

# **Optimistic Best-First Search with Goal-preferred Actions in Fast Downward**

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UNIBAS AI Group HS2025*

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- 2. Delete-Relaxation
- 3. Heuristics
- 4. Vidal's concepts

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# Searching...

Planning in Artificial Intelligence is the search for a sequence of applicable actions to reach a given goal from the initial state.

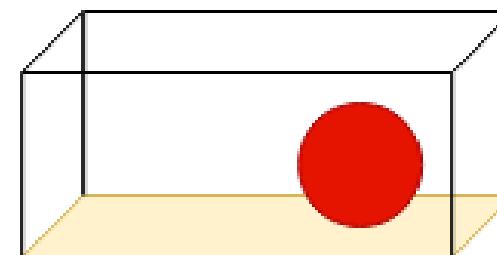
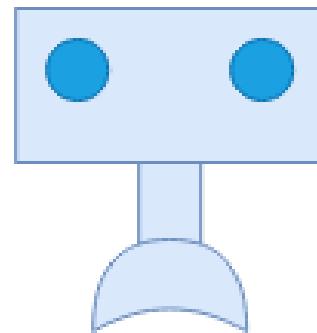
# STRIPS Gripper: Initial state

## State Variables:

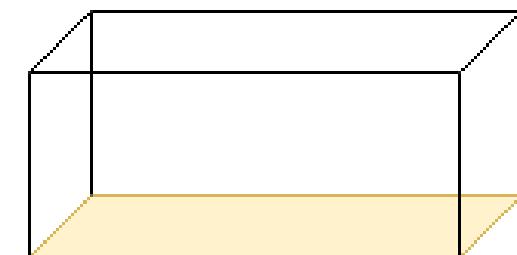
Robot at room A: **at\_gA**

Ball at room A: **at\_1A**

Robot arm free: **free**



Room A



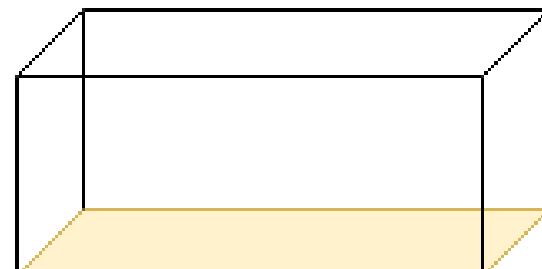
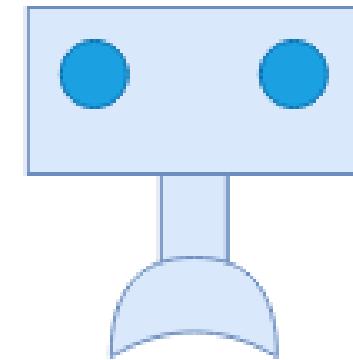
Room B

# STRIPS Gripper: Goal state

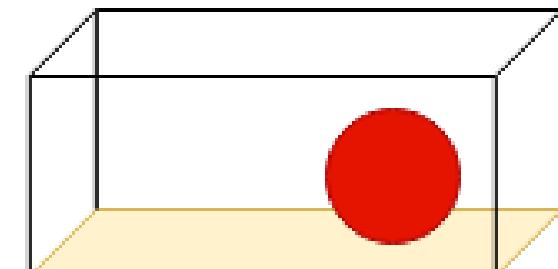
## State Variables:

Robot at room B: **at\_gB**

Ball at room B: **at\_1B**



Room A



Room B

# STRIPS Gripper: Actions

	Move		Pick		Drop	
Action	move_AB	move_BA	pick_1A	pick1B	drop_1A	drop_1B
Preconditions	at_gA	at_gB	at_gA, at_1A, free	at_gB, at_1B, free	at_gA, at_1A, in	at_gB, at_1B, in
Add effects	at_gB	at_gA	in	in	at_1A	at_1B
Delete effects	at_gA	at_gB	at_1A, free	at_1B, free	in	in
Cost	2		3		1	

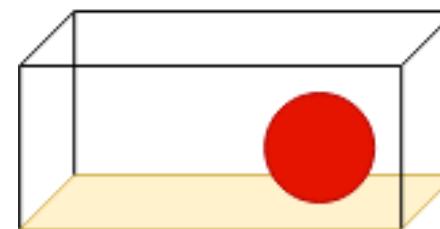
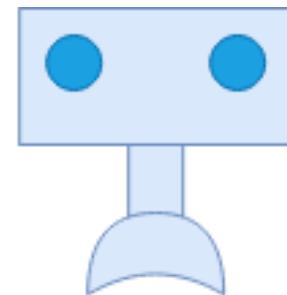
# Delete-relaxation: Initial state

V\_0

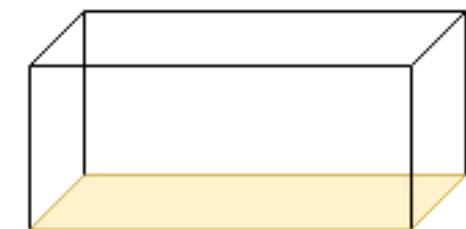
at\_1A

at\_gA

free

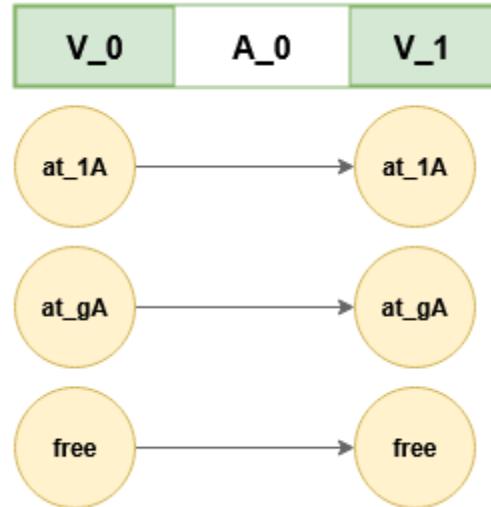


Room A



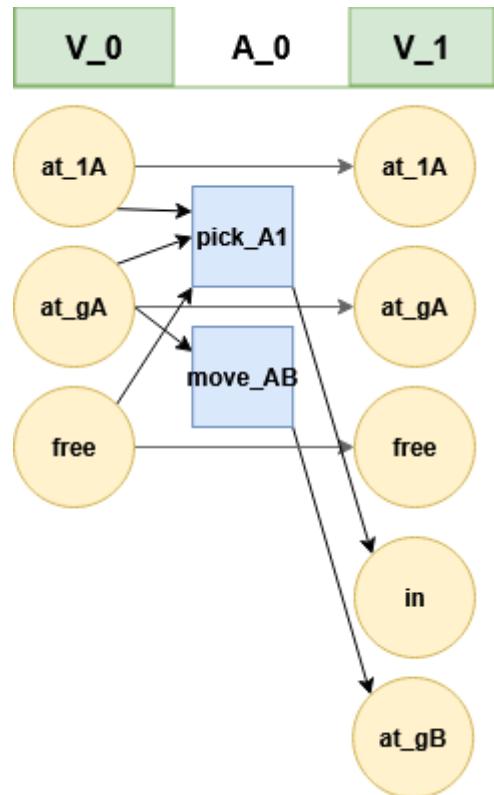
Room B

# Delete-relaxation: Vertices



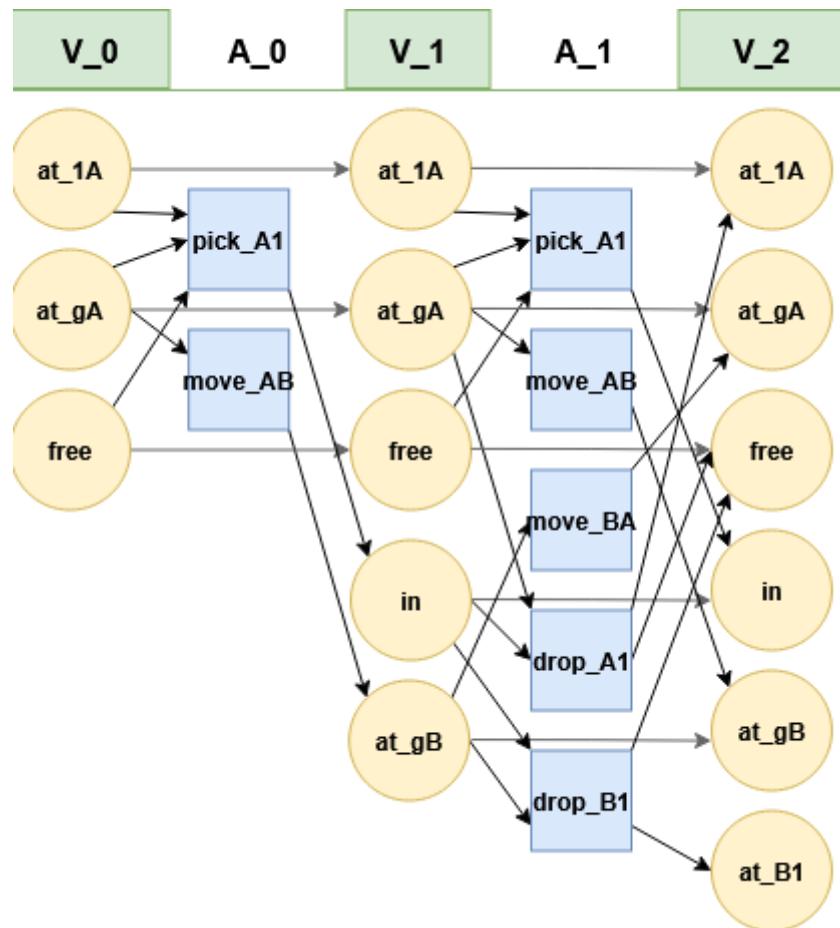
- No delete effects: vertices stay

# Delete-relaxation: Action Layer

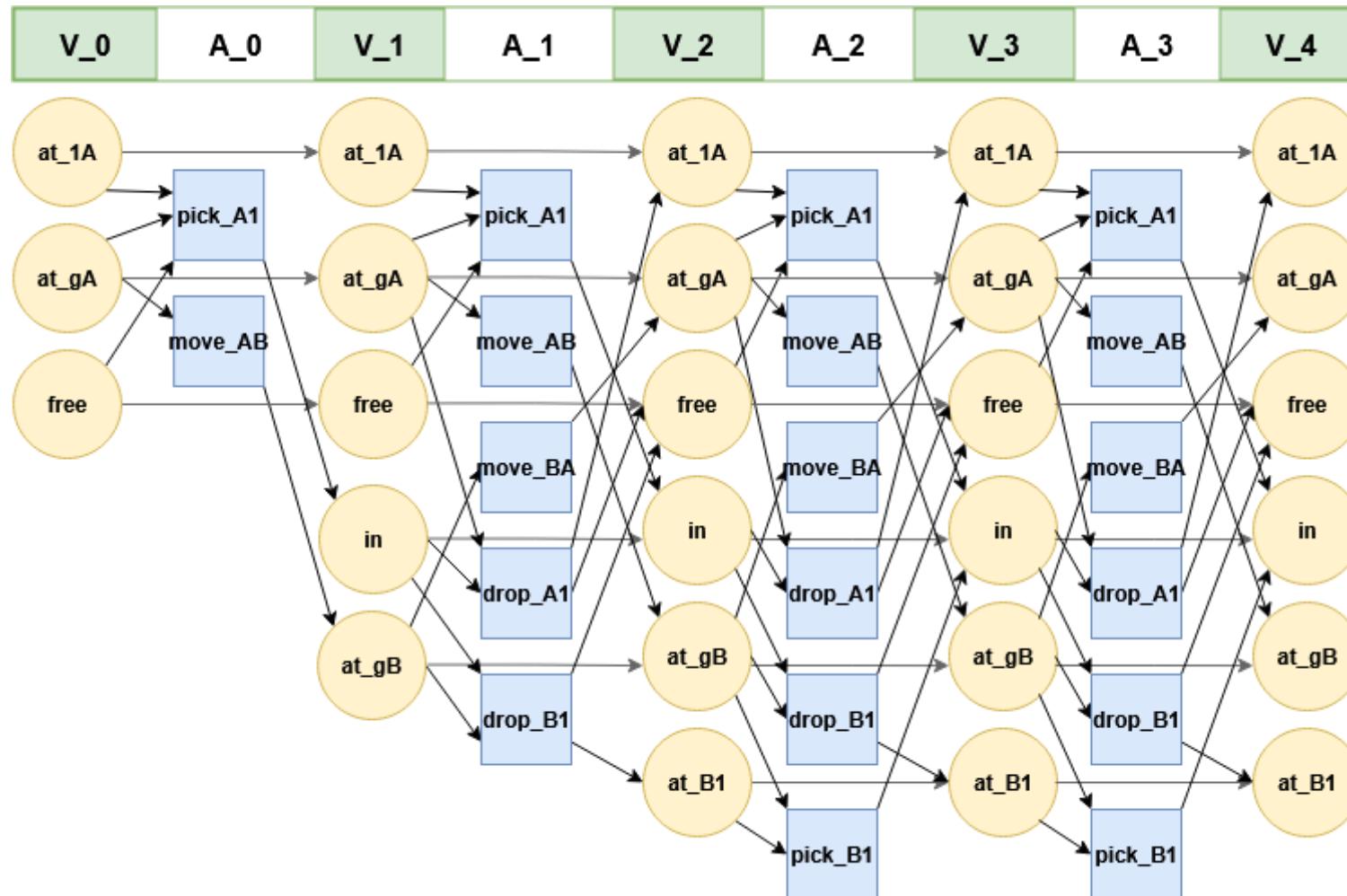


- Preconditions to pick the ball from Room A fulfilled
- Preconditions to move the robot from room A to room B fulfilled

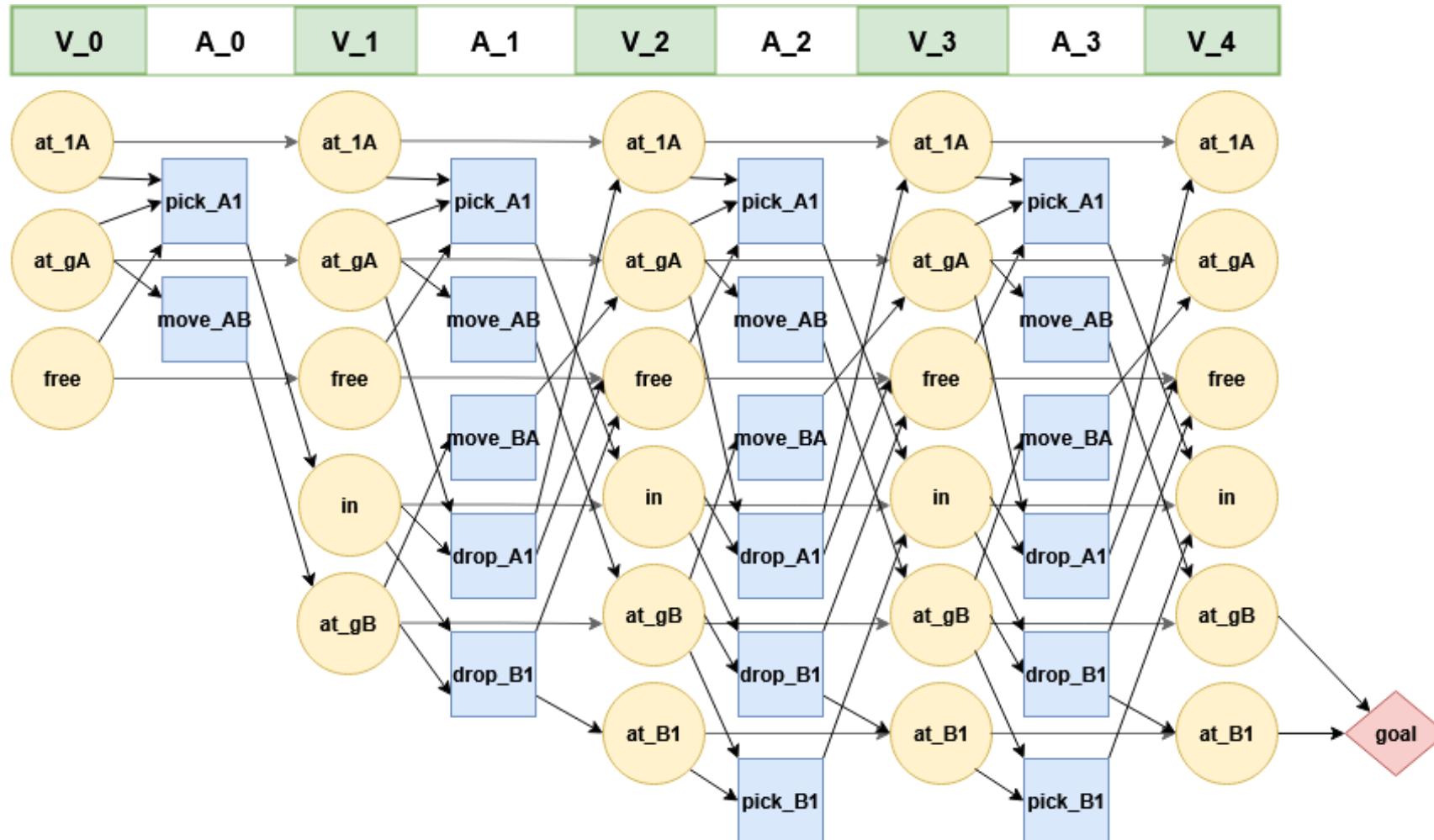
# Delete-relaxation



# Delete-relaxation: Termination



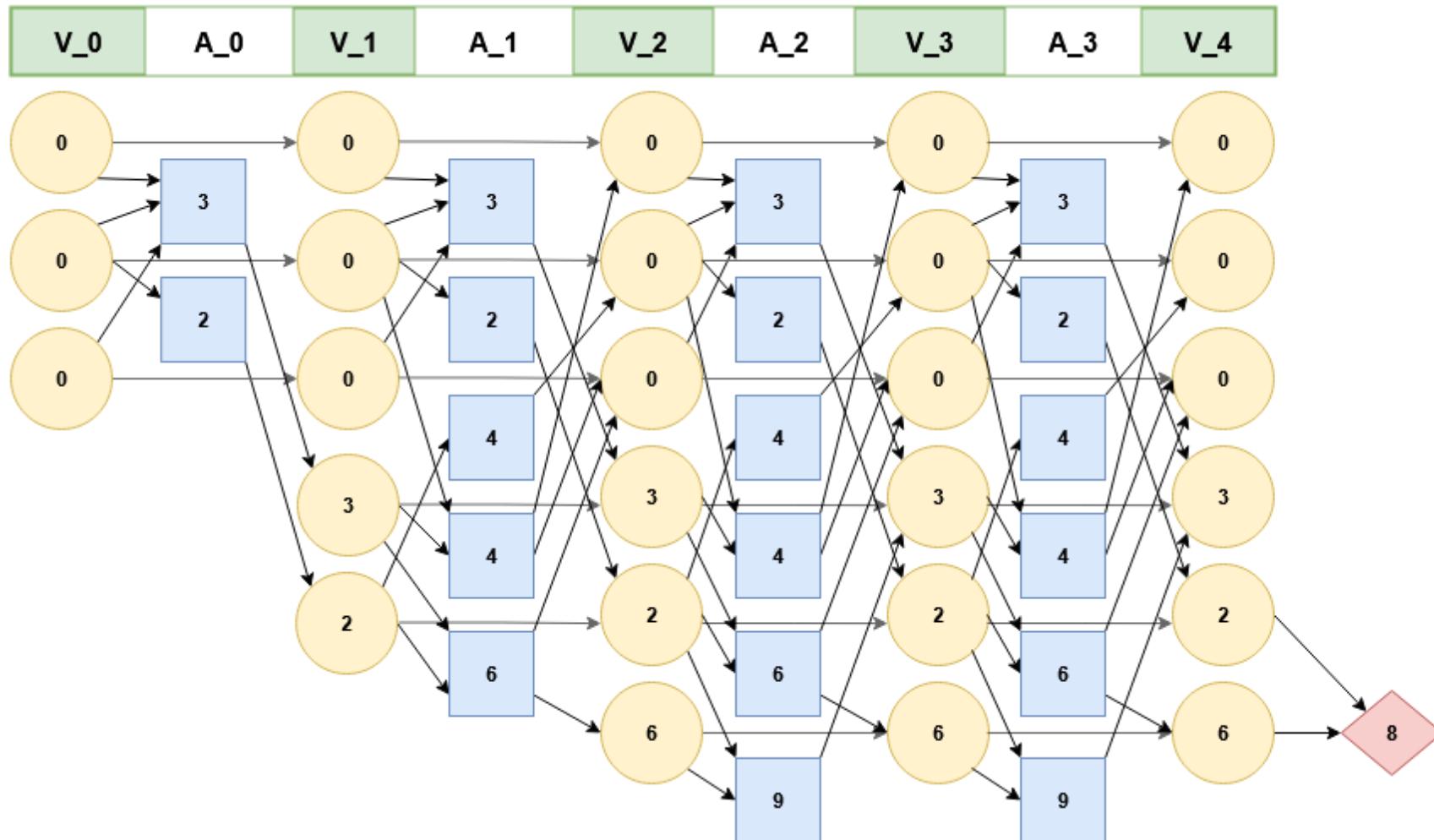
# Delete-relaxation: Goal



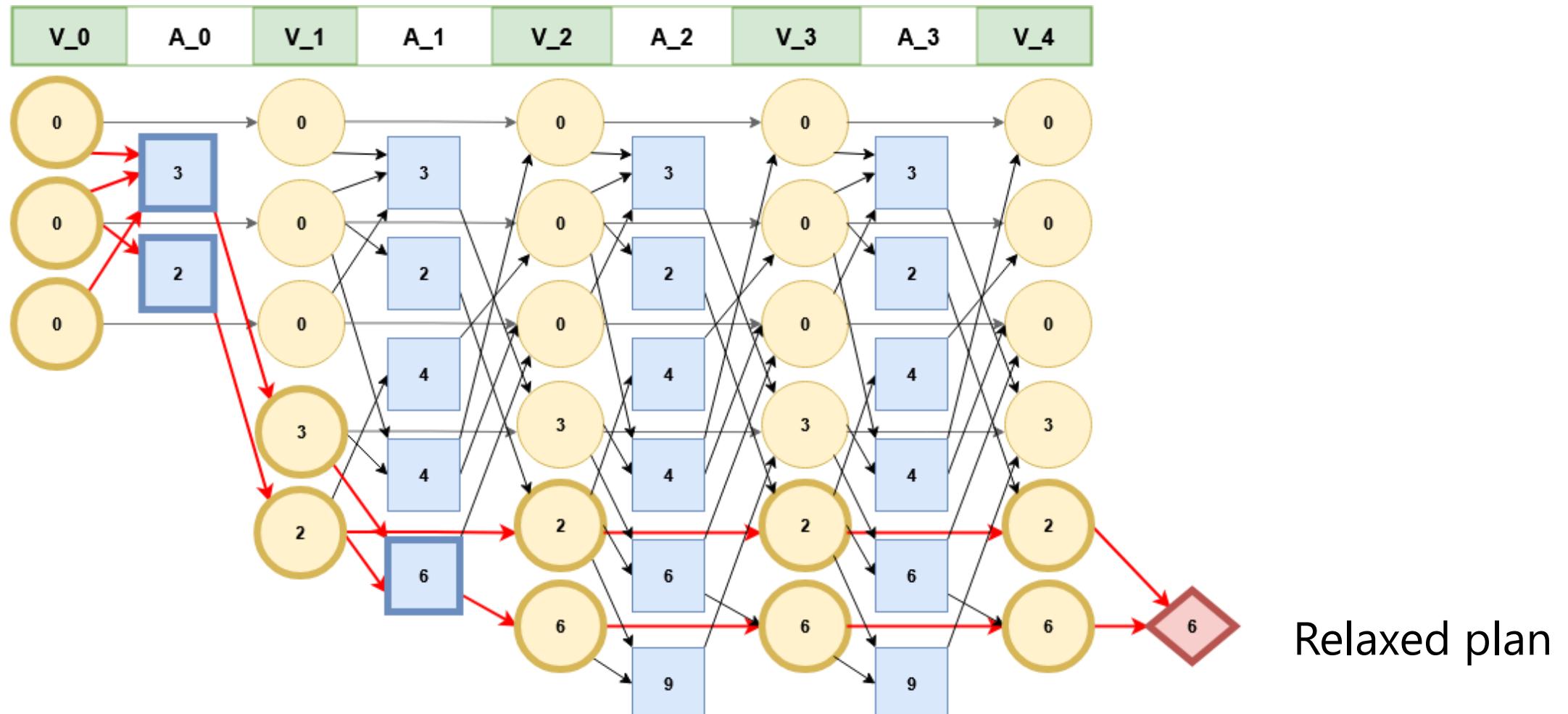
# Heuristics

How do we estimate how far we are from the goal from a given node from the delete-relaxation graph?

# hadd Heuristic

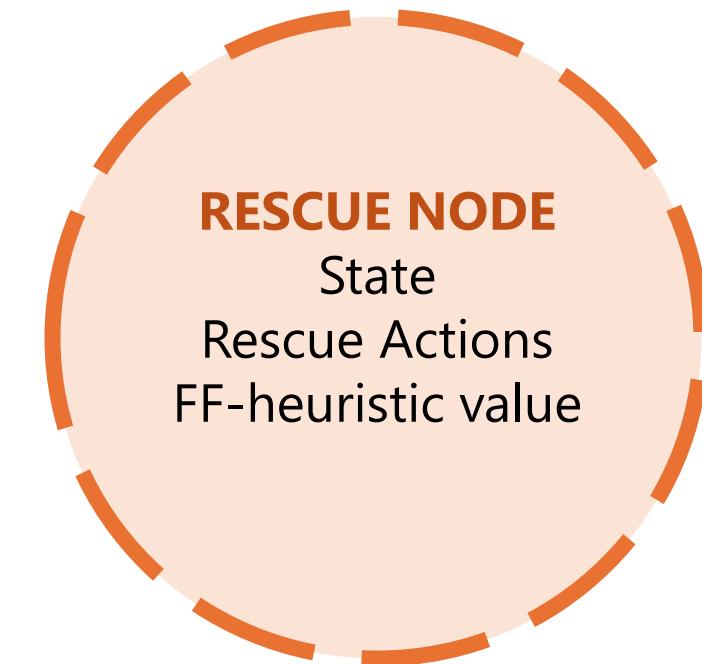


# FF-heuristic: Helpful Actions & Nodes



# Rescue Actions & Nodes

- Not helpful applicable actions
- Helpful Actions  $\cup$  Rescue Actions  
= All applicable actions
- Completeness
- Node stores state, Rescue Actions, heuristic value



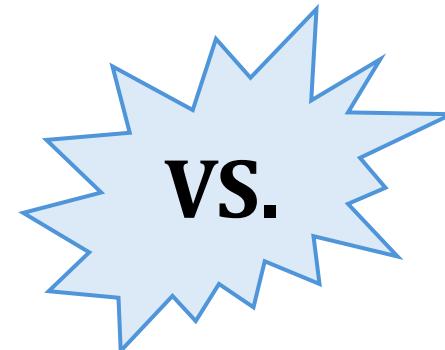
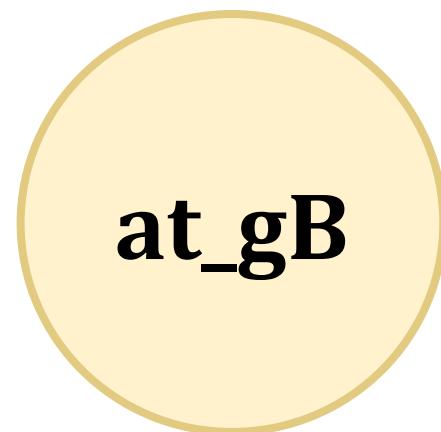
# Goal-preferred Actions

«Actions that do not delete a state variable that belongs to the goal and do not belong in the initial state» - *Vincent Vidal*

- Goal-preferred actions....
  - Are free to delete any state variables present in the initial state, regardless of whether they too are in the goal
  - Otherwise cannot delete state variables present in the goal

# Delete-Effects: STRIPS vs. SAS+

- Delete effects, Add effects vs. Effects
- Reassignment of variables, erasure of value



**{gripper  $\mapsto$  at\_A,  
gripper  $\mapsto$  at\_B}**

# Goal-preferred Actions Algorithm

## Naive Algorithm:

- Effect variable, value pair not in initial state
- Effect variable in the goal
- Effect value not the goal value

-> ***Not goal-preferred action***

# Goal-preferred Actions Algorithm

## Naive Algorithm:

- Effect variable, value pair not in initial state
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- Effect value not the goal value

-> ***Not goal-preferred action***

## Reworked Algorithm:

- Effect variable, value pair not in initial state
- Effect variable in the goal
- Effect value not the goal value
- Goal variable not in preconditions or goal variable, value pair in preconditions

-> ***Not goal-preferred action***

# What does OBFS with goal-pref do?

## **Store expansion candidates:**

1. Build a relaxed plan with only Goal-preferred Actions
2. If it **succeeds**, store Helpful Node & Rescue Node
3. If it **fails**, build relaxed plan and store as Rescue Node

## **Search Expansion Criteria:**

1. Helpful Nodes preferred over Rescue Nodes
2. Low FF-heuristic value preferred

# Results

Comparison of performance against related benchmarks

# Results: What are we looking for?

- For suboptimal algorithms, if possible:
  - Few expansions
  - Memory efficiency
  - Fast search
- Further analysis:
  - Completeness
  - % of goal-preferred actions

# Results: What are we comparing?

- Related planners:
  - Eager greedy FF
  - Greedy FF with preferred actions
- Our implementation:
  - Naive goal-preferred algorithm
  - Reworked goal-preferred algorithm

# Results: Implementation differences

Sum	Naive Goalpref	Goalpref
Goal-preferred actions	22'143'251	35'433'194
Goal-preferred ratio arithmetic average %	64%	92%

## What does this mean for the behavior of the search?

- Possibility that goal-preferred actions only relaxed plan fails less with more goal-preferred actions
- Thus FF-heuristic value tie-breaker comes less into play

# Results: Completeness

Sum	Eager Greedy FF	Greedy FF with pref	Naive Goalpref	Goalpref
<b>Error: Search unsolveable</b>	4	4	119	97

Implementation is incomplete

# Results: Coverage, 1st run

Sum	Eager Greedy FF	Greedy FF with pref	Naive Goal-pref	Goal-pref
<b>Out of memory</b>	87	70	829	760
<b>Out of time</b>	506	393	0	0
<b>Other errors</b>	5	6	4	9
<b>Coverage</b>	1117	1246	882	946
<b>Coverage %</b>	65.13%	72.65%	51.4%	55.16%

Implementation is memory inefficient

# Can we be more memory efficient?

## **Store expansion candidates:**

1. Build a relaxed plan with only Goal-preferred Actions
2. If it succeeds, store Helpful Node & Rescue Node
3. If it **fails**, build relaxed plan and store all as Rescue Node

## **Search Expansion Criteria:**

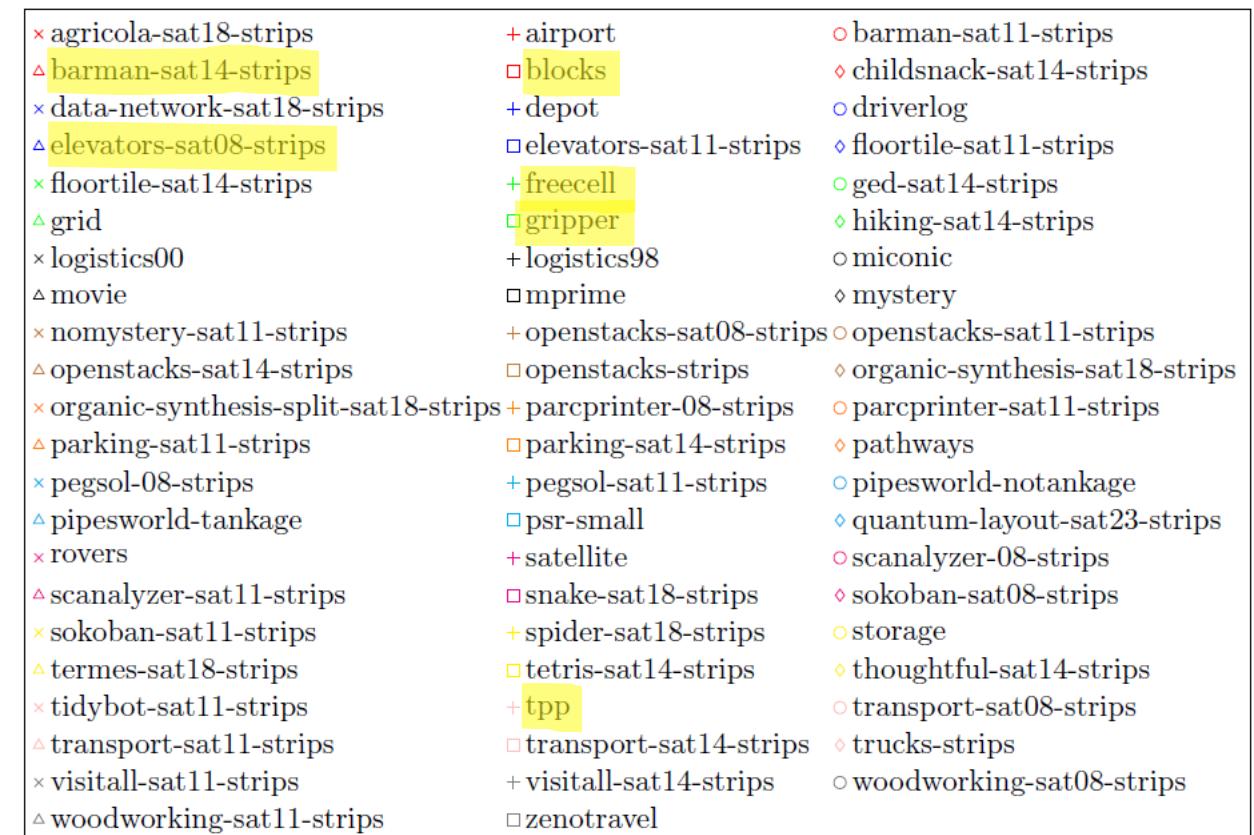
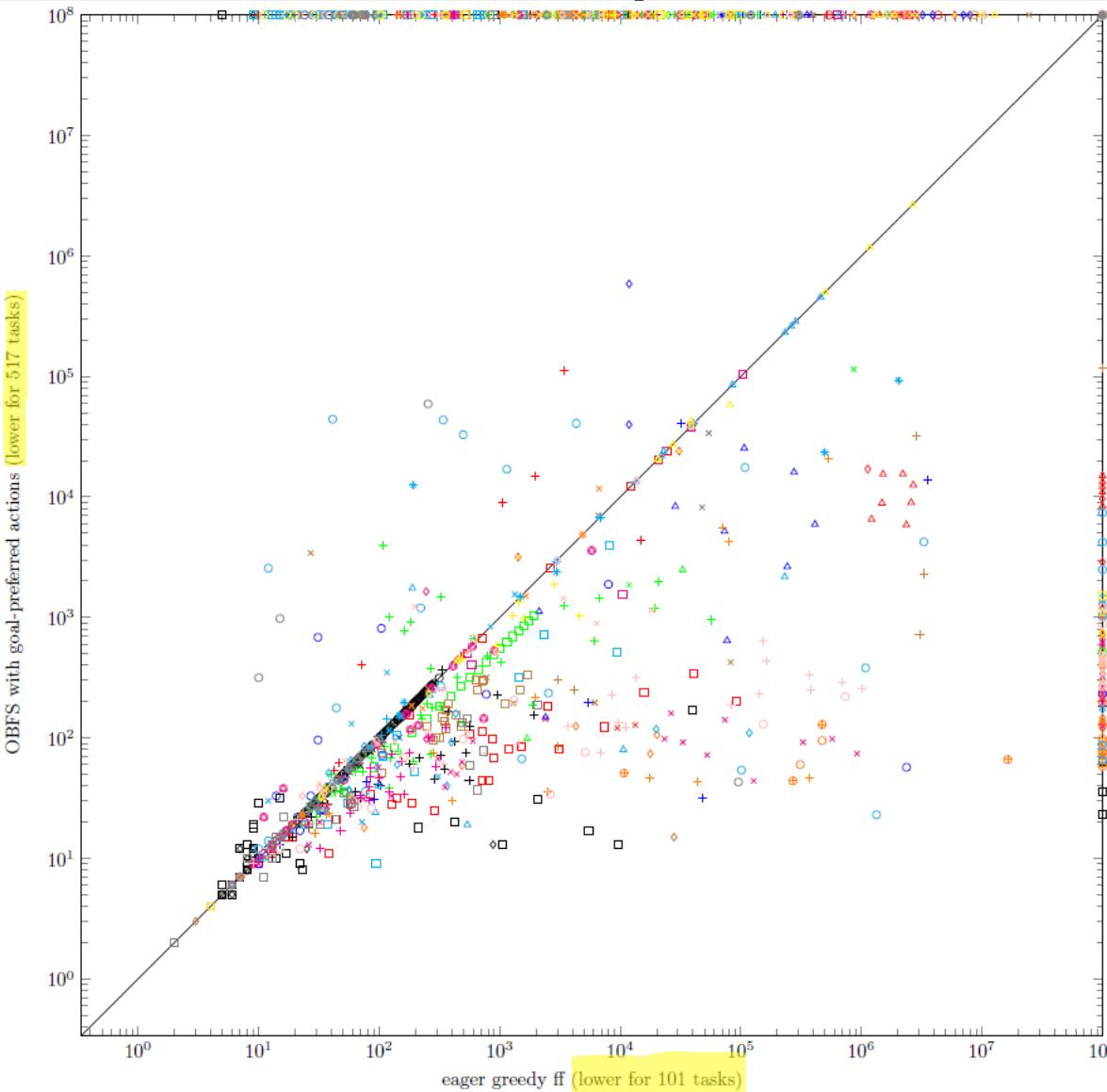
1. Helpful Nodes preferred over Rescue Nodes
2. Low FF-heuristic value preferred

# Results: Coverage, Take 2

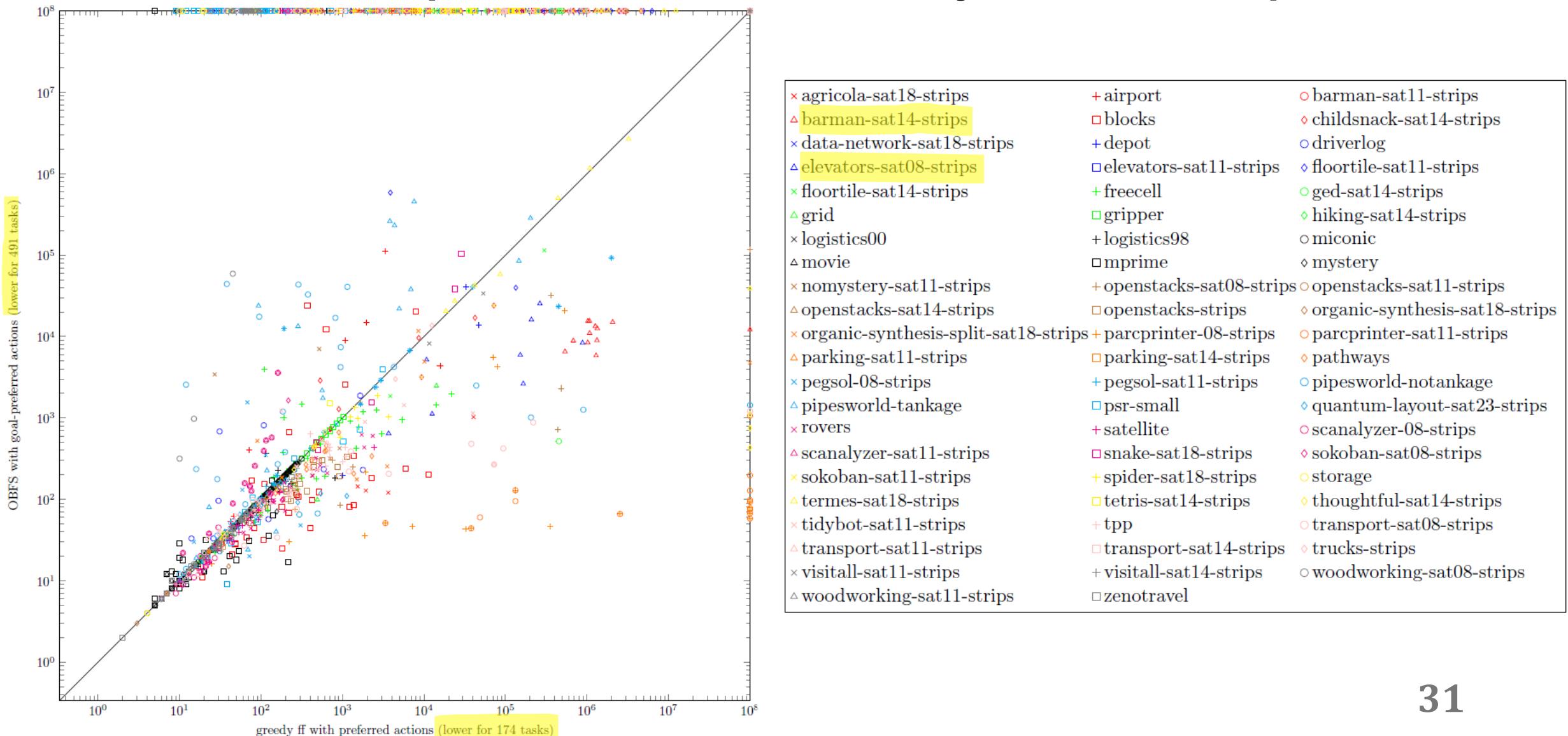
Sum	Eager Greedy FF	Greedy FF with pref	Naive Goal-pref	Goal-pref
<b>Out of memory</b>	85	68	661	301
<b>Out of time</b>	513	399	67	363
<b>Other errors</b>	7	4	8	8
<b>Coverage</b>	1227	1361	981	1067
<b>Unsolvable</b>	4	4	119	97

Implementation is less memory inefficient

# Results: Expansions (Eager Greedy FF)

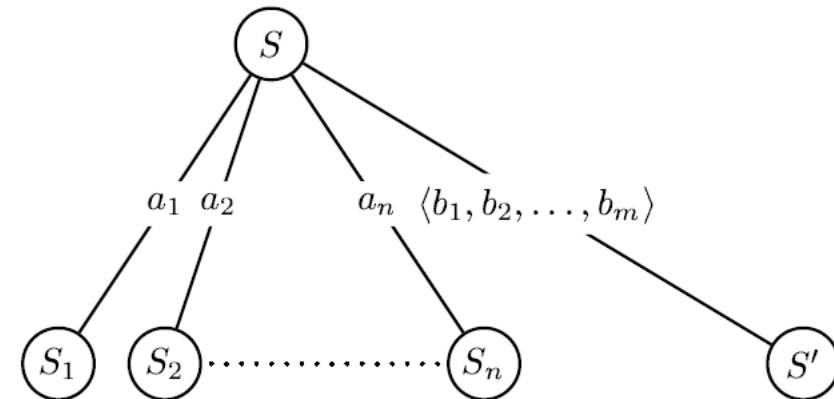
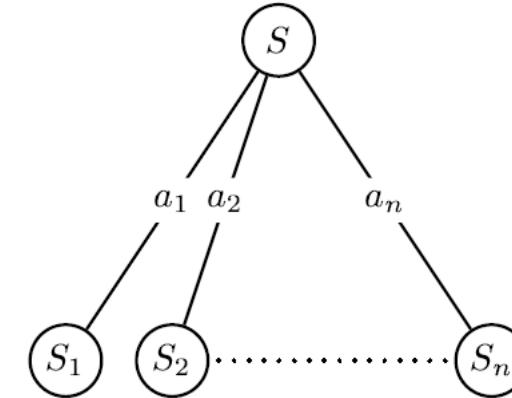


# Results: Expansions (Greedy FF with pref)



# Conclusion

- Results:
  - Incomplete
  - Memory inefficient
  - Few expansions
  - Reworked version more faithful & better
- Possible additions:
  - Achieve completeness
  - Lookahead algorithm
  - 3rd expansion tiebreaker
  - YAHSP2 & 3



lookahead-node development, YAHSP Vincent Vidal

# Backup

# STRIPS Gripper: Goal-preferred Actions

	Move		Pick	Drop	
Action	move_AB	move_BA	pick_A1	pickB1	drop_A1
Preconditions	at_gA	at_gB	at_gA, at_1A, Free	at_gB, at_1B, free	at_gA, at_1A, in
Add effects	at_gB	at_gA	in	in	at_1A
Delete effects	at_gA	at_gB	at_1A, free	at_1B, free	in
Cost	2		3		1

# SAS+ Gripper: Goal-preferred Actions

**Initial state:** Gripper  $\mapsto$  at\_A,

Arm  $\mapsto$  Free, Ball  $\mapsto$  at\_A

**Goal:** Gripper  $\mapsto$  at\_B,

Ball  $\mapsto$  at\_B

Action	pick_A1
Preconditions	Gripper $\mapsto$ at_A, Ball $\mapsto$ at_A, Arm $\mapsto$ Free
Effects	Ball $\mapsto$ in

## Naive Algorithm:

- Effect variable, value pair not in initial state
- Effect variable in the goal
- Effect value not the goal value

-> ***Not goal-preferred action***

# SAS+ Gripper: Goal-preferred Actions

**Initial state:** Gripper  $\mapsto$  at\_A,,  
Arm  $\mapsto$  Free, Ball  $\mapsto$  at\_A

**Goal:** Gripper  $\mapsto$  at\_B,  
Ball  $\mapsto$  at\_B

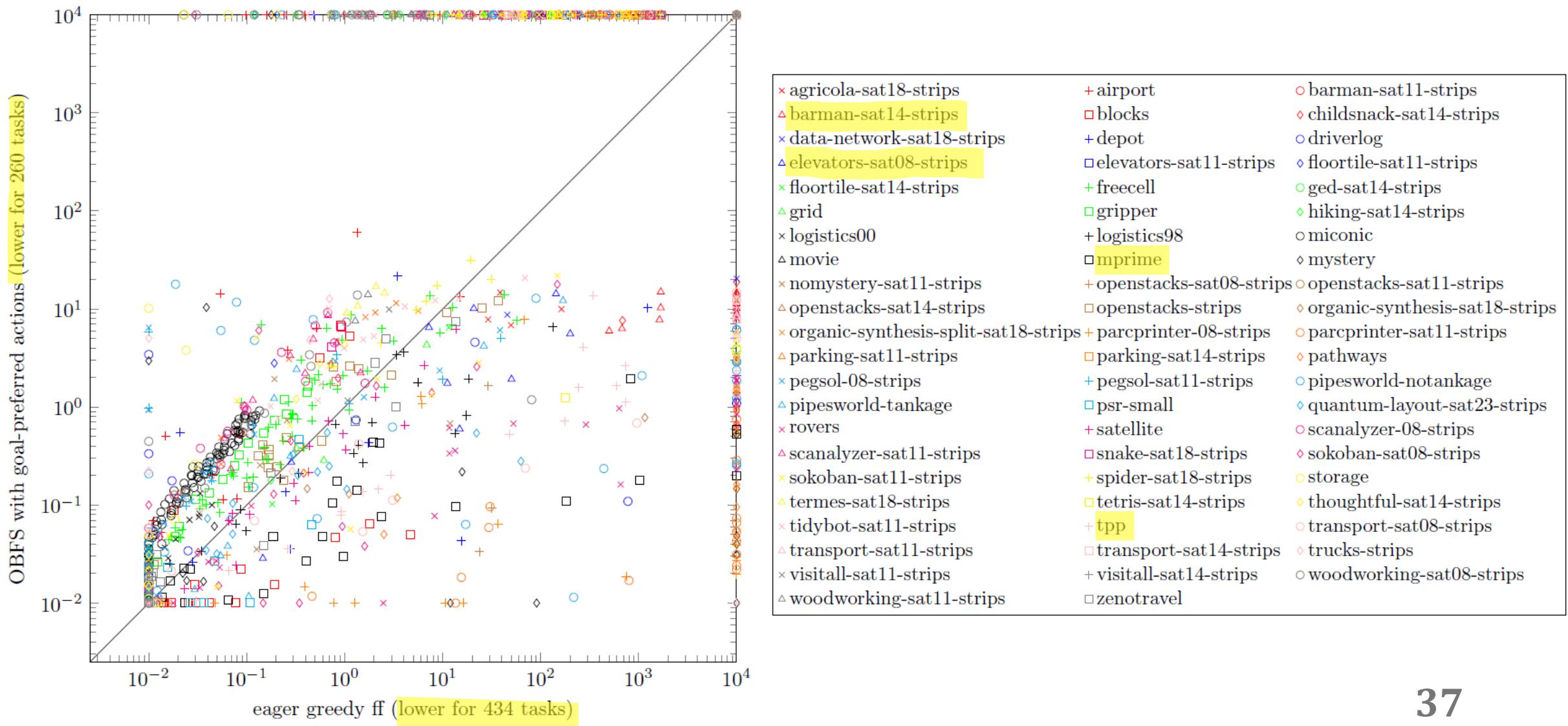
Action	pick_A1
Preconditions	Gripper $\mapsto$ at_A, Ball $\mapsto$ at_A, Arm $\mapsto$ Free
Effects	Ball $\mapsto$ in

## Reworked Algorithm:

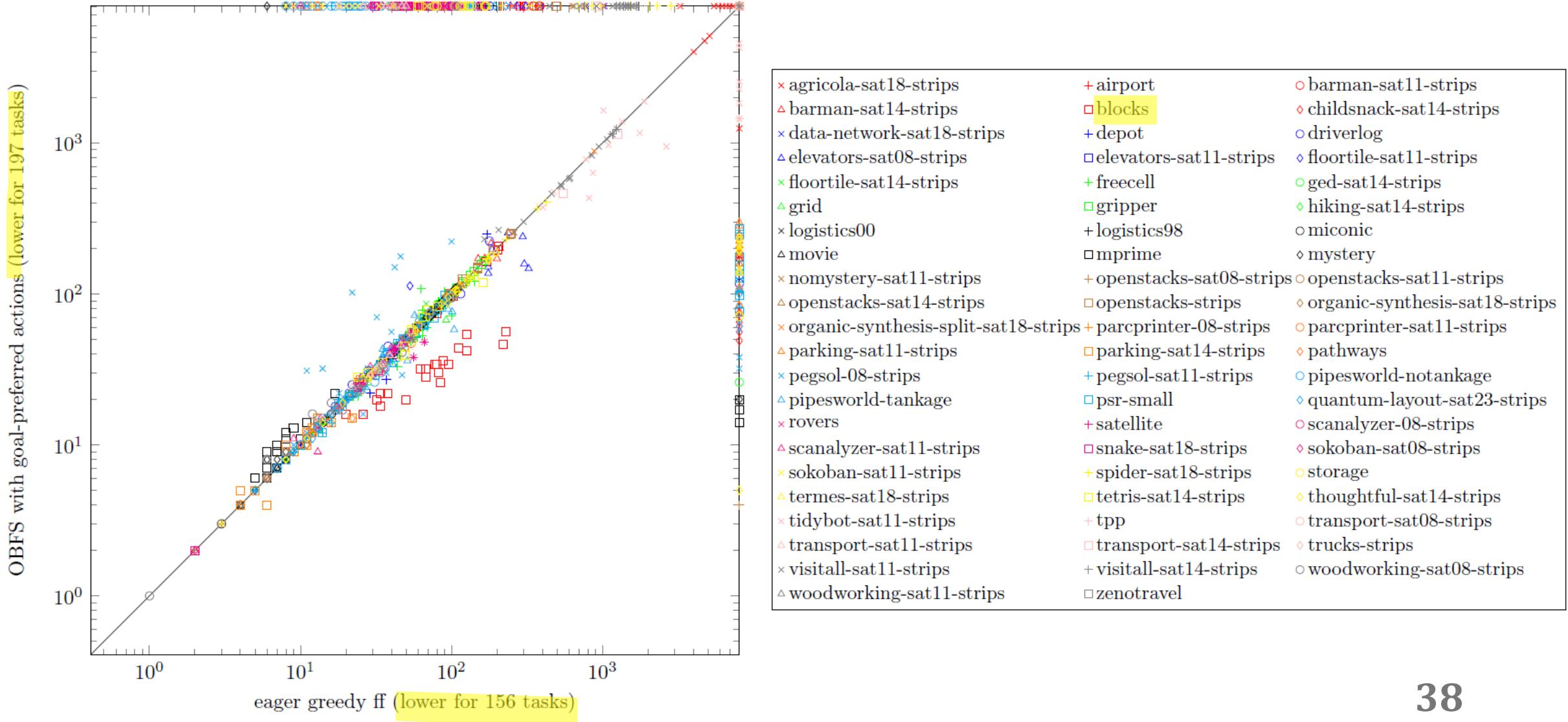
- Effect variable, value pair not in initial state
- Effect variable in the goal
- Effect value not the goal value
- Goal variable not in preconditions or goal variable value pair in preconditions

*-> Not goal-preferred action*

# Results: Search Time (Eager Greedy FF)



# Results: Cost (Eager Greedy FF)



21.10.2025