

(Logic-based) Automated Mechanism Design

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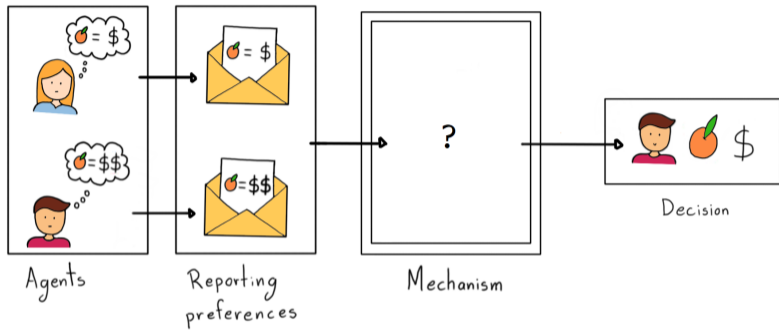
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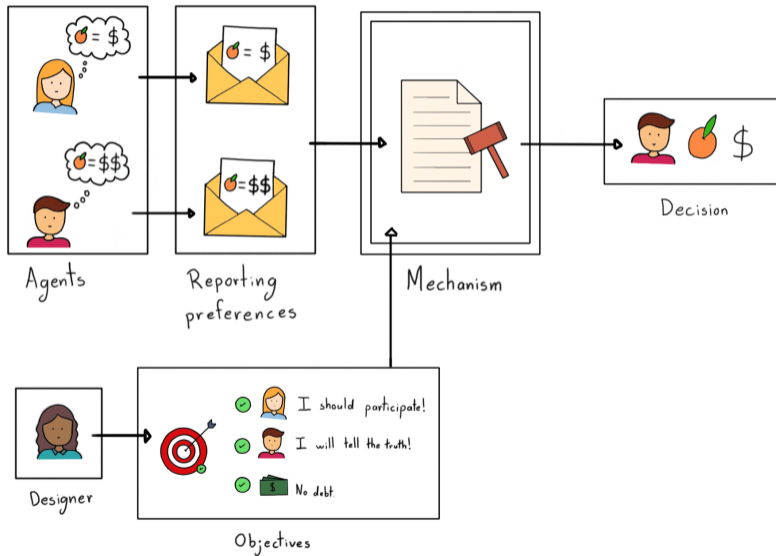
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Automated Mechanism Design



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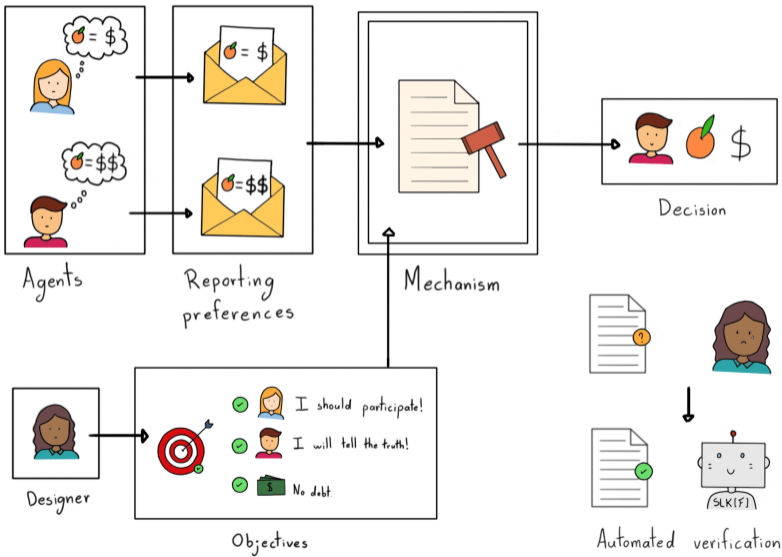


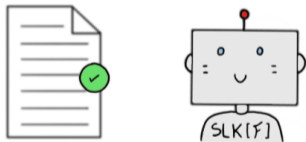
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Automated verification of mechanisms

Requirements:

- i Quantitative aspects
- ii Imperfect information (II)
- iii Ability to express complex solution concepts



Quantitative and epistemic version of Strategy Logic (SLK[\mathcal{F}])¹

¹Strategic Reasoning in Automated Mechanism Design (Maubert et al., KR 2021)

Related Works

- Logics for Strategic Reasoning:
 - ATL and extensions (Alur, Henzinger, and Kupferman 2002)
 - Strategy Logic (SL) (Chatterjee, Henzinger, and Piterman 2010)
 - SL with II and knowledge operators (Berthon et al. 2021; Belardinelli et al. 2020; Maubert and Murano 2018)
 - $SL[\mathcal{F}]$ (Bouyer et al. 2019)
 - Our work: $SLK[\mathcal{F}]$ SL with quantitative semantics and knowledge operators



SL[\mathcal{F}] with Imperfect Information

SLK[\mathcal{F}] Syntax

- Syntax
 - Propositions p
 - Functions $f(\varphi, \dots, \varphi)$
e.g. $x \mapsto \neg x$
 $x, y \mapsto \max(x, y)$
 - Strategy quantifiers $\exists s_a. \varphi$ and bindings $(a, s_a)\varphi$
 - Epistemic operator: $K_a\varphi$
 - Temporal operators: $\mathbf{X}\varphi$ and $\varphi\mathbf{U}\varphi$ (and thus $\mathbf{F}\varphi$ and $\mathbf{G}\varphi$)

Concurrent Game Structure

- Weighted Concurrent Game Structure (wCGS) \mathcal{G}
 - state-transition model
 - state/position: proposition p with a weight
 - transition: joint action
 - observation relation: each agent can not distinguish between states
- Strategy Str_a of agent a : maps positions to actions
- Assignment χ : maps agents and variables to strategies

SLK[\mathcal{F}] Semantics

Let \mathcal{G} be a wCGS, and χ an assignment. Satisfaction value $\llbracket \varphi \rrbracket_{\chi}^{\mathcal{G}}(v) \in [-1, 1]$ of a formula φ in a position v is defined as follows

- $\llbracket p \rrbracket_{\chi}^{\mathcal{G}}(v) = \ell(v, p)$
- $\llbracket \exists s_a. \varphi \rrbracket_{\chi}^{\mathcal{G}}(v) = \max_{\sigma \in \mathbf{Str}_a} \llbracket \varphi \rrbracket_{\chi[s_a \mapsto \sigma]}^{\mathcal{G}}(v)$
- $\llbracket (a, s_a)\varphi \rrbracket_{\chi}^{\mathcal{G}}(v) = \llbracket \varphi \rrbracket_{\chi[a \mapsto \chi(s_a)]}^{\mathcal{G}}(v)$
- $\llbracket K_a \varphi \rrbracket_{\chi}^{\mathcal{G}}(v) = \min_{v' \sim_a v} \llbracket \varphi \rrbracket_{\chi}^{\mathcal{G}}(v')$
- $\llbracket f(\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_m) \rrbracket_{\chi}^{\mathcal{G}}(v) = f(\llbracket \varphi_1 \rrbracket_{\chi}^{\mathcal{G}}(v), \dots, \llbracket \varphi_m \rrbracket_{\chi}^{\mathcal{G}}(v))$
- $\mathbf{F}\varphi$ maximises the values of φ over all future points in time
- $\mathbf{G}\varphi$ minimizes the values of φ over all future points in time



Reasoning about Auction Mechanisms

Social choice functions and mechanisms

- Split the SCF into choice and payment functions: $f = (x, \{p_a\})$

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Example (Dutch Auction)

- A position $\langle p, \{x_a\}, t, \{\theta_a\} \rangle$

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- An initial position $\langle 1, 0, \dots, 0, 0, -1, \theta_1, \dots, \theta_n \rangle$
- Transition: $p' = p - \text{dec}$ if everyone *waits*
Otherwise, allocate the good to the agent who bet, she pays p

Social choice functions and mechanisms

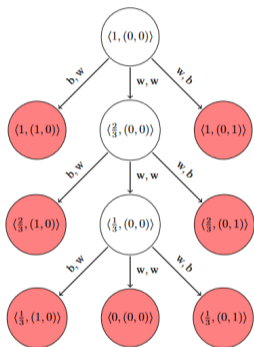


Figure 1: Mechanism timeline

One initial state (types are omitted) - Action bid is written b and wait is w .

Solution concepts

- Nash equilibrium (NE)

$$\text{NE}(s) := \bigwedge_{a \in \text{Ag}} \forall t. [(\text{Ag}_{-a}, s_{-a})(a, t) \mathbf{F}(ter \wedge \text{util}_a) \\ \leq (\text{Ag}, s) \mathbf{F}(ter \wedge \text{util}_a)]$$

- Dominant strategy equilibrium (DSE)

$$\text{DSE}(s) := \bigwedge_{a \in \text{Ag}} \text{DS}(s_a, a)$$

where $\text{DS}(s_a, a)$ if s_a weakly maximizes a 's utility, for all strategies of other agents.

Implementation of SCF

- Alternatives Alt
- Agent's type $\theta_a \in \Theta_a$
- Social choice function (SCF) $f : \Theta \rightarrow \text{Alt}$
- Atomic propositions for describing the alternatives
- Let $E \in \{\text{NE}, \text{DSE}\}$
- Mechanism \mathcal{G} E-implements the SCF f if they assign the same alternative in **some** E-equilibrium, for all type profiles θ .

Mechanism Properties

- Individual Rationality (IR): define $IR := \bigwedge_{a \in Ag} 0 \leq util_a$
Let \mathcal{G} be a mechanism that E-implements f .

Proposition (IR)

f is individually rational iff IR has the satisfaction value 1 in the E-equilibrium implementing f (for all $\theta \in \Theta$).

Mechanism Properties

- Strategyproofness (SP)
Let $\hat{\theta}_a$ be the truth-revealing strategy for a
 \mathcal{G} is direct revelation mechanism

Proposition (SP)

\mathcal{G} is SP if $\mathbb{I}[\text{DSE}(s)]_{\chi}^{\mathcal{G}}(v_i^{\theta}) = 1$ for all $\theta \in \Theta$, where $\chi(s_a) = \hat{\theta}_a$ for each a

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- Efficiency, Pareto optimality, budget-balance

Revenue benchmarks with knowledge

- Mechanisms with possibilistic beliefs \mathcal{B} (Chen and Micali 2015)
- 2nd Belief Benchmark denoted $2^{\text{nd}}(\mathcal{B})$:
 - i The maximum type each agent a is *sure* someone has
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$$\varphi_a^{\text{smv}} := K_a \max_{a' \in \text{Ag}} (\text{type}_{a'})$$

$$\varphi_{2^{\text{nd}}} := 2^{\text{nd-max}}(\varphi_{a_1}^{\text{smv}}, \dots, \varphi_{a_n}^{\text{smv}})$$

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Proposition (Revenue benchmark)

Given a mechanism \mathcal{G} , a position v and a belief profile $\mathcal{B}(v)$, it holds that $\llbracket \varphi_{2\text{nd}} \rrbracket^{\mathcal{G}}(v) = 2^{\text{nd}}(\mathcal{B}(v))$.



Model Checking and Synthesis

Model-checking

Model-checking problem (MC) for $\text{SLK}[\mathcal{F}]$:

Given a sentence φ , a wCGS \mathcal{G} , a position v in \mathcal{G} and a predicate $P \subseteq [-1, 1]$, decide whether $\llbracket \varphi \rrbracket^{\mathcal{G}}(v) \in P$.

Theorem (MC for $\text{SLK}[\mathcal{F}]$)

Assuming that functions in \mathcal{F} can be computed in polynomial space, model checking $\text{SLK}[\mathcal{F}]$ with imperfect information and **memoryless agents** is PSPACE-complete.

Synthesis of Mechanisms

- Creating mechanisms from a logical specification in $SL[\mathcal{F}]^2$
- Satisfiability of SL (thus, $SL[\mathcal{F}]$) is undecidable in general
- Decidable cases

Theorem (Satisfiability of $SL[\mathcal{F}]$)

The satisfiability of $SL[\mathcal{F}]$ is decidable in the following cases

- wCGS with bounded actions
- Turn-based wCGS

²Automated Synthesis of Mechanisms (Mittelmann et al., IJCAI 2022)

Optimal mechanism synthesis

Algorithm 1: Optimal mechanism synthesis

Data: A $SL[\mathcal{F}]$ specification Φ and a set of possible values for atomic propositions \mathcal{V}

Result: A $wCGS$ \mathcal{G} such that $\llbracket \Phi \rrbracket^{\mathcal{G}}$ is maximal

Compute $\widetilde{Val}_{\Phi, \mathcal{V}}$;

Let ν_1, \dots, ν_n be a decreasing enumeration of $\widetilde{Val}_{\Phi, \mathcal{V}}$;

for $i=1 \dots n$ **do**

 Solve \mathcal{V} -satisfiability for Φ and $\vartheta = \nu_i$;

if there exists \mathcal{G} such that $\llbracket \Phi \rrbracket^{\mathcal{G}} \geq \nu_i$ **then**

return \mathcal{G} ;

end

end

Japanese auction

- $\mathbf{AG}((\text{initial} \rightarrow \text{price} = 0 \wedge \neg \text{terminal}) \wedge (\mathbf{XG}\neg \text{initial} \wedge \mathbf{F} \text{terminal}))$
- $\mathbf{AG}(\text{sold} \leftrightarrow \text{choice} \neq -1)$
- $\mathbf{AG}((\neg \text{sold} \wedge \text{price} + \text{inc} \leq 1) \rightarrow (\text{price} + \text{inc} = \mathbf{Xprice} \wedge \neg \mathbf{Xterminal}))$
- $\mathbf{AG}((\text{sold} \vee \text{price} + \text{inc} > 1) \rightarrow (\text{price} = \mathbf{Xprice} \wedge \mathbf{Xterminal}))$
- $\mathbf{AG}(\text{choice} = \text{wins}_a \leftrightarrow \text{bid}_a \wedge \bigwedge_{b \neq a} \neg \text{bid}_b)$
- $\mathbf{AG}(\text{choice} = -1 \leftrightarrow \neg(\bigvee_{a \in \text{Ag}}(\text{bid}_a \wedge \bigwedge_{b \neq a} \neg \text{bid}_b)))$
- $\mathbf{AG}(\bigwedge_{a \in \text{Ag}}(\text{choice} = \text{wins}_a \rightarrow \text{payment}_a = \text{price}))$
- $\mathbf{AG}(\bigwedge_{a \in \text{Ag}}(\text{choice} \neq \text{wins}_a \rightarrow \text{payment}_a = 0))$
- $\bigwedge_{\theta \in \Theta} \exists s. \text{NE}(s, \theta) \wedge \mathbf{F}(\text{terminal} \wedge \mathbf{EF}(\theta))$

Proposition

There exists a wCGS such that the satisfaction value of these rules is 1.

Computational Complexity

Legacy of Strategy Logic

Synthesis of Mechanism

In general $k + 1$ -EXPTIME.

Japanese Auction: 3-EXPTIME

Conclusion

- Logic-Based Mechanism Design
- Verifying properties \rightarrow model check SLK[\mathcal{F}]-formulas (KR'21)
- Generating mechanisms \rightarrow synthesis from SL[\mathcal{F}]-formulas (IJCAI'22)
- Probabilistic setting (AAAI'23)
 - Bayesian mechanisms
 - Mixed strategies
 - Randomized mechanisms

Going Further

- Previous logical approaches are deterministic
- Bayesian and randomized mechanisms
- Challenges for a general approach
 - Settings: deterministic or randomized mechanisms, incomplete information, mixed or pure strategies, and direct or indirect mechanisms
 - Time-line for revealing the incomplete information
- Framework for MD with Probabilistic Strategy Logic (PSL)
- Automatic verification through PSL model checking

Bayesian Mechanism Design

- A (randomized) *social choice function* (SCF) (similarly, *mechanism*) is a function that maps **type profiles** (resp, **strategy profiles**) to probability distributions over the set of alternatives.
- Mechanism as stochastic transition systems: labels on terminal states indicate the alternative chosen

Example BIN-TAC auction

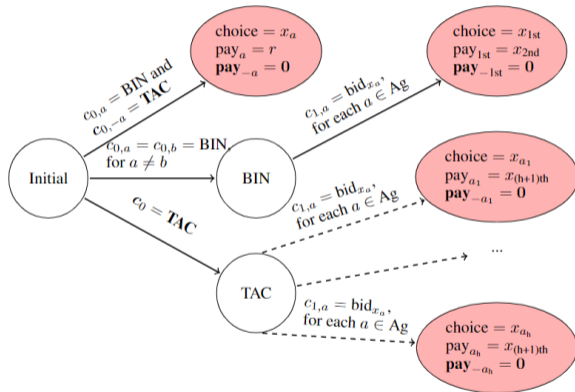


Figure 2: System representing the “Buy-It-Now or Take-a-Chance” (BIN-TAC) auction. Continuous lines are transitions with prob. 1 and dashed lines are transitions with prob. $\frac{1}{h}$.

Expected utilities

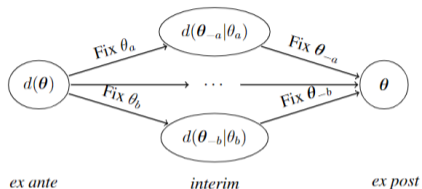


Figure 3: Mechanism timeline

Probability Strategy Logic captures the utility of agent a

- *ex ante* $\mathbb{E}_a^{e.a.}(s)$: expected utility given the type profile distribution
- *interim* $\mathbb{E}_a^{e.i.}(s, \theta_a)$ expected utility given agent a 's type and the distribution of type profiles
- *ex post* $\mathbb{E}_a^{e.p.}(s, \theta)$ expected utility given a type profile

Expected utilities

In more details

$$\mathbb{E}_a^{e.p.}(s, \theta) := \sum_{\alpha \in \text{Alt}} u_a(\theta_a, \alpha) \times \mathbb{P}_{s(\theta)}(\mathbf{F}(\text{ter} \wedge \text{al}^\alpha))$$

$$\mathbb{E}_a^{e.i.}(s, \theta_a) := \sum_{\theta_{-a} \in \Theta_{-a}} d(\theta_{-a} | \theta_a) \times \mathbb{E}_a^{e.p.}(s, (\theta_{-a}, \theta_a))$$

$$\mathbb{E}_a^{e.a.}(s) := \sum_{\theta \in \Theta} d(\theta) \times \mathbb{E}_a^{e.p.}(s, \theta)$$

Figure 4: PSL encoding

Solution concepts

Let $s = (s_a)_{a \in \text{Ag}}$ denote a strategy (variable) profile

s is a Nash equilibrium (NE) if for every agent a and for every θ , s_a is the best response (w.r.t. alternative strategy t_a) that a has to s_{-a} when the type profile is θ

$$\text{NE}(s) := \bigwedge_{\theta \in \Theta} \bigwedge_{a \in \text{Ag}} \forall t_a. \mathbb{E}_a^{e.p.}((s_{-a}, t_a), \theta) \leq \mathbb{E}_a^{e.p.}(s, \theta)$$

s is a Bayesian-Nash equilibrium (BNE) if for every agent a and every θ_a , s_a is the best response that a has to s_{-a} when her type is θ_a , in expectation over the other types θ_{-a}

$$\text{BNE}(s) := \bigwedge_{a \in \text{Ag}} \bigwedge_{\theta_a \in \Theta_a} \forall t_a. \mathbb{E}_a^{e.i.}((s_{-a}, t_a), \theta_a) \leq \mathbb{E}_a^{e.i.}(s, \theta_a)$$

Implementation of an SCF

Given an equilibrium concept \mathbf{E} , a mechanism \mathbf{E} -implements an SCF f if there exists a strategy profile $\sigma(\theta)$ that is an \mathbf{E} -equilibrium and it assigns the same probability distribution as f under strategies $\sigma(\theta)$, for any types θ^3 .

Let \mathcal{G} be a system representing a mechanism and $\varphi_{f,s}$ be the PSL formula expressing whether f assigns the same probability distribution as \mathcal{G} under s .

\mathcal{G} \mathbf{E} -implements an f if

$$\mathcal{G}, v_t \models \exists s. \mathbf{E}(s) \wedge \varphi_{f,s}$$

³Generalised from Parkes 2001

Mechanism properties

An SCF f is (interim) IR if for every $\theta \in \Theta$ and agent a , their interim utility is at least 0

Given a mechanism \mathcal{G} E-implementing f , \mathcal{G} is interim IR if

$$\mathcal{G}, v_t \models \exists \mathbf{s}. \mathbf{E}(\mathbf{s}) \wedge \mathbf{F}(\text{terminal} \wedge \varphi_{f, \mathbf{s}} \wedge \bigwedge_{\theta \in \Theta} \text{IR}(\mathbf{s}, \theta))$$

where $\text{IR}(\mathbf{s}, \theta) := \bigwedge_{a \in \text{Ag}} 0 \leq \mathbb{E}_a^{e.i.}(\mathbf{s}, \theta_a)$

Mechanism properties

A direct mechanism is *BIC* if the truth-revealing strategy profile $(\hat{\theta}_a)_{a \in \text{Ag}}$ is a BNE for any $\theta \in \Theta$

Let \mathcal{G} be a system representing a mechanism, \mathcal{G} is BIC if

$$\mathcal{G}, \chi[s \rightarrow (\hat{\theta}_a)_{a \in \text{Ag}}], v_i \models \text{BNE}(s)$$

Evaluating mechanisms \rightarrow model-checking PSL -formulas, which is decidable for memoryless strategies

Conclusion

- Bridge between the economics' approach to MD and formal reasoning in Multi-Agent Systems
- General approach for verification of mechanisms using $SL[\mathcal{F}]$ and Bayesian mechanisms using PSL
- Future work
 - Social Good
 - Practical Tools!

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