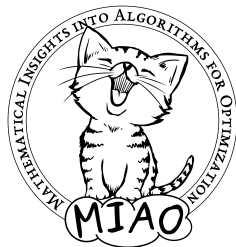


# Certified Symmetry and Dominance Breaking for Combinatorial Optimisation

Jakob Nordström

University of Copenhagen  
and Lund University



Swedish Operations Research Conference  
Stockholm, Sweden  
October 24, 2022

Joint work 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]\*
  - Constraint programming (CP) [RvBW06]
  - Mixed integer linear programming (MIP) [AW13, BR07]

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- **Formal verification** techniques cannot deal with level of complexity of modern solvers

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# Certified Results with Proof Logging

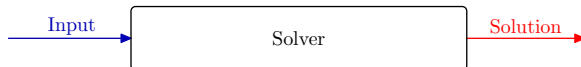
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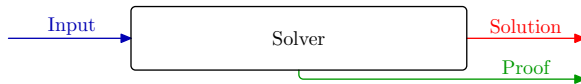
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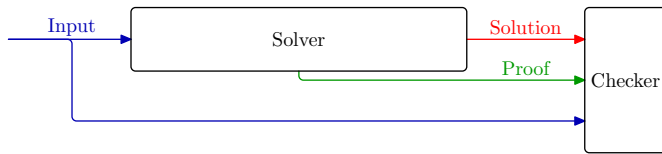
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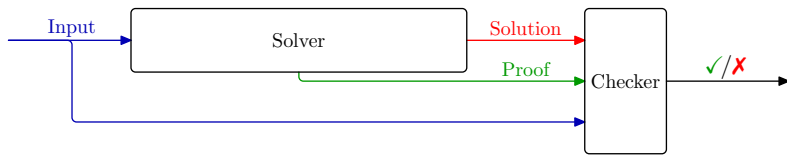
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## Workflow:

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- 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<sup>+</sup>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

# Our Work: Efficient Proof Logging for Symmetry Breaking

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

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- 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 solving (also other applications, but focus here on SAT)
- 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  $\ell_i$ :  $x_i$  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 (a.k.a. 0-1 integer linear programs)

# 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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- **Fact:** Fully sufficient for proof logging for so-called conflict-driven clause learning [BS97, MS99, MMZ<sup>+</sup>01]
- Also need **extension** rule (analogue of RAT [JHB12] used in SAT proof logging) to deal with, e.g., preprocessing/presolving

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- Witness  $\omega$  should be specified and implication **efficiently verifiable** by very simple checks (technical details omitted)

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Zoom tutorial on all of these developments **Mon Nov 28 at 14:00 CET**

*Combinatorial Solving with Provably Correct Results*

See <http://www.jakobnordstrom.se/miao-seminars>

# The Challenge of Symmetries

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

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Not supported by standard SAT proof logging!

# Optimisation Problems

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### Spoiler alert:

For decision problem, nothing stops us from inventing objective function (like  $\sum_{i=1}^n 2^{n-i} \cdot x_i$  minimized by lexicographic order)

# Proof Logging for Optimisation Problems

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Redundance-based strengthening, optimisation version

Add constraint  $C$  to formula  $F$  if exists witness substitution  $\omega$  such that

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- Applying  $\omega$  should **strictly decrease**  $f$
- If so, don't need to show that  $C|_{\omega}$  implied!

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- ➑ Can't go on forever, so finally reach  $\alpha'$  satisfying  $F \wedge C$

# 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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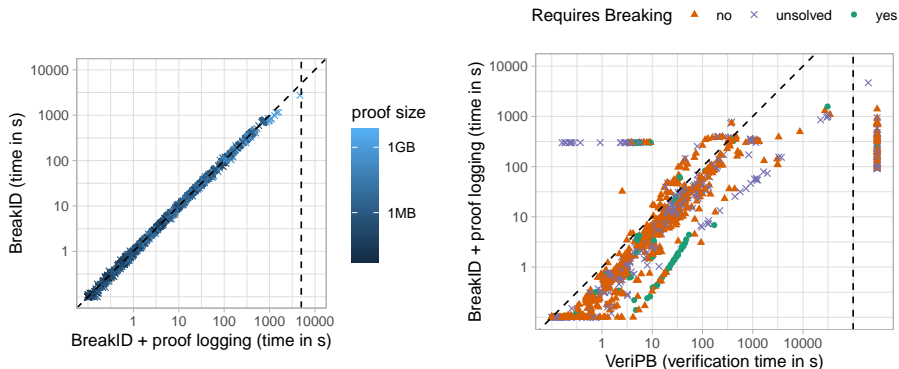
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- ❸ Derive **CNF encoding** of lex-leader constraints from PB constraint  
(in same spirit as PB-to-CNF translation in [GMNO22])

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

# 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*)

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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 proof system with extensions

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*Thank you for your attention!*



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