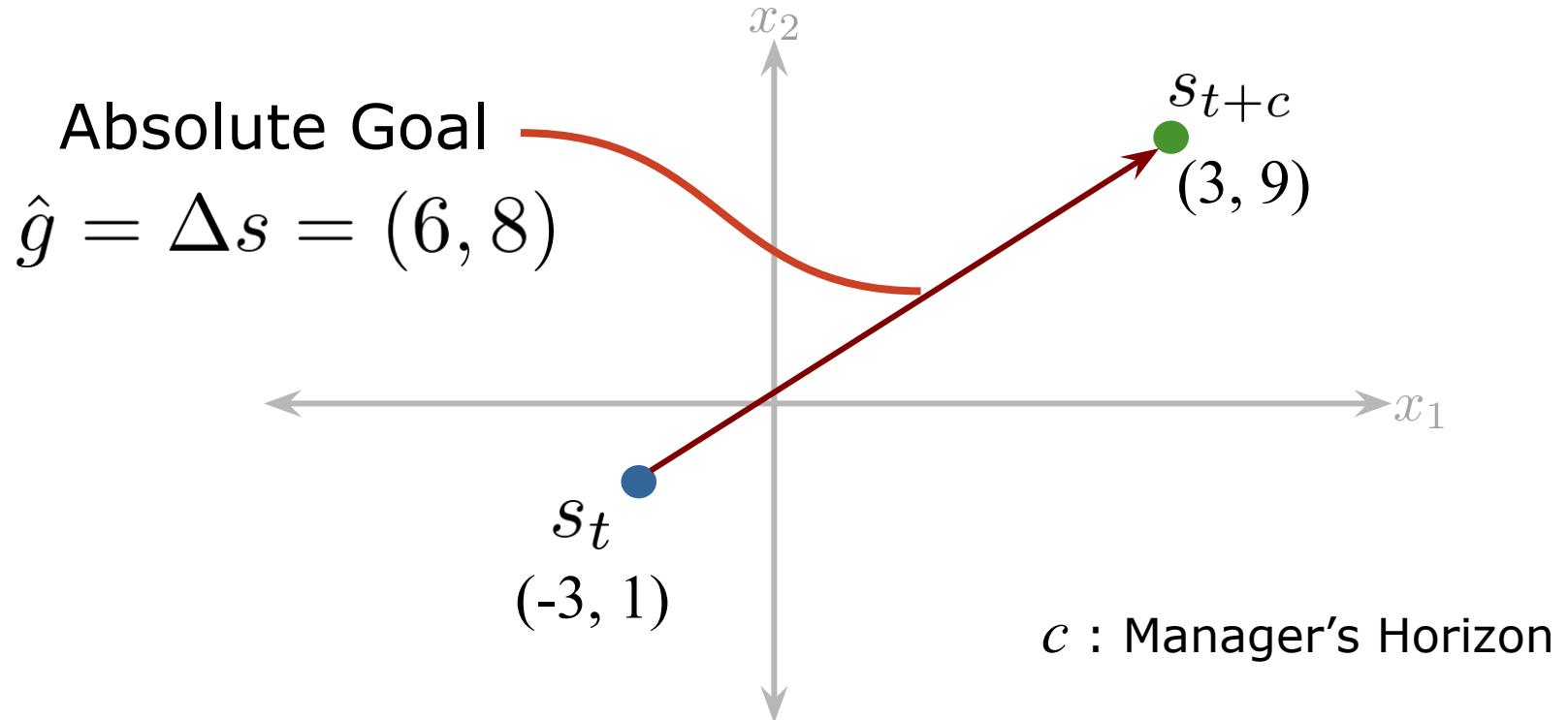
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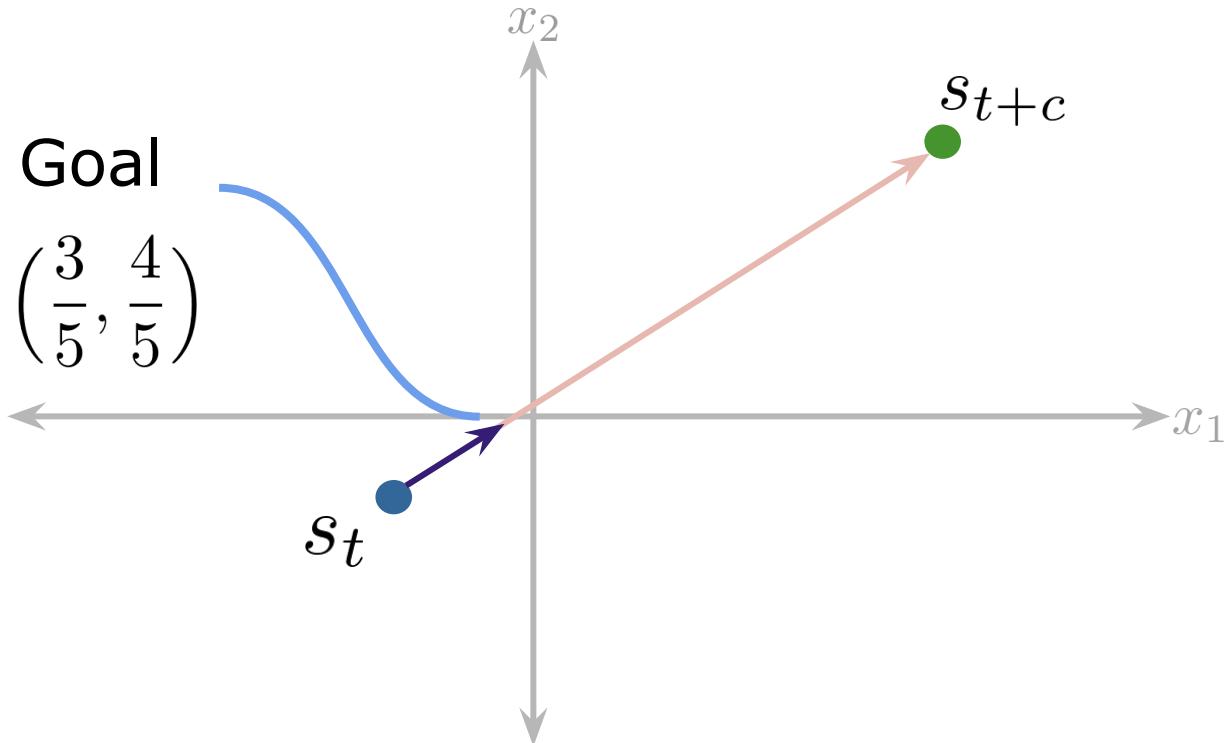
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)



# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

Directional Goal

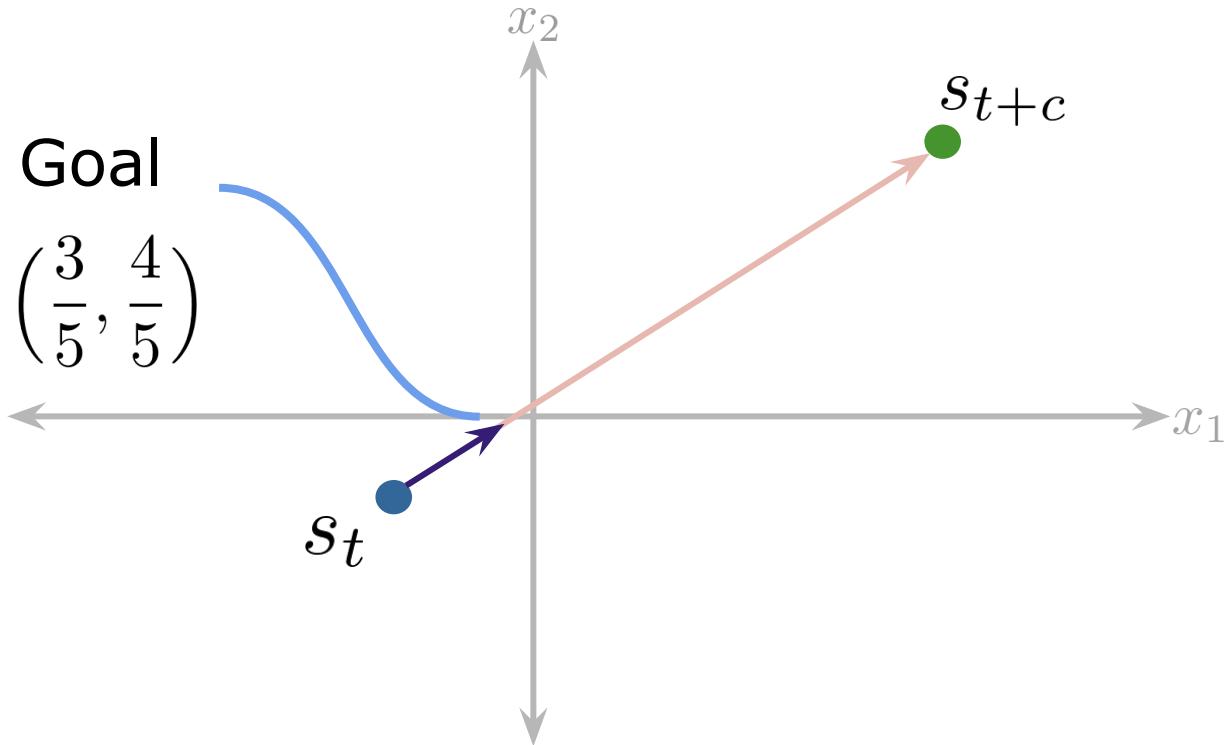
$$g = \frac{\hat{g}}{\|\hat{g}\|} = \left( \frac{3}{5}, \frac{4}{5} \right)$$



# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

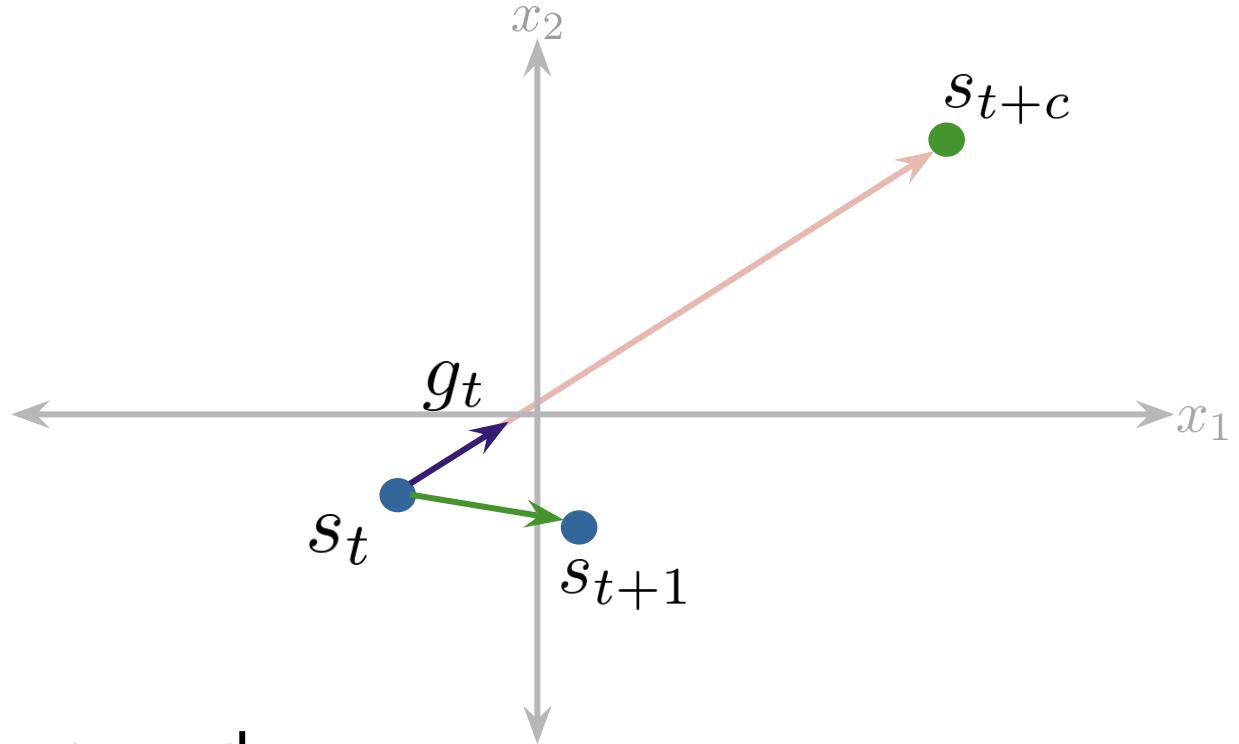
Directional Goal

$$g = \frac{\hat{g}}{\|\hat{g}\|} = \left( \frac{3}{5}, \frac{4}{5} \right)$$



**Idea:** A single sub-goal (direction) can be reused in many different locations in state space

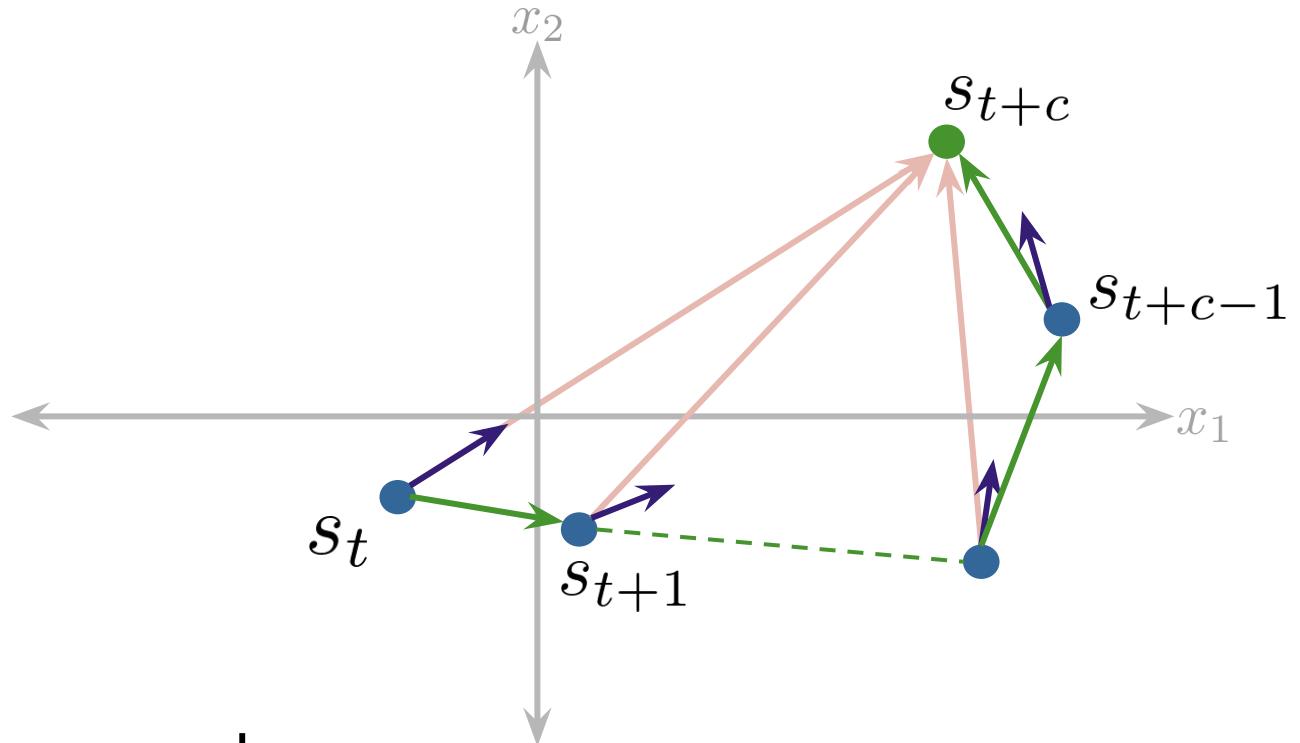
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)



- Intrinsic reward

$$d_{cos}(s_{t+1} - s_t, g_t) = \frac{(s_{t+1} - s_t)^T g_t}{|s_{t+1} - s_t| |g_t|}$$

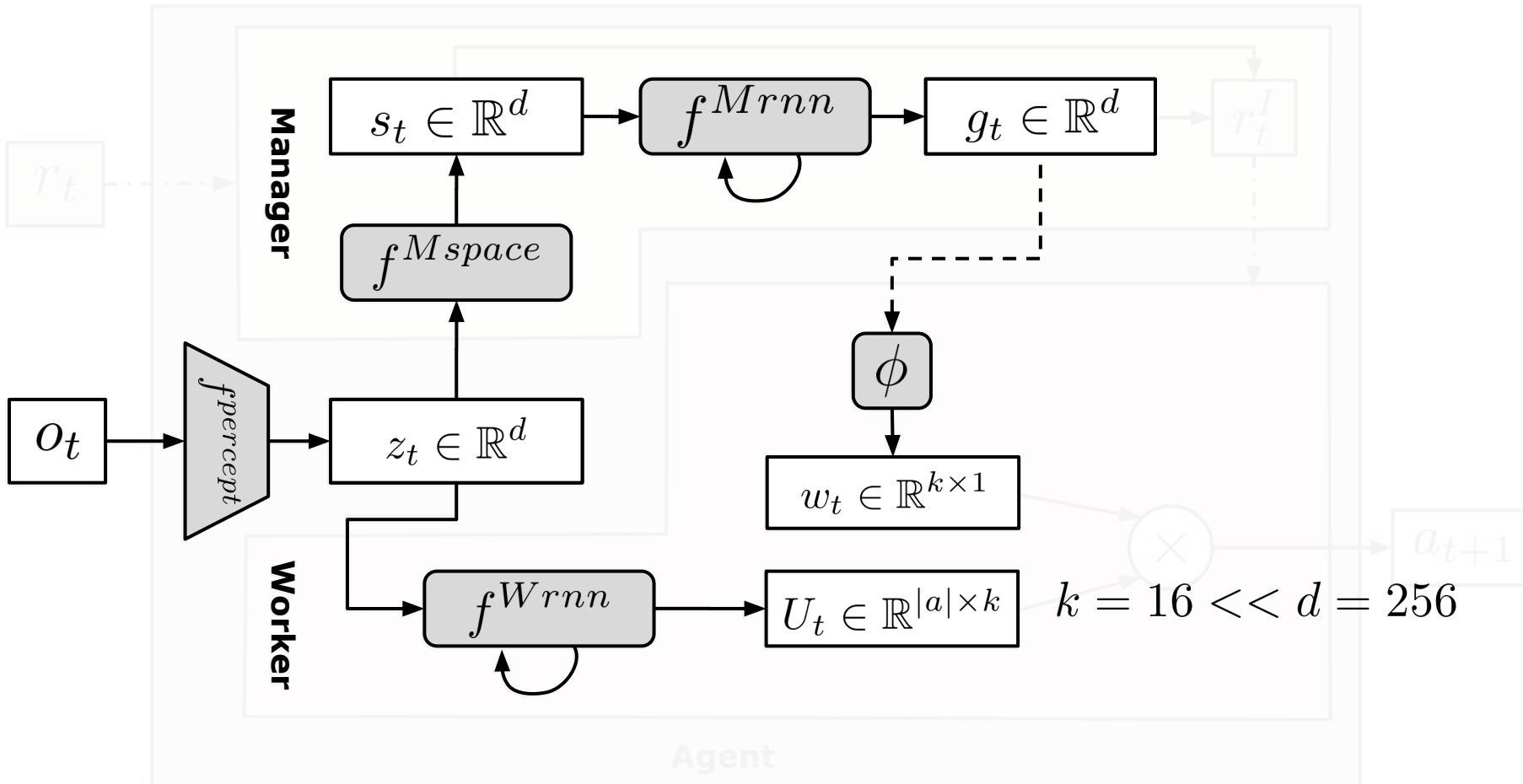
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)



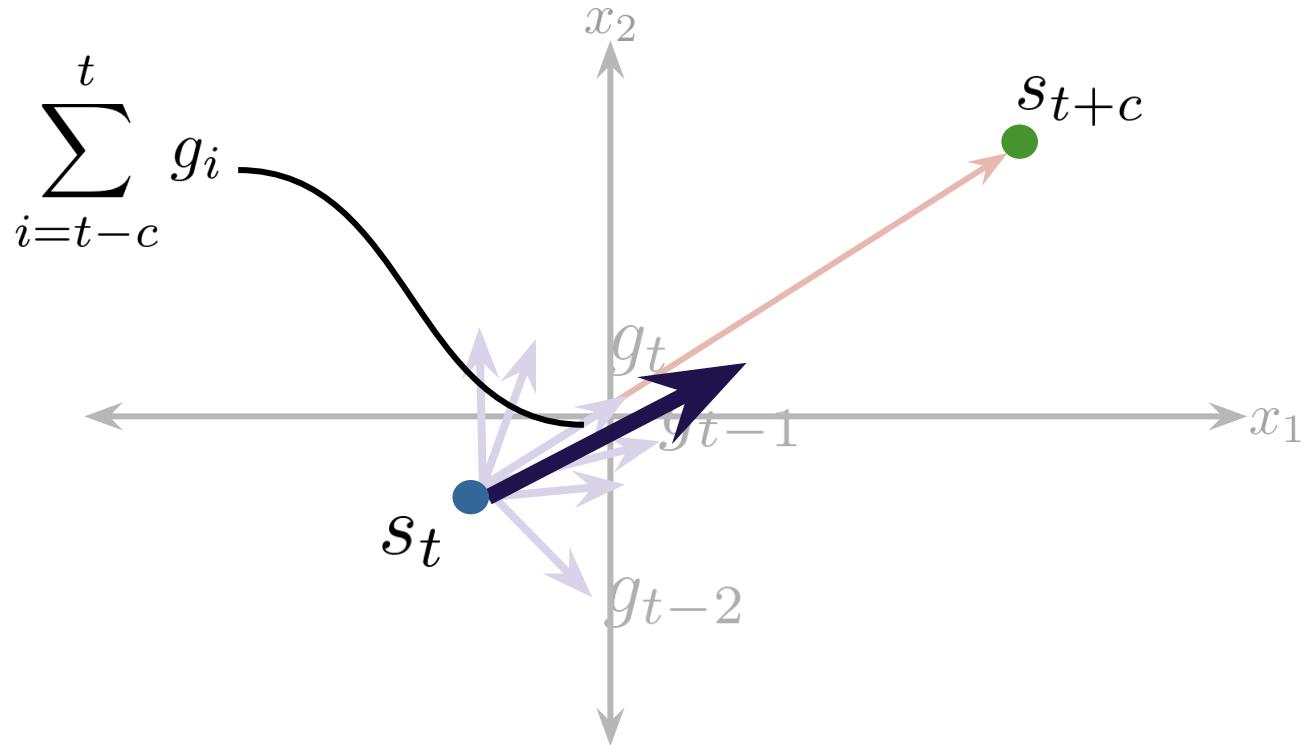
- Intrinsic reward

$$r_{t+c}^I = \frac{1}{c} \sum_{i=t}^{t+c} d_{cos}(s_{t+c} - s_i, g_i)$$

# FeUdal Networks (FUN)



# FeUdal Networks (FUN)



$$w_t = \phi \left( \sum_{i=t-c}^t g_i \right)$$

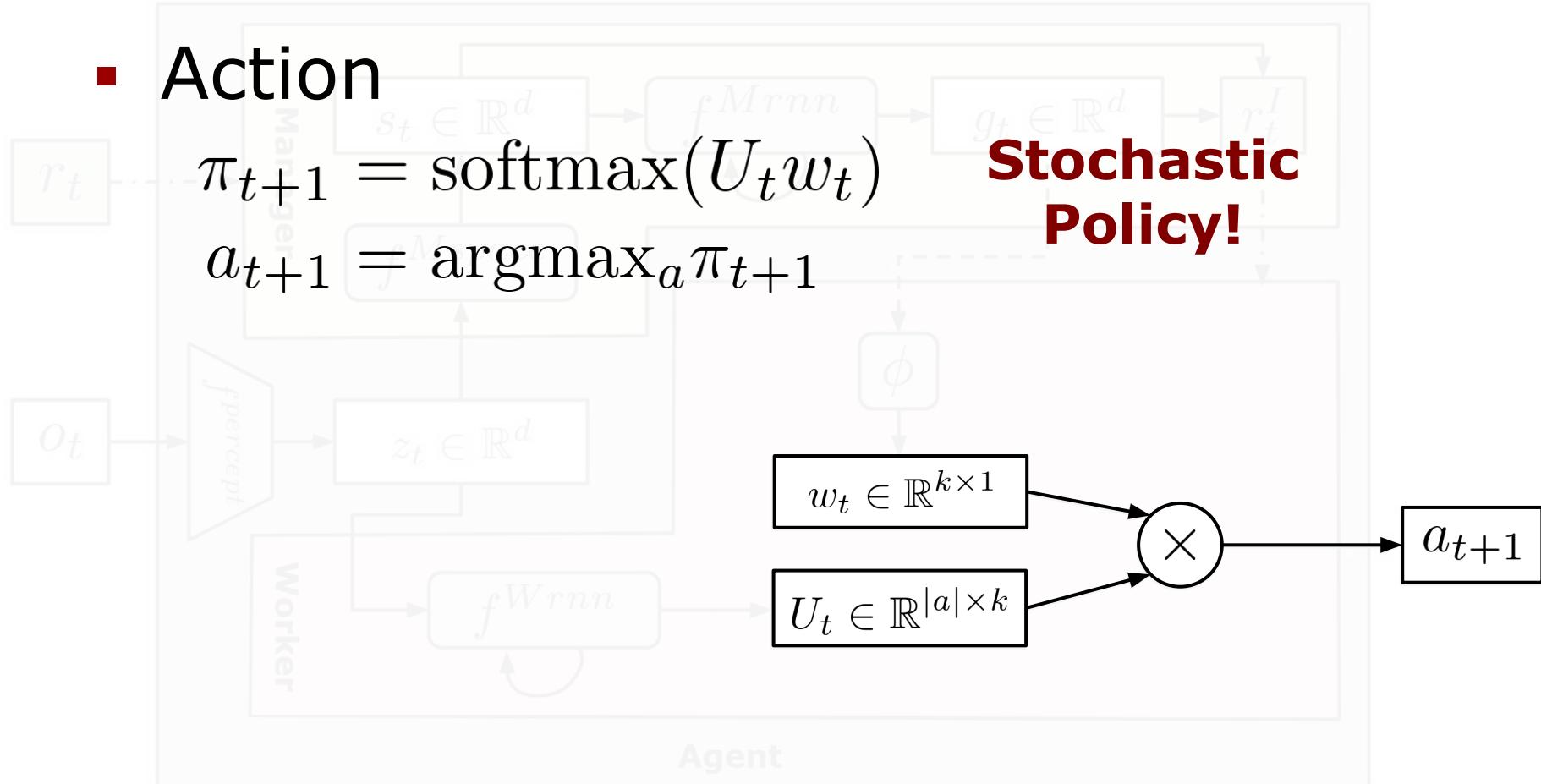
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

- Action

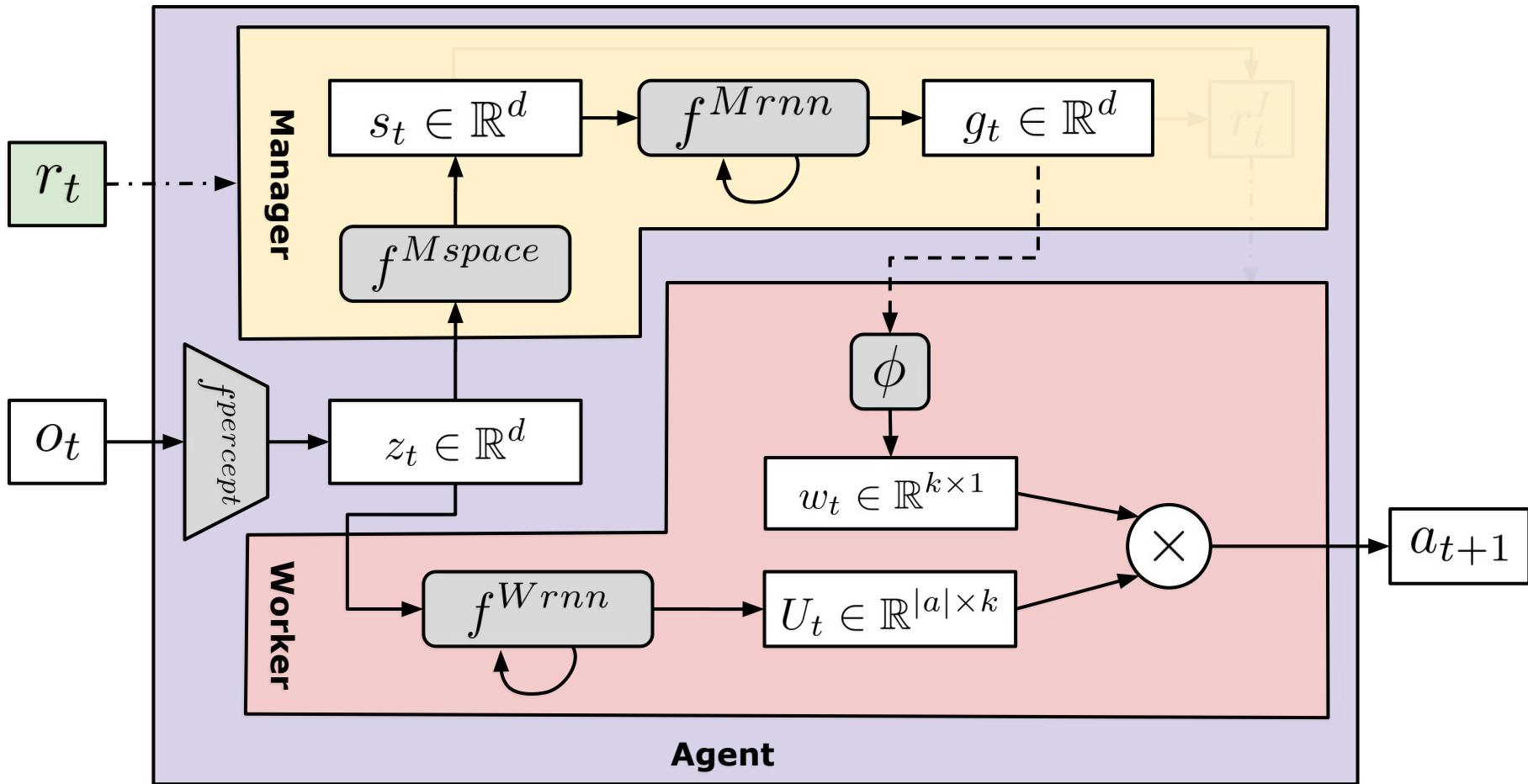
$$\pi_{t+1} = \text{softmax}(U_t w_t)$$

$$a_{t+1} = \underset{\tau}{\operatorname{argmax}} \pi_{t+1}$$

**Stochastic Policy!**

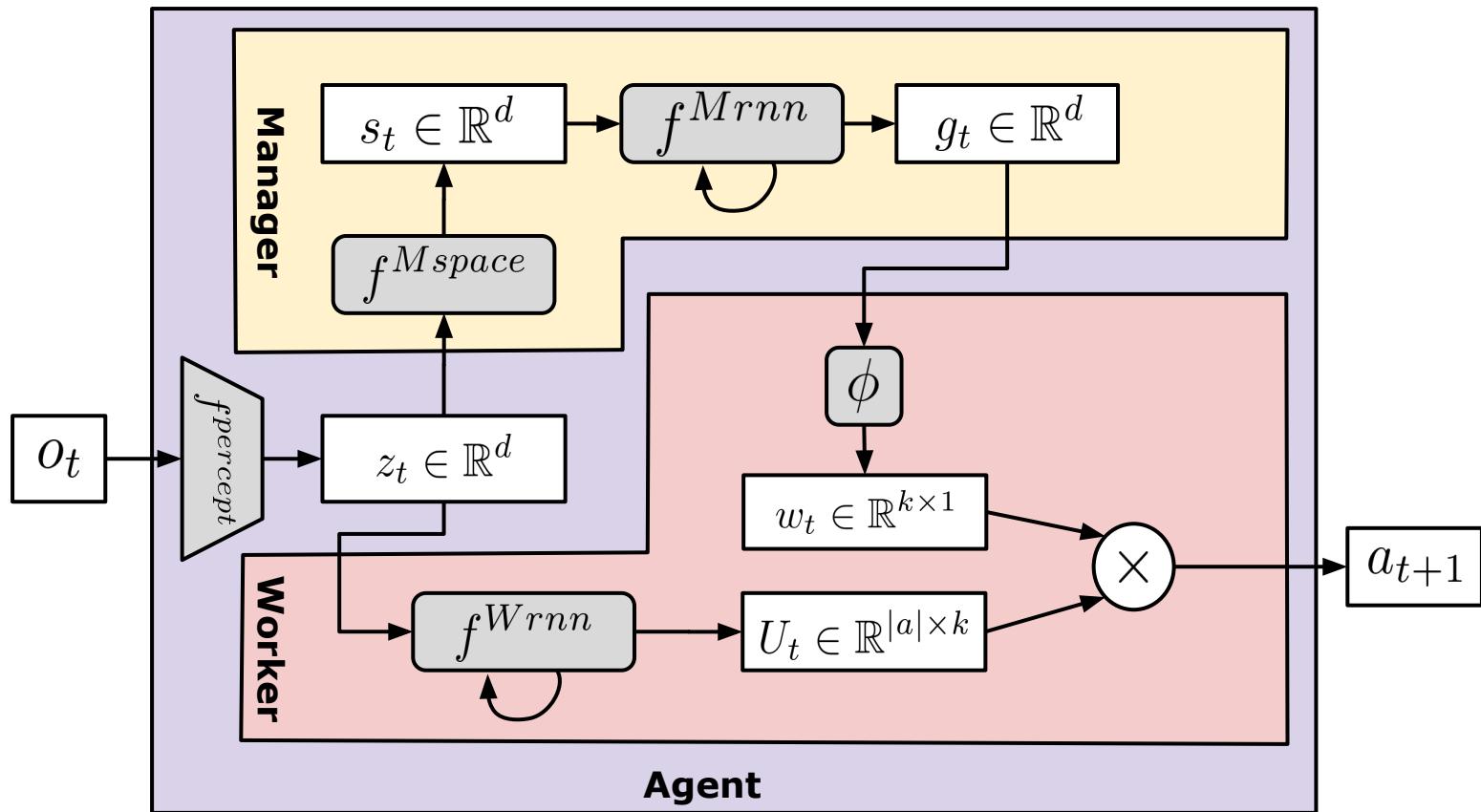


# FeUdal Networks (FUN)



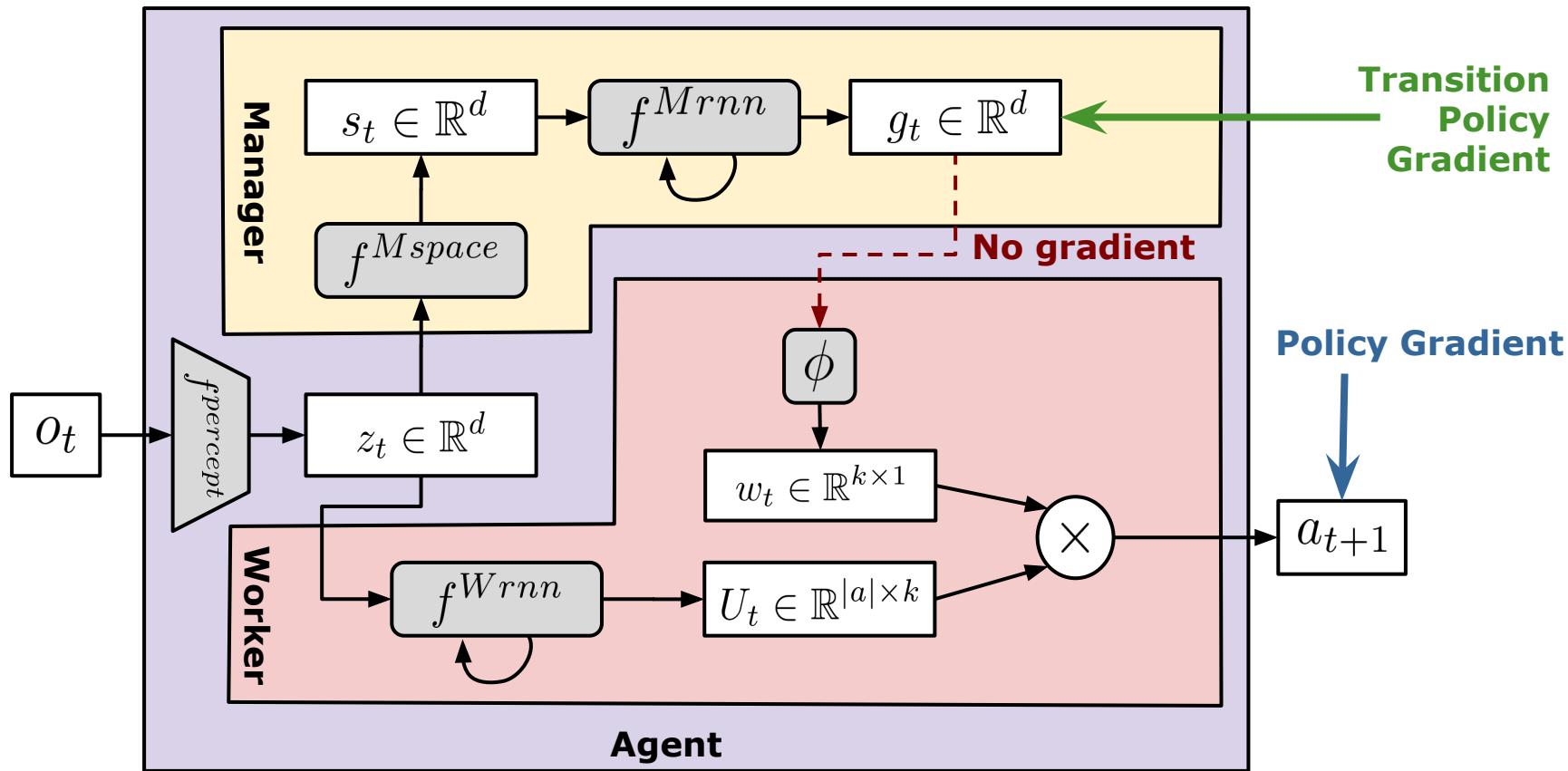
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

Why not do end-to-end learning?



# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

Manager & Worker: Separate Actor-Critic

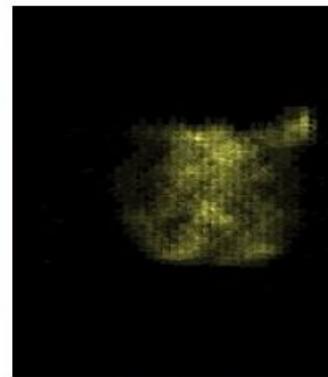


# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

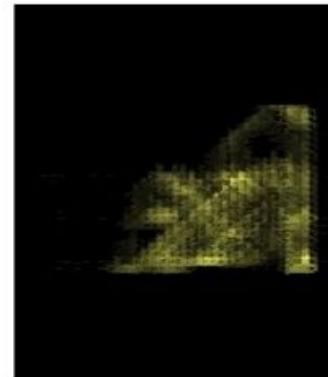
## Qualitative Analysis



Example frame



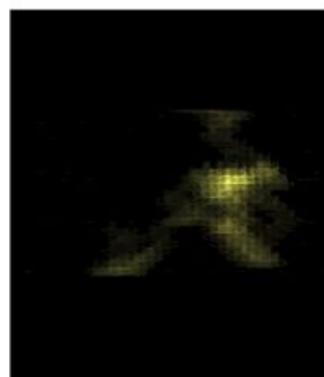
LSTM



Full FuN



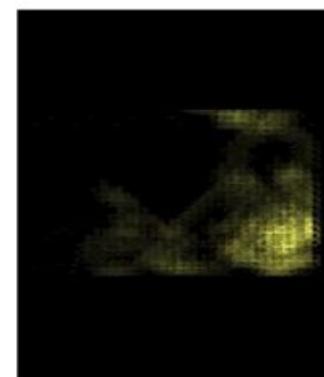
sub-policy 1



sub-policy 2



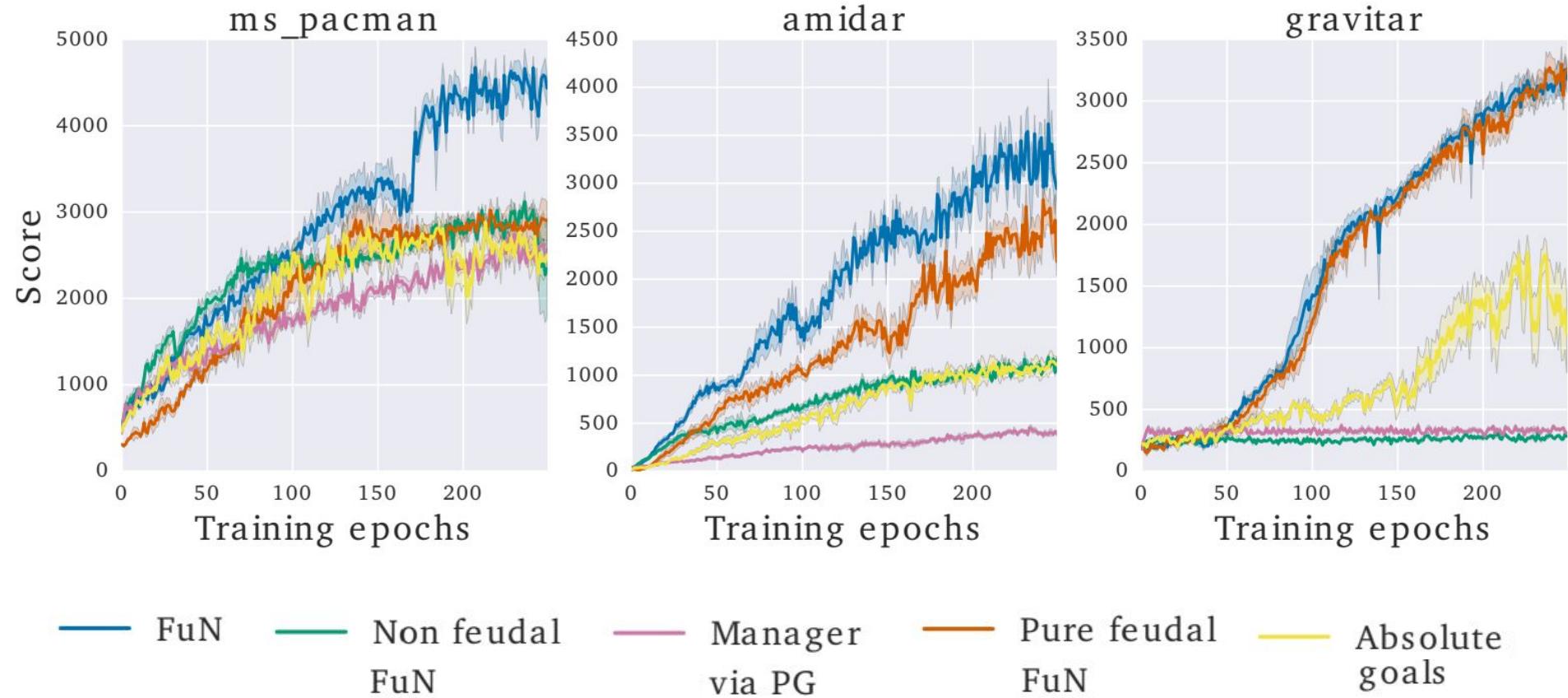
sub-policy 3



sub-policy 4

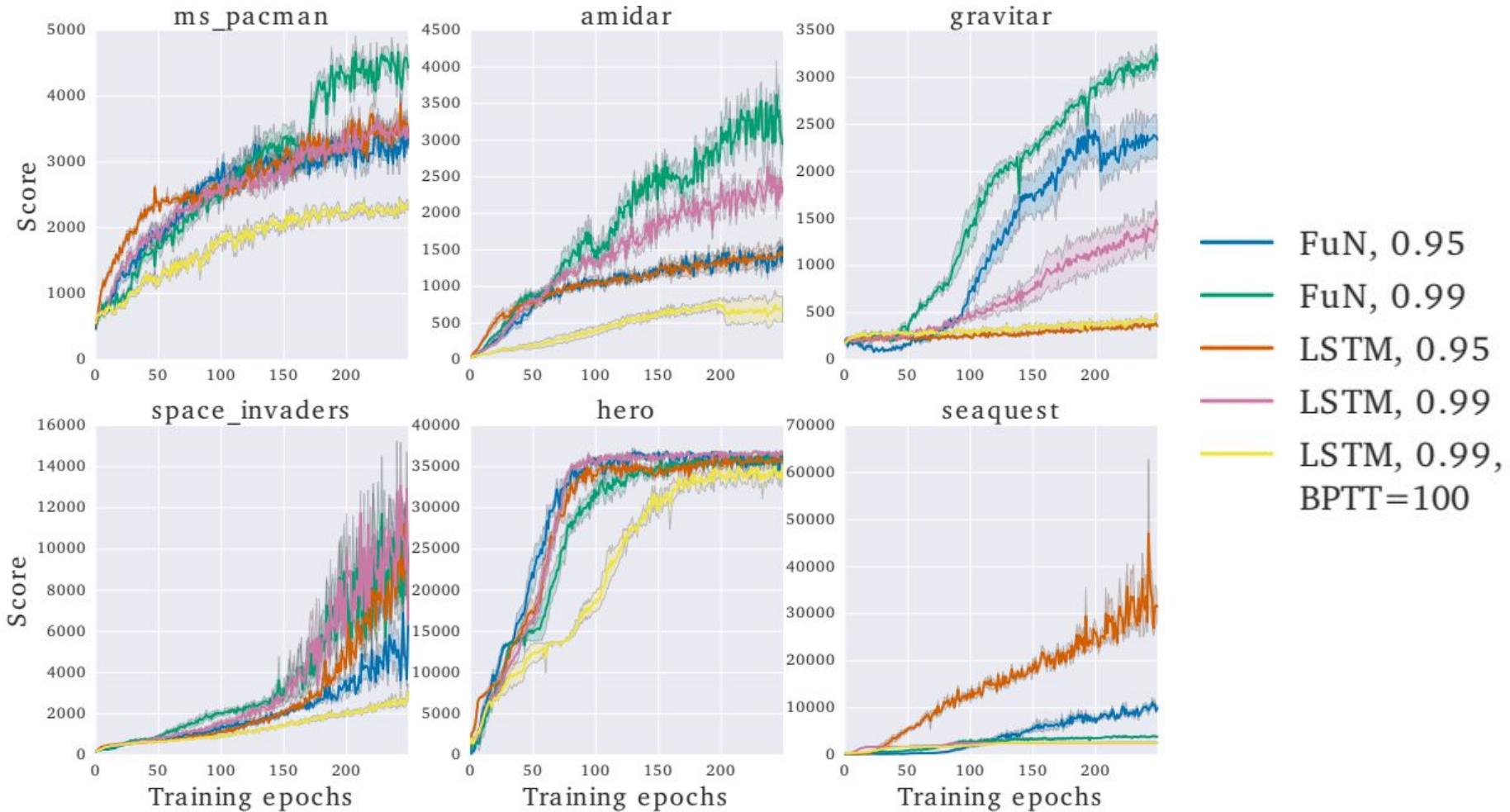
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

## Ablative Analysis



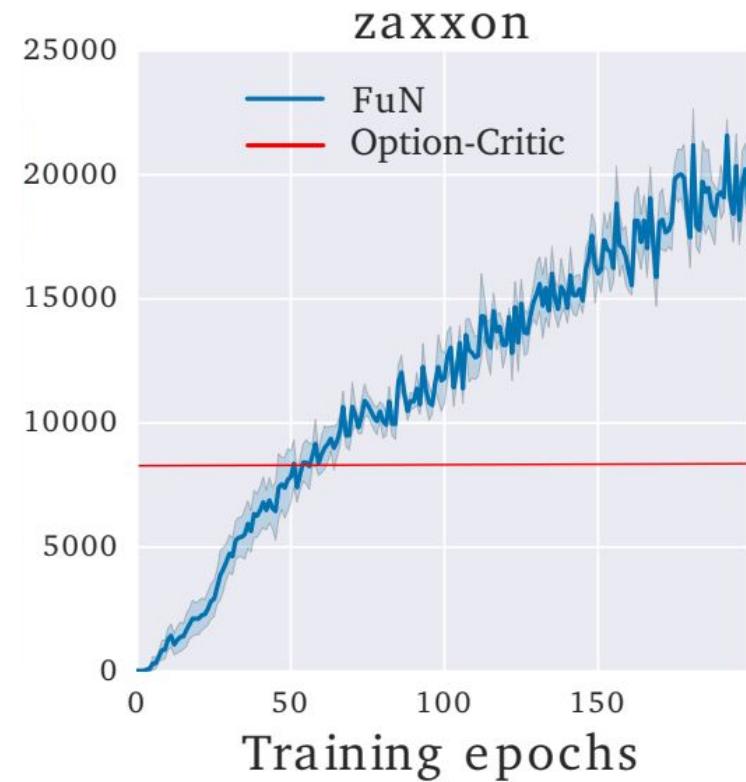
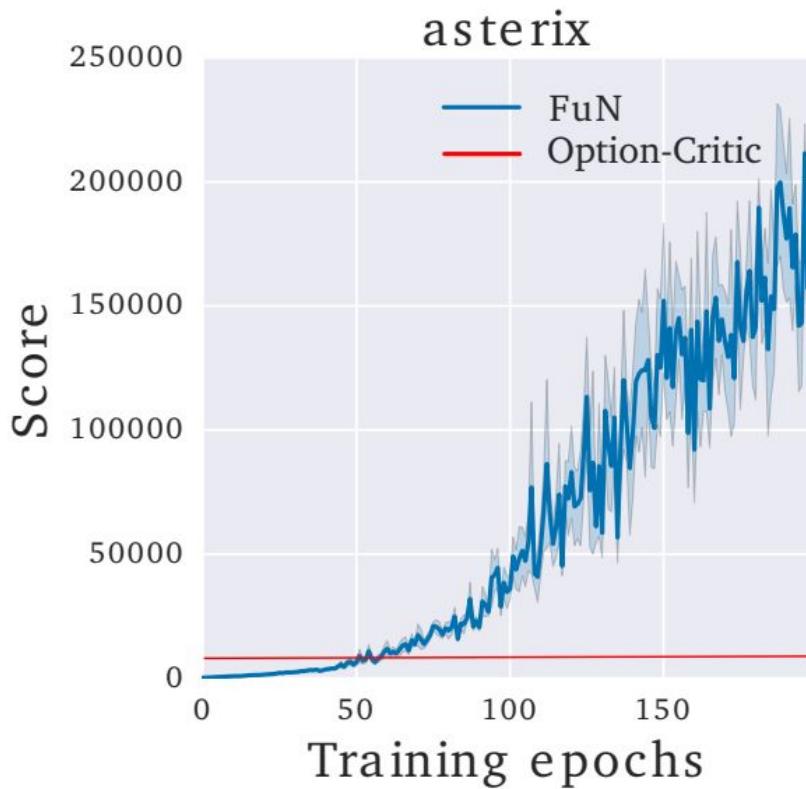
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

## Ablative Analysis



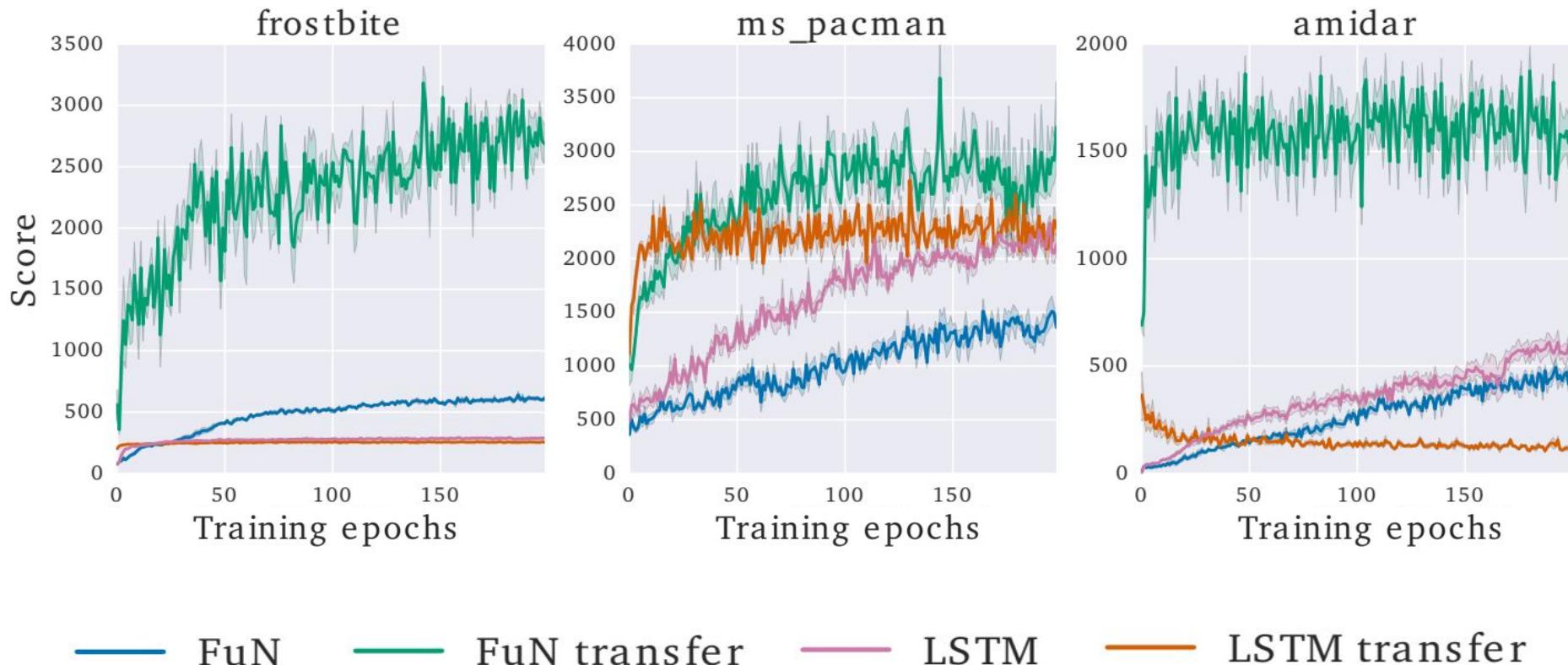
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

## Comparison



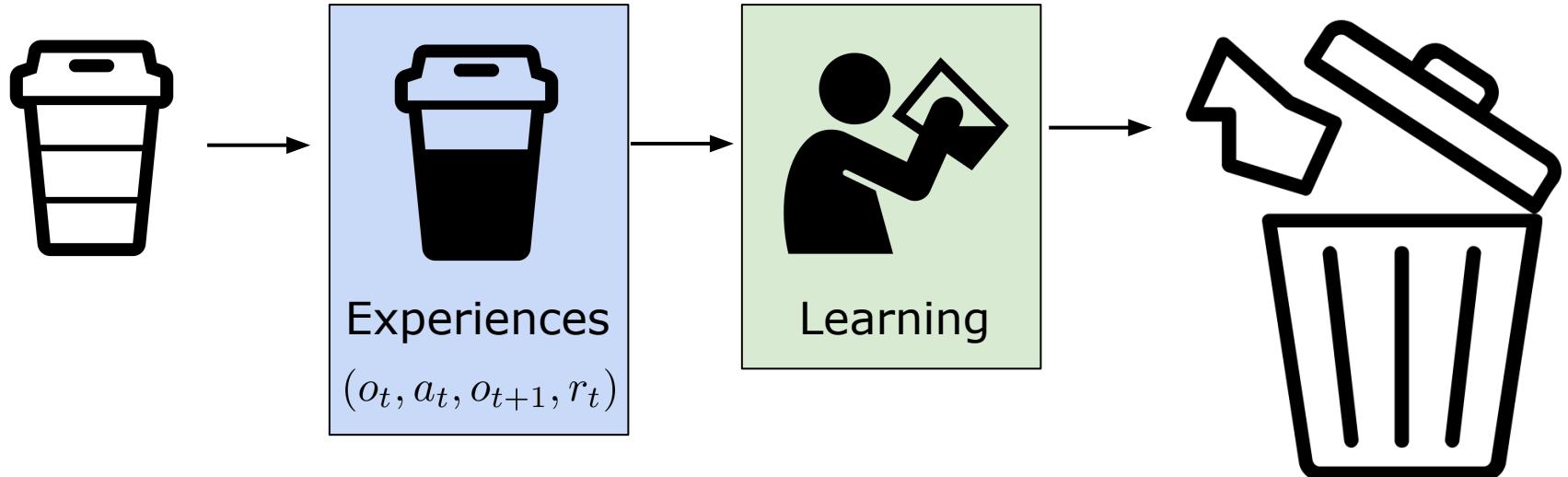
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

## Action Repeat Transfer



# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

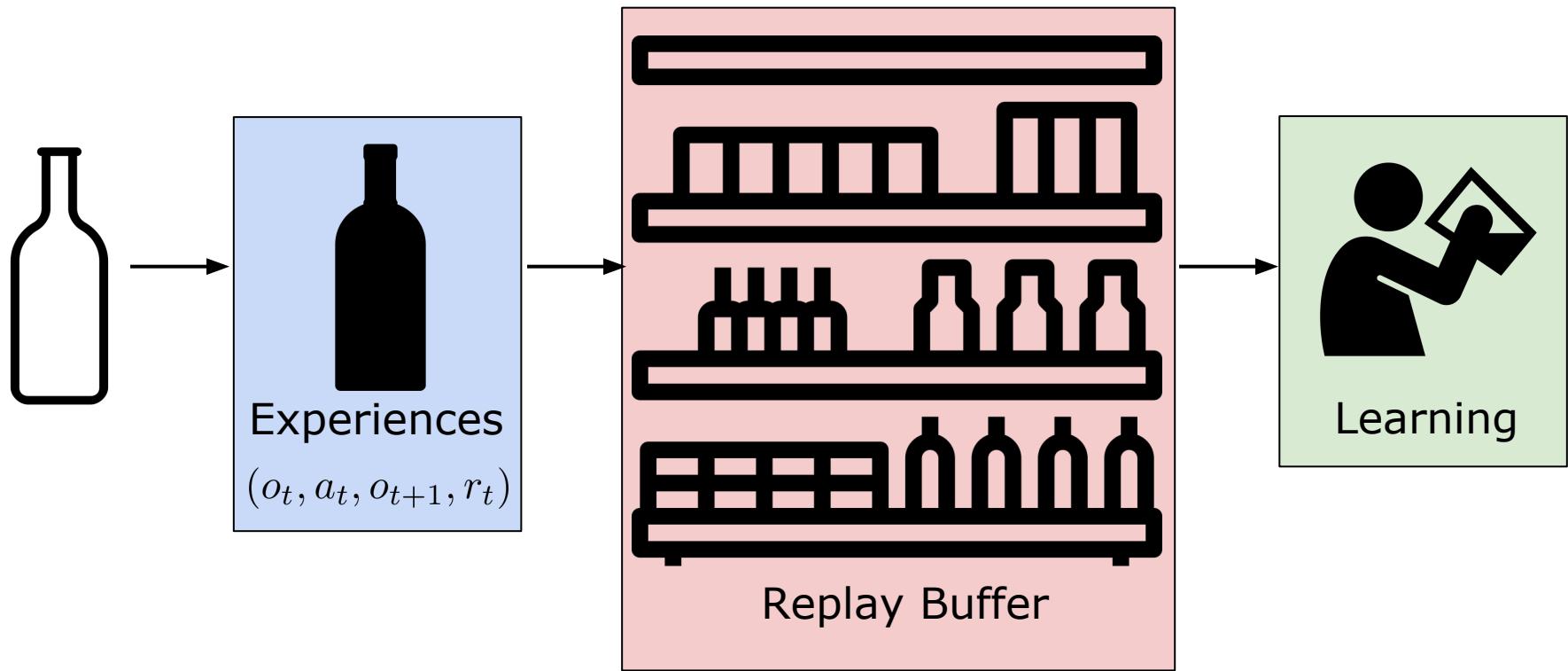
On-Policy Learning



**Wastage!**

# Can we do better?

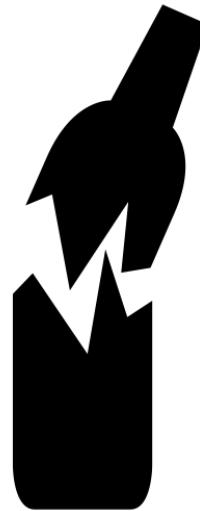
Off-Policy Learning



**Reusage!**

# Can we do better?

Off-Policy Learning



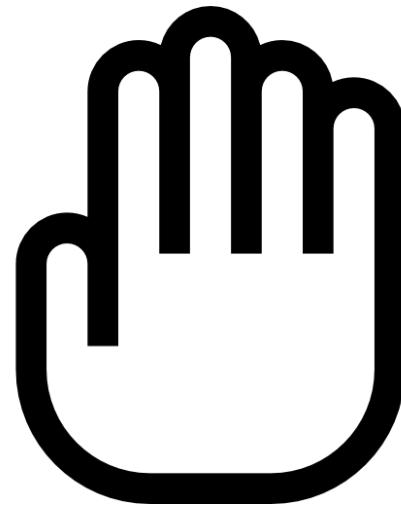
Unstable Learning

# Can we do better?

Off-Policy Learning

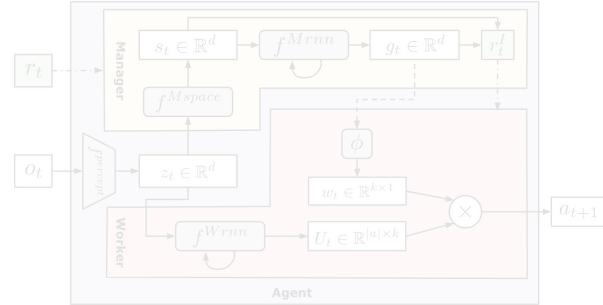


Unstable Learning

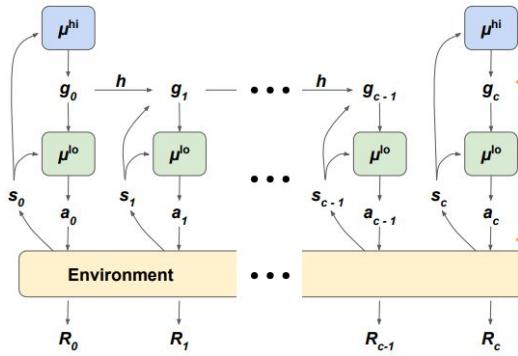


To-Be-Disclosed

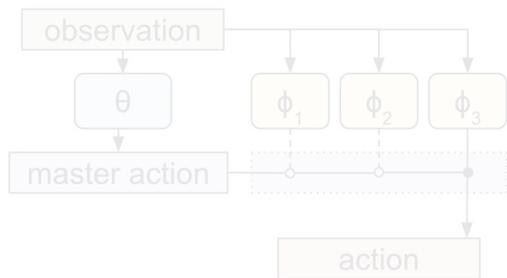
# Hierarchical RL



FeUDal Networks for  
Hierarchical Reinforcement  
Learning (ICML 2017)

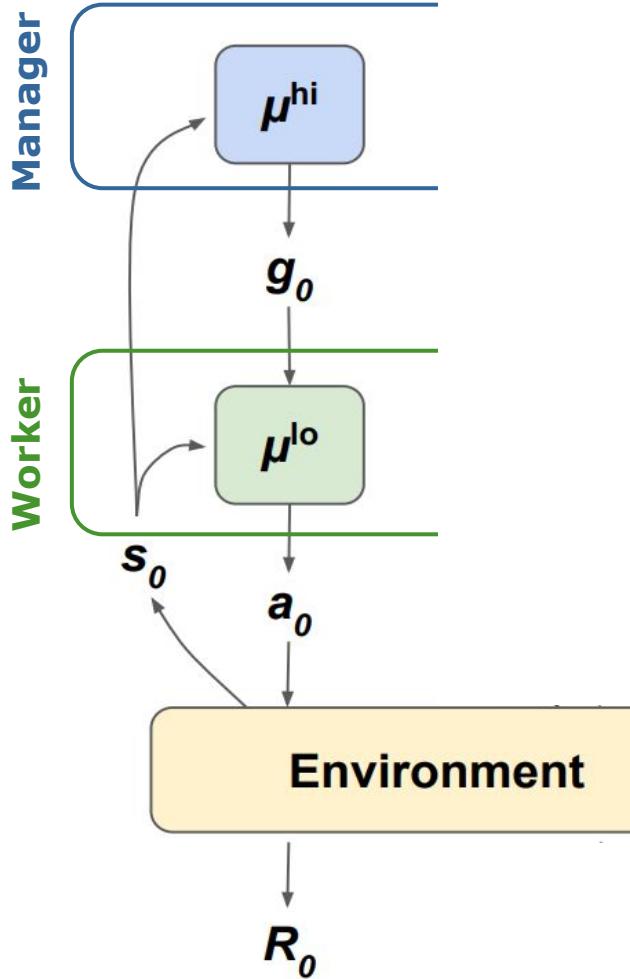


Data-Efficient Hierarchical  
Reinforcement Learning  
(NeurIPS 2018)



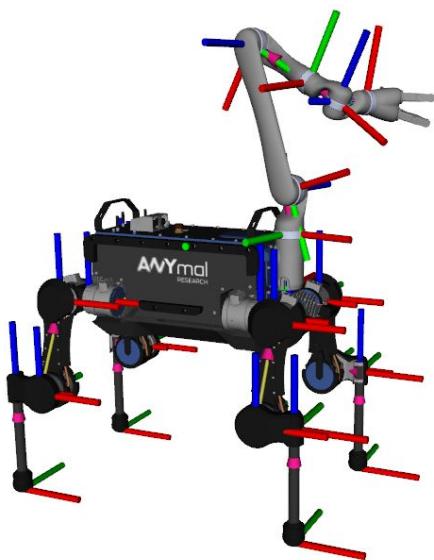
Meta-Learning Shared  
Hierarchies (ICLR 2018)

# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

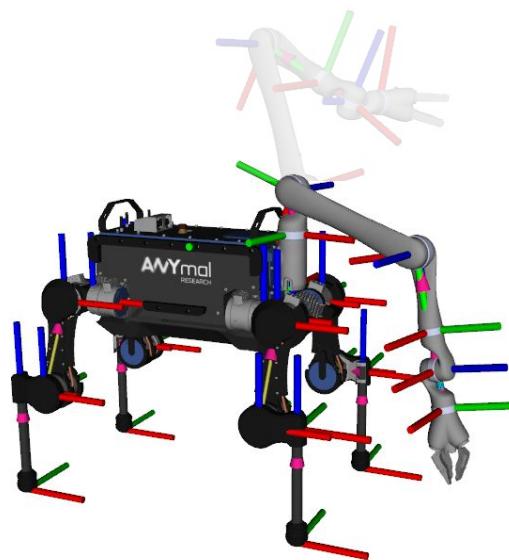


# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

**Input**



**Goal**



**Action**



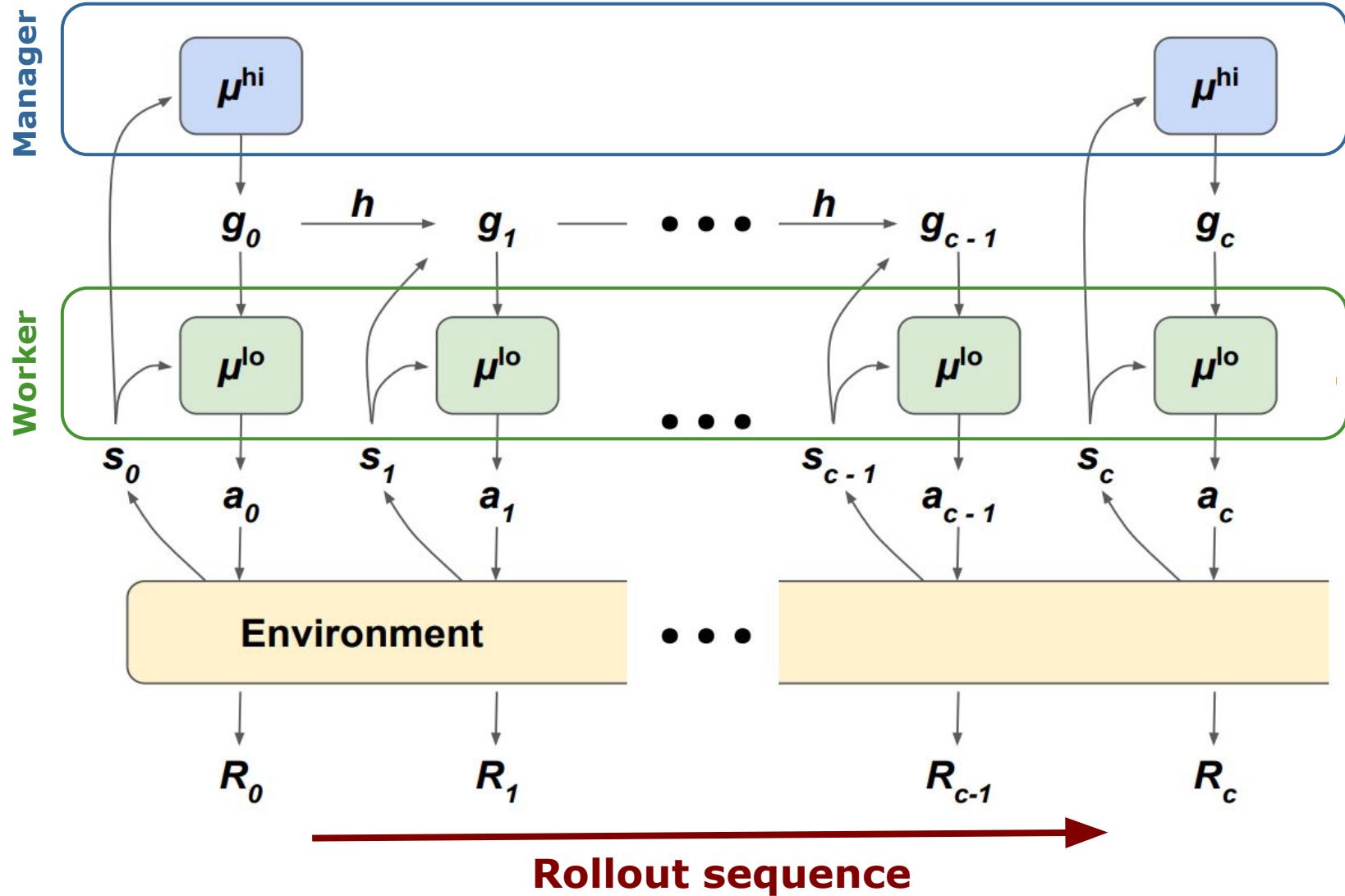
$$s = (q, \dot{q}, z)$$

$$g = (\Delta q, \Delta \dot{q}, \Delta z)$$

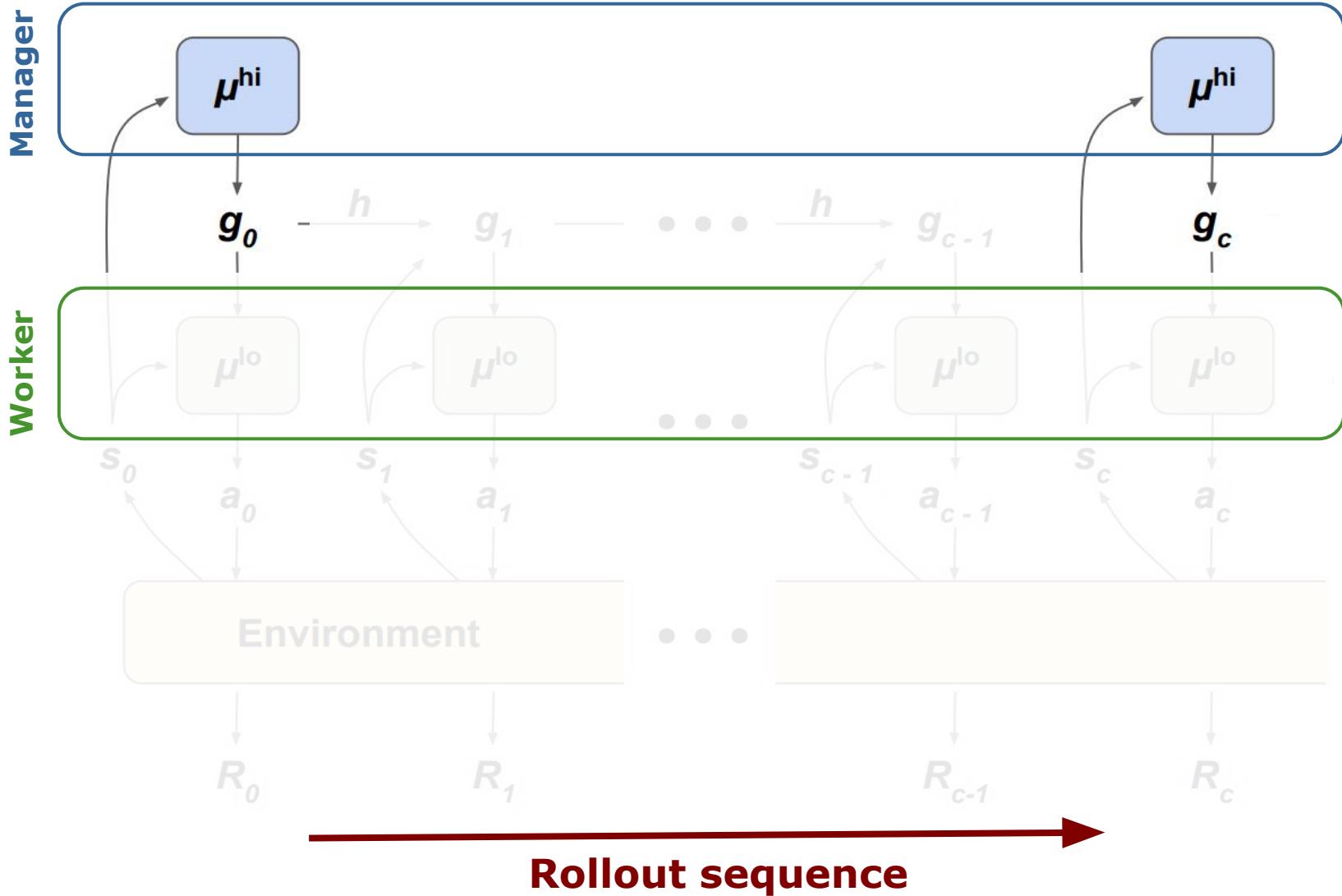
$$a = \tau_{act}$$

 Raw Observation Space

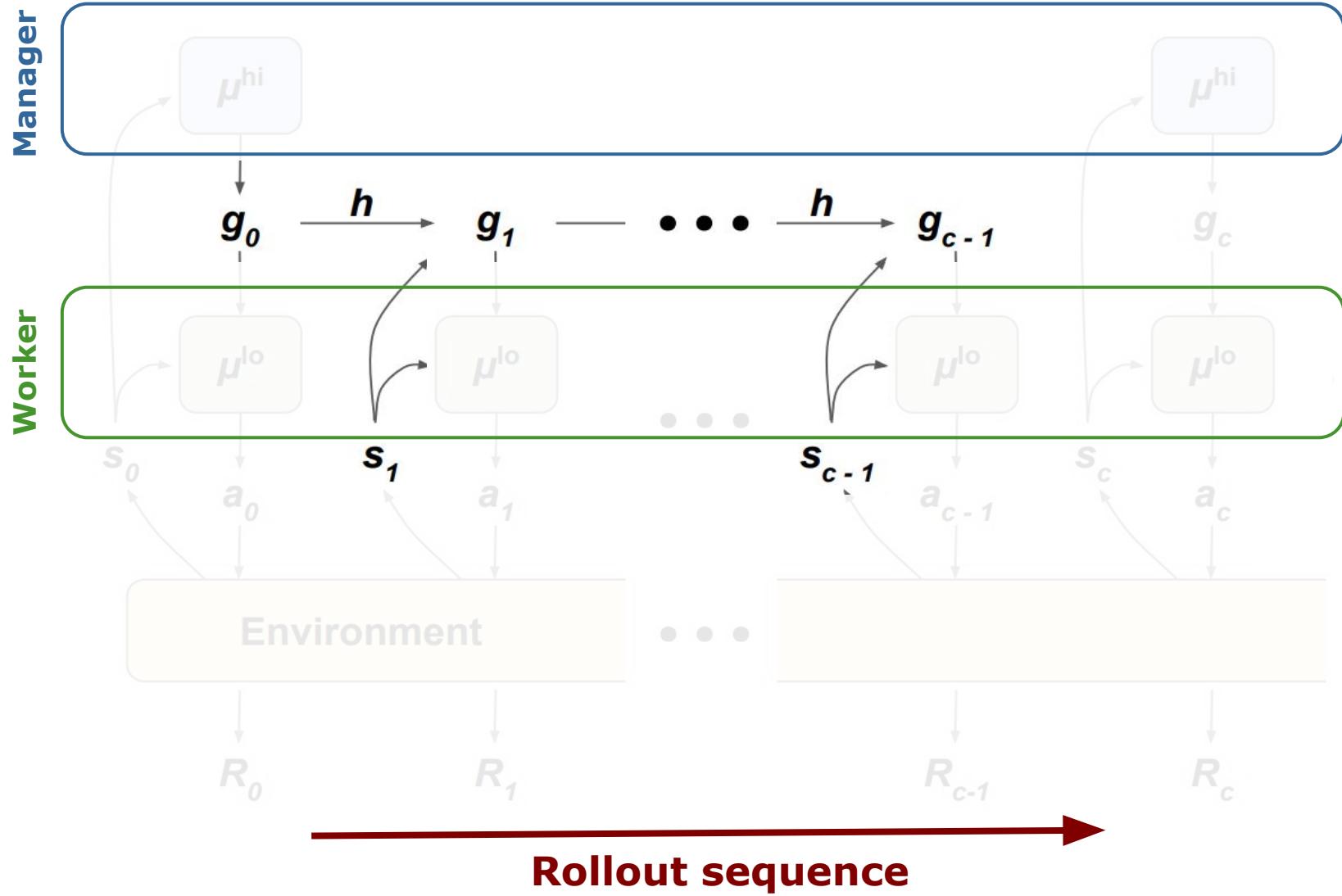
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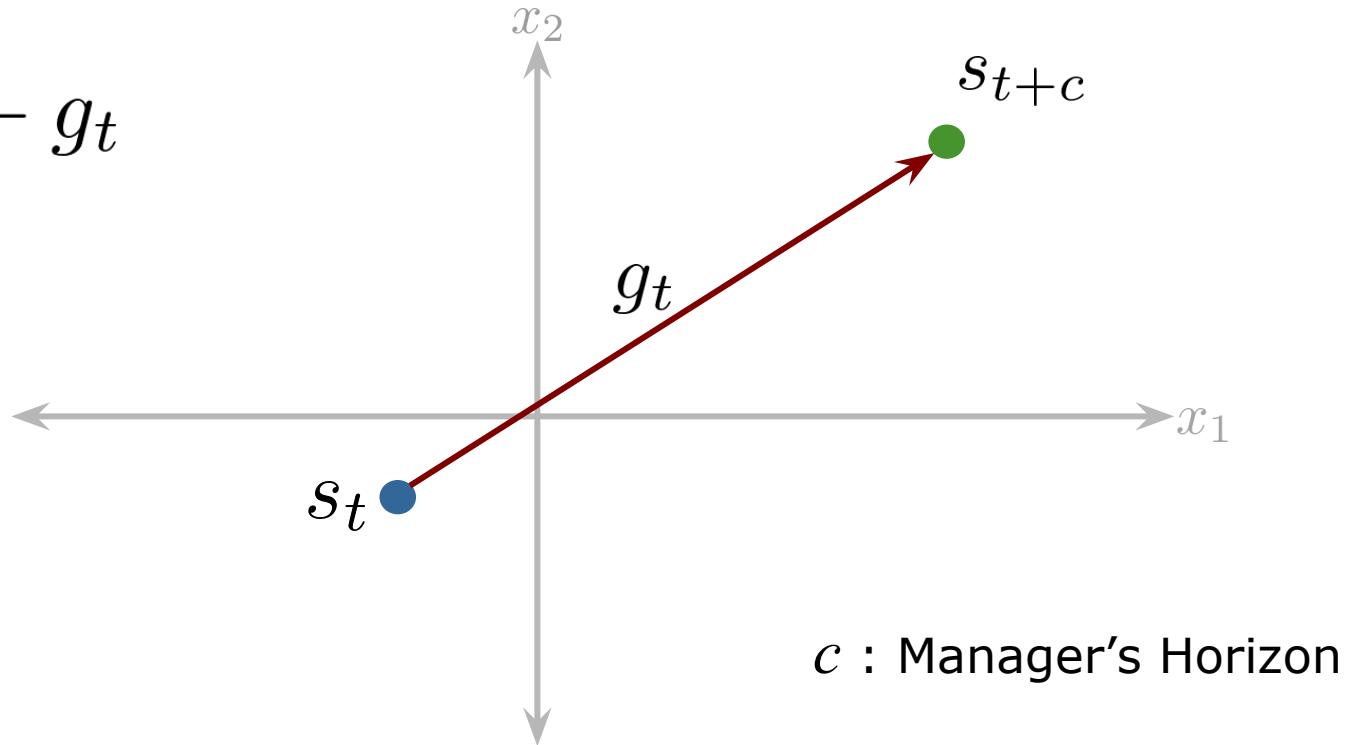


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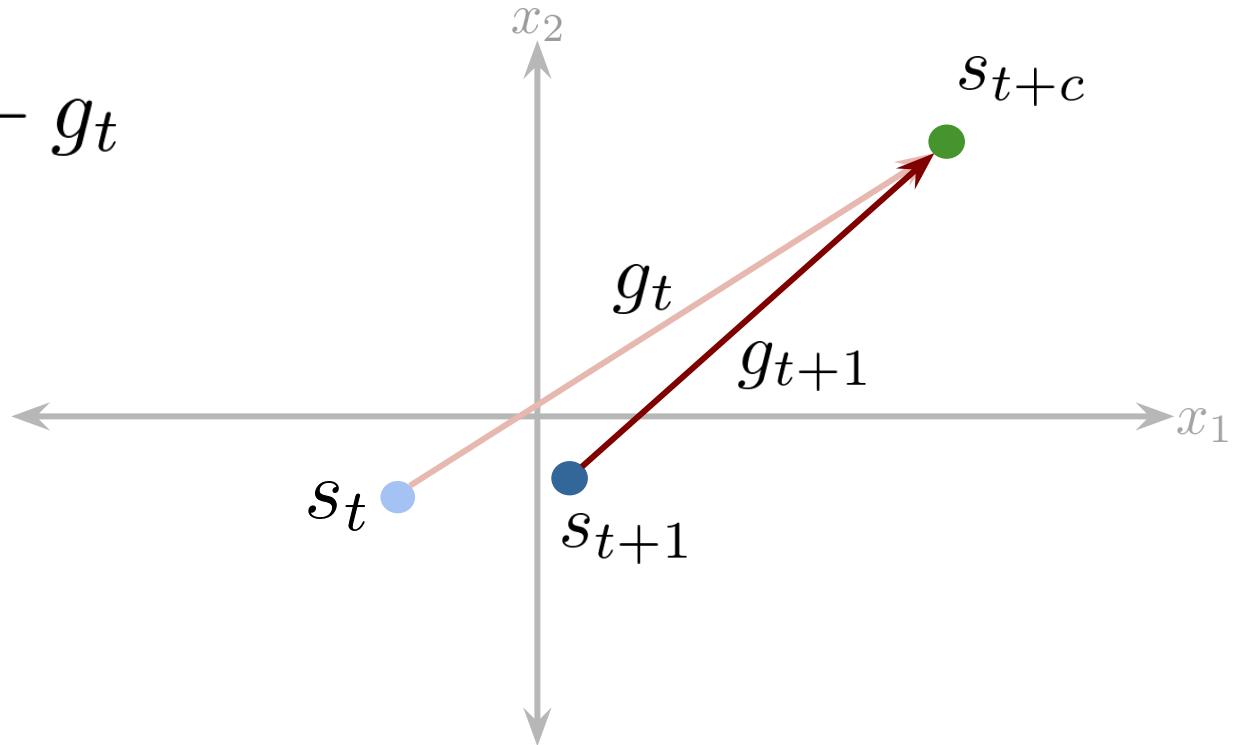
# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

$$s_{t+c} \approx s_t + g_t$$



# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

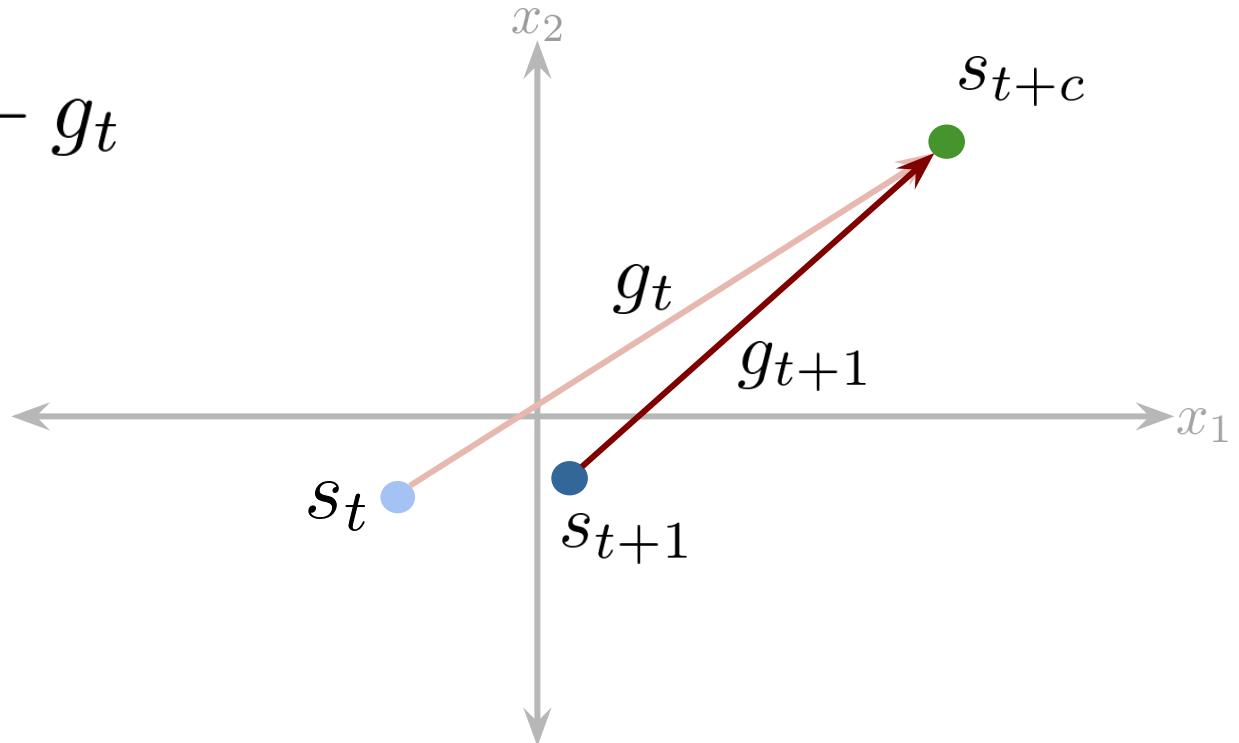
$$s_{t+c} \approx s_t + g_t$$



$$g_{t+1} = h(s_t, g_t, s_{t+1}) = s_t + g_t - s_{t+1}$$

# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

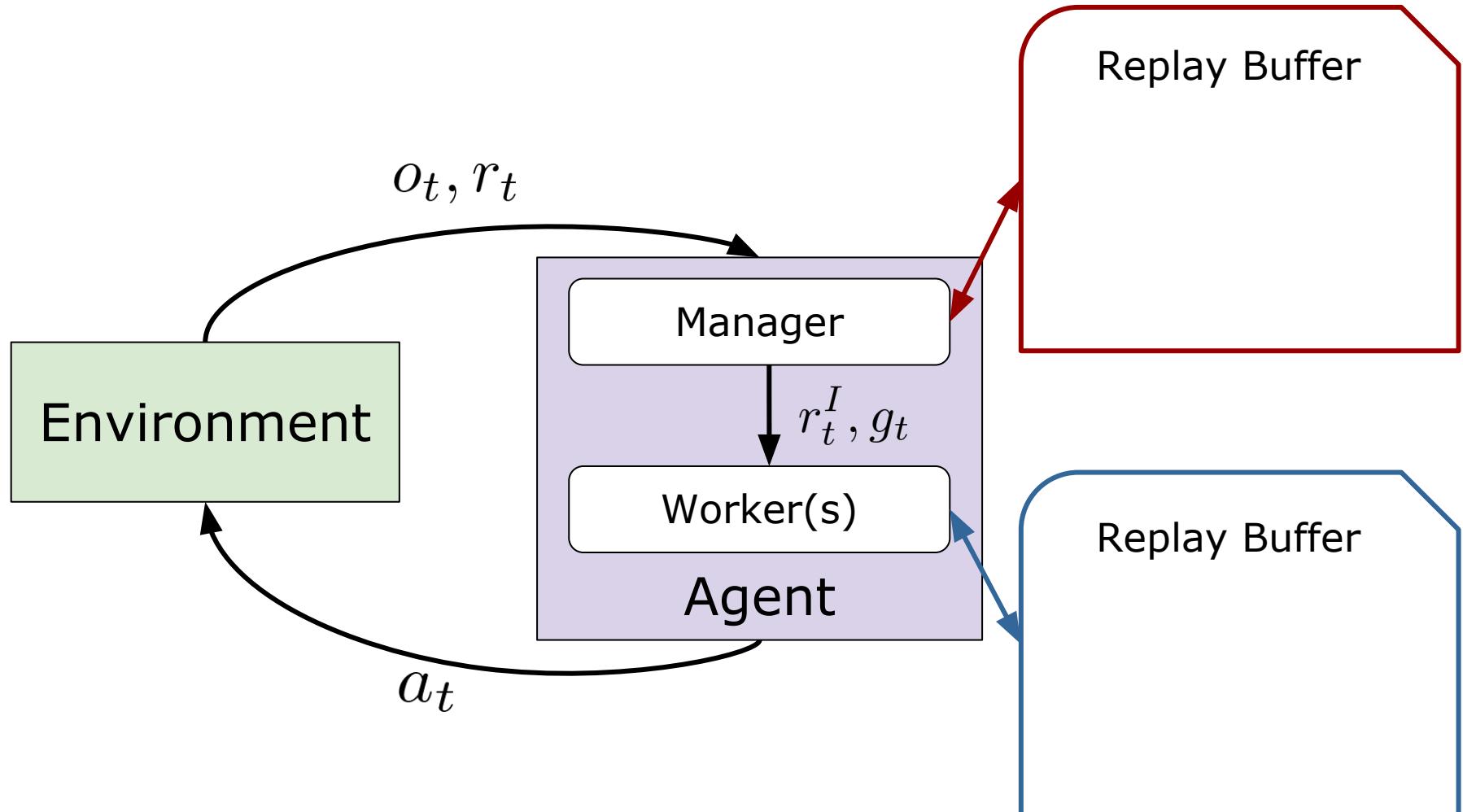
$$s_{t+c} \approx s_t + g_t$$



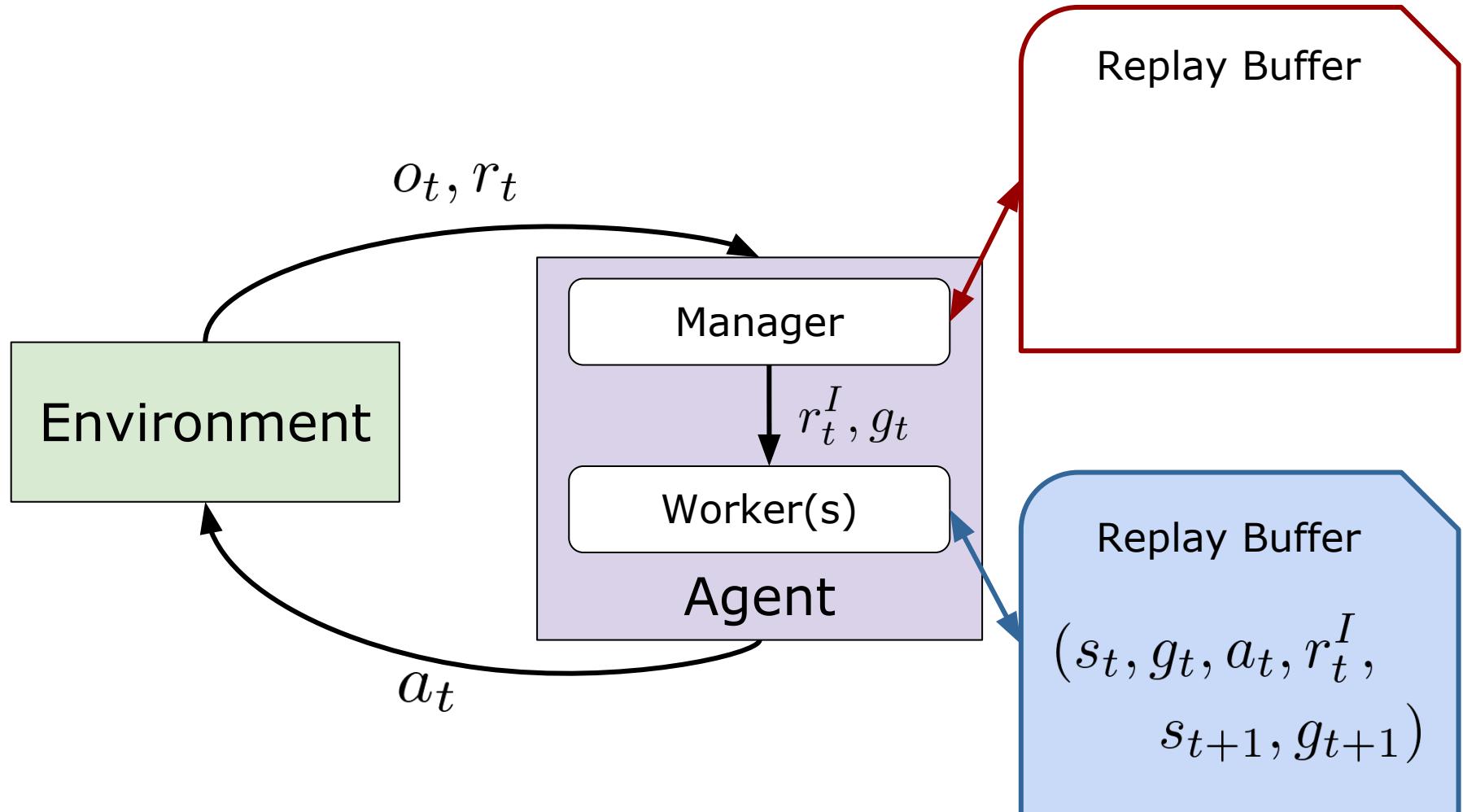
- Intrinsic reward

$$r_I(s_t, g_t, a_t, s_{t+1}) = -\|s_t + g_t - s_{t+1}\|_2$$

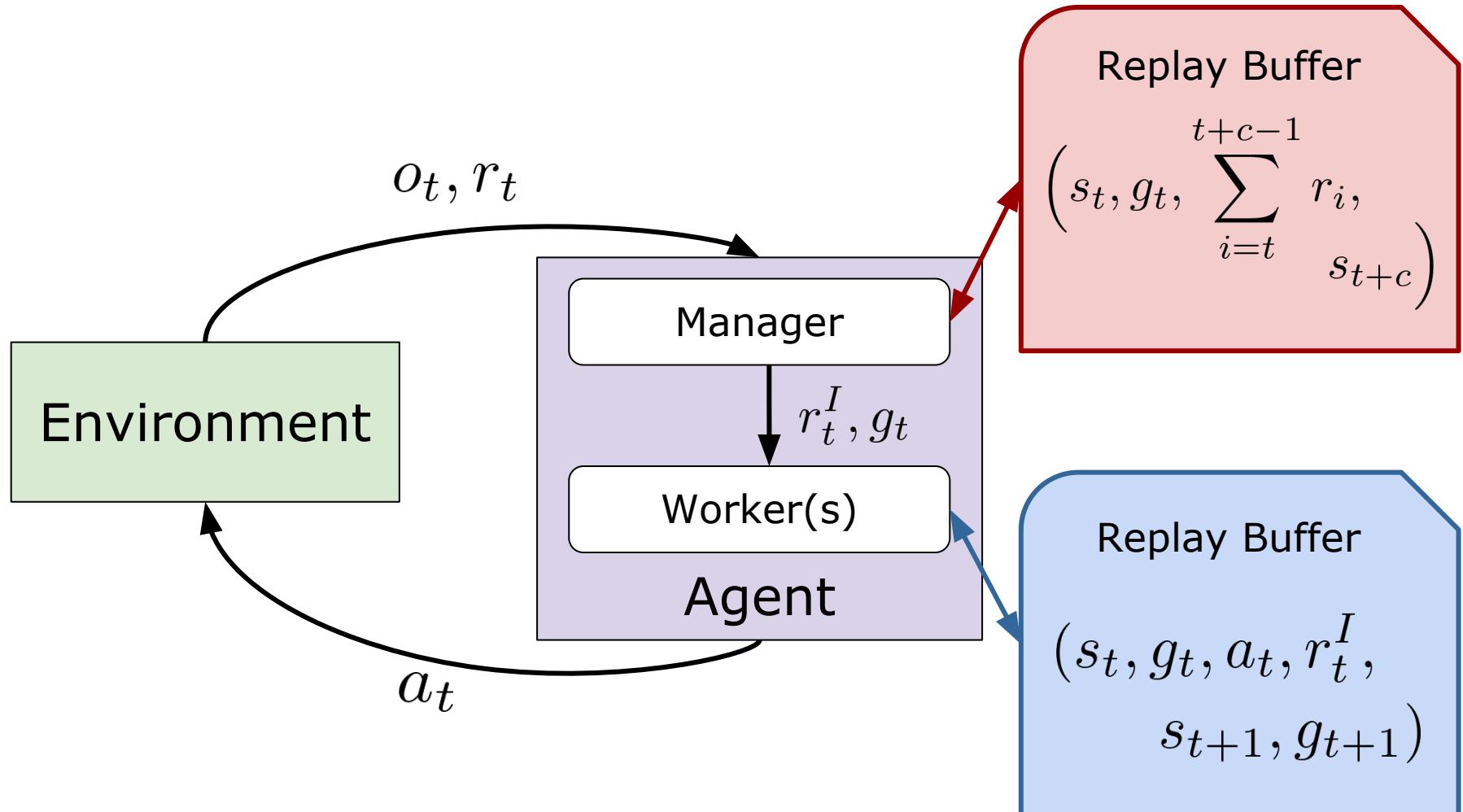
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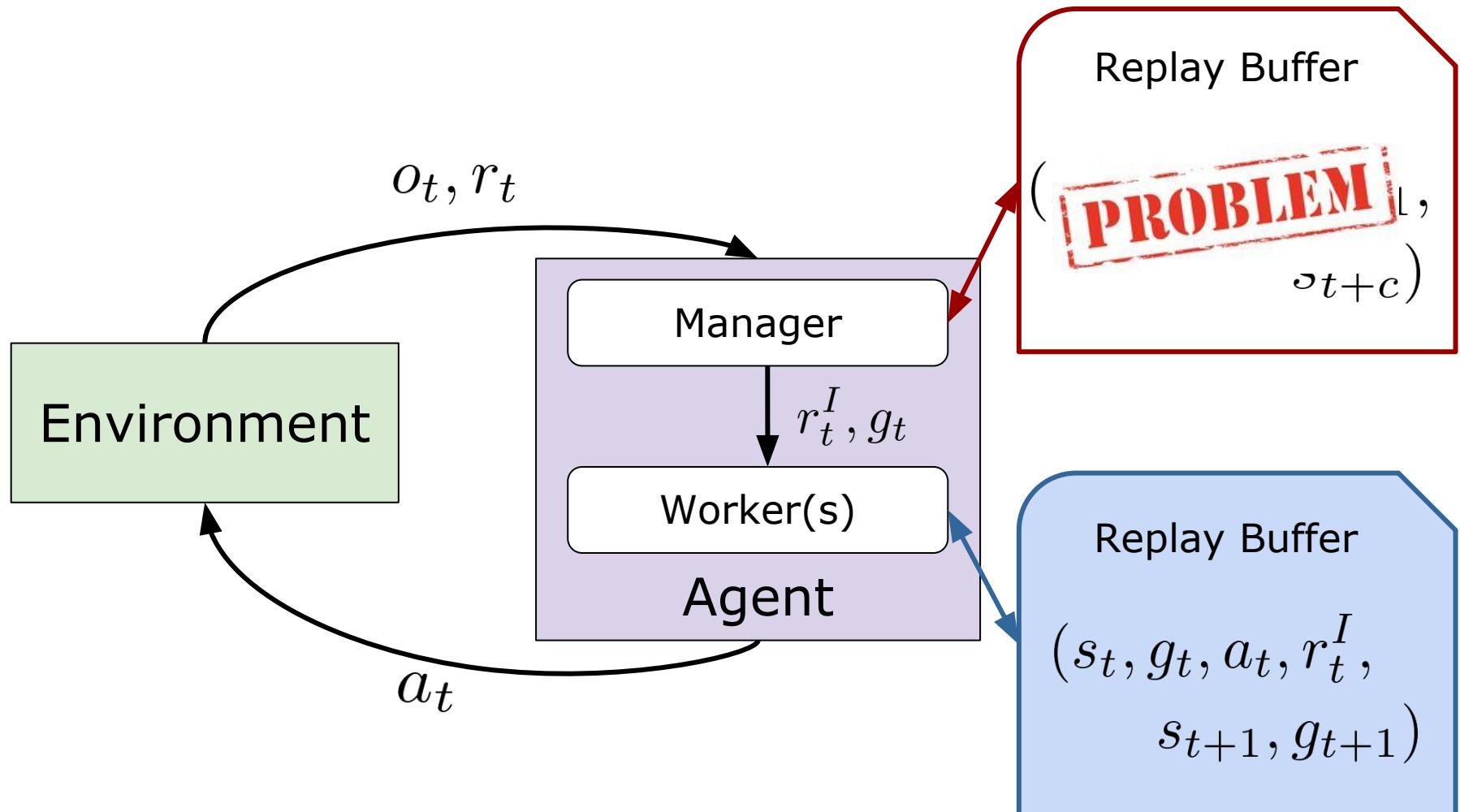
# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)



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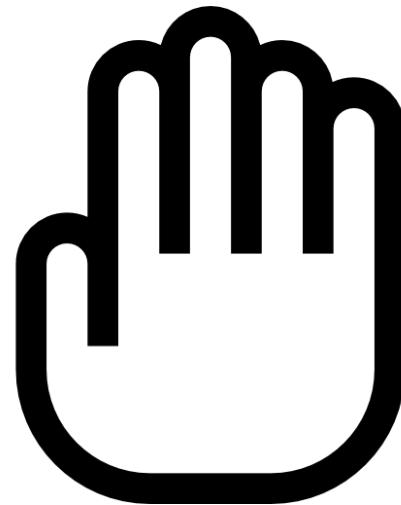


# Can we do better?

Off-Policy Learning



Unstable Learning



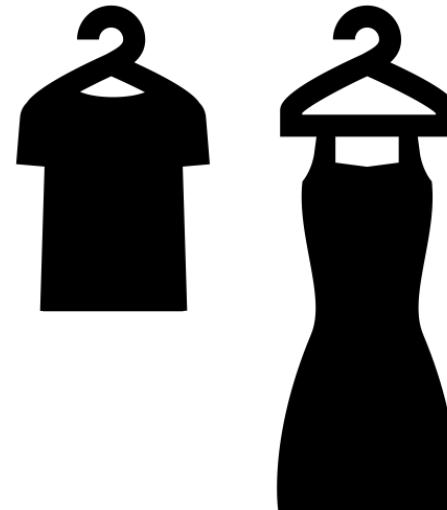
To-Be-Disclosed

# Can we do better?

Off-Policy Learning



Unstable Learning



Manager's past  
experience might  
become useless

# Can we do better?

Off-Policy Learning



$t = 12 \text{ yrs}$

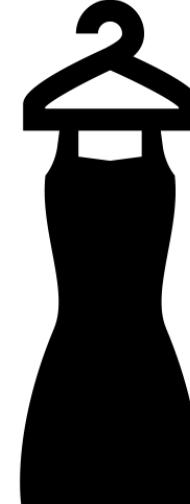


# Can we do better?

Off-Policy Learning



$t = 22 \text{ yrs}$



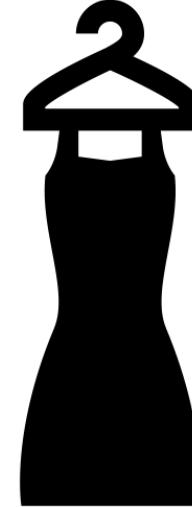
Same goal induces  
different behavior

# Can we do better?

Off-Policy Learning



$t = 22 \text{ yrs}$



**Goal relabelling  
required!**

# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

Off-Policy Correction for Manager

$$\left( s_{t'}, \textcolor{red}{g_t}, \sum_{i=t'}^{t'+c-1} r_i, s_{t'+c} \right)$$

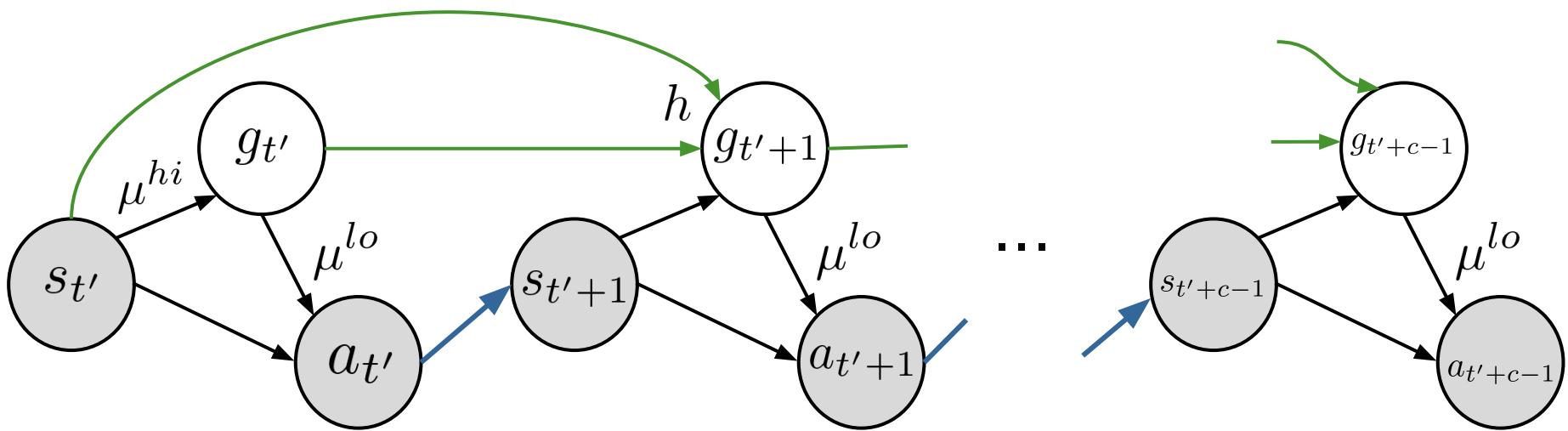


$$\tilde{g}_{t'} = \operatorname{argmax} \mu^{lo}(a_{t':t'+c-1} | s_{t':t'+c-1}, \tilde{g}_{t':t'+c-1})$$

$$\text{where } \tilde{g}_{t'+1} = h(s_{t'}, \tilde{g}_{t'}, s_{t'+1})$$

# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

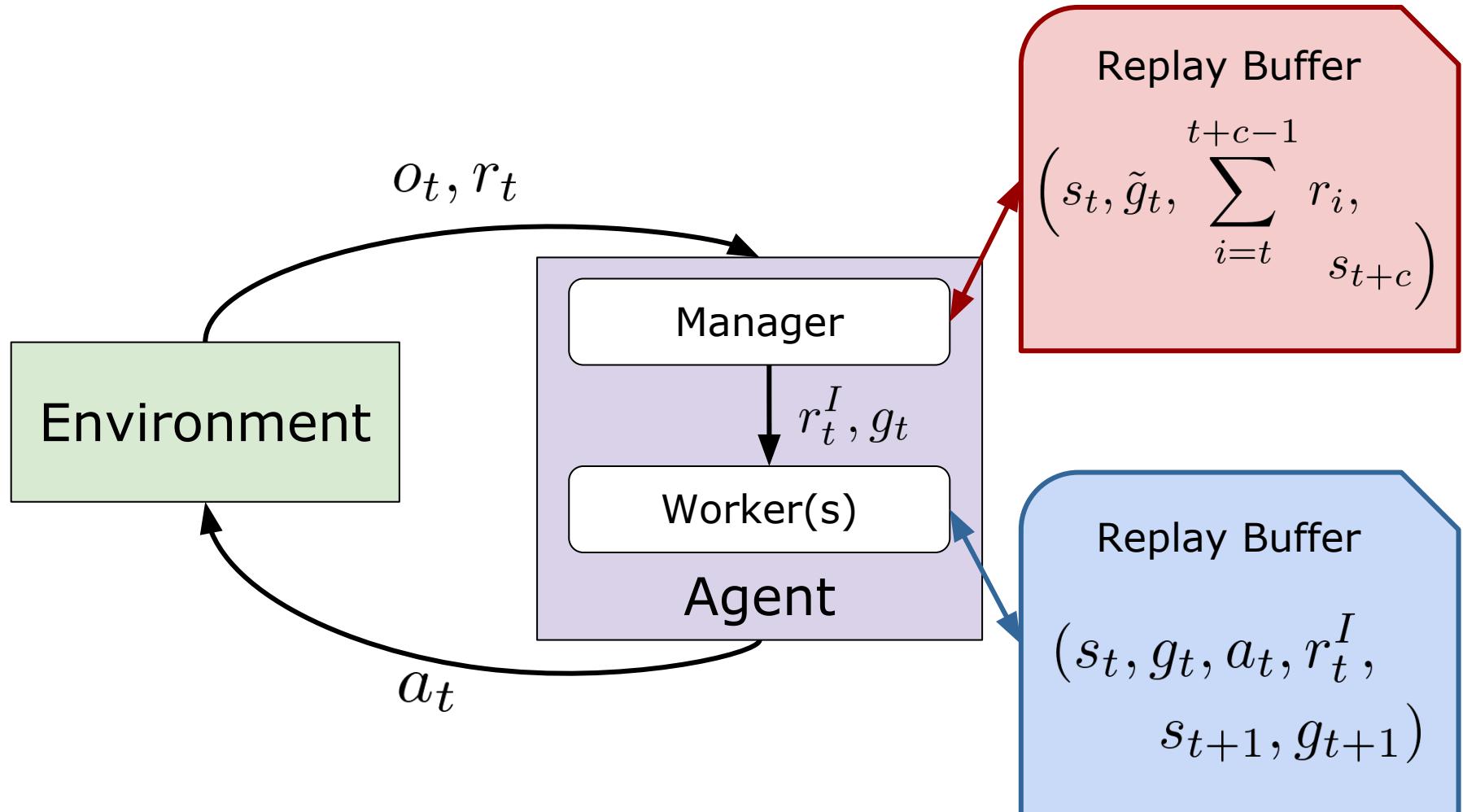
## Off-Policy Correction for Manager



$$\tilde{g}_{t'} = \operatorname{argmax}_{\tilde{g}_{t'}} \mu^{lo}(a_{t':t'+c-1} | s_{t':t'+c-1}, \tilde{g}_{t':t'+c-1})$$

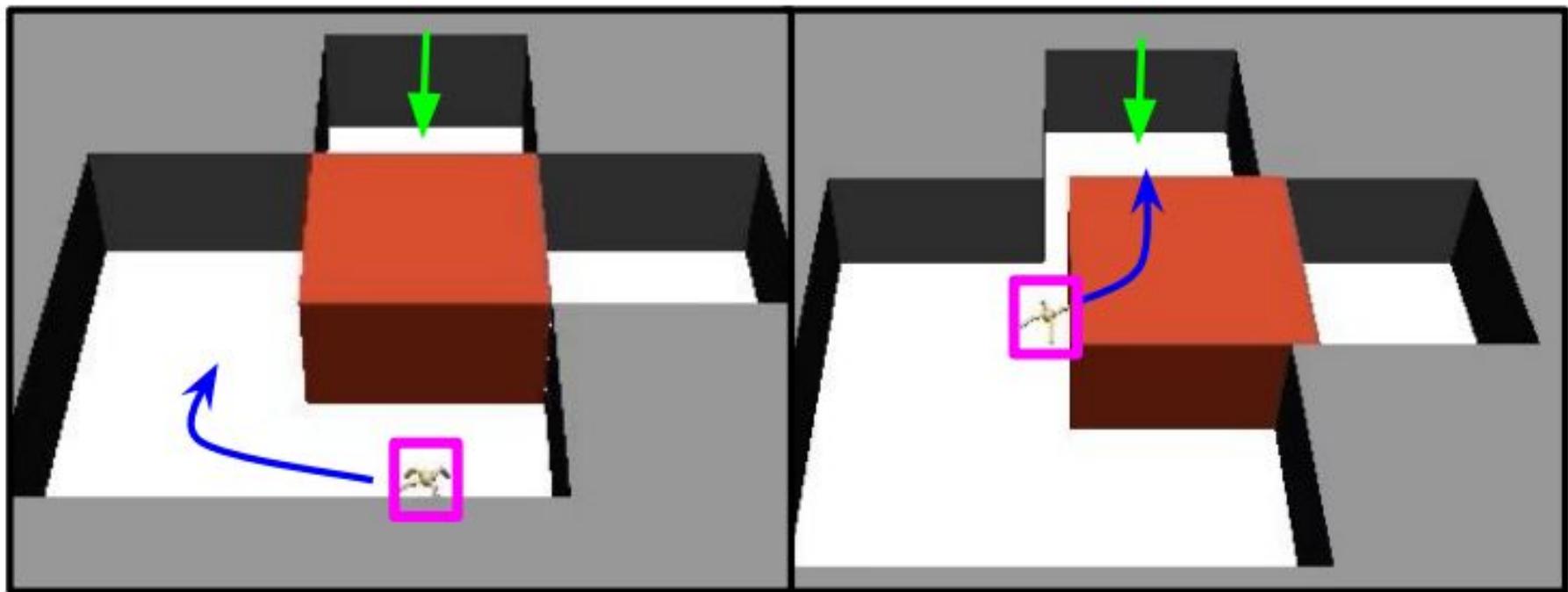
where  $\tilde{g}_{t'+1} = h(s_{t'}, \tilde{g}_{t'}, s_{t'+1})$

# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)



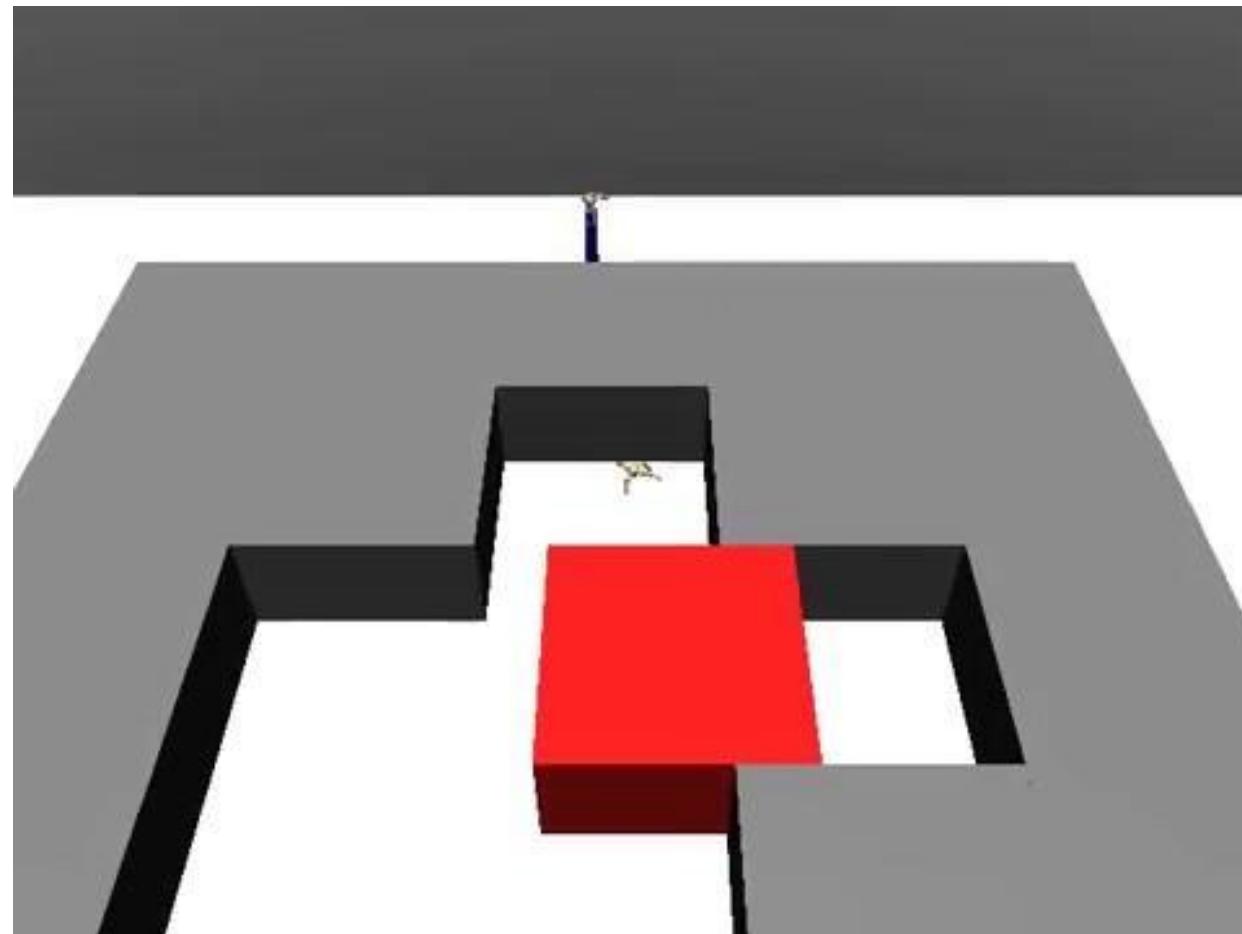
# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

## Ant Push



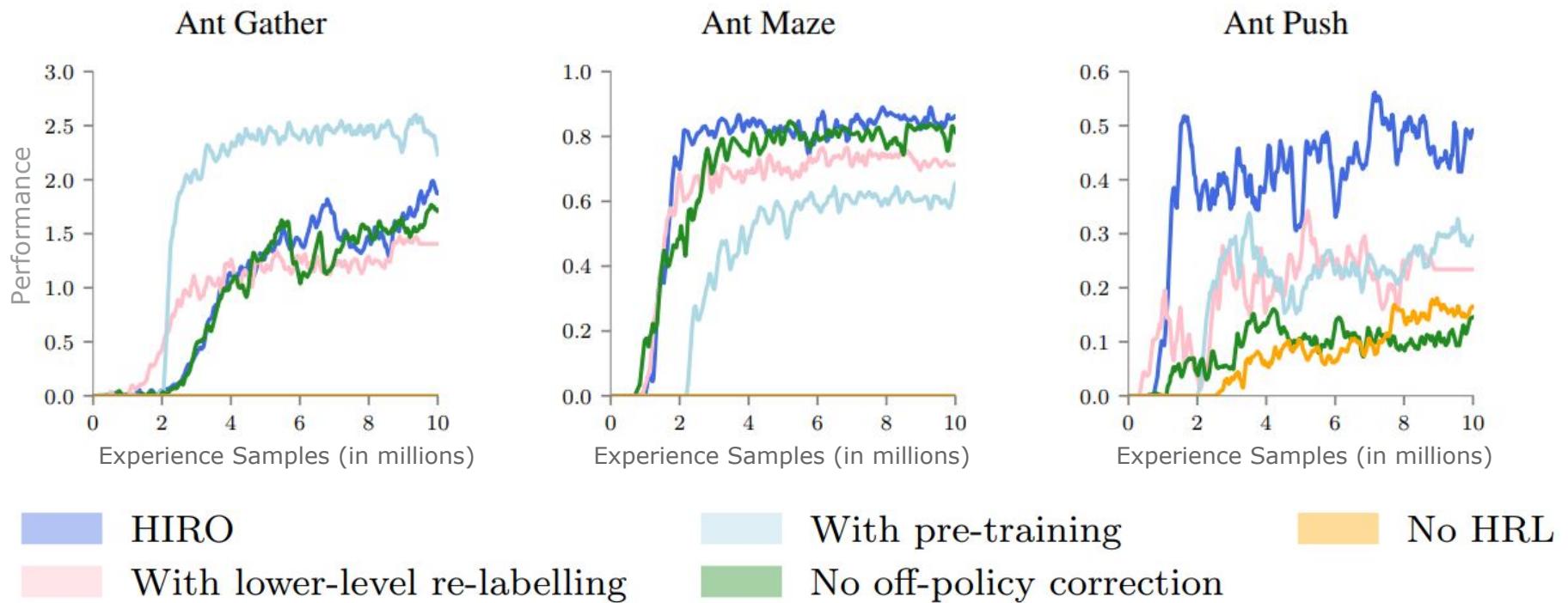
# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

## Qualitative Analysis



# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

## Ablative Analysis



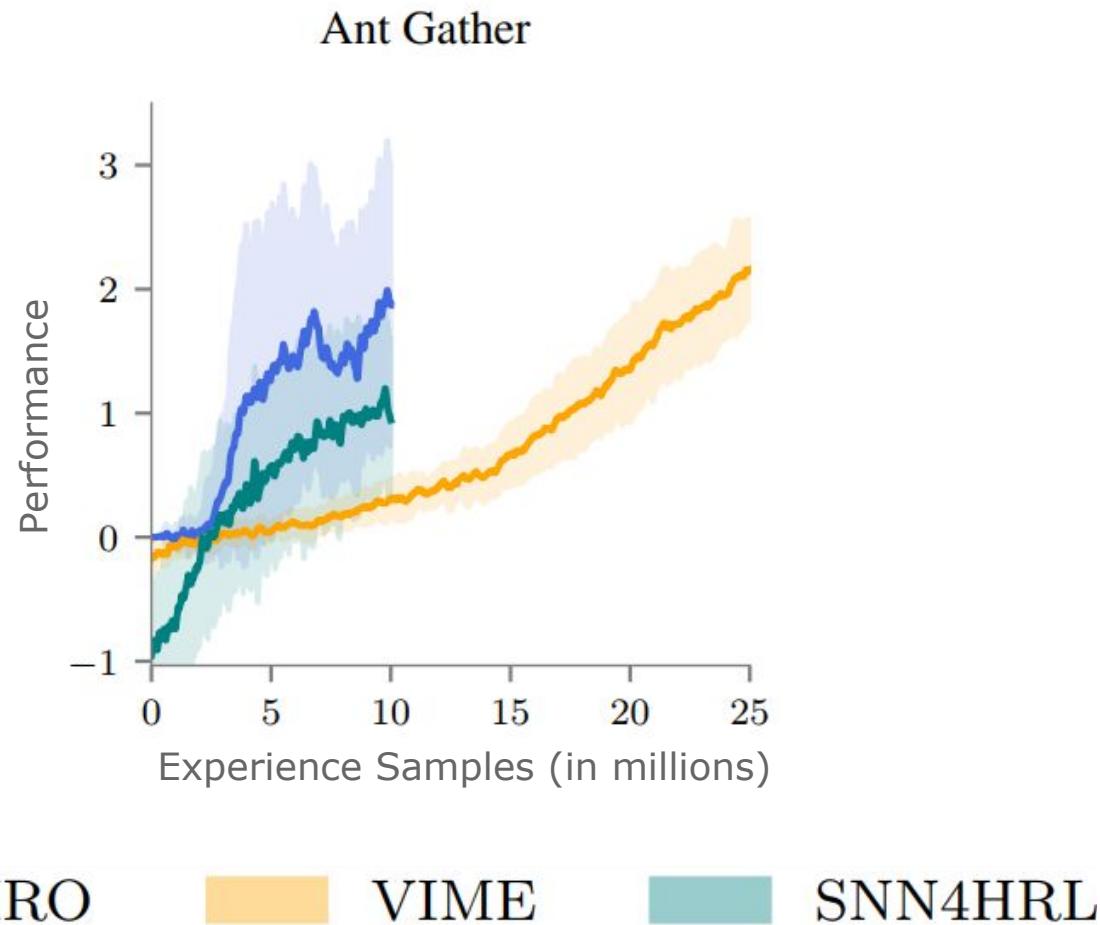
# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

## Comparison

	<b>Ant Gather</b>	<b>Ant Maze</b>	<b>Ant Push</b>	<b>Ant Fall</b>
HIRO	<b>3.02±1.49</b>	<b>0.99±0.01</b>	<b>0.92±0.04</b>	<b>0.66±0.07</b>
FuN representation	0.03 ± 0.01	0.0 ± 0.0	0.0 ± 0.0	0.0 ± 0.0
FuN transition PG	0.41 ± 0.06	0.0 ± 0.0	0.56 ± 0.39	0.01 ± 0.02
FuN cos similarity	0.85 ± 1.17	0.16 ± 0.33	0.06 ± 0.17	0.07 ± 0.22
FuN	0.01 ± 0.01	0.0 ± 0.0	0.0 ± 0.0	0.0 ± 0.0
SNN4HRL	1.92 ± 0.52	0.0 ± 0.0	0.02 ± 0.01	0.0 ± 0.0
VIME	1.42 ± 0.90	0.0 ± 0.0	0.02 ± 0.02	0.0 ± 0.0

# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

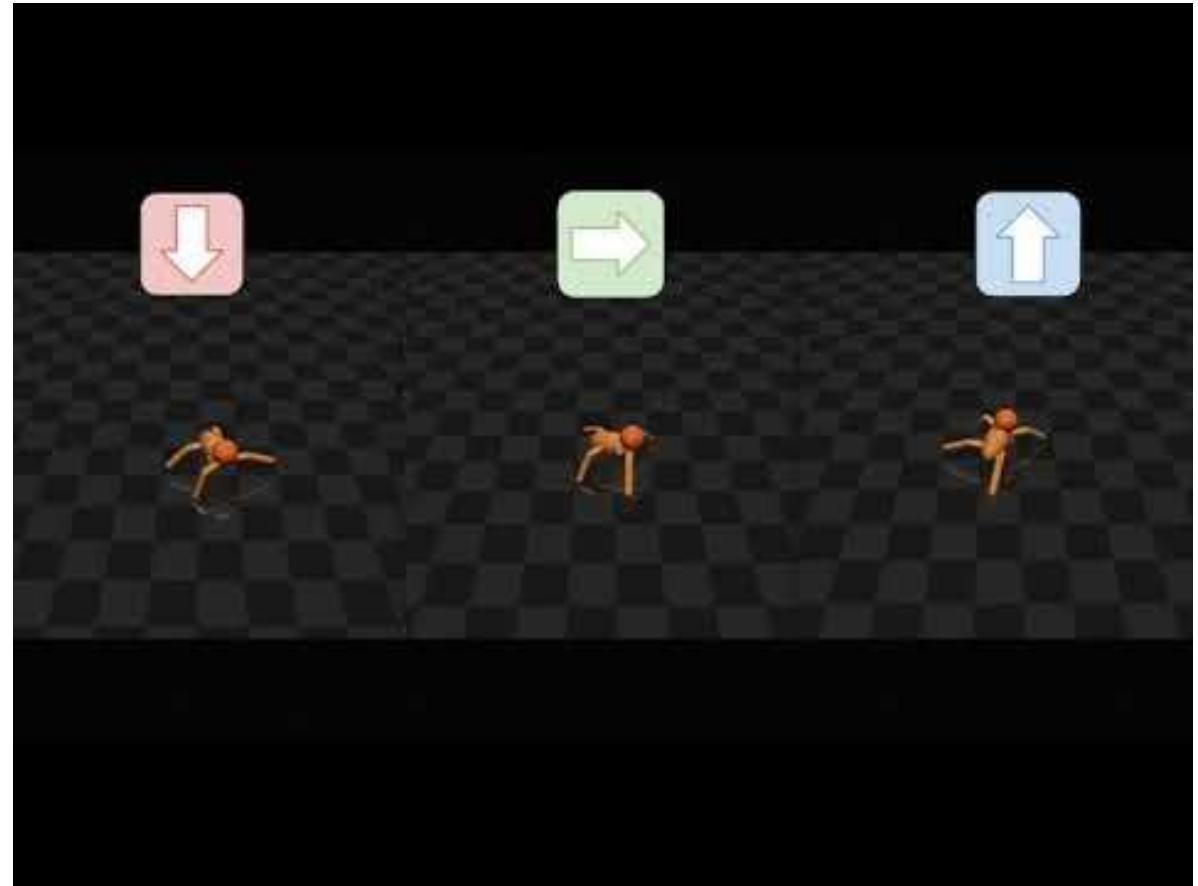
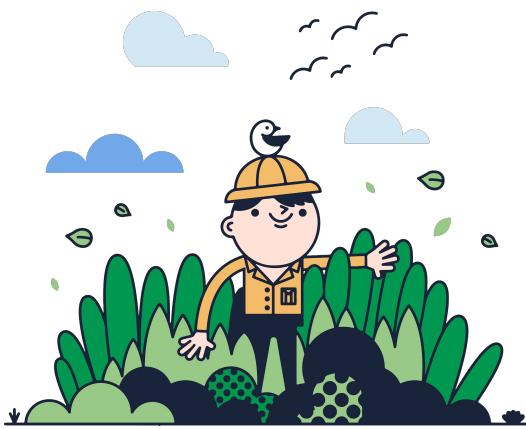
## Comparison



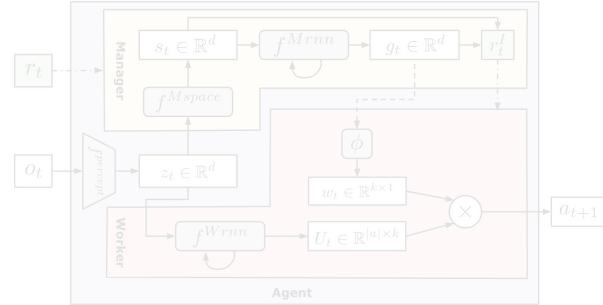
# Can we do better?

What is missing?

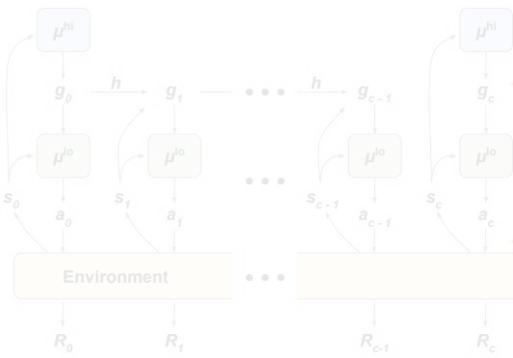
Structured  
exploration



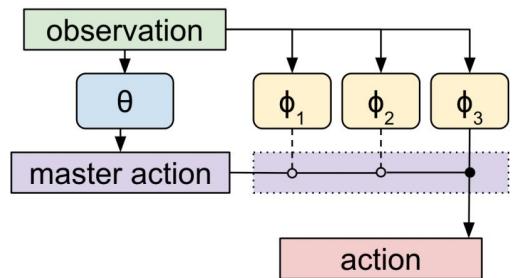
# Hierarchical RL



FeUDal Networks for  
Hierarchical Reinforcement  
Learning (ICML 2017)



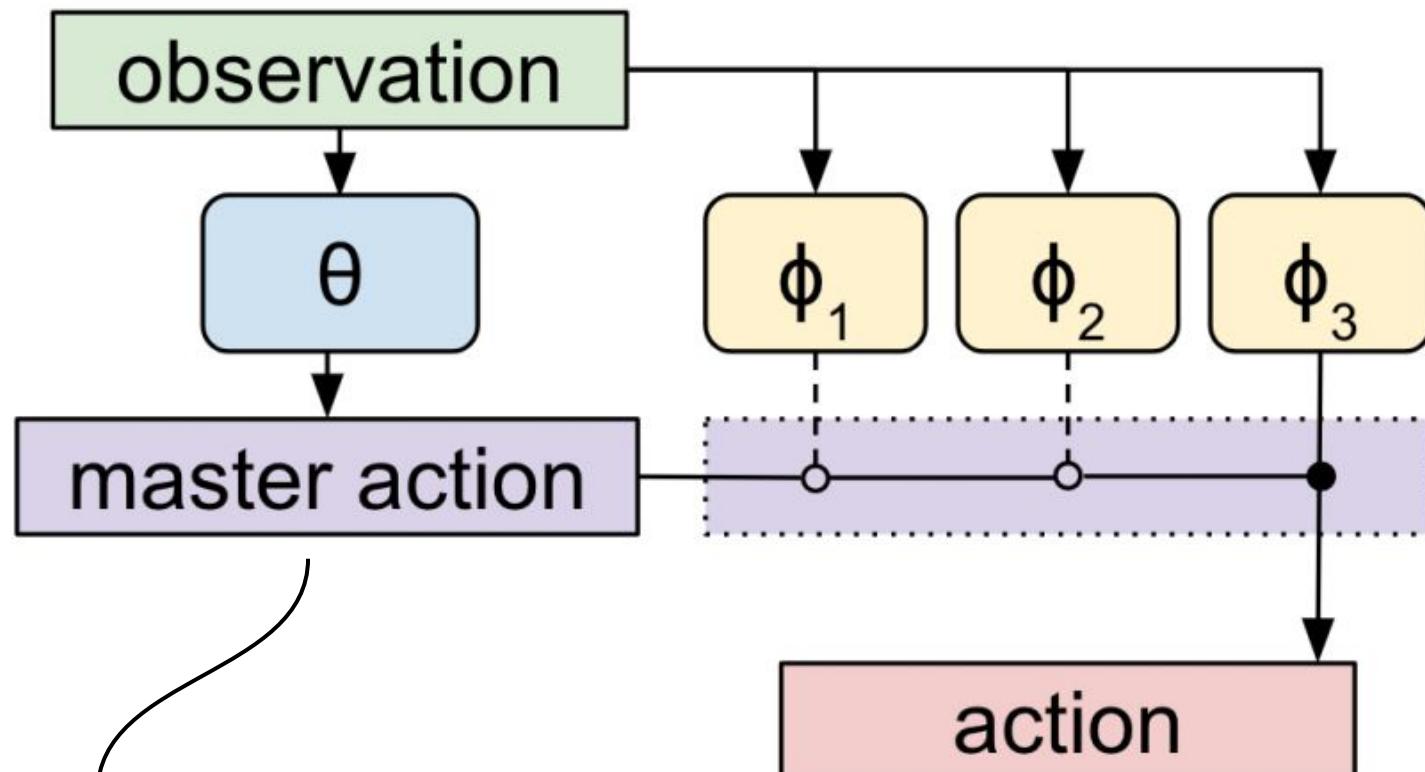
Data-Efficient Hierarchical  
Reinforcement Learning  
(NeurIPS 2018)



Meta-Learning Shared  
Hierarchies (ICLR 2018)

# **Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)**

# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)



Taken after every  
 $N$  steps

# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

Computer Vision practice:

- Train on ImageNet
- Fine tune on actual task



# **Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)**

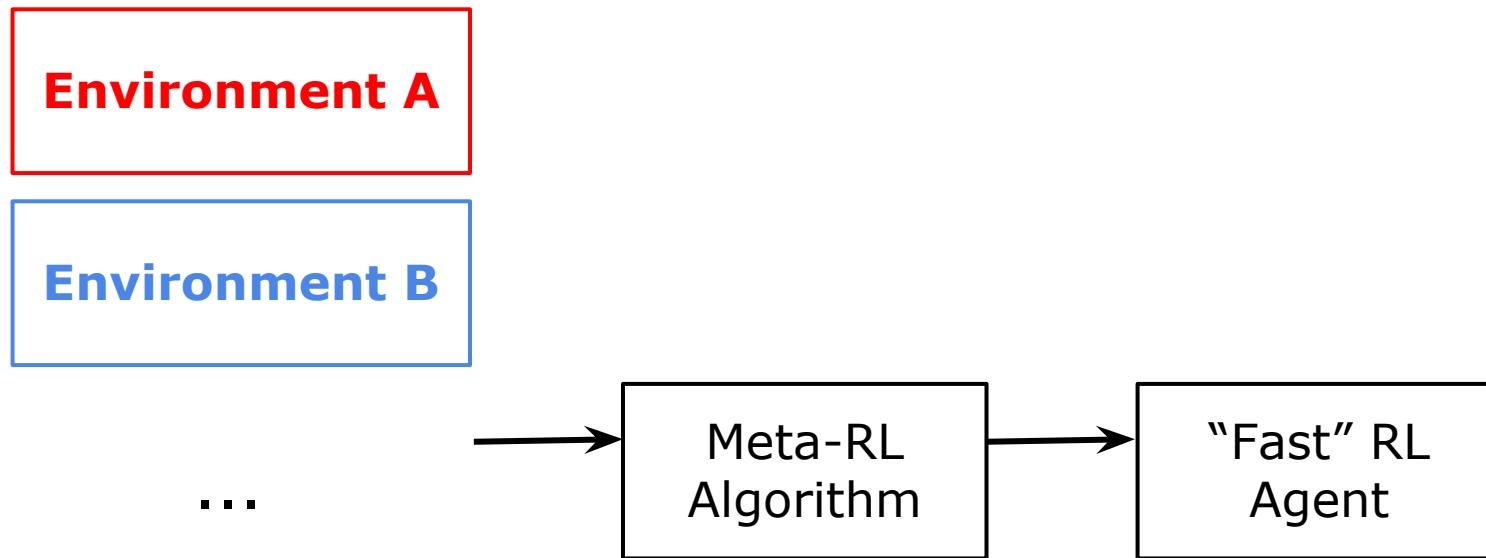
Computer Vision practice:

- Train on ImageNet
- Fine tune on actual task

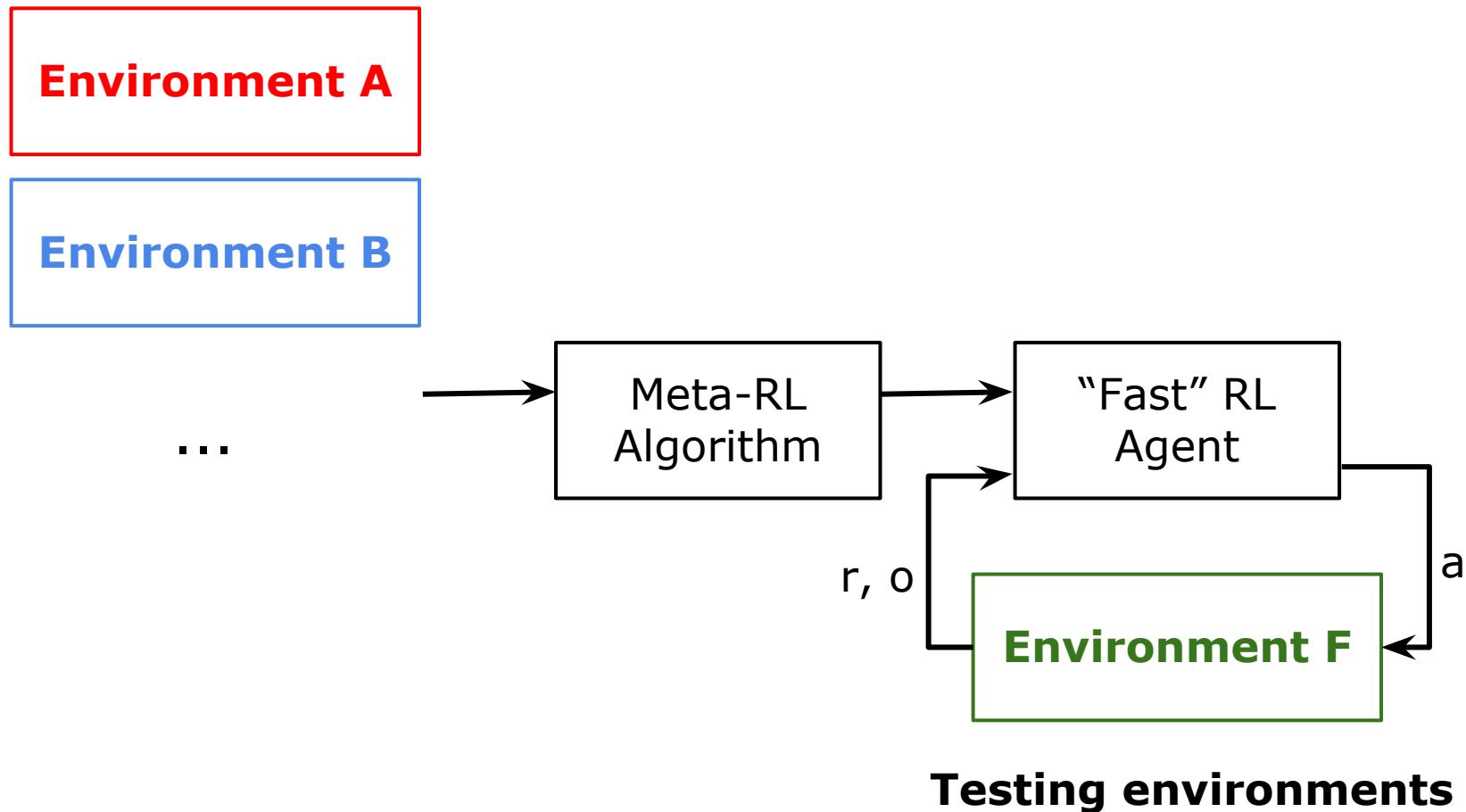


**How to generalize this to behavior learning?**

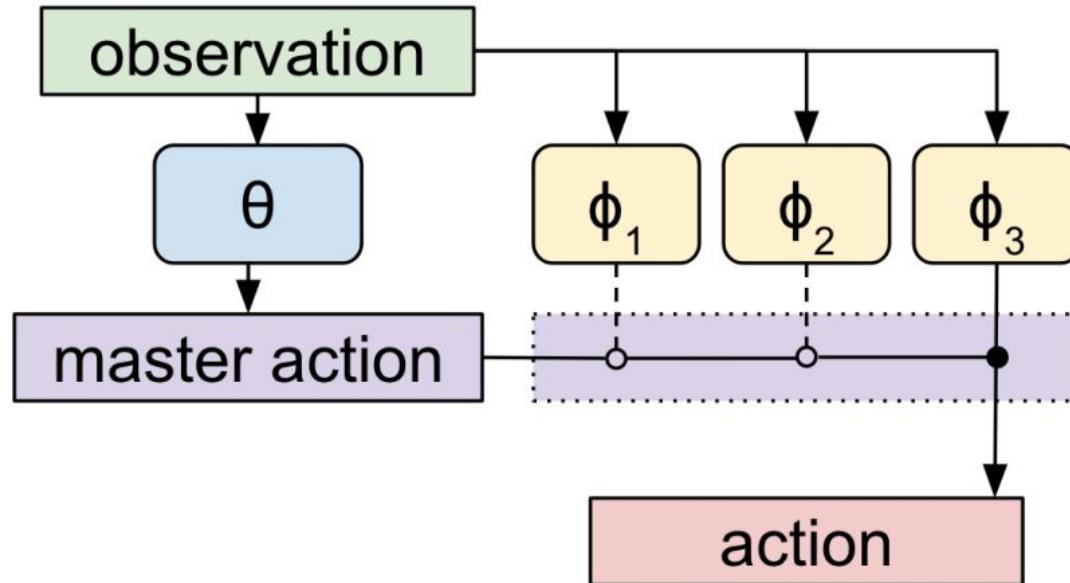
# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)



# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

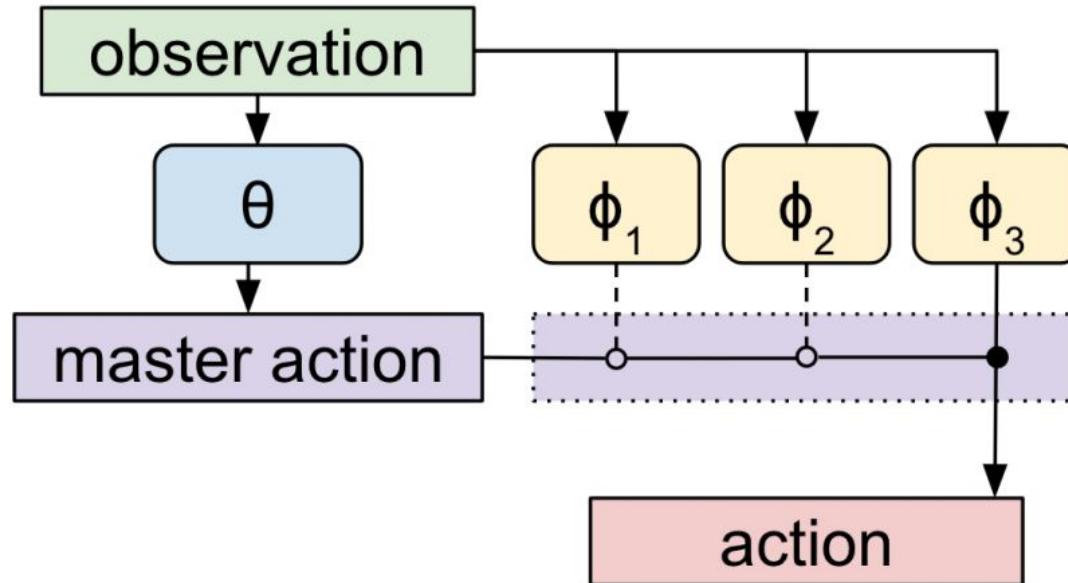


# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)



**GOAL:** Find sub-policies that enable fast learning of master policy  $\theta$

# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)



**GOAL:** Find sub-policies that enable fast learning of master policy  $\theta$

$$\text{maximize}_{\phi} E_{M \sim P_M, t=0 \dots T-1}[R]$$

# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

Initialize  $\phi$

repeat

    Initialize  $\theta$

    Sample task  $M \sim P_M$

**for**  $w = 0, 1, \dots, W$  (warmup period) **do**

        Collect  $D$  timesteps of experience using  $\pi_{\phi, \theta}$

        Update  $\theta$  to maximize expected return from  $1/N$  timescale viewpoint

**end for**

**for**  $u = 0, 1, \dots, U$

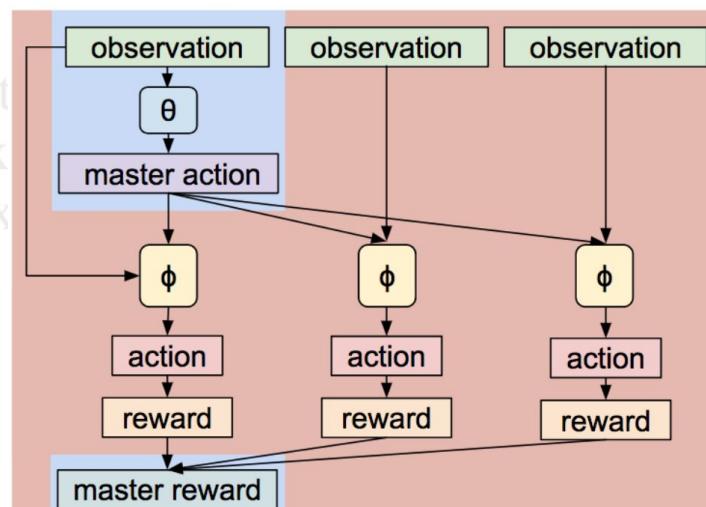
        Collect  $D$  timesteps

        Update  $\theta$  to max

        Update  $\phi$  to max

**end for**

until convergence



timescale viewpoint

timescale viewpoint

# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

Initialize  $\phi$   
repeat

    Initialize  $\theta$

    Sample task  $M \sim J$

    for  $w = 0, 1, \dots, W$

        Collect  $D$  timesteps

        Update  $\theta$  to maximize expected return from  $1/N$  timescale viewpoint

    end for

**for**  $u = 0, 1, \dots, U$  (joint update period) **do**

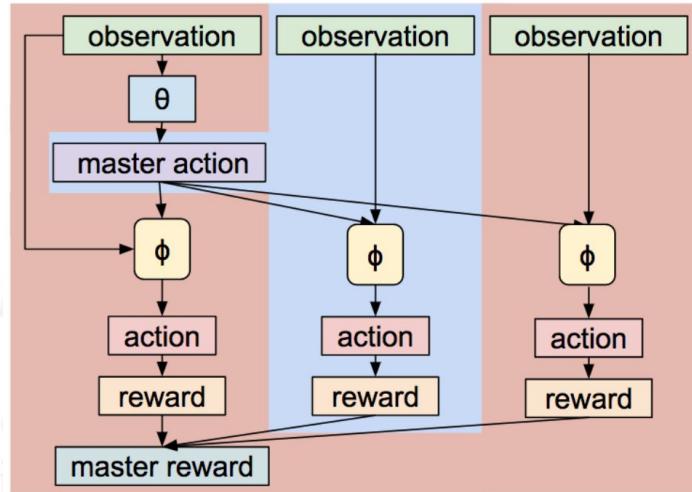
        Collect  $D$  timesteps of experience using  $\pi_{\phi, \theta}$

        Update  $\theta$  to maximize expected return from  $1/N$  timescale viewpoint

        Update  $\phi$  to maximize expected return from full timescale viewpoint

**end for**

until convergence



timescale viewpoint

# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

Initialize  $\phi$

**repeat**

    Initialize  $\theta$

    Sample task  $M \sim P_M$

**for**  $w = 0, 1, \dots, W$  (warmup period) **do**

        Collect  $D$  timesteps of experience using  $\pi_{\phi, \theta}$

        Update  $\theta$  to maximize expected return from  $1/N$  timescale viewpoint

**end for**

**for**  $u = 0, 1, \dots, U$  (joint update period) **do**

        Collect  $D$  timesteps of experience using  $\pi_{\phi, \theta}$

        Update  $\theta$  to maximize expected return from  $1/N$  timescale viewpoint

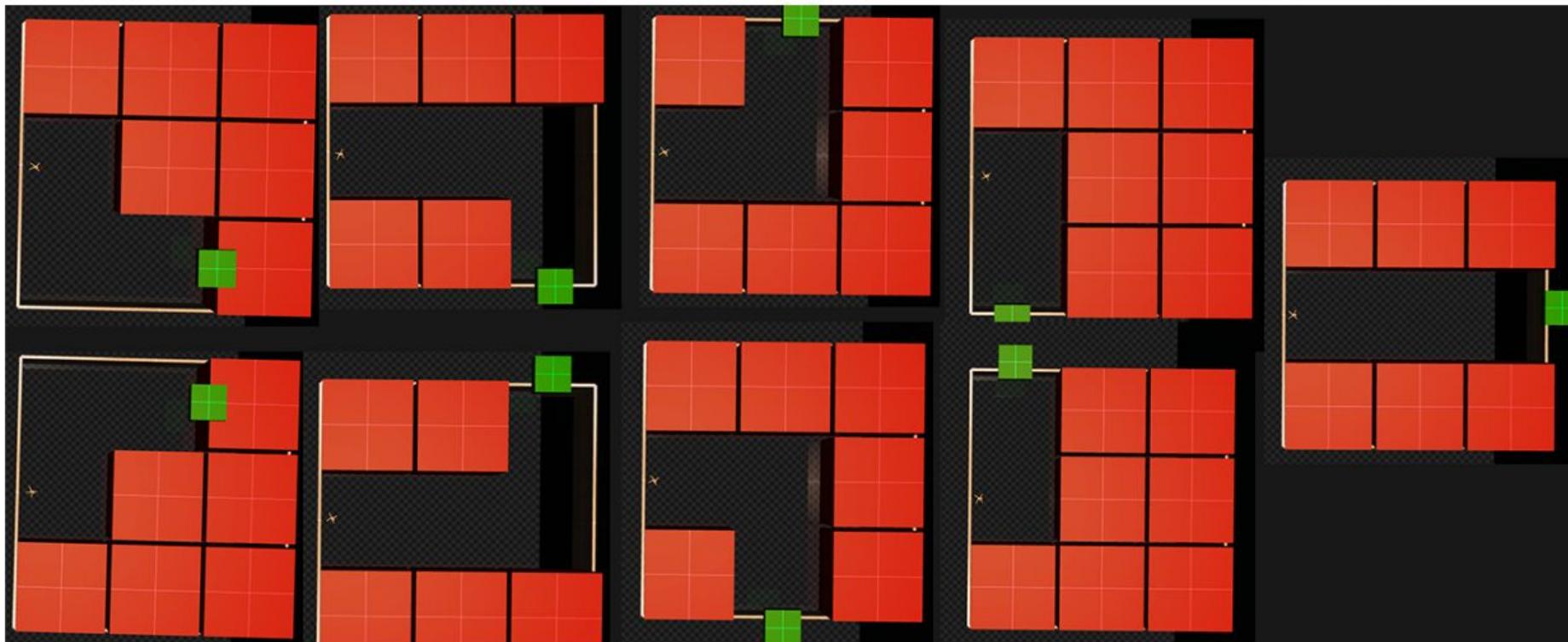
        Update  $\phi$  to maximize expected return from full timescale viewpoint

**end for**

**until** convergence

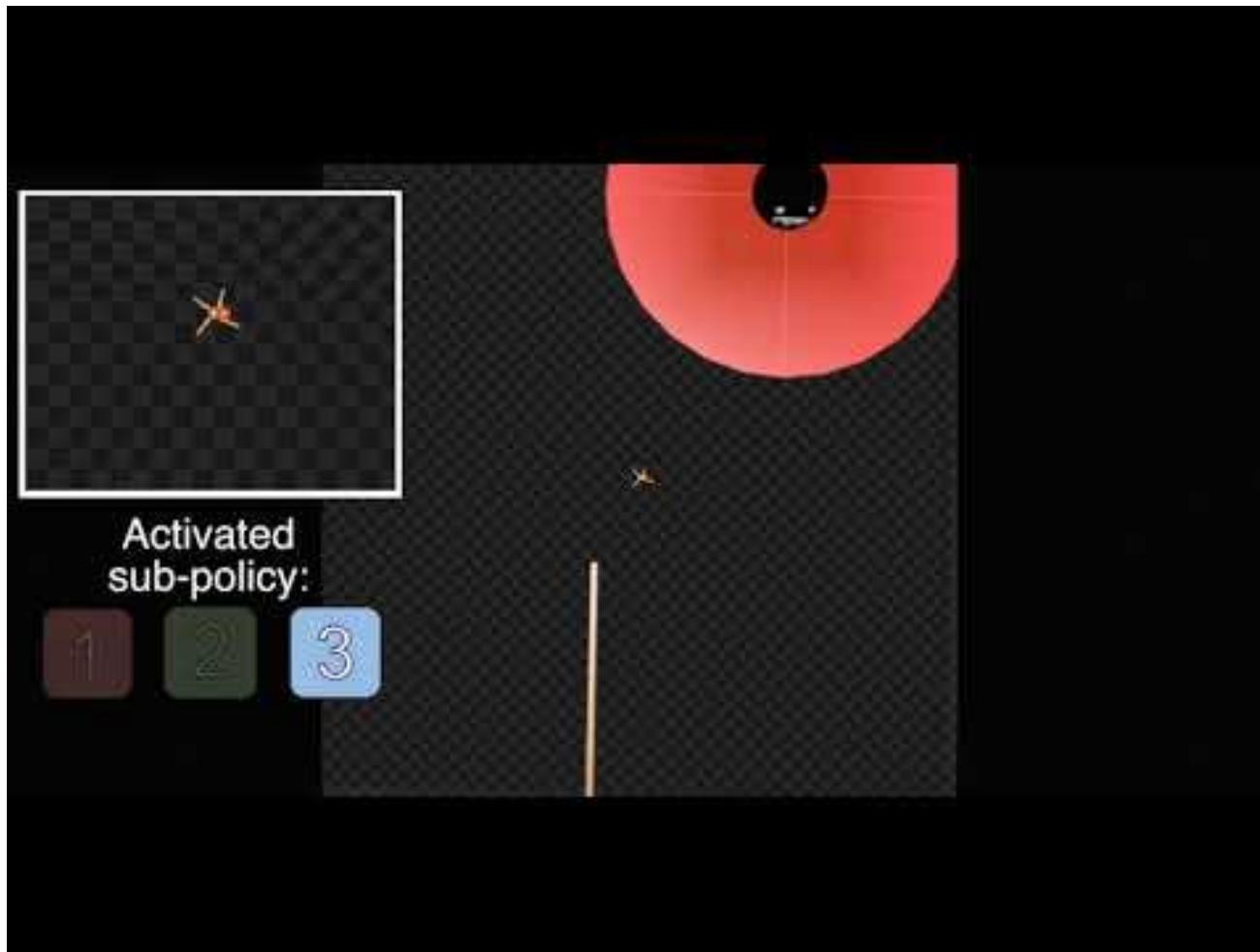
# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Ant Two-walks



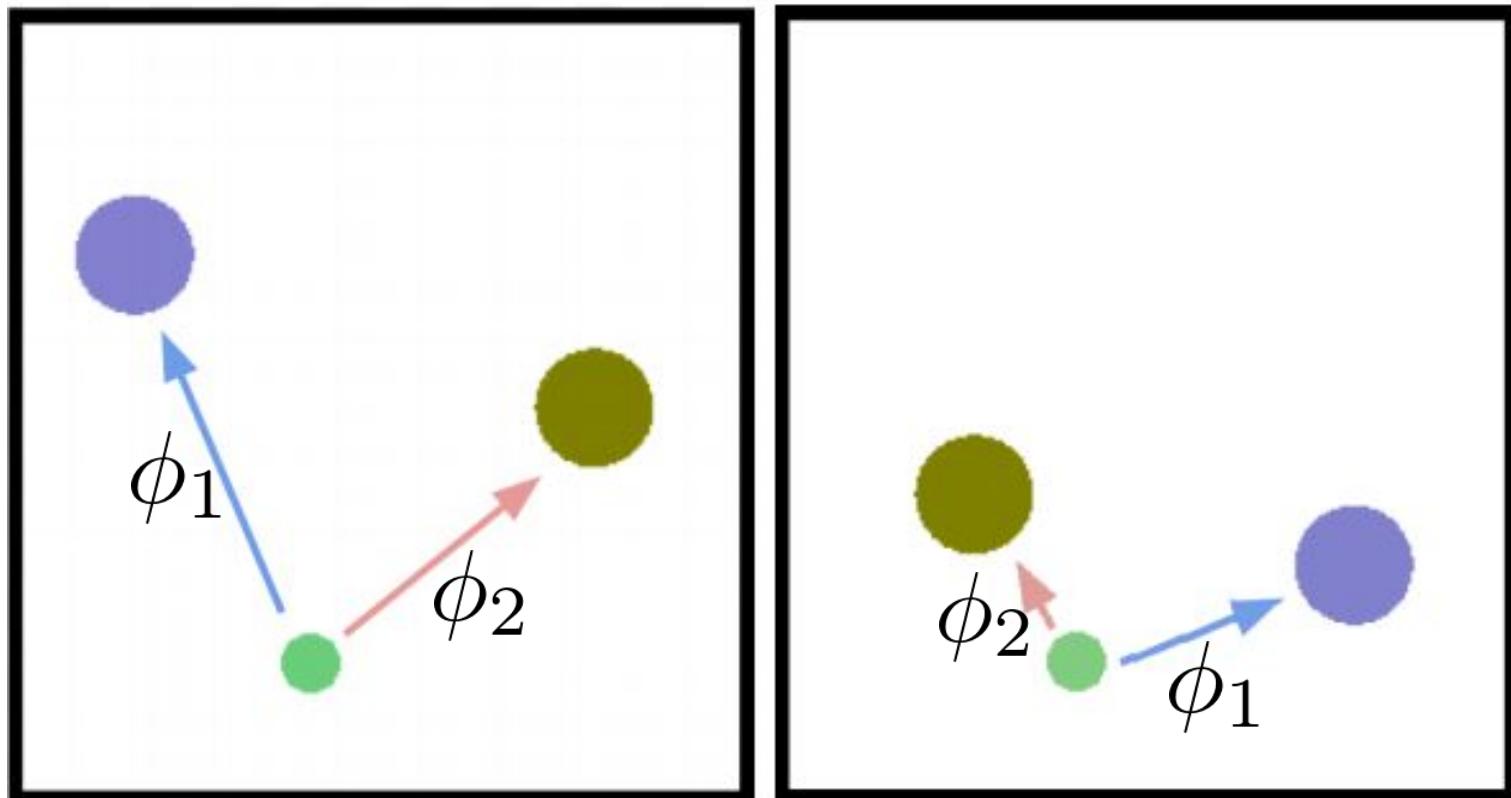
# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Ant Obstacle Course



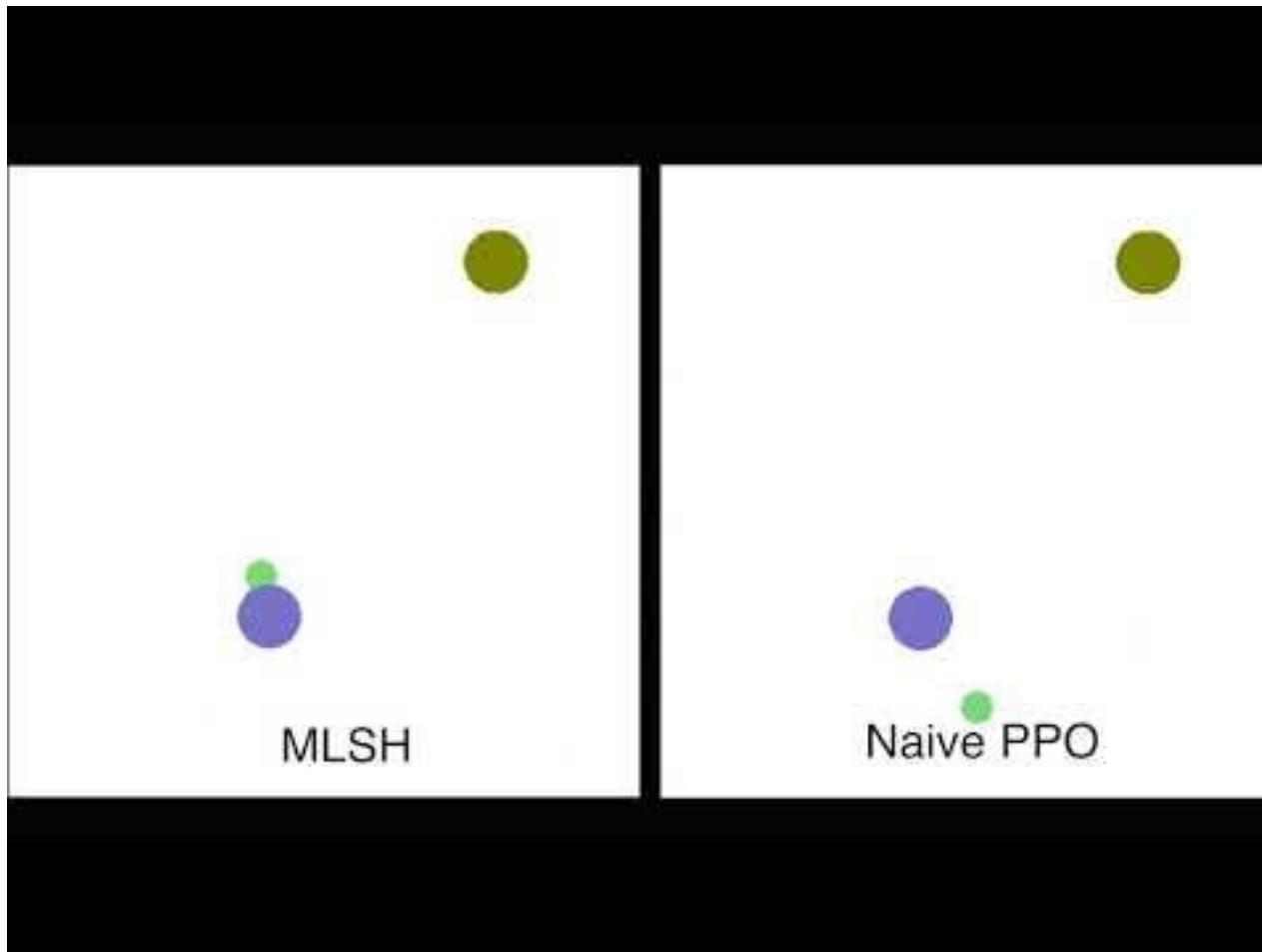
# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Movement Bandits



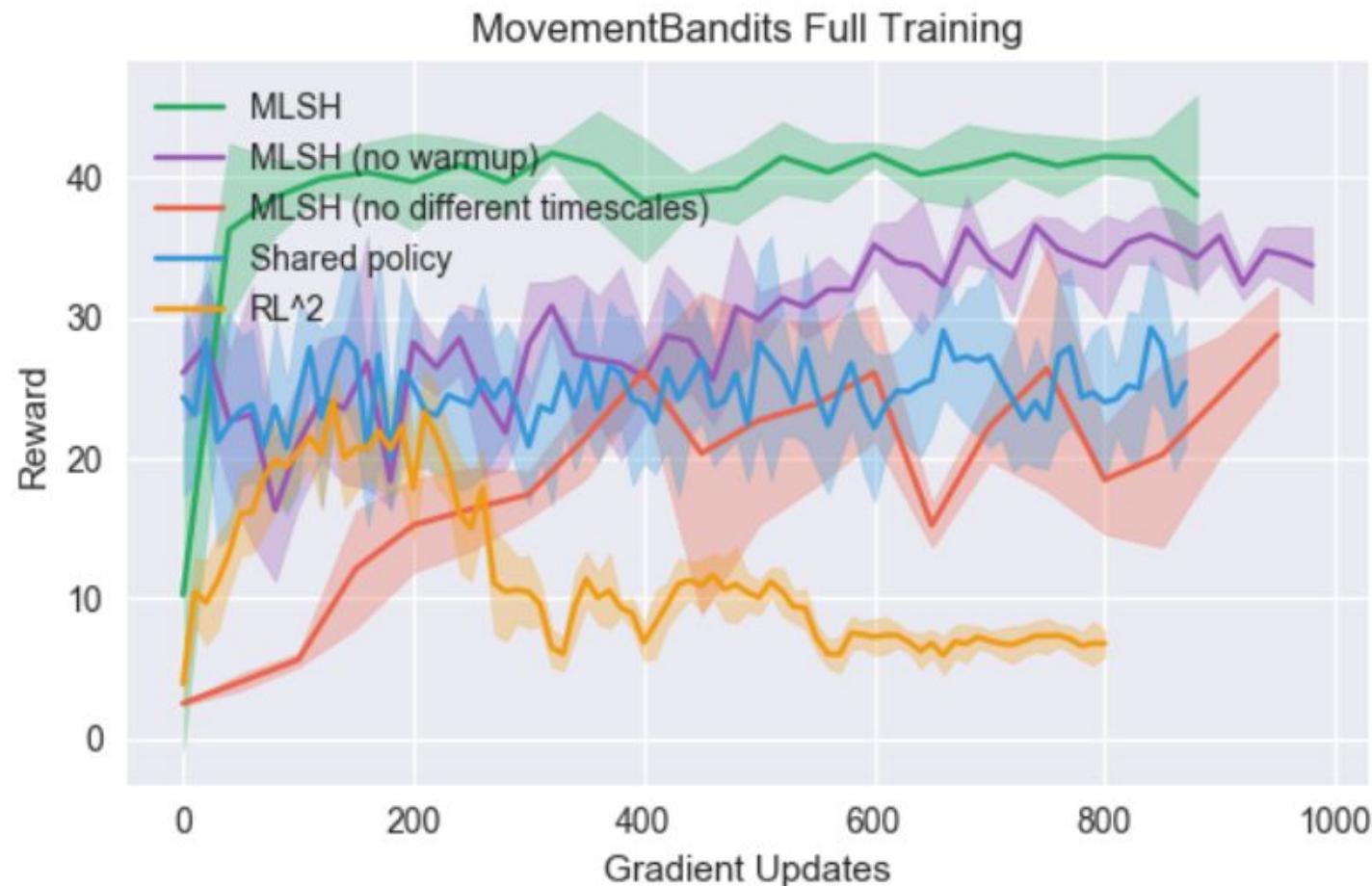
# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Comparison



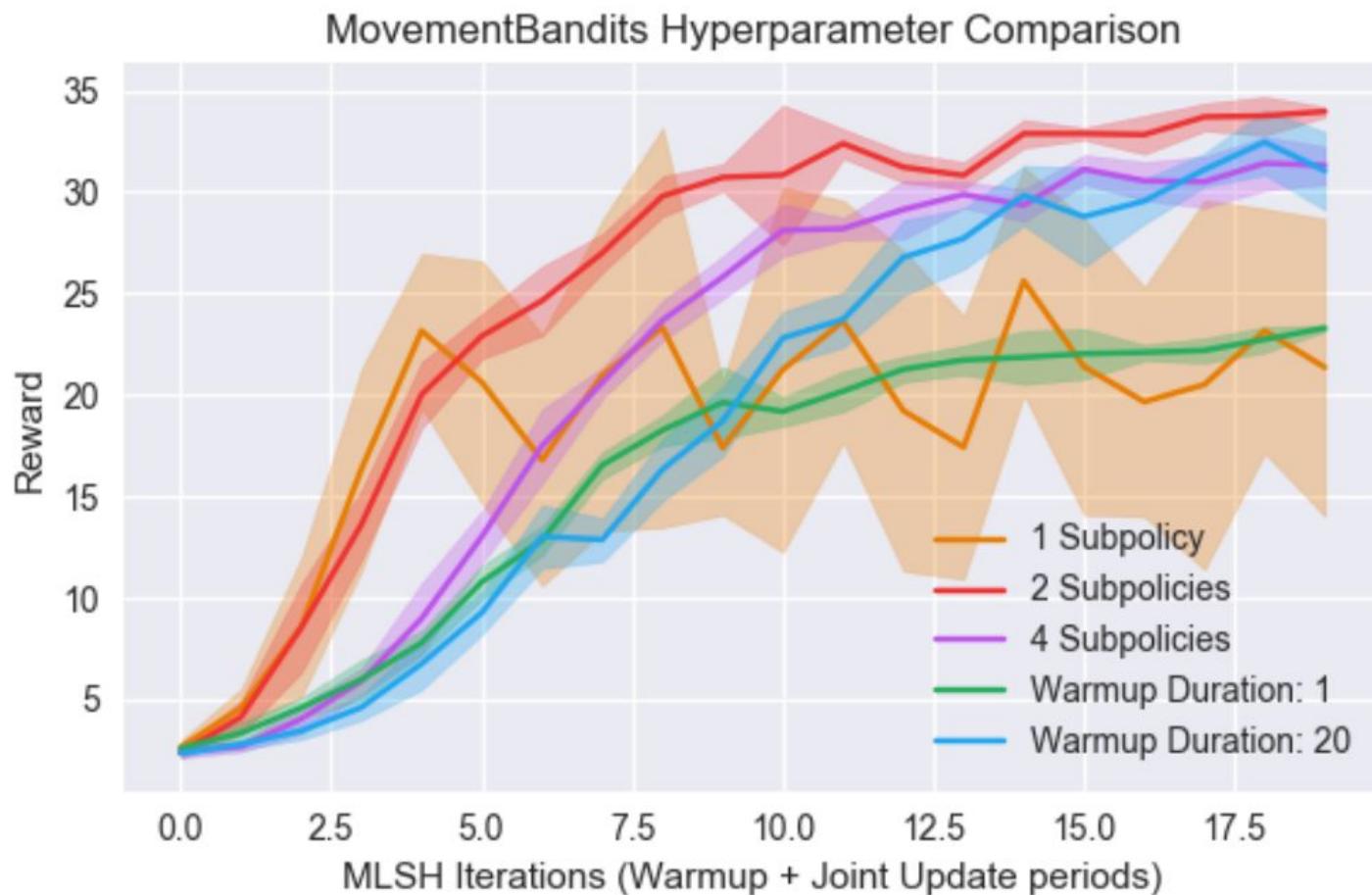
# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Ablative Analysis



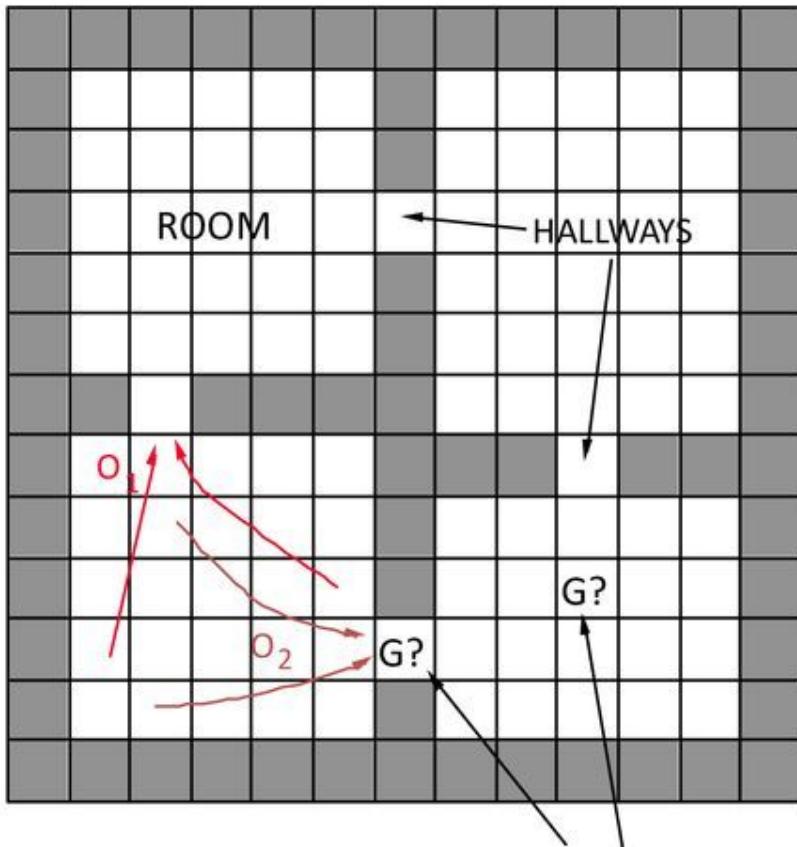
# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Ablative Analysis



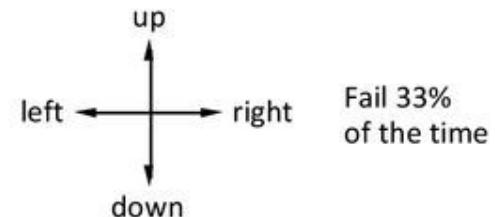
# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Four Rooms



Goal states are given  
a terminal value of 1

4 rooms  
4 hallways  
4 unreliable  
primitive actions



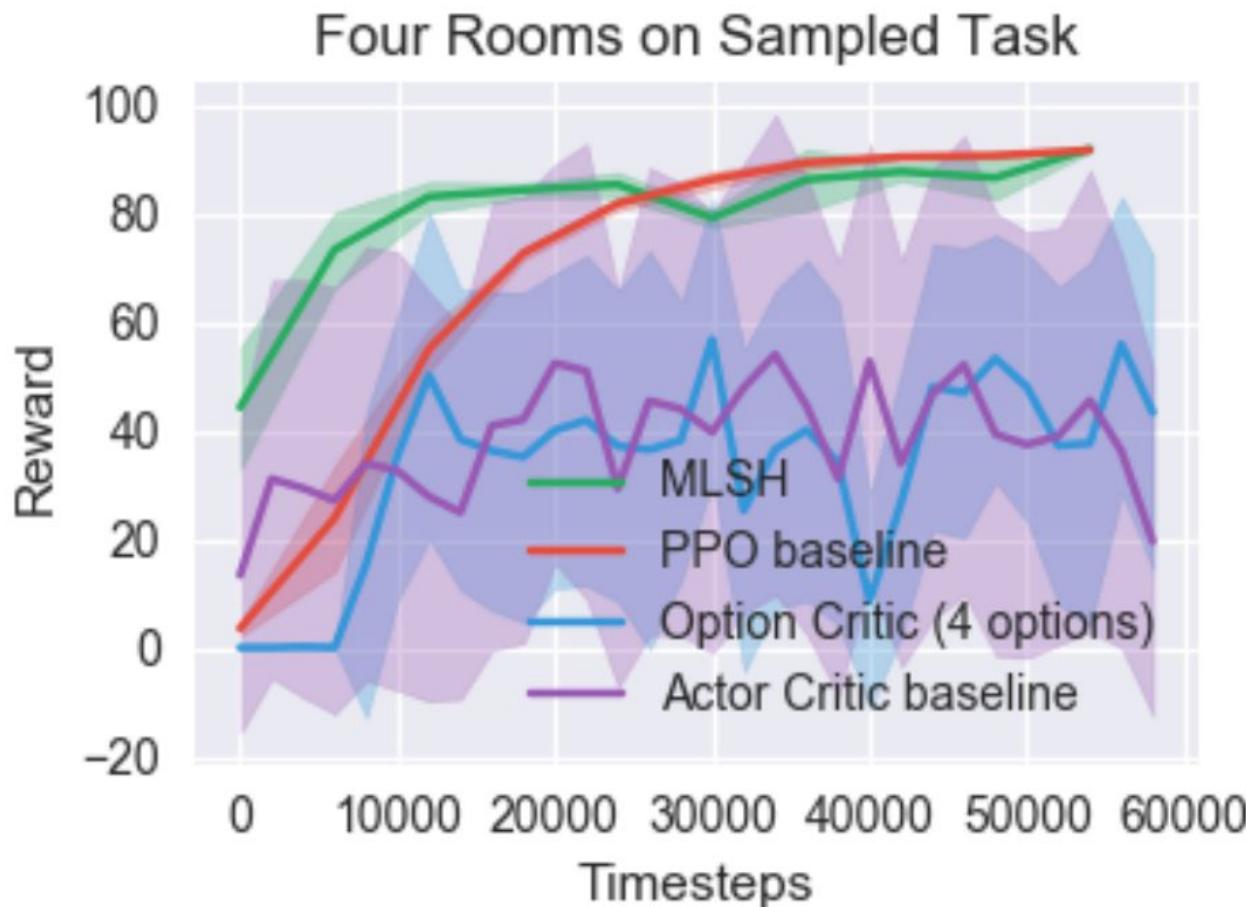
8 multi-step options  
(to each room's 2 hallways)

Given goal location,  
quickly plan shortest route

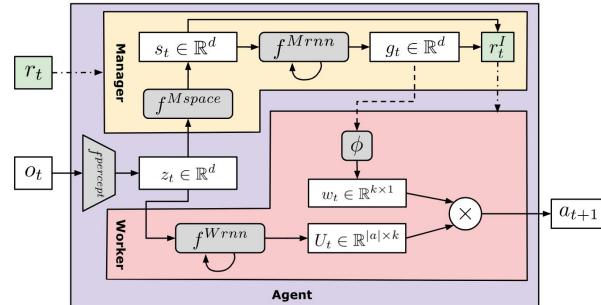
All rewards zero  
 $\gamma = .9$

# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Comparison

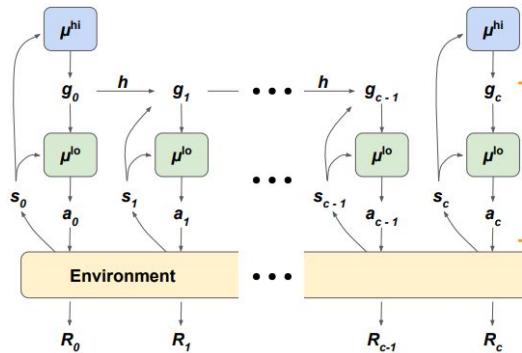


# Summary



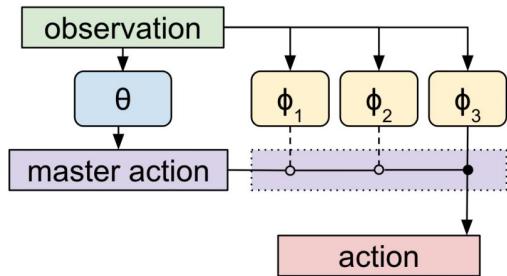
## FUN

- Directional goals
- Dilated RNN
- Transition Policy Gradient



## HIRO

- Absolute goals in observation space
- Data-efficient
- Off-policy label correction



## MLSH

- Generalization in RL algorithm
- Inspired from “Options” framework

# Discussion

- How to decide temporal resolution (i.e.  $c, N$ )?
- Do we need discrete # of sub-policies?
- Future prospects of HRL? More hierarchies?

**Thank you for your attention!**

# **Any Questions?**

# Let's go and have lunch!

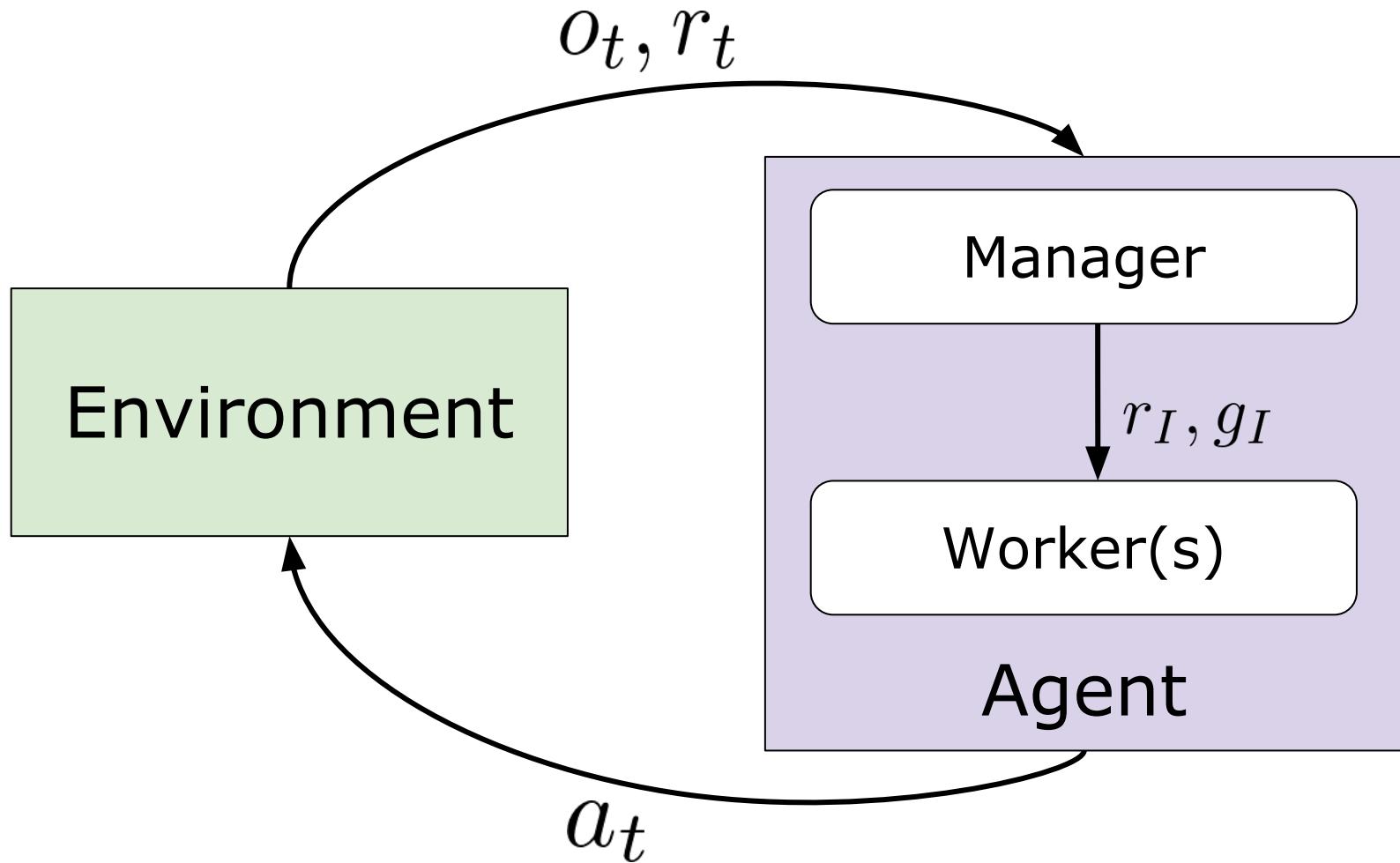


# References

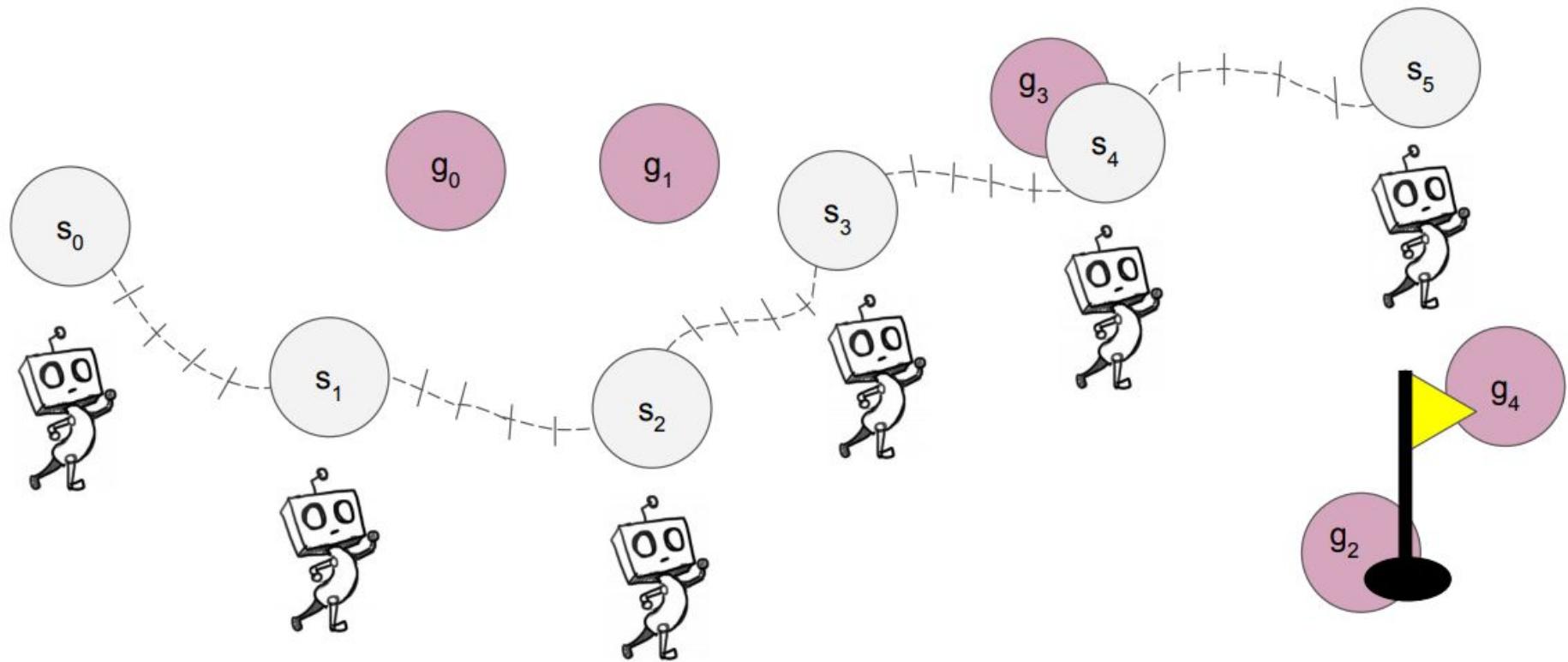
- Vezhnevets, A.S., Osindero, S., Schaul, T., Heess, N., Jaderberg, M., Silver, D., & Kavukcuoglu, K. (2017). **FeUdal Networks for Hierarchical Reinforcement Learning.** *ICML*.
- Nachum, O., Gu, S., Lee, H., & Levine, S. (2018). **Data-Efficient Hierarchical Reinforcement Learning.** *NeurIPS*.
- Frans, K., Ho, J., Chen, X., Abbeel, P., & Schulman, J. (2018). **Meta Learning Shared Hierarchies.** *CoRR, abs/1710.09767*.

# **Appendix**

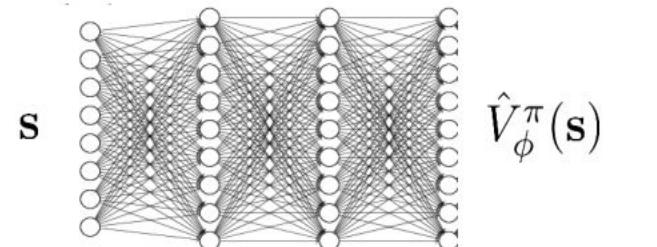
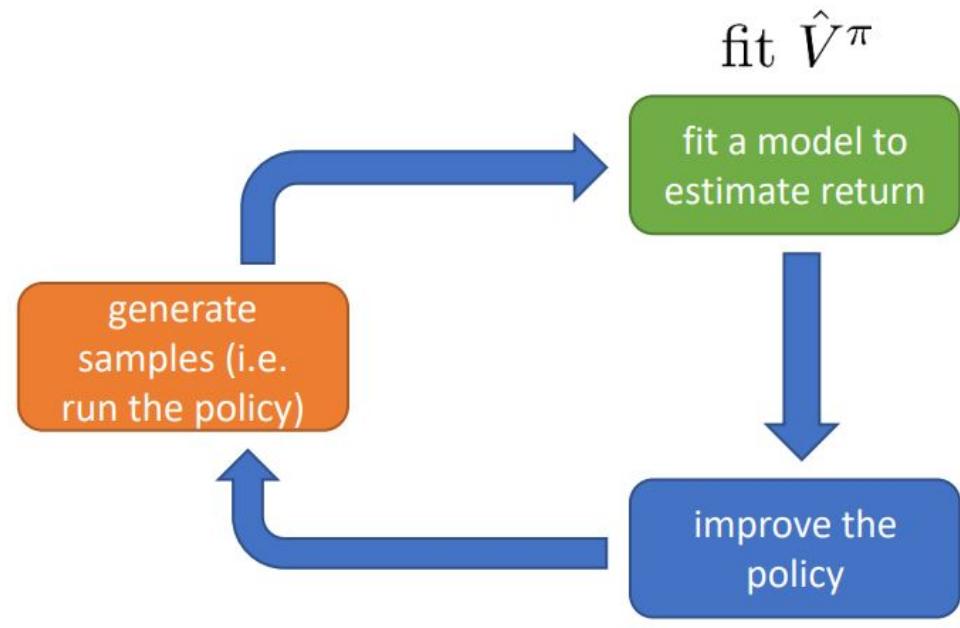
# Hierarchical RL



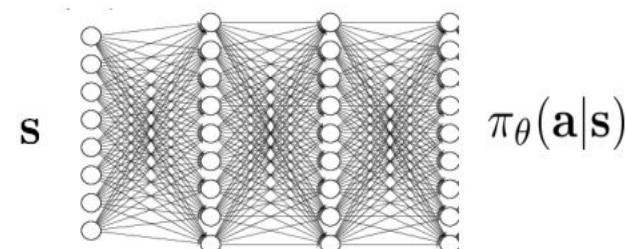
# Hierarchical RL



# Detour: A2C



update  $\hat{V}_\phi^\pi$  using target  $r + \gamma \hat{V}_\phi^\pi(s')$



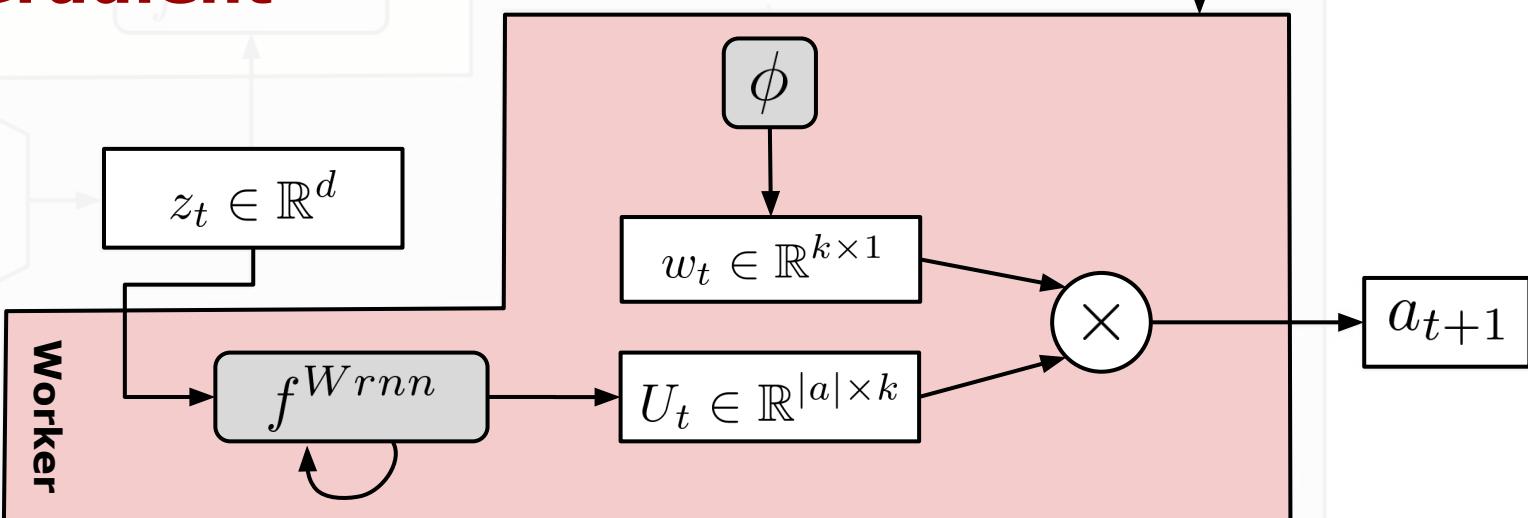
evaluate  $\hat{A}^\pi(s, a) = r(s, a) + \gamma \hat{V}_\phi^\pi(s') - \hat{V}_\phi^\pi(s)$   
 $\nabla_\theta J(\theta) \approx \nabla_\theta \log \pi_\theta(a|s) \hat{A}^\pi(s, a)$   
 $\theta \leftarrow \theta + \alpha \nabla_\theta J(\theta)$

# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

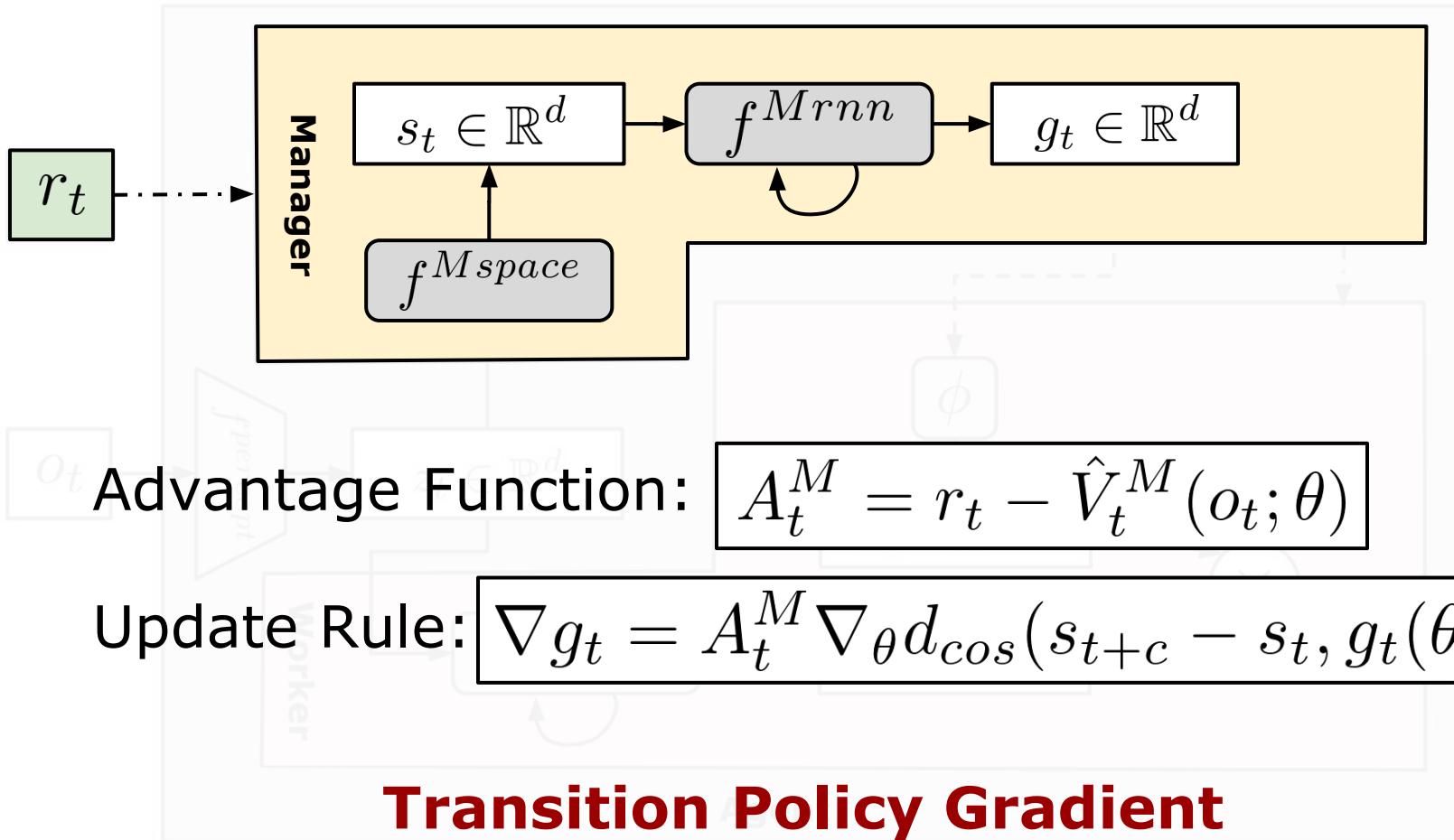
Advantage Function:  $A_t^W = r_t + \alpha r_t^I - \hat{V}_t^W(o_t; \theta)$

Update Rule:  $\nabla \pi_t = A_t^W \nabla_{\theta} \log \pi(a_t | o_t; \theta)$

## Policy Gradient



# FeUdal Networks (FUN)



# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

## Transition Policy Gradient

$$\begin{aligned}\nabla_{\theta} g_t &= \mathbb{E}_{\pi_{t,\theta}}[(R_t - V(s_t)) \nabla_{\theta} \log(\pi_{t,\theta}^{TP}(s_{t+c}|s_t))] \\ &= \mathbb{E}[(R_t - V(s_t)) \nabla_{\theta} \log(p(s_{t+c}|s_t, \theta))]\end{aligned}$$

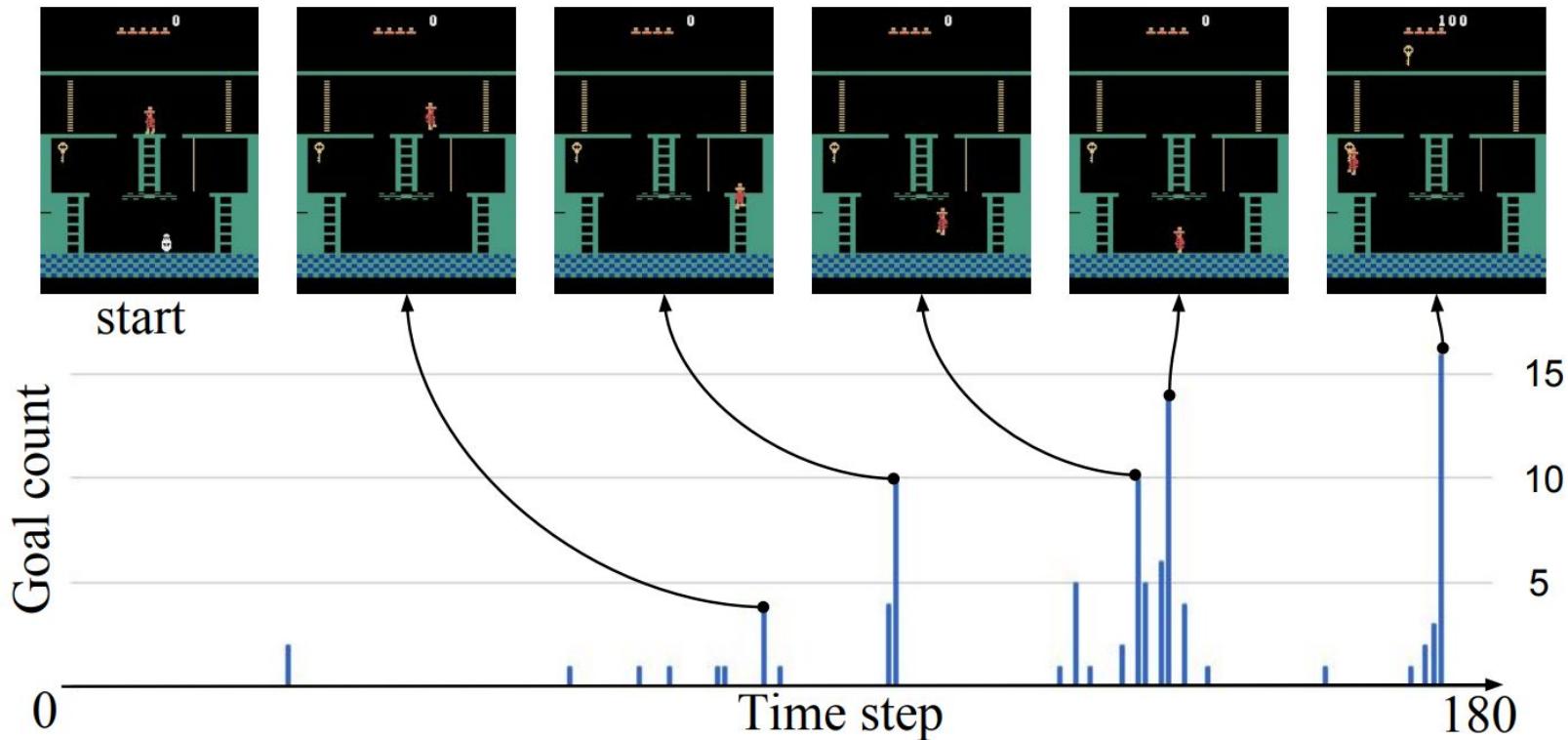
### Assumption:

- Worker will eventually learn to follow the goal directions
- Direction in state-space follows von Mises-Fisher distribution

$$p(s_{t+c}|s_t, \theta) \propto \exp(d_{cos}(s_{t+c} - s_t, g_t(\theta)))$$

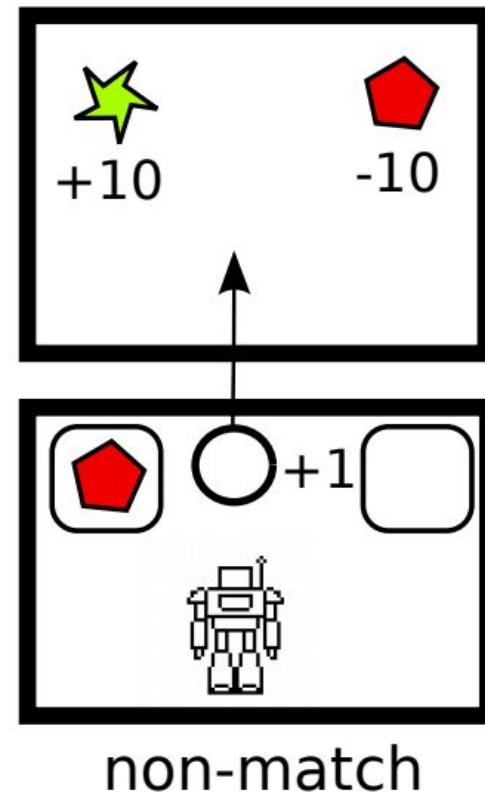
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

Learnt sub-goals by Manager



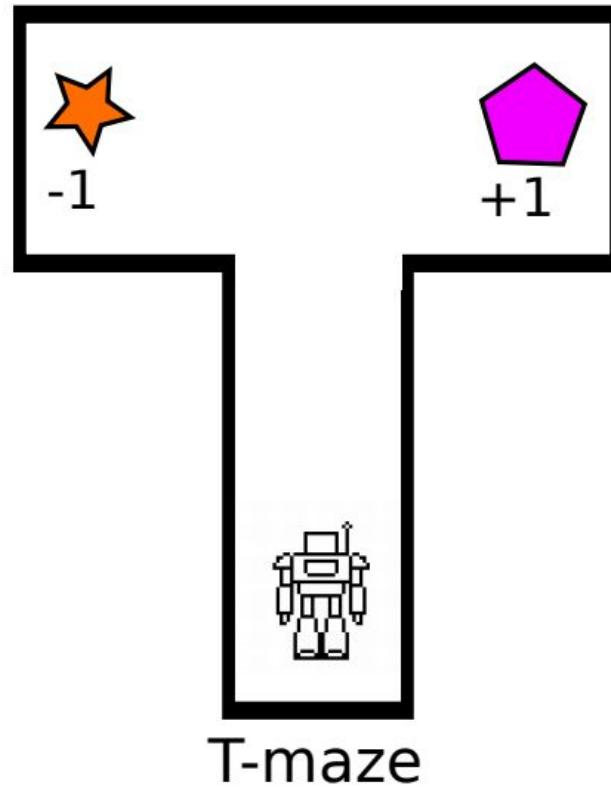
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

## Memory Task: Non-Match



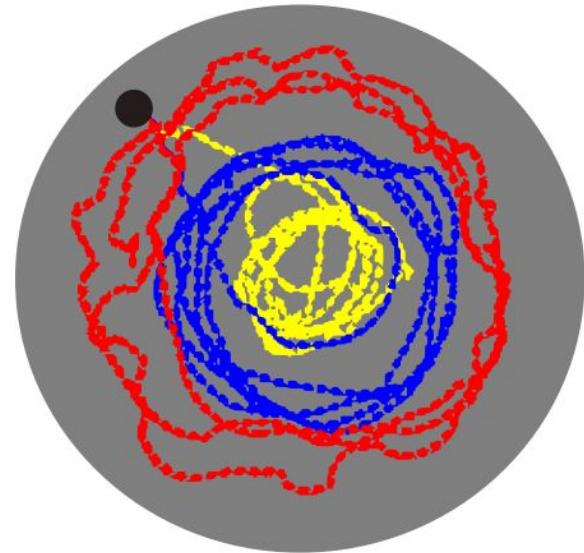
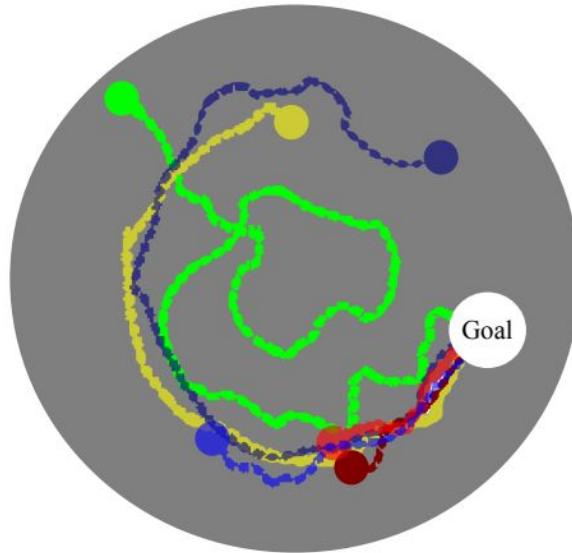
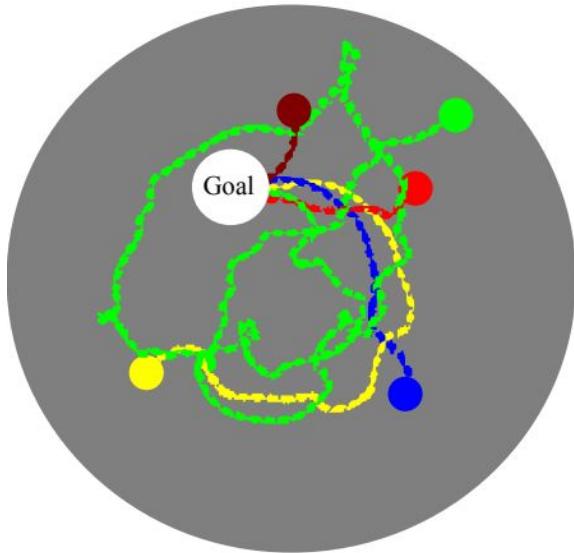
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

Memory Task: T-Maze



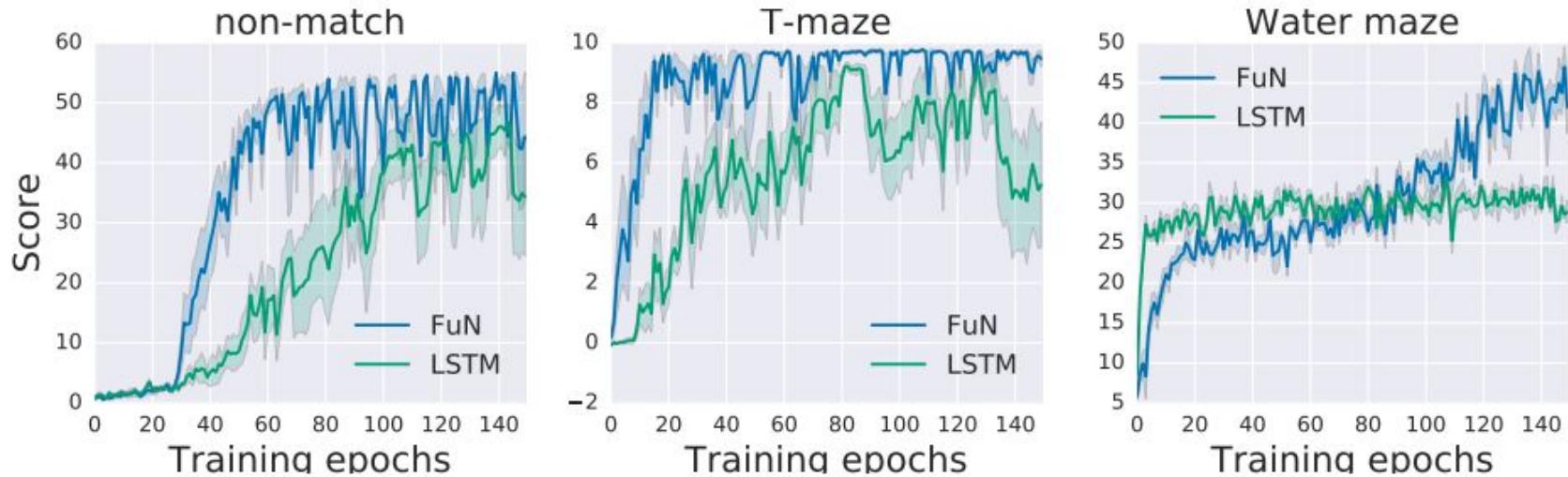
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

Memory Task: Water-Maze



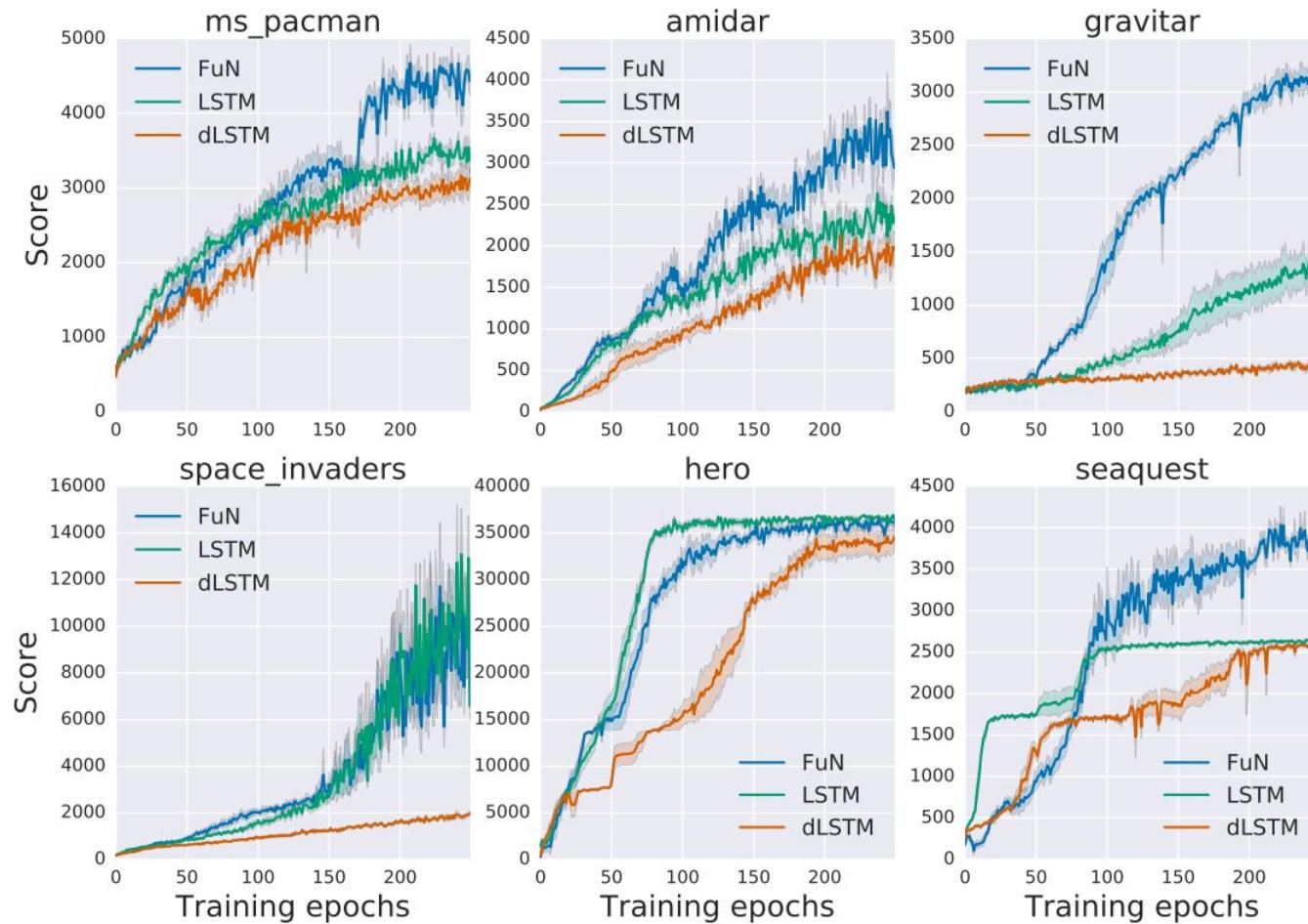
# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

## Comparison



# FeUdal Networks (FUN)

## Comparison



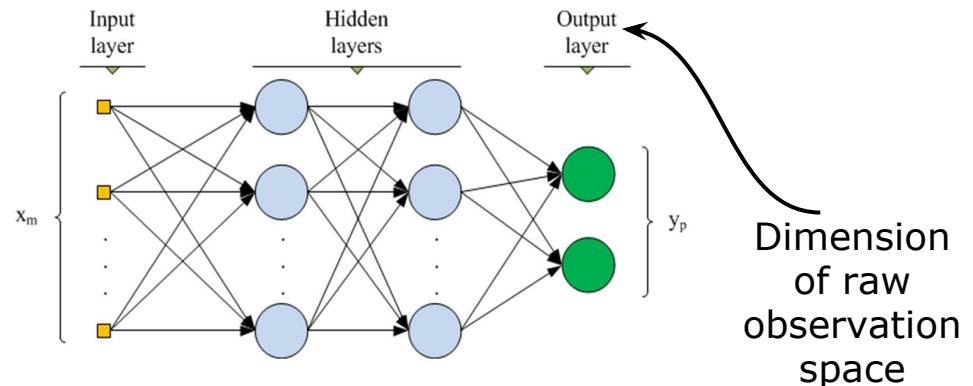
# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

## Network Structure: TD3



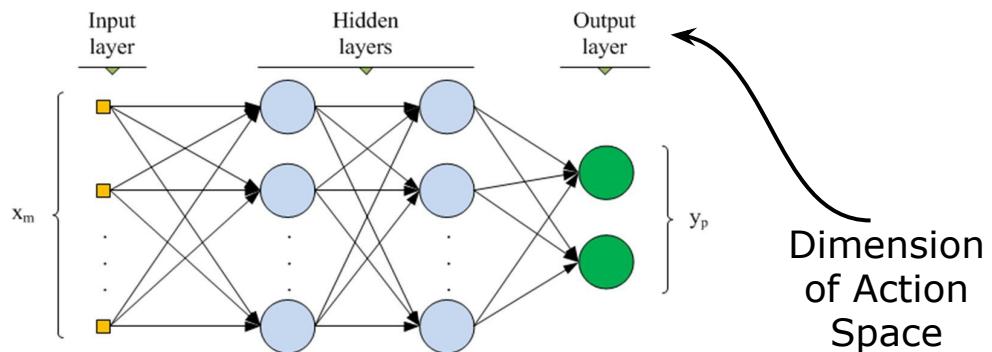
**Manager**

Actor-Critic with  
2-layer MLP each



**Worker**

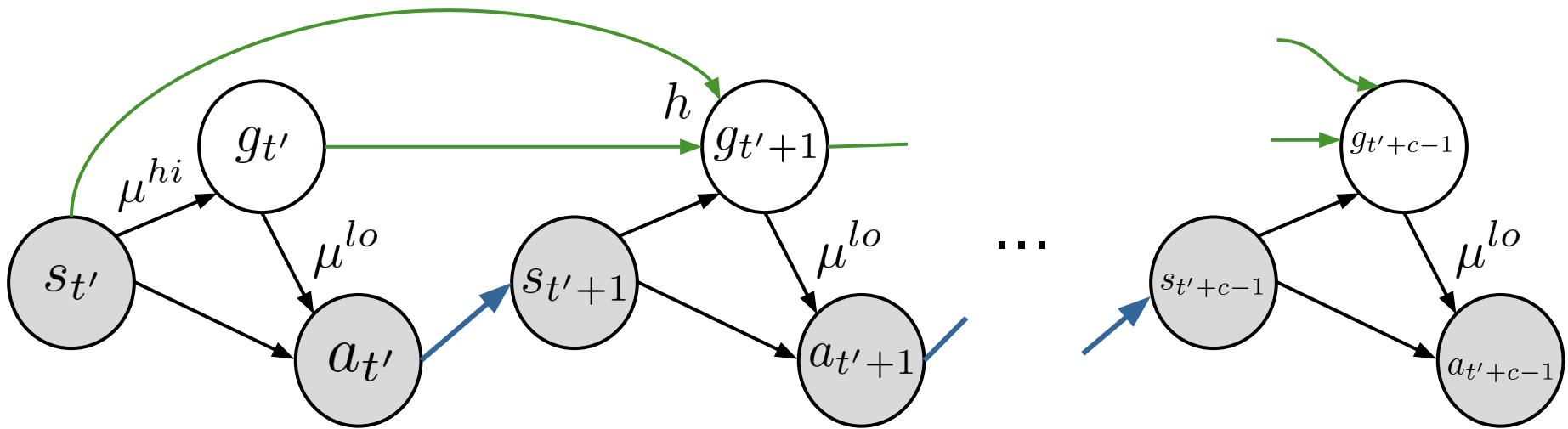
Actor-Critic with  
2-layer MLP each



For more details: Fujimoto, S., et. al (2018). Addressing Function Approximation Error in Actor-Critic Methods. *ICML*.

# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

## Off-Policy Correction for Manager



$$\tilde{g}_{t'} = \operatorname{argmax}_{\tilde{g}_{t'}} \mu^{lo}(a_{t':t'+c-1} | s_{t':t'+c-1}, \tilde{g}_{t':t'+c-1})$$

where  $\tilde{g}_{t'+1} = h(s_{t'}, \tilde{g}_{t'}, s_{t'+1})$

# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

## Off-Policy Correction for Manager

$$\begin{aligned}\tilde{g}_{t'} &= \operatorname{argmax}_{\tilde{g}_{t'}} \mu^{lo}(a_{t':t'+c-1} | s_{t':t'+c-1}, \tilde{g}_{t':t'+c-1}) \\ &= \operatorname{argmax}_{\tilde{g}_{t'}} \log(\mu^{lo}(a_{t':t'+c-1} | s_{t':t'+c-1}, \tilde{g}_{t':t'+c-1})) \\ &\quad \underbrace{\qquad\qquad\qquad}_{\alpha - \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=t'}^{t'+c-1} \|a_i - \mu^{lo}(s_i, \tilde{g}_i)\|_2^2 + \text{constant}}\end{aligned}$$

Approximately solved by generating candidate goals  $\tilde{g}_{t'}$

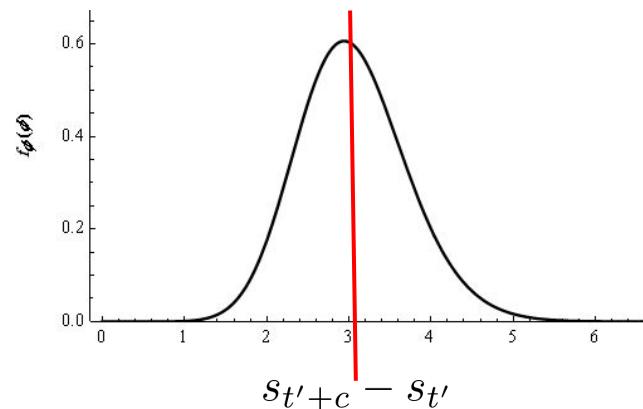
# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

## Off-Policy Correction for Manager

$$\tilde{g}_{t'} = \operatorname{argmax}_{\tilde{g}_{t'}} \mu^{lo}(a_{t':t'+c-1} | s_{t':t'+c-1}, \tilde{g}_{t':t'+c-1})$$

Approximately solved by generating candidate goals  $\tilde{g}_{t'}$  :

- Original goal given:  $g_{t'}$
- Absolute goal based on transition observed:  $s_{t'+c} - s_{t'}$
- Randomly sampled candidates:



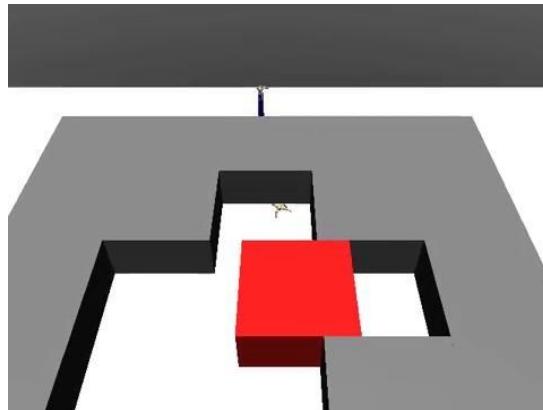
# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

## Training

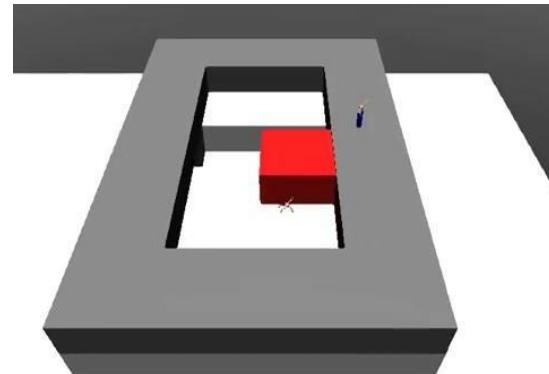
1. Collect experience  $s_t, g_t, a_t, R_t, \dots$
2. Train  $\mu^{lo}$  with experience transitions  $(s_t, g_t, a_t, r_t, s_{t+1}, g_{t+1})$  using  $g_t$  as additional state observation and reward given by goal-conditioned function  $r_t = r(s_t, g_t, a_t, s_{t+1}) = -||s_t + g_t - s_{t+1}||_2$ .
3. Train  $\mu^{hi}$  on temporally-extended experience  $(s_t, \tilde{g}_t, \sum R_{t:t+c-1}, s_{t+c})$ , where  $\tilde{g}_t$  is re-labelled high-level action to maximize probability of past low-level actions  $a_{t:t+c-1}$ .
4. Repeat.

# Data-Efficient HRL (HIRO)

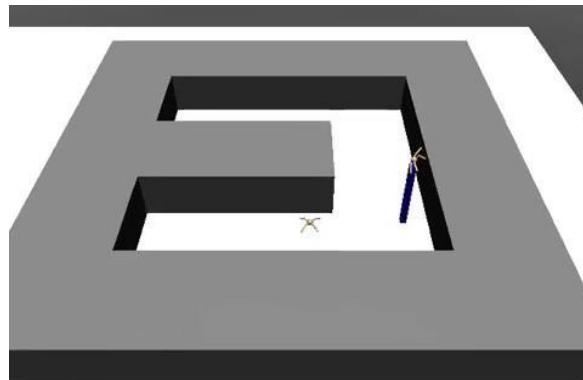
## Environments



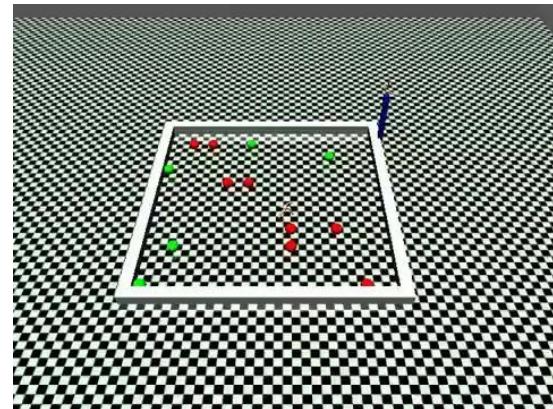
Ant Push



Ant Fall



Ant Maze



Ant Gather

# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Network Structure: PPO



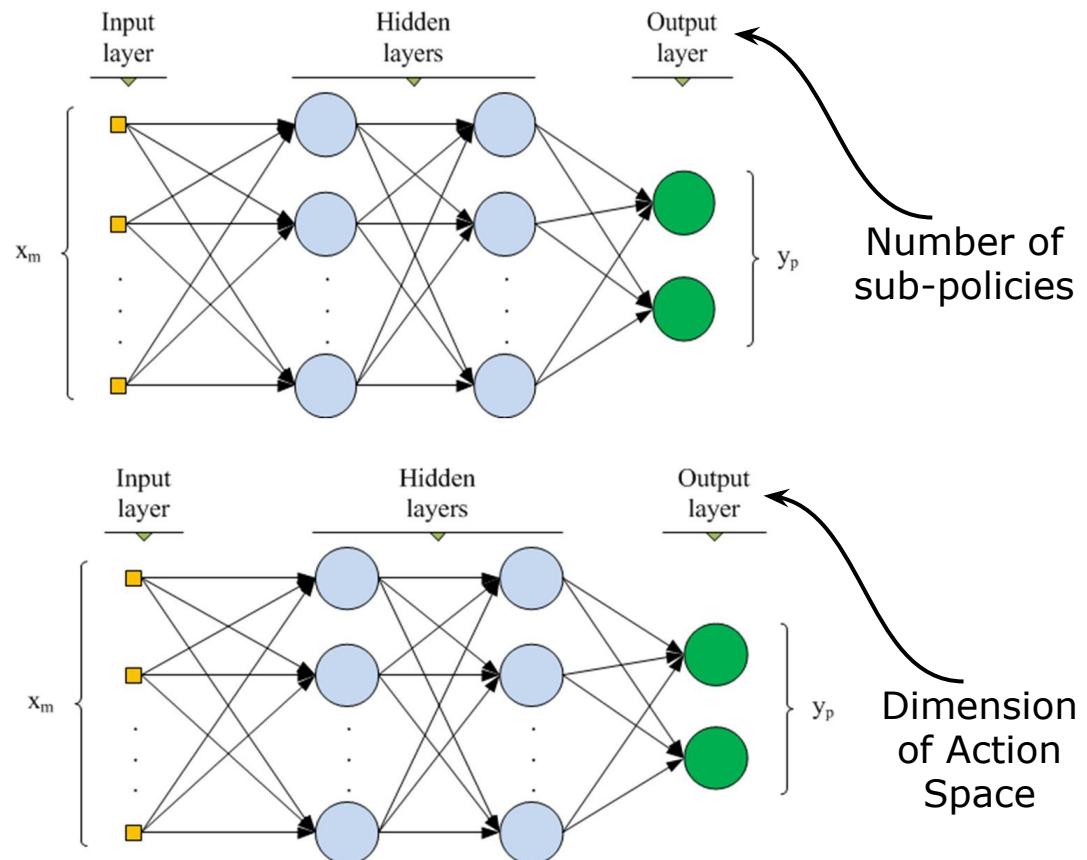
**Manager**

2-layer MLP with  
64 hidden units



**Each sub-policy**

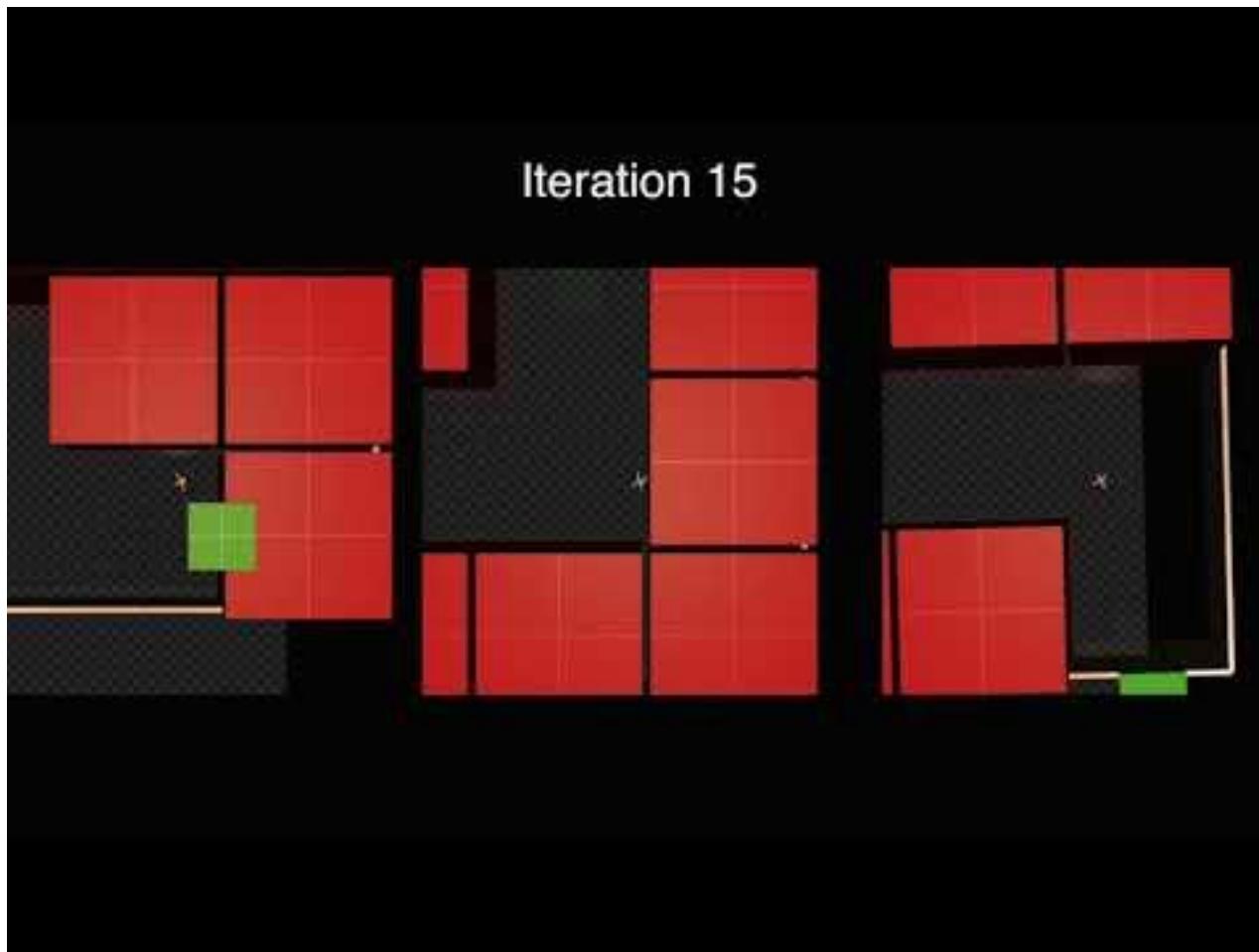
2-layer MLP with  
64 hidden units



For more details: Schulman, J., et. al (2017).. Proximal Policy Optimization Algorithms. *CoRR*, *abs/1707.06347*

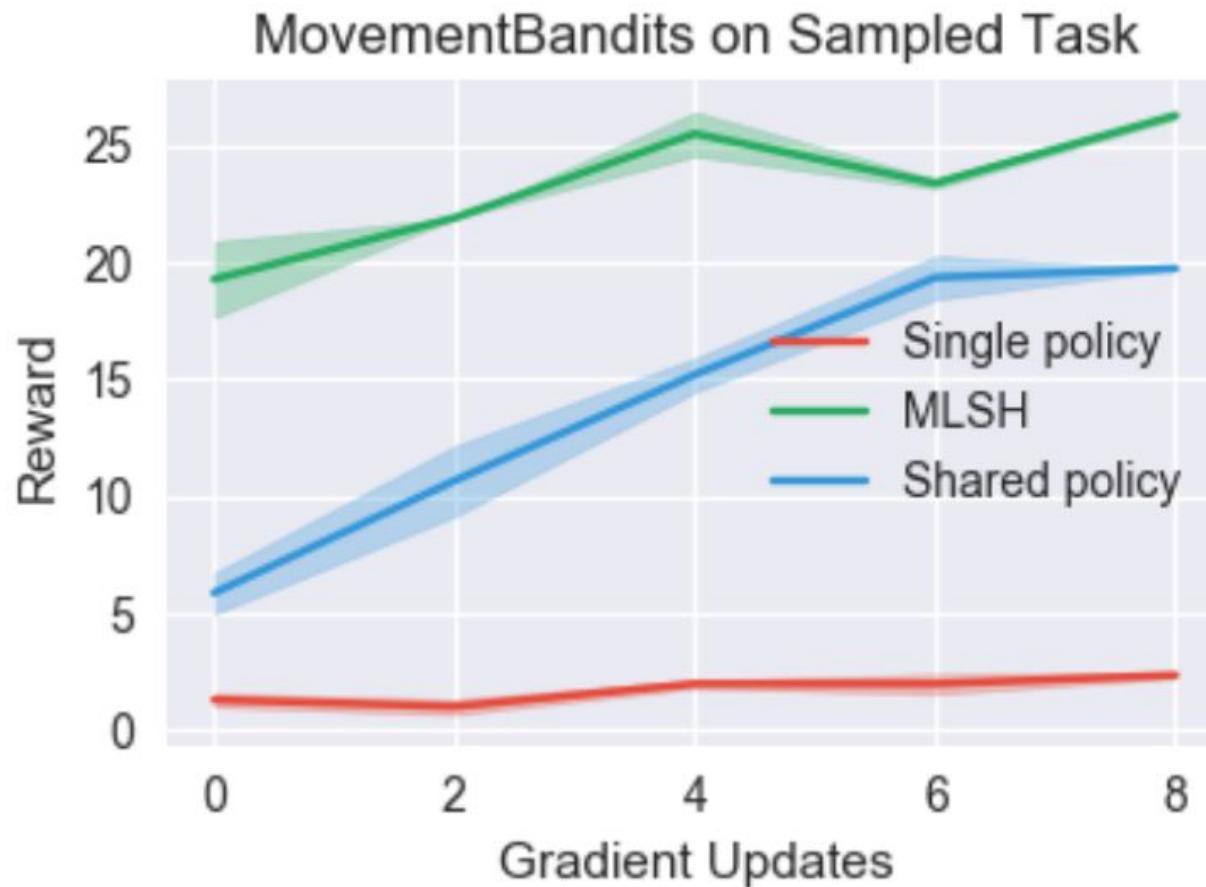
# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Training



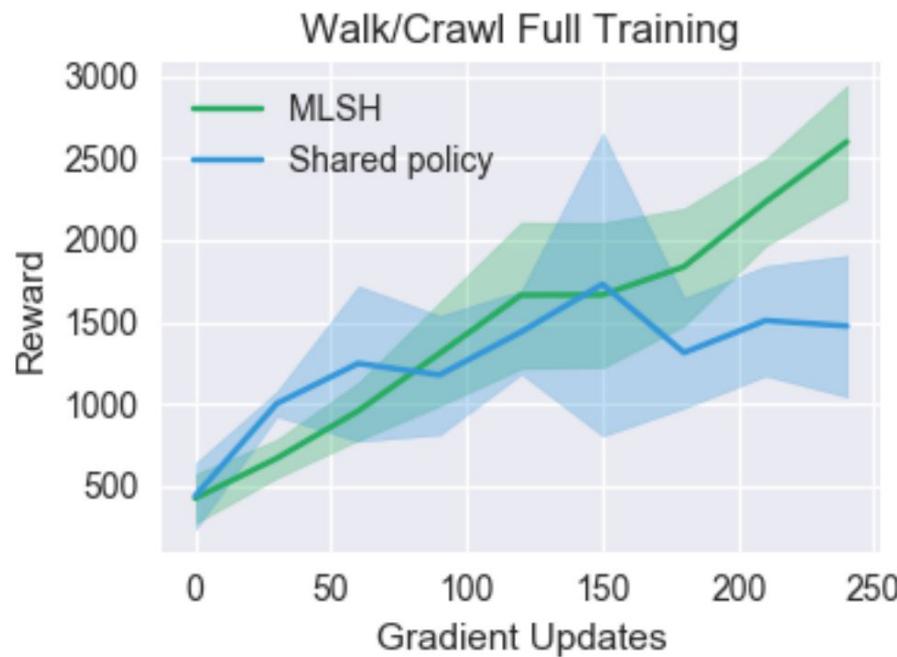
# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

## Comparison



# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

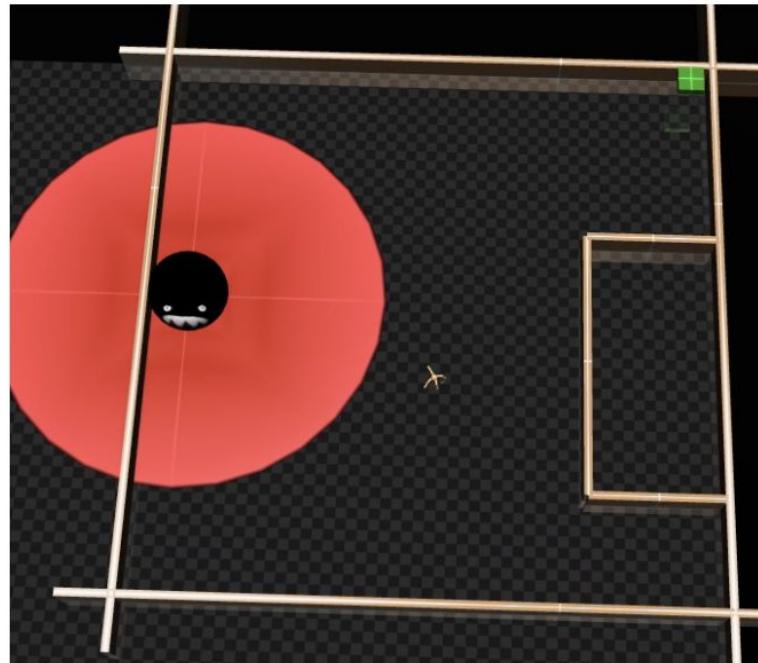
## Comparison



Reward on Walk/Crawl combination task	
MLSH Transfer	14333
Shared Policy Transfer	6055
Single Policy	-643

# Meta-Learning Shared Hierarchies (MLSH)

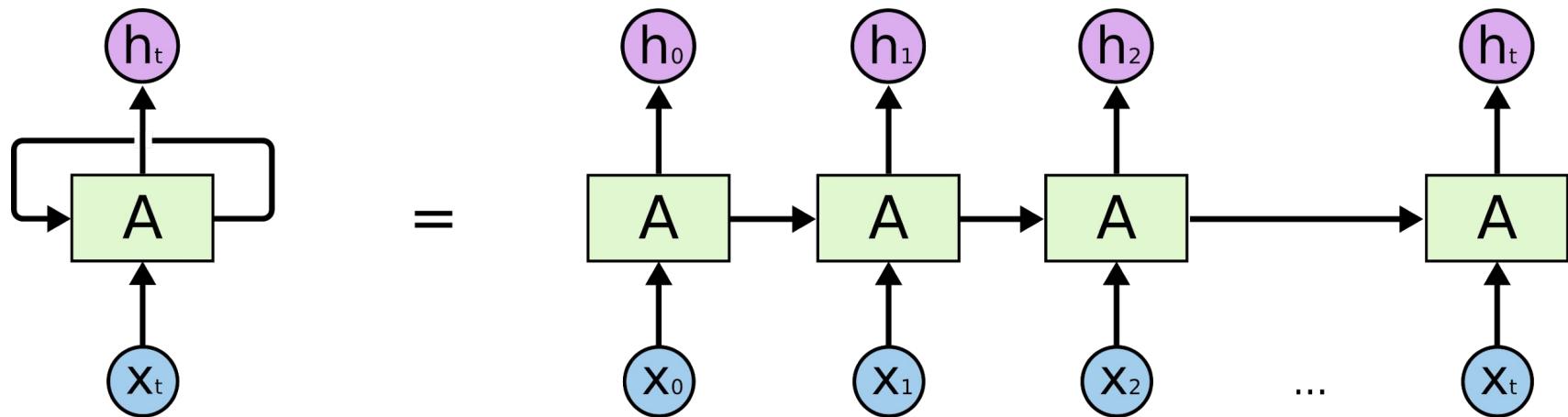
## Comparison



Reward on Ant Obstacle task	
MLSH Transfer	193
Single Policy	0

# Recurrent Neural Network

- Useful when input data is sequential (such as in speech recognition, language modelling)



# **Stochastic NN for HRL (SNN4HRL)**

Aims to learn useful skills during pre-training and then leverage them for learning faster in future tasks

# Variational Information Maximizing Exploration (VIME)

Exploration based on maximizing information gain about agent's belief of the environment