Two Player Games

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Branislav Bošanský, Martin Schaefer, David Fiedler, Jaromír Janisch
{name.surname}@agents.fel.cvut.cz
Artificial Intelligence Center, Czech Technical University

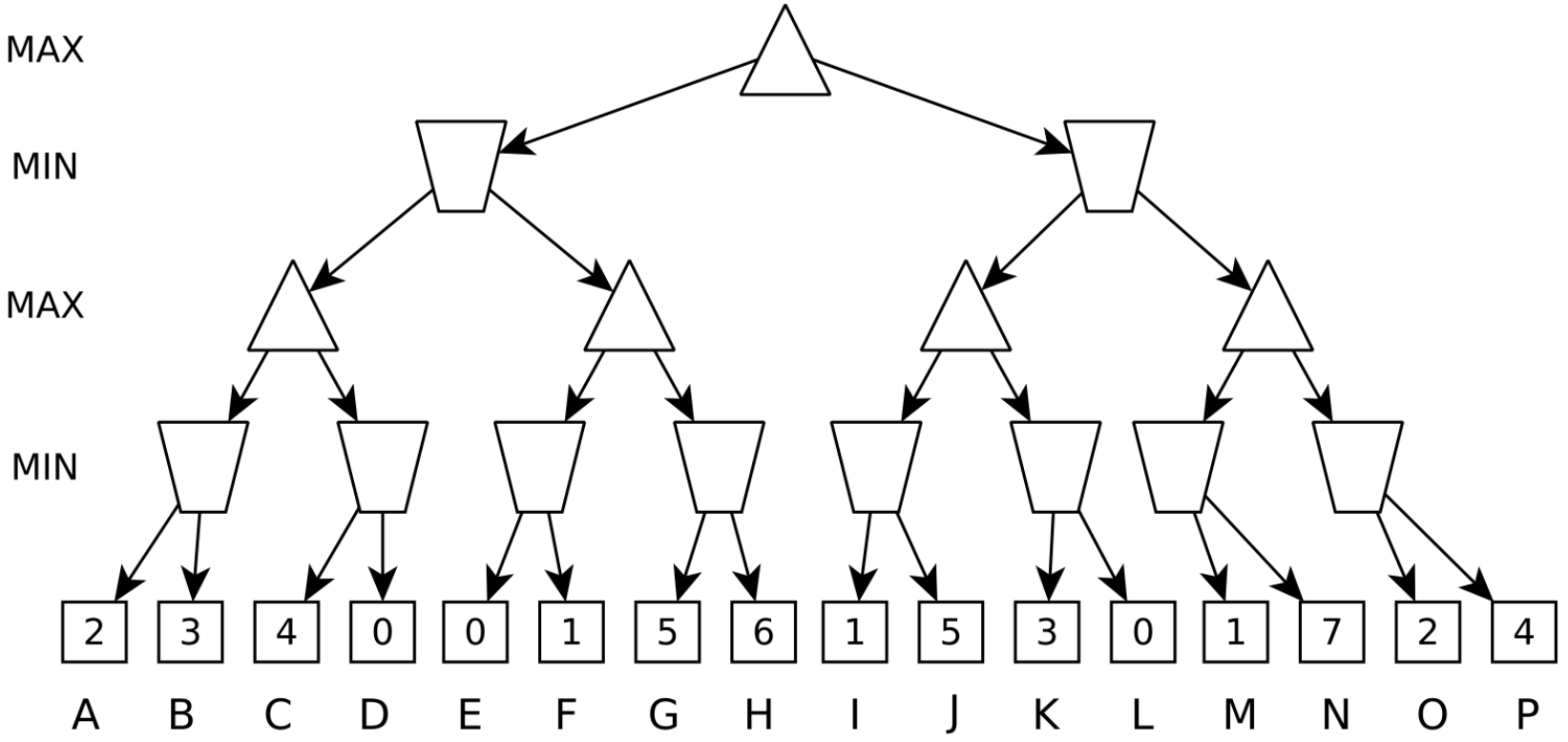
Minimax

```
function minimax(node, depth, Player)
    if (depth = 0 or node is a terminal node) return evaluation value of node
    if (Player = MaxPlayer)
        for each child of node
            v := max(v, minimax(child, depth-1, switch(Player) ))

        return v
    else
        for each child of node
            v := min(v, minimax(child, depth-1, switch(Player) ))

        return v
```

Alpha-Beta Pruning

- **function** alphabeta(node, depth, α, β, Player)
- **if** (depth = 0 or node is a terminal node) **return** evaluation value of node
- **if** (Player = MaxPlayer)
- **for each** child of node
- v := max(v, alphabeta(child, depth-1, α, β, switch(Player)))
- α := max(α,v); **if** (β≤α) break
- **return** v
- **else**
- **for each** child of node
- v := min(v, alphabeta(child, depth-1, α, β, switch(Player)))
- β := min(β,v); **if** (β≤α) break
- **return** v

Game



Negamax

- **function** negamax(node, depth, α, β, Player)
- **if** (depth = 0 or node is a terminal node) **return** evaluation value of node
- **if** (Player = MaxPlayer)
- **for each** child of node
- v := max(v, -negamax(child, depth-1, -β, -α, switch(Player)))
- α := max(α,v); **if** (β≤α) break
- **return** v
- **else**
- **for each** child of node
- v := min(v, alphabeta(child, depth-1, α, β, switch(Player)))
- β := min(β,v); **if** (β≤α) break
- **return** v

NegaScout – Main Idea

- enhancement of the alpha-beta algorithm
- assumes some heuristic that determines move ordering
  - the algorithm assumes that the first action is the best one
  - after evaluating the first action, the algorithm checks whether the remaining actions are worse
  - the “test” is performed via null-window search
    - $[\alpha, \alpha+1]$
    - the algorithm needs to re-search, if the test fails (i.e., there might be a better outcome for the player when following the tested action)

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NegaScout

function negascout(node, depth, α, β, Player)

- **if** ((depth = 0) or (node is a terminal node)) **return** eval(node)
- b := β
- **for each** child of node
- v := max(v,-negascout(child, depth-1, -b, -α, switch(Player))))
- **if** ((α < v) and (child is not the first child))
- v := max(v,-negascout(child, depth-1, -β, -α, switch(Player))))
- α := max(α, v)
- **if** (β≤α) break
- b := α + 1
- **return** v

Alpha-Beta with null window check (negascout)

```
function ns_alphabeta(node, depth, α, β, Player)
    if (depth = 0 or node is a terminal node) return evaluation value of node
    if (Player = MaxPlayer)
        for each child of node
            v := max(v, alphabeta(child, depth-1, α, α+1, switch(Player) ))
            if (v > α  and child not a first child)
                        v := max(v, alphabeta(child, depth-1, α, β, switch(Player) ))
            α := max(α,v);  if (β≤α) break
        return v
    else
        for each child of node
            v := min(v, alphabeta(child, depth-1, β-1 , β, switch(Player) ))
            if (v < β and child not a first child)
                        v := min(v, alphabeta(child, depth-1, α, β, switch(Player) ))
            β := min(β,v);  if (β≤α)   break
        return v
```

NegaScout

function negascout(node, depth, α, β, Player)

- **if** ((depth = 0) or (node is a terminal node)) **return** eval(node)
- b := β
- **for each** child of node
- v := max(v,-negascout(child, depth-1, -b, -α, switch(Player))))
- **if** ((α < v < β) and (child is not the first child))
- v := max(v,-negascout(child, depth-1, -β, -v, switch(Player))))
- α := max(α, v)
- **if** (β≤α) break
- b := α + 1
- **return** v

Alpha Beta and Negascout in Practice

- Ordering moves using heuristic
  - The algorithms work better if goods moves are evaluated first
- Cache for previous results (transposition tables)
  - What do you need to identify a state/partial result?
  - state, player, searched depth, bounds, …
- Iterative deepening (using previous results in game playing)
- Implementation of game states (bit operations, modifications have to be as quick as possible)