

Reconstruction of attacks in Proverif

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2025

1 Background

- Proverif
- Saturation Procedure
- Reconstruction of attacks

2 Contribution

- Improving reconstruction of attacks
- Other optimizations
 - Matching replication occurrences
 - Smarter Let constructs

What is Proverif?

- Protocol:

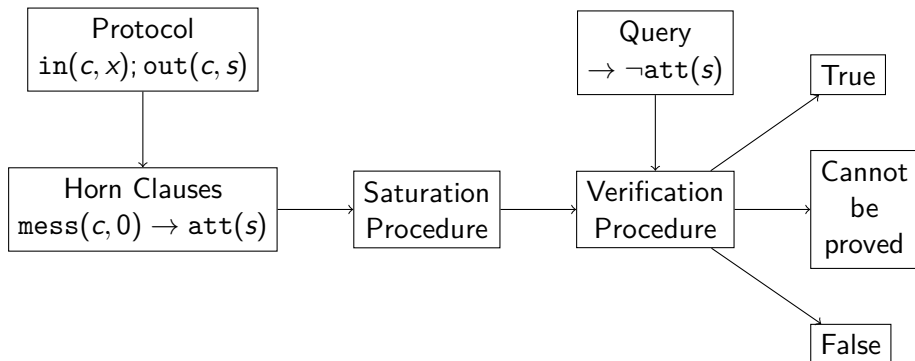
$P_a = \text{new } k; \text{out}(c, \text{sign}(\text{enc}(k, pk_b), sk_a))$

$P_b = \text{in}(c, x); \text{if } \text{verify}(x, pk_a) \text{ then out}(c, \text{enc}(s, \text{dec}(x, sk_b)))$

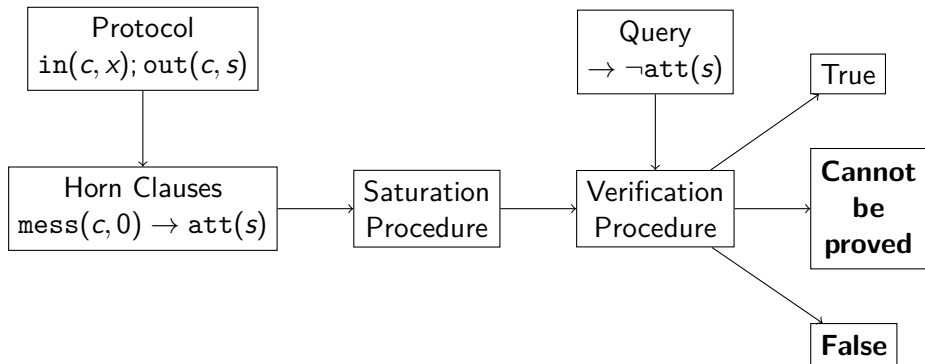
$P = P_a \mid P_b$

- Security property: can the attacker learn s ?
- Query: $\rightarrow \text{att}(s)$
- Omnipotent attacker (Dolev-Yao)

Structure of Proverif



Structure of Proverif



- Overapproximations
- Derivation $\rightarrow$ Real trace?

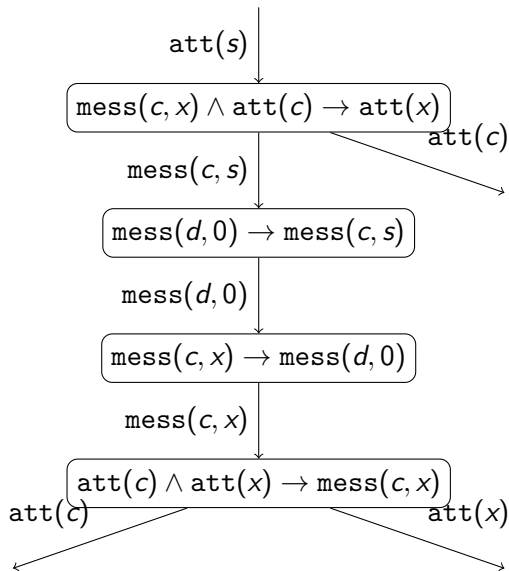
Example

$$P = \text{in}(c, x); \text{out}(d, 0) \\ | \text{in}(d, y); \text{out}(c, s)$$

with query $\neg att(s)$, where:

- c is a public channel,
- d is a private channel
- s is a secret value.

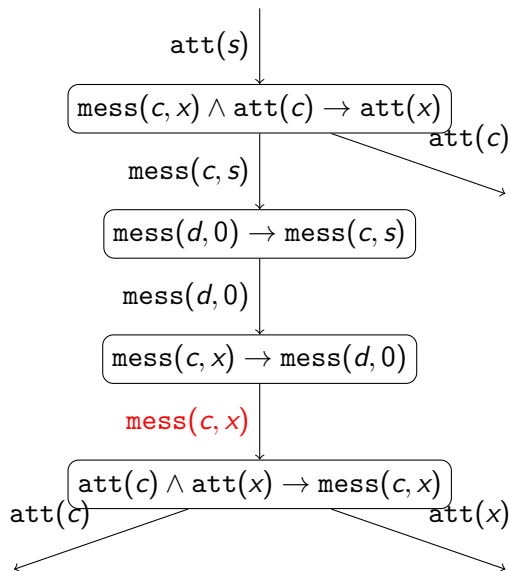
Reconstruction idea: guiding steps (from 2005)



$P = \text{in}(c, x); \text{out}(d, 0)$
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How do I step?

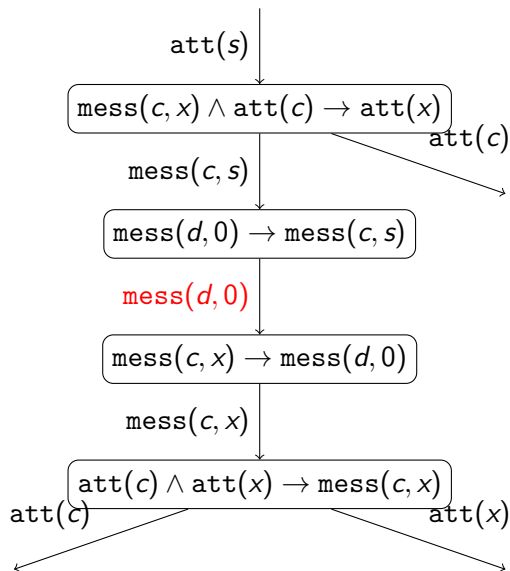
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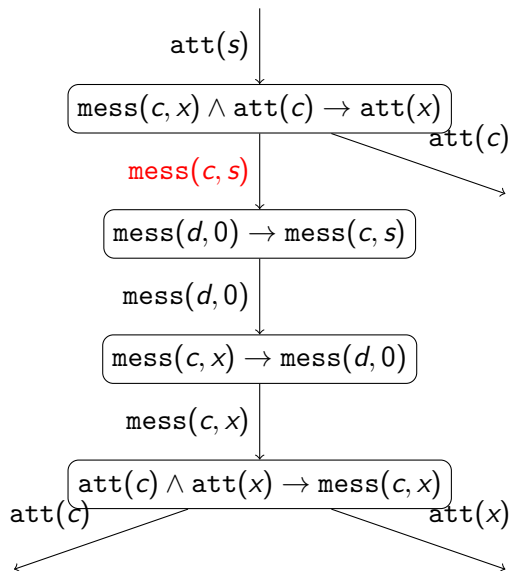
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How do I step?

Translation of process

- Process to Horn clauses
- Hypothesis: inputs and others (ex: conditional)
- Conclusions: outputs

Example

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Translation of process

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$$P = \text{in}(c, x); \text{out}(d, 0) \\ | \text{in}(d, y); \text{out}(c, s)$$
$$\text{mess}(c, x)$$

Translation of process

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Translation of process

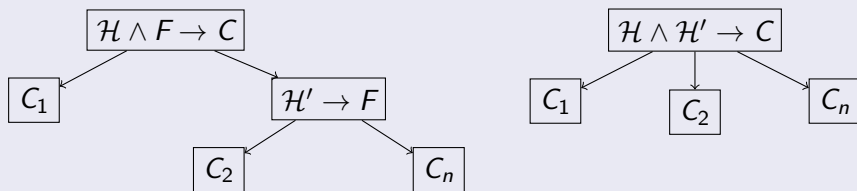
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Saturation and derivation example

Idea: Squish!



Example

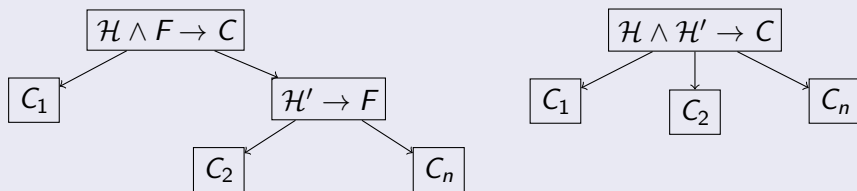
$$\text{mess}(c, x) \rightarrow \text{mess}(d, 0)$$

$$\text{mess}(d, y) \rightarrow \text{mess}(c, s)$$

$$\text{att}(c) \wedge \text{att}(x) \rightarrow \text{mess}(c, x)$$

Saturation and derivation example

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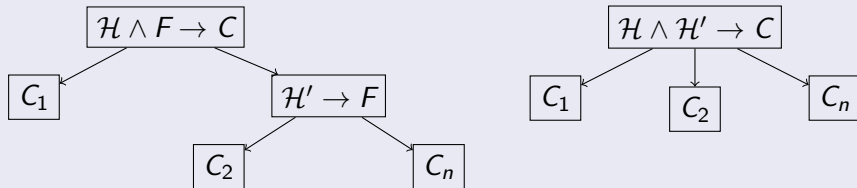
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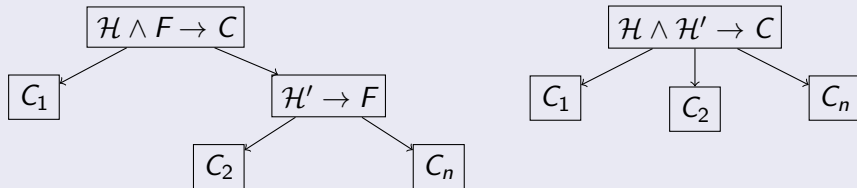
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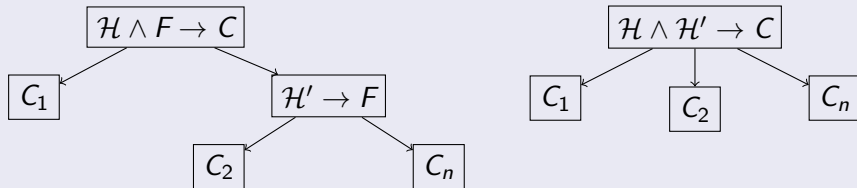
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Saturation and derivation example

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When reconstruction fails

Consider: $P = \text{in}^{o_1}(c, x); \text{in}^{o_2}(d, y)$
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Demo Time!

When reconstruction fails

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 $| \text{out}(d, s); \text{out}(c, s)$

$\rightarrow \text{mess}(d, s)$

When reconstruction fails

Consider: $P = \text{in}^{o_1}(c, x); \text{in}^{o_2}(d, y)$
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$\rightarrow \text{mess}(d, s)$

$\rightarrow \text{att}(s)$

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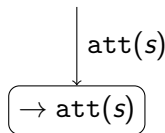
Loss of info!

When reconstruction fails

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Loss of info!



What's happening

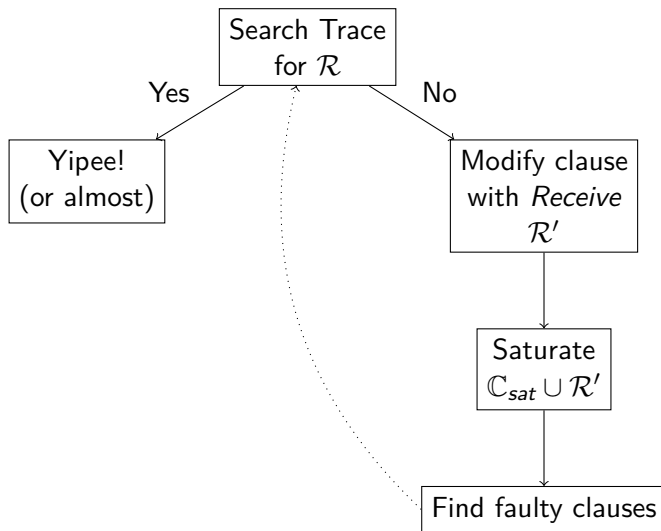
Why does it sometimes work?

- Current implementation not the same as the theory
- Heuristics
- Backtracking

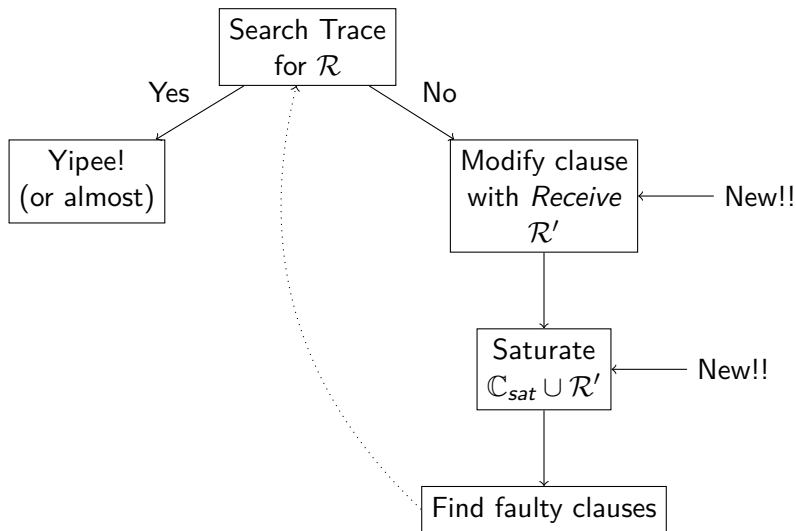
Can we improve it?

- Private sync in derivation
- Consistent
- Less to no backtracking
- *We care*: private channels are everywhere (ex: memory cells)

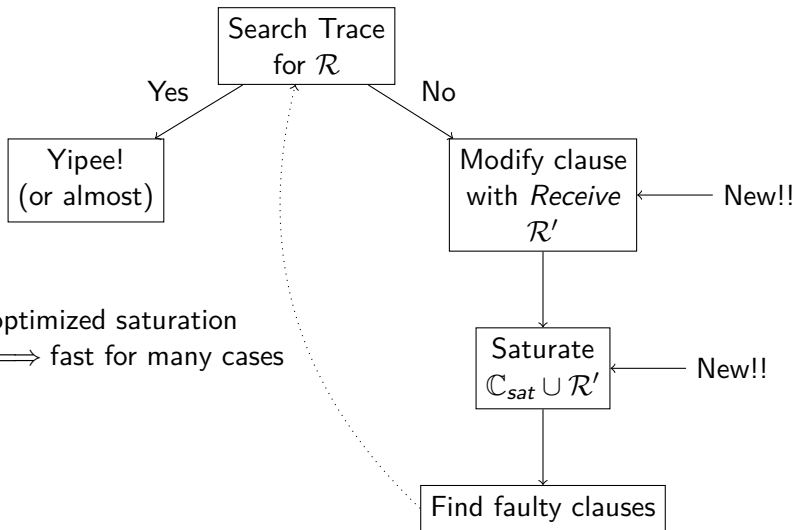
Progressively searching



Progressively searching



Progressively searching



Rely on optimized saturation
Iterative $\Rightarrow$ fast for many cases

Modifying generation of clauses: *Receive* predicate

Idea: new predicate

- $Receive(c, O)$: “Message is received on channel c ”
- Keep occurrence O that was used.

Example

$$P = \text{in}^{o_1}(c, x); \text{in}^{o_2}(d, y) \\ | \text{out}(d, s); \text{out}(c, s)$$

Modifying generation of clauses: *Receive* predicate

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$$\rightarrow Receive(c, o_1)$$
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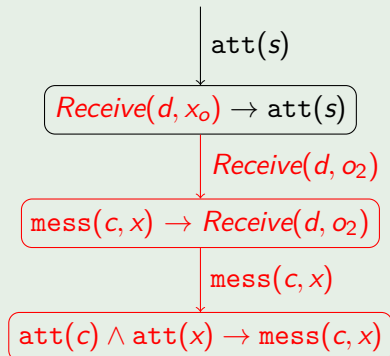
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$$Receive(d, x_o) \rightarrow \text{att}(s)$$
$$\rightarrow Receive(c, o_1)$$
$$\text{mess}(c, x) \rightarrow Receive(d, o_2)$$

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$$\text{Receive}(d, x_o) \rightarrow \text{att}(s) \\ \rightarrow \text{Receive}(c, o_1)$$
$$\text{mess}(c, x) \rightarrow \text{Receive}(d, o_2)$$


Running the algorithm on an example

$$\begin{aligned} P = & \text{out}^{o_1}(d', s); \text{out}^{o_2}(c, s) \\ & | \text{out}^{o_3}(d, s); \text{in}^{o_4}(d', x) \\ & | \text{in}^{o_5}(d, x) \end{aligned}$$

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Initial call

$$\mathcal{R} \Rightarrow \text{att}(s)$$

$\rightarrow \text{mess}(d', s)$	(1)
$\rightarrow \text{att}(s)$	(2)
$\rightarrow \text{mess}(d, s)$	(3)
$\rightarrow \text{Receive}(d, o_5)$	(4)
$\rightarrow \text{Receive}(d', o_4)$	(5)

$\text{att}(s) \downarrow$
(2)

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First iteration

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First iteration

$$\mathcal{R}' = \text{Receive}(d', x_o) \rightarrow \text{att}(s)$$

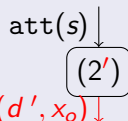
$$\rightarrow \text{mess}(d', s) \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Receive}(d', x_o) \rightarrow \text{att}(s) \quad (2')$$

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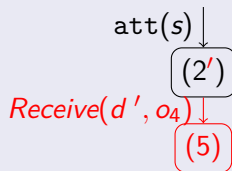
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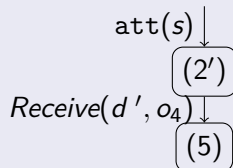
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Second iteration

$$\mathcal{R} \Rightarrow \text{att}(s)$$

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Running the algorithm on an example

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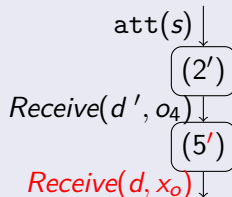
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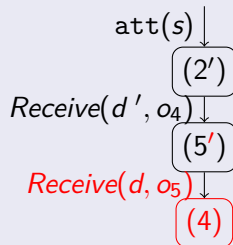
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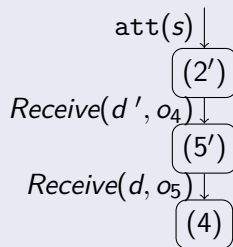
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Third iteration

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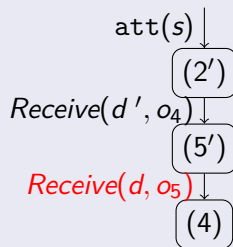
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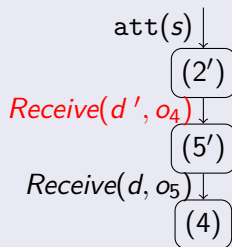
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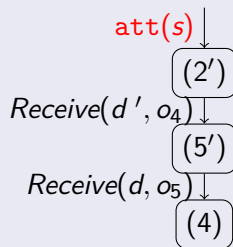
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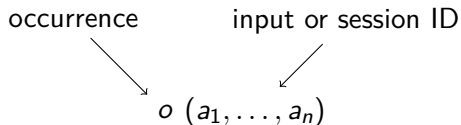
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Occurrences and instrumentalisation



Example

$$P = ! \text{ in}(c, x); \text{ new } a; \text{ out}(c, a)$$
$$P = !_i^{o_1(i)} \text{ in}^{o_2(i)}(c, x); \text{ out}(c, a[i, x])$$

Matching replication occurrences

$$a[a_1, \dots, a_n, \lambda, a'_1, \dots, a'_{k_1}, \lambda_1, \dots]$$



$$\begin{array}{l} a_1, \dots, a_n = b_1, \dots, b_n \\ a'_i = b'_i \text{ if } \text{occof}(a'_i) = \text{occof}(b'_i) \end{array}$$



$$b[b_1, \dots, b_n, \lambda, b'_1, \dots, b'_{k_2}, \lambda_2, \dots]$$

- Used throughout saturation and derivation

Matching replication occurrences

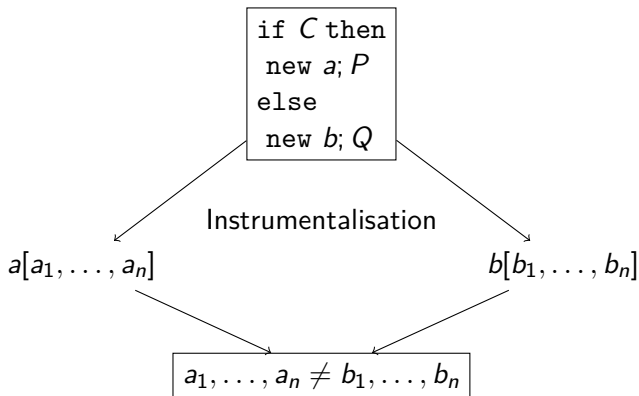
$$a[a_1, \dots, a_n, \lambda, a'_1, \dots, a'_{k_1}, \lambda_1, \dots]$$

$$\begin{array}{l} a_1, \dots, a_n = b_1, \dots, b_n \\ a'_i = b'_i \text{ if } \text{occof}(a'_i) = \text{occof}(b'_i) \end{array}$$

$$b[b_1, \dots, b_n, \lambda, b'_1, \dots, b'_{k_2}, \lambda_2, \dots]$$

- Used throughout saturation and derivation
- Like precise?

Smarter Let constructs



Conclusion

- Private Channel synchronization
- New algorithm structure with incremental search
- Modernized old theory (from 2005)
- Miscellaneous optimizations
- Future Work: finishing prototype