

# Definitional Quantifiers Realise Semantic Reasoning for Proof by Induction

Yutaka Nagashima

<https://github.com/datab1/PSL>

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Electronic Notes in Theoretical Computer Science 125 (2005) 5–43

Electronic Notes in Theoretical Computer Science  
www.elsevier.com/locate/entcs

## Strategic Issues, Problems and Challenges in Inductive Theorem Proving

Bernhard Gramlich<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

(Automated) *Inductive Theorem Proving* (ITP) is a challenging field in automated reasoning and theorem proving. Typically, (Automated) *Theorem Proving* (TP) refers to methods, techniques and tools for automatically proving *general* (most often first-order) theorems. Nowadays, the field of TP has reached a certain degree of maturity and powerful TP systems are widely available and used. The situation with ITP is strikingly different, in the sense that proving inductive theorems in an essentially automatic way still is a very challenging task, even for the most advanced existing ITP systems. Both in general TP and in ITP, strategies for guiding the proof search process are of fundamental importance, in automated as well as in interactive or mixed settings. In the paper we will analyze and discuss the most important strategic and proof search issues in ITP, compare ITP with TP, and argue why ITP is in a sense much more challenging. More generally, we will systematically isolate, investigate and classify the main problems and challenges in ITP w.r.t. automation, on different levels and from different points of views. Finally, based on this analysis we will present some theses about the state of the art in the field, possible criteria for what could be considered as *substantial progress*, and promising lines of research for the future, towards (more) automated ITP.

**Keywords:** Inductive theorem proving, automated theorem proving, automation, interaction, strategies, proof search control, challenges.

## 1 Background and Overview

Theorem proving tasks are ubiquitous in computer science, e.g., in fields like program specification, transformation and verification. Most often the given, generated or resulting proof tasks are not *general* ones (in the sense, that validity in **all** models of the underlying logic specification is to be established),

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Prof. Bernhard Gramlich  
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## Strategic Issues, Problems and Challenges in Inductive Theorem Proving

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*Keywords:* Inductive theorem proving, automated theorem proving, proof search, proof search control, strategies, proof search control, challenges.

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## 5 Some Theses

Here are a few theses about (automated) ITP for which there is no formal proof, but only some evidence: Theses:

- **In the near future, ITP will only be successful for**
  - **very specialized domains (e.g., with fixed axiomatizations),**
  - **for very restricted classes of conjectures.**
- **ITP will continue to be a very challenging engineering process.**



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**July 24 – 28 , 1995, Dagstuhl Seminar 9530**

## Automation of Proof by Mathematical Induction

### Organizer

R.S. Boyer, A. Bundy, D. Kapur, Ch. Walther

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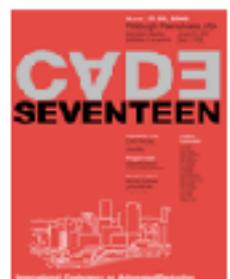
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**July 24 – 28 , 1995, Dagstuhl Seminar 9530**

## Automation of Proof by Mathematical Induction

# Workshop on Automation of Proofs by Mathematical Induction



Held in Connection with  
The 17th International Conference on Automated Deduction  
June 17-20, 2000  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

### CALL FOR PAPERS

Proof by Mathematical Induction presents the Automated Deduction community with some very challenging research problems. The aim of this one day workshop is to create an informal forum in which hot-topics and emerging techniques can be presented and discussed.

The workshop will feature invited talks and contributed presentations with ample time for discussion regarding topics like:

- Inductive theorem proving and formal methods,
- Higher-order logic and type theory,

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**July 24 – 28 , 1995, Dagstuhl Seminar 9530**

**Automation of Proof by Mathematical Induction**

**Workshop on inductive theorem proving**  
**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> & Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2013**  
**Imperial College London**

**Department of Computing,**  
**180 Queen's Gate**  
**Room 217/218**

Bernhard Gramlich  
[logic.at/staff/gramlich/](http://logic.at/staff/gramlich/)

This workshop will be very informal and simply aim to give researchers interested in inductive theorem proving a chance to meet and exchange ideas. We hope for a lot of interaction between participants and an opportunity to actually try out some of the available theorem provers.

**Saturday 23/11**

**9.30 - 10.00**

Welcome and introduction. Participants briefly say a few words on what their interests are and what they hope to get from the workshop.

**10.00 - 10.45 Demo of the Dafny system Rustan Leino**

**10.45 - 11.30 Using Dafny in Teaching, Sophia Drossopoulou**

**11.30-12.00 Zeno - a retrospective look, Will Sonnex**

**12.00 - 13.30 Lunch**

**13.30 -14.15 HipSpec: Automating Inductive Proofs using Theory Exploration, Dan Rosen**

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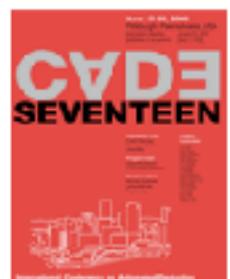
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# Workshop on Automation of Proofs by Mathematical Induction



Held in Connection with  
The 17th International Conference on Automated Deduction  
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The workshop will feature invited talks and contributed presentations with ample time for discussion regarding topics like:

- Inductive theorem proving and formal methods,
- Inductive theory exploration,

There is no formal

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S C H L O S S  
Leibniz-Zentrum für Informatik



# The Second Workshop on Automated Inductive Theorem-proving (WAIT?), 20-21 March 2015, Chalmers University, Gothenburg, Sweden

Inductive theorem proving is a topic of growing interest in the automated reasoning community. Following our successful first workshop in London 2013, we would like to invite you to a second workshop on inductive theorem proving. The workshop will be very informal and aims to give researchers interested in the topic a chance to meet, exchange ideas and perhaps also try out some of the available theorem provers. We would like to invite talks featuring demos and tutorials of inductive theorem provers, challenge problems, new directions of research or anything else of interest to the inductive theorem proving community.

If you have any questions please contact Nick Smallbone ([nicsma@chalmers.se](mailto:nicsma@chalmers.se)) or Moa Johansson ([moa.johansson@chalmers.se](mailto:moa.johansson@chalmers.se)).

Hope to see you in Gothenburg!

— The HipSpec crew  
(Moa Johansson, Dan Rosén, Nick Smallbone, Koen Claessen)

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July 24 – 28 , 1995, Dagstuhl Seminar

## Automation of Induction

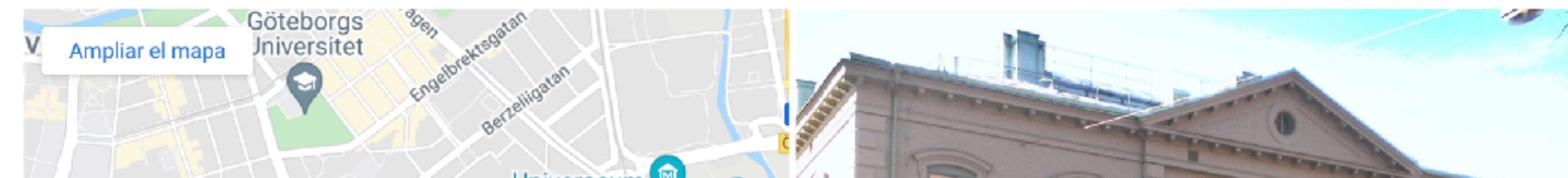
## Registration

The workshop will be **free of charge** but please register by filling in the form [here](#). If you want to contribute a talk or demo, please submit a title and a short abstract when you register.

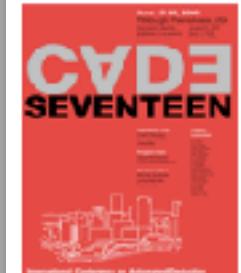
We'll provide coffee but you'll have to pay for lunch/dinner yourself.

## Location and programme

The workshop will take place on **Friday 20 March - Saturday 21 March** at [Chalmersvillan, Gibraltargatan 1A, Gothenburg](#), in the room upstairs:



Home



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Hope to see you in Gothenburg!

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### Registration

## WAIT Workshop: The Third Workshop on Automated Inductive Theorem-Proving

November 17-18, 2016

Seminar room Zemanek,  
[Vienna University of Technology](http://www.tuw.ac.at/zemanek)  
Favoritenstrasse 9-11, Building 18  
1040 Vienna, Austria

[WAIT 2018](#) [Aim](#) [Venue](#) [Program](#) [Participants](#) [Organizers](#)

### Aim:

Inductive theorem proving is a topic of growing interest in the automated reasoning community. The Workshop on Automated Inductive Theorem Proving - WAIT focuses on this topic.



## Fourth International Workshop on Automated (Co)inductive Theorem P

28–29 June 2018, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Co-located with **Matryoshka 2018**

We invite talks featuring de

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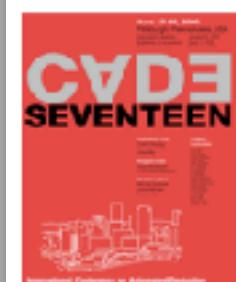
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Held in Connection with  
The 17th International Conference on  
June 17-20, 2000  
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### CALL FOR

Proof by Mathematical Induction presents the automated reasoning community with some very challenging problems. The aim of this one day workshop is to create an international forum where the latest developments and emerging techniques can be presented and discussed.

The workshop will feature invited talks, poster presentations, and ample time for discussion regarding the topics.

- Inductive theorem proving and related topics



IJCAI.thy (-/Workplace/PSL/Example)

```
primrec rev1:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
  "rev1 []      = []"
| "rev1 (x # xs) = rev1 xs @ [x]"

fun rev2:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
  "rev2 []      ys = ys"
| "rev2 (x # xs) ys = rev2 xs (x # ys)"

lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
oops
```

Proof state  Auto update  Update Search:  100%

```
proof (prove)
goal (1 subgoal):
  1. rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys
```

IJCAI.thy (-/Workplace/PSL/Example)

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| "rev2 (x # xs) ys = rev2 xs (x # ys)"

lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
apply (induct "xs" arbitrary:ys)
oops
```

Proof state  Auto update Update Search:  100% 

```
proof (prove)
goal (2 subgoals):
1. ⋀ys. rev2 [] ys = rev [] @ ys
2. ⋀a xs ys.
   (⋀ys. rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys) ⟹
   rev2 (a # xs) ys = rev (a # xs) @ ys
```

```
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lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
apply (induct "xs" arbitrary:ys)
apply auto
```

```
proof (prove)
goal:
No subgoals!
```

# Smart Induction for Isabelle/HOL (Tool Paper)

Yutaka Nagashima    
 CIIRC, Czech Technical University in Prague  
 University of Innsbruck  
 Email: yutaka.nagashima@cvut.cz

**Abstract**—Proof assistants offer tactics to facilitate inductive proofs; however, deciding what arguments to pass to these tactics still requires human ingenuity. To automate this process, we present `smart_induct` for Isabelle/HOL. Given an inductive problem in any problem domain, `smart_induct` lists promising arguments for the `induct` tactic without relying on a search. Our in-depth evaluation demonstrate that `smart_induct` produces valuable recommendations across problem domains. Currently, `smart_induct` is an interactive tool; however, we expect that `smart_induct` can be used to narrow the search space of automatic inductive provers.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Proof by induction lies at the heart of verification of computer programs that involve recursive data-structures, recursion, or iteration [1]. To facilitate proofs by induction, interactive theorem provers, such as Isabelle/HOL [2], Coq [3], and HOL[4], offers tactics. Yet, it requires prover specific expertise to be familiar with such tactics, and human developers have to manually investigate each inductive problem to decide how to apply such tactics.

Unfortunately, the automation of proof by induction is considered as a long standing challenge in computer science, for which Gramlich [1] presented the following conjecture in 2005:

in the near future, inductive theorem proving will only be successful for very specialised domains for very restricted classes of conjectures. Inductive theorem proving will continue to be a very challenging engineering process [1].

We challenge his conjecture with `smart_induct`, a recommendation tool for proof by induction in Isabelle/HOL. Given an inductive problem in *any* domain, `smart_induct` suggests how one should apply the `induct` tactic to attack that problem.

## II. PROOF BY INDUCTION IN ISABELLE/HOL

Given the following two simple reverse functions defined in Isabelle/HOL [2], how do you prove their equivalence [5]?

```
primrec rev::" $\alpha$  list  $\Rightarrow$   $\alpha$  list" where
  "rev [] = []"
  | "rev (x # xs) = rev xs @ [x]"

fun itrev::" $\alpha$  list  $\Rightarrow$   $\alpha$  list  $\Rightarrow$   $\alpha$  list" where
  "itrev [] ys = ys"
  | "itrev (x#xs) ys = itrev xs (x#ys)"
```

lemma "itrev xs ys = rev xs @ ys"

where `#` is the list constructor, and `@` appends two lists. Using the `induct` tactic of Isabelle/HOL, we can prove this inductive problem in multiple ways:

```
lemma prf1: "itrev xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
  apply(induct xs arbitrary: ys) by auto
lemma prf2: "itrev xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
  apply(induct xs ys rule:itrev.induct)
  by auto
```

`prf1` applies structural induction on `xs` while generalising `ys` before applying induction by passing `ys` to the `arbitrary` field. It is worth noting that the `induct` tactic determines the default induction principle in `prf1` from the induction term, `xs`. On the other hand, `prf2` applies functional induction (also known as computation induction) on `itrev` by the induction principle, `itrev.induct`, to the `rule` field.

There are other lesser-known techniques to handle difficult inductive problems using the `induct` tactic, and sometimes users have to develop useful auxiliary lemmas manually; however, for most cases the problem of how to apply induction boils down to the the following three questions:

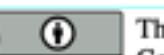
- On which terms to apply induction?
- Which variables to generalise using the `arbitrary` field?
- Which rule to use for functional induction or rule inversion (as known as rule induction) in the `rule` field?

To answer these questions automatically, we previously developed a proof strategy language, PSL [6]. Given an inductive problem, PSL produces various combinations of induction arguments for the `induct` tactic and conducts an extensive proof search based on a given strategy. If PSL completes a proof search, it identifies the appropriate combination of arguments for the problem and presents the combination to the user; however, when the search space becomes enormous, PSL cannot find a proof within a realistic timeout and fails to provide any recommendation, even if PSL produces the right combination of induction arguments. For further automation of proof by induction, we need a tool that satisfies the following two criteria:

- The tool suggests right induction arguments without completing a proof search.
- The tool suggests right induction arguments for any inductive problems.



[https://doi.org/10.34727/2020/isbn.978-3-85448-042-6\\_32](https://doi.org/10.34727/2020/isbn.978-3-85448-042-6_32)



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```

lemma "itrev xs ys = ..."  
where # is the list construct...  
Using the `induct` tactic of I...  
inductive problem in multiple...  
lemma prf1: "itrev xs ys = ..."  
apply(induct xs ar...  
lemma prf2: "itrev xs ys = ..."  
apply(induct xs ys ...  
by auto

prf1 applies structural induct...  
before applying induction by...  
field. It is worth noting that th...  
default induction principle in...  
xs. On the other hand, prf2 (also known as computation...  
induction principle, `itrev.induct`)...  
There are other lesser-known...  
inductive problems using the...  
users have to develop useful...  
however, for most cases the pr...  
boils down to the the following...  
• On which terms to apply...  
• Which variables to gen...  
field?  
• Which rule to use for fu...  
sion (as known as rule in...  
To answer these questions a...  
developed a proof strategy langu...  
problem, PSL produces vari...  
arguments for the `induct` t...  
proof search based on a giv...  
a proof search, it identifies the appropriate combination of...  
arguments for the problem and presents the combination to...  
the user; however, when the search space becomes enormous,...  
PSL cannot find a proof within a realistic timeout and fails to...  
provide any recommendation, even if PSL produces the right...  
combination of induction arguments. For further automation of...  
proof by induction, we need a tool that satisfies the following...  
two criteria:

- The tool suggests right induction arguments without...  
completing a proof search.
- The tool suggests right induction arguments for any...  
inductive problems.

## V. CONCLUSION

We presented `smart_induct`, a recommendation tool for proof by induction in Isabelle/HOL. Our evaluation showed `smart_induct`'s excellent performance in recommending how to apply functional induction and rule inversion and good performance at identifying induction variables for structural induction for various inductive problems across problem domains. This partially refutes Gramlich's bleak conjecture from 2005. However, recommendation of variable generalisation remains as a challenging task.

# Smart Induction for Isabelle/HOL (Tool Paper)

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University of Innsbruck  
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**Abstract**—Proof assistants offer tactics to facilitate inductive proofs; however, deciding what arguments to pass to these tactics still requires human ingenuity. To automate this process, we present `smart_induct` for Isabelle/HOL. Given an inductive problem in any problem domain, `smart_induct` lists promising arguments for the `induct` tactic without relying on a search. Our in-depth evaluation demonstrate that `smart_induct` produces valuable recommendations across problem domains. Currently, `smart_induct` is an interactive tool; however, we expect that `smart_induct` can be used to narrow the search space of automatic inductive provers.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Proof by induction lies at the heart of verification of computer programs that involve recursive data-structures, recursion, or iteration [1]. To facilitate proofs by induction, interactive theorem provers, such as Isabelle/HOL [2], Coq [3], and HOL[4], offers tactics. Yet, it requires prover specific expertise to be familiar with such tactics, and human developers have to manually investigate each inductive problem to decide how to apply such tactics.

Unfortunately, the automation of proof by induction is considered as a long standing challenge in computer science, for which Gramlich [1] presented the following conjecture in 2005:

in the near future, inductive theorem proving will only be successful for very specialised domains for very restricted classes of conjectures. Inductive theorem proving will continue to be a very challenging engineering process [1].

We challenge his conjecture with `smart_induct`, a recommendation tool for proof by induction in Isabelle/HOL. Given an inductive problem in *any* domain, `smart_induct` suggests how one should apply the `induct` tactic to attack that problem.

## II. PROOF BY INDUCTION IN ISABELLE/HOL

Given the following two simple reverse functions defined in Isabelle/HOL [2], how do you prove their equivalence [5]?

```
primrec rev::" $\alpha$  list  $\Rightarrow$   $\alpha$  list" where
  "rev [] = []"
  | "rev (x # xs) = rev xs @ [x]"

fun itrev::" $\alpha$  list  $\Rightarrow$   $\alpha$  list  $\Rightarrow$   $\alpha$  list" where
  "itrev [] ys = ys"
  | "itrev (x#xs) ys = itrev xs (x#ys)"
```

```
lemma "itrev xs ys =
where # is the list construct
Using the induct tactic of I
inductive problem in multiple
lemma prf1: "itrev xs ys
apply(induct xs ar
lemma prf2: "itrev xs ys
apply(induct xs ys
by auto

prf1 applies structural induct
before applying induction by
field. It is worth noting that the
default induction principle in
xs. On the other hand, prf2
(also known as computation
induction principle, itrev.i)
```

There are other lesser-known inductive problems using the `itrev` function. However, for most cases the problem boils down to the following:

- On which terms to apply
- Which variables to generalise
- Which rule to use for functional induction (as known as rule inversion)

To answer these questions a proof strategy language, PSL, was developed. PSL produces various arguments for the `induct` tactic. During a proof search based on a given combination of induction arguments, it identifies the appropriate combination of arguments for the problem and presents the combination to the user; however, when the search space becomes enormous, PSL cannot find a proof within a realistic timeout and fails to provide any recommendation, even if PSL produces the right combination of induction arguments. For further automation of proof by induction, we need a tool that satisfies the following two criteria:

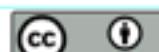
- The tool suggests right induction arguments without completing a proof search.
- The tool suggests right induction arguments for any inductive problems.

## V. CONCLUSION

We presented `smart_induct`, a recommendation tool for proof by induction in Isabelle/HOL. Our evaluation showed `smart_induct`'s excellent performance in recommending how to apply functional induction and rule inversion and good performance at identifying induction variables for structural induction for various inductive problems across problem domains. This partially refutes Gramlich's bleak conjecture from 2005. However, recommendation of variable generalisation remains as a challenging task.



[https://doi.org/10.34727/2020/isbn.978-3-85448-042-6\\_32](https://doi.org/10.34727/2020/isbn.978-3-85448-042-6_32)



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<https://www.ijcai.org/proceedings/2021/273>

# Faster Smarter Proof by Induction in Isabelle/HOL

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## Abstract

We present `sem.ind`, a recommendation tool for proof by induction in Isabelle/HOL. Given an inductive problem, `sem.ind` produces candidate arguments for proof by induction, and selects promising ones using heuristics. Our evaluation based on 1,095 inductive problems from 22 source files shows that `sem.ind` improves the accuracy of recommendation from 20.1% to 38.2% for the most promising candidates within 5.0 seconds of timeout compared to its predecessor while decreasing the median value of execution time from 2.79 seconds to 1.06 seconds.

---

## Program 1 Equivalence of two reverse functions

---

```
@ :: α list ⇒ α list ⇒ α list
[]      @ ys = ys
| (x # xs) @ ys = x # (xs @ ys)

rev1 :: α list ⇒ α list
rev1 []      = []
| rev1 (x # xs) = rev1 xs @ [x]

rev2 :: α list ⇒ α list ⇒ α list
rev2 []      ys = ys
| rev2 (x # xs) ys = rev2 xs (x # ys)

theorem rev2 xs ys = rev1 xs @ ys
```

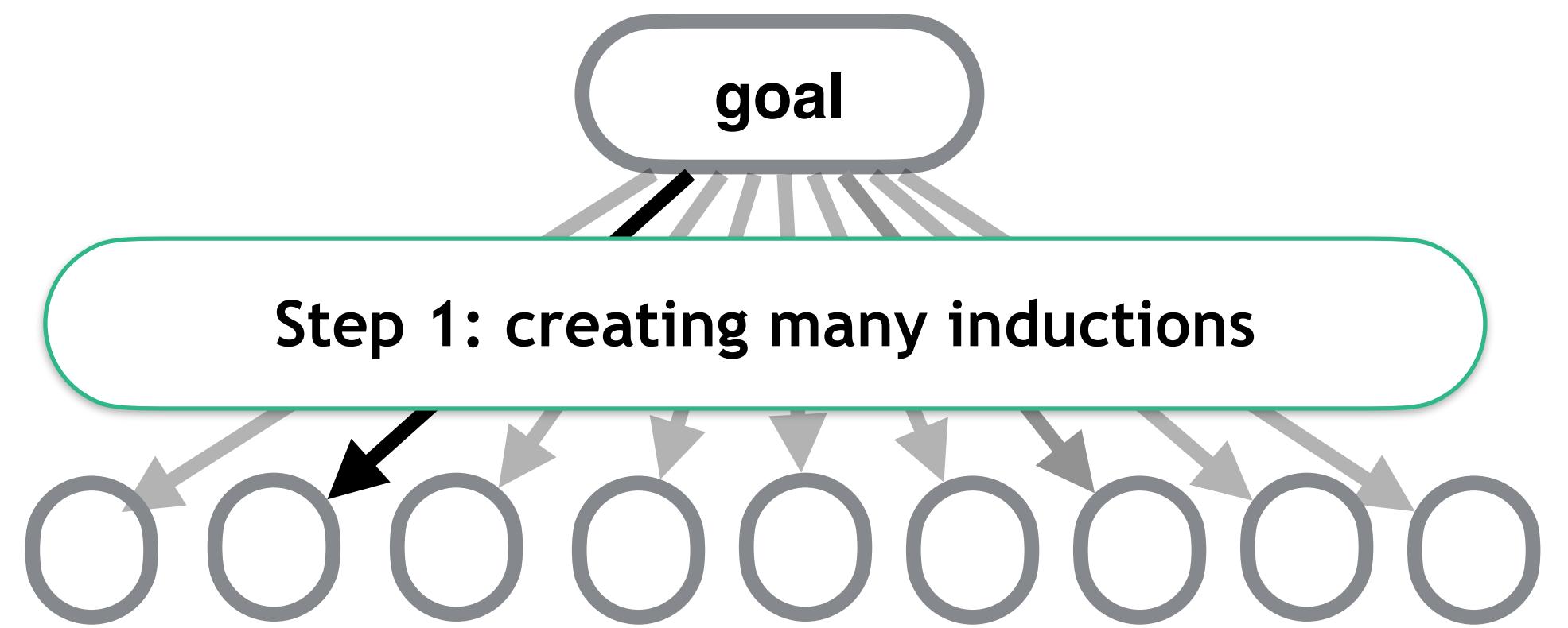
# smart induction

(FMCAD2020)

goal

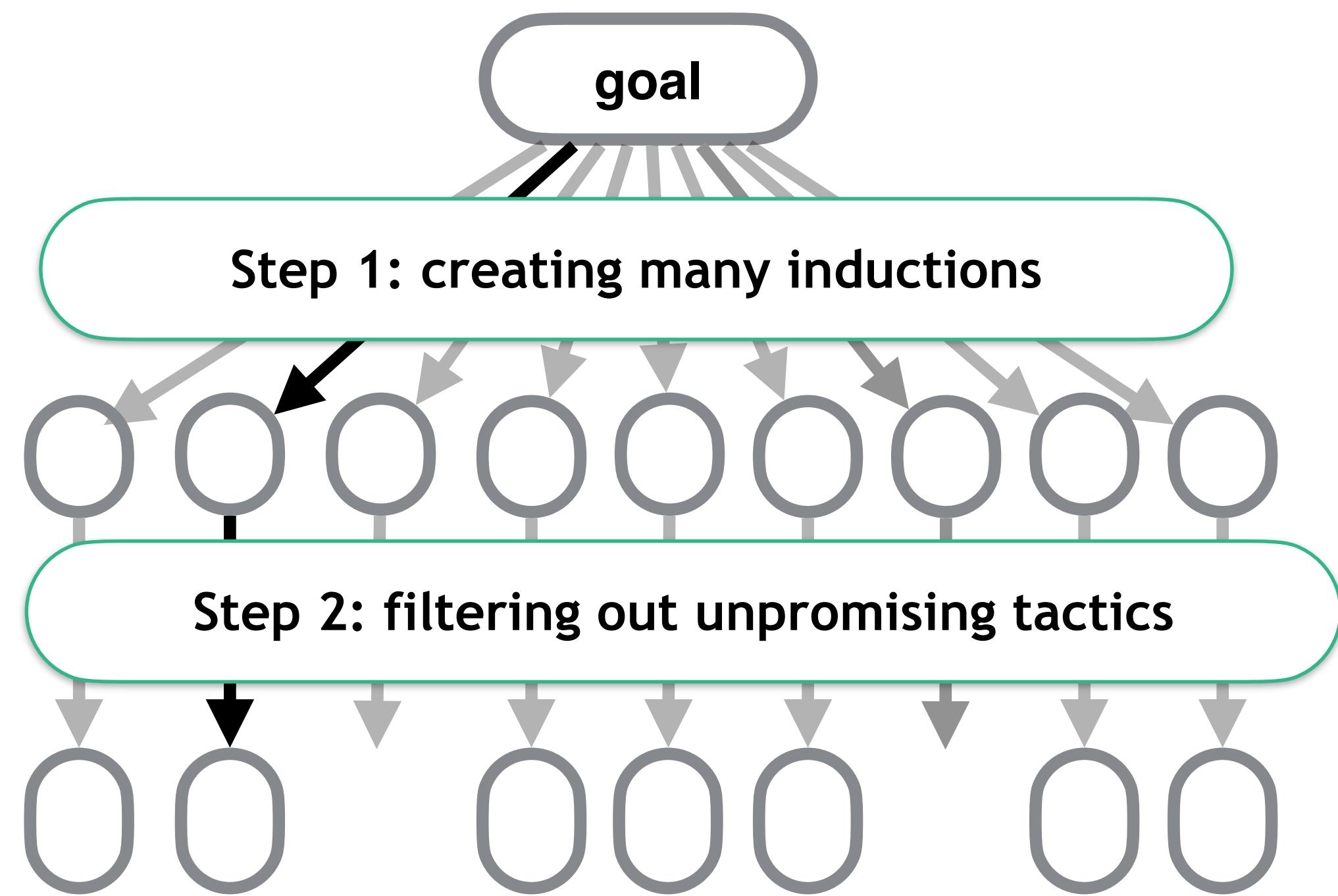
# smart induction

(FMCAD2020)



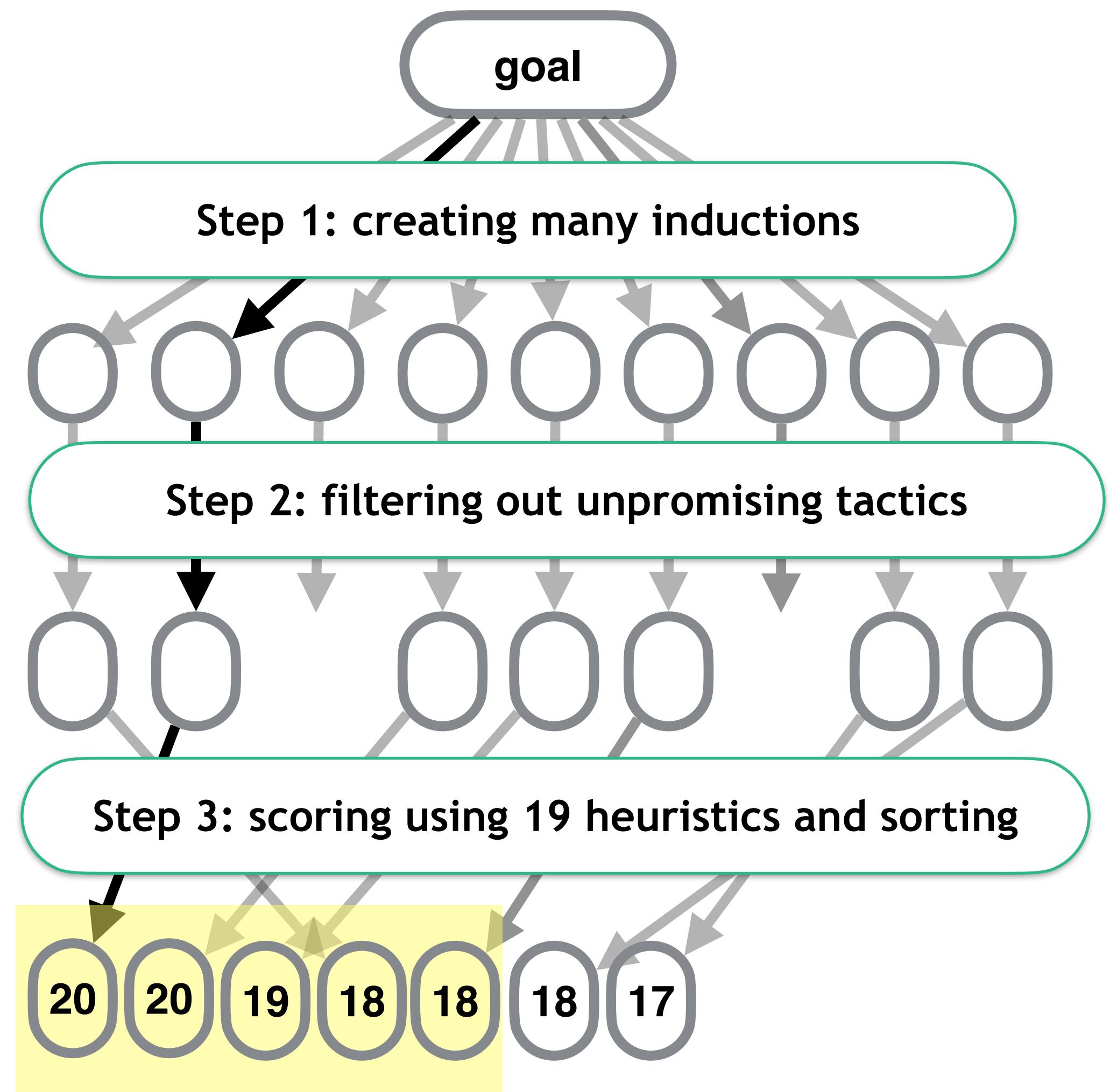
# smart induction

(FMCAD2020)



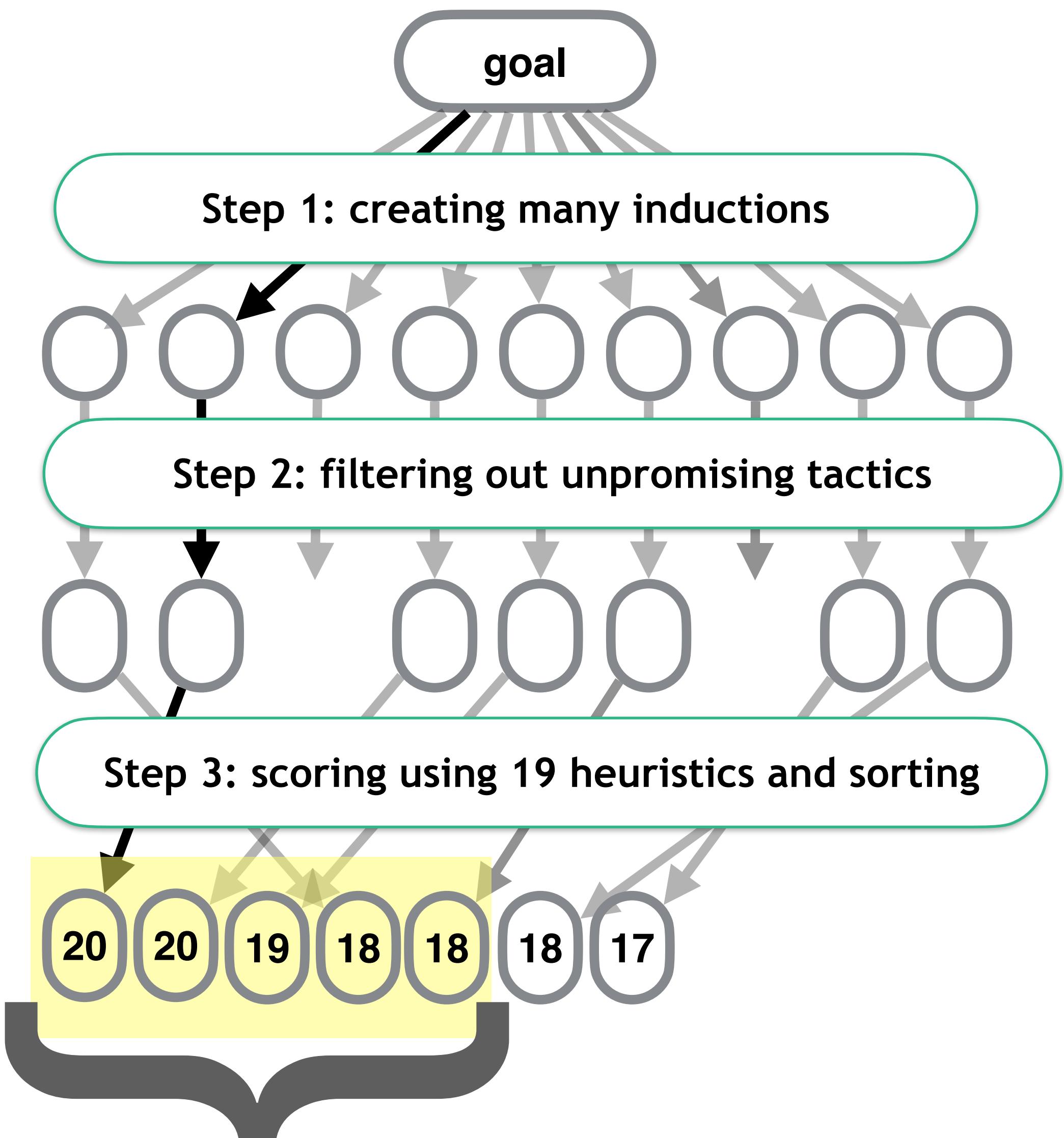
# smart induction

(FMCAD2020)



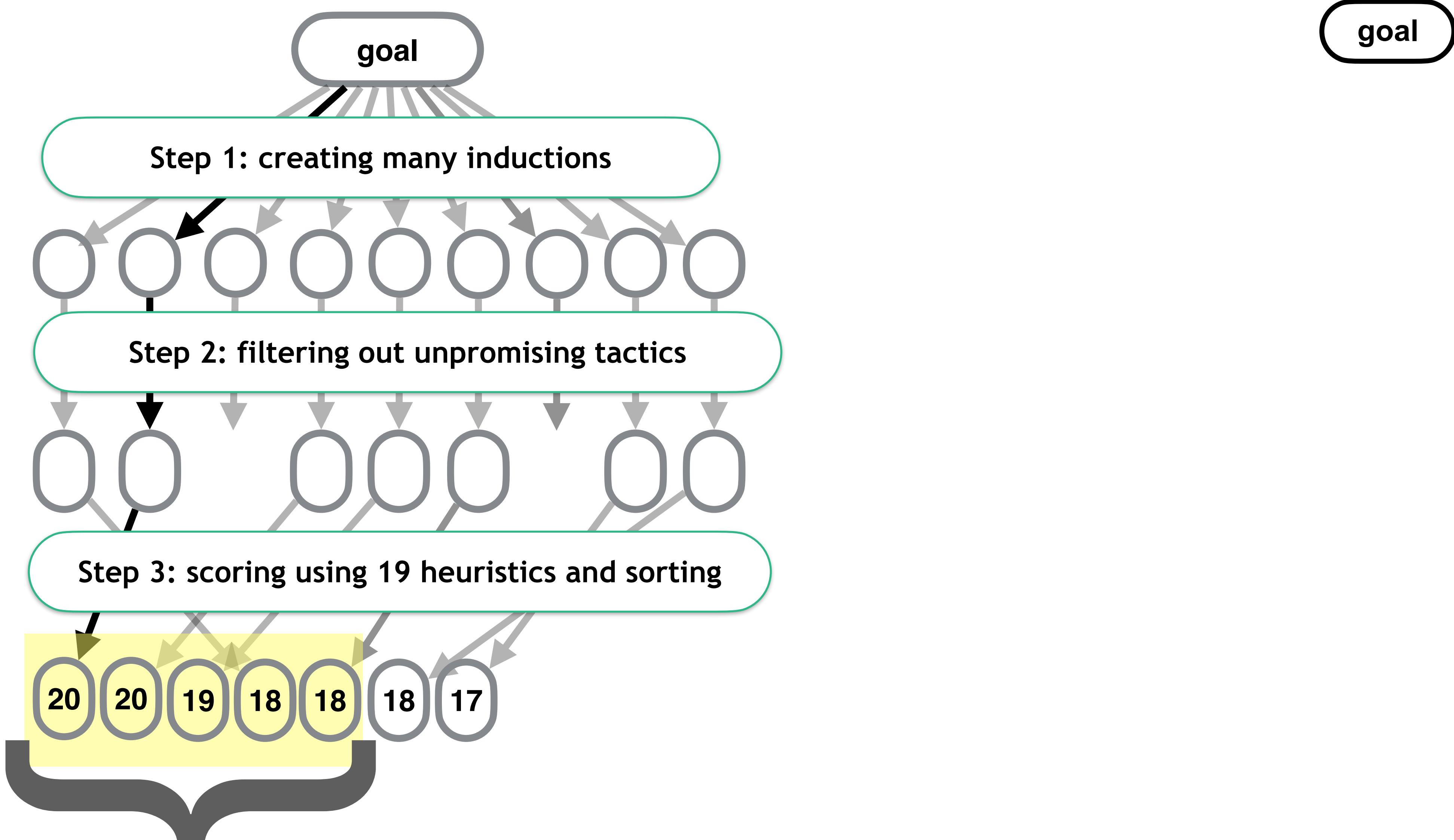
# smart induction

(FMCAD2020)

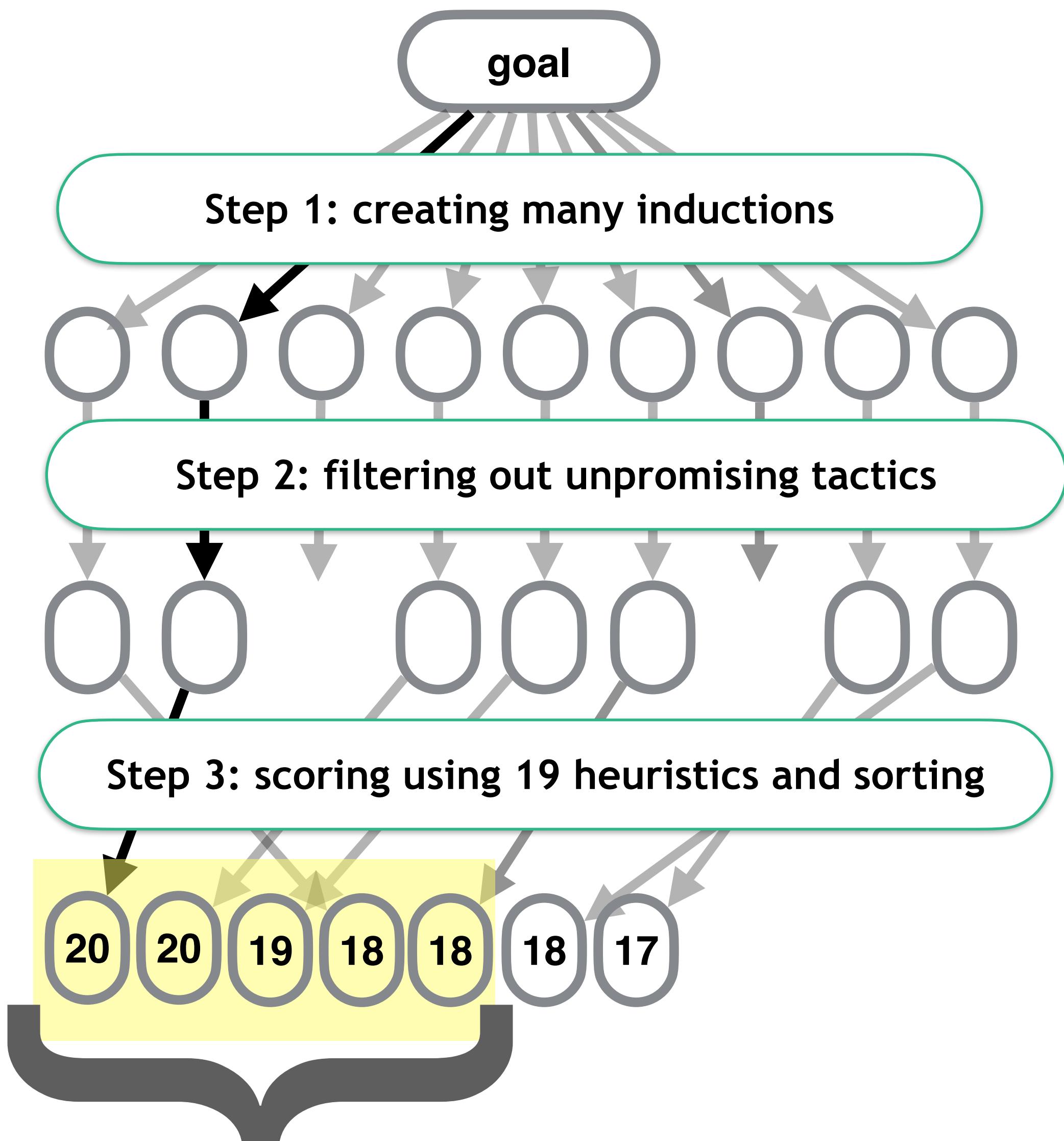


smart induction  
(FMCAD2020)

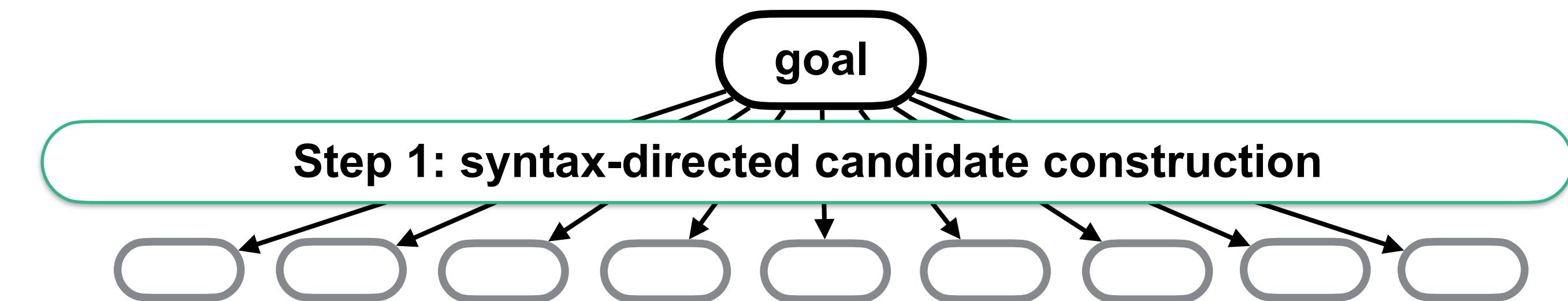
sem\_ind  
(IJCAI2011)



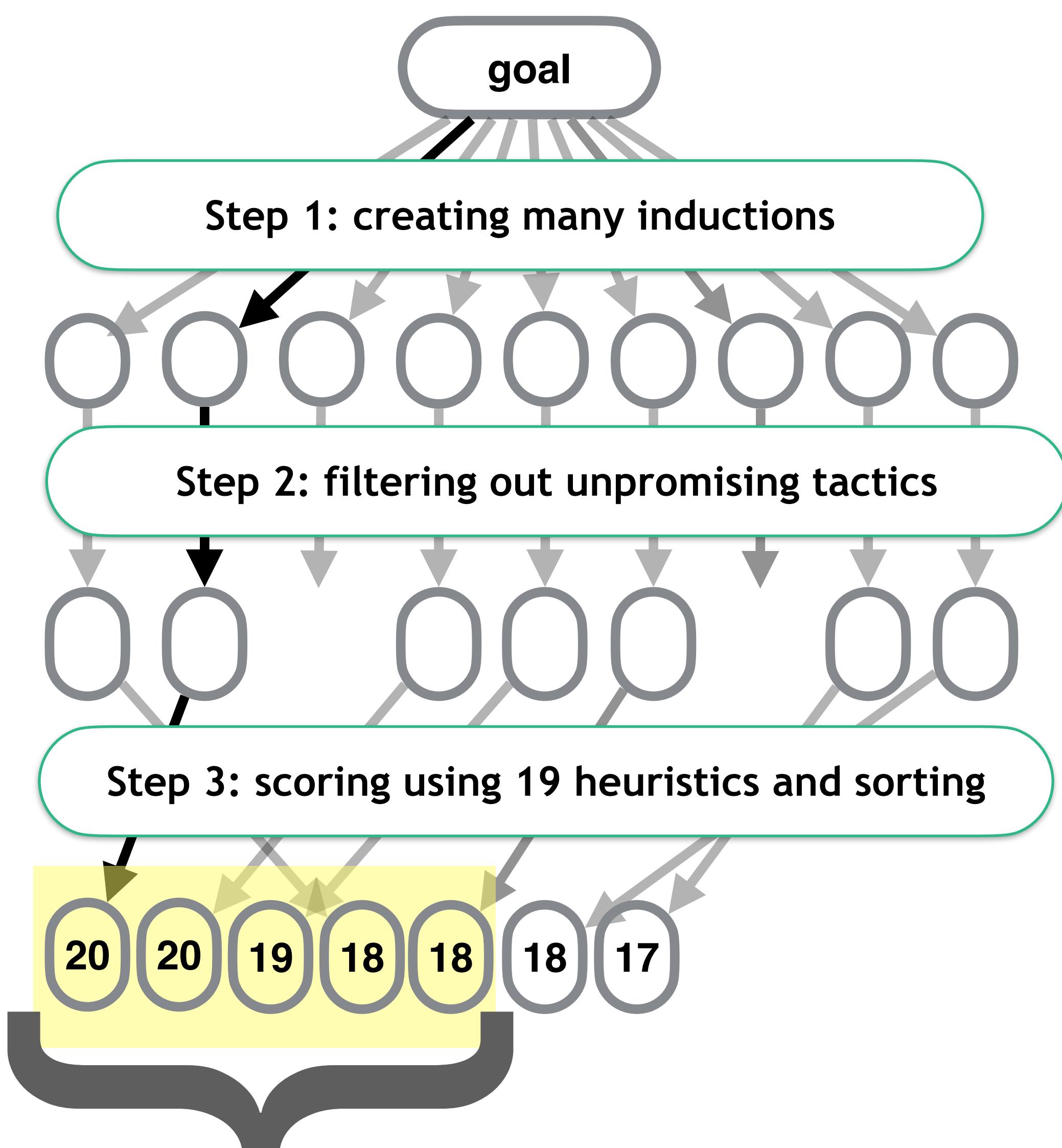
smart induction  
(FMCAD2020)



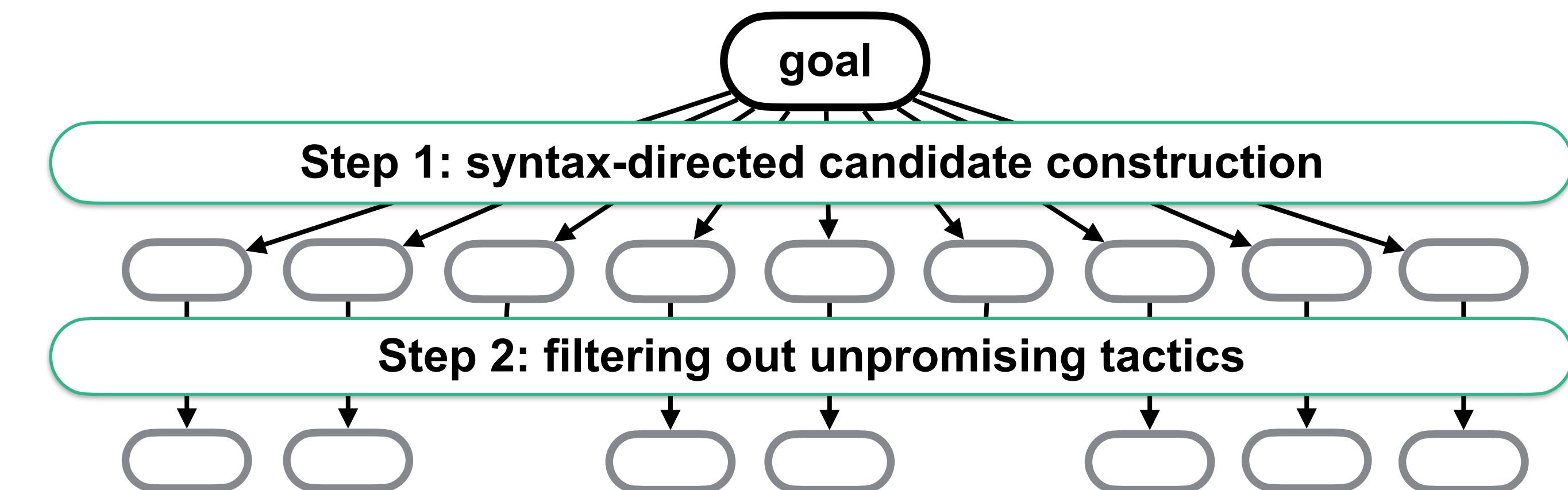
sem\_ind  
(IJCAI2011)



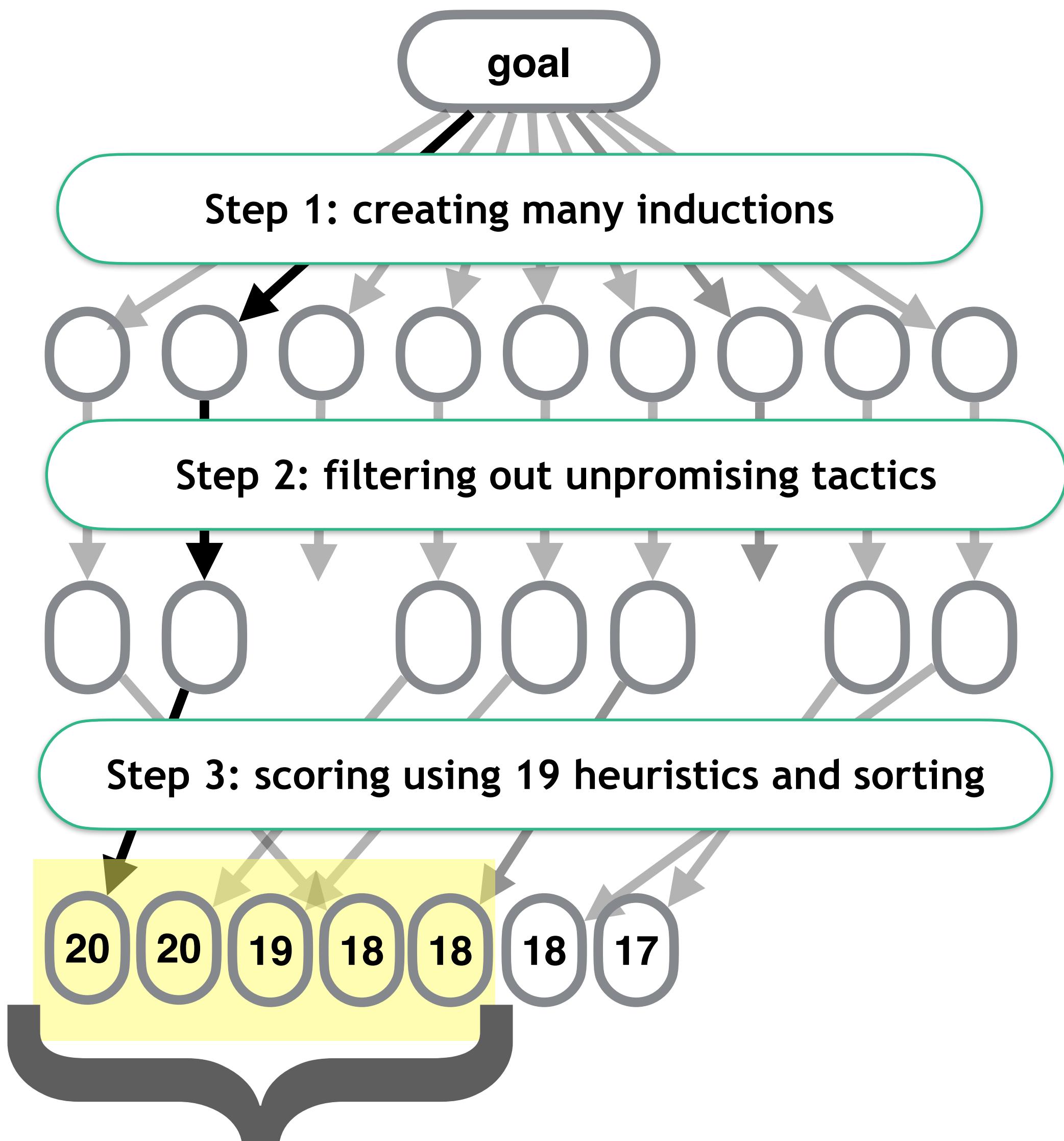
smart induction  
(FMCAD2020)



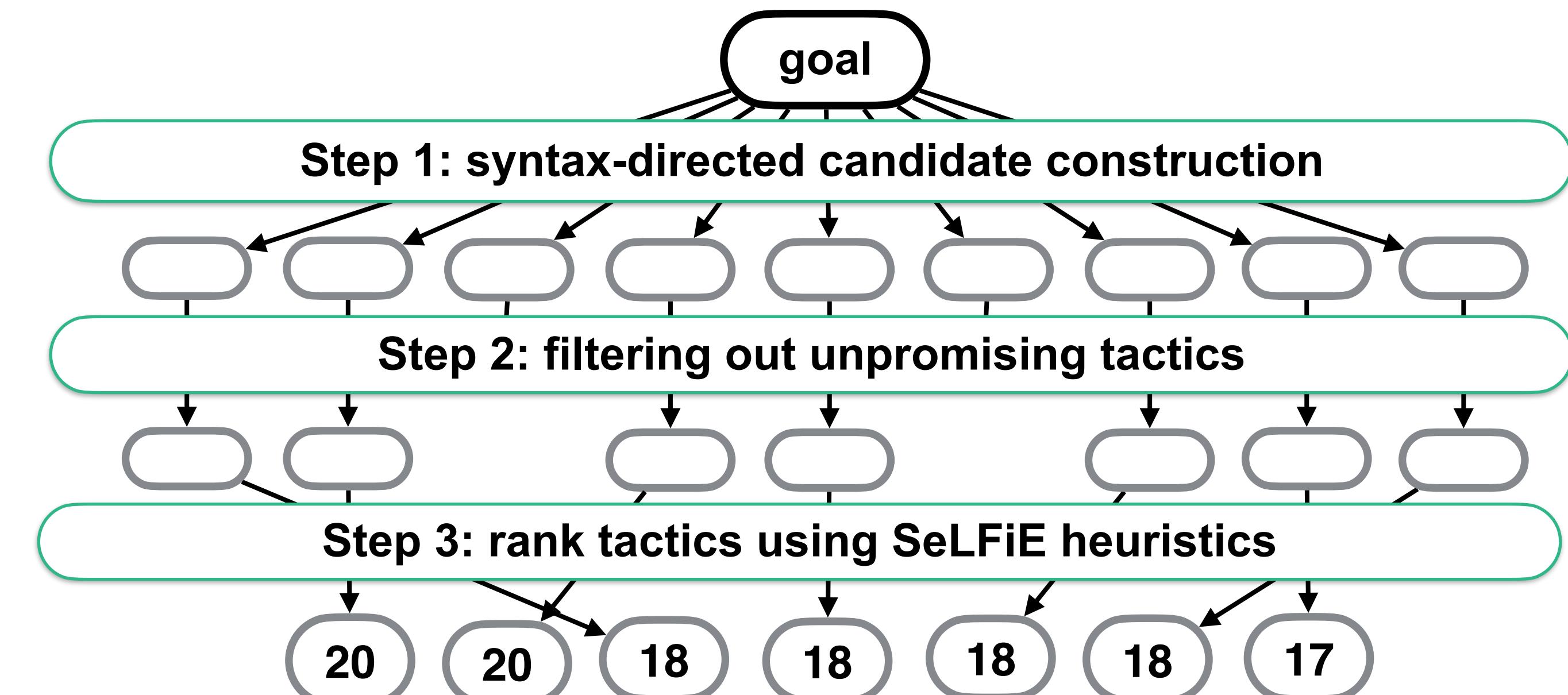
sem\_ind  
(IJCAI2011)



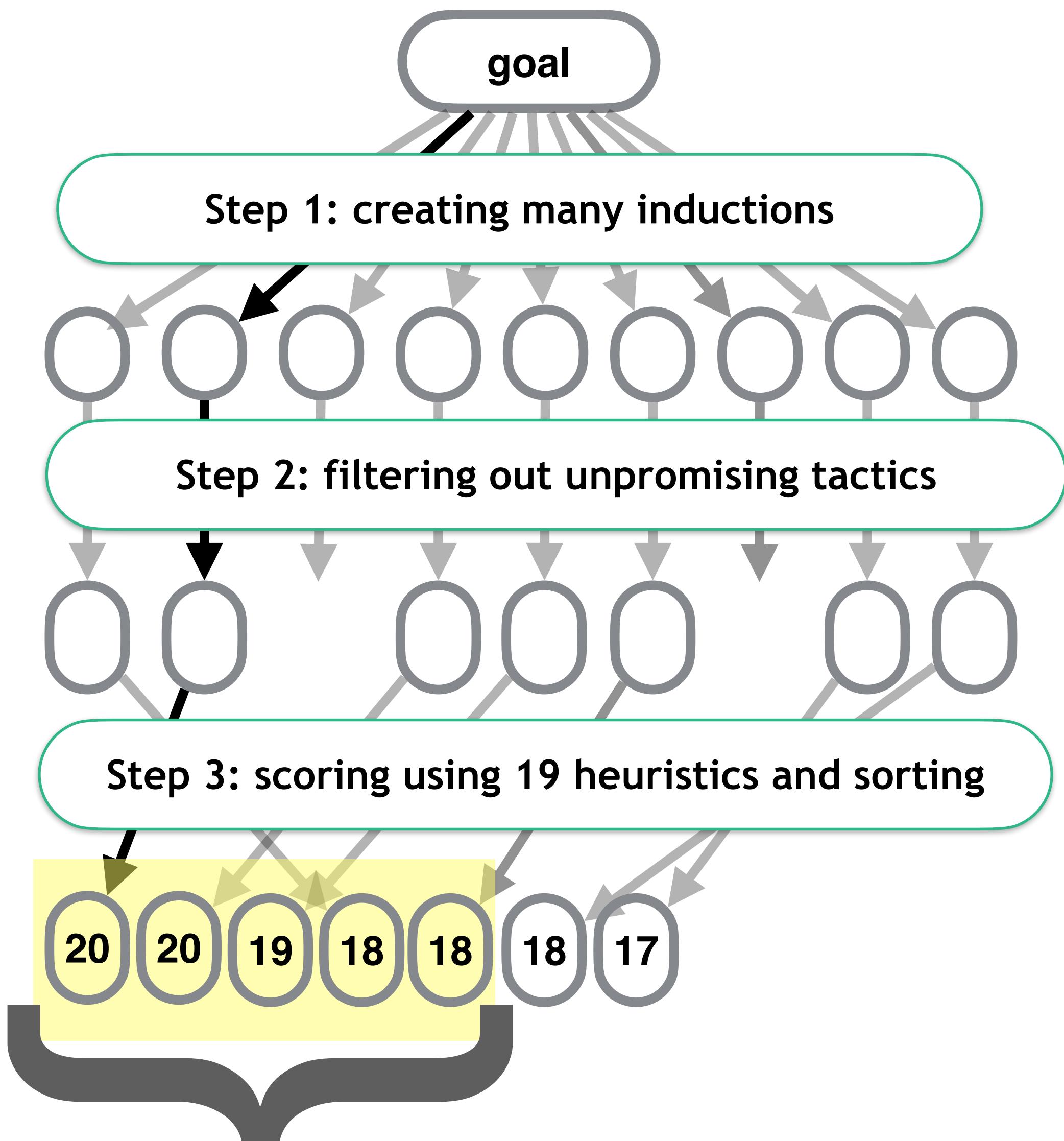
smart induction  
(FMCAD2020)



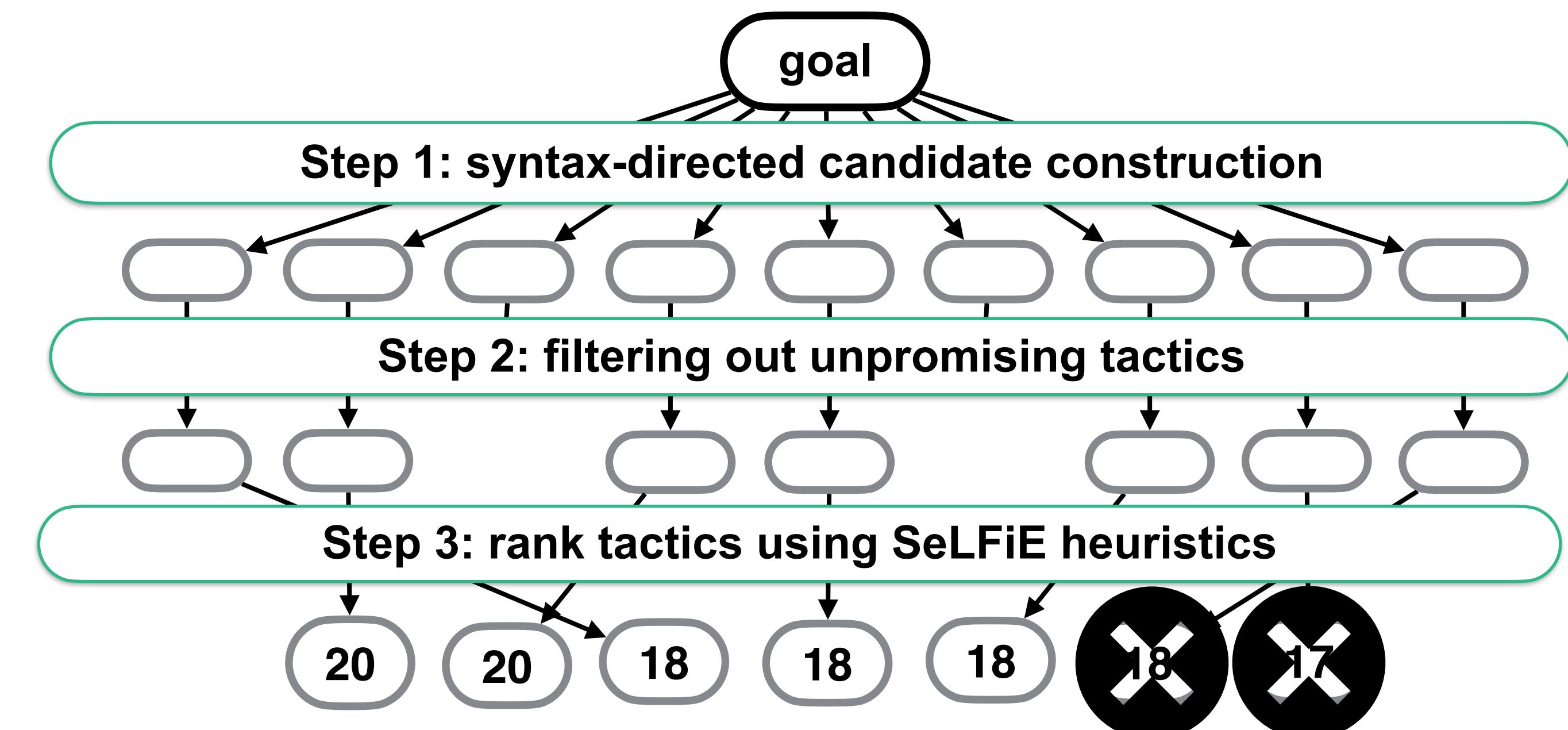
sem\_ind  
(IJCAI2011)



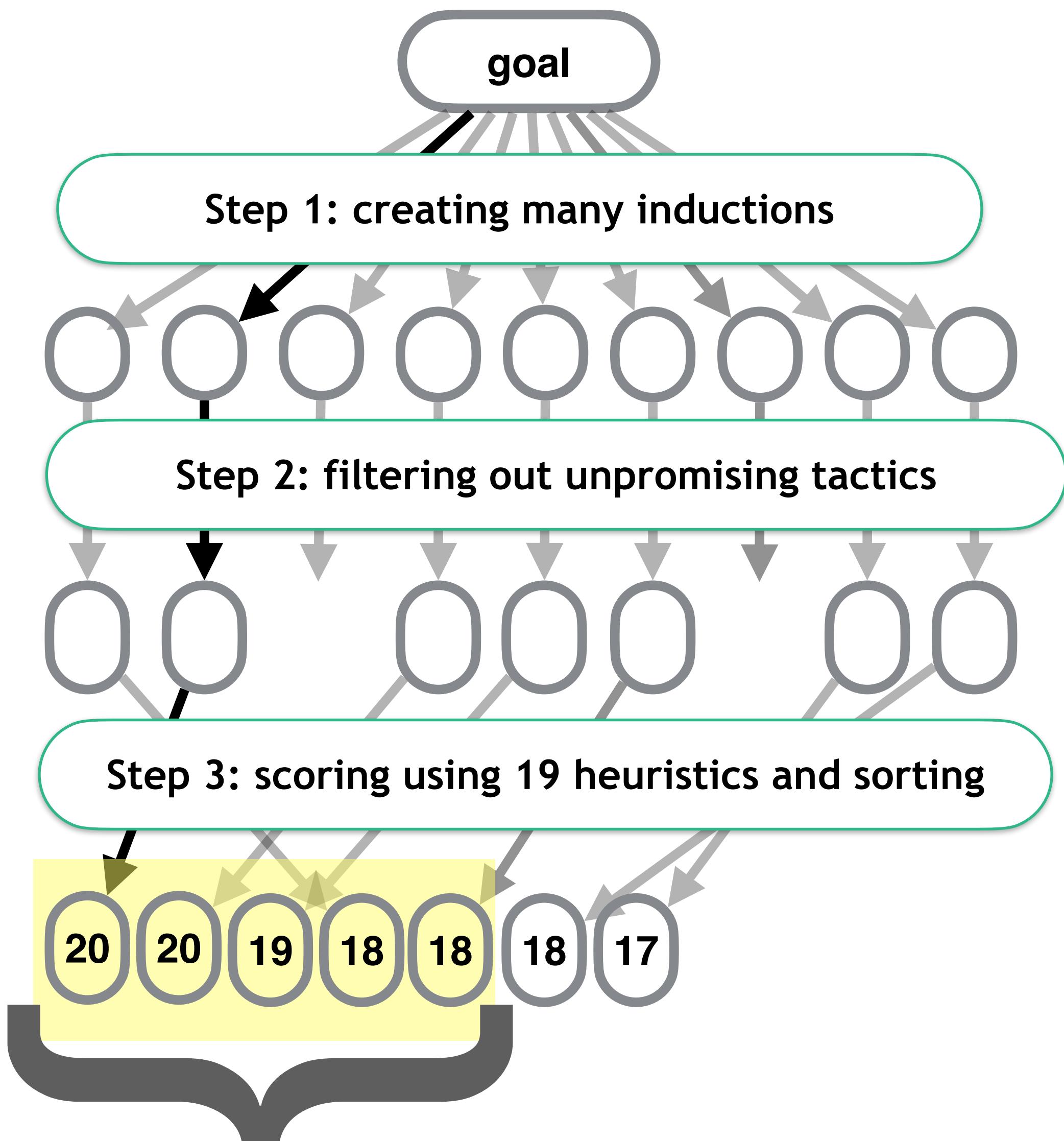
smart induction  
(FMCAD2020)



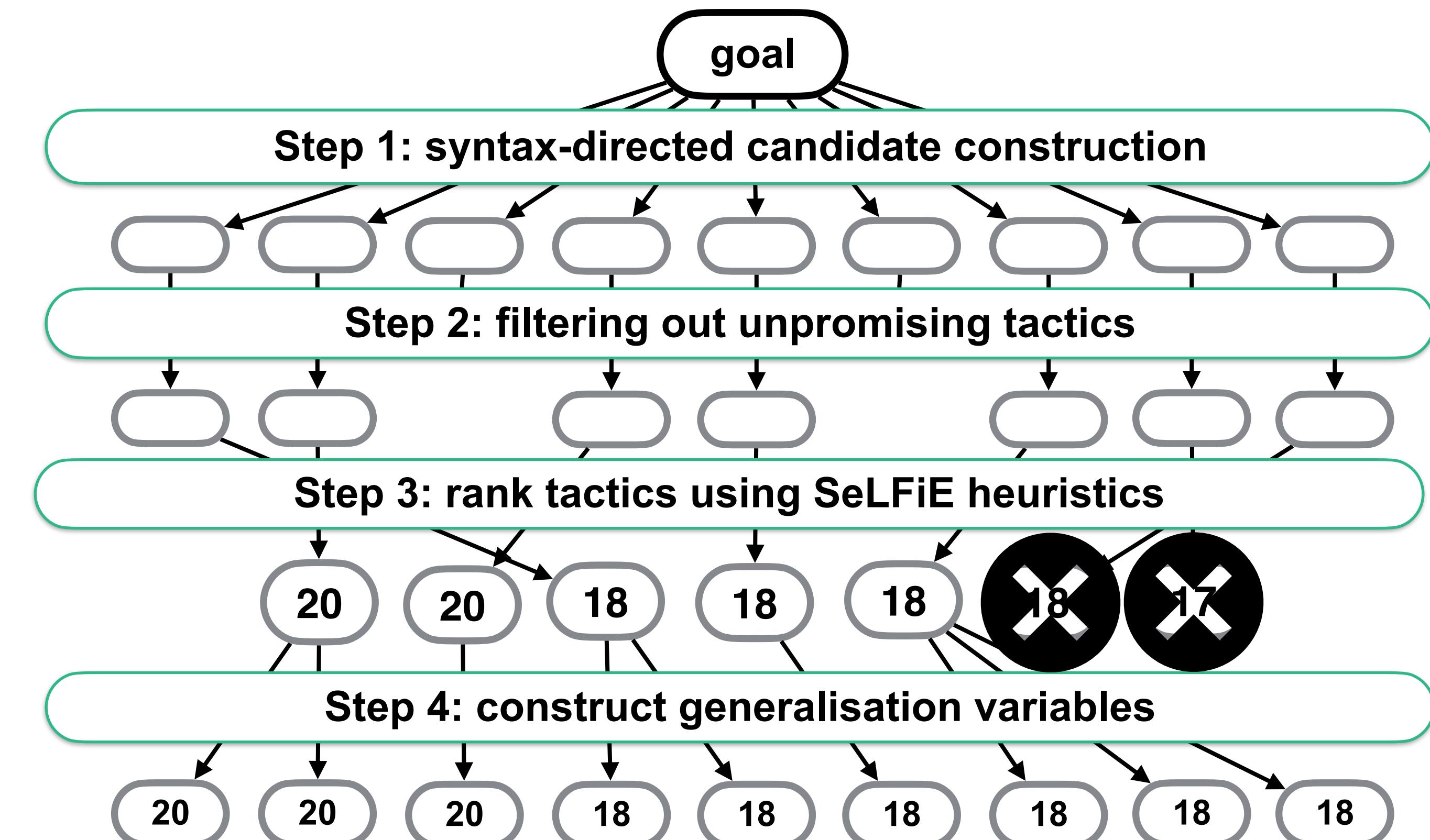
sem\_ind  
(IJCAI2011)



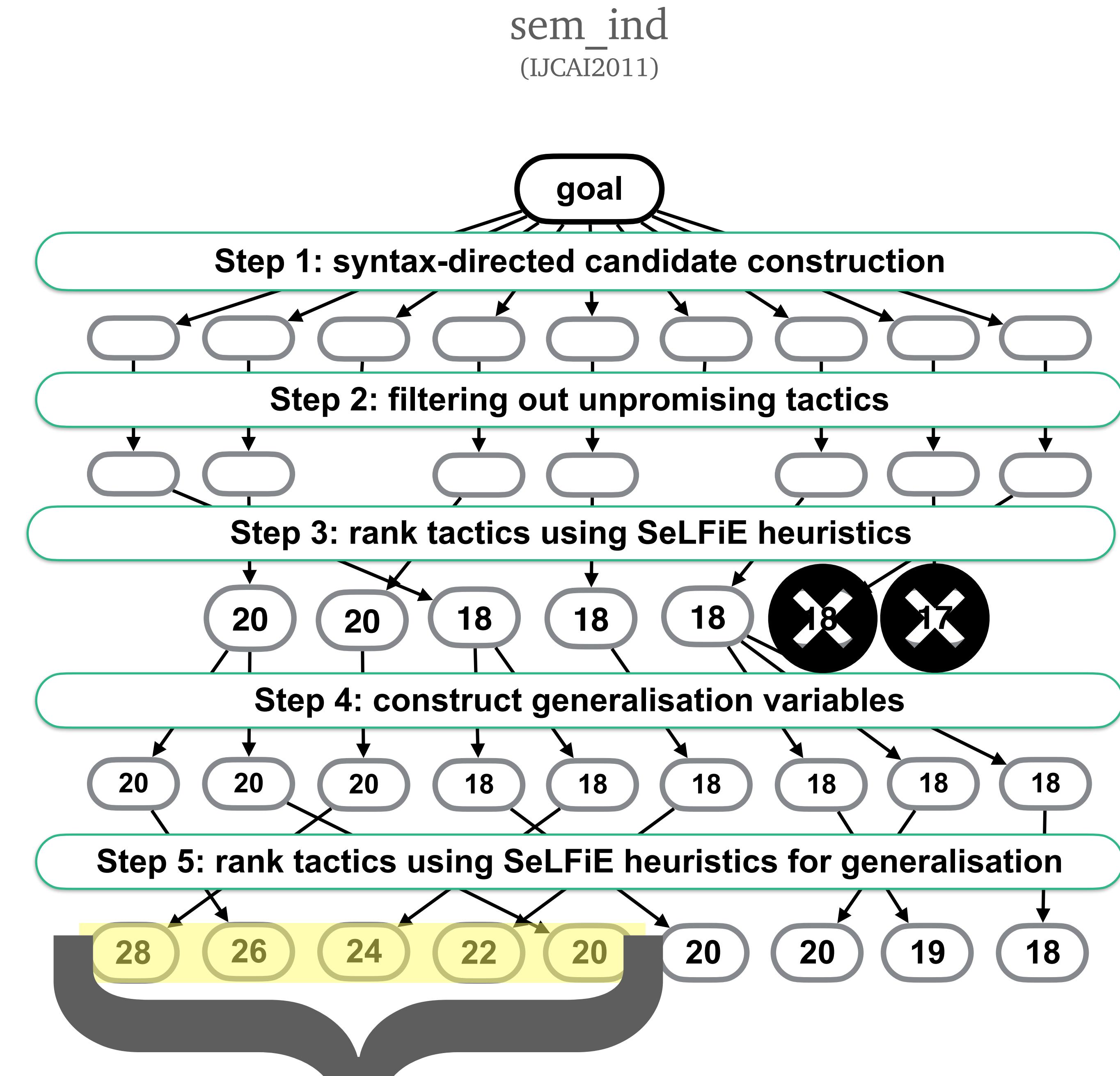
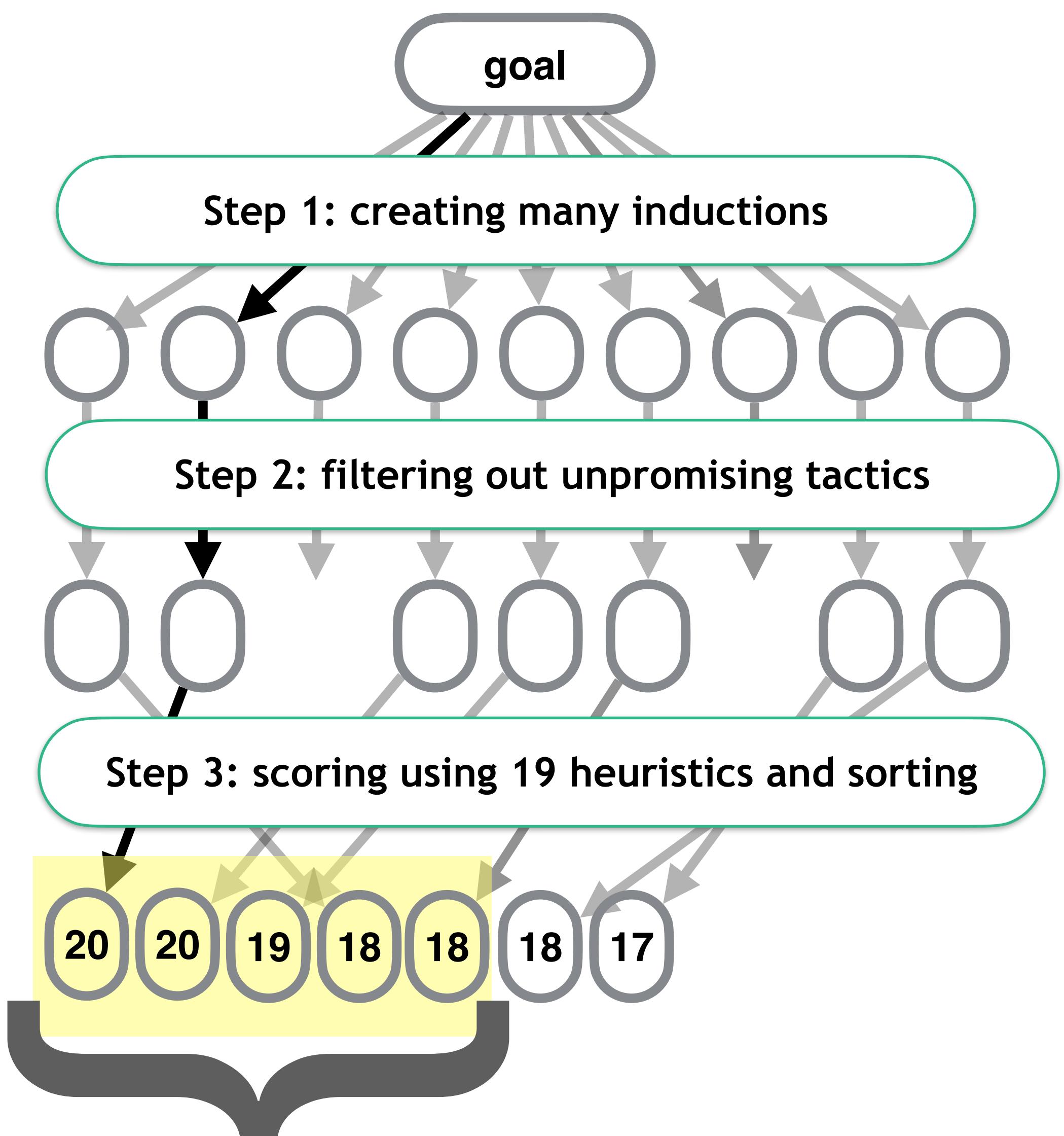
smart induction  
(FMCAD2020)

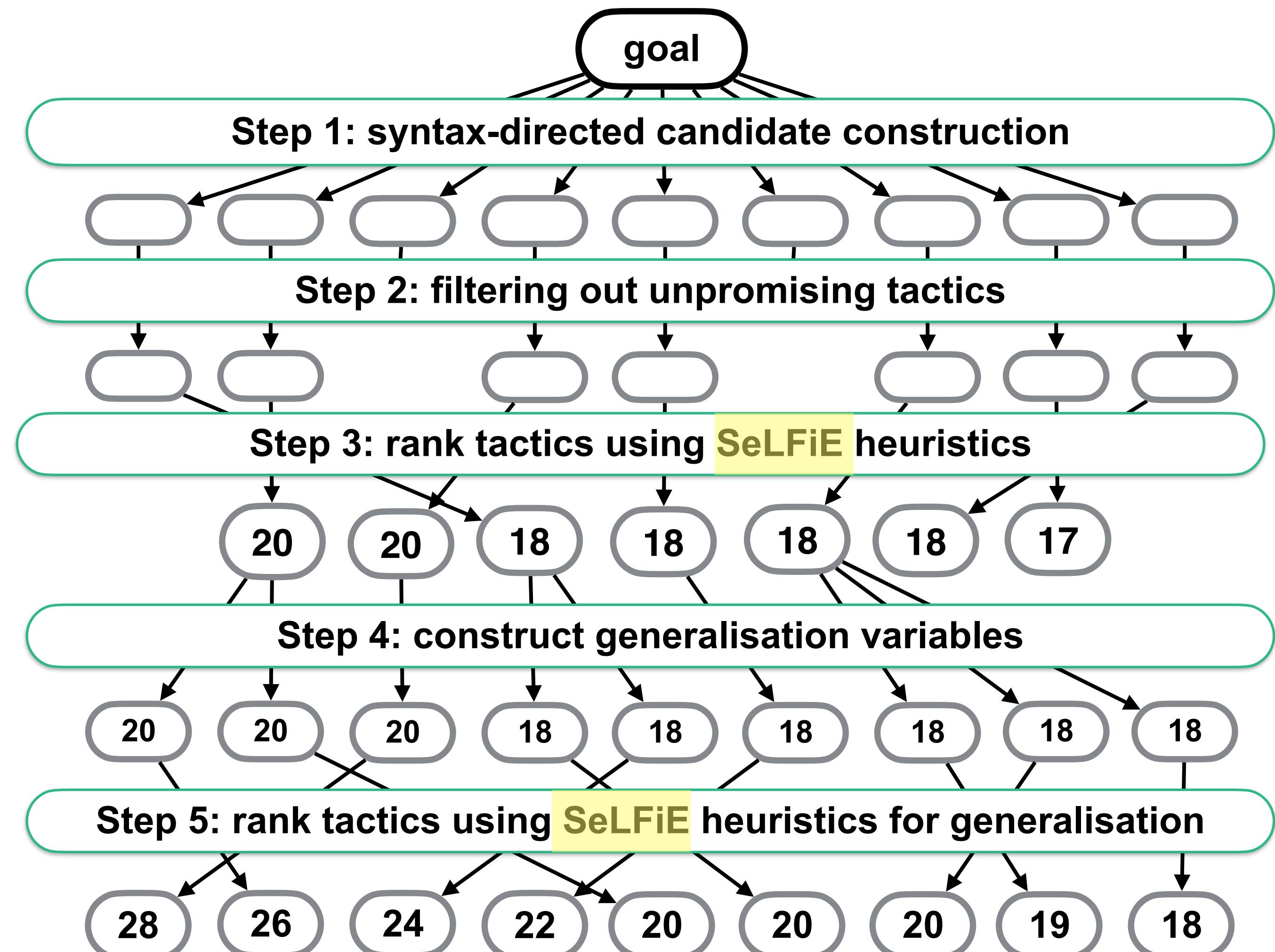


sem\_ind  
(IJCAI2011)

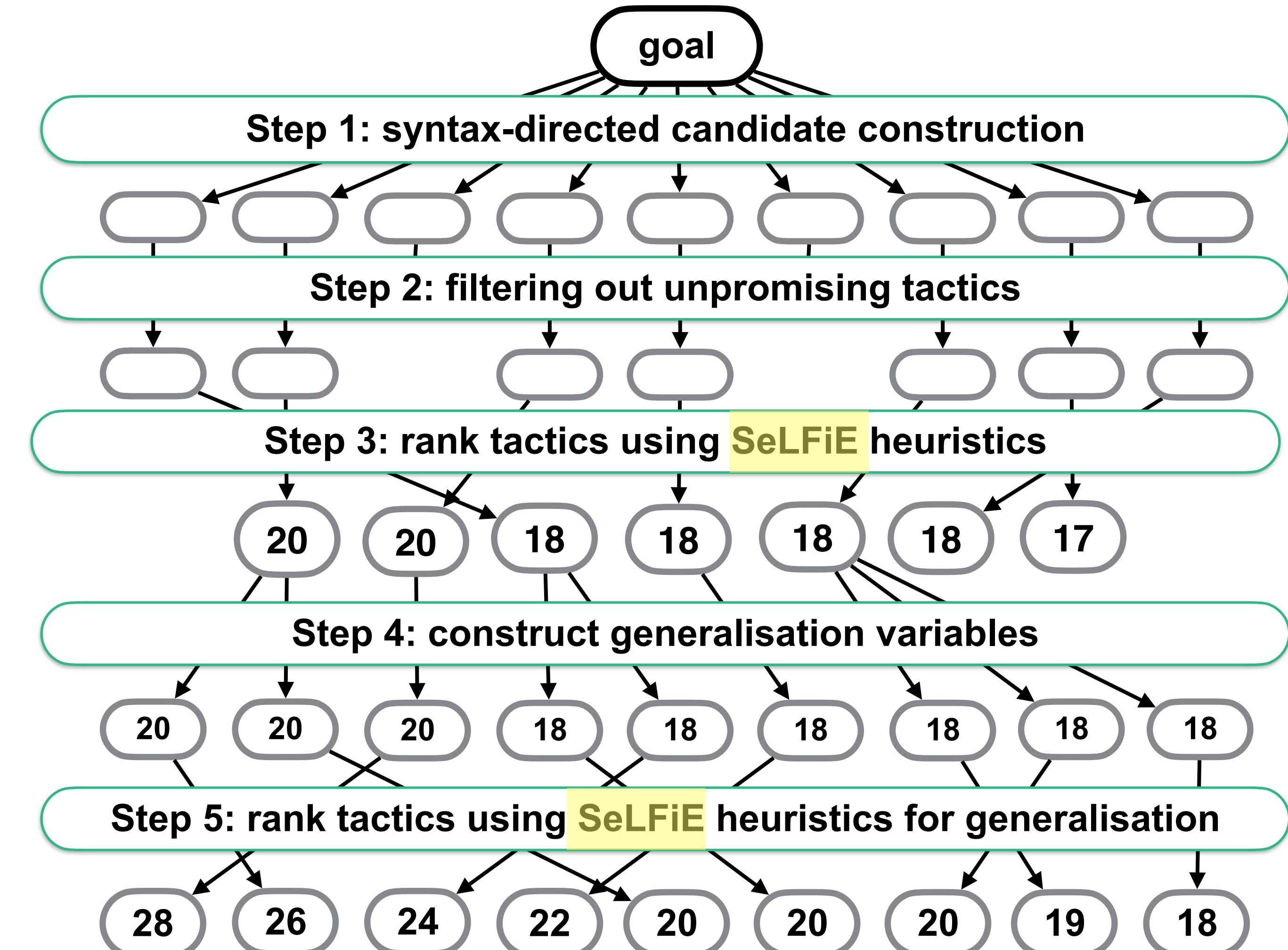
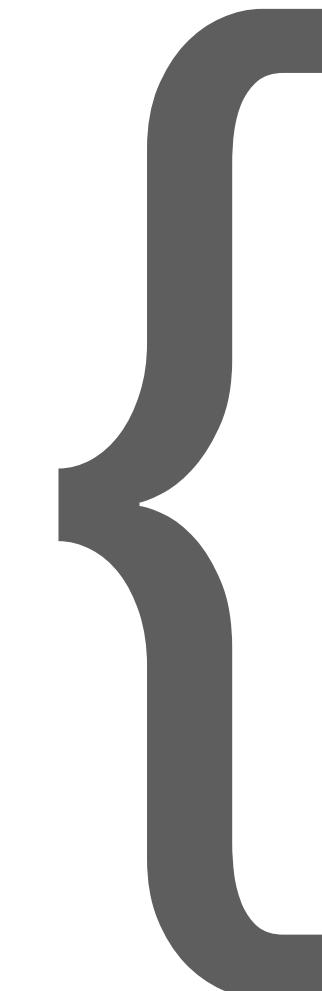


smart induction  
(FMCAD2020)

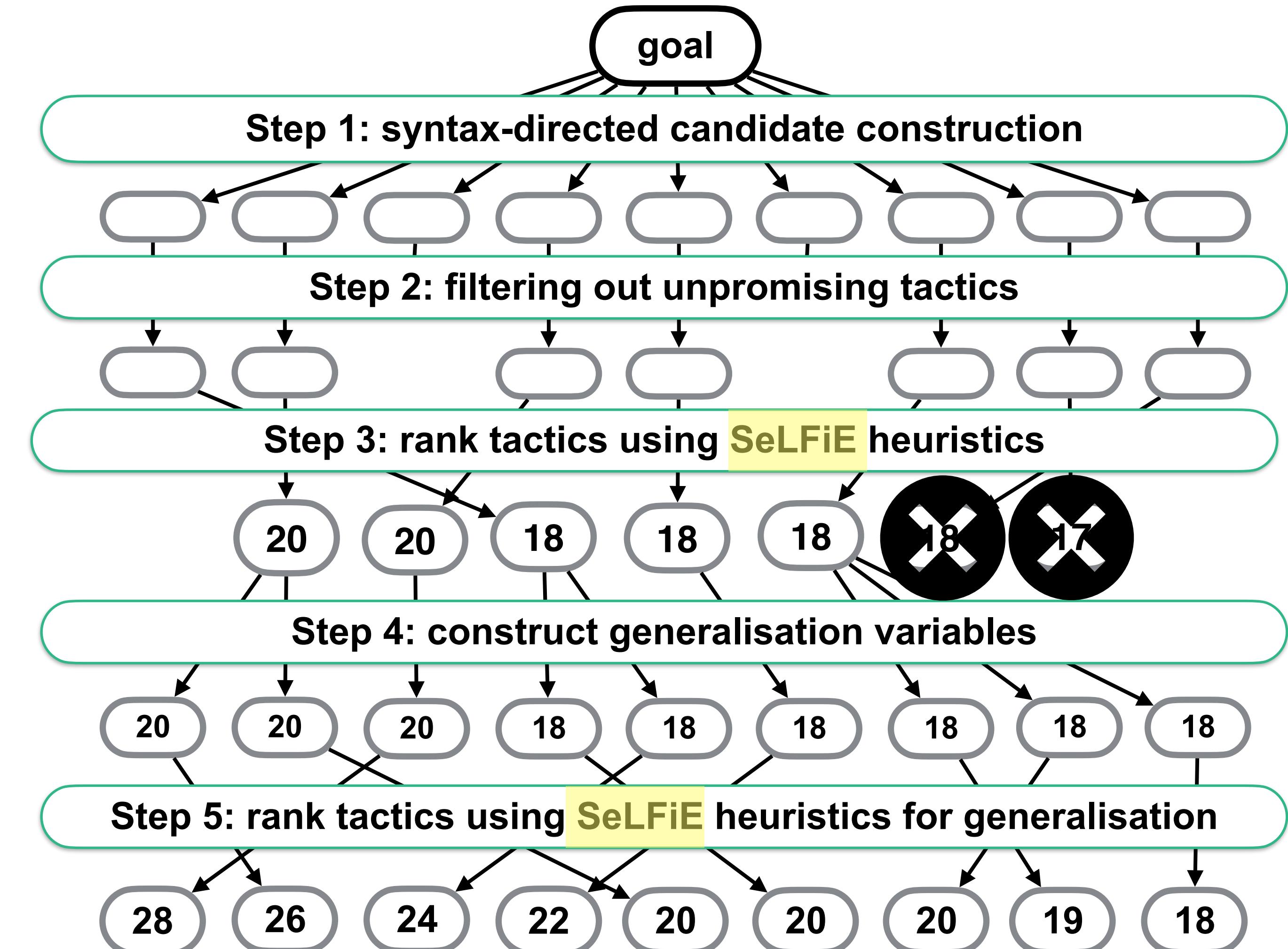
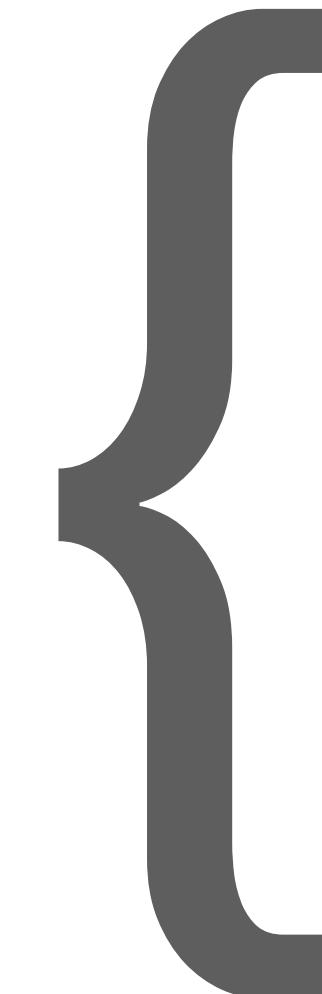




induction terms

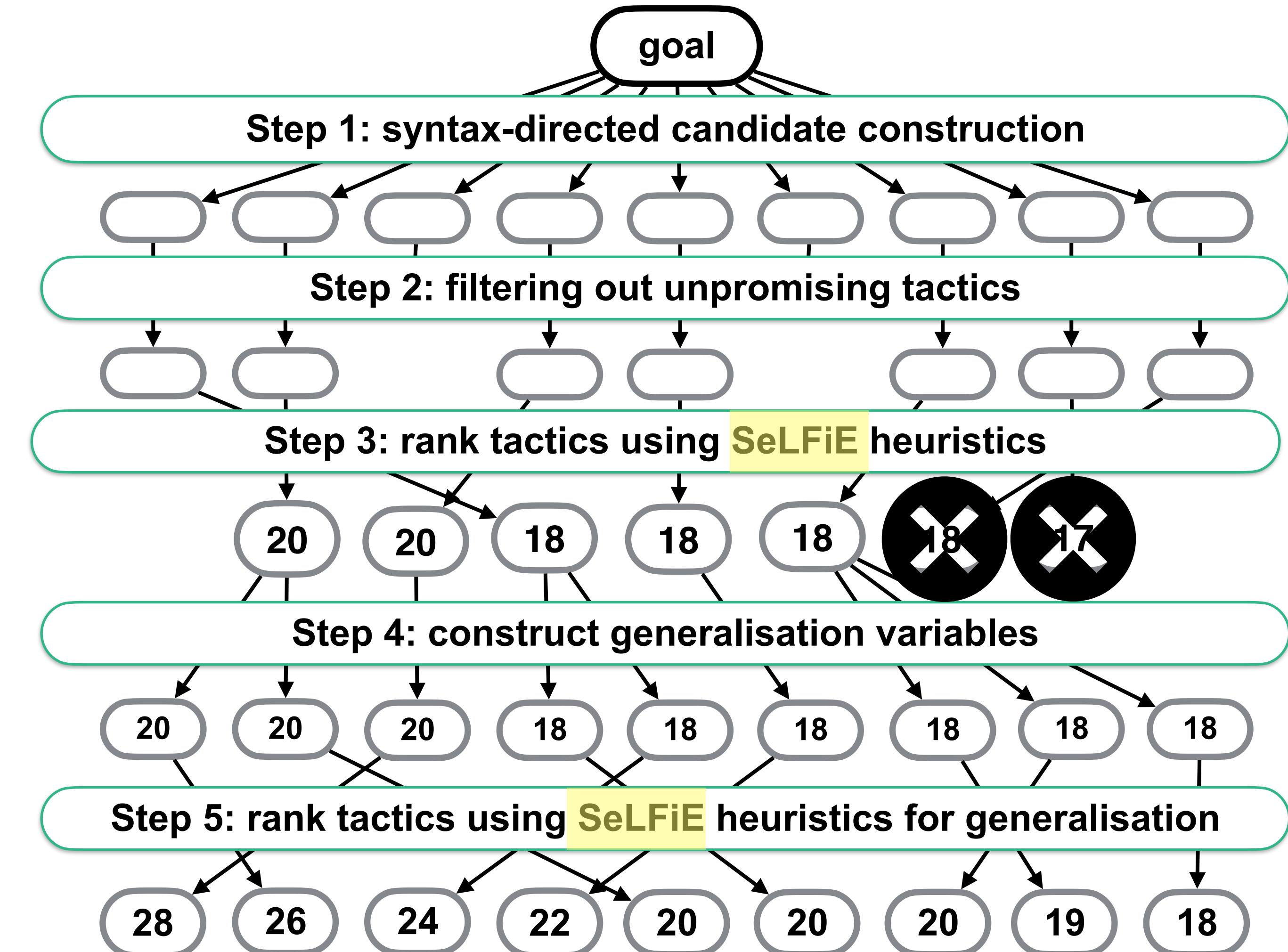


induction terms



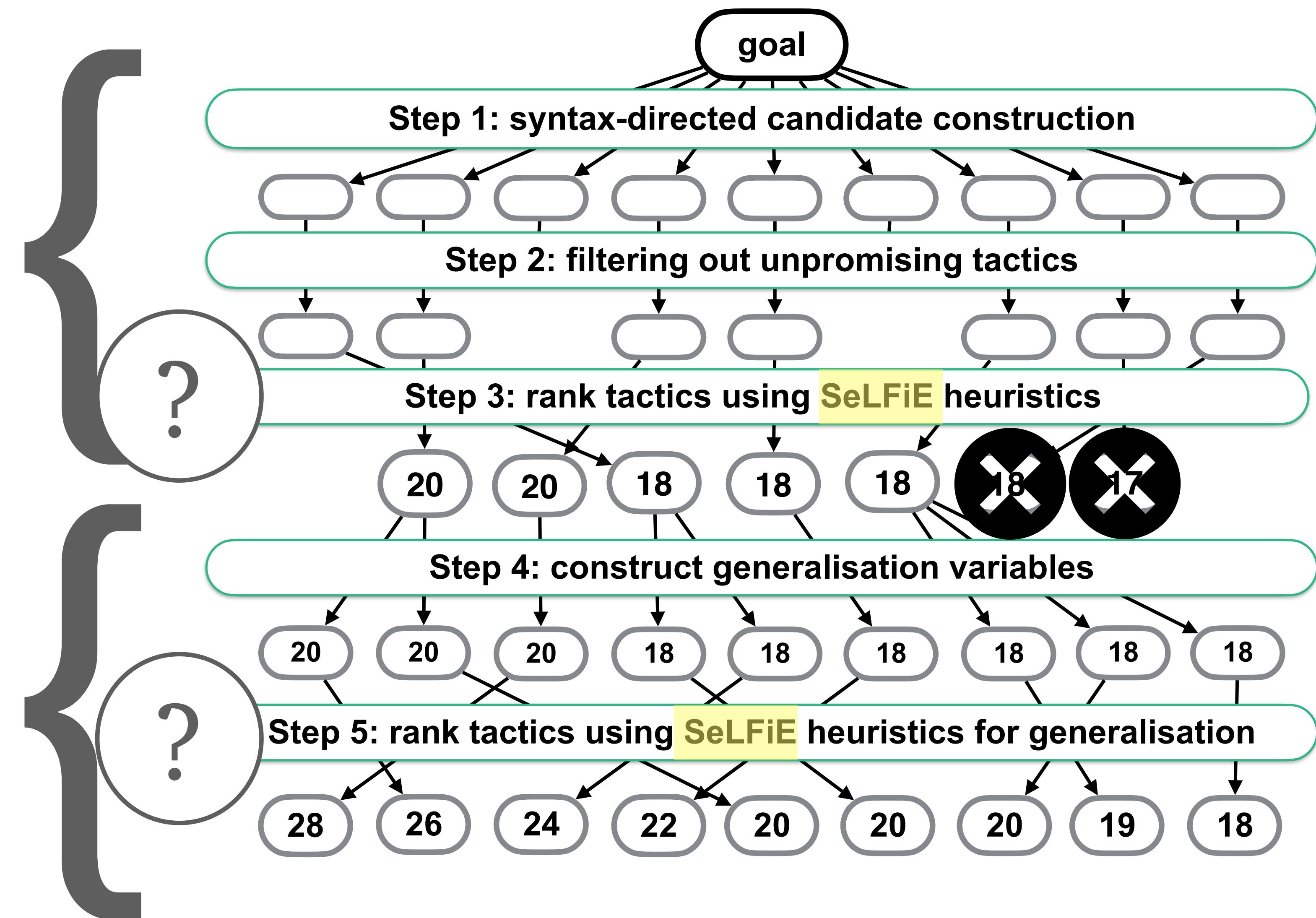
induction terms

variable generalisation



induction terms

variable generalisation



---

**Program 2** Syntactic analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

---

$\forall \text{arb\_term} : \text{term} \in \text{arbitrary\_term}.$   
 $\exists f_{\text{term}} : \text{term}.$   
 $\exists f_{\text{occ}} : \text{term\_occ} \in f_{\text{term}}.$   
 $\exists \text{arb\_occ} \in \text{arb\_term}.$   
 $\exists \text{generalise\_nth} : \text{number}.$   
     $\text{is\_or\_below\_nth\_argument\_of}$   
         $(\text{arb\_occ}, \text{generalise\_nth}, f_{\text{occ}})$   
 $\wedge$   
 $\exists_{\text{def}}$   
     $(f_{\text{term}},$   
         $\text{generalise\_nth\_argument\_of},$   
         $[\text{generalise\_nth}, f_{\text{term}}])$

---

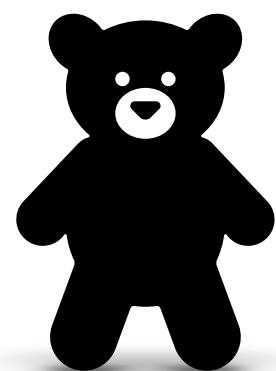
---

**Program 3** Definitional analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

---

$\text{generalise\_nth\_argument\_of} :=$   
 $\lambda [\text{generalise\_nth}, f_{\text{term}}].$   
     $\exists \text{lhs\_occ} : \text{term\_occ}.$   
         $\text{is\_left\_hand\_side} (\text{lhs\_occ})$   
 $\wedge$   
     $\exists \text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs} : \text{term\_occ}.$   
         $\text{is\_nth\_argument\_of}$   
             $(\text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs}, \text{generalise\_nth},$   
             $\text{lhs\_occ})$   
 $\wedge$   
     $\exists \text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs} : \text{term\_occ}.$   
         $\neg \text{are\_of\_same\_term}$   
             $(\text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs}, \text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs})$   
 $\wedge$   
     $\exists f_{\text{occ\_on\_rhs}} : \text{term\_occ} \in f_{\text{term}}.$   
         $\text{is\_nth\_argument\_of}$   
             $(\text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs},$   
             $\text{generalise\_nth},$   
             $f_{\text{occ\_on\_rhs}})$

---



Program 2 for inductive problems



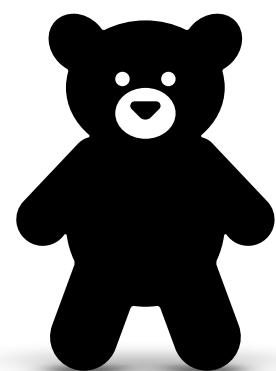
Program 3 for definitions

## Program 2 Syntactic analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

$\forall \text{arb\_term} : \text{term} \in \text{arbitrary\_term}.$   
 $\exists f_{\text{term}} : \text{term}.$   
 $\exists f_{\text{occ}} : \text{term\_occ} \in f_{\text{term}}.$   
 $\exists \text{arb\_occ} \in \text{arb\_term}.$   
 $\exists \text{generalise\_nth} : \text{number}.$   
is\_on  
(an) **definitional quantifier** f  
 $\wedge$   
 $\exists_{\text{def}} (f_{\text{term}},$   
 $\text{generalise\_nth\_argument\_of},$   
 $[\text{generalise\_nth}, f_{\text{term}}])$

## Program 3 Definitional analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

**generalise\_nth\_argument\_of** :=  
 $\lambda [\text{generalise\_nth}, f_{\text{term}}].$   
 $\exists \text{lhs\_occ} : \text{term\_occ}.$   
is\_left\_hand\_side ( $\text{lhs\_occ}$ )  
 $\wedge$   
 $\exists \text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs} : \text{term\_occ}.$   
is\_nth\_argument\_of  
( $\text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs}$ ,  $\text{generalise\_nth}$ ,  
 $\text{lhs\_occ})$   
 $\wedge$   
 $\exists \text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs} : \text{term\_occ}.$   
 $\neg \text{are\_of\_same\_term}$   
( $\text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs}$ ,  $\text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs}$ )  
 $\wedge$   
 $\exists f_{\text{occ\_on\_rhs}} : \text{term\_occ} \in f_{\text{term}}.$   
is\_nth\_argument\_of  
( $\text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs}$ ,  
 $\text{generalise\_nth}$ ,  
 $f_{\text{occ\_on\_rhs}})$



Program 2 for inductive problems



Program 3 for definitions

## Program 2 Syntactic analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

$\forall \text{arb\_term} : \text{term} \in \text{arbitrary\_term}.$   
 $\exists f_{\text{term}} : \text{term}.$   
 $\exists f_{\text{occ}} : \text{term\_occ} \in f_{\text{term}}.$   
 $\exists \text{arb\_occ} \in \text{arb\_term}.$   
 $\exists \text{generalise\_nth} : \text{number}.$   
is\_on  
(an) **definitional quantifier** f  
 $\wedge$   
 $\exists_{\text{def}} (f_{\text{term}},$   
 $\text{generalise\_nth\_argument\_of},$   
 $[\text{generalise\_nth}, f_{\text{term}}])$

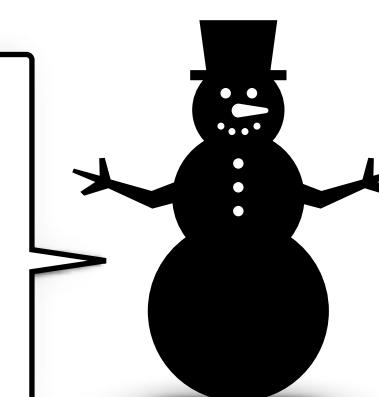
## Program 3 Definitional analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

**generalise\_nth\_argument\_of** :=  
 $\lambda [\text{generalise\_nth}, f_{\text{term}}].$   
 $\exists \text{lhs\_occ} : \text{term\_occ}.$   
is\_left\_hand\_side ( $\text{lhs\_occ}$ )  
 $\wedge$   
 $\exists \text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs} : \text{term\_occ}.$   
is\_nth\_argument\_of  
( $\text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs}$ ,  $\text{generalise\_nth}$ ,  
 $\text{lhs\_occ})$   
 $\wedge$   
 $\exists \text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs} : \text{term\_occ}.$   
 $\neg \text{are\_of\_same\_term}$   
( $\text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs}$ ,  $\text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs}$ )  
 $\wedge$   
 $\exists f_{\text{occ\_on\_rhs}} : \text{term\_occ} \in f_{\text{term}}.$   
is\_nth\_argument\_of  
( $\text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs}$ ,  
 $\text{generalise\_nth}$ ,  
 $f_{\text{occ\_on\_rhs}})$

Question about definitions.



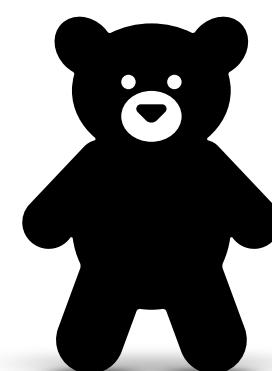
Answer about definitions.



## Program 2 Syntactic analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

```
∀ arb_term : term ∈ arbitrary_term.  
  ∃ f_term : term.  
    ∃ f_occ : term_occ ∈ f_term.  
    ∃ arb_occ ∈ arb_term.  
    ∃ generalise_nth : number.  
      is_on  
      (an) definitional quantifier  
      ^  
      ∃def  
        (f_term,  
         generalise_nth_argument_of,  
         [generalise_nth, f_term])
```

Checks if `generalise_nth_argument_of` returns True when applied to `generalise_nth` and `f_term` for some clause defining `f_term`.



Question about definitions.

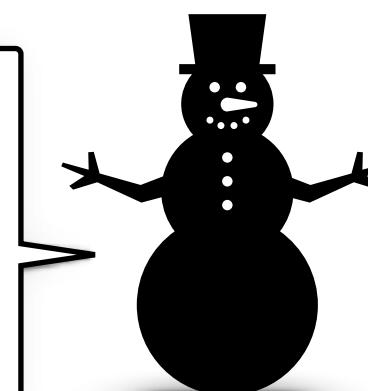
Answer about definitions.

Program 2 for inductive problems

## Program 3 Definitional analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

```
generalise_nth_argument_of :=  
  λ [generalise_nth, f_term].  
    ∃ lhs_occ : term_occ.  
      is_left_hand_side (lhs_occ)  
    ∧  
    ∃ nth_param_on_lhs : term_occ.  
      is_nth_argument_of  
      (nth_param_on_lhs, generalise_nth,  
       lhs_occ)  
    ∧  
    ∃ nth_param_on_rhs : term_occ.  
      ¬ are_of_same_term  
      (nth_param_on_rhs, nth_param_on_lhs)  
      rhs : term_occ ∈ f_term.  
      argument_of  
      (nth_param_on_rhs,  
       generalise_nth,  
       f_occ_on_rhs)
```

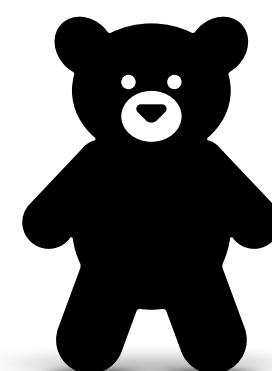
Program 3 for definitions



## Program 2 Syntactic analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

```
∀ arb_term : term ∈ arbitrary_term.  
  ∃ f_term : term.  
    ∃ f_occ : term_occ ∈ f_term.  
    ∃ arb_occ ∈ arb_term.  
    ∃ generalise_nth : number.  
      is_on  
      (an) definitional quantifier  
      ^  
      ∃def  
        (f_term,  
         generalise_nth_argument_of,  
         [generalise_nth, f_term])
```

Checks if `generalise_nth_argument_of` returns True when applied to `generalise_nth` and `f_term` for some clause defining `f_term`.



Question about definitions.

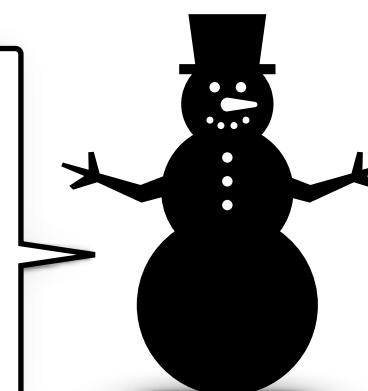
Answer about definitions.

Program 2 for inductive problems

## Program 3 Definitional analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

```
generalise_nth_argument_of :=  
  λ [generalise_nth, f_term].  
    ∃ lhs_occ : term_occ.  
      is_left_hand_side (lhs_occ)  
    ∧  
    ∃ nth_param_on_lhs : term_occ.  
      is_nth_argument_of  
      (nth_param_on_lhs, generalise_nth,  
       lhs_occ)  
    ∧  
    ∃ nth_param_on_rhs : term_occ.  
      ¬ are_of_same_term  
      (nth_param_on_rhs, nth_param_on_lhs)  
      rhs : term_occ ∈ f_term.  
      argument_of  
      (nth_param_on_rhs,  
       generalise_nth,  
       f_occ_on_rhs)
```

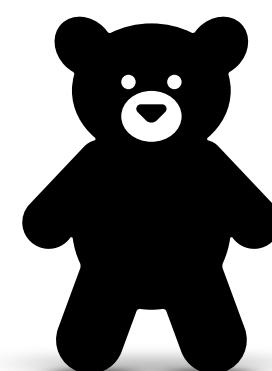
Program 3 for definitions



## Program 2 Syntactic analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

```
∀ arb_term : term ∈ arbitrary_term.  
  ∃ f_term : term.  
    ∃ f_occ : term_occ ∈ f_term.  
    ∃ arb_occ ∈ arb_term.  
    ∃ generalise_nth : number.  
      is_on  
      (an) definitional quantifier  
      ^  
      ∃def  
        (f_term,  
         generalise_nth_argument_of,  
         [generalise_nth, f_term])
```

Checks if `generalise_nth_argument_of` returns True when applied to `generalise_nth` and `f_term` for some clause defining `f_term`.



Question about definitions.

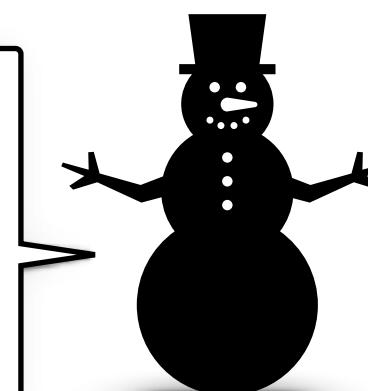
Answer about definitions.

Program 2 for inductive problems

## Program 3 Definitional analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

```
generalise_nth_argument_of :=  
  λ [generalise_nth, f_term].  
    ∃ lhs_occ : term_occ.  
      is_left_hand_side (lhs_occ)  
    ∧  
    ∃ nth_param_on_lhs : term_occ.  
      is_nth_argument_of  
      (nth_param_on_lhs, generalise_nth,  
       lhs_occ)  
    ∧  
    ∃ nth_param_on_rhs : term_occ.  
      ¬ are_of_same_term  
      (nth_param_on_rhs, nth_param_on_lhs)  
      rhs : term_occ ∈ f_term.  
      argument_of  
      (nth_param_on_rhs,  
       generalise_nth,  
       f_occ_on_rhs)
```

Program 3 for definitions



```

primrec rev1:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
| "rev1 []      = []"
| "rev1 (x # xs) = rev1 xs @ [x]"

fun rev2:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
| "rev2 []      ys = ys"
| "rev2 (x # xs) ys = rev2 xs (x # ys)"

lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
apply (induct "xs" arbitrary:ys) by auto

```

Question about definitions.



Answer about definitions.



```

primrec rev1:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
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lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
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}

```

Program 2

Question about definitions.



Answer about definitions.



Program 2 for inductive problems

Program 3 for definitions

```

primrec rev1:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
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fun rev2:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
| "rev2 []      ys = ys"
| "rev2 (x # xs) ys = rev2 xs (x # ys)" } Program 3

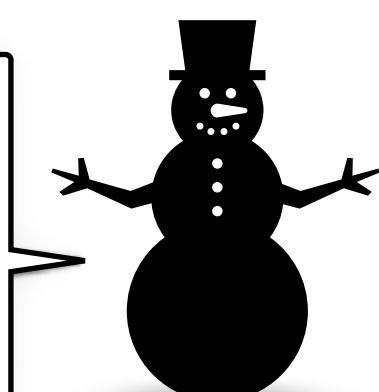
lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys" } Program 2
apply (induct "xs" arbitrary:ys) by auto

```

Question about definitions.



Answer about definitions.



```

primrec rev1:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
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| "rev2 (x # xs) ys = rev2 xs (x # ys)" } Program 3

```

```

lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys" } Program 2
apply (induct "xs" arbitrary:ys) by auto

```

May I generalise  $ys$ , which appears as  
the second argument of  $\text{rev2}$ ?



Answer about definitions.



```
primrec rev1:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
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```

} Program 3

```
lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
apply (induct "xs" arbitrary:ys) by auto
```

} Program 2

May I generalise  $ys$ , which appears as the second argument of  $\text{rev2}$ ?

Yes. You may do so because the second argument changes from the left-hand side to the right-hand side in the second clause defining  $\text{rev2}$ .



## Program 2 Syntactic analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

---

$$\begin{aligned} \forall \text{arb\_term} : \text{term} \in \text{arbitrary\_term}. \\ \exists f_{\text{term}} : \text{term}. \\ \exists f_{\text{occ}} : \text{term\_occ} \in f_{\text{term}}. \\ \exists \text{arb\_occ} \in \text{arb\_term}. \\ \exists \text{generalise\_nth} : \text{number}. \\ \text{is\_or\_below\_nth\_argument\_of} \\ (\text{arb\_occ}, \text{generalise\_nth}, f_{\text{occ}}) \\ \wedge \\ \exists_{\text{def}} \\ (f_{\text{term}}, \\ \text{generalise\_nth\_argument\_of}, \\ [\text{generalise\_nth}, f_{\text{term}}]) \end{aligned}$$

---

May I generalise  $ys$ , which appears as the second argument of  $\text{rev2}$ ?



Yes. You may do so because the second argument changes from the left-hand side to the right-hand side in the second clause defining  $\text{rev2}$ .

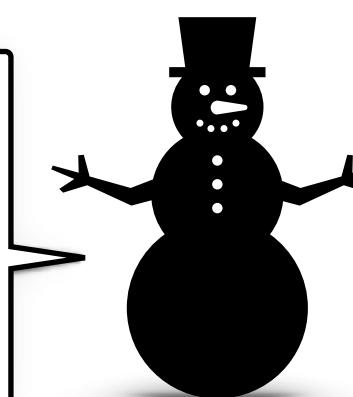
Program 2 for inductive problems

## Program 3 Definitional analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

---

$$\begin{aligned} \text{generalise\_nth\_argument\_of} := \\ \lambda [\text{generalise\_nth}, f_{\text{term}}]. \\ \exists \text{lhs\_occ} : \text{term\_occ}. \\ \text{is\_left\_hand\_side} (\text{lhs\_occ}) \\ \wedge \\ \exists \text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs} : \text{term\_occ}. \\ \text{is\_nth\_argument\_of} \\ (\text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs}, \text{generalise\_nth}, \\ \text{lhs\_occ}) \\ \wedge \\ \exists \text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs} : \text{term\_occ}. \\ \neg \text{are\_of\_same\_term} \\ (\text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs}, \text{nth\_param\_on\_lhs}) \\ \wedge \\ \exists f_{\text{occ\_on\_rhs}} : \text{term\_occ} \in f_{\text{term}}. \\ \text{is\_nth\_argument\_of} \\ (\text{nth\_param\_on\_rhs}, \\ \text{generalise\_nth}, \\ f_{\text{occ\_on\_rhs}}) \end{aligned}$$

---



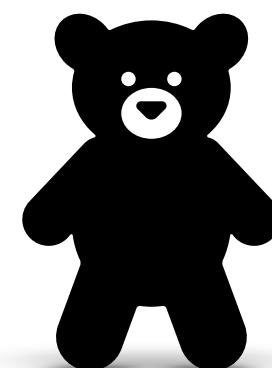
Program 3 for definitions

## Program 2 Syntactic analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

```
forall arb_term : term in arbitrary_term.  
exists f_term : term.  
exists f_occ : term_occ in f_term.  
exists arb_occ in arb_term.  
exists generalise_nth : number.  
is_in(f_occ, generalise_nth) and  
for the second clause  
exists def(f_term,  
generalise_nth_argument_of,  
[generalise_nth, f_term])
```

May I generalise ys, which appears as the second argument of rev2?

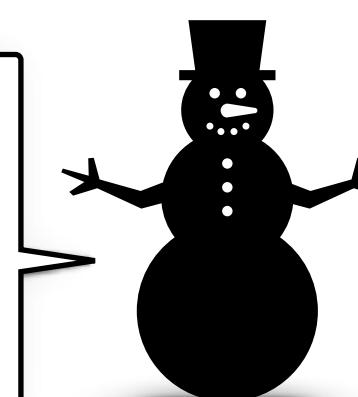
Yes. You may do so because the second argument changes from the left-hand side to the right-hand side in the second clause defining rev2.



Program 2 for inductive problems

## Program 3 Definitional analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

```
generalise_nth_argument_of :=  
lambda [generalise_nth, f_term].  
exists lhs_occ : term_occ.  
is_left_hand_side(lhs_occ)  
and  
exists nth_param_on_lhs : term_occ.  
is_nth_argument_of  
(nth_param_on_lhs, generalise_nth,  
lhs_occ)  
and  
exists nth_param_on_rhs : term_occ.  
not are_of_same_term  
(nth_param_on_rhs, nth_param_on_lhs)  
and  
exists f_occ_on_rhs : term_occ in f_term.  
is_nth_argument_of  
(nth_param_on_rhs,  
generalise_nth,  
f_occ_on_rhs)
```



Program 3 for definitions

## Program 2 Syntactic analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

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exists f_term : term.  
exists f_occ : term_occ in f_term.  
exists arb_occ in arb_term.  
exists generalise_nth : number.  
is_ -> for the second clause -of  
      defining rev2  
      &  
exists def(f_term,  
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          [generalise_nth, f_term])
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May I generalise ys, which appears as the second argument of rev2?

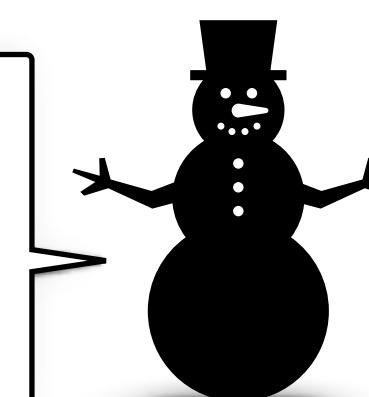


Yes. You may do so because the second argument changes from the left-hand side to the right-hand side in the second clause defining rev2.

Program 2 for inductive problems

## Program 3 Definitional analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

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is_nth_argument_of  
(nth_param_on_lhs, generalise_nth,  
lhs_occ)  
&  
exists nth_param_on_rhs : term_occ.  
not are_of_same_term  
(nth_param_on_rhs, nth_param_on_lhs)  
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```



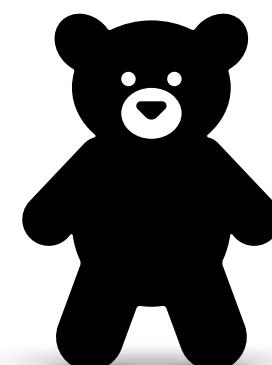
Program 3 for definitions

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is_ -> for the second clause -of  
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```

second argument

May I generalise ys, which appears as the second argument of rev2?

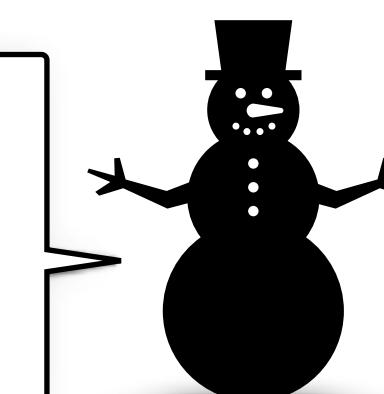


Yes. You may do so because the second argument changes from the left-hand side to the right-hand side in the second clause defining rev2.

Program 2 for inductive problems

## Program 3 Definitional analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

```
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Program 3 for definitions

## Program 2 Syntactic analysis for generalisation in SeLFiE

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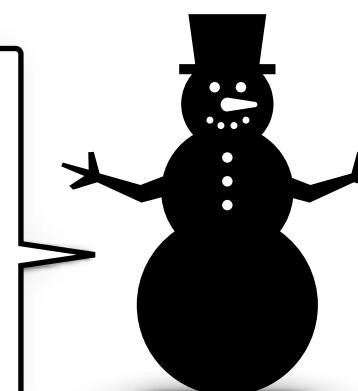
second argument

changes from the left-hand side to the right-hand side

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Yes. You may do so because the second argument changes from the left-hand side to the right-hand side in the second clause defining rev2.



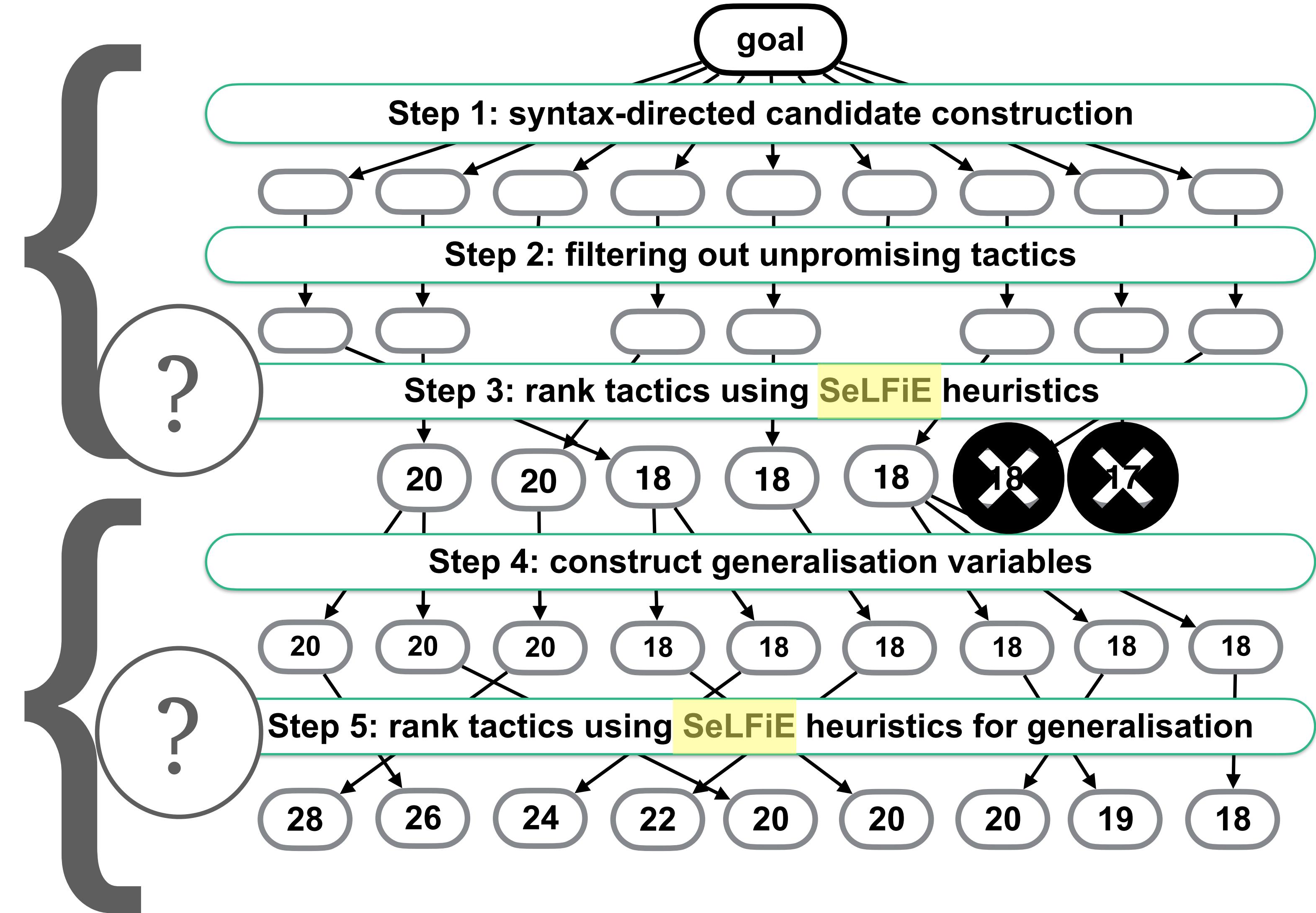
Program 2 for inductive problems

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```

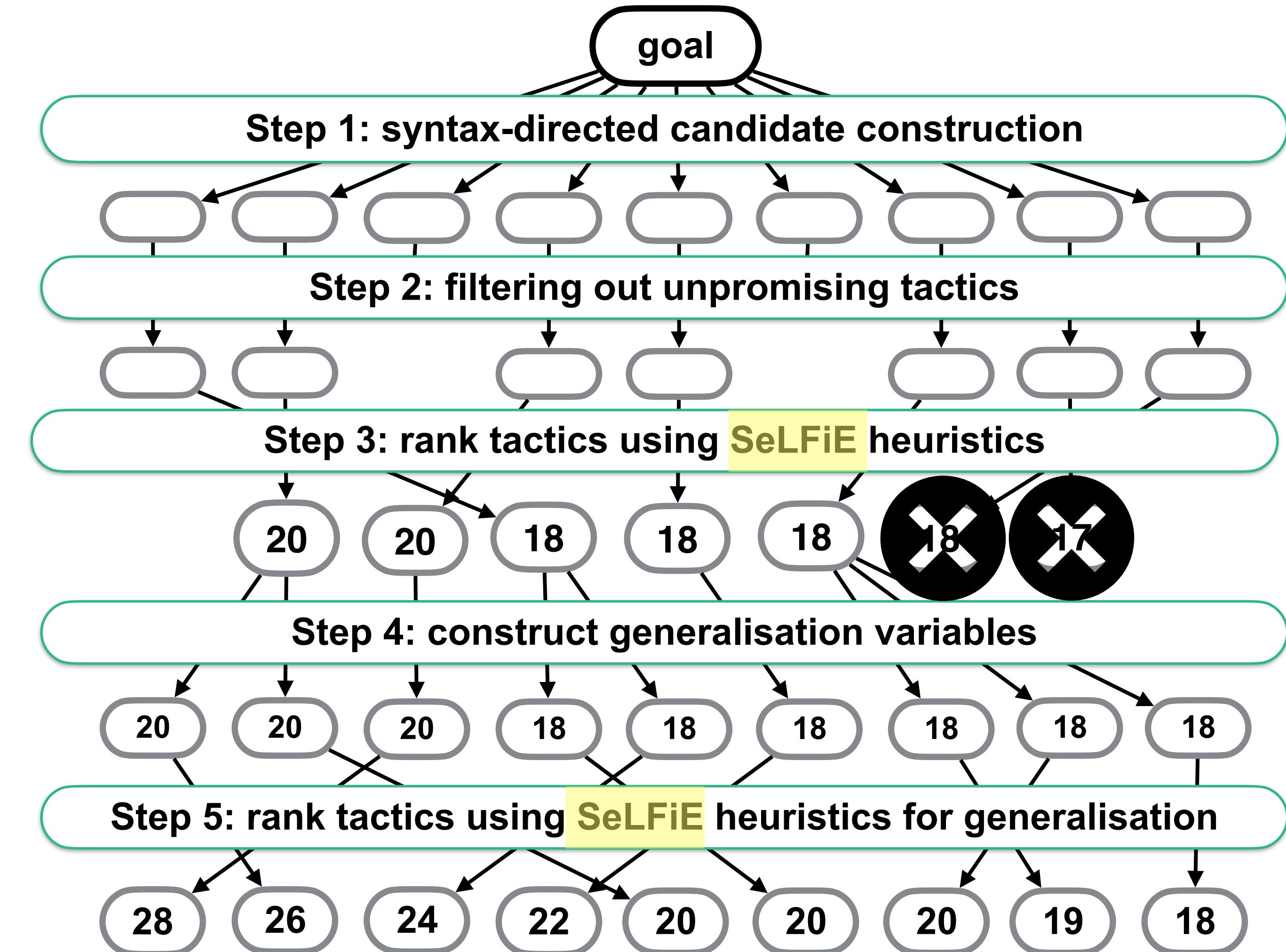
Program 3 for definitions

induction terms  
variable generalisation



induction terms

variable generalisation



# Faster Smarter Proof by Induction in Isabelle/HOL

**Yutaka Nagashima**

Yale-NUS College, National University of Singapore  
University of Innsbruck

Czech Institute of Informatics, Robotics, and Cybernetics, Czech Technical University in Prague  
[yutaka@yale-nus.edu.sg](mailto:yutaka@yale-nus.edu.sg)

## Abstract

We present `sem.ind`, a recommendation tool for proof by induction in Isabelle/HOL. Given an inductive problem, `sem.ind` produces candidate arguments for proof by induction, and selects promising ones using heuristics. Our evaluation based on 1,095 inductive problems from 22 source files shows that `sem.ind` improves the accuracy of recommendation from 20.1% to 38.2% for the most promising candidates within 5.0 seconds of timeout compared to its predecessor while decreasing the median value of execution time from 2.79 seconds to 1.06 seconds.

---

## Program 1 Equivalence of two reverse functions

---

```
@ :: α list ⇒ α list ⇒ α list
[]      @ ys = ys
| (x # xs) @ ys = x # (xs @ ys)

rev1 :: α list ⇒ α list
rev1 []      = []
| rev1 (x # xs) = rev1 xs @ [x]

rev2 :: α list ⇒ α list ⇒ α list
rev2 []      ys = ys
| rev2 (x # xs) ys = rev2 xs (x # ys)
```

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```

①

②

<https://www.ijcai.org/proceedings/2021/273>

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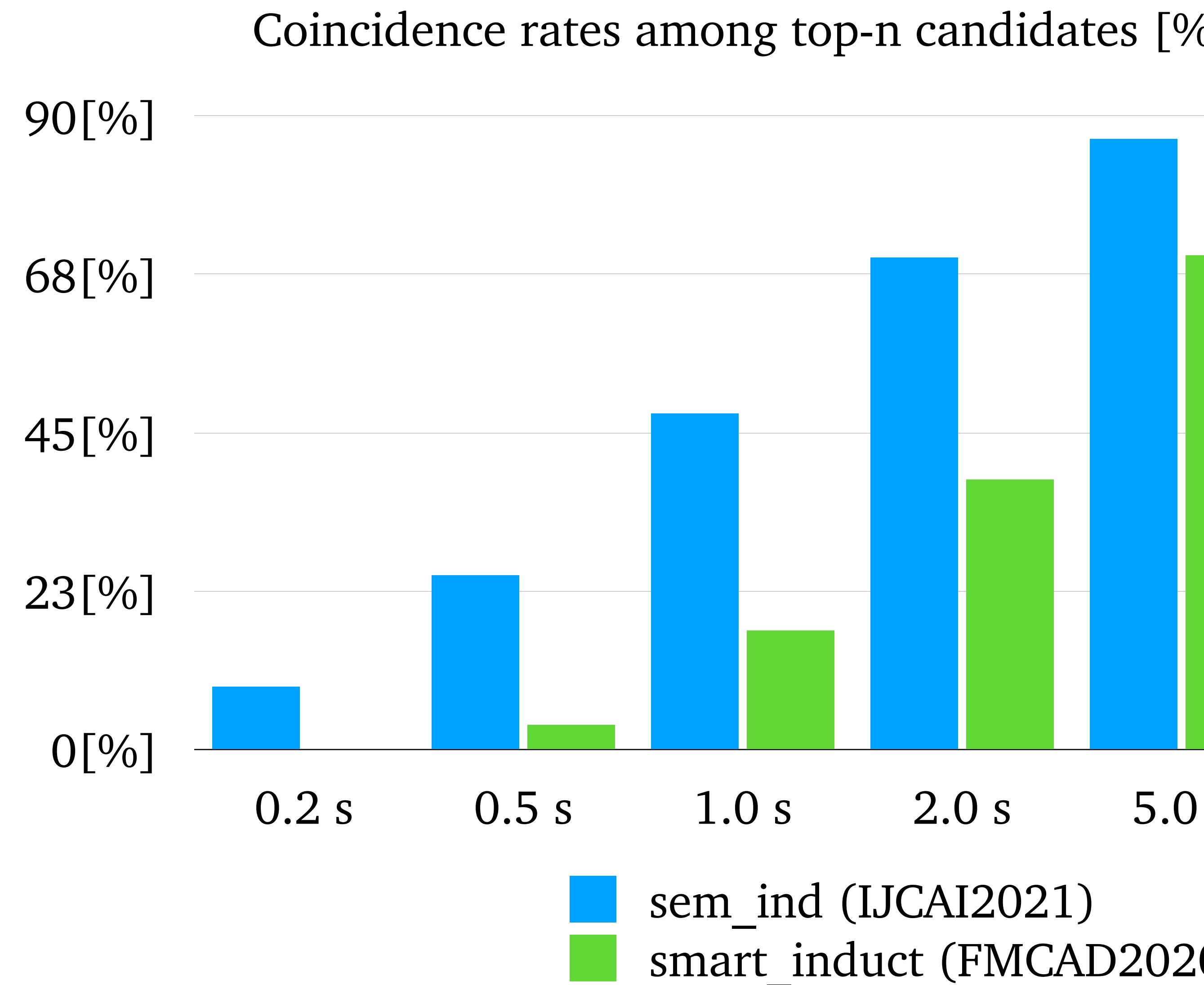
```
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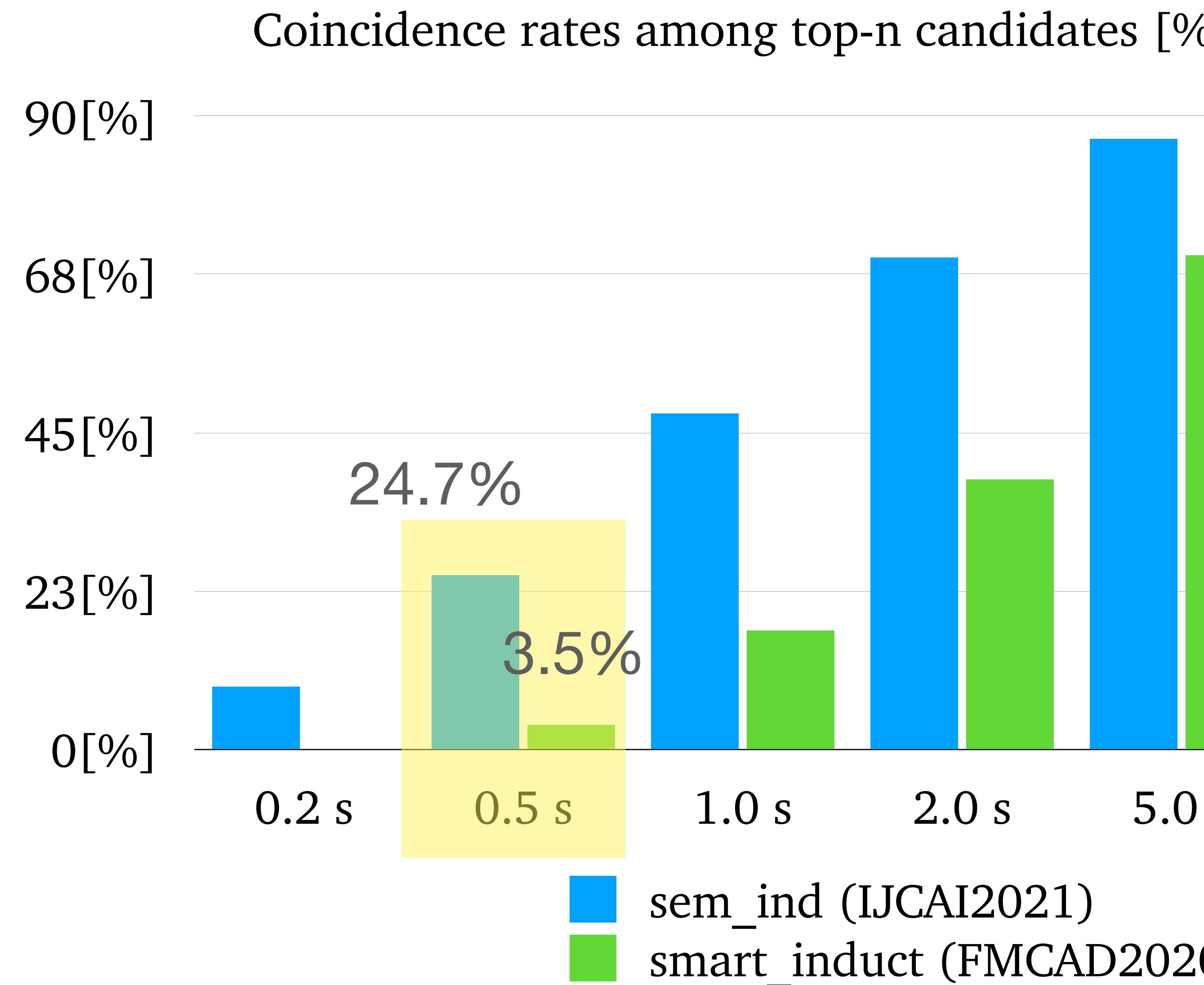
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```

# ① Faster Proof by Induction in Isabelle/HOL

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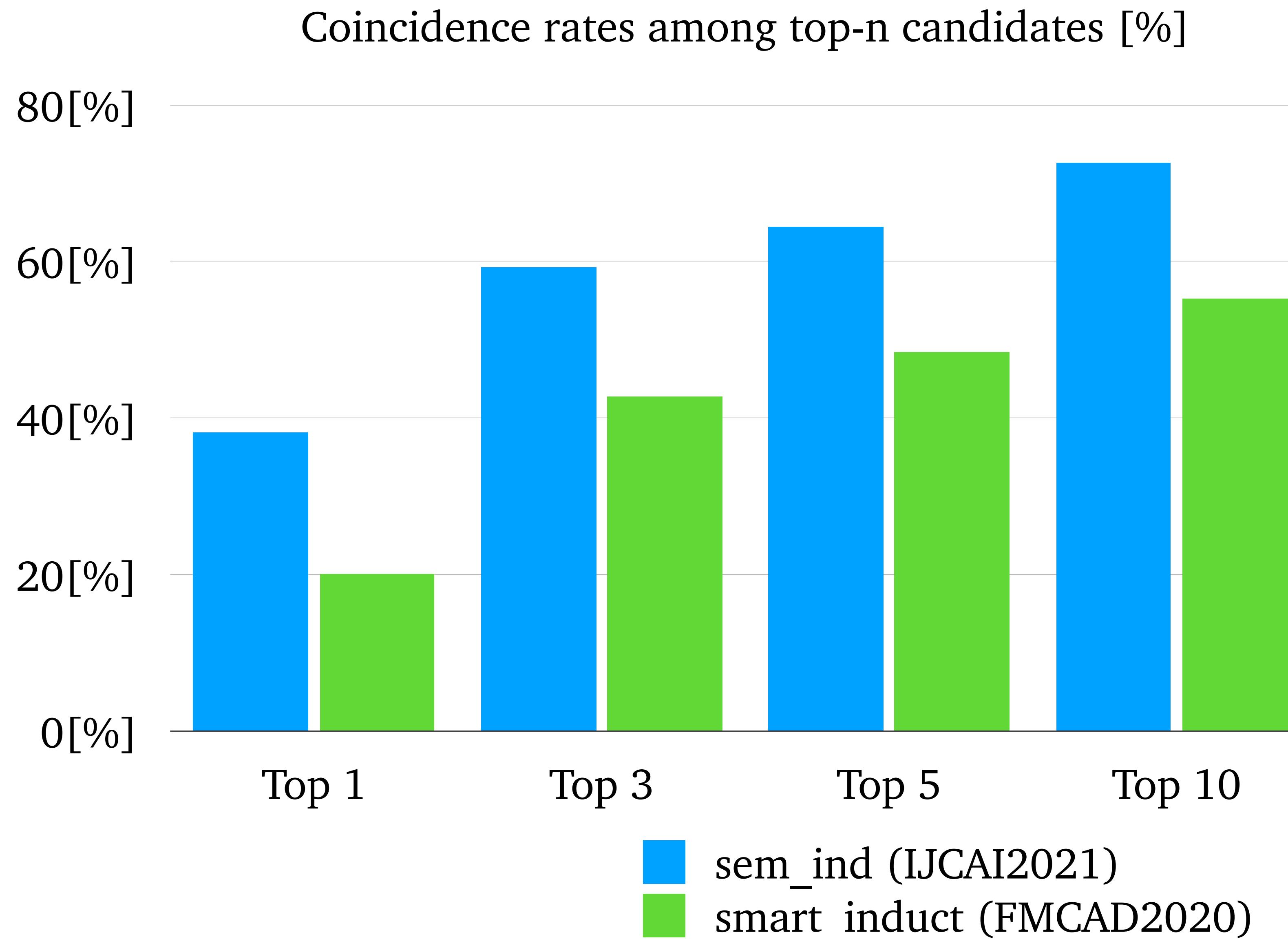


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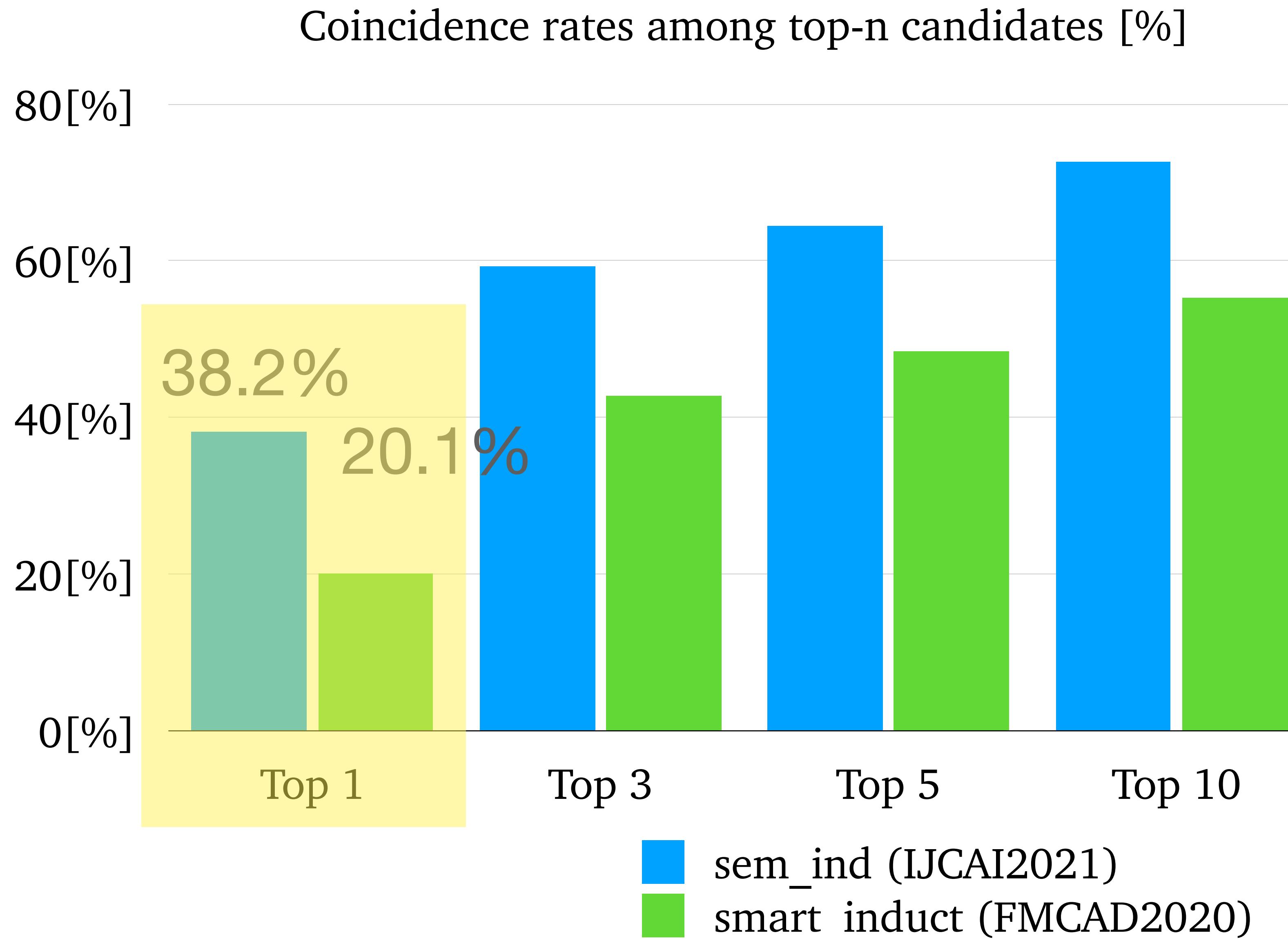


## ② Smarter Proof by Induction in Isabelle/HOL

## ② Smarter Proof by Induction in Isabelle/HOL



## ② Smarter Proof by Induction in Isabelle/HOL



IJCAI.thy (-/Workplace/PSL/Example)

```
File Browser Documentation ▾ HyperSearch Results Sidekick State Theories
```

```
primrec rev1:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
  "rev1 []      = []"
| "rev1 (x # xs) = rev1 xs @ [x]"

fun rev2:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
  "rev2 []      ys = ys"
| "rev2 (x # xs) ys = rev2 xs (x # ys)"

lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
```

```
proof (prove)
goal (1 subgoal):
  1. rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys
```

```
File Browser Documentation IJCAI.thy (-/Workplace/PSL/Example)
primrec rev1:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
  "rev1 []      = []"
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  "rev2 []      ys = ys"
| "rev2 (x # xs) ys = rev2 xs (x # ys)"

lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
sem_ind
```

```
1st candidate is apply (induct "xs" arbitrary:ys)
  (* The score is 103.0 out of 104.0. *)
2nd candidate is apply (induct "xs")
  (* The score is 102.0 out of 104.0. *)
3rd candidate is apply (induct "xs" "ys" rule:IJCAI.rev2.induct)
  (* The score is 100.0 out of 104.0. *)
4th candidate is apply (induct "xs" "ys" rule>List.list_induct2')
  (* The score is 100.0 out of 104.0. *)
```

IJCAI.thy (-/Workplace/PSL/Example)

```
primrec rev1:: "'a list ⇒ 'a list" where
  "rev1 []      = []"
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| "rev2 (x # xs) ys = rev2 xs (x # ys)"

lemma "rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys"
  sem_ind
  apply (induct "xs" arbitrary:ys) □
```

```
proof (prove)
goal (2 subgoals):
  1. ∀ys. rev2 [] ys = rev [] @ ys
  2. ∀a xs ys.
    (∀ys. rev2 xs ys = rev xs @ ys) ⇒
    rev2 (a # xs) ys = rev (a # xs) @ ys
```

Old

---

#### Program 4 Automatic inductive prover without SeLFiE

---

```
Auto_Solve = Thens[Auto, Solved]
PSL_WO_SeLFiE =
Ors[Auto_Solve,
    PThenOne[Dynamic (Induct), Auto_Solve]
    PThenOne[Dynamic(Induct), Thens[Auto, RepeatN(Hammer), Solved]]]
```

---

new

---

#### Program 5 Automatic inductive prover with SeLFiE

---

```
PSL_W_SeLFiE =
Ors[Auto_Solve,
    PThenOne[Semantic_Induct, Auto_Solve]
    PThenOne[Semantic_Induct, Thens[Auto, RepeatN(Hammer), Solved]]]
```

---

Old

---

#### Program 4 Automatic inductive prover without SeLFiE

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Auto_Solve = Thens[Auto, Solved]
PSL_WO_SeLFiE =
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```

---

new

---

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```

---

timeouts	Program 5	Program 4
0.3[s]	11.0%	1.2%
1.0[s]	25.6%	1.7%
3.0[s]	28.2%	21.9%
10.0[s]	34.9%	28.0%
30.0[s]	45.8%	38.3%

(a) Success rates

speedup [times]	occurrence
$x < 1.0$	3 (2.4%)
$1.0 \leq x < 5.0$	64 (50.8%)
$5.0 \leq x < 10.0$	44 (34.9%)
$10.0 \leq x < 15.0$	9 (7.1%)
$15.0 \leq x <$	6 (4.8%)

(b) Speedup of execution time

Old

---

#### Program 4 Automatic inductive prover without SeLFiE

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```

---

new

---

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---

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```

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(a) Success rates

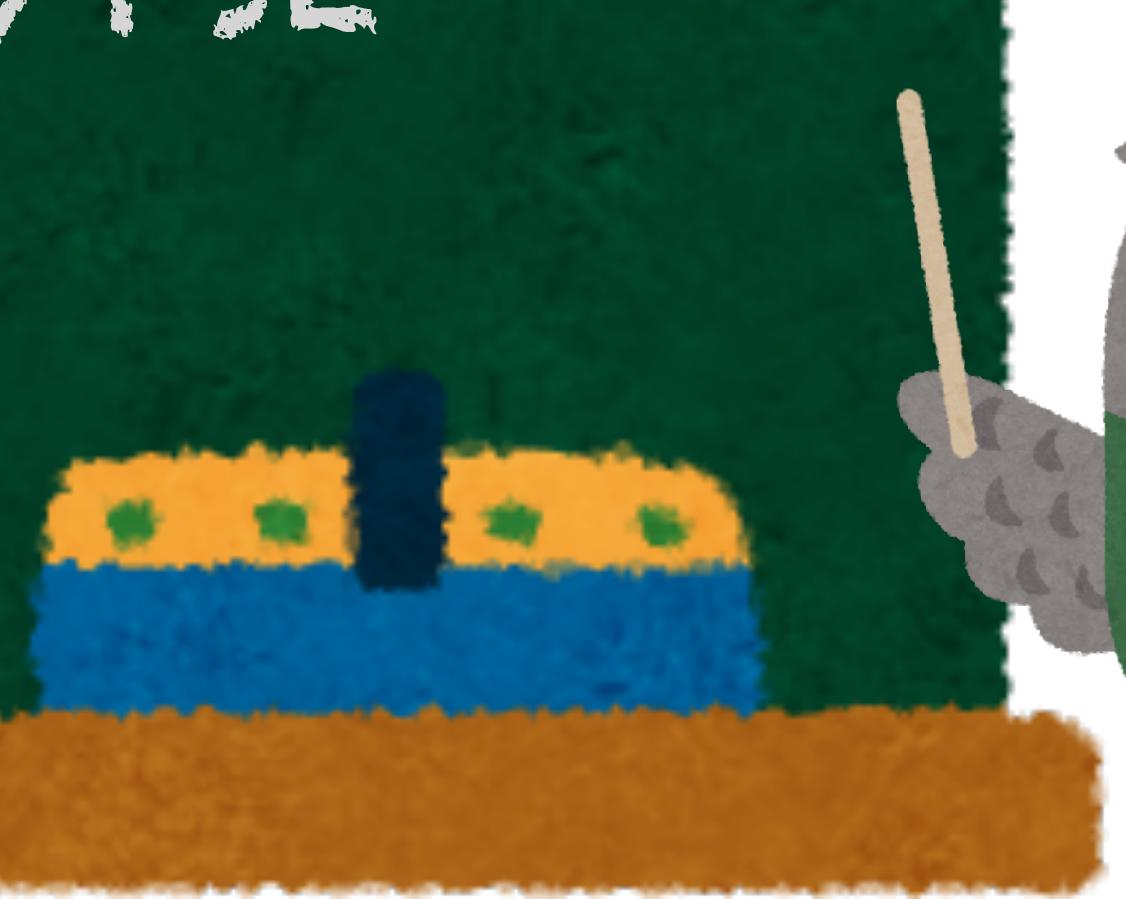
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(b) Speedup of execution time

# Definitional Quantifiers Realise Semantic Reasoning for Proof by Induction

Yutaka Nagashima

<https://github.com/datal61/PSL>



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