

Synchronizing Tasks in Multi-Agent Systems with Max-Plus Algebra

Assured Autonomy in Contested Environments (AACE)

Program Review (Fall 2023)

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Joint work with Michael M. Zavlanos (PI)

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Duke

Objectives

“Synchronizing Tasks in Multi-Agent Systems with Max-Plus Algebra

- ▶ Formulate a general **multi-agent planning problem**
- ▶ Introduce a novel **mathematical theory** for solving the problem.
- ▶ **Survey** our current efforts to **extend** our **decentralized** methods to more general linear temporal logic (LTL) formal verification & synthesis problems.

Recent Publications

H. Riess, G. Henselman-Petrusek, M. Munger, R. Ghrist, Z. Bell, M. Zavlanos, (2023) “Network preference dynamics using lattice theory” (submitted).

H. Riess, M. Munger, & M. Zavlanos (2023). Max-Plus synchronization in decentralized trading systems. *2023 IEEE Conference on Decision and Control*.

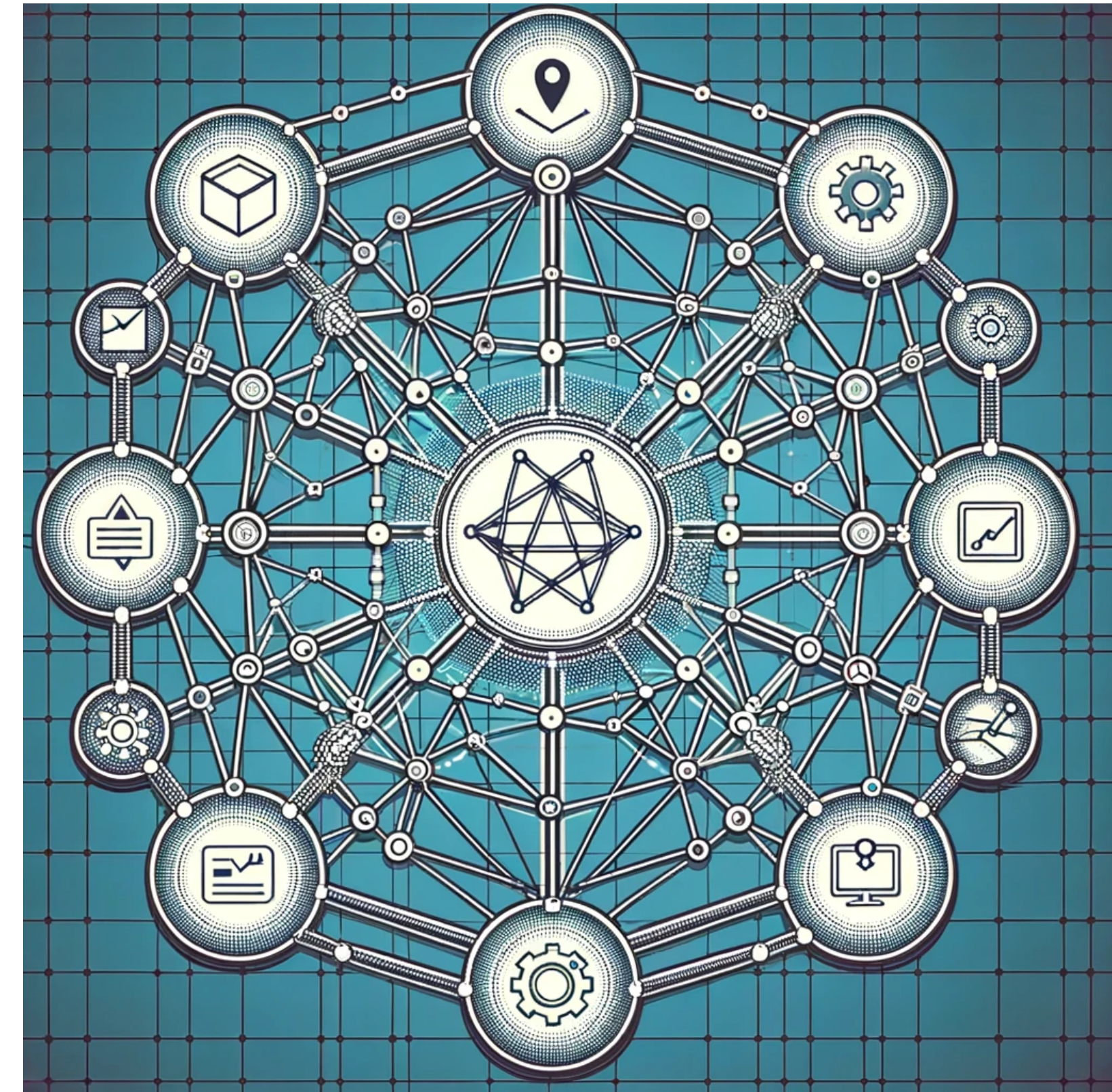
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Motivation

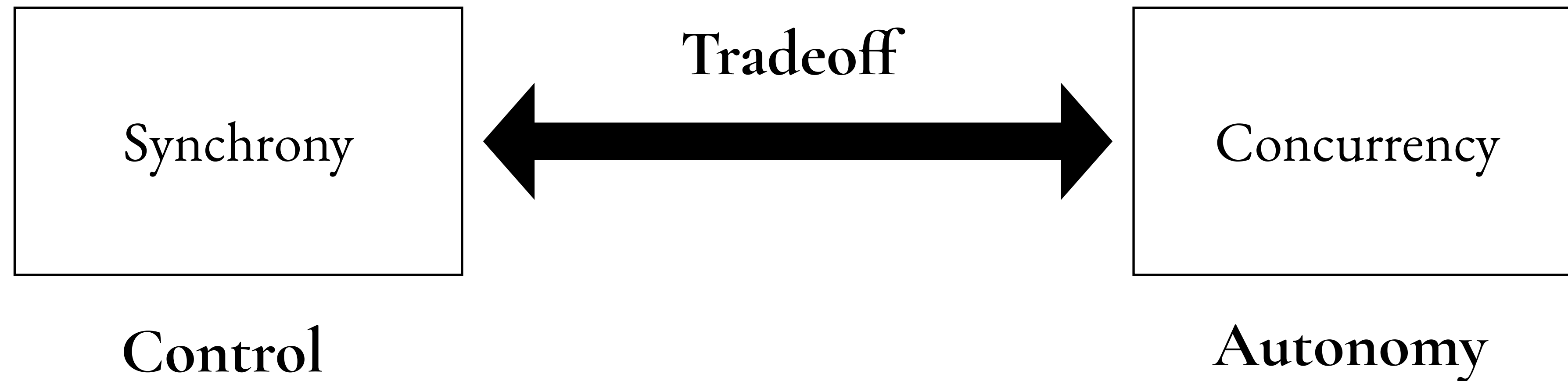
Decentralized Autonomy & Coordination

- ▶ Heterogeneous autonomous agents
- ▶ Decentralized synthesis of task schedules
- ▶ E.g. intermittent connectivity control (Kantaros-Zavlanos 2016)
- ▶ Complex interactions between agents
- ▶ Synchrony v.s. Concurrency



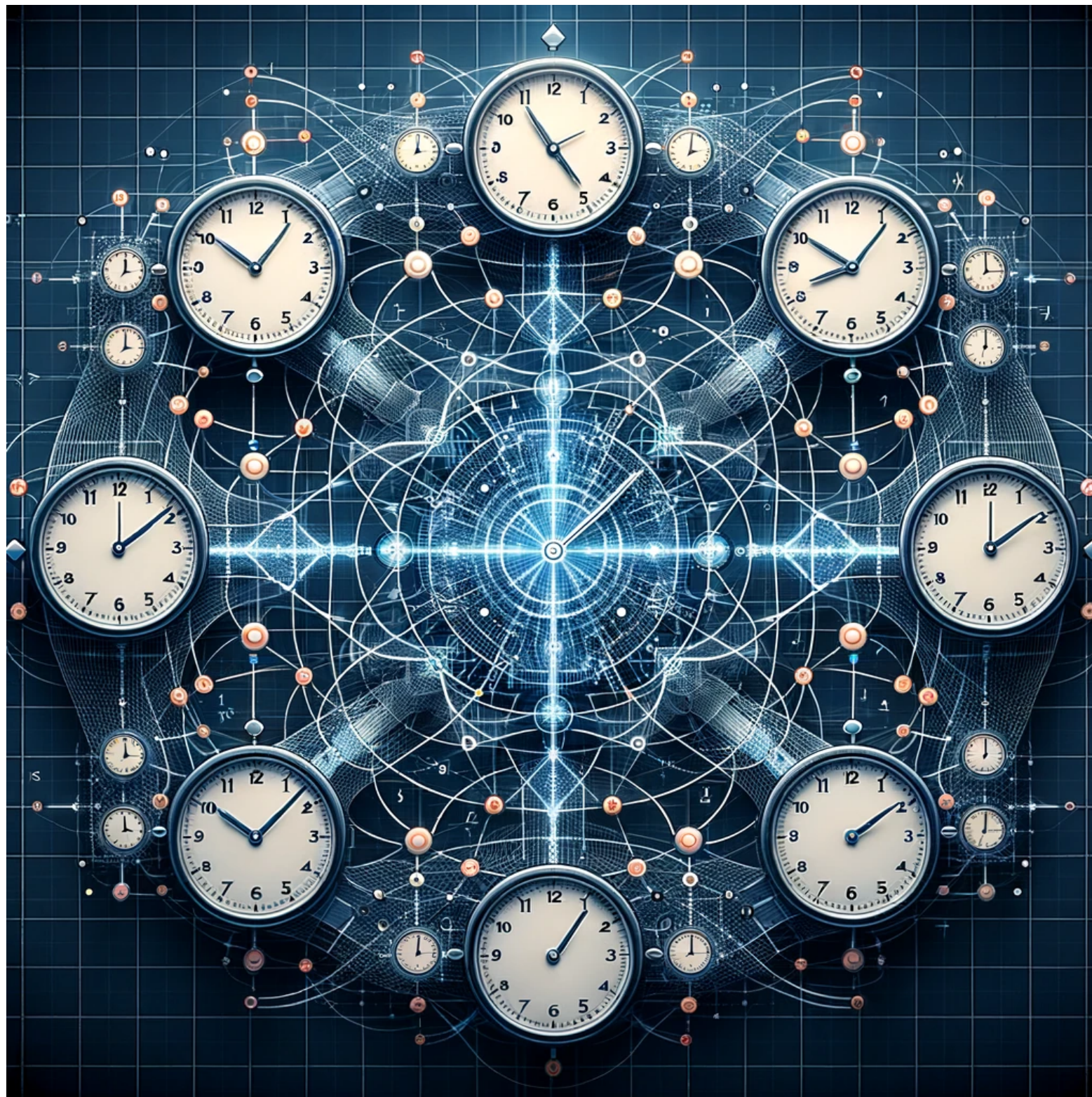
Multi-Agent Coordination

Motivation



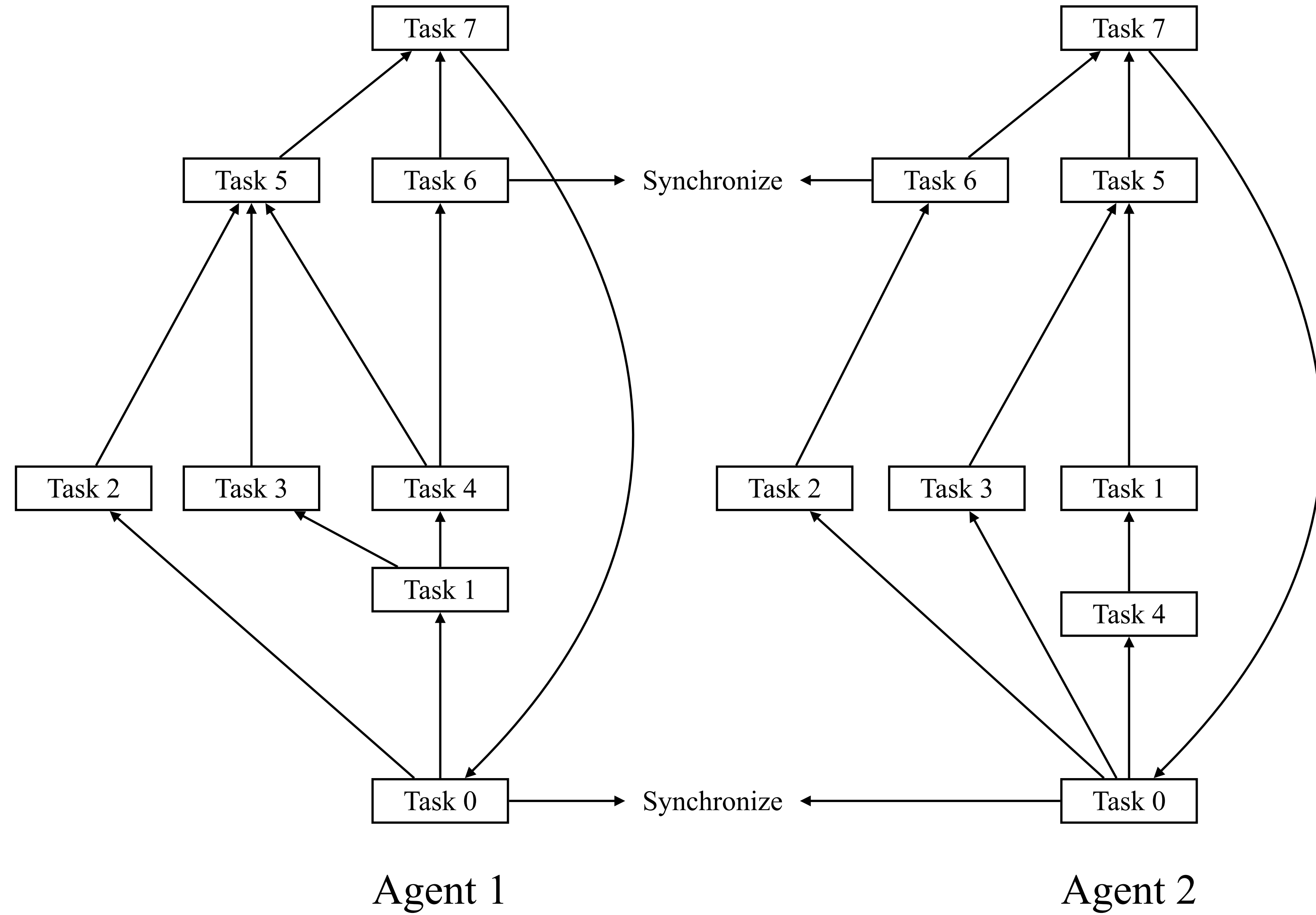
Synchronization

Motivation



- ▶ Agreement between agents in the discrete time domain
- ▶ Synchrony: groups of agents executing events at (approximately) the same time

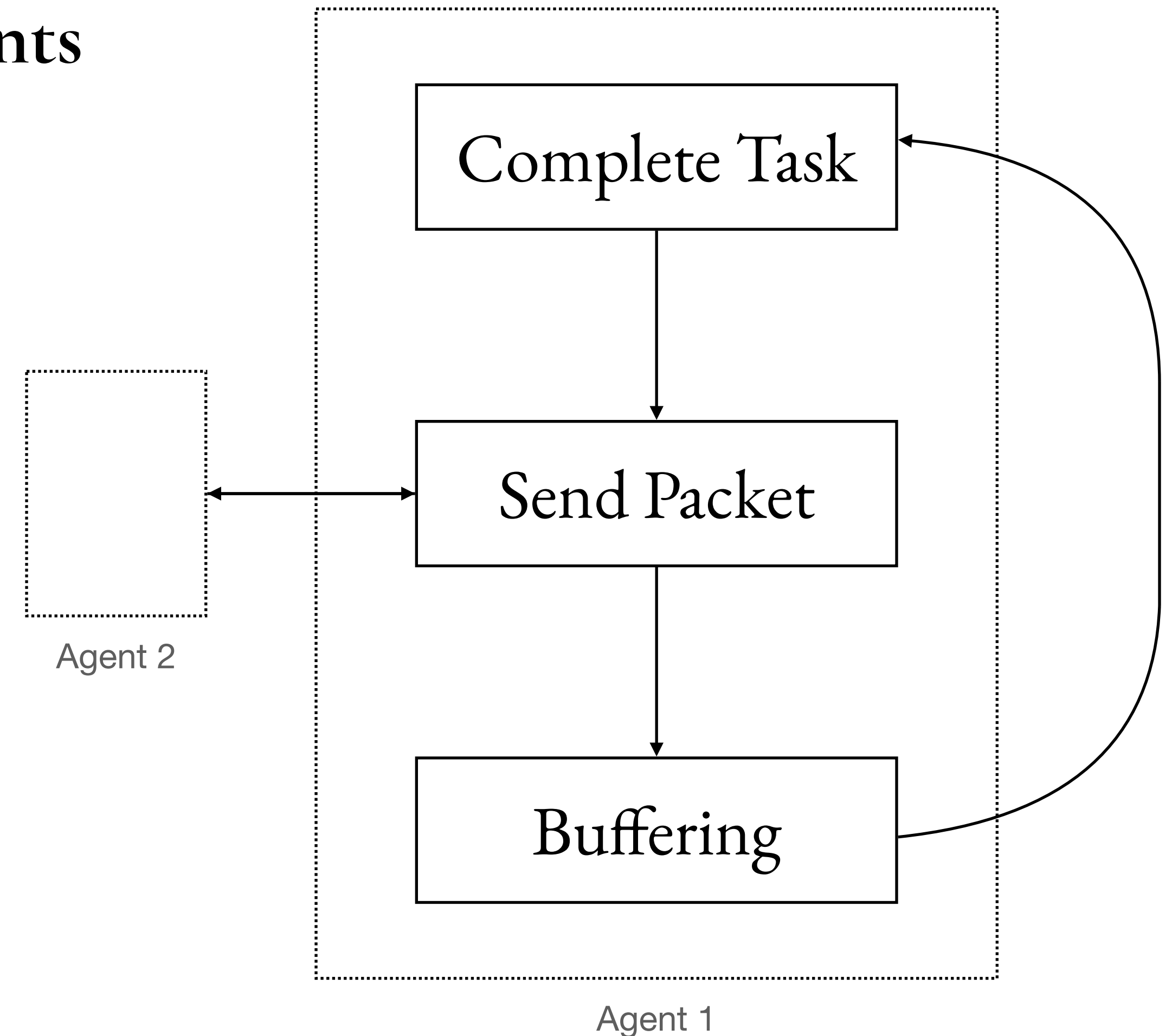
Multi-Agent Task Planning



Multi-Agent Task Planning

Task specifications with temporal constraints

- ▶ Autonomous agents: $u, v \in \mathcal{A} = \{1, 2, \dots, N\}$
- ▶ Events: $i \in \{1, 2, \dots, M\}$ (e.g. actions, tasks)
- ▶ Events assigned to agents: $\mathcal{T} \subseteq \mathcal{N} \times \mathcal{A}$
- ▶ Transitions times between events: $\tau_{i,j}^u \geq 0$.
- ▶ Temporal constraints on the order of events
- ▶ Temporal constraints on coupled events
- ▶ Communication links between agents

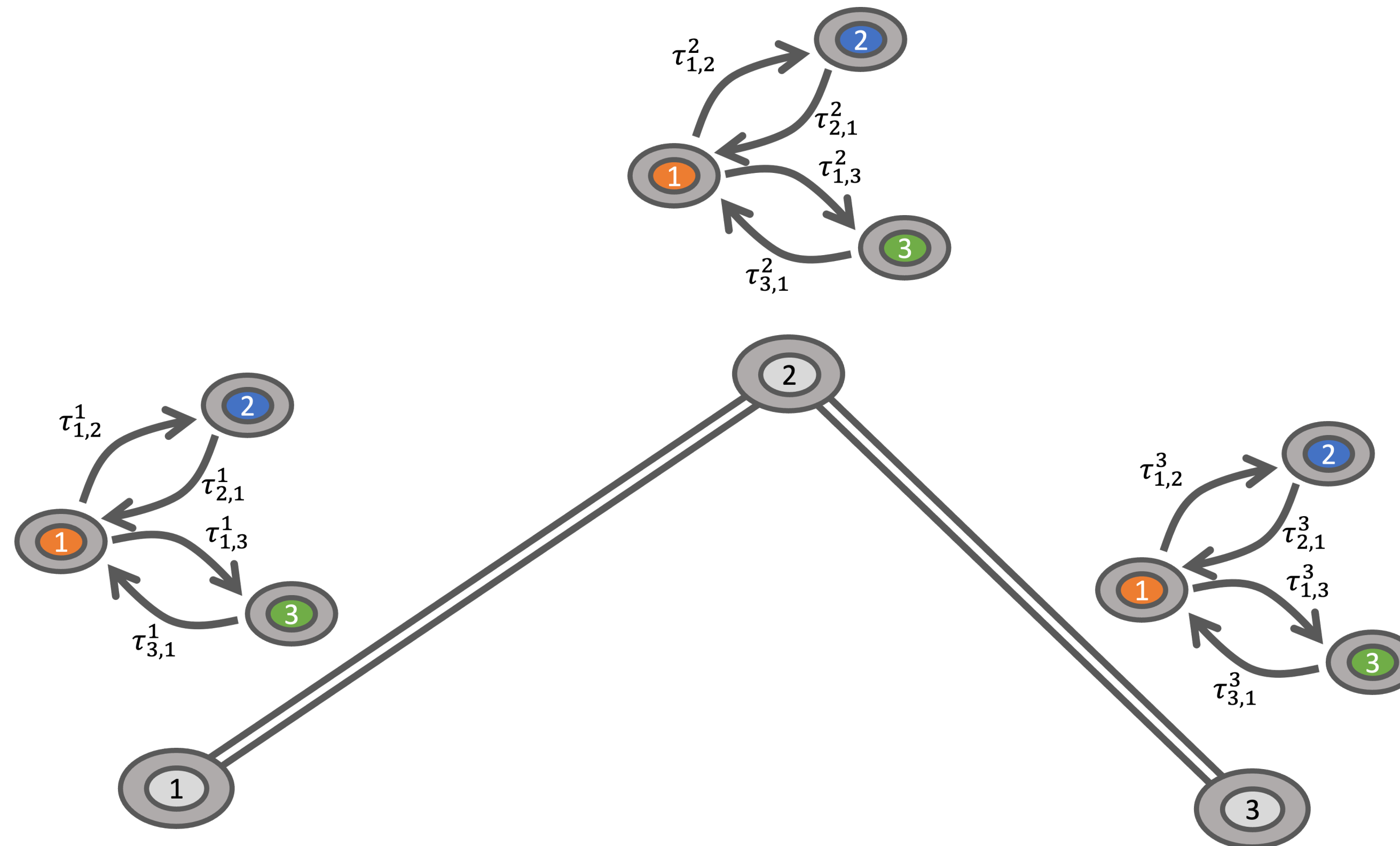


Problem: Compute a global schedule satisfying constraints.

Multi-Agent Task Planning

Task specifications with temporal constraints

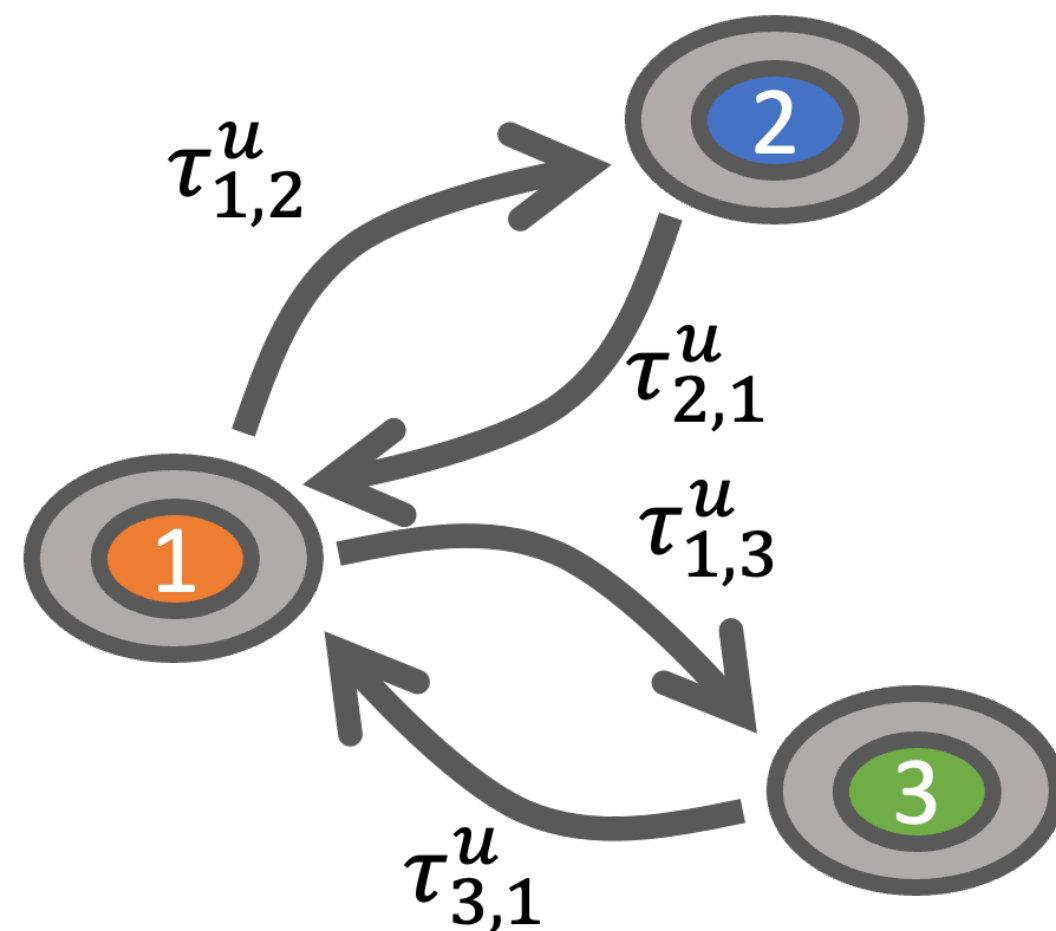
Communication between agents: **undirected** graph, $\mathcal{G} = (\mathcal{N}, \mathcal{E})$



Multi-Agent Task Planning

Task specifications with temporal constraints

Transitions between tasks & durations: weighted **directed** graph



Task 1 can be performed only after Task 2 and Task 3 is performed;

Task 2 or Task 3 can only be performed after Task 1 is performed.

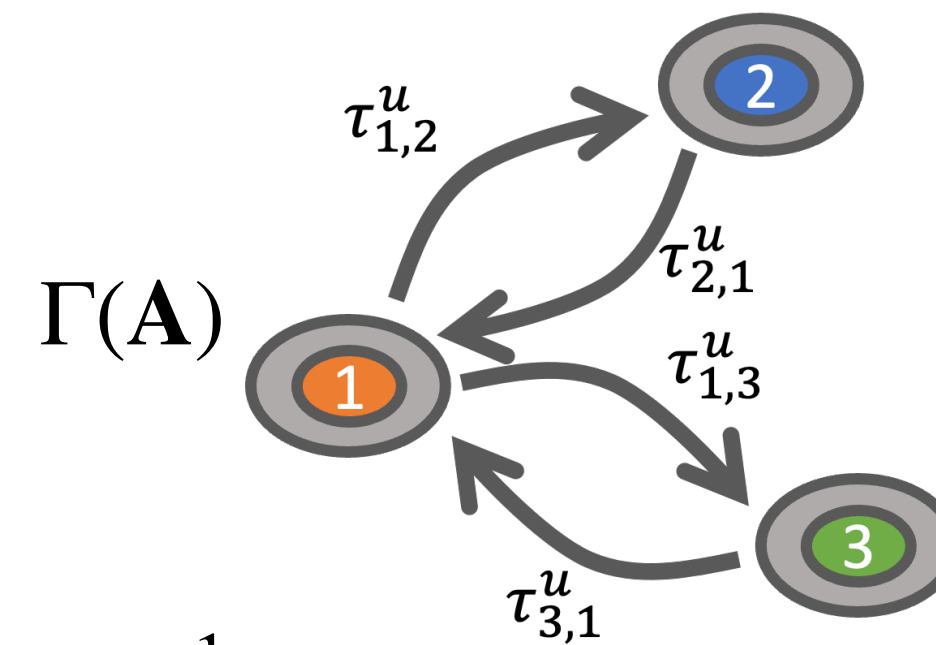
Multi-Agent Task Planning

Task specifications with temporal constraints

Event graphs represented by matrices

$$\mathbf{A} = \begin{bmatrix} -\infty & \tau_{2,1}^u & \tau_{3,1}^u \\ \tau_{1,2}^u & -\infty & -\infty \\ \tau_{1,3}^u & -\infty & -\infty \end{bmatrix}$$

\longleftrightarrow



If $\mathbf{x}_u \in \mathbb{R}_+^3$ is a vector encoding *starting times* of each task for Agent u , then

$$\begin{bmatrix} -\infty & \tau_{2,1}^u & \tau_{3,1}^u \\ \tau_{1,2}^u & -\infty & -\infty \\ \tau_{1,3}^u & -\infty & -\infty \end{bmatrix} \boxplus \begin{bmatrix} x_1^u \\ x_2^u \\ x_3^u \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \max\{x_1^u - \infty, x_2^u + \tau_{2,1}^u, x_3^u + \tau_{3,1}^u\} \\ \max\{x_1^u + \tau_{1,2}^u, x_2^u - \infty, x_3^u - \infty\} \\ \max\{x_1^u + \tau_{1,3}^u, x_2^u - \infty, x_3^u - \infty\} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \max\{x_2^u + \tau_{2,1}^u, x_3^u + \tau_{3,1}^u\} \\ x_1^u + \tau_{1,2}^u \\ x_1^u + \tau_{1,3}^u \end{bmatrix}$$

is the time-vector each task is started next. Naturally leads to **max-plus algebra** approach to synchronization...

Why Max-Plus Algebra?

Max-plus linear systems theory

- ▶ Discrete event systems (DESs): $\mathbf{x}(k + 1) = \mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x}(k) = \mathbf{A}^{\boxplus k} \boxplus \mathbf{x}(0)$
- ▶ Concepts, properties, techniques from conventional linear system theory translate to max-plus systems theory

$$\begin{aligned}\mathbf{x}(k + 1) &= \mathbf{A}(k) \boxplus \mathbf{x}(k) \vee \mathbf{B}(k) \boxplus \mathbf{u}(k) \\ \mathbf{y}(k + 1) &= \mathbf{C}(k) \boxplus \mathbf{x}(k + 1)\end{aligned}$$

The “linear algebra of combinatorics” (Butkovič, 2003)

- $\mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x} = \mathbf{b}$, (minimal) set covering
- $\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x} \vee \mathbf{b}$, shortest path (Bellman-Ford)
- $\mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x} = \lambda + \mathbf{x}$, maximum cycle mean

Max-Plus Algebra

Replace “plus” with “max” and “times” with “plus”

- ▶ Linear algebra over the max-plus semiring (also called a dioid)

$$\mathbb{R}_{\max} = (\mathbb{R} \cup \{-\infty\}, \max, -\infty, +, 0)$$

- ▶ Max-plus matrix-vector multiplication generalizes linear transformations

$$[\mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x}]_i = \max_{j=1}^n [\mathbf{A}]_{i,j} + [\mathbf{x}]_j, \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, m$$

defining a max-plus linear transformation $A : \mathbb{R}_{\max}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\max}^m$

- ▶ Linear with respect to **point-wise max** (\vee) & scalar addition:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{A} \boxplus (\mathbf{x}_1 \vee \mathbf{x}_2) &= \mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x}_1 \vee \mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x}_2 \\ \mathbf{A} \boxplus (\mathbf{x} + h) &= \mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x} + h \end{aligned}$$

Min-Plus Algebra

Replace “plus” with “min” and “times” with “plus”

- ▶ Linear algebra over the min-plus semiring (also called a dioid)

$$\mathbb{R}_{\min} = (\mathbb{R} \cup \{\infty\}, \min, \infty, +, 0)$$

- ▶ Min-plus matrix-vector multiplication generalizes linear transformations

$$[\mathbf{B} \boxplus \mathbf{y}]_j = \min_{i=1}^m [\mathbf{B}]_{j,i} + [\mathbf{y}]_i, \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, n$$

defining a max-plus linear transformation $B : \mathbb{R}_{\min}^m \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\min}^n$

- ▶ Linear with respect to **point-wise min** (\wedge) & scalar addition:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{B} \boxplus' (\mathbf{y}_1 \wedge \mathbf{y}_2) &= \mathbf{B} \boxplus' \mathbf{y}_1 \wedge \mathbf{B} \boxplus' \mathbf{y}_2 \\ \mathbf{B} \boxplus' (\mathbf{y} + h) &= \mathbf{B} \boxplus' \mathbf{y} + h \end{aligned}$$

Residuation Theory

Pseudo-inverses of max-plus matrices are min-plus matrices

- ▶ Let $\bar{\mathbb{R}} = \mathbb{R} \cup \{-\infty, \infty\}$. Then, $\bar{\mathbb{R}}^n$ is an ordered **lattice** with $\mathbf{x} \vee \mathbf{y}$ (join) and $\mathbf{x} \wedge \mathbf{y}$ (meet).
- ▶ Suppose $A : \mathbb{R}_{\max}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\max}^m$ is a max-plus linear transformation. Then, there is a min-plus linear transformation $A^\# : \mathbb{R}_{\min}^m \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\min}^n$ given by

$$A^\#(\mathbf{y})_j = \max_{i=1}^m [\mathbf{y}]_i - [\mathbf{A}]_{j,i}, \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, n$$

such that $\mathbf{A}^\# \boxplus' (\mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x}) \geq \mathbf{x}$ and $\mathbf{A} \boxplus (\mathbf{A}^\# \boxplus' \mathbf{y}) \leq \mathbf{y}$, or, equivalently,

$$\mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x} \leq \mathbf{y} \quad \text{if and only if} \quad \mathbf{x} \leq \mathbf{A}^\# \boxplus' \mathbf{y}$$

- ▶ $A^\#(\mathbf{y}) = \mathbf{A}^\# \boxplus' \mathbf{y}$ where $\mathbf{A}^\# \in \mathbb{R}_{\min}^{n \times n}$ is a matrix defined $[\mathbf{A}^\#]_{i,j} = -[\mathbf{A}]_{j,i}$.
- ▶ The vector $\bar{\mathbf{x}} = \mathbf{A}^\# \boxplus' \mathbf{b}$ is the greatest solution to the equation $\mathbf{A} \boxplus \mathbf{x} = \mathbf{b}$.

Multi-Agent Task Synchronization

Problem Formulation

Compute initial starting-times for each agent and for each task $[\mathbf{x}_u]_i$ such that agents assigned to the same task start the task at approximately the same time after k occurrences.

- ▶ \mathcal{N} , agents
- ▶ \mathcal{A} , events
- ▶ $\mathcal{G} = (\mathcal{N}, \mathcal{E})$, (undirected) communication graph
- ▶ $\mathbf{A}_u \in \mathbb{R}_{\max}^{M \times M}$, max-plus matrices representing local temporal constraints; defined $[\mathbf{A}_u]_{i,j} = \tau_{j,i}^u$
- ▶ $\mathcal{T} \subseteq \mathcal{N} \times \mathcal{A}$, relation assigning agents to events
- ▶ $\mathcal{T}_{(u,v)} = \{i \in \mathcal{A} : (u, i), (v, i) \in \mathcal{T}\}$, tasks assigned to both $(u, v) \in \mathcal{E}$
- ▶ $M_{(u,v)} = |\mathcal{T}_{(u,v)}|$, number of tasks assigned to both $(u, v) \in \mathcal{E}$
- ▶ $\mathbf{x}_u \in \mathbb{R}_+^M$, vector of start times for each task for Agent u
- ▶ $\epsilon > 0$, synchronization threshold

Multi-Agent Task Synchronization

Equilibrium Condition (Mathematical Formulation of the Problem)

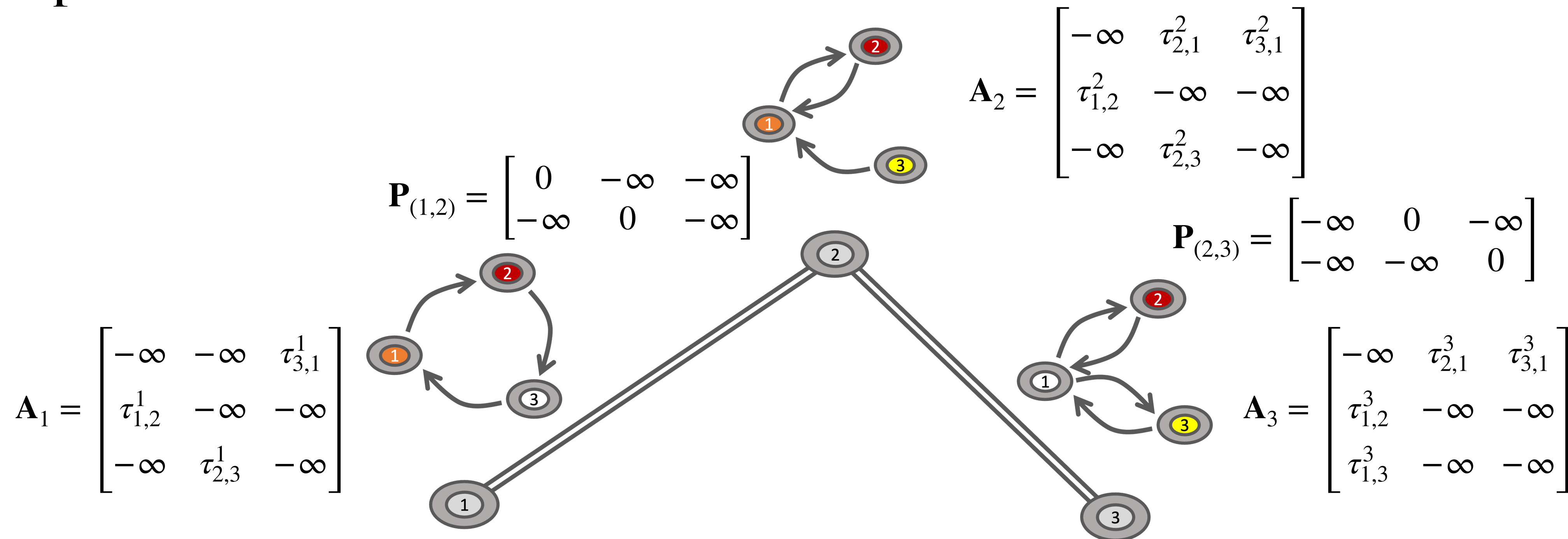
Given $\{\mathbf{A}_u \in \mathbb{R}_{\max}^{M \times M}\}_{u \in \mathcal{N}}$, find a vector $\mathbf{x}(0) \in (\mathbb{R}_+^M)^N$ such that

$$\|\mathbf{P}_{(u,v)} \boxplus \mathbf{A}_u^k \boxplus \mathbf{x}_u - \mathbf{P}_{(u,v)} \boxplus \mathbf{A}_v^k \boxplus \mathbf{x}_u\|_\infty < \epsilon \quad \forall (u, v) \in \mathcal{E}$$

where $\mathbf{P}_{(u,v)} \in \mathbb{R}_{\max}^{M(u,v) \times M}$ is the projection onto $\mathcal{T}_{(u,v)} \subseteq \mathcal{A}$ for $(u, v) \in \mathcal{E}$.

Multi-Agent Task Synchronization

Example



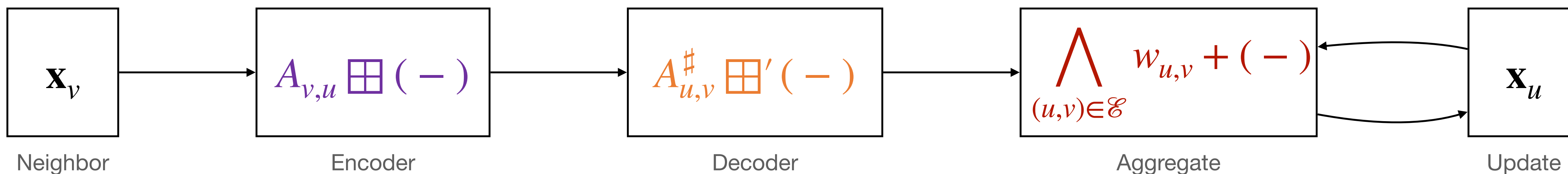
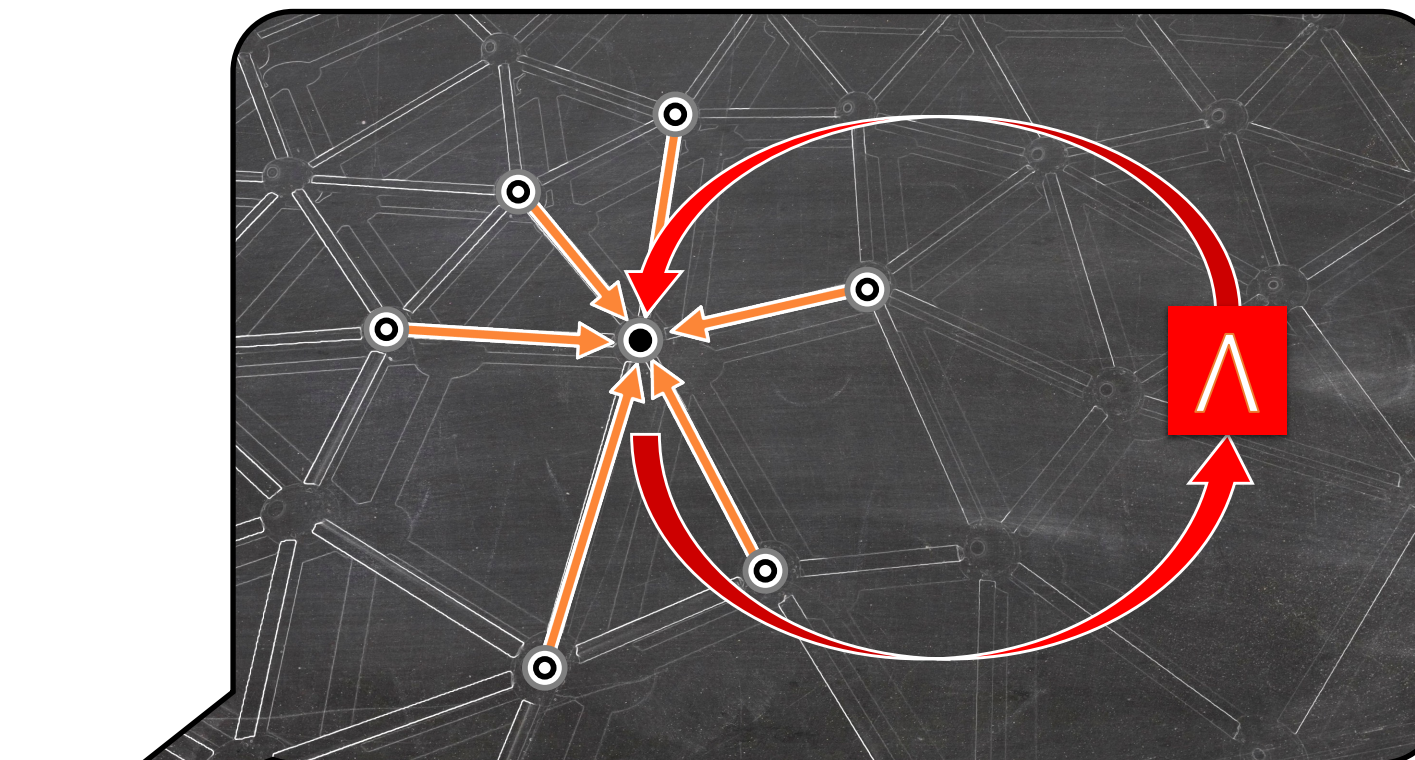
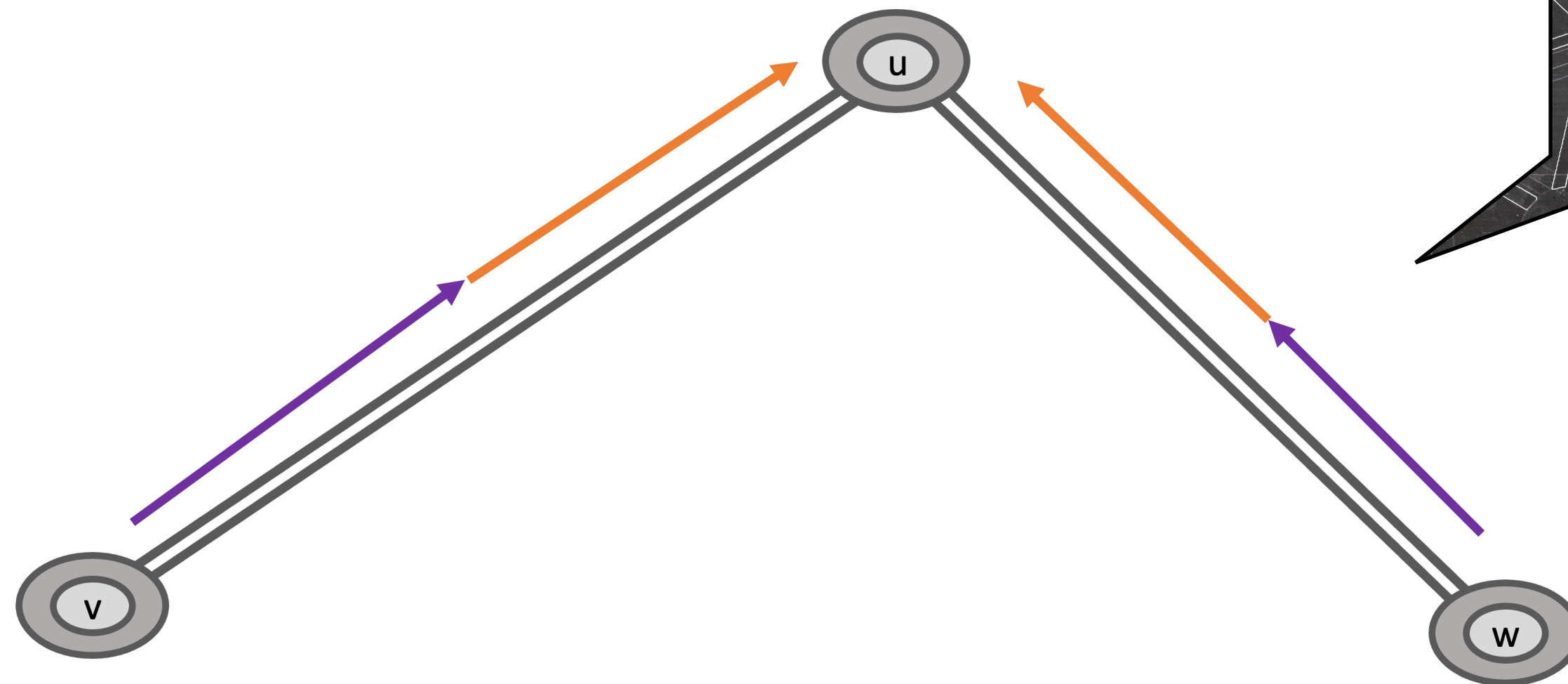
The **Task 1** executed simultaneously by Agent 1, Agent 2, & Agent 3;

Task 2 by Agent 1 & Agent 2;

Task 3 by Agent 2 & Agent 3.

The Tarski Laplacian

Message-Passing



Graph Laplacian (ubiquitous), $[\mathbf{L}\mathbf{x}]_u = \frac{1}{\text{deg}(u)} \sum_{(u,v) \in \mathcal{E}} w_{u,v}(x_u - x_v)$

Graph connection Laplacian (Signer-Wu, 2012), $(\mathcal{L}\mathbf{x})_u = \mathbf{x}_u - \frac{1}{\text{deg}(u)} \sum_{(u,v) \in \mathcal{E}} w_{u,v} \mathbf{O}_{v,u} \mathbf{x}_v$

The Tarski Laplacian

Definition (Riess-Zavlanos, 2023)

The Tarski Laplacian is a map $\mathcal{L} : (\mathbb{R}_{\max}^M)^N \rightarrow (\mathbb{R}_{\max}^M)^N$ defined

$$(\mathcal{L}\mathbf{x})_u = \underbrace{\bigwedge_{v \in \mathcal{N}_u} \underbrace{W(u, v)}_{\text{delay}} + \mathbf{A}_u^\# \boxplus' \left(\underbrace{\mathbf{P}_{(u,v)}^\# \boxplus' \left(\underbrace{\mathbf{P}_{(u,v)} \boxplus \mathbf{A}_v \boxplus \mathbf{x}_v}_{\text{next time}} \right)}_{\text{projection}} \right)}_{\text{aggregation}} \right)_{\text{residuation}}$$

where $\mathbf{W} \in \mathbb{R}_{\min}^{N \times N}$ and $\mathbf{A}_{u,v} \in \mathbb{R}_{\max}^{M_{(u,v)} \times M_u}$

Notation: in the task assignment problem, define $\mathbf{A}_{u,v} := \mathbf{P}_{(u,v)} \boxplus \mathbf{A}_u$.

The Tarski Laplacian

Definition (Riess-Zavlanos, 2023)

The Tarski Laplacian is a map $\mathcal{L} : (\mathbb{R}_{\max}^M)^N \rightarrow (\mathbb{R}_{\max}^M)^N$ defined

$$\mathcal{L}(\mathbf{x})_u = \bigwedge_{(u,v) \in \mathcal{E}} [\mathbf{W}]_{u,v} + \mathbf{A}_{u,v}^{\#} \boxplus' (\mathbf{A}_{v,u} \boxplus \mathbf{x}_v)$$

where $\mathbf{W} \in \mathbb{R}_{\min}^{N \times N}$ and $\mathbf{A}_{u,v} \in \mathbb{R}_{\max}^{M_{(u,v)} \times M_u}$.

Iterative map $\mathcal{F}(\mathbf{x}) = \mathcal{L}(\mathbf{x}) \wedge \mathbf{x}$ and dynamics $\mathbf{x}(t+1) = \mathcal{F}(\mathbf{x})$

Theorem 1 (Riess-Zavlanos)

Suppose $\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y} \in \text{Fix}(\mathcal{F}) \subseteq (\mathbb{R}_{\max}^M)^N$. Then, $\mathbf{x} \vee \mathbf{y} \in \text{Fix}(\mathcal{F})$ and $\mathbf{x} + h \in \text{Fix}(\mathcal{F})$.

The Tarski Laplacian

Definition (Riess-Zavlanos, 2022)

The Tarski Laplacian is a map $\mathcal{L} : (\mathbb{R}_{\max}^M)^N \rightarrow (\mathbb{R}_{\max}^M)^N$ defined

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where $\mathbf{W} \in \mathbb{R}_{\min}^{N \times N}$ and $\mathbf{A}_{u,v} \in \mathbb{R}_{\max}^{M_{(u,v)} \times M_u}$.

Iterative map $\mathcal{F}(\mathbf{x}) = \mathcal{L}(\mathbf{x}) \wedge \mathbf{x}$ and dynamics $\mathbf{x}(t+1) = \mathcal{F}(\mathbf{x}(t))$

Theorem 2 (Riess-Zavlanos)

$\|\mathbf{A}_{u,v} \boxplus \mathbf{x}_u - \mathbf{A}_{v,u} \boxplus \mathbf{x}_v\|_{\infty} \leq [\mathbf{W}]_{u,v}$ for all $(u, v) \in \mathcal{E}$ if and only if $\mathbf{x} \in \text{Fix}(\mathcal{F})$. Then, $\mathbf{x} \in \text{Fix}(\mathcal{F})$ if and only if \mathbf{x} satisfies the Equilibrium Condition.

Convergence Analysis

Two convergence regimes: $\alpha > 0$, $\alpha = 0$

- ▶ Compute fixed points via the **heat equation**

$$\mathbf{x}(k+1) = \mathcal{L}(\mathbf{x}(k)) \wedge \mathbf{x}(k)$$

with initial condition $\mathbf{x}(0) \in (\mathbb{R}^D)^N$

- ▶ Gradients vanish

$$\begin{aligned}\alpha(k) &= \|\mathbf{x}(k) - \mathbf{x}(k+1)\|_\infty \\ &= \|\mathbf{x}(k) - \mathbf{x}(k) \wedge \mathcal{L}(\mathbf{x}(k))\|_\infty\end{aligned}$$

Theorem 3 (Riess-Zavlanos)

Let $\mathcal{F} = \mathcal{L} \wedge I$. The operator $\mathcal{F} : (\mathbb{R}^D)^N \rightarrow (\mathbb{R}^D)^N$ is non-expansive in the ℓ_∞ -norm. Furthermore, $\alpha(k) \rightarrow \alpha$ as $k \rightarrow \infty$ for some $\alpha \geq 0$.

Recap

Theoretical Results

Theorem 1

Suppose $\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y} \in \text{Fix}(\mathcal{F}) \subseteq (\mathbb{R}_{\max}^M)^N$. Then, $\mathbf{x} \vee \mathbf{y} \in \text{Fix}(\mathcal{F})$ and $\mathbf{x} + h \in \text{Fix}(\mathcal{F})$.

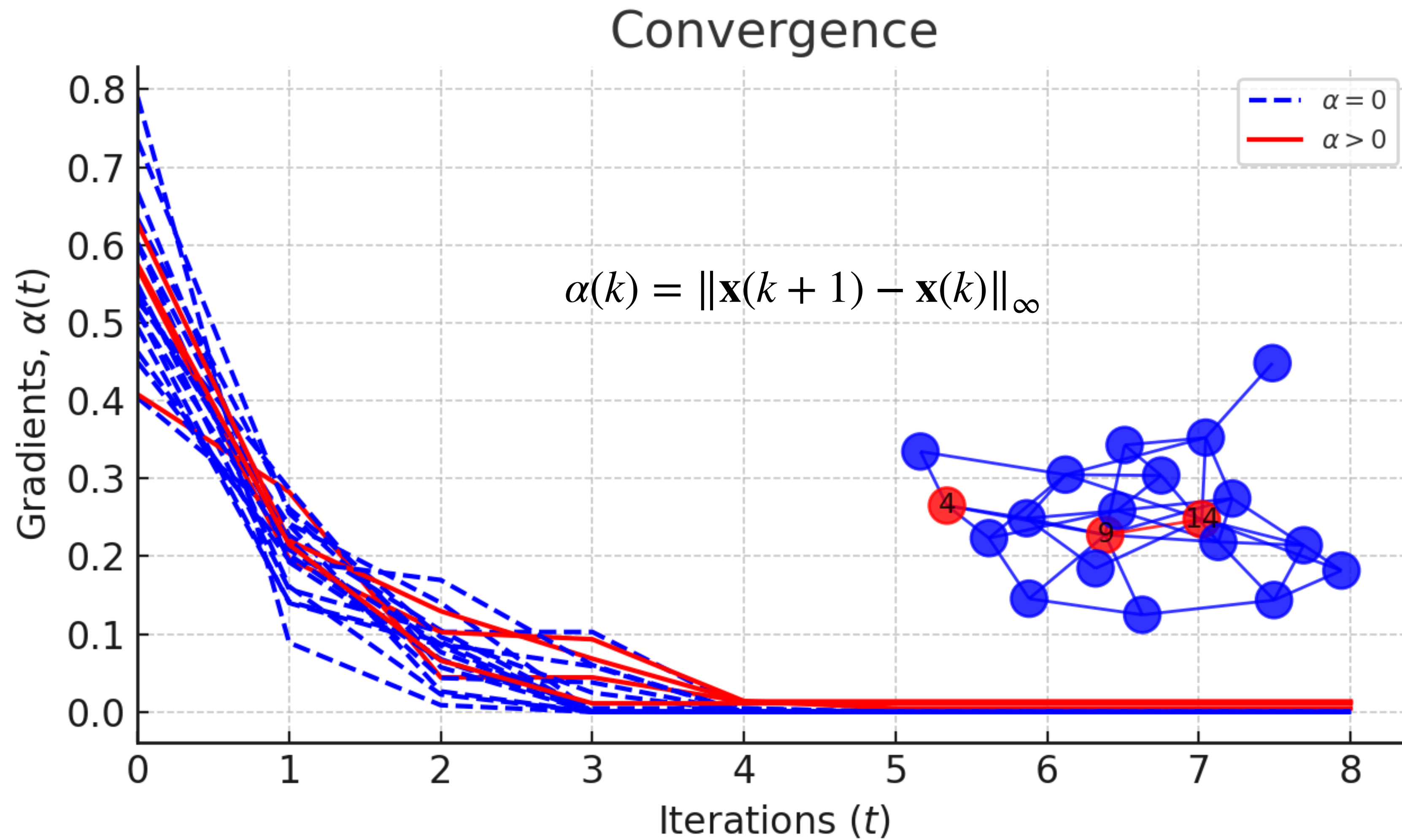
Theorem 2

$\|\mathbf{A}_{u,v} \boxplus \mathbf{x}_u - \mathbf{A}_{v,u} \boxplus \mathbf{x}_v\|_\infty \leq [\mathbf{W}]_{u,v}$ for all $(u, v) \in \mathcal{E}$ if and only if $\mathbf{x} \in \text{Fix}(\mathcal{F})$.

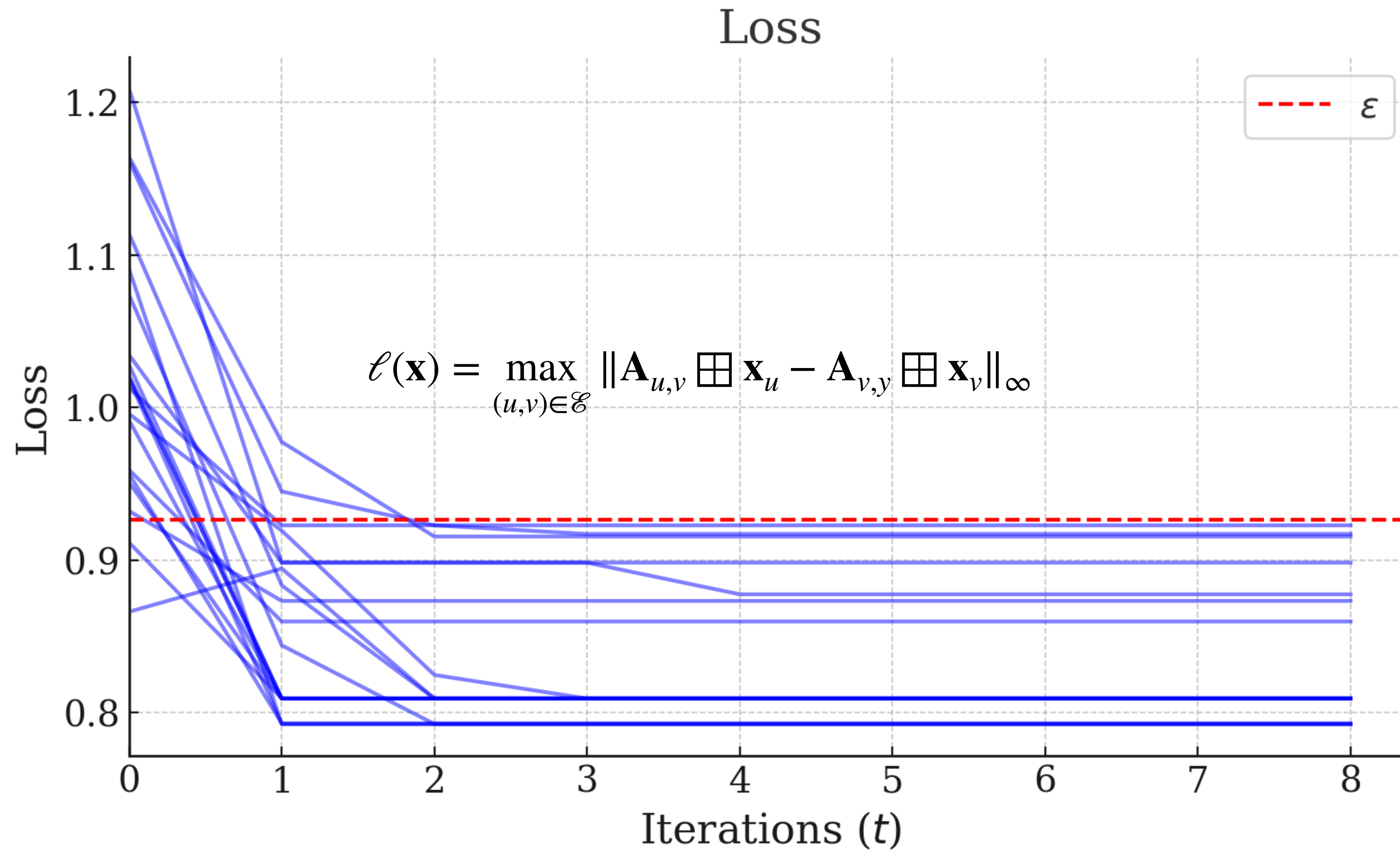
Theorem 3

The operator $\mathcal{F} : (\mathbb{R}^D)^N \rightarrow (\mathbb{R}^D)^N$ is non-expansive in the ℓ_∞ -norm. Furthermore, $\alpha(k) \rightarrow \alpha$ as $k \rightarrow \infty$ for some $\alpha \geq 0$.

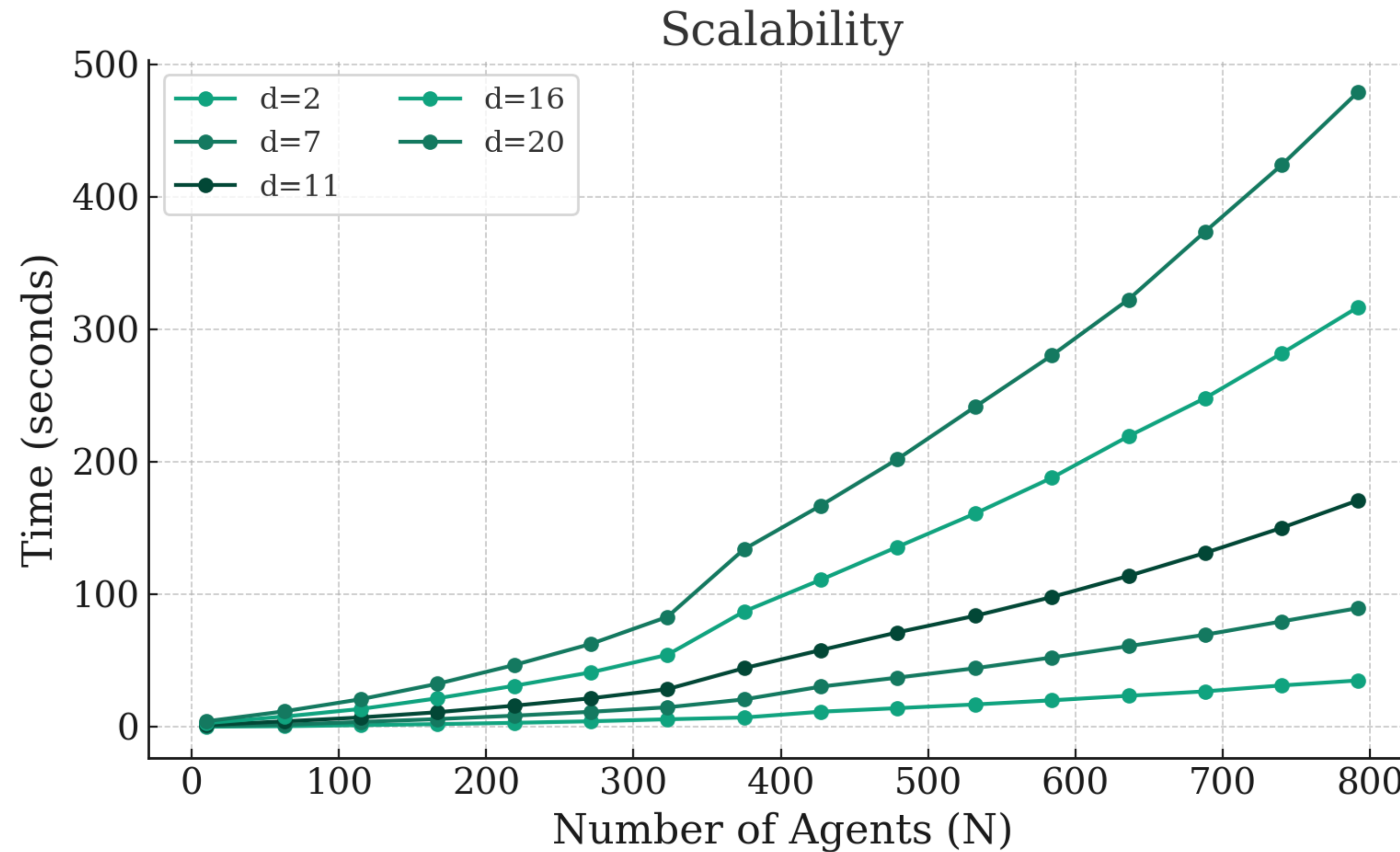
Convergence



Convergence



Scalability



Runtime of the tropical Tarski Laplacian in the number of agents and the dimension (number of events).

Towards Decentralized Formal Verification

Linear Temporal Logic (LTL)

LTL is a language for model-checking for formal verification and control synthesis.

$$\pi \mid \varphi \mid \varphi_1 \wedge \varphi_2 \mid \neg\varphi \mid \varphi_1 \cup \varphi_2 \mid \bigcirc\varphi \mid \square\varphi \mid \diamond\varphi$$

Our Framework

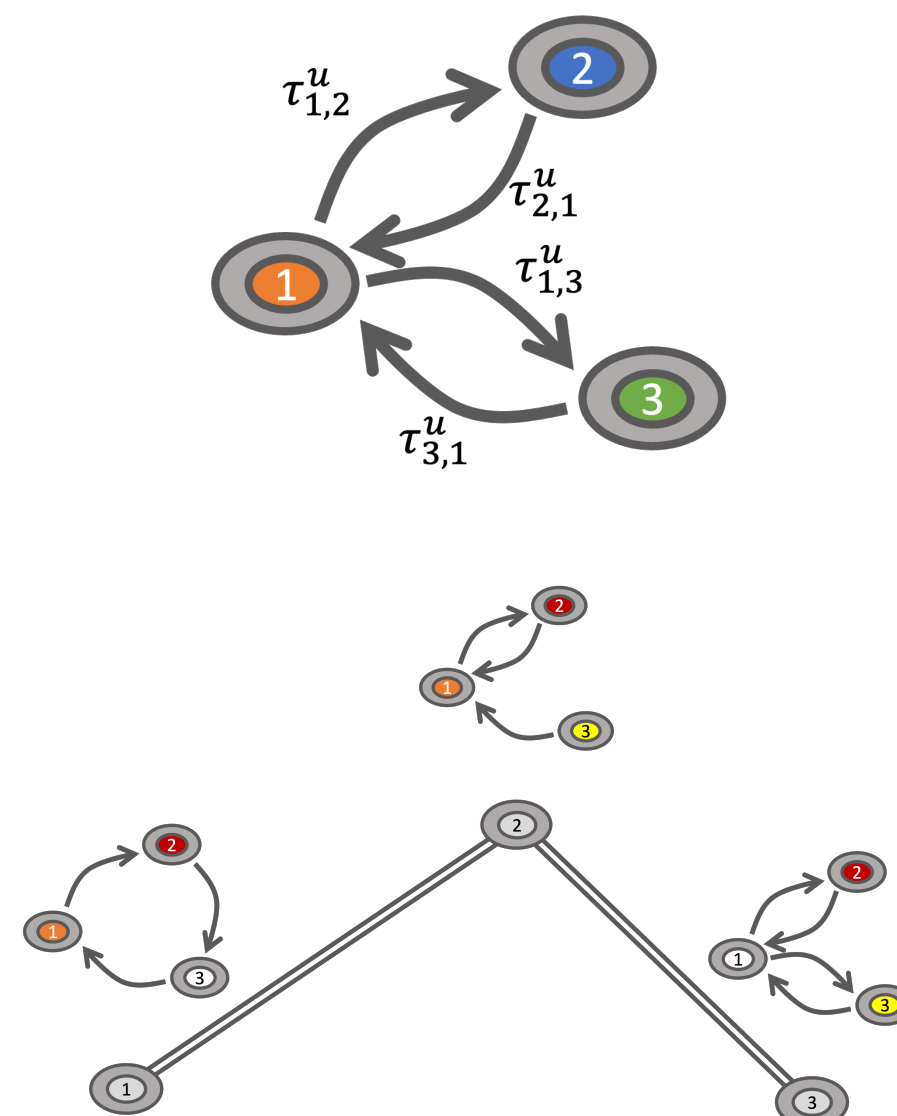
► Atomic propositions: $\Phi = \{\pi_i^v\}_{i \in \mathcal{A}, v \in \mathcal{N}}$

► Constraints on the order of tasks

$$\varphi_v = \bigwedge_{i \in \mathcal{A}} \neg\pi_v^i \cup \left(\bigwedge_{j \in \mathcal{P}_v(i)} \pi_v^j \right)$$

► Constraints on synchronization of tasks

$$\psi_i = \bigcirc^k \left(\bigwedge_{w \in \mathcal{A}_i} \pi_w^i \right)$$



Towards Decentralized Model Checking

What's Next

Robust & adaptive schedule synchrony

- ▶ Time-invariant temporal constraints
- ▶ Delays and feedback through control inputs
- ▶ Dynamic topology & multi-hop synchronization.

Asynchronous schedule updates

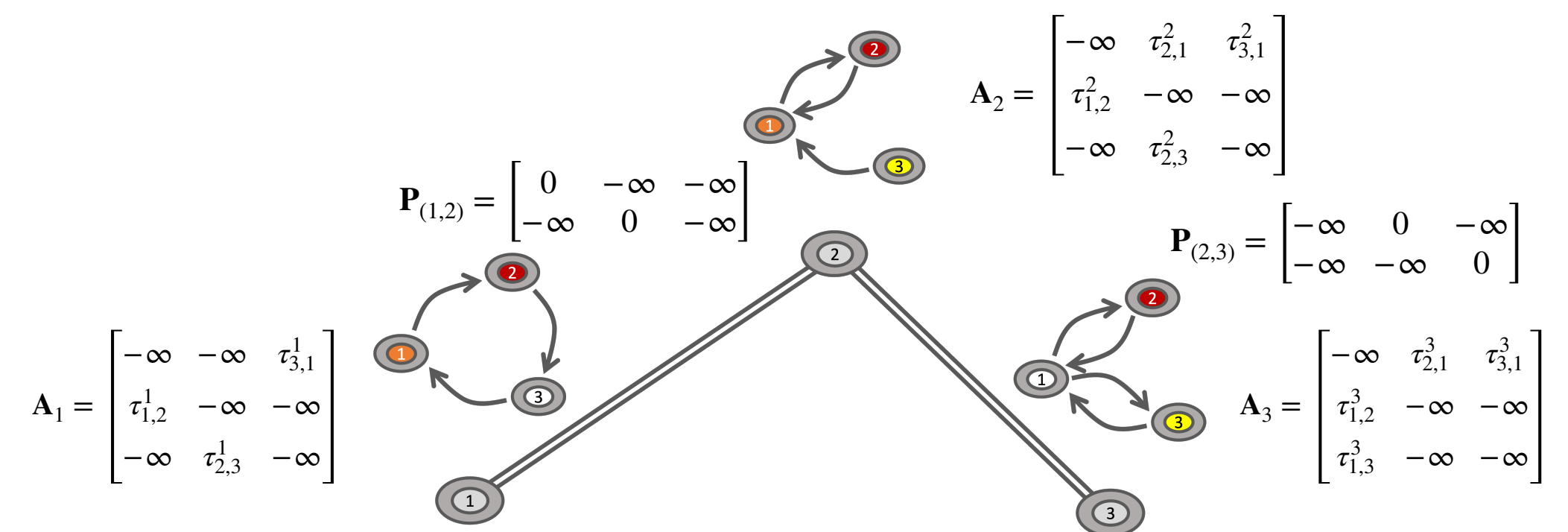
Expanding the language

- ▶ Expanding constraints on the order of events
- ▶ Expanding constraints on synchronization of events.

Higher order LTL: $\bigwedge_{i \in \mathcal{A}} \diamond \left(\bigwedge_{v \in \mathcal{A}_i} \pi_v^i \right)$ v.s. $\bigcirc^k \left(\bigwedge_{w \in \mathcal{A}_i} \pi_w^i \right)$

Lattice Graph Diffusion \Rightarrow Model Checking

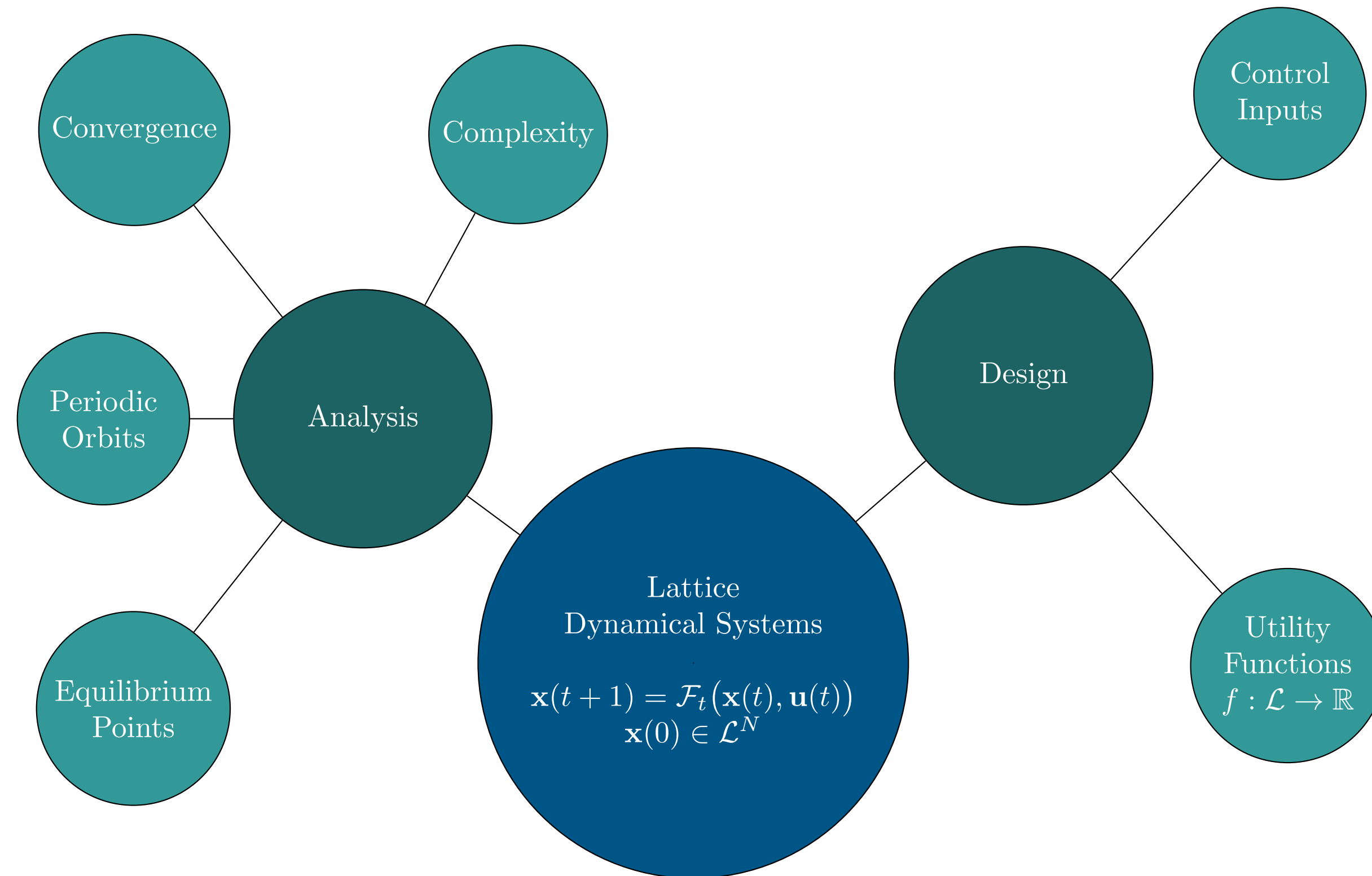
$$(\mathcal{L}\mathbf{x})_u = \underbrace{\bigwedge_{v \in \mathcal{N}_u} \underbrace{W(u, v)}_{\text{delay}} + \mathbf{A}_u^\# \boxplus' \left(\underbrace{\mathbf{P}_{(u,v)}^\# \boxplus' \left(\underbrace{\mathbf{P}_{(u,v)}}_{\text{projection}} \boxplus \underbrace{\mathbf{A}_v \boxplus \mathbf{x}_v}_{\text{next time}} \right)}_{\text{residuation}} \right)}_{\text{aggregation}}$$



Beyond Schedules

Lattice Graph Diffusion \Rightarrow Model Checking

- ▶ Knowledge diffusion
- ▶ Preference dynamics



Conclusion

“Synchronizing Tasks in Multi-Agent Systems with Max-Plus Algebra

- ▶ Formulated a general **multi-agent planning problem**
- ▶ Introduced a novel **mathematical theory** for solving the problem.
- ▶ **Surveyed** our current efforts to **extend** our **decentralized** methods to more general linear temporal logic (LTL) formal verification & synthesis problems.

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Thank you. Questions?