

# Epistemic Strategies and Games on Concurrent Processes



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*Joint work with Sophia Knight, Konstantinos  
Chatzikokolakis and Catuscia Palamidessi.*

*Invited Talk at ICE 2011, Reykjavik.*



# My collaborators

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- Nondeterminism is resolved by an *omniscient, omnipotent* and *invisible scheduler*.

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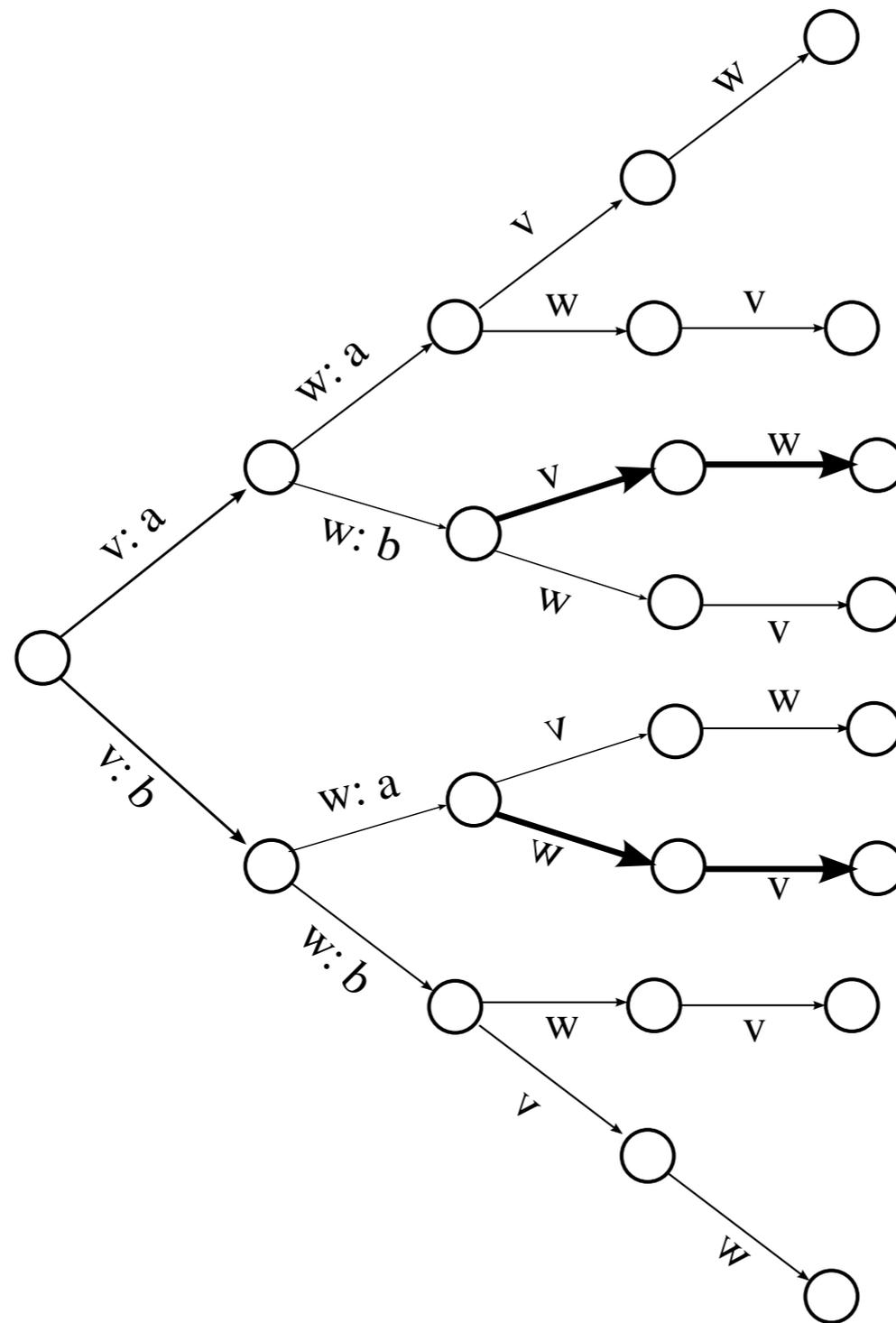
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- A scheduler can leak the votes!



A scheduler that leaks voting preferences.

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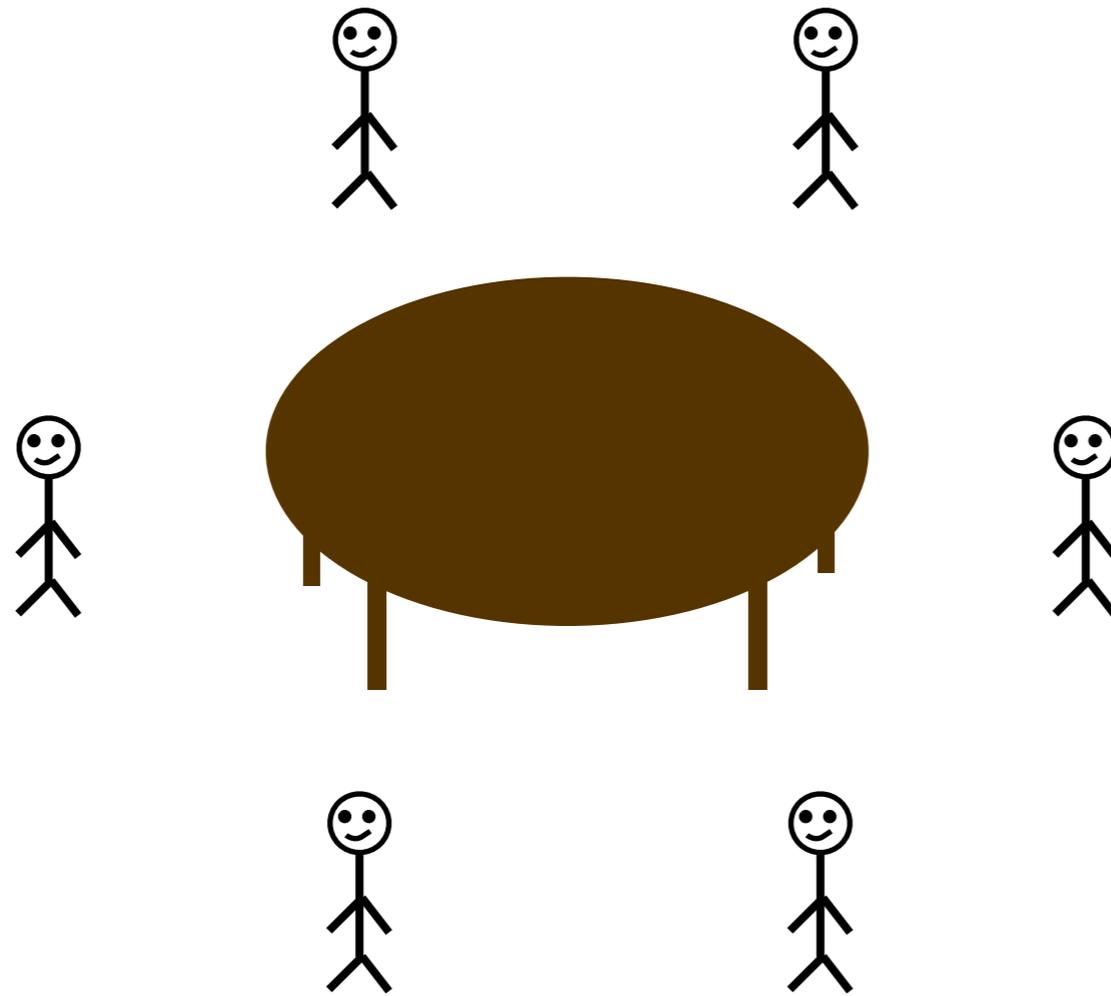
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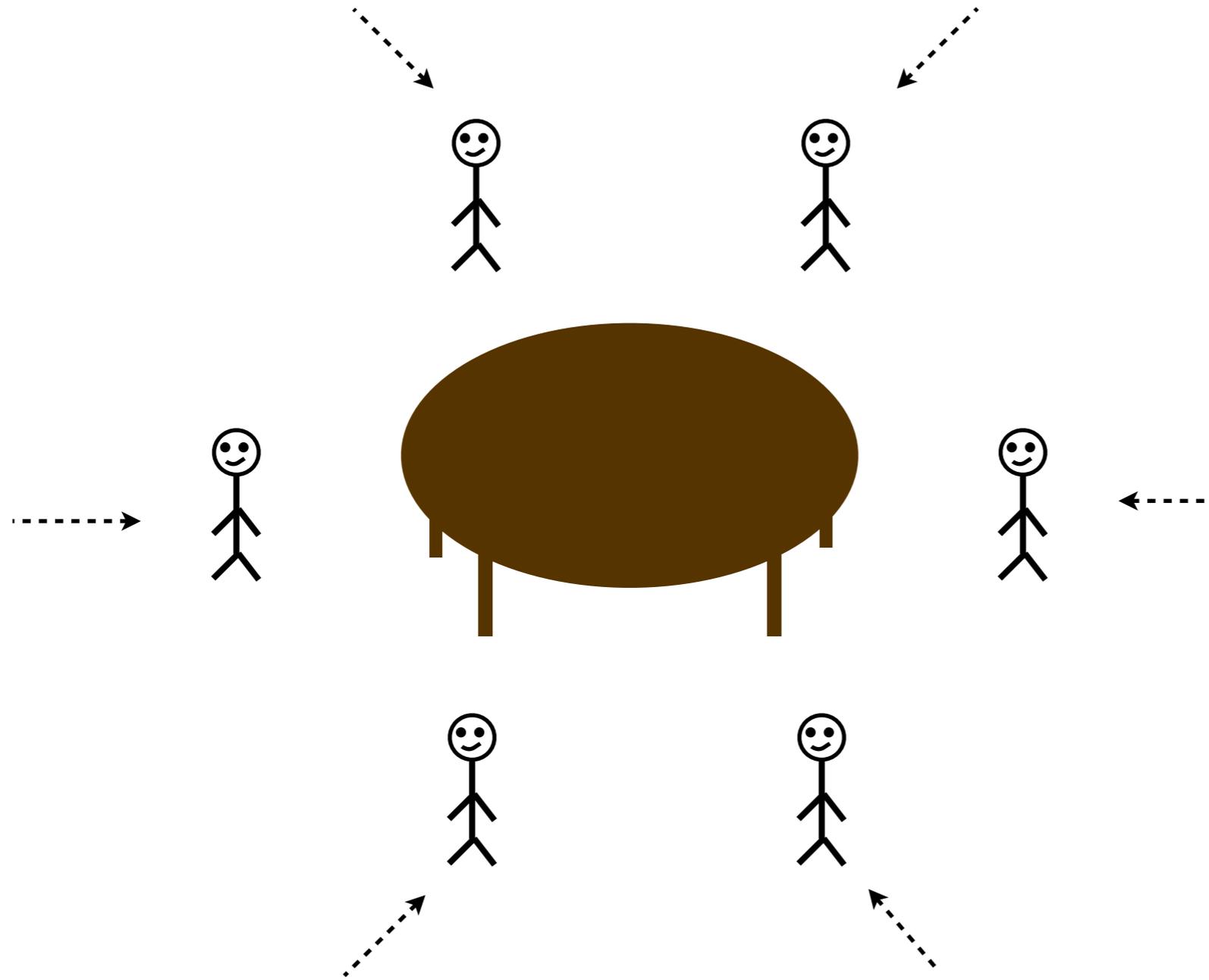
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- They showed that certain equations hold.

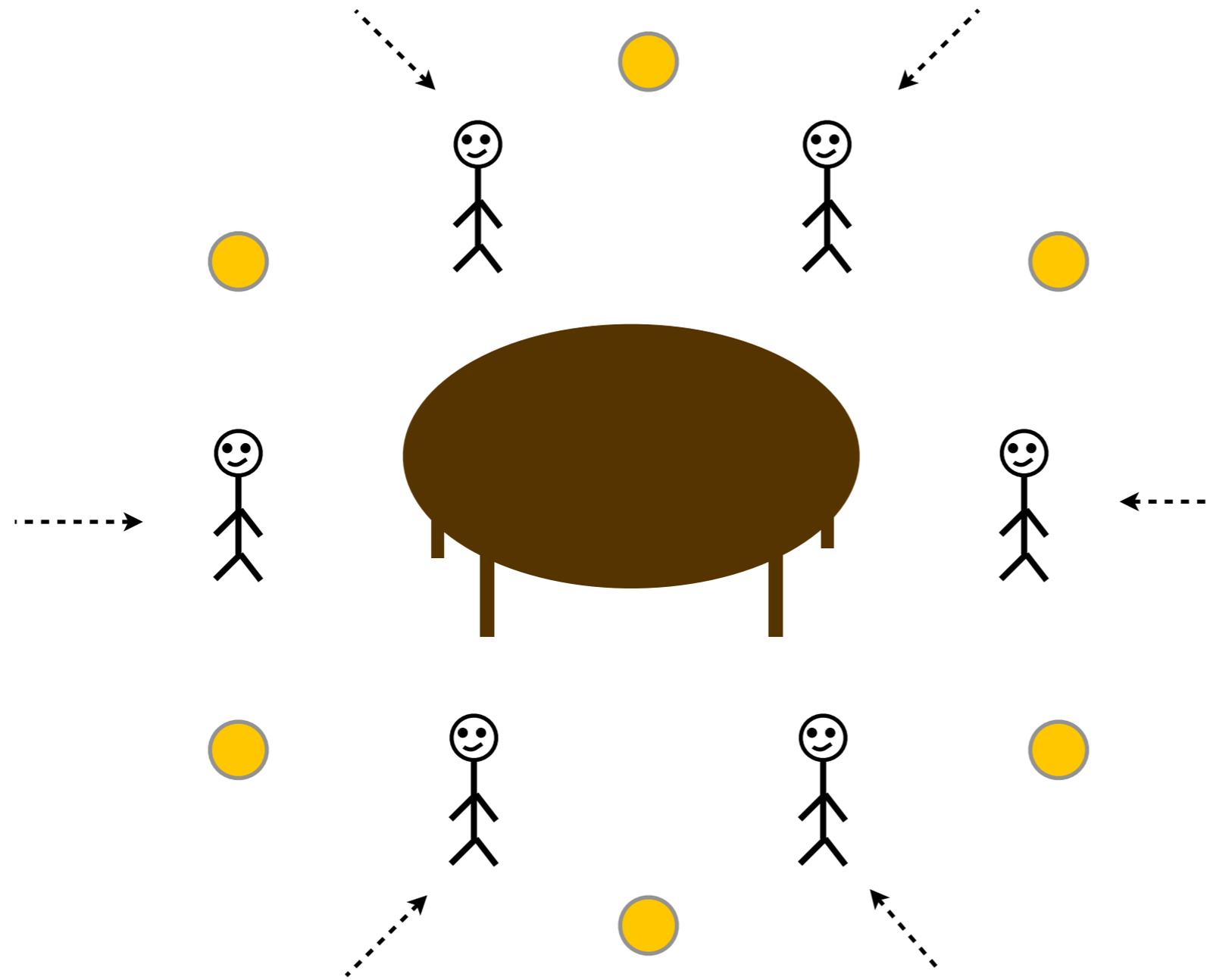
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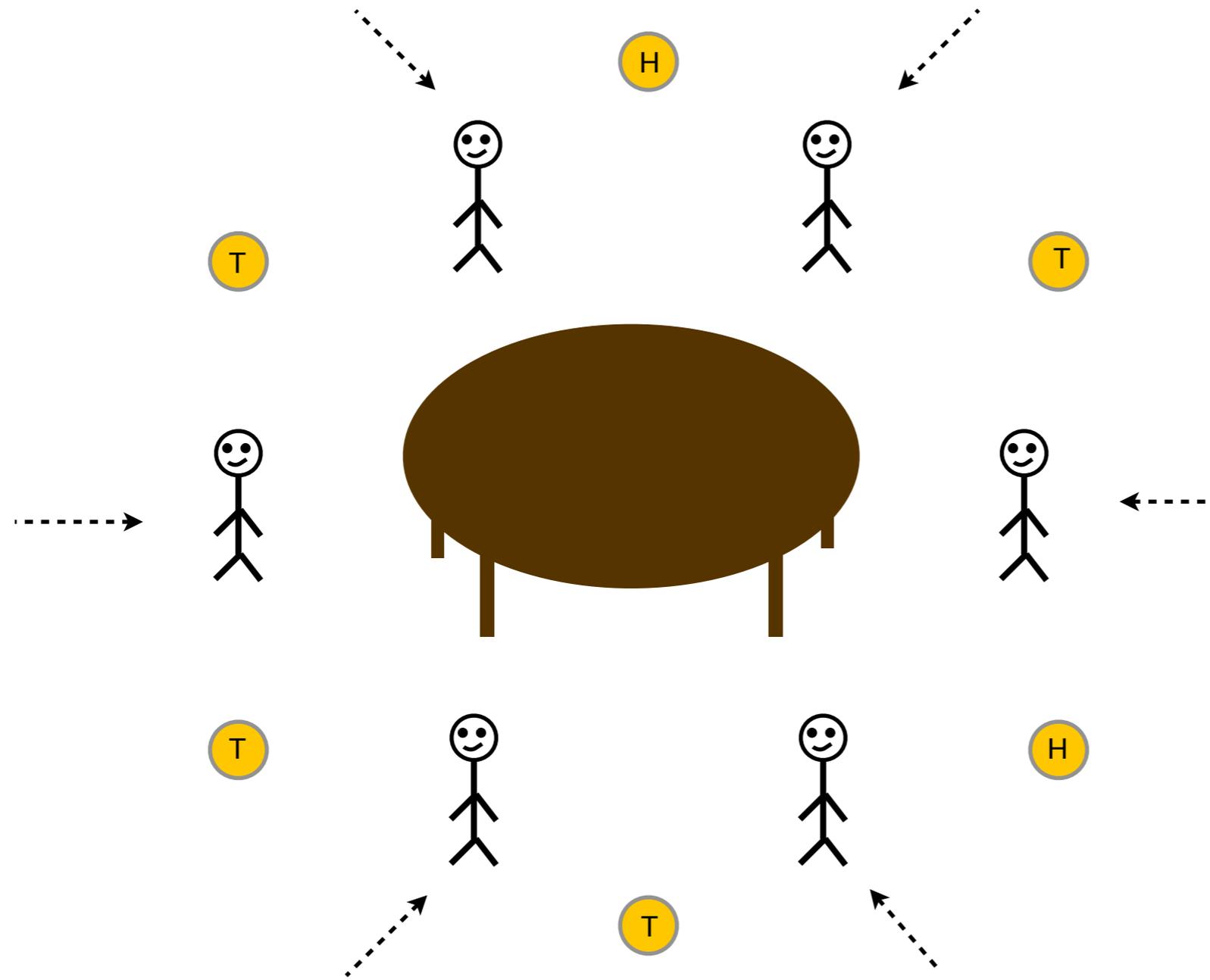
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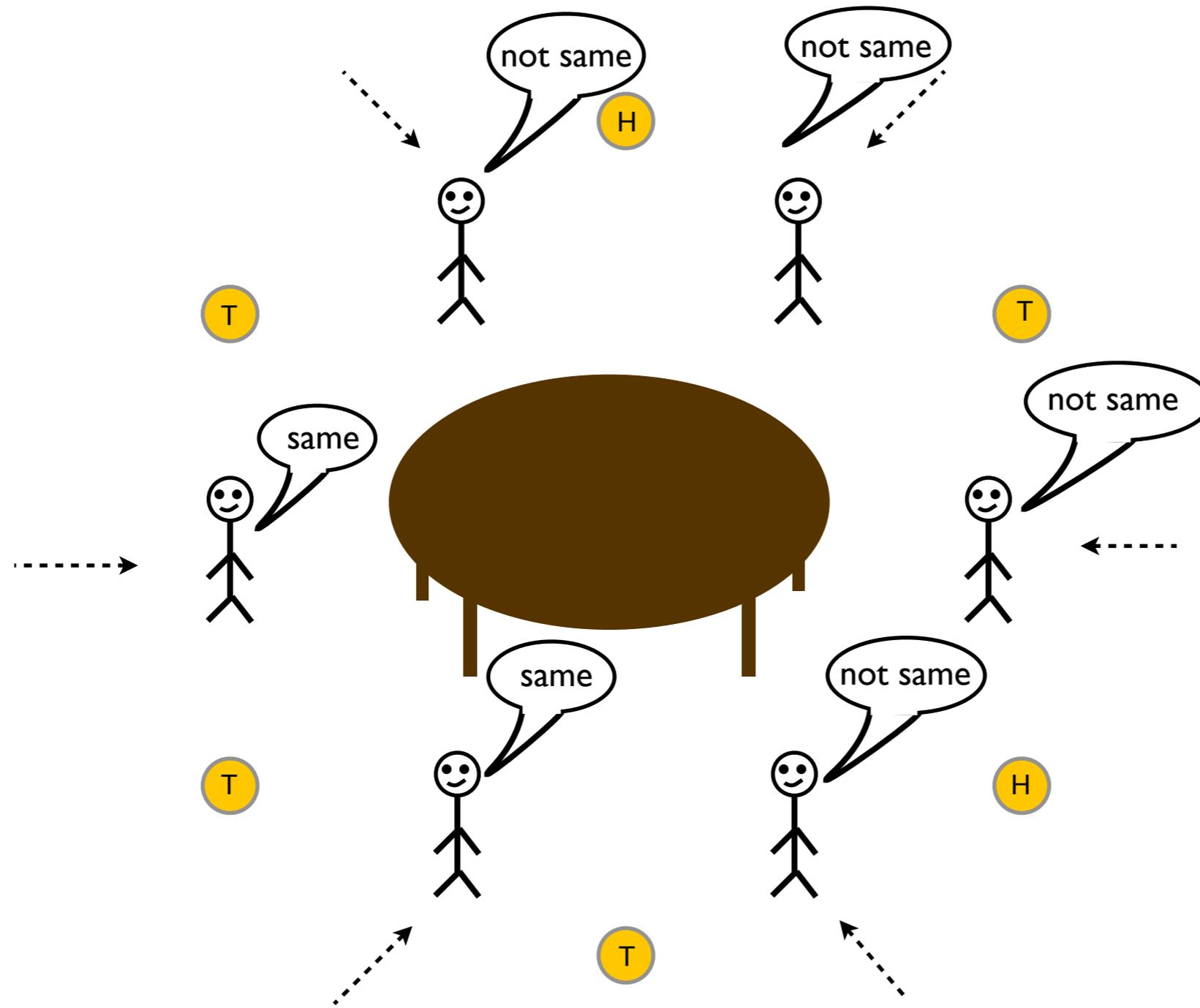
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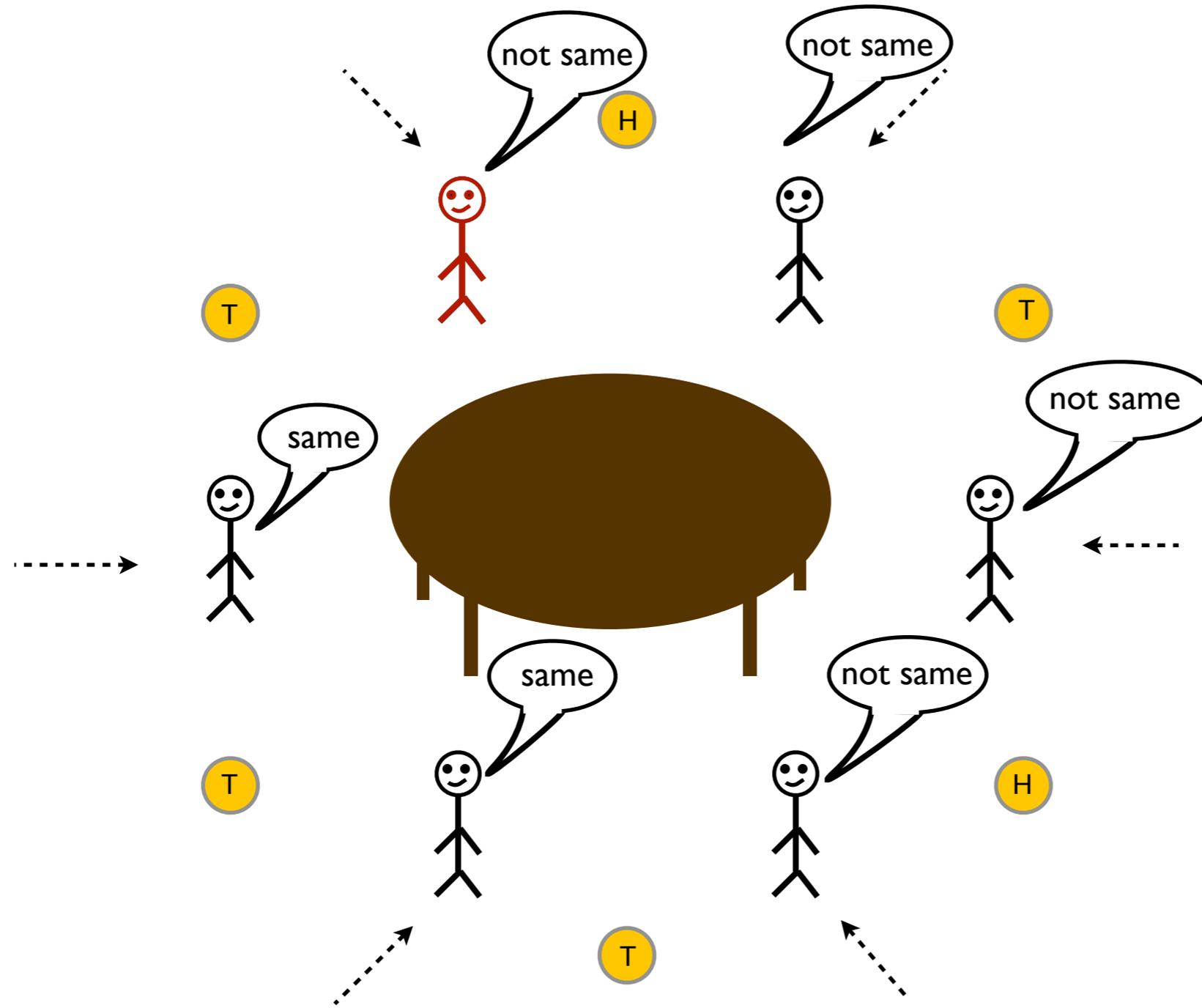
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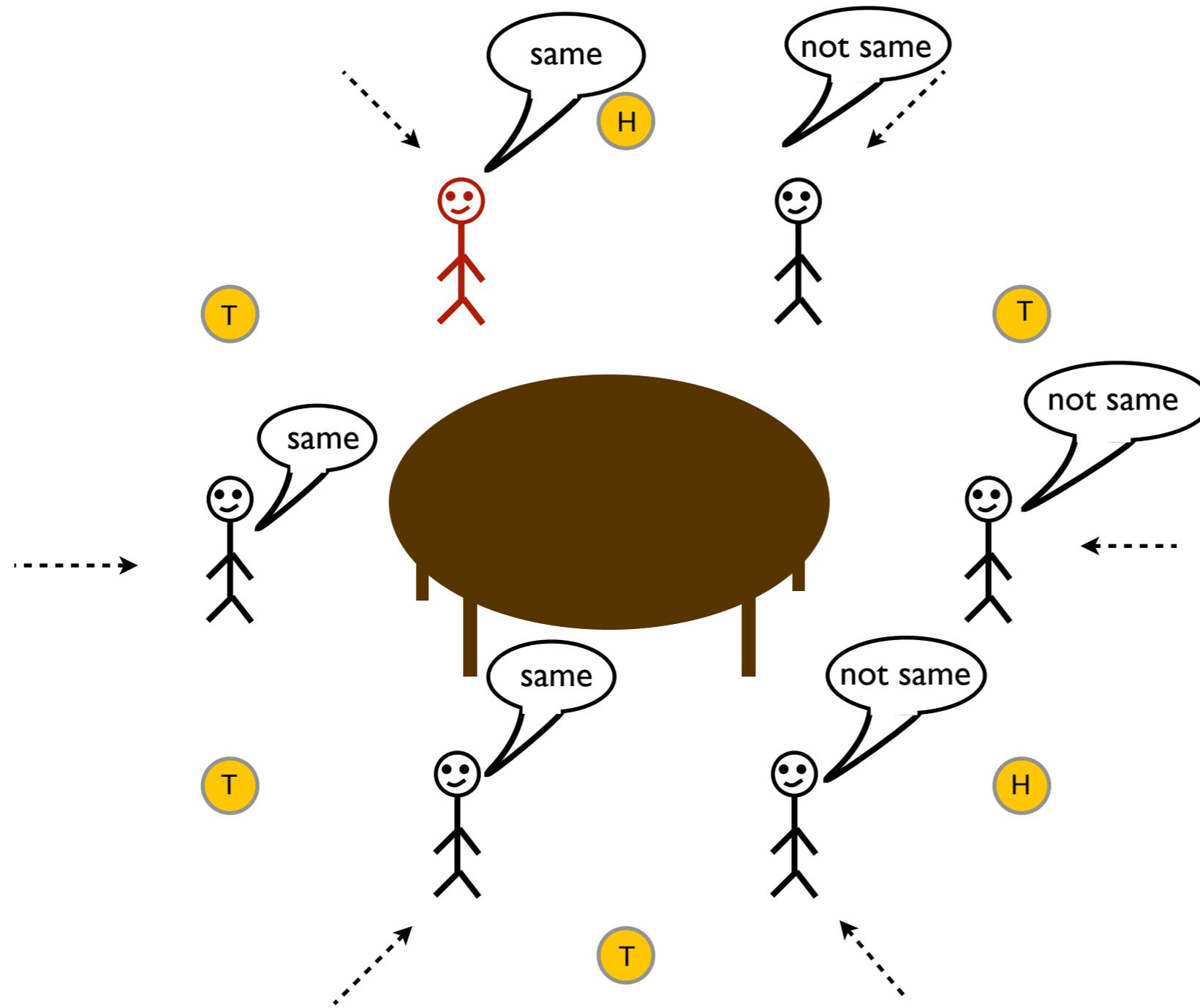
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- An omniscient scheduler can decide always to schedule the liar (if there is one) last (or first).
- This is very unreasonable; the scheduler should not “know” the outcomes of the coin tosses when making the schedule.
- There are two kinds of nondeterminism and there should be two schedulers.

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$$A \triangleq a(x).([\overline{x = 0}] \overline{ok} \\ \dagger_{0.5} \\ [\overline{x = 1}] \overline{ok})$$

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If we use the context  $\overline{a}0|\overline{a}1$ , then  $A$  can produce  $ok$  with probability  $\frac{1}{2}$  **no matter what the scheduler does.**

But with  $B$ , a scheduler that **knows** the outcome of the random choice can select the synchronization and make the probability of  $ok$  be 1 or 0.

In general when  $+_p$  represents a private choice we would like to have

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This is an algebraic way of capturing the limited knowledge of the scheduler but it is very indirect.

# Games and Knowledge

- Games are an ideal setting to explore epistemic concepts.
- Economists have been particularly active in developing these ideas.

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- Games in hardware synthesis: Ghica

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- In order to make the epistemic aspects more explicit we can think of schedulers as playing games.
- The concurrent process is the “board” and the moves end up choosing the action.
- We control what the schedulers “know” by putting restrictions on the allowed strategies.

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- One possible restriction: an agent knows what choices are available to it **and what choices were available to it in the past.**
- This corresponds exactly to the CP syntactic restrictions [C,Knight, P 08].
- Easy to impose epistemic restrictions on strategies.

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- Games are already used in many ways in concurrency, semantics, logic and economics.
- But we still do not have a systematic way of describing and reasoning about interacting agents algebraically.

# Processes with labels

$a, b$

actions

$\bar{a}, \bar{b}$

co-actions

$\tau$

silent action

$\alpha, \beta$

generic actions, co-actions, or silent action

$P, Q ::= 0 \mid l : \alpha.P \mid P \mid Q \mid P + Q \mid (\nu a)P \mid l : \{P\}$

# Operational Semantics

$$\text{ACT} \frac{}{l:\alpha.P \xrightarrow{\alpha} P}$$

$$\text{RES} \frac{P \xrightarrow{\alpha} P' \quad \alpha \neq a, \bar{a}}{(\nu a)P \xrightarrow{\alpha} (\nu a)P'}$$

$$\text{SUM1} \frac{P \xrightarrow{\alpha} P'}{P+Q \xrightarrow{\alpha} P'}$$

$$\text{SUM2} \frac{Q \xrightarrow{\alpha} Q'}{P+Q \xrightarrow{\alpha} Q'}$$

$$\text{PAR1} \frac{P \xrightarrow{\alpha} P'}{P|Q \xrightarrow{\alpha} P'|Q}$$

$$\text{PAR2} \frac{Q \xrightarrow{\alpha} Q'}{P|Q \xrightarrow{\alpha} P|Q'}$$

$$\text{COM} \frac{P \xrightarrow{a} P' \quad Q \xrightarrow{\bar{a}} Q'}{P|Q \xrightarrow{\tau} P'|Q'}$$

$$\text{SWITCH} \frac{P \xrightarrow{\tau} P'}{l:\{P\} \xrightarrow{\tau} P'}$$

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Required to do a silent action because otherwise the outcome of the protected choice would be visible to the scheduler.

DEFINITION 2.1.  $P$  is deterministically labelled if the following conditions hold:

- (1) It is impossible for  $P$  to make two different transitions with the same labels:  
for all strings  $s$ , if  $P \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P'$  and  $P \xrightarrow[s]{\beta} P''$  then  $\alpha = \beta$  and  $P' = P''$ .
- (2) If  $P \xrightarrow[l_X \cdot j_Y]{\tau} P'$  then there is no transition  $P \xrightarrow[l_X]{\alpha} P''$  for any  $\alpha$  or  $P''$ .
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$l_1 : a.0 + l_1 : \{l_2 : \tau.0\}$  is not deterministically labelled

Also,  $l_1 : a \mid l_2 : b.l_1 : c$  is not deterministically labelled because it can transition to  $l_1 : a \mid l_1 : c$  which is not deterministically labelled.

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- Players are independent and act according to their strategies.
- Players interact to determine how process will execute.

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- A valid position is like a trace, but with labels instead of actions.

DEFINITION 3.1. *A move is anything of the form  $l_X$ ,  $l_Y$ ,  $(l, j)_X$ , or  $(l, j)_Y$  where  $l$ , and  $j$  are labels.  $l_X$  and  $(l, j)_X$  are called  $X$ -moves and  $l_Y$  and  $(l, j)_Y$  are called  $Y$ -moves*

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DEFINITION 3.2. This extends the transition relation to multiple transitions, ignoring the actions for the transitions but keeping track of the labels.

(1) For any process  $P$ ,  $P \xrightarrow{\varepsilon} P$ .

(2) If  $P \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P'$  and  $P' \xrightarrow[s']{} P''$  then  $P \xrightarrow[s.s']{} P''$ .

Now we define valid positions.

DEFINITION 3.3. If  $P \xrightarrow[s]{} P'$  then every prefix of  $s$  (including  $s$ ) is a valid position for  $P$ .

$$P = (\nu b) (l_1 : \{k_1 : \tau . l_2 : a . l_3 : b + k_2 : \tau . l_2 : c . l_3 : b\} \mid l_4 : \bar{b} . (l_5 : d + l_6 : e)).$$

*Here are some of the valid positions for  $P$ :*

$$l_{1X} . k_{1Y} . l_{2X} . (l_3, l_4)_X . l_{5X}$$

$$l_{1X} . k_{1Y} . l_{2X} . (l_3, l_4)_X . l_{6X}$$

$$l_{1X} . k_{2Y} . l_{2X} . (l_3, l_4)_X . l_{5X}$$

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A strategy tells the player what move to make in a possible partial execution of the process.

$$P = (\nu b) (l_1 : \{k_1 : \tau . l_2 : a . l_3 : b + k_2 : \tau . l_2 : c . l_3 : b\} \mid l_4 : \bar{b} . (l_5 : d + l_6 : e)),$$

*one strategy for X is:*

$$\begin{aligned} &\varepsilon \\ &l_{1X} \\ &l_{1X} . k_{2Y} . l_{2X} \\ &l_{1X} . k_{2Y} . l_{2X} . (l_3, l_4)_X \\ &l_{1X} . k_{2Y} . l_{2X} . (l_3, l_4)_X . l_{6X} \end{aligned}$$

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Strategies need not be determinate.

*One strategy for Y is:*

$$\begin{aligned} &\varepsilon \\ &l_{1X} \cdot k_{1Y} \\ &l_{1X} \cdot k_{2Y} \end{aligned}$$

*One strategy for Y is:*

$\varepsilon$   
 $l_{1X} \cdot k_{1Y}$   
 $l_{1X} \cdot k_{2Y}$

*This is not a strategy:*

$\varepsilon$   
 $l_{1X}$   
 $l_{1X} \cdot k_{2Y} \cdot l_{2X} \cdot (l_3, l_4)_X$

# Restrictions 1

**Definition** A strategy  $S$  is *deterministic* if for all sequences  $s$ ,  $s.m_1 \in S$  and  $s.m_2 \in S$  implies  $m_1 = m_2$ .

# Complete strategies

- We want some way of ensuring that the strategy tells the player what to do in every possible situation.
- This is formalized by the definition of complete strategy.

DEFINITION 3.9. Let  $V$  denote the set of valid positions for a process  $P$ . If  $s$  is a valid position for  $P$ ,  $\text{enabled}(s)$  represents the set of moves available after  $s$ : define  $\text{enabled}(s) = \{m \mid s.m \in V\}$ . Also, define the  $X$  and  $Y$  moves available after  $s$  as, respectively,  $\text{enabled}_X(s) = \{m_X \mid s.m_X \in V\}$  and  $\text{enabled}_Y(s) = \{m_Y \mid s.m_Y \in V\}$ .

DEFINITION 3.12. For a nonblocked process with valid positions  $V$ , a strategy  $S$  for player  $Z$  is complete if for all  $s \in S$ , for every string  $s'$  such that  $Z(s') = \varepsilon$  and  $s.s' \in V$  and  $\text{enabled}_Z(s.s') \neq \emptyset$ , then  $s.s'.m \in S$  for some move  $m$ .

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Note that a position can have  $X$  moves enabled or  $Y$  moves enabled, but not both. This is clear from the operational semantics.

**DEFINITION 3.12.** *For a nonblocked process with valid positions  $V$ , a strategy  $S$  for player  $Z$  is complete if for all  $s \in S$ , for every string  $s'$  such that  $Z(s') = \varepsilon$  and  $s.s' \in V$  and  $\text{enabled}_Z(s.s') \neq \emptyset$ , then  $s.s'.m \in S$  for some move  $m$ .*

$$P = (\nu b) (l_1 : \{k_1 : \tau . l_2 : a . l_3 : b + k_2 : \tau . l_2 : c . l_3 : b\} \mid l_4 : \bar{b} . (l_5 : d + l_6 : e)),$$

$\varepsilon$

$l_{1X}$

$l_{1X}.k_{2Y}.l_{2X}$

$l_{1X}.k_{2Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X$

$l_{1X}.k_{2Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X.l_{6X}$

*is not complete, because  $X$  cannot respond to  $Y$  choosing  $k_1$ :  $l_{1X} \in S$ , and  $l_{1X}.k_{1Y} \in V$  and  $\text{enabled}_X(l_{1X}.k_{1Y}) \neq \emptyset$ , but there is no move  $m$  such that  $l_{1X}.k_{1Y}.m \in S$ . The strategy would be complete if, for example, the valid position  $l_{1X}.k_{1Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X.l_{5X}$  and all appropriate prefixes were added to the strategy.*

# Executions

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- A pair of complete, deterministic strategies

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- We are saying that strategies can only be based on what players know.
- One can design different equivalences to “engineer” the appropriate epistemic concept.

# Introspection

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- An example epistemic restriction: introspection.

# Introspection

- An example epistemic restriction: introspection.
- The player knows his own history **and what moves were available to him at every point in the past.**

DEFINITION 3.16. For player  $Z$ , positions  $s_1$  and  $s_2$  are called  $Z$  indistinguishable if they satisfy the following conditions:

(1)  $Z(s_1) = Z(s_2)$

(2)  $\text{enabled}_Z(s_1) = \text{enabled}_Z(s_2)$ .

(3) For all prefixes  $s'_1$  of  $s_1$  and  $s'_2$  of  $s_2$ , if  $Z$  has a move available at both  $s'_1$  and  $s'_2$  and  $Z(s'_1) = Z(s'_2)$ , then  $\text{enabled}(s'_1) = \text{enabled}(s'_2)$ .

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DEFINITION 3.17. Given a process  $P$ , and  $S$  a strategy for player  $Z$  on  $P$ ,  $S$  is introspective if for every  $Z$  indistinguishable pair of valid positions  $s_1$  and  $s_2$ ,  $s_1.m \in S$  if and only if  $s_2.m \in S$ .

$$P = (\nu b) (l_1 : \{k_1 : \tau . l_2 : a . l_3 : b + k_2 : \tau . l_2 : c . l_3 : b\} \mid l_4 : \bar{b} . (l_5 : d + l_6 : e))$$

*the deterministic strategy given above for X,*

$$S = \{ \varepsilon, \\ l_{1X}, \\ l_{1X}.k_{1Y}.l_{2Y}, \\ l_{1X}.k_{2Y}.l_{2X}, \\ l_{1X}.k_{1Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X, \\ l_{1X}.k_{2Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X, \\ l_{1X}.k_{1Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X.l_{5X}, \\ l_{1X}.k_{2Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X.l_{6X} \}$$

*is not introspective. This is because in order to satisfy the introspection condition,  $l_{1X}.k_{1Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X$  and  $l_{1X}.k_{2Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X$  should have the same moves appended to them in  $S$ , since they are  $X$  indistinguishable. However,  $l_{1X}.k_{1Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X.l_{5X} \in S$  and  $l_{1X}.k_{2Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X.l_{5X} \notin S$ , and similarly,  $l_{1X}.k_{2Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X.l_{6X} \in S$  and  $l_{1X}.k_{1Y}.l_{2X}.(l_3, l_4)_X.l_{6X} \notin S$ .*

$$P = {}^0\{ {}^1\tau .( {}^3c .( {}^6f + {}^7g ) + {}^4d ) + {}^2\tau .( {}^3c .( {}^6f + {}^7g ) + {}^5e )\}.$$

Let  $X$ 's strategy be

$$\begin{aligned} S = & \{ \varepsilon, \\ & l_{0X}, \\ & l_{0X}.l_{1Y}.l_{3X}, \\ & l_{0X}.l_{2Y}.l_{3X}, \\ & l_{0X}.l_{1Y}.l_{3X}.l_{6X}, \\ & l_{0X}.l_{2Y}.l_{3X}.l_{7X}. \end{aligned}$$

*This strategy is introspective. Even though  $X(l_{0X}.l_{1Y}.l_{3X}) = X(l_{0X}.l_{2Y}.l_{3X})$  and  $enabled_X(l_{0X}.l_{1Y}.l_{3X}) = enabled_X(l_{0X}.l_{2Y}.l_{3X})$ , it is acceptable that the two strings have different moves appended to them, because  $enabled_X(l_{0X}.l_{1Y}) = \{l_{3X}, l_{4X}\}$  and  $enabled_X(l_{0X}.l_{2Y}) = \{l_{3X}, l_{5X}\}$ . This can be thought of as  $X$  being able to distinguish between the two positions  $l_{0X}.l_{1Y}.l_{3X}$  and  $l_{0X}.l_{2Y}.l_{3X}$  because he remembers what moves were available to him earlier and is able to use this information to tell apart the two positions.*

# Syntactic schedulers

$$P, Q ::= l : \alpha.P \mid P|Q \mid P + Q \mid (\nu a)P \mid l : \{P\} \mid 0$$

$$L ::= l \mid (l, k)$$

$$\rho, \eta ::= \sigma(L).\rho \mid \mathbf{if } L \mathbf{ then } \rho \mathbf{ else } \eta \mid 0$$

$$CP ::= P \parallel \rho, \eta$$

$$\begin{array}{l}
\text{ACT} \frac{}{l : \alpha.P \parallel \sigma(l).\rho, \eta \xrightarrow[l_X]{\alpha} P \parallel \rho, \eta} \\
\text{RES} \frac{P \parallel \rho, \eta \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P' \parallel \rho', \eta' \quad \alpha \neq a, \bar{a}}{(\nu a)P \parallel \rho, \eta \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} (\nu a)P' \parallel \rho', \eta'} \\
\text{SUM1} \frac{P \parallel \rho, \eta \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P' \parallel \rho', \eta' \quad \rho \neq \mathbf{if} \ L \ \mathbf{then} \ \rho_1 \ \mathbf{else} \ \rho_2}{P + Q \parallel \rho, \eta \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P' \parallel \rho', \eta'} \\
\text{PAR1} \frac{P \parallel \rho, \eta \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P' \parallel \rho', \eta' \quad \rho \neq \mathbf{if} \ L \ \mathbf{then} \ \rho_1 \ \mathbf{else} \ \rho_2}{P|Q \parallel \rho, \eta \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P'|Q \parallel \rho', \eta'} \\
\text{SWITCH} \frac{P \parallel \eta, 0 \xrightarrow[j_X]{\tau} P' \parallel \eta', 0}{l : \{P\} \parallel \sigma(l).\rho, \eta \xrightarrow[l_X \cdot j_Y]{\tau} P' \parallel \rho, \eta'} \\
\text{COM} \frac{P \parallel \sigma(l).0, 0 \xrightarrow[l_X]{a} P' \parallel 0, 0 \quad Q \parallel \sigma(j).0, 0 \xrightarrow[j_X]{\bar{a}} Q' \parallel 0, 0}{P|Q \parallel \sigma(l, j).\rho, \eta \xrightarrow[(l, j)_X]{\tau} P'|Q' \parallel \rho, \eta} \\
\text{IF1} \frac{P \parallel \rho_1, \eta \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P' \parallel \rho'_1, \eta' \quad P \parallel \sigma(L).0, \theta \xrightarrow[s']{\beta} P'' \parallel 0, \theta' \quad \text{for some scheduler } \theta}{P \parallel \mathbf{if} \ L \ \mathbf{then} \ \rho_1 \ \mathbf{else} \ \rho_2, \eta \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P' \parallel \rho'_1, \eta'} \\
\text{IF2} \frac{P \parallel \rho_2, \eta \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P' \parallel \rho'_2, \eta' \quad P \parallel \sigma(L).0, \theta \not\rightarrow \quad \text{for all schedulers } \theta}{P \parallel \mathbf{if} \ L \ \mathbf{then} \ \rho_1 \ \mathbf{else} \ \rho_2, \eta \xrightarrow[s]{\alpha} P' \parallel \rho'_2, \eta'}
\end{array}$$

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- In particular,
- they are equivalent to the syntactic schedulers of Chatzikokolakis and Palamidessi.

*THEOREM 4.4. Given a deterministically labelled process  $P$ , a nonblocking primary scheduler  $\rho$  for  $P$ , and a nonblocking secondary scheduler  $\eta$  for  $P$ , there is a deterministic, complete, introspective  $X$  strategy  $S$  depending only on  $P$  and  $\rho$ , and a deterministic, complete, introspective  $Y$  strategy  $T$  depending only on  $P$  and  $\eta$ , such that the execution of  $P \parallel \rho, \eta$  is identical to the execution of  $P$  with  $S$  and  $T$ .*

*Furthermore, given a deterministically labelled process  $P$ , a deterministic, complete, introspective  $X$  strategy  $S$  for  $P$ , and a deterministic, complete, introspective  $Y$  strategy  $T$  for  $P$ , there is a nonblocking primary scheduler  $\rho$  depending only on  $S$  and  $P$  and a nonblocking secondary scheduler  $\eta$  depending only on  $T$  and  $P$  such that the execution of  $P$  with  $S$  and  $T$  is identical to the execution of  $P \parallel \rho, \eta$ .*

# Probabilistic Choice

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- Chatzikokolakis and Palamidessi also defined schedulers for a probabilistic process algebra.
- We have formalized this also and proved a similar correspondence theorem.

# Modal Logic

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- Epistemic concepts are nicely captured by an S5 modal logic.
- Such logics have been very useful in the theory of distributed systems but have been slow to penetrate concurrency theory.
- We present a modal logic for capturing the notion of introspection and other epistemic aspects of the agents.

# Knowledge

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- Usually modelled with an equivalence relation on the set of states (possible worlds), which represents what the agents thinks is possible.
- If  $S_t$  is the set of states then the agent knows  $\phi$  in state  $s$  if for all states  $t$  with  $s \sim t$ ,  $\phi$  is true in  $t$ .

# Axioms for Knowledge

1. All propositional tautologies
2.  $(K_i\phi) \wedge (K_i(\phi \Rightarrow \psi)) \Rightarrow K_i\psi$
3.  $K_i\phi \Rightarrow \phi$
4.  $K_i\phi \Rightarrow K_iK_i\phi$
5.  $\neg K_i\phi \Rightarrow K_i(\neg K_i\phi)$
6. *Modus Ponens*
7. From  $\phi$  infer  $K_i\phi$

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- The axioms given correspond to assuming that the possibility relation is an equivalence relation.
- The axioms given are for a **static** situation.
- Many combinations are possible: time, probability, dynamic update.

# What our logic should say

- Which player made the last move and what the last move was,
- What moves are available and what player they belong to,
- What formulas are satisfied by specific continuations of the current valid position,
- What formulas are satisfied by specific prefixes of the current valid position,
- The knowledge of each player in the current state, according to the introspective indistinguishability condition discussed in section 3, and
- What formulas were satisfied by the state immediately after either player's last move.

Let  $L$  represent a general label (a single label or a synchronizing pair of labels),  $m$  a move (a general label together with a player), let  $X$  and  $Y$  be the two players, and let  $Z$  represent either  $X$  or  $Y$ .

$$\phi ::= C_Z(L) \mid A_Z(L) \mid \bigcirc_m \phi \mid \ominus \phi \mid K_Z \phi \mid @_Z \phi \mid \phi \wedge \phi \mid \neg \phi \mid \top.$$

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$$\phi ::= C_Z(L) \mid A_Z(L) \mid O_m \phi \mid \ominus \phi \mid K_Z \phi \mid @_Z \phi \mid \phi \wedge \phi \mid \neg \phi \mid \top.$$

$C_Z(L)$ : last move was  $L_Z$ .

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$C_Z(L)$ : last move was  $L_Z$ .

$A_Z(L)$ :  $L_Z$  is available now.

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$\bigcirc_m \phi$ : after move  $m$ ,  $\phi$  will be true;  
it asserts that  $m$  is available.

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$$\phi ::= C_Z(L) \mid A_Z(L) \mid \bigcirc_m \phi \mid \ominus \phi \mid K_Z \phi \mid @_Z \phi \mid \phi \wedge \phi \mid \neg \phi \mid \top.$$

$C_Z(L)$ : last move was  $L_Z$ .

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$\bigcirc_m \phi$ : after move  $m$ ,  $\phi$  will be true;  
it asserts that  $m$  is available.

$\ominus \phi$  means that  $\phi$  was true at the previous valid position

$K_Z \phi$  means  $Z$  knows  $\phi$ .

$@_Z \phi$  means  $\phi$  was true just after  $Z$ 's last move.

**THEOREM 6.2.**  $s \sim_Z t$  if and only if  $s$  and  $t$  agree on all formulas of the form

$$(@_Z \ominus)^n @_Z C_Z(L)$$

for  $n \geq 0$ , and for any  $L$ , and also agree on all formulas of the form

$$(@_Z \ominus)^n A_Z(L)$$

for  $n \geq 0$  and for any  $L$ .

# Conclusions

- We have shown that the syntactic restrictions of Chatzikokolakis and Palamidessi can be viewed as semantic restrictions on the strategies allowed.
- It is easy to impose other restrictions if one wants; it is not so easy to define a new syntax and operational semantics for schedulers every time one wants to consider a variation.
- Epistemic concepts are pervasive in security; they should be made manifest.

# Dreams

- Epistemic logic and information theory should fuse to give a new quantitative theory of information flow.
- Process algebra should be enriched to allow more subtle interactions (e.g. games) between agents.