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A POLYNOMIAL ALGORITHM  
FOR DECIDING 3-SAT

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# A Polynomial Algorithm for Deciding **3-sat**

Technical Report

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## Abstract

We present here a **KE**-tableaux based method for solving **3-sat**. We show that this method is polynomial. We solve, in this way, a question alternative to the classic question whether  $P = NP$ .

## 1 Introduction

Our goals here are to establish a polynomial algorithm for writing and solving polynomially a macro for a tableau for **3-sat**.

The class of **sat** problems was shown to be **NP-complete**. The pioneer work shown of Cook, in [1] and Cook and Reckhow in [2]. The focus is to establish lower bounds in complexity, as the pioneer work of Meyer and Sotckmeyer and Meyer [5] and [4]. The literature in this area is rich of very nice surveys, like [3] and [6].

Our approach on the problem of solving **3-sat** using the approach of tableaux. Tableaux branches can grow exponentially, but we propose a macro based on a bound over the number of clauses of a given **3-sat** formula and this approach can be give answers in some open questions.

## 2 Basic Definitions

This Section is divided into two parts. The algorithms we have developed are a “brand new feature”. Definitions can be, even in this introductory section, a mandatory reading for the sake of the full comprehension. Definitions 2.1 to 2.11 belong to the class of “keystone definitions” for being the base of our algorithm. The other definitions can get more of the reader focus accordingly to the needs.

A **3-sat** formula  $\Psi$  is a conjunctions of a number, say  $n$ , of formulas  $L_n$ , where each  $L_i$  is a disjunction of three literals. We write

$$\Psi \equiv (l_1^1 \vee l_1^2 \vee l_1^3) \wedge \cdots \wedge (l_n^1 \vee l_n^2 \vee l_n^3) \equiv C_1 \wedge \cdots \wedge C_n$$

Any subformula of  $\Psi$  of the form  $C_k \equiv l_k^1 \vee l_k^2 \vee l_k^3$ ,  $1 \leq k \leq n$  is called a *conjunct* of  $\Psi$

**Definition 2.1** *The set of literals of a formula  $\Psi$  is denoted by  $\text{Letter}(\Psi)$ .*

*A pair of a literal and its negation is called a conjugated pair.*

**Notation 2.2** *Consider the 3-sat formula*

$$\Psi \equiv (p_1 \vee q_{11} \vee q_{12}) \wedge (p_1 \vee q_{21} \vee q_{22}) \wedge \cdots \wedge (p_1 \vee q_{2t} \vee q_{2t})$$

*The factorization of  $\Psi$*

$$p_1 \vee ((q_{11} \vee q_{12}) \wedge (q_{21} \vee q_{22}) \wedge \cdots \wedge (q_{2t} \vee q_{2t})) \quad (1)$$

*is denoted  $p_1 \vee S_{p_1}$ .*

**Definition 2.3** *Given a 3-sat formula  $\Psi \equiv \psi_1 \wedge \cdots \wedge \psi_n$ , a partition for a formula  $\Psi$  is a rewritten of  $\Psi$  as (the equivalent) formula*

$$(p_1 \vee S_{p_1}) \wedge (\neg p_1 \vee S_{\neg p_1}) \wedge \cdots \wedge (p_k \vee S_{p_k}) \wedge (\neg p_k \vee S_{\neg p_k}) \wedge S_3 \quad (2)$$

*where for all  $l_1, l_2$  in  $\{p_1, \neg p_1, \dots, p_k, \neg p_k\}$ ,  $l_1 \cap \text{Letter}(S_{l_2}) = \emptyset$ .*

Schematically, we have:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} p_1 & \boxed{S_{p_1}} & \neg p_1 & \boxed{S_{\neg p_1}} \\ p_2 & \boxed{S_{p_2}} & \neg p_2 & \boxed{S_{\neg p_2}} \\ & \vdots & & \vdots \\ p_k & \boxed{S_{p_k}} & \neg p_k & \boxed{S_{\neg p_k}} \\ & & & \boxed{S_3^1} \end{array}$$

We can keep on making partitions of the above formula  $S_3^1$ . The set of atoms in  $S_3^1$  is contained in the union of the atoms of each  $S_l$  and not necessarily  $S_3^1$  is a 2-sat formula or empty, as the below formula

$$\Psi = (a \vee b \vee c) \wedge (a \vee b \vee d) \wedge (a \vee c \vee d) \wedge (b \vee c \vee d)$$

If  $\Psi$  already is of the form

$$(p_{01} \vee S_{p_{01}}) \wedge (\neg p_{01} \vee S_{\neg p_{01}}) \wedge \cdots \wedge (p_{0k} \vee S_{p_{0k}}) \wedge (\neg p_{0k} \vee S_{\neg p_{0k}}) \wedge S_3^1$$

Successively, do the partitions:

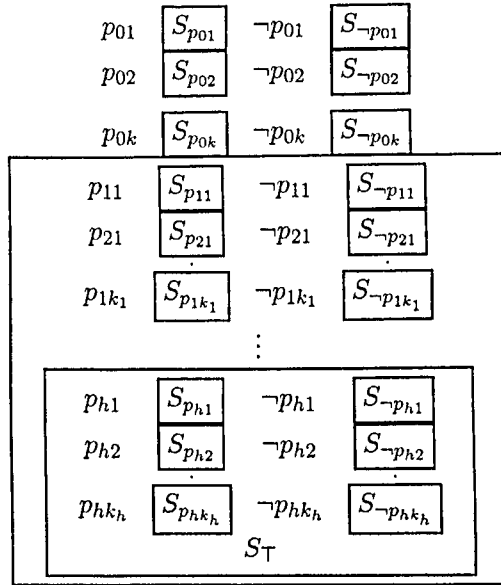
$$S_3^1 \equiv (p_{11} \vee S_{p_{11}}) \wedge (\neg p_{11} \vee S_{\neg p_{11}}) \wedge \cdots \wedge (p_{1k_1} \vee S_{p_{1k_1}}) \wedge (\neg p_{1k_1} \vee S_{\neg p_{1k_1}}) \wedge S_3^2$$

$$S_3^2 \equiv (p_{21} \vee S_{p_{21}}) \wedge (\neg p_{21} \vee S_{\neg p_{21}}) \wedge \cdots \wedge (p_{2k_2} \vee S_{p_{2k_2}}) \wedge (\neg p_{2k_2} \vee S_{\neg p_{2k_2}}) \wedge S_3^3$$

$$\dots$$

$$S_3^h \equiv (p_{h1} \vee S_{p_{h1}}) \wedge (\neg p_{h1} \vee S_{\neg p_{h1}}) \wedge \dots \wedge (p_{hk_h} \vee S_{p_{hk_h}}) \wedge (\neg p_{hk_h} \vee S_{\neg p_{hk_h}}) \wedge S_{\top}$$

where  $S_{\top}$  is either a 2-sat formula or the formula  $\top$ . Finally, obtain the below partition:



**Definition 2.4** The set  $\text{Label} = \{p_{ij} | (1 \leq i \leq h) \wedge (1 \leq j \leq k_i)\}$  is called the set of labels and each literal in  $\text{Label}$  is a label.

We distinguish the set of labels according to its depth. A literal  $l_{ij}$  belongs to the level  $i$ .

Notice that if a literal  $l$  belongs to the level 0, then it cannot belong to the set of vertices, if a literal  $l$  belongs to the level  $j$ , then it cannot be an vertices of a level  $j' > j$ .

A line with a single literal in it, say,  $l$  is equivalent to  $l \vee \perp$ .

We refute or do not refute a given formula  $\Psi$  under the hypothesis that any given maximal consistent set of labels  $L = \{l_i, \dots, l_k\}$  forms a branch of a labeled tableau for  $\Psi$  in which each node is a literal of the maximal consistent set labeled as false,  $F$ .

Observe that if there is a literal  $r$  so that  $r \in \text{Letter}(\Psi)$  and  $\neg r \notin \text{Letter}(\Psi)$ , then  $\Psi$  is false iff the formula

$$\Psi' \equiv \{C_i | 1 \leq i \leq n \wedge r \notin \text{Letter}(C_i)\}$$

is false since a valuation  $r = \top$  trivializes our search.

From now on, we fix a partitioned **3-sat** formula  $\Psi$

**Definition 2.5** *A maximal set is a maximal consistent subset of  $\mathbb{L}\text{abel}$ .*

**Definition 2.6** *The the mirror tableau for  $\Psi$  is the tableau whose branches are of the form*

$$\begin{array}{l} F \ l_{01} \\ \vdots \\ F \ l_{0k_0} \\ \vdots \\ F \ l_{hk_h} \\ T \ S_{l_{01}} \\ \vdots \\ T \ S_{l_{0k_0}} \\ \vdots \\ T \ S_{l_{hk_h}} \end{array}$$

*where the nodes labeled as false range over maximal sets.*

We show in this paper that there is a quick way to select this branches of a **KE**-tableaux and decide if  $\Phi$  is valid or no. The search over the generated branches starts on looking for contradictions over groups of conjunctions of clauses  $S_{ij}$ .

**Definition 2.7** *Define the cylindrical digraph  $\mathcal{C}\text{ln}\text{dr-graph}$ ,  $(L_{0,1}, \Rightarrow, \dots)$ :*

- $L_{0,1} = L \times \{0, 1\} \cup \{\perp\}$ , where  $L$  is the set of literals that belong to some  $S_{ij}$ ;

- If  $a \vee b$  is a clause of  $S_{l_1}, \dots, S_{l_k}$ , then  $a_0 \Rightarrow b_1$  and  $b_0 \Rightarrow a_1$  are vertices and both have as label the string  $l_1 \dots l_k$  of literals in  $\mathbb{L}abel$ ;
- If  $a$  is an isolated line of  $\{S_{l_1}, \dots, S_{l_s}\}$ , then  $a_0 \Rightarrow \perp$  and  $\perp \Rightarrow a_1$  are edges in  $\mathbb{C}lndr\text{-}graph$  both with label given by the string  $l_1 \dots l_s$
- For all conjugated,  $a$  and  $\neg a$  in  $\mathbb{L}etter(\Psi)$ ,  $a_1 \dots \neg a_0$  and  $\neg a_1 \dots a_0$ .

**Definition 2.8** Given two strings of labels,  $l_1$  and  $l_2$ , we say that both strings are equivalent iff there is a set of labels  $\{r_1, \dots, r_n\}$  so that both  $l_1$  and  $l_2$  are a concatenation of all elements of the given set.

From now on, labels are written as its quotient by the above defined equivalence class.

**Definition 2.9** Given a subdigraph  $B$  of the cylindrical digraph and two vertices  $a_0$  and  $b_1$ ,

1. An alternated sequence from  $a_0$  to  $b_1$  is a linear subdigraph of the form

$$a_0 \Rightarrow c_1^1 \dots \neg c_0^1 \dots c_1^k \dots \neg c_0^k \Rightarrow b_1$$

2. An interval between  $a_0$  and  $b_1$  is the subdigraph of  $B$  that contains all alternated sequences from  $a_0$  to  $b_1$ . Denote this interval by  $[a_0, b_1]$ ;
3. A maximal linear sequence is an alternated sequence

$$a_0 \xRightarrow{l_1} b_1^1 \dots \neg b_0^1 \xRightarrow{l_2} b_1^2 \dots \neg b_0^2 \dots b_1^m \xRightarrow{l_m} c_1$$

maximal for the property:  $\forall 1 \leq i \leq m (\neg b_0^i \xRightarrow{l_i} d_1) \rightarrow (b_1^{i+1} = d_1)$ ;

4. Given an interval  $[a_0, b_1]$  a sequence in the interval  $[a_0, b_1]$  is any alternated sequence with starting point  $a_0$  and ending  $b_1$ .

**Lemma 2.10** The number of lines of a partitioned formula  $\Psi$  is bounded by the square of its set of atoms.

**Proof:** The number of literals  $\Psi$ ,  $|\mathbb{L}etter(\Psi)|$ , establishes the number maximum of edges in  $\Leftrightarrow$ . This bound, given by  $|\mathbb{L}etter(\Psi)|^2$ , is the maximum of edges one can draw in a polygon with  $|\mathbb{L}etter(\Psi)|$  arrows and it is given by the sum of an arithmetic progression

$$(|\mathbb{L}etter(\Psi)|) + (|\mathbb{L}etter(\Psi)| - 1) + \dots + 1$$

Now, consider operations over subdigraphs of the cylindrical digraph. Two subdigraphs  $G_1 = (V_1, \Rightarrow, \dots)$  and  $G_2 = (V_2, \Rightarrow, \dots)$  can be turned into two *disjoint* digraphs by, say, by taking the natural bijective mapping of  $V_i$  onto  $V_i \times i$ ,  $i \in \{1, 2\}$  and a set of edges,  $\Rightarrow$  and  $\dots$  inherited from the similar edges of  $G_i$ . For shortness, we write vertex of each  $G_i$  by using its first coordinate. In other words, a vertex  $(a_j, i)$ ,  $i \in \{1, 2\}$ ,  $j \in \{0, 1\}$  is written as  $a_j$ . Edges have no especial distinction on its notation. The context of writing the disjoint subdigraphs is very clear.

**Definition 2.11** Let  $G_1 = (V_1, \Rightarrow, \dots)$  and  $G_2 = (V_2, \Rightarrow, \dots)$  be two disjoint digraphs. Let  $a_1, a_0 \in V_1$  and  $b_1, \neg a_0 \in V_2$  and  $l$  a string of labels.

1. Define the disjoint join of the two digraphs by  $a_1$  and  $\neg a_0$  as the disjoint union of the digraphs  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  plus a new edge  $a_1 \dots \neg a_0$ .

Denote the join of  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  by  $G_1 a_1 \dots \neg a_0 G_2$ .

2. Define the disjoint join with label  $l$  of  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  by  $a_0 \in V_1$  and  $b_1 \in V_2$  as the disjoint union of  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  with all the edges inherited from each digraph and the addition of the labeled edge  $a_0 \xRightarrow{l} b_1$ .

Denote the join of  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  by  $a_0 \in V_1$  and  $b_1 \in V_2$  with label  $l$  by  $G_1 a_0 \xRightarrow{l} b_1 G_2$ .

**Definition 2.12** Given two strings of labels  $l$  and  $m$ , the operation  $l \setminus m$  is the string of labels formed by all labels in  $l$  that do not belong to  $m$ .

**Definition 2.13** Given a subdigraph  $SB$  of a cylindrical digraph,

1. If  $m$  is a string of labels, define the subdigraph  $SB \setminus m$  as the subdigraph of  $SB$  whose vertices and edges are inherited by the vertices and edges of  $SB$  and moreover, for any arrow with label  $l$ ,  $a_0 \xRightarrow{l} b_1$ , we have either,

$$a_0 \xRightarrow{l \setminus m} b_1 \text{ if } l \setminus m \neq \emptyset$$

or the edge erased, if  $l \subseteq m$ ;

2. If  $a_{i_1}^1, a_{i_2}^2, \dots, a_{i_k}^k$  are vertex for  $i_j \in \{0, 1\}$ ,  $1 \leq j \leq k$ , denote by  $SBVL(a_{i_1}^1, a_{i_2}^2, \dots, a_{i_k}^k)$  to the digraph generated by  $SB$  whose set of vertices is the set of vertices of  $SB$  less the vertices  $\{a_{i_1}^1, a_{i_2}^2, \dots, a_{i_k}^k\}$ .

### 3 Algorithm I - Building the Macro Tableau

Given a formula  $\Psi$  as an input, the output is either  $\Psi$  is *non-valid* or  $\Psi$  is *valid*. From now on, we suppose  $\Psi$  is *always* written in any of its partitioned form.

We introduce an algorithm that is based on **KE**-tableau methods. We work backwards with regard to the usual tableaux operations and, after fixing one set of labels, *Label*, we apply Bivalence Rule, we develop a quick search for the set of closed branches. If it can be done, we obtain a closed **KE**-tableau for  $\Psi$ .

We start our algorithm of writing a macro for the search for closed branches in the mirror tableau. The basic idea is to look for contradictions over alternated paths in the cylindrical digraph.

**Definition 3.1** *Given an set of strings of labels,*

$$\{l_1, l_2, \dots, l_k\}$$

*its associated linear macrobranch is an array of the form*

$$\begin{array}{c} F \ l_1 \\ F \ l_2 \\ \vdots \\ F \ l_k \end{array}$$

*where  $F \ l_1$  encodes the choice of a literal  $r_1$  in the string  $l_1$  and its labeling as  $F$ . Similarly,  $F \ l_2$ , a choice of a literal  $r_2$  in the string  $l_2$  labeled as  $F$ . Successfully,  $F \ l_k$ , a choice of a literal  $r_k$  in  $l_k$ , labeled  $F$ .*

*A choice of consistent literals  $r_i \in l_i$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq k$ , defines the possible branch*

$$\begin{array}{c} F \ r_1 \\ F \ r_2 \\ \vdots \\ F \ r_k \end{array}$$

A possible branch is a subbranch of the mirror tableaux. We write a macrotableau where we write all the subbranches in the mirror tableau that are closed.

**Definition 3.2** *Given an alternated sequence*

$$a_0 \xRightarrow{l_1} b_1^1 \dots \neg b_0^1 \xRightarrow{l_2} b_1^2 \dots \neg b_0^2 \dots b_1^k \dots \neg b_0^k \xRightarrow{l_k} c_1$$

*consider the set of strings of labels associated to each edge  $r_0 \xRightarrow{l_i} s_1$  in the alternated sequence,  $\{l_1, l_2, \dots, l_k\}$ .*



A linear macrobranch generated by the given sequence is the linear macrobranch associated to  $\{l_1, l_2, \dots, l_k\}$ .

Notice that a possible branch is a subbranch of the mirror tableau.

**Definition 3.3** A linear macrobranch is a macrobranch. Inductively, we built macrobranches by using the operations  $\wedge$  and  $\vee$ , as we define here.

Given two macrobranches  $B_1$  and  $B_2$ ,

1. The conjunction of  $B_1$  and  $B_2$ , denoted  $B_1 \wedge B_2$  is the macrobranch

$B_1$

$B_2$

obtained by the join of the macrobranches  $B_1$  and  $B_2$  is a macrobranch and its meaning is the use of  $\wedge$ -rule over all possible branches of  $B_1$  with all possible branches of  $B_2$ .

A possible branch in  $B_1 \wedge B_2$  is the choice of a branch  $l_1$  in  $B_1$ , a branch  $l_2$  in  $B_2$  to form the branch  $\begin{matrix} l_1 \\ l_2 \end{matrix}$

2. The disjunction of  $B_1$  and  $B_2$ , denoted by  $B_1 \vee B_2$  is the macrobranch

$B_1 \quad B_2$

and its meaning is the use of  $\vee$ -rule over all possible branches of  $B_1$  and  $B_2$ .

**Definition 3.4** Consider the linear macrobranches  $\{B_1, \dots, B_n\}$ ,  $n \geq 1$ .

1.  $\bigwedge_{1 \leq j \leq n} B_j$  is the macrobranch  $B_1 \wedge \dots \wedge B_n$ . An analogous notation is given to  $\bigvee_{1 \leq j \leq n} B_j$ .

$B_1 = \bigwedge_{i=1} B_i = \bigvee_{i=1} B_i$ . Parenthesis commutates in both  $\wedge$  and  $\vee$  and are omitted when its meaning is clear.

Recursively, a macrobranch is obtained from operations  $\vee$  and  $\wedge$  over macrobranches. We call each of its macrobranches we use to make the building up of a more complex macrobranch a submacrobranch. With abuse of notation we use the notation  $\in$  to denote the binary relation of being a submacrobranch of a given macrobranch;

2. Define the partial order over the linear submacrobranches in a macrobranch  $B$  as the transitive closure of

$$\forall B_i \in \{B_1, \dots, B_n\} \forall B_j \in \{B_{n+1}, \dots, B_m\} \\ ((\bigvee_{1 \leq j \leq n} B_i) \wedge (\bigvee_{n+1 \leq j \leq m} B_j) \in B) \rightarrow B_k \leq B_l$$

3. Let  $\{B_1, B_2, \dots, B_s\}$  be linear macrobranches so that  $C = B_1 < B_2 < \dots < B_s$  is a maximal chain of a macrobranch  $B$ . A possible branch over  $C$  is a choice of a possible branch over  $\bigwedge_{1 \leq i \leq s} B_i$ .

A possible branch in  $B$  is a possible branch in some chain of  $B$ ;

4. Given a possible branch

$$\begin{array}{c} F l_1 \\ \vdots \end{array}$$

$$F l_1$$

each  $F l_i$  is called a (labeled) node.

Macrotableaux are a way to write a tableau from the hypothesis we have nodes of the form  $F(r_1 \wedge r_2 \wedge \dots \wedge r_n)$  in which  $r_i$  ranges over a given string of labels. So, all the properties of tableaux are translated and rewritten in here. The association of macrobranches to intervals in a cylindrical digraph is our way to make shortcuts on solving 3-sat.

We translate intervals in a cylindrical digraph to macrobranch. A maximal sequence

$$a_0 \xrightarrow{l_1} b_1^1 \dots \neg b_0^1 \xrightarrow{l_2} b_1^2 \dots \neg b_0^2 \dots b_1^m \dots \neg b_0^m \xrightarrow{l_m} c_1$$

has a forking in at least two paths, say the maximal sequences for  $1 \leq i \leq n$  and  $n \geq 2$ ,

$$\neg c_0 \xrightarrow{l_{1i}} d_1^{1i} \dots \neg d_0^{1i} \xrightarrow{l_{2i}} d_1^{2i} \dots \neg d_0^{2i} \dots d_1^{mi} \dots \neg d_0^{mi} \xrightarrow{l_{mi}} e_1^i$$

If the below sequences are associated, respectively, to the macrobranch  $B$  and  $B_i$  for  $1 \leq i \leq n$ , then we have the macrobranches  $B \wedge (\bigvee_{1 \leq i \leq n} B_i)$ :

$$\begin{array}{c} B \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ B_1 \dots \dots B_n \end{array}$$

In general, we associate macrobranches to intervals.

**Definition 3.5** Given an interval  $[a_0, b_1]$ , the macrobranch associated to  $[a_0, b_1]$  is defined by the macrobranch  $B$  so that

- For all maximal sequence  $M$  in  $[a_0, b_1]$ , the linear macrobranch  $B_M$  generated by  $M$  is a member of  $B$ ;

- If a maximal sequence  $M$  has the forking with  $t$  maximal sequences whose associated linear macrobranches are  $M_1, \dots, M_t$ . Then the macrobranch built by the  $\bigvee$ -rule,

$$M \bigwedge \left( \bigvee_{1 \leq j \leq t} M_j \right)$$

is a submacrobranch of  $B$ .

**Definition 3.6** Given a macrobranch  $B$ , define its transposed,  $B^t$  as

1. The transposed of a node  $F \ r_1 r_2 \dots r_n$  in a linear macrobranch is the linear macrobranch  $l^t$

$$F \neg r_1$$

$$F \neg r_2$$

$$\vdots$$

$$F \neg r_n$$

2. The transposed a linear macrobranch with  $n$  nodes  $l_1, \dots, l_n$  is  $\bigvee_{1 \leq i \leq n} l_i^t$ ;
3.  $(B_1 \bigvee B_2)^t = B^t \bigwedge B_2^t$  and  $(B_1 \bigwedge B_2)^t = B_1^t \bigvee B_2^t$ .

Notice that if  $B$  is a linear macrobranch whose nodes are the labeled strings  $F \ l_i$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq n$ , for some number  $n$ , its transposed is

$$\bigvee_{1 \leq i \leq n} F \ (l_i)^t$$

where if  $l_i$  is the string  $r_{i1} \dots r_{in_i}$ , then its transposed is

$$F \neg r_{i1}$$

$$\vdots$$

$$F \neg r_{in_i}$$

**Definition 3.7** Given a chain  $C_1, \dots, C_n$  in a macrotableau  $B$ , its transposed,  $\bigvee_{1 \leq i \leq n} C_i^t$  is called an antichain.

**Definition 3.8** A possible branch of  $B$

$$F \ r_1$$

$$\vdots$$

$$F \ r_n$$

is closed iff

$F \ r_1$   
 $\vdots$   
 $F \ r_n$   
 $T \ S_{r_1}$   
 $\vdots$   
 $T \ S_{r_n}$

is a closed subbranch of the mirror tableau.

A macrobranch is closed iff any of its possible branches are closed.

**Definition 3.9** Any literal  $a$  so that the interval  $[a_0, a_1]$  is a non-empty digraph is called a necessarily true literal.

The set of necessarily true literal is denoted by  $Nec$ .

A necessarily true literal  $a$  ought be labeled as *true* regarding to any of its linear macrobranches generated by alternated sequences in the interval  $[a_0, a_1]$ ,

$$a_0 \xRightarrow{l_1} b_1^1 \dots \neg b_0^1 \dots \neg b_0^n \xRightarrow{l_n} a_1$$

If otherwise, labeling  $a$  with *false* will result in a contradiction. Indeed, if the sequence is  $a_0 \xRightarrow{l} \perp \xRightarrow{l} a_1$ ,  $a$  is an isolated branch in any label  $r$  in the string  $l$ . So the branches of the mirror tableau for  $\Psi$  with the nodes  $F \ r$  and  $F \ a$  are closed. If the vertex  $\perp$  does not belong to the alternated sequence, we have that the same reasoning holds for branches of a tableau for  $\Psi$  with  $F \ r_1, \dots, F \ r_n$  and  $F \ a$ , for any  $r_i$  in the string of labels  $l_i$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq n$ . Indeed, a label  $F \ a$  implies  $T \ b^1$ ,  $F \ \neg b^1$  and so on until we obtain  $F \ \neg b^n$  and, therefore,  $T \ a$ , a contradiction, whereas  $T \ a$  does not leads to a contradiction over the sequence at all.

We keep this reasoning as a building block for writing and searching for contradictions over macrobranches.

**Definition 3.10** A literal  $r \in \text{Label} \cap (\cup \text{Letter}(S_{ij}))$  is called necessarily false literal. The set of necessarily false literals is denoted by  $NecFls$ .

A necessarily false literal  $r$  ought be labeled as  $F \ r$ .

Consider the three non-empty intervals,

$$[\neg a_0, \neg c_1] \quad [r_0, s_1] \quad [\neg a_0, r_1]$$

where  $a, c \in Nec$  and  $r, s \in NecFls$ .

The literals  $a, c$  and  $r, s$  are labeled, respectively, as **True** and **False** over their macrobranches, respectively,  $B_{\neg a_0 \neg c_1}$ ,  $B_{r_0 s_1}$  and  $B_{\neg a_0 r_1}$ .

In this way, if the macrobranches associated to  $[a_0, a_1]$  and  $[c_0, c_1]$  are, respectively  $B_{a_0a_1}$ ,  $B_{c_0c_1}$ . We will show, in Proposition 3.13, that three macrobranches

$$\begin{array}{ccc} B_{a_0a_1} & & B_{a_0a_1} \\ B_{\neg a_0 \neg c_1} & B_{r_0s_1} & B_{\neg a_0r_1} \\ B_{c_0c_1} & & \end{array}$$

are closed, or, to be more precise, the above defined macrobranches are closed.

**Definition 3.11** *Given a cylindrical digraph, its set of closed digraphs, CSD is defined as*

1. For all  $a \in \text{Nec} \cap \text{NecFls}$ , the digraph,

$$([a_0, a_1] \setminus (\neg a))a_0 \xrightarrow{a} \perp \{\perp\}$$

where  $\{\perp\}$  is the digraph with only one vertex, the vertex  $\perp$ ;

2. For all  $a, b \in \text{Nec}$ , if  $[\neg a_0, \neg b_1] \forall L(a_0, a_1, \neg a_1) \neq \emptyset$ , consider

$$([a_0, a_1]a_1 \dots \neg a_0([\neg a_0, \neg b_1] \forall L(a_0, a_1, \neg a_1)) \neg b_1 \dots b_0[b_0, b_1]) \setminus (ab)$$

3. For all  $a \in \text{Nec}$ ,  $b \in \text{NecFls}$ , if  $[\neg a_0, b_1] \forall L(a_0, a_1, \neg a_1) \neq \emptyset$ , consider

$$([a_0, a_1]a_1 \dots \neg a_0([\neg a_0, b_1] \forall L(a_0, a_1, \neg a_1)) \setminus (a \neg b)$$

4. For all  $a, b \in \text{NecFls}$ , if  $[a_0, b_1] \neq \emptyset$ , consider

$$[a_0, b_1] \setminus (\neg a \neg b)$$

**Definition 3.12** *Given a set of closed digraphs, CSD, its associated set of possible closed macrobranches,  $\mathcal{A}$ , is the set of macrobranches generated by each digraph in CSD.*

*The macrotableau for  $\Psi$  is  $\bigvee \{B \mid B \in \mathcal{A}\}$ .*

**Proposition 3.13** *If  $B$  is a macrobranch in  $\mathcal{A}$ , then  $B$  is closed.*

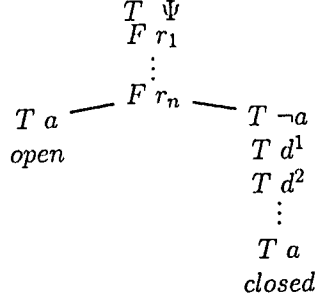
**Proof:** Case 1)  $a \in \text{NecFls} \cap \text{Nec}$ . For any sequence in the interval  $[a_0, a_1]$ ,

$$a_0 \xrightarrow{s_1} d_1^1 \dots \neg d_0^1 \dots \neg d_0^m \xrightarrow{s_x} a_1$$

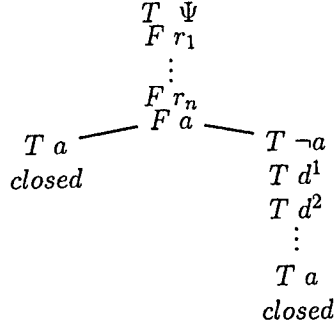
associated to a linear macrobranch  $Lin$ , for any possible branch in  $lin$ , with nodes in the set  $\{r_1, \dots, r_n\}$ , we have the branch for a tableau

$T \Psi$   
 $F r_1$   
 $\vdots$   
 $F r_n$   
 $T a \vee d^1$   
 $T \neg d^1 \vee d^2$   
 $\vdots$   
 $T \neg d^n \vee a$

that can be developed, by the use of Bivalence rule, as



Suppose  $\neg a \notin \{r_1, \dots, r_n\}$ . Add the node  $F a$ , we obtain the closed branch



Hence, the subdigraph

$$([a_0, a_1] \setminus (\neg a))a_0 \xrightarrow{a} \perp \{\perp\}$$

has its generated macrotableau closed.

Case 2): The literals  $a$  and  $b$  are necessarily true and case 1), at least one of them is necessarily false, does not happen.

The intervals  $[a_0, a_1]$  and  $[b_0, b_1]$  generate two macrobranches,  $B_a$  and  $B_b$  that close if we add to them, respectively, the nodes  $F a$  and  $F b$ .

Let  $B_{\neg a \neg b}$  be the macrobranch generated by the interval  $[\neg a_0, \neg b_1]$ . If we add the the macrobranch  $B_{\neg a \neg b}$  the two nodes  $F \neg a$  and  $F \neg b$ , then the macrobranch closes.

In conclusion, the macrobranch  $B_a \wedge B_b \wedge B_{\neg a \neg b}$  is closed.

The hypothesis of  $a$  or  $b$  being necessarily false was ruled out. So, we conclude that the macrotableau generated by

$$[a_0, a_1]a_1 \vdots \neg a_0([\neg a_0, \neg b_1]VL(a_0, a_1, \neg a_1))\neg b_1 \vdots b_0[b_0, b_1]$$

closes under all possible nodes  $F a$  or  $F b$  or ( $F \neg a$  and  $F \neg b$ ).

Case 3) If  $a$  is necessarily true, the macrobranch generated by  $[a_0, a_1]$  closes with the addition of the node  $F a$ .

The macrobranch generated by  $[\neg a_0, b_1]$  closes added to the nodes  $F \neg a$  and  $Tb$ . Hence, if  $b$  is necessarily false, the macrobranch generated by  $[a_0, a_1]a_1 \vdots \neg a_0([\neg a_0, b_1]VL(a_0, a_1, \neg a_1))$  closes under the nodes  $F a$  or  $T b$  or ( $T a$  and  $T b$ ). We cannot suppose  $\{a \neg b\} \subseteq NecFls$ . So, the macrobranch generated by

$$([a_0, a_1]a_1 \vdots \neg a_0([\neg a_0, b_1]VL(a_0, a_1, \neg a_1))) \setminus (a \neg b)$$

is closed.

Case 4) Consider the interval  $[a_0, b_1]$ . Any alternated sequence in this interval generates a linear macrobranch so that the node  $F a$  forces  $T b$ , a contradiction if we assume that  $a$  and  $b$  are nodes of the mirror tableau.

Discharge the labels  $\neg a$  and  $\neg b$ , for we deal with the hypothesis that  $F a$  and  $F b$  are nodes in the mirror tableau, which is the tableau obtained by using Branching Rule.

Conclude that macrobranch generated by

$$[a_0, b_1] \setminus (\neg a \neg b)$$

is closed. □

**Proposition 3.14** *The set CSD has its size bounded by a polynomial.*

**Proof:** Observe that one can easily write in polynomial time and size the set of non-empty intervals  $[a_0, b_1]$ , for  $(a, b) \in Letter(\Psi) \times Letter(\Psi)$ . □

The reciprocal of Theorem 3.13 is shown next.

**Theorem 3.15** *For any closed branch  $Br$  in the mirror tableau there is a macrobranch  $B$  so that a possible branch  $l$  of  $B$  is a subbranch of  $Br$ .*

**Proof:** Let  $Br$  be a branch for the mirror tableau for  $T \Psi$  so that none of its subbranches is a possible branch in some macrotableau in  $\mathcal{A}$ .

$$\begin{array}{l} F \ l_1 \\ \vdots \\ F \ l_t \\ T \ S_{l_1} \\ \vdots \\ T \ S_{l_t} \end{array}$$

that is, for no subdibrach  $S$  in  $CSD$  (see Definition 3.11), there is a possible branch generated by  $S$  that is a subbranch of  $Br$ .

Our search is restricted to  $CIL$ , the digraph given by the cylindrical digraph without labels ranging over the literals complementary to each  $l_i$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq t$ .  $CIndr \setminus (\neg l_1, \dots, \neg l_t)$ . On making such a restriction, we avoid writing nodes of the form  $F p$  for any  $p \in \{\neg l_1, \dots, \neg l_t\}$ .

Consider the set  $NT$  of the necessarily true literals in  $CIL$  and  $NF$  the necessarily false literals among the set  $\{l_1, \dots, l_t\}$ . By hypothesis,  $NT \cap NF = \emptyset$ , for otherwise, Case 1 of Definition 3.11 holds.

If  $NT$  is non-empty, for any  $a \in NT$ , extend  $Br$  by adding all the branches of the form

$$\begin{array}{l} F \neg a \\ T \neg a \vee r_1 \\ T \neg r_1 \vee r_2 \quad \text{where } \neg a \vee r_1 \text{ and for all } 1 \leq i \leq j, \neg r_1 \vee r_2 \text{ belong to some} \\ \vdots \\ T \neg r_{j_1-1} \vee r_j \\ S_i. \end{array}$$

The above branch is equivalent to the branch

$$\begin{array}{l} F \neg a \\ T \ r_1 \\ T \ r_2 \\ \vdots \\ T \ r_j \end{array}$$

and by our hypothesis, cases 2 and 3 of Definition 3.11 were ruled out, so,  $\{r_1, r_2, \dots, r_j\} \cap NF = \emptyset$  (Case 3 of the same Definition does not happen). Also,  $\{\neg r_1, \neg r_2, \dots, \neg r_j\} \cap NT = \emptyset$  (Case 2, does not happen). Therefore, we conclude that subbranches of the above form remain open.

If  $NF$  is non-empty, for any  $b \in NF$ , consider branches of the form

$$\begin{array}{l} T \ b \vee r_1 \\ T \neg r_1 \vee r_2 \\ \vdots \\ T \neg r_{j_1-1} \vee r_{j_1} \end{array}$$



Take the branches maximal in the sense that no new node of the form  $T \neg r_j \vee r_{j+1}$  can be added to it

As  $b \in NF$ , the node  $F b$  belongs to  $Br$ . So, the above branch is equivalent to

$$\begin{array}{l} T r_1 \\ T r_2 \\ \vdots \\ T r_{j_1} \end{array}$$

As cases 3 and 4 of Definition 3.11 were ruled out, none of the literals in the above branch are in  $NF$  or a conjugated pair of a literal in  $NT$  and therefore no literal labeled as  $T$  and  $F$  occurs. The branch is left open.

It remains to analyze the branches with no literals in  $NF$  or  $NT$  in it. Consider maximal branches of the form

$$\begin{array}{l} T \neg s_1 \vee s_2 \\ T \neg s_2 \vee s_3 \\ \vdots \\ T \neg s_{j-1} \vee s_j \end{array}$$

The above branch is developed, using Branching Rule as

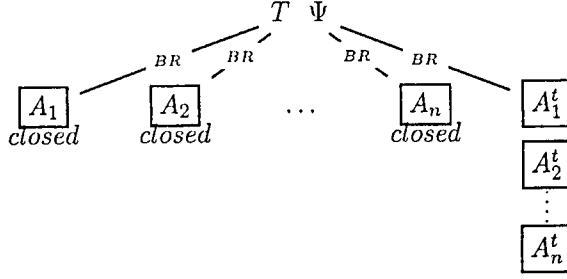
$$\begin{array}{l} T s_1 \\ T \neg s_1 \quad \begin{array}{l} T s_2 \\ \vdots \\ T s_{j_1} \end{array} \end{array}$$

The second branch remains open. Indeed, no  $\neg s_i$  belongs to  $NT$  and no  $s_i$  belongs to  $NF$ . ■

## 4 Algorithm II - Polynomial Resolution

Now, we deal with a decision procedure in order to decide if a given set of possible closed branches indeed entails the mirror tableau, and therefore, the tableau closes and the given 3-sat formula  $\Psi$  is not valid or the tableau does not close, so  $\Psi$  is valid. That is, we develop the tools to polynomially decide if for any branch of the mirror tableau, there is a possible branch in  $\mathcal{A}$  that is a subbranch of it (so  $\Psi$  is non-valid) or not ( $\Psi$  is valid).

Our general strategy for solving the tableaux is the following: Given a set of possible closed branches  $\mathcal{A}$  for a formula  $\Psi$ , then we solve the tableau for  $\Psi$  by Bivalence rule over a set  $A \in \mathcal{A}$ , which we recall, entails all closed branches. In a schema,



The last branch  $(\bigvee_{1 \leq i \leq n} A_i)^t$ , was built up due to a branching rule, generalized over all possible branches. All other possible branches in  $\mathcal{A}$  are *closed* and we describe here a procedure in order to decide whether any possible branch in any macrobranch of  $\mathcal{A}$  represents a closed tableau, that is, any branch of the mirror tableau contains a possible branch of some  $A_i$ . Call resolution to the process of deciding whether branches in the mirror tableau are a possible line in  $\mathcal{A}$  or not.

Recall that the set of all nodes in a possible branch is a consistent set of literals in *Label*.

**Definition 4.1** A macrobranch  $B$  is inconsistent iff there is no possible line in  $B$ .

In a rephrasing, a macrobranch  $B$  is inconsistent iff for any attempt of writing a possible branch we can find two nodes with complementary literals in it.

**Proposition 4.2** Let  $\mathcal{A} = \bigvee_{1 \leq i \leq n} A_i$  be a set of possible closed branches. A branch  $Br$  is a possible branch of  $\bigwedge_{1 \leq i \leq n} A_i^t$  iff  $Br$  is not a possible branch in any macrotableau  $A \in \mathcal{A}$ .

**Proof:** Let  $\mathcal{C}$  be the set of all chains in  $\bigwedge_{1 \leq i \leq n} A_i^t$ . For all  $\{C_1, \dots, C_m\} \in \mathcal{C}$  we have that  $\{C_1^t, \dots, C_m^t\}$  is an antichain in  $\bigvee A_i$ . That is, for all possible branch in  $\bigvee_{1 \leq i \leq n} A_i$ , there is a node whose literals in its string of labels are complementary of the literals in the possible branch.

So, for all  $A \in \mathcal{A}$  and any chain  $\{B_1, \dots, B_p\}$  in  $A$  has non empty intersection with  $\{C_1^t, \dots, C_m^t\}$ . Suppose that the linear branch  $\bigwedge_{1 \leq i \leq m} C_i$  is of the form

$$\begin{array}{l} l_1 \\ \vdots \\ l_m \end{array}$$

then for all  $s$ , there is a node in  $B_s$  substring of  $\neg l_1 \neg l_m$ . □

In other words,  $\bigwedge A_i^t$  is consistent iff there is a branch of the mirror tableau that is not a possible branch in  $\mathcal{A}$ . So, the tableau generated by  $\mathcal{A}$  closes iff there is no possible branch in  $\bigwedge A_i^t$ .

**Definition 4.3** Given two strings of labels  $l_1, l_2$ ,

$$\begin{aligned} l_1 &= r_{11}r_{21} \dots r_{n_1 1} \\ l_2 &= r_{12}r_{22} \dots r_{n_2 2} \end{aligned}$$

we say that  $l_1$  and  $l_2$  are compatible if no two pairs of conjugated letters belong to  $\{r_{11}, r_{21}, \dots, r_{n_1 1}, r_{12}, r_{22}, \dots, r_{n_2 2}\}$

Notice that a string of the form  $a \neg ab_1 \dots b_n$  is not compatible with any other string.

Recall that lines belong to macrobranches and macrobranches are numbered and ordered according to a partial order in  $\mathcal{A}$ .

A line  $l$  belong to the set  $A_1, A_2, \dots, A_l$  and its position is  $j_1, j_2, \dots, j_l$ .

**Definition 4.4** We say that the set of possible closed branches  $\mathcal{A}$  represents the mirror tableau iff for any maximal consistent set  $\{l_1, \dots, l_n\}$ , there is a possible line in  $\mathcal{A}$  that is a subbranch of the branch of the mirror tableau whose nodes are  $F l_i$ , for all  $1 \leq i \leq n$ .

If  $\mathcal{A}$  represents the mirror tableau, then the mirror tableau for  $\Psi$  (that is any tableau for  $\Psi$ ) is closed.

**Corollary 4.5** Given a set  $\mathcal{A} = \{B_1, \dots, B_n\}$ , the following assertions are equivalent:

1.  $\mathcal{A}$  represents the mirror tableau;
2.  $\bigwedge_{1 \leq i \leq n} B_i^t$  is inconsistent;
3. For all antichain  $\text{Ant} = \{C_1, \dots, C_m\}$  in  $\mathcal{A}$ , for all  $1 \leq i \leq m$  in  $\text{Ant}$  and strings of labels  $l_{ik_i}$  in  $C_i$ , there is a pair  $(i, j)$  so that the strings  $l_{ik_i}$  and  $l_{jk_j}$  are incompatible.

**Proof:** Equivalences of 1 and 2 follows from Proposition 4.2.

2 iff 3 follows from  $\bigwedge_{1 \leq i \leq n} B_i^t$  is inconsistent iff for any chain  $\{C_1, \dots, C_p\}$  there is no consistent line in  $\bigwedge_{1 \leq i \leq p} C_i$ . That is for all possible lines  $l_{ik_i}$  in each  $C_i$ , there is a pair  $(i, j)$  so that a node in  $l_{ik_i}$  and a node in  $l_{jk_j}$  form a conjugated pair.

Equivalently, for all antichain  $\{C_1^t, \dots, C_p^t\}$  and strings  $l_{ik_i}$  in each  $C_i^t$ , there is a pair  $(i, j)$  so that the strings  $l_{ik_i}$  and  $l_{jk_j}$  are non-compatible.  $\square$

**Theorem 4.6** *There is a polynomial algorithm for deciding a set  $\mathcal{A}$ ,*

**Proof:** Let  $\{B_1, B_2, \dots, B_m\}$  be the set of all linear macrobranches in  $\mathcal{A}$ . Suppose that the label  $F$  was dropped in each node and we consider only strings of literals in each node. For all  $1 \leq i \leq m$ , let  $l_{i1}, \dots, l_{in_i}$  be an enumeration of each node in  $B_i$ .

For all  $l_{ik}$  and  $l_{i'k'}$ , if

1.  $l_{ik}$  and  $l_{i'k'}$  are compatible or
2.  $l_{ik}$  and  $l_{i'k'}$  are incompatible and there are comparable linear macrobranches in, say, the macrobranches  $A_1, \dots, A_p \in \mathcal{A}$ ;

then we write all sequences of the form

$$l_{1k_1}, l_{2k_2}, \dots, l_{mk_m}$$

two-by-two compatible or in comparable positions in the macrobranches  $A_1, \dots, A_q \in \mathcal{A}$ , we choose  $B_i$  the minimum position where macrobranches are comparable and  $B_2, \dots, B_s$  where the linear macrobranch is not comparable.

Notice that this is an antichain and  $\bigwedge_{1 \leq k_1 \leq s, k_s \leq mk_m} l_{sk_s}^t$  is a possible branch of  $\bigwedge \{A^t \mid A \in \mathcal{A}\}$ .  $\square$

## 5 Conclusion

We described in this paper two algorithms for solving **3-sat**. One of them describes how to obtain a macrotableau for **3-sat** formulas. The second algorithm deals with the resolution of such macrotableaux.

Regarding the first algorithm, we have to write subdigraphs of the cylindrical digraph. A straightforward observation is the following Theorem:

**Theorem 5.1** *Writing the intervals for building the set  $\mathcal{A}$  is polynomial in space and time.*

The algorithm of solving the macrotableau involves deciding if strings of labels do have or do not have a non compatible associated string.

Searching for non compatible strings of labels has order 2 regarding to the set of strings and, therefore, order 4 regarding to the set of literals in  $\Psi$ . So, we have the following Theorem:

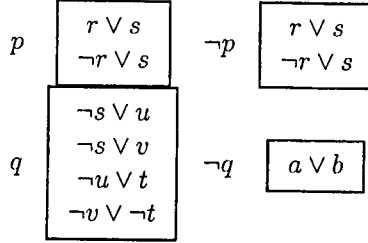
**Theorem 5.2** *Solving and deciding a given macrotableau is polynomial in time and space.*

## 6 Examples

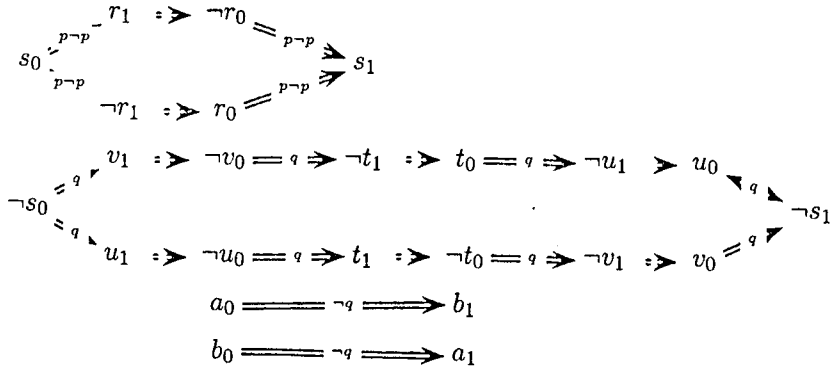
**Example 6.1** Consider the formula

$$\begin{aligned}\Psi \equiv & (p \vee r \vee s) \wedge (\neg p \vee r \vee s) \wedge (p \vee \neg r \vee s) \wedge (\neg p \vee \neg r \vee s) \wedge \\ & (q \vee \neg r \vee u) \wedge (q \vee \neg r \vee v) \wedge (q \vee \neg u \vee t) \wedge (q \vee \neg v \vee t) \\ & (\neg q \vee a \vee b)\end{aligned}$$

and the following partition:



The cylindrical digraph is given by:



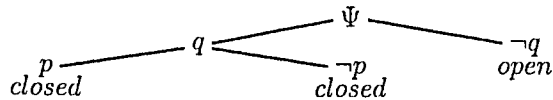
A simple computation show us that the set of conjugated literals  $\{s, \neg s\}$  is the set of necessarily true literals. We skip the straightforward computation of the set of necessarily true and  $A$ . The set  $A$  is given by

$$\underline{p, \neg p}$$

$q$

We have that the below set is not complete.

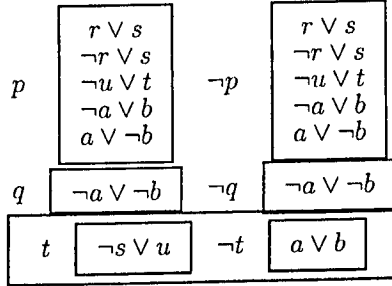
The tableau for  $\Psi$ , shown below, is open.



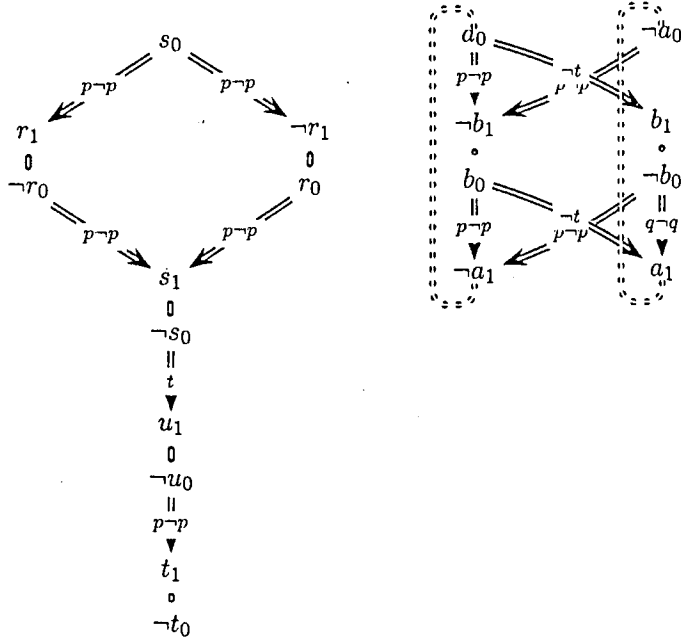
**Example 6.2** Consider the formula

$$\begin{aligned}
 & (p \vee r \vee s) \wedge (\neg p \vee r \vee s) \wedge (p \vee \neg r \vee s) \wedge (\neg p \vee \neg r \vee s) \wedge \\
 & (p \vee \neg u \vee t) \wedge (\neg p \vee \neg u \vee t) \wedge (p \vee \neg a \vee b) \wedge (\neg p \vee \neg a \vee b) \wedge \\
 & (p \vee a \vee \neg b) \wedge (\neg p \vee a \vee \neg b) \wedge (q \vee \neg a \vee \neg b) \wedge (\neg q \vee \neg a \vee \neg b) \wedge \\
 & (\neg s \vee t \vee u) \wedge (\neg t \vee a \vee b)
 \end{aligned}$$

Partitioned as



and obtain the below cylindrical digraph:



We have  $Nec = \{s, a, \neg a, b, \neg b\}$ . the closed digraph

$$([s_0, s_1]s_1 \dots \neg s_0([\neg s_0, t_1]VL(s_0, s_1, \neg s_1)) \setminus (s \neg t))$$

after reduction over  $[s_0, s_1]$  is given by

$$s_0 = p \neg p \triangleright r_1 \quad \text{:::} \quad \neg r_0 = p \neg p \cdot s_1$$

$$\neg s_0 \trianglelefteq \neg t \triangleright u_1 \quad \text{:::} \quad \neg u_0 = p \neg p \cdot t_1$$

As  $s$  is necessarily true, the vertices  $u_1, t_1$  are labeled as **true** and the literal  $t$  belongs to NecFls. In other words,  $F \ t$  implies  $T \ t$ . So, the below chart belongs to  $A$ :

$$\frac{p, \neg p}{p, \neg p}$$

$$\frac{p, \neg p}{t}$$

$$\frac{p, \neg p}{p, \neg p}$$

The below line says "under true  $t$ , we have false  $t$ ". After reduction, we have the macrobranch:  $\frac{t}{p, \neg p}$

The other macrobranch in  $A$  was built on analyzing the necessarily true literals  $a, \neg a$  and  $b, \neg b$ :

$$\frac{p, \neg p}{q, \neg q}$$

$$\frac{q, \neg q}{p, \neg p}$$

$$\frac{p, \neg p}{\neg t}$$

the below macrobranch is reduced to:  $\frac{p, \neg p}{q, \neg q}$   
 $\neg t$

Both macrobranches have non compatible lines. Lines  $p, \neg p$  and  $q, \neg q$  are non compatible in itself, so, in any antichain. Lines  $t$  and  $\neg t$  are non compatible lines and belong to distinct macroarrays.

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