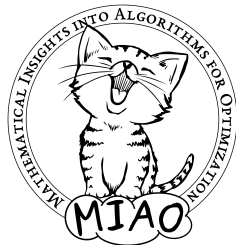


Certified Symmetry and Dominance Breaking for Combinatorial Optimisation

Jakob Nordström

University of Copenhagen
and Lund University

SAT Encodings and Beyond
Dagstuhl Seminar 23261
June 25–30, 2023



Joint AAAI '22 paper with Bart Bogaerts, Stephan Gocht, and Ciaran McCreesh

Combinatorial Solving and Optimisation

- Revolution last couple of decades in **combinatorial solvers** for
 - Boolean satisfiability (SAT) solving [BHvMW21]
 - Satisfiability modulo theories (SMT) solving [BHvMW21]
 - Constraint programming (CP) [RvBW06]
 - Mixed integer linear programming (MIP) [AW13, BR07]
- Solve NP problems (or worse) very successfully in practice!
- **Except solvers are sometimes wrong...** (Even best commercial ones) [BLB10, CKSW13, AGJ⁺18, GSD19, GS19]
- **Software testing** doesn't suffice to resolve this problem
- **Formal verification** techniques cannot deal with level of complexity of modern solvers

Certified Results with Proof Logging

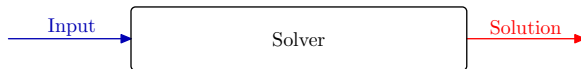
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- not only **solve problem** but also
- do **proof logging** to certify that solution is correct

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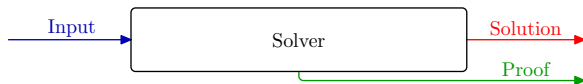
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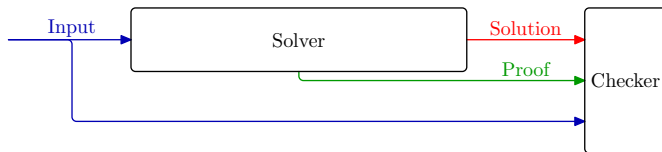
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- 2 Get as output not only solution but also proof

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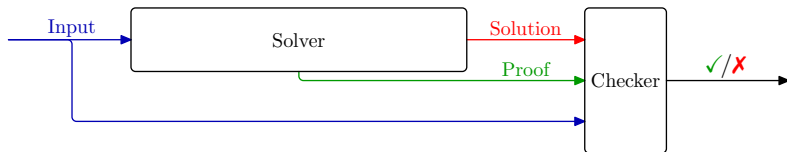
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- ③ Feed input + solution + proof to proof checker

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Workflow:

- ① Run solver on problem input
- ② Get as output not only solution but also proof
- ③ Feed input + solution + proof to proof checker
- ④ Verify that proof checker says solution is correct

Yet Another SAT Success Story

Many proof logging formats for SAT solving using CNF clausal format:

- DRAT [HHW13a, HHW13b, WHH14]
- GRIT [CMS17]
- LRAT [CHH⁺17]
- ...

Well established — required in main track of SAT competitions

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But efficient proof logging has remained out of reach for stronger paradigms

And, in fact, even for some advanced SAT solving techniques:

- cardinality reasoning
- Gaussian elimination
- symmetry handling

Clausal Proof Logging Approaches

Cardinality and pseudo-Boolean reasoning [SB06, BBH22]

Evaluated on fairly specific crafted benchmarks

More challenging and/or real-world benchmarks would be valuable

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Gaussian elimination [PR16, Bry22, SB22]

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Symmetry handling [HHW15, TD20]

No fully general method for **symmetry breaking** (i.e., adding constraints to remove symmetric solutions)

Method for **symmetric learning** (i.e., adding symmetric versions of derived constraints) not compatible with SAT preprocessing

Our Work: Efficient Proof Logging for Symmetry Breaking

Paper *Certified Symmetry and Dominance Breaking for Combinatorial Optimisation* at AAAI '22 [BGMN22]:

Implementation in proof checker VERIPB [Ver]

- First general & efficient proof logging method for **symmetry breaking**
- Supports also **pseudo-Boolean reasoning** and **Gaussian elimination**
- Based on **0-1 integer linear constraints** instead of clauses
- Uses **cutting planes method** [CCT87] with additional rules

Outline of Presentation

What I hope to cover in the rest of this presentation:

- Basics of proof logging with 0-1 linear constraints
- New rule for symmetry and dominance breaking
- Application to symmetry breaking for SAT (and some other problems)
- Some future research directions

0-1 Integer Linear (a.k.a. Pseudo-Boolean) Constraints

Pseudo-Boolean (PB) constraints are 0-1 integer linear constraints

$$C \doteq \sum_i a_i \ell_i \geq A$$

- $a_i, A \in \mathbb{Z}$
- **literals** ℓ_i : x_i or \bar{x}_i (where $x_i + \bar{x}_i = 1$)
- variables x_i take values $0 = \text{false}$ or $1 = \text{true}$

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Pseudo-Boolean formulas $F \doteq \bigwedge_{i=1}^m C_i$ are conjunctions of pseudo-Boolean constraints

Some Types of Pseudo-Boolean Constraints

1 Clauses

$$x \vee \bar{y} \vee z \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad x + \bar{y} + z \geq 1$$

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3 General pseudo-Boolean constraints

$$x_1 + 2\bar{x}_2 + 3x_3 + 4\bar{x}_4 + 5x_5 \geq 7$$

Pseudo-Boolean Reasoning: Cutting Planes [CCT87]

Literal axioms $\frac{}{\ell_i \geq 0}$

Linear combination $\frac{\sum_i a_i \ell_i \geq A \quad \sum_i b_i \ell_i \geq B}{\sum_i (c_A a_i + c_B b_i) \ell_i \geq c_A A + c_B B} \quad [c_A, c_B \in \mathbb{N}]$

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(See [BN21] for more details about cutting planes)

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- Generalize **reverse unit propagation (RUP)** rule [GN03, Van08] to PB constraints — just convenient shorthand for derivation
- Also need **extension** rule (analogue of RAT [JHB12]) to deal with, e.g., preprocessing

Extension Rule: Redundance-Based Strengthening

C is **redundant** with respect to F if F and $F \wedge C$ are **equisatisfiable**

Want to allow adding redundant constraints

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- Proof sketch for interesting direction: If α satisfies F but falsifies C , then $\alpha \circ \omega$ satisfies $F \wedge C$
- Implication should be **efficiently verifiable** — every $D \in (F \wedge C) \upharpoonright_{\omega}$ should follow from $F \wedge \neg C$ by, e.g.,
 - 1 weakening (addition of literal axioms $\ell_i \geq 0$)
 - 2 reverse unit propagation (RUP)
 - 3 explicit derivation presented in proof log

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- Pre- and inprocessing [GN21] (since redundancy rule subsumes RAT)
- Pseudo-Boolean reasoning (by design)
- Gaussian elimination [GN21]
- Subgraph problems [GMN20, GMM⁺20]
- Pseudo-Boolean solving via translation to CNF [GMNO22]
- Core-guided MaxSAT solving [VDB22, BBN⁺23]
- Constraint programming [EGMN20, GMN22]
- **This talk:** Symmetry and dominance breaking [BGMN22]

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More info in tutorial [Combinatorial solving with provably correct results](https://youtu.be/s_5BIi4I22w)
(https://youtu.be/s_5BIi4I22w) on pseudo-Boolean proof logging

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(Syntactic) symmetry: substitution σ preserving F ($F|_{\sigma} \doteq F$)

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Allow to add all symmetric versions of learned constraint [DBB17]

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Not supported by standard SAT proof logging!

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Deal with **symmetry breaking** by switching focus to **optimisation**
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Note that $\sum_i w_i l_i < \sum_i w_i \cdot \alpha(l_i)$ means $\sum_i w_i l_i \leq -1 + \sum_i w_i \cdot \alpha(l_i)$

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Redundance-based strengthening, optimisation version

Add constraint C to formula F if exists witness substitution ω such that

$$F \wedge \neg C \models (F \wedge C) \upharpoonright_{\omega} \wedge f \upharpoonright_{\omega} \leq f$$

Redundance and Dominance Rules

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- 7 ...
- 8 Can't go on forever, so finally reach α' satisfying $F \wedge C$

Strength of Dominance Rule

Dominance-based strengthening (stronger, still simplified)

If C_1, C_2, \dots, C_{m-1} have been derived from F (maybe using dominance), then can derive also C_m if exists witness substitution ω such that

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Further extensions:

- Define dominance rule w.r.t. order independent of objective function
- Switch between different orders in same proof
- See [BGMN22] for details

Strategy for SAT Symmetry Breaking

- 1 Pretend to **solve optimisation problem** minimizing $f \doteq \sum_{i=1}^n 2^{n-i} \cdot x_i$
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- 3 Derive **CNF encoding** of lex-leader constraints from PB constraint (in same spirit as [GMNO22])

y_0	$\overline{y_j} \vee \overline{\sigma(x_j)} \vee x_j$
$\overline{y_{j-1}} \vee \overline{x_j} \vee \sigma(x_j)$	$y_j \vee \overline{y_{j-1}} \vee \overline{x_j}$
$\overline{y_j} \vee y_{j-1}$	$y_j \vee \overline{y_{j-1}} \vee \sigma(x_j)$

Breaking Symmetries With the Dominance Rule (1/2)

Theorem

$C_\sigma \doteq f \leq f|_\sigma$ can be derived from F using dominance with witness σ

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Redundance-based strengthening can be used analogously to [HHW15]

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- but only guaranteed to work for breaking **single symmetry** σ
- if σ is **involution** (i.e., its own inverse)
- not known how to deal with symmetries that are complex or interact

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Breaking symmetries with the dominance rule

- Surprisingly **simple**

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Why does it work?

- Witness need not satisfy all derived constraints
- Sufficient to just produce “better” assignment

Applied Symmetry Breaking for SAT Solving

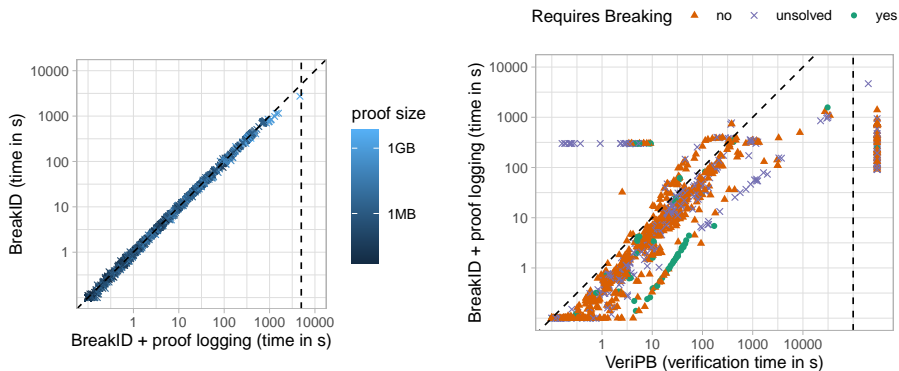
- ① Break symmetries with `BREAKID` and get proofs for symmetry breaking clauses
- ② Concatenate with CDCL solver proof
(DRAT rewritten in `VERIPB` format)

Short dictionary for DRAT-to-VeriPB translations

DRAT	VERIPB
1	x1
-2	$\sim x2$
1 -2 3 0	+1 x1 +1 $\sim x2$ + 1 x3 ≥ 1 ;
1 -2 3 0 is RUP	rup +1 x1 +1 $\sim x2$ + 1 x3 ≥ 1 ;
1 -2 3 0 is RAT	red +1 x1 +1 $\sim x2$ + 1 x3 ≥ 1 ; x1 $\rightarrow 1$

Experimental Evaluation

- Evaluated on SAT competition benchmarks
- BREAKID [DBBD16, Bre] used to find and break symmetries



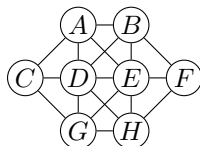
- proof logging overhead negligible
- verification at most 20 times slower than solving for 95% of instances

Symmetry Breaking for Constraint Programming

Crystal Maze puzzle

Place numbers 1 to 8 without repetition

Adjacent circles mustn't have consecutive numbers

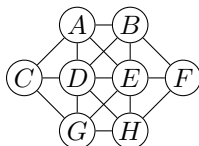


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Without loss of generality:

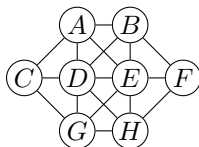
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- $A < B$ (vertical mirror symmetry)
- $A \leq 4$ (value symmetry)

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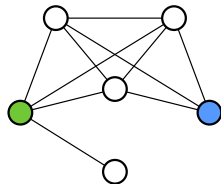
Technical challenge: integer-valued variables

See [GMN22] for more detailed discussion

Dominance Breaking for Maximum Clique Solving

Maximum clique solving

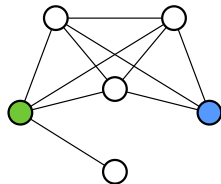
Find largest fully connected component



Dominance Breaking for Maximum Clique Solving

Maximum clique solving

Find largest fully connected component



Lazy global domination [MP16]

Only consider green and not blue vertex

(since every neighbour of blue is also neighbour of green)

Technical challenge: vertex domination detected only lazily during search
Dominance rule (rather than redundancy rule) really helpful here

Future Research Directions

Performance and reliability of pseudo-Boolean proof logging

- Trim proof while verifying (as in DRAT-TRIM [HHW13a])
- Compress proof file using binary format
- Design formally verified proof checker (*work in progress [BMM⁺23]*)

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- MaxSAT solving and PB optimization (*work in progress [VDB22, BBN⁺23]*)
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And more...

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- **We're hiring!** Talk to me to join the proof logging revolution! 😊

Summing up

- Combinatorial solving and optimization is a true success story
- But ensuring correctness is a crucial, and not yet satisfactorily addressed, concern
- Certifying solvers producing machine-verifiable proofs of correctness seems like most promising approach
- Cutting planes reasoning with pseudo-Boolean constraints seems to hit a sweet spot between simplicity and expressivity
- **This work:** Efficient proof logging for symmetry and dominance breaking using cutting planes with extensions

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Thank you for your attention!

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