Causal Discovery for Time-Series Data

Luca Castri, PhD student @ University of Lincoln, UK

Outline

- **Causal Discovery for Time-series Data**
  - PCMCI algorithm

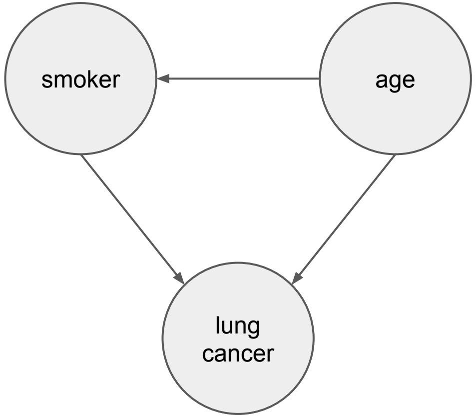
- Robotics Applications
  - F-PCMCI algorithm
  - CAnDOIT algorithm
  - CausalFlow
  - ROS-Causal

Causal Discovery for Time-series Data

The PC and FCI causal discovery methods work well with discrete/categorical data.

example
non-smoker **0** - smoker **1**
age under 50 **0** - age over 50 **1**
no lung cancer **0** - lung cancer **1**

Smoker	Age	Lung cancer
0	0	0
0	0	1
0	1	0
0	1	1
1	0	0
1	0	1
1	1	0
1	1	1



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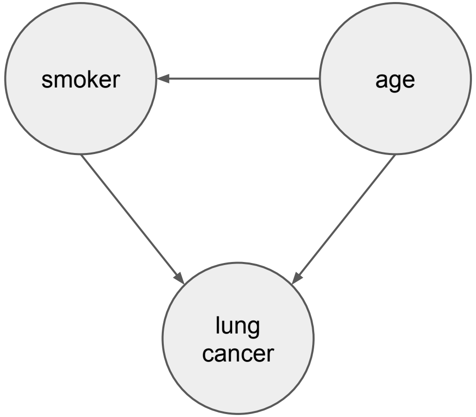

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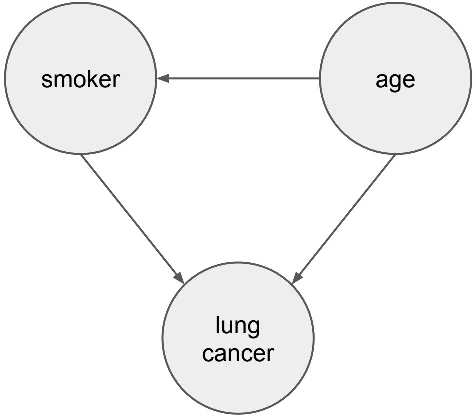

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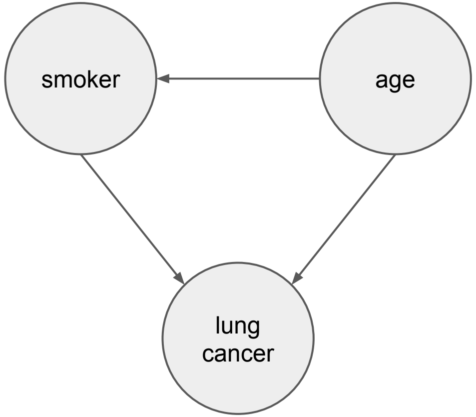

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The order is not important

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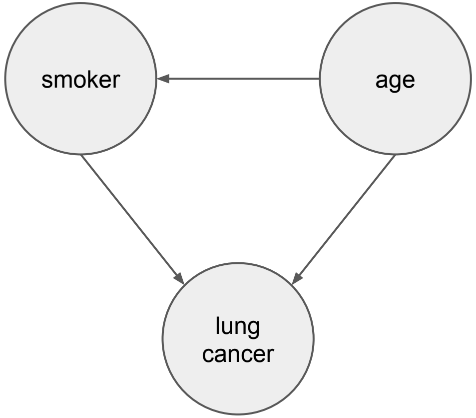
What if our data is time-dependent?



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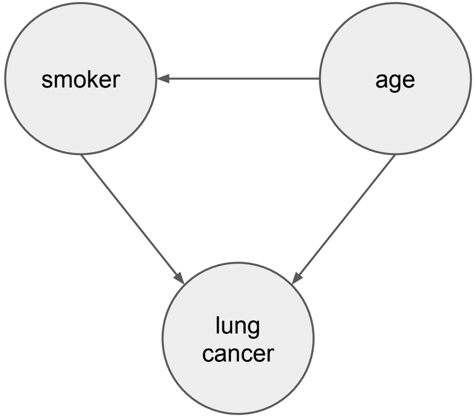

We cannot only consider the contemporaneous relationships

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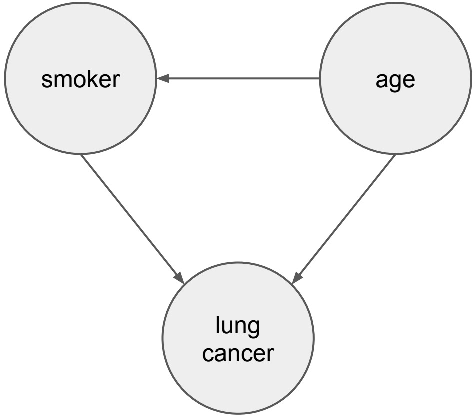

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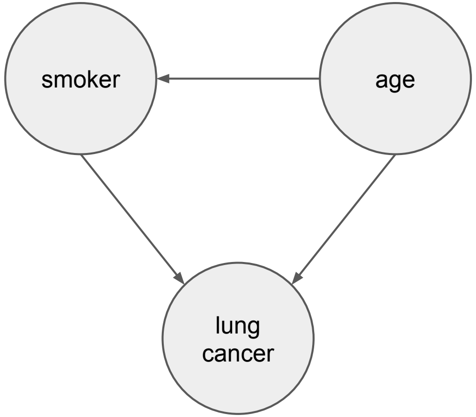

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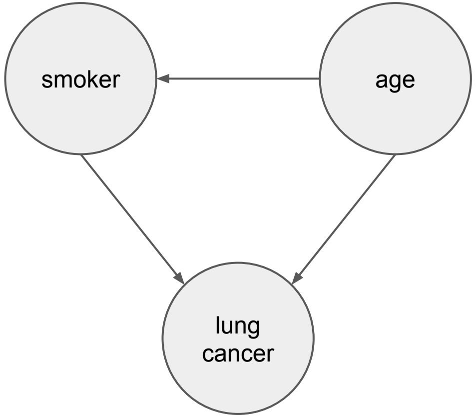


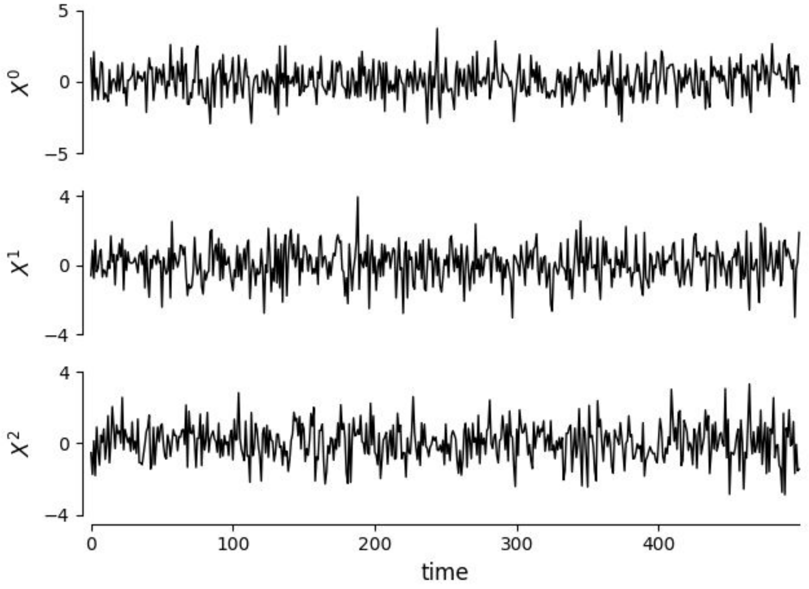
Causal Discovery for Time-series Data

The PC and FCI causal discovery methods work well with discrete/categorical data.

What if we deal with time-series data?
PC/FCI is inappropriate to use with time series data due to:

- time ordering
- lagged dependencies
- high false positive rates due to the autocorrelation.

$$\begin{cases} X_t^0 = 0.2(X_{t-1}^1)^2 + \eta_t^0 \\ X_t^1 = \eta_t^1 \\ X_t^2 = 0.3(X_{t-2}^1)^2 + \eta_t^2 \end{cases}$$



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Causal Discovery for Time-series Data

PCMCI algorithm

It consists of two main steps:

- **PC algorithm**
  retrieves the causal model structure by considering ONLY lagged dependencies as possible causal relationships between variables

- **MCI test**
  validates the structure found at the previous step by performing a false positive rate optimisation control

$$X^i_{t-\tau} \perp\!\!\!\perp X^j_t | \tilde{P}(X^i_{t-\tau}), \tilde{P}(X^j_t)$$

Key parameter: τ maximum time delay

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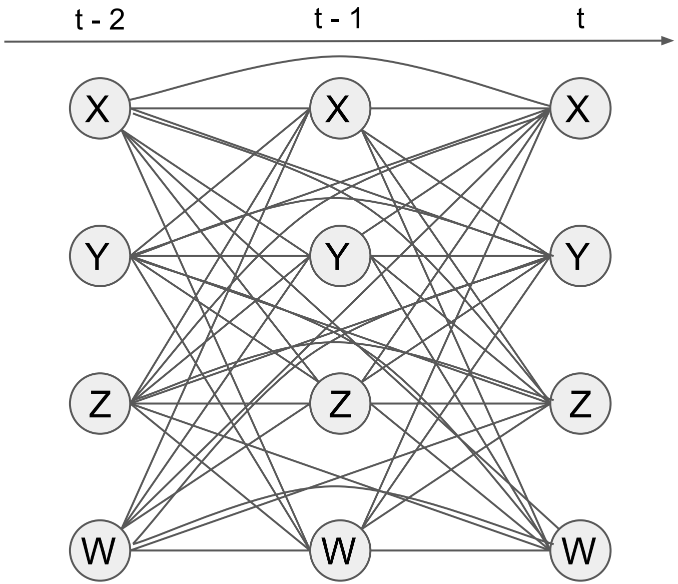

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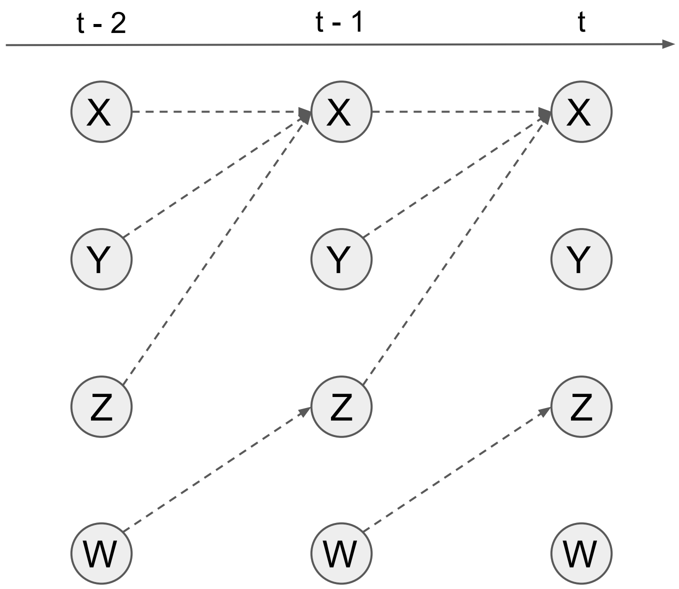

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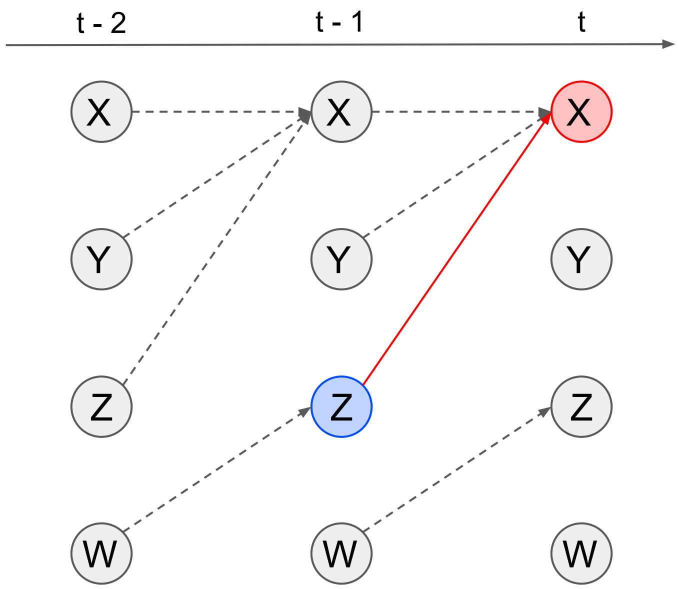

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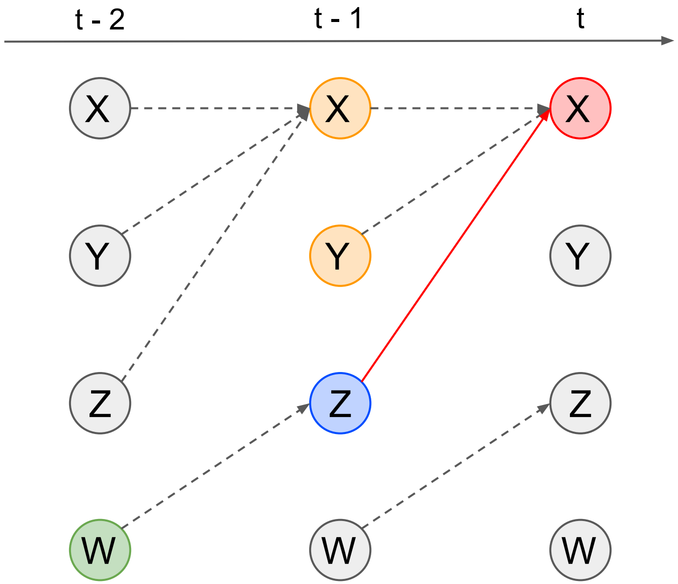

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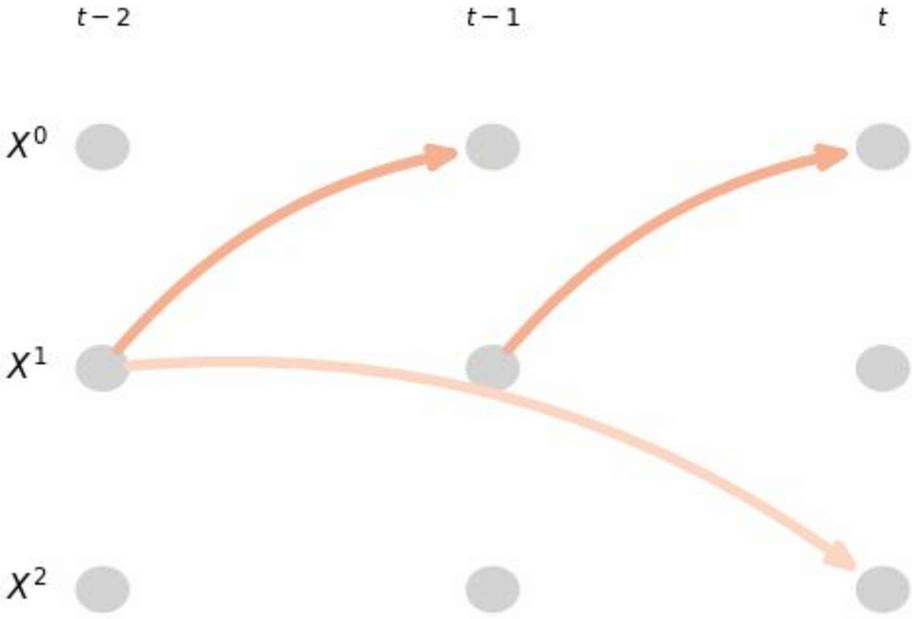

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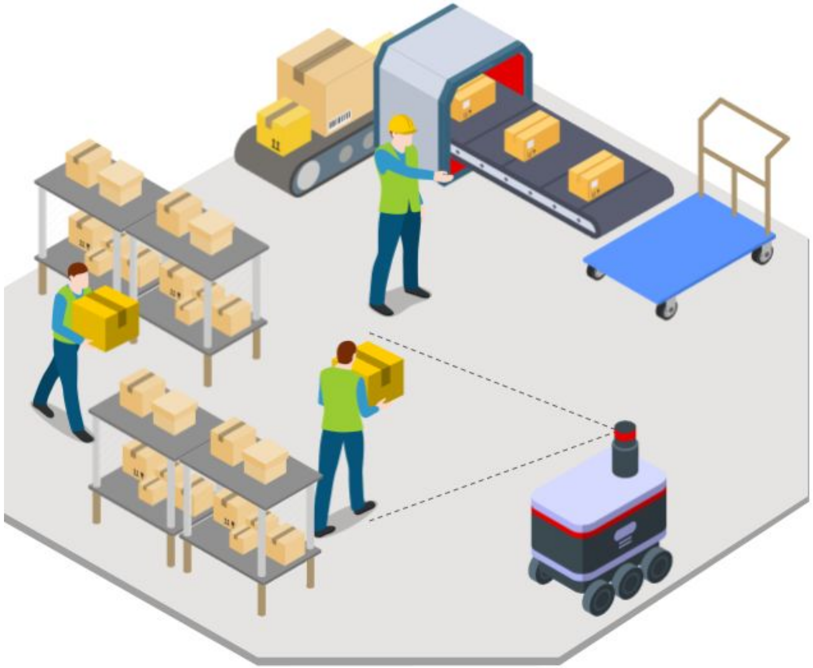
Robotics Applications

Main challenges in robotics:

- execution time of the causal discovery analysis
- conduct causal discovery using data from observations and interventions
- conduct the causal discovery analysis online



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Robotics Applications

F-PCMCI algorithm

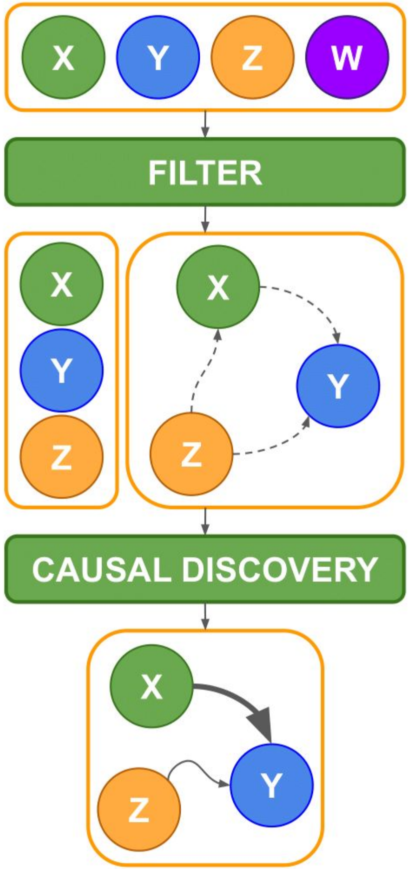
PCMCI computational cost depends on:

- the length of the time-series
- the number of variables

Filtered-PCMCI (**F-PCMCI**) steps:

- takes in input a prefixed set of variables
- the Transfer Entropy-based filter analyses and removes irrelevant variables (e.g., constants or isolated ones). The reduced variable set is used to create a hypothetical causal model
- the hypothetical causal model needs to be validated by a proper causal analysis, which is performed by PCMCI

This strategy enables **faster** and **more accurate** causal discovery



Castri, Luca, et al. "Enhancing Causal Discovery from Robot Sensor Data in Dynamic Scenarios." (2023).

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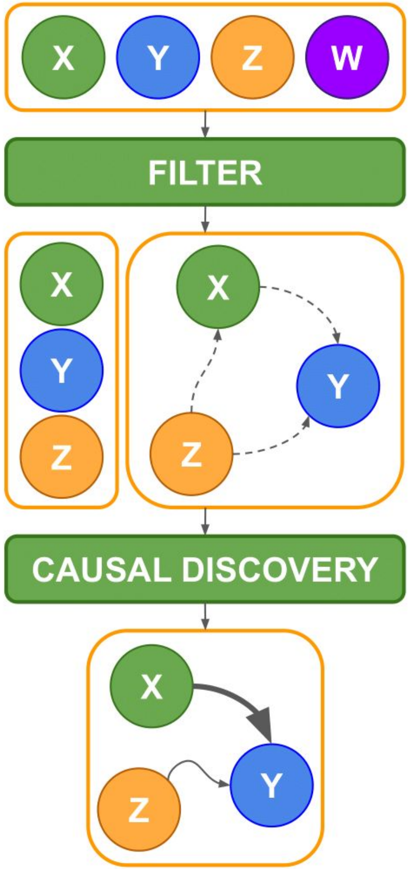

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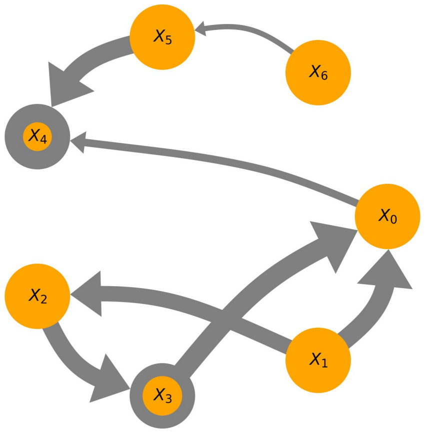
Robotics Applications

F-PCMCI algorithm

$$
\begin{cases}
x_0(t) = 2x_1(t-1) + 3x_3(t-1) + \eta_0 \\
x_1(t) = \eta_1 \\
x_2(t) = 1.1x_1(t-1)^2 + \eta_2 \\
x_3(t) = x_3(t-1) \cdot x_2(t-1) + \eta_3 \\
x_4(t) = x_4(t-1) + x_5(t-1) \cdot x_0(t-1) + \eta_4 \\
x_5(t) = \eta_5 \\
x_6(t) = \eta_6
\end{cases}
$$

PCMCI



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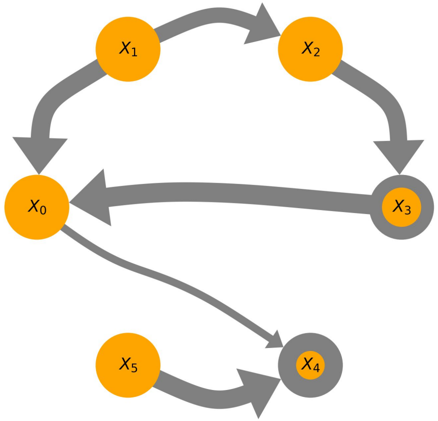

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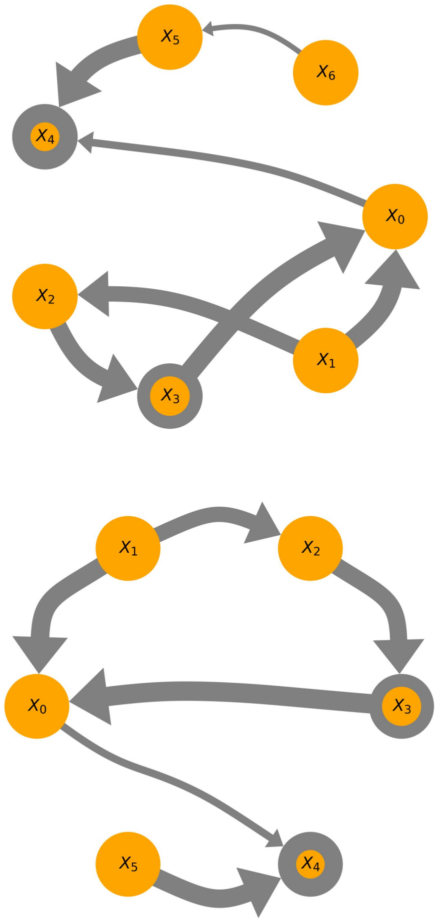
Isolated

PCMCI

F-PCMCI



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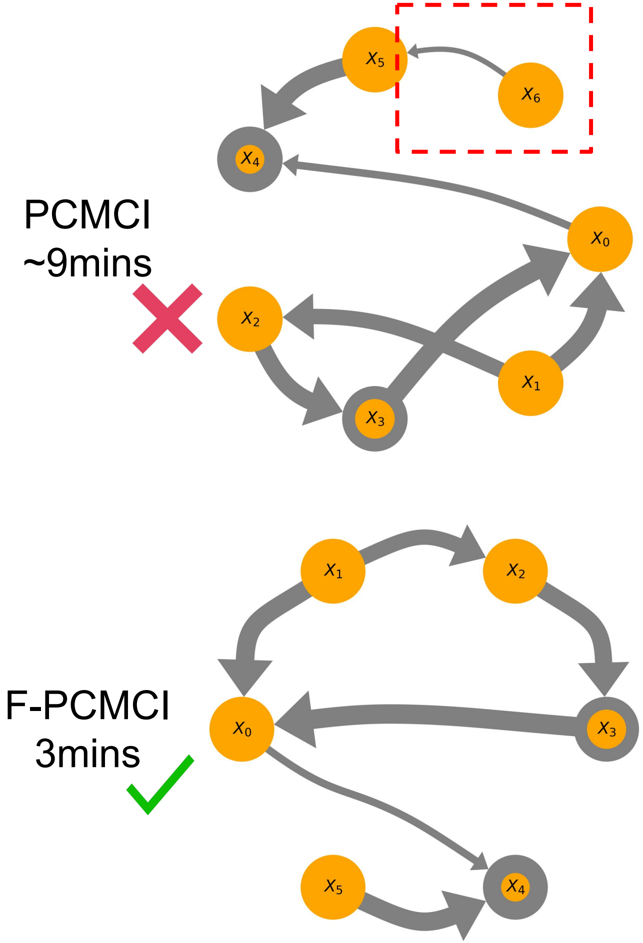

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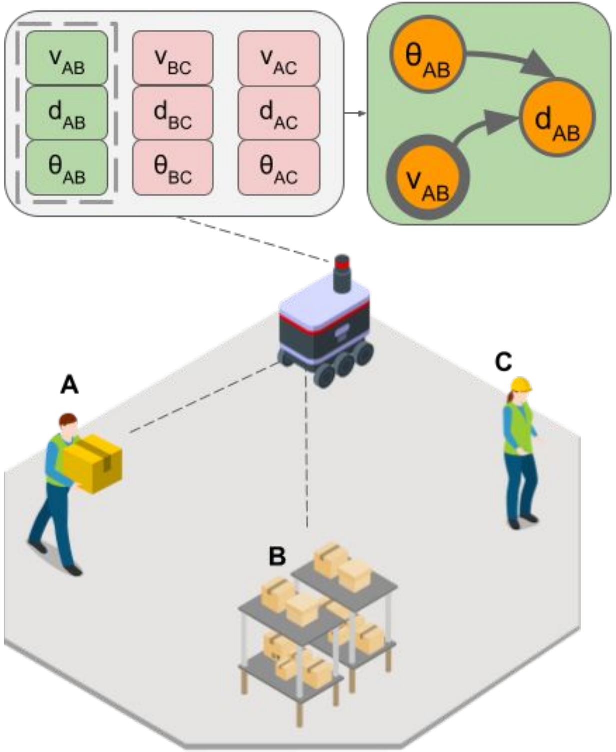
Robotics Applications

F-PCMCI algorithm

Considering the interaction scenario modelled by three variables

- v_{ij}: relative velocity between agent i and j
- d_{ij}: distance between agent i and j
- $theta_{ij}$: angle between agent i and j

Are all the observable variables useful to understand the observed scenario?



Robotics Applications

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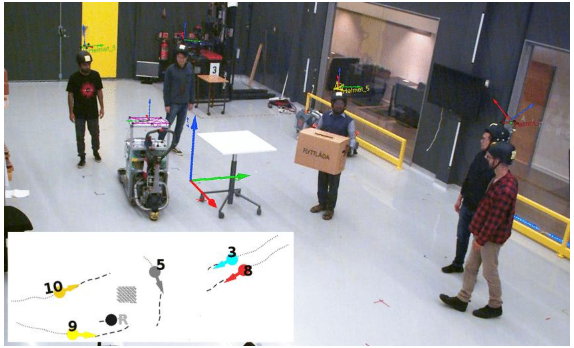

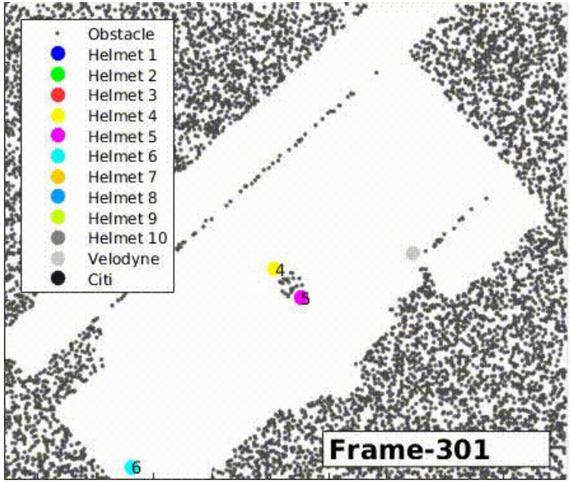

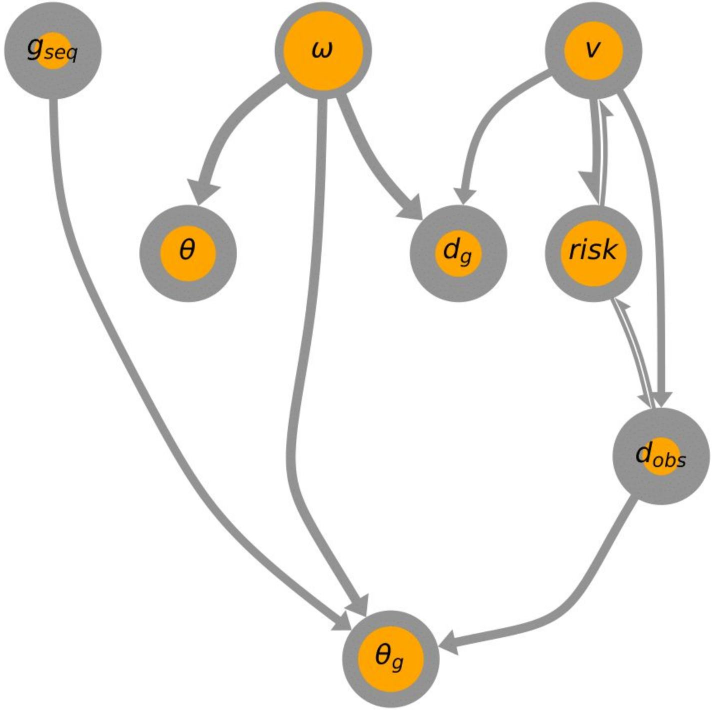

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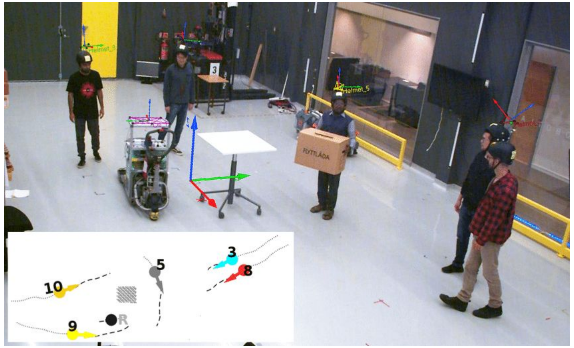
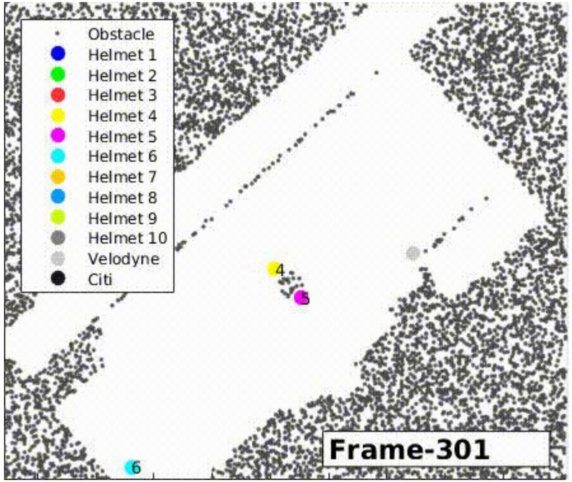
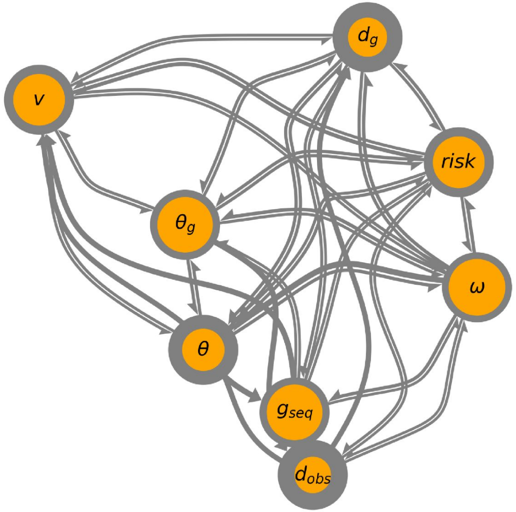
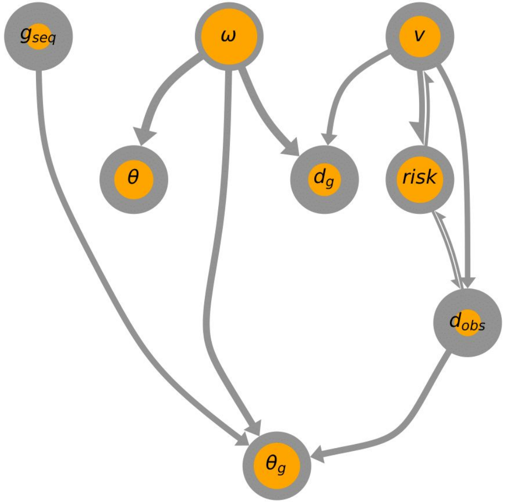






PCMCI ~80mins



F-PCMCI ~18mins

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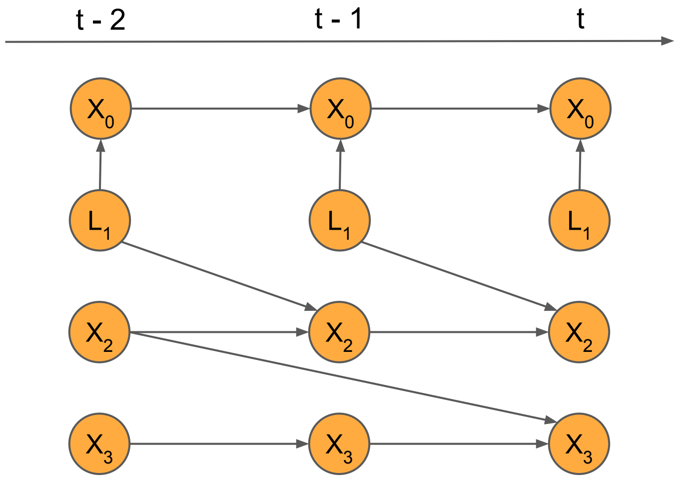
Robotics Applications

🔨 CAnDOIT algorithm

- Observational data alone are often insufficient to accurately identify the correct causal model in complex scenarios where not all variables are observable

$$\begin{cases} X_0(t) = 0.9X_0(t-1) + 0.6X_1(t) + \eta_0 \\ L_1(t) = \eta_1 \\ X_2(t) = 0.9X_2(t-1) + 0.4X_1(t-1) + \eta_2 \\ X_3(t) = 0.9X_3(t-1) - 0.5X_2(t-2) + \eta_3 \end{cases}$$



Robotics Applications

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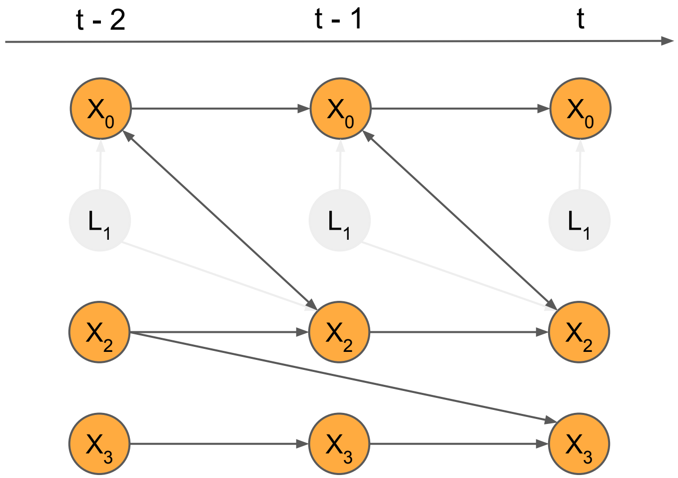
- Observational data alone are often insufficient to accurately identify the correct causal model in complex scenarios where not all variables are observable

$$\begin{cases} X_0(t) = 0.9X_0(t-1) + 0.6X_1(t) + \eta_0 \\ L_1(t) = \eta_1 \\ X_2(t) = 0.9X_2(t-1) + 0.4X_1(t-1) + \eta_2 \\ X_3(t) = 0.9X_3(t-1) - 0.5X_2(t-2) + \eta_3 \end{cases}$$



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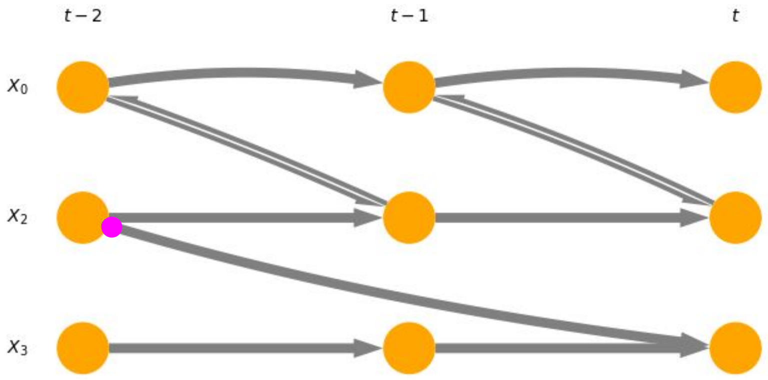
Causal model obtained by using **Latent-PCMCI (LPCMCI)**: version of PCMCI, based on FCI, that handles latent variables



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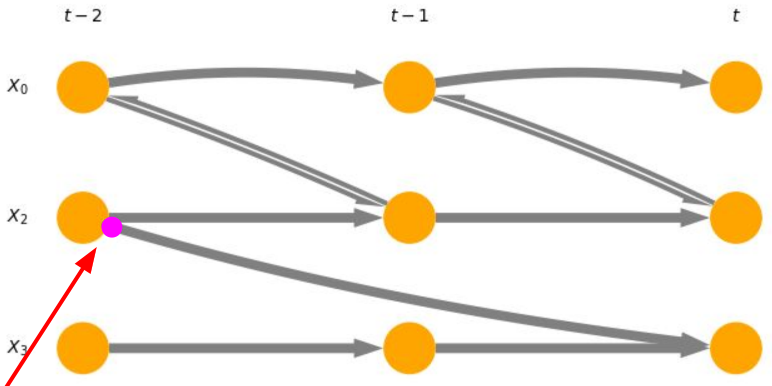

LPCMCI is uncertain about the orientation of this link

$\circ\!\!\rightarrow \; = \; \rightarrow$ or $\leftrightarrow$

Robotics Applications

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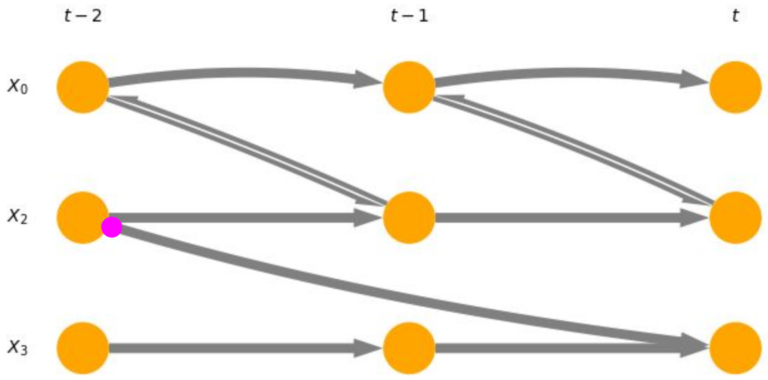
Despite the "simple" toy problem (linear, 4 variables)
- reconstructing the causal model from data is never straightforward
- especially when there are hidden confounders

Causal model obtained by using **Latent-PCMCI (LPCMCI)**: version of PCMCI, based on FCI, that handles latent variables



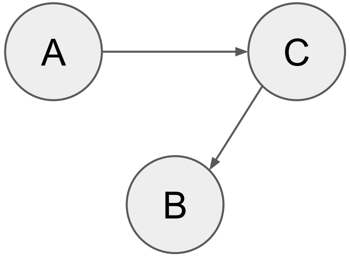
How can we perform causal discovery using data from observations 👀 and interventions 🔨?

Robotics Applications

🔨 CAnDOIT algorithm

- Observational data alone are often insufficient to accurately identify the correct causal model in complex scenarios where not all variables are observable
- We need **interventions**

CAnDOIT: CAusal Discovery with Observational 👀 and Interventional 🔨 data from Time-series



Castri, Luca, et al. "CAnDOIT: Causal Discovery with Observational and Interventional Data from Time Series" (2024).

Robotics Applications

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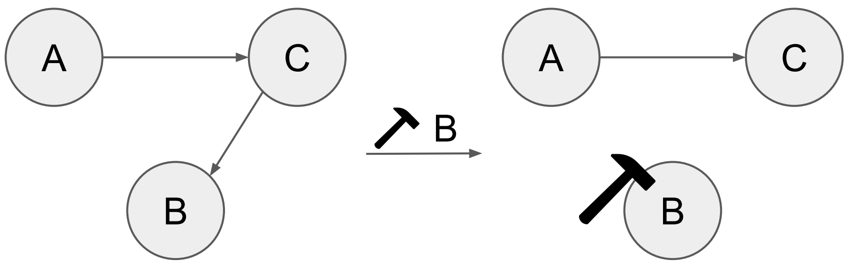

- For the observational case, we need to consider B's parents
- For the interventional case, we need to remove all incoming links to B

How can we enable a causal discovery method to do this?

Castri, Luca, et al. "CAnDOIT: Causal Discovery with Observational and Interventional Data from Time Series" (2024).

Robotics Applications

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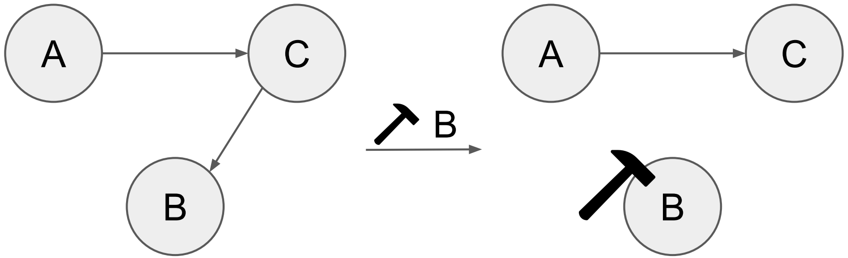
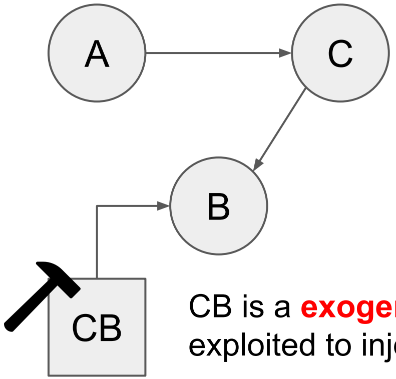


🔨 CAnDOIT uses **context** variables



CB is a **exogenous** dummy variable exploited to inject interventional data

Castri, Luca, et al. "CAnDOIT: Causal Discovery with Observational and Interventional Data from Time Series" (2024).

Robotics Applications

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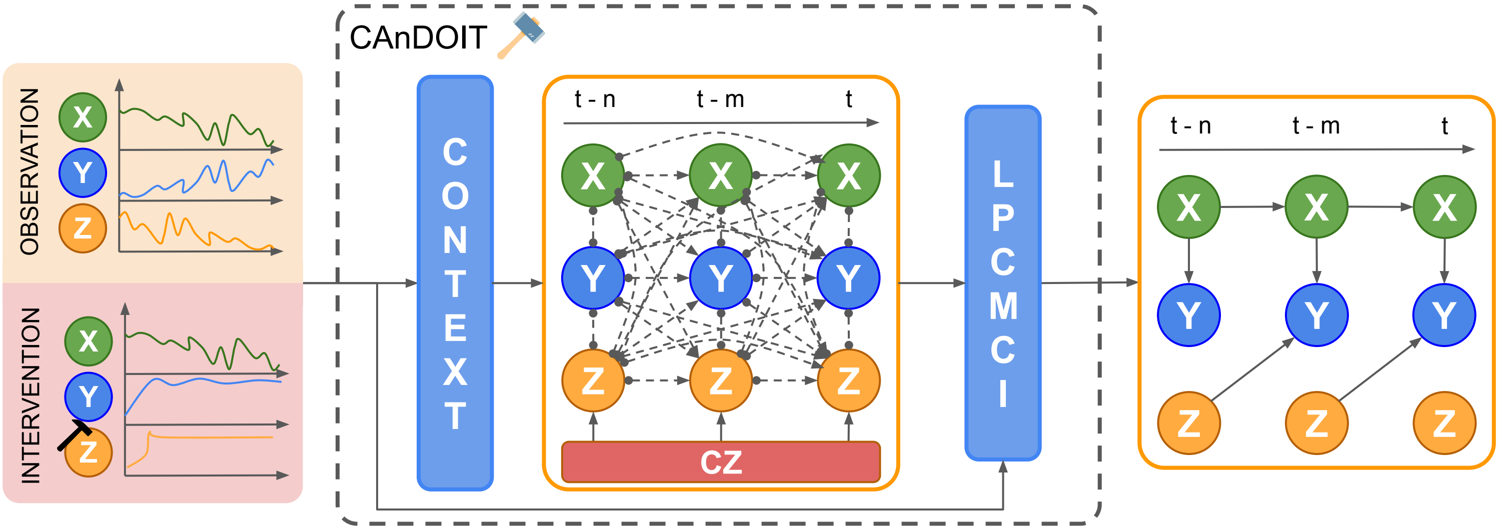

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Robotics Applications

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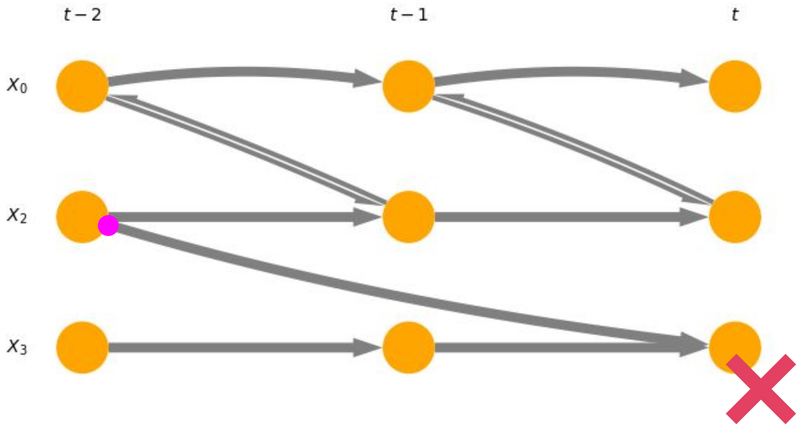
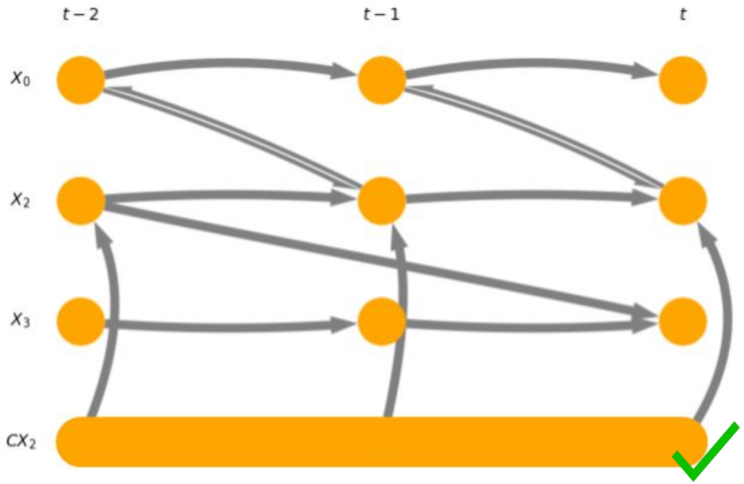


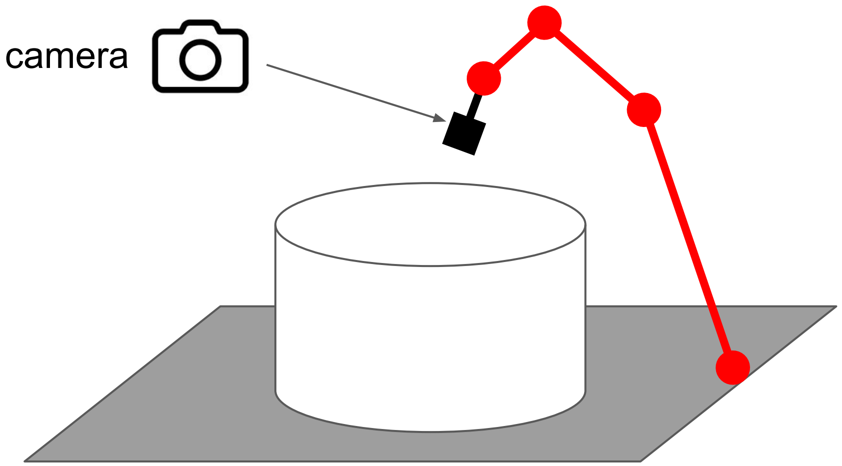
Causal model obtained by using **CAnDOIT**



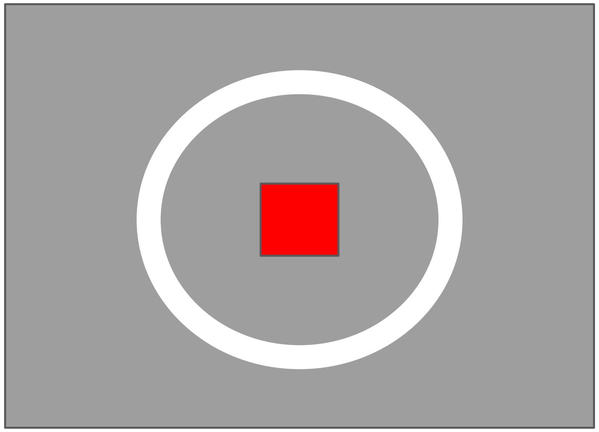
Robotics Applications

🔨 CAnDOIT algorithm

Consider the brightness of the colours of the objects in the cylinder captured by a robot camera



3D representation



2D representation

Castri, Luca, et al. "CAnDOIT: Causal Discovery with Observational and Interventional Data from Time Series" (2024).

Robotics Applications

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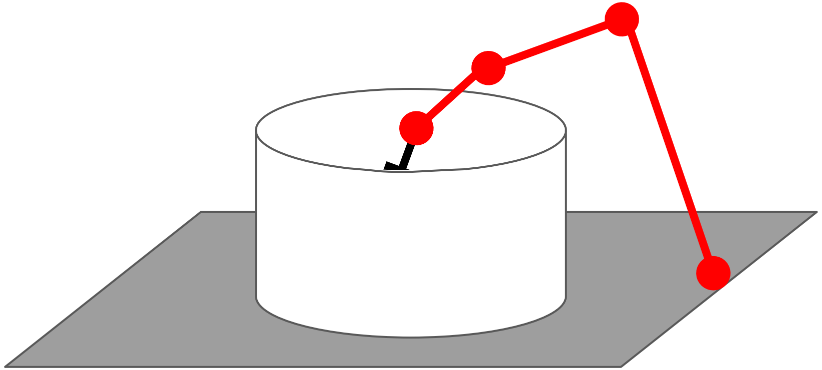

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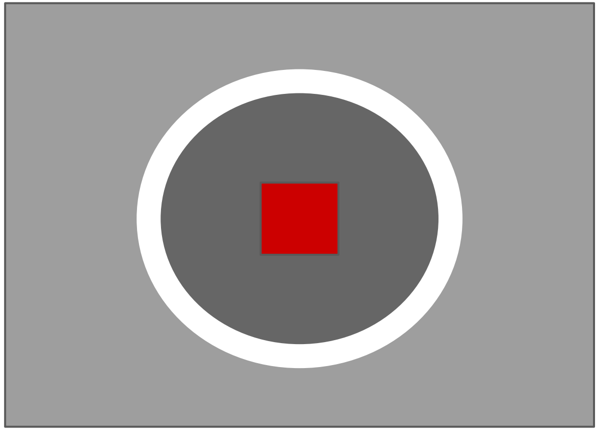

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Robotics Applications

🔨 CAnDOIT algorithm

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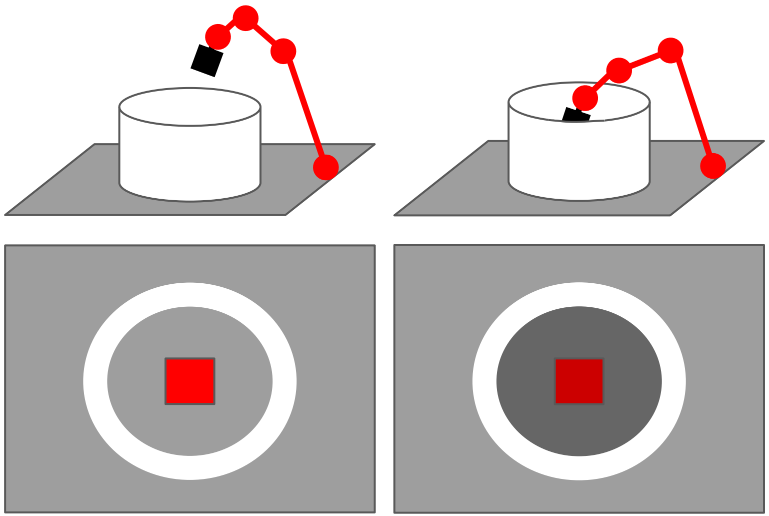
$$\begin{cases} F_c(t) = b(H(t-1)) \\ C_c(t) = b(H(t-1), v(t-1), d_c(t-1)) \end{cases}$$

$$b = K_h \frac{H}{H_{max}} + K_v \left(1 - \frac{v}{v_{max}}\right) + K_d \frac{d_c}{d_{c_{max}}}$$



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Robotics Applications

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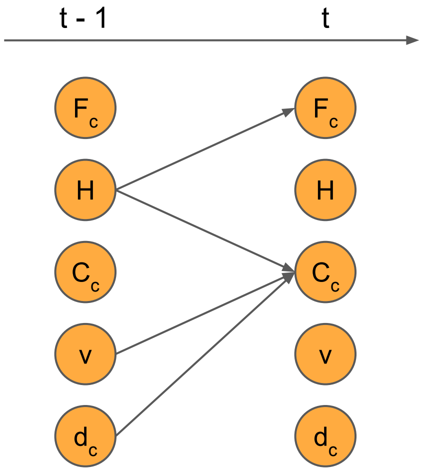

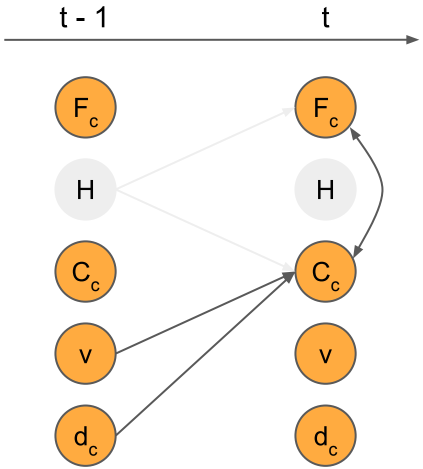

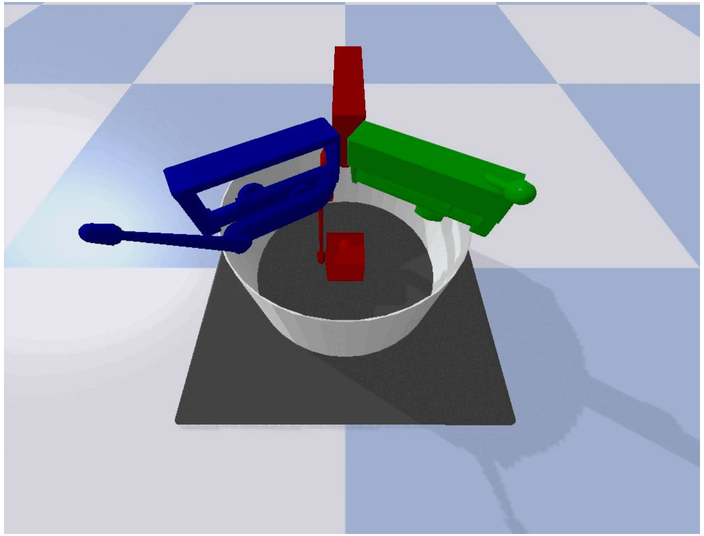

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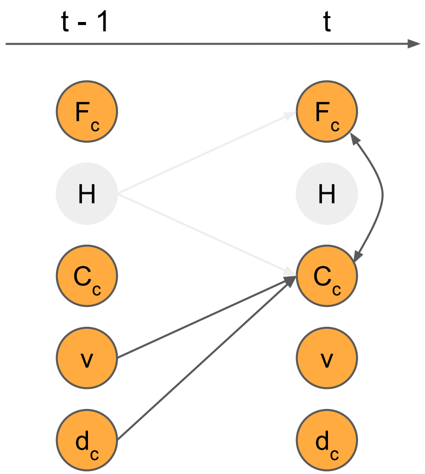
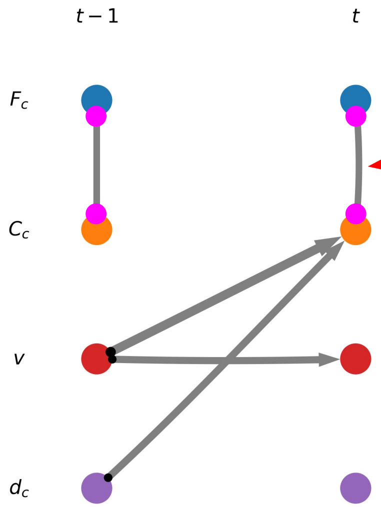
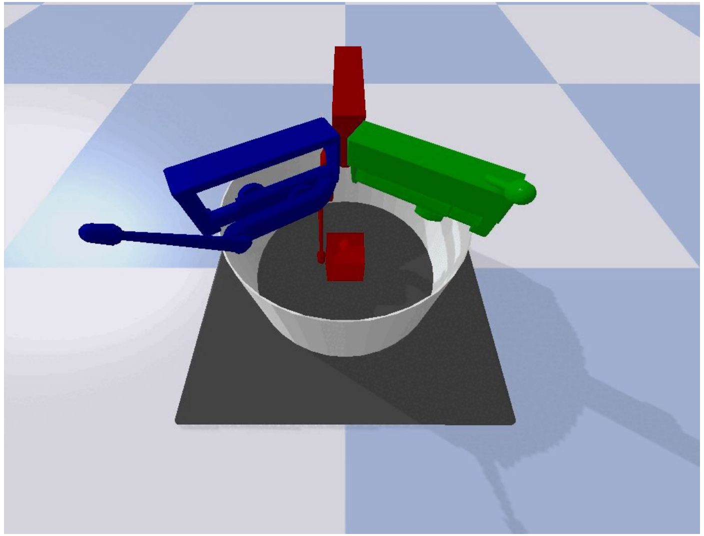
Robotics Applications

🔨 CAnDOIT algorithm

Again, LPCMCI is uncertain about the orientation of this link







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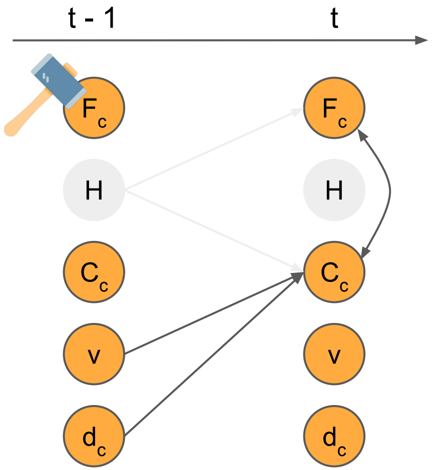
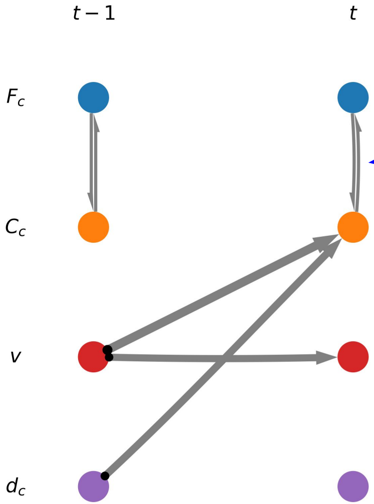
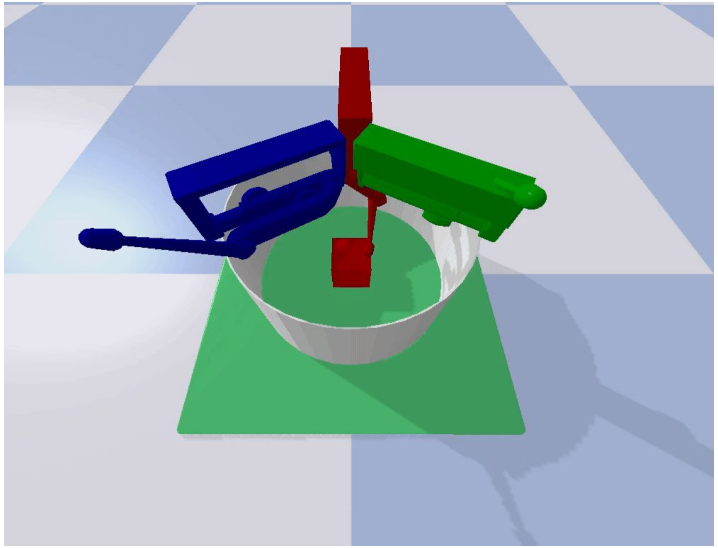
Robotics Applications

CAnDOIT algorithm

CAnDOIT using observational and interventional data is able to correctly orient this link







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Castri, Luca, et al. "CAnDOIT: Causal Discovery with Observational and Interventional Data from Time Series" (2024).

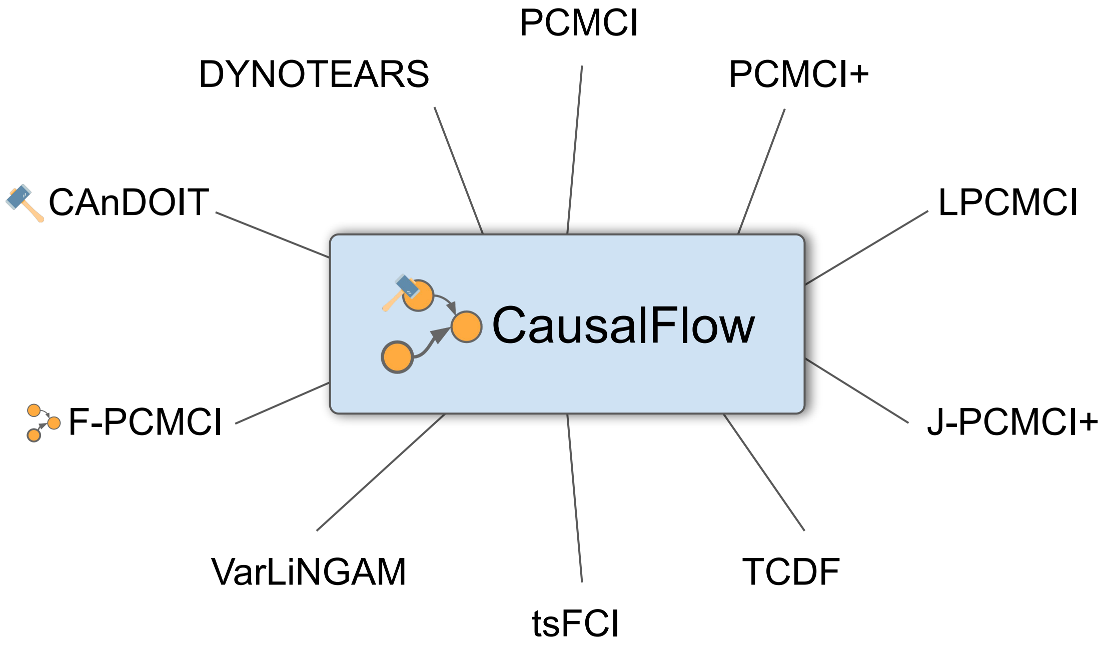
Outline

- Causal Discovery for Time-series Data
  - PCMCI algorithm

- **Robotics Applications**
  - F-PCMCI algorithm
  - CAnDOIT algorithm
  - **CausalFlow**
  - ROS-Causal

Robotics Applications

CausalFlow



GitHub

CausalFlow

```
pip install
py-causalflow
```

Outline

- Causal Discovery for Time-series Data
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- **Robotics Applications**
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  - **ROS-Causal**

What is Robot Operating System (ROS)?

people tracker

navigation stack

...

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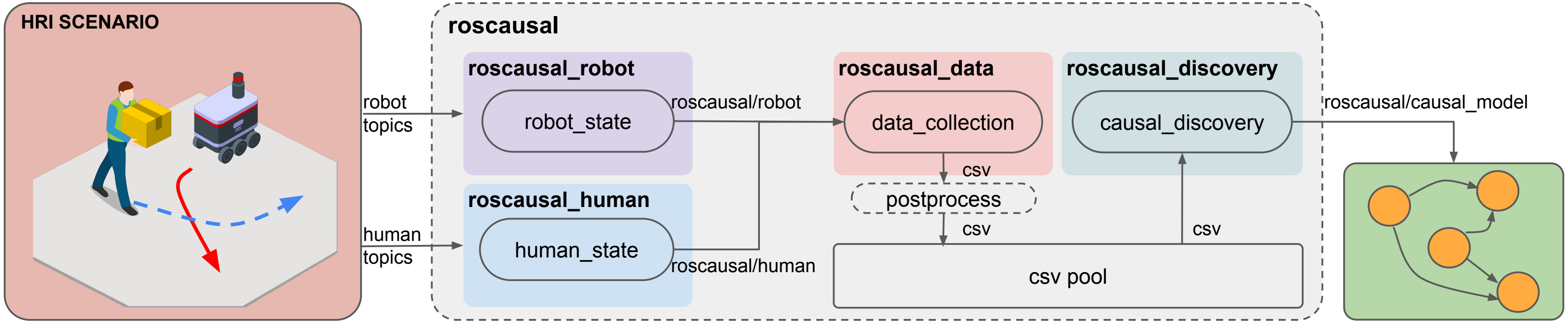
ROS-Causal

Robotics Applications

ROS-Causal



- ROS-Causal extracts and collects data from a HRI scenario, such as agents' trajectories, and performs causal analysis on the collected data in a batched manner. It is composed by four different rosnodes:
    - roscausal_robot
    - roscausal_human
    - roscausal_data
    - roscausal_discovery

Castri, Luca, et al. "Experimental Evaluation of ROS-Causal in Real-World Human-Robot Spatial Interaction Scenarios" (2024).

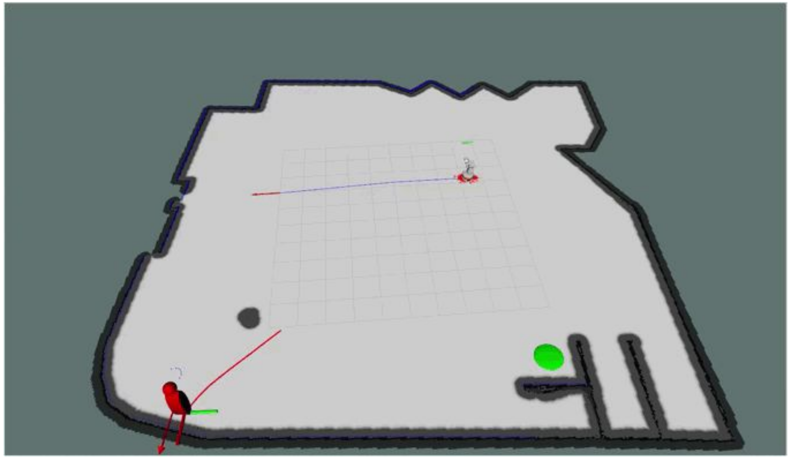
Robotics Applications

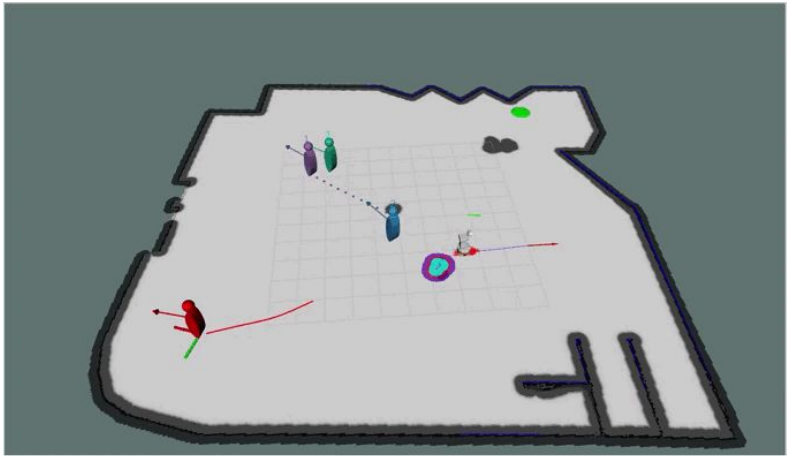
ROS-Causal

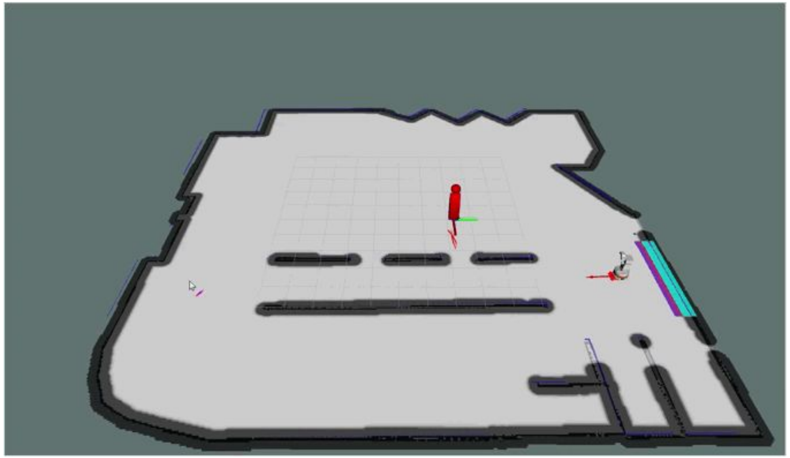
ROS-Causal_HRISim

HRI simulator involving:

- TIAGo robot
- pedestrians

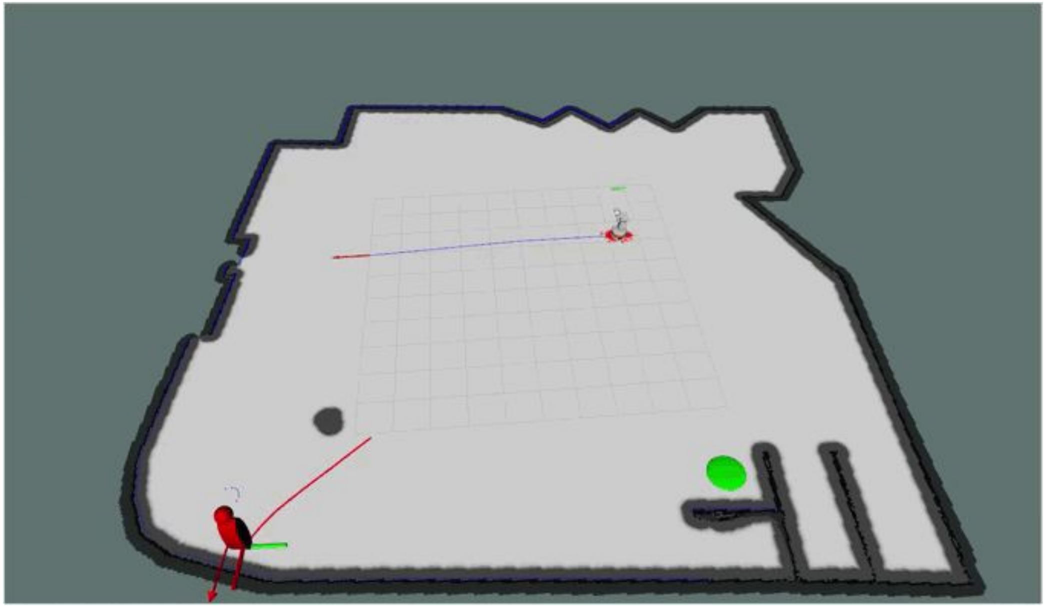


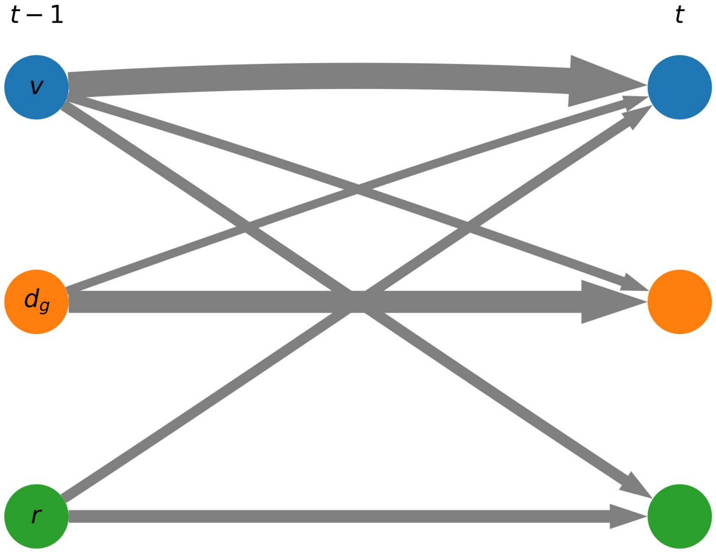




Robotics Applications

ROS-Causal





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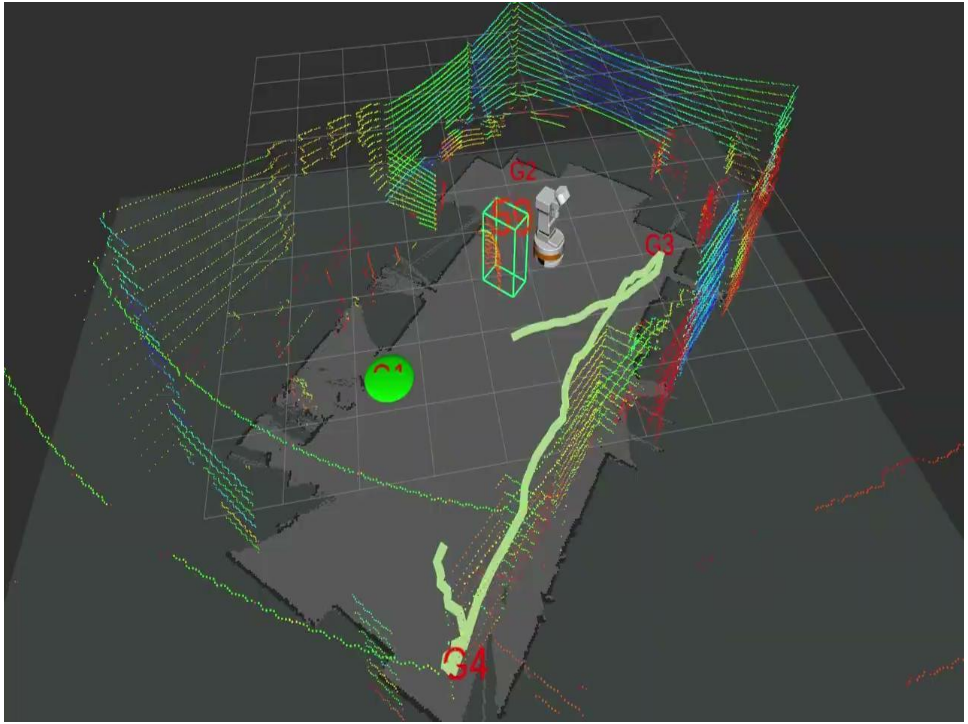
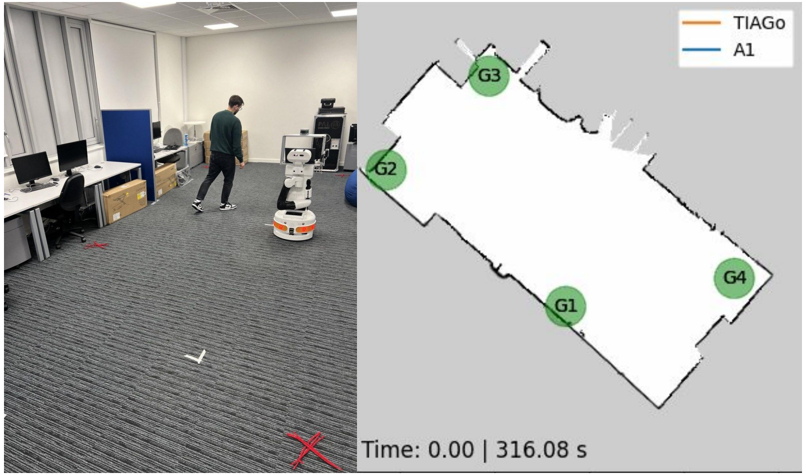
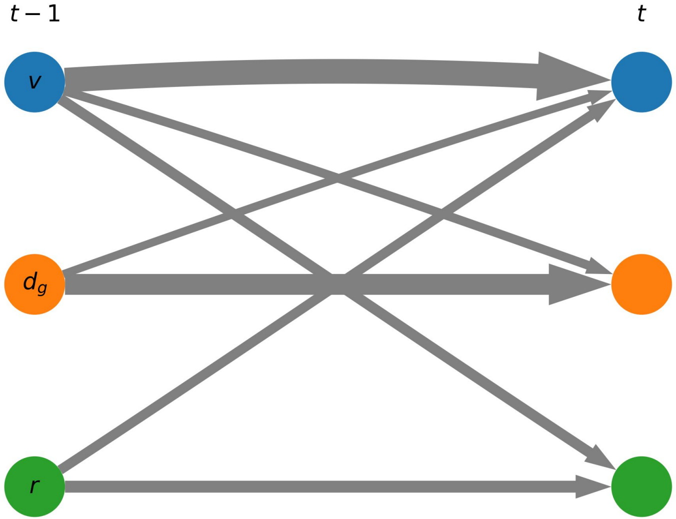
Robotics Applications

ROS-Causal







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Reference

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- Castri, L., Mghames, S., Hanheide M. and Bellotto, N. 2024. CAnDOIT: Causal Discovery with Observational and Interventional Data from Time-Series, Advanced Intelligent Systems.

CausalFlow

ROS-Causal

Thank you!
questions?