Ad Hoc Teamwork by Learning Teammates' Task

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Introduction

- Ad Hoc Teamwork
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Ad Hoc Teamwork

The ad hoc teamwork setting is a situation when an autonomous agent must collaborate with other teammate agents to accomplish a common goal without prior coordination.

Prior related work includes:

- 1. Multi-armed bandits problem with a teacher and a student. [2]
- 2. Robot soccer pick up games. [3]
- 3. Ad hoc teamwork for leading a flock. [4]
- 4. Multi-agent collaboration with open environment. [5]
- 5. Ad hoc teamwork in the pursuit domain. [6]

Ad Hoc Agent

A good "ad hoc team player" must be adept at: [7]

- 1. Assessing the capabilities of other agents.
- 2. Assessing the other agents' knowledge states.
- 3. Estimating the effects of its actions on the other agents.

Evaluation framework proposed by Barrett and Stone. [8]

- 1. Team knowledge
- 2. Environment knowledge
- 3. Reactivity of teammates

Ad Hoc Agent

Novel perspective of ad hoc teamwork.

- Task identification should not be overlooked.
- Better planning with task and teammate identification.
- Close relationships between the three challenges.
- Ad hoc agent receives no direct reward from the environment.
- Learning and making prediction by observation.



Figure 1: Challenges in establishing ad hoc teamwork

Tackling the Ad Hoc Teamwork Problem

- K-player Fully Cooperative Matrix Game
- Bounded Rationality

K-player Fully Cooperative Matrix Game

$$\varGamma = (K, (\mathcal{A}_k), U)$$

U: payoff received by all agents. \mathcal{A}_k : set of actions[7] available to player *k*. $\mathcal{A} = \times_{k=1}^{K} \mathcal{A}_k$: set of joint actions taken by all agents. For example: $a = \langle a_1, \dots, a_K \rangle$ represents joint action *a* by agents a_1 through a_K .

$$\pi(a) = \prod_{k=1}^K \pi_k(a_k) ext{ and } \sum_{a_k \in \mathcal{A}_k} \pi_k(a_k) = 1$$

 π : probability mapping of agent *k* executing action a_k .

K-player Fully Cooperative Matrix Game

- *T**: The target task.
- α: The ad hoc agent
 - Determine the *task* to be performed.
 - Determine the strategy of its teammates.
 - Act accordingly.
- $-\alpha$: Teammate agent, or meta-agent.
 - Fictitious play[9] bounded rationality.
 - Action selection strategy is internal.
 - Uses at most N past observations to select its own individual action.

Bounded Rationality

Let
$$\hat{V}(h_{1:n}, a_{-\alpha}) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{t=0}^{N-1} U_{T^*}(\langle a_{\alpha}(n-t), a_{-\alpha} \rangle)$$
 then,
 $\pi_{-\alpha}(h_{1:n}, a^*_{-\alpha}) > 0$ only if $a^*_{-\alpha} \in \operatorname{argmax}_{a_{-\alpha}} \hat{V}(h_{1:n}, a_{-\alpha})$

$$\begin{array}{l} -h_{1:n}=\{a(1),\ldots,a(n)\} \text{ denotes a specific instance of history} \\ H(n),n\geq N, \text{ where } H(n)=\{A(t),t=1,\ldots,n\}. \\ -\pi_{-\alpha}(h_{1:n},a_{-\alpha}^*)=\mathbb{P}\left[A_k(n+1)=a_k\mid a(n),\ldots,a(n-N+1)\right]. \end{array}$$

Ad Hoc Agent Modeling

- Online Learning Agent
- E-commerce Scenario
- Decision-Theoretic Framework POMDP Agent

Online Learning Agent Recall that:

$$\hat{V}^k_ au(h_{1:n},a_k)=rac{1}{N}\sum_{t=0}^{N-1}U_ au(\langle a_k,a_{-k}(n-t)
angle), \qquad k=lpha,-lpha.$$

We can define the set of maximizing actions as:

$$\hat{\mathcal{A}}^k_{ au}(h_{1:n}) = \mathrm{argmax}_{a_k \in \mathcal{A}_k} \hat{V}^k_{ au}(h_{1:n})$$

For best scenarios we define *expert* as a mapping $E_{\tau} : \mathcal{H} \times \mathcal{A} \rightarrow [0, 1]$ such that:

$$E_{ au}(h_{1:n},a) = E_{ au}^{lpha}(h_{1:n},a_{lpha})E_{ au}^{-lpha}(h_{1:n},a_{-lpha})$$

More precisely:

$$E^k_ au(h_{1:n},a_k)= \left\{egin{array}{cc} rac{1}{\left|\hat{\mathcal{A}}^k_ au(h_{1:n})
ight|} & ext{if } a_k\in\hat{\mathcal{A}}^k_ au(h_{1:n})\ 0 & ext{otherwise} \end{array}
ight., \qquad k=lpha,-lpha$$

• To evaluate the prediction, we define the *loss* function:

$$\ell(\hat{A}(n),A_{-lpha}(n))=1-\delta(\hat{A}_{-lpha}(n),A_{-lpha}(n))$$

Now we represent the *expected loss of expert E_τ*, given history h_{1:n}, at time n + 1 as:

$$\ell_ au(h_{1:n},a_{-lpha}) = \mathbb{E}_{E_ au(h_{1:n})}\left[\ell(\hat{A},a_{-lpha})
ight] riangleq \sum_{a'\in\mathcal{A}} E_ au(h_{1:n},a')\ell(a',a_{-lpha})$$

The cumulative loss of expert E_τ is how "bad" the ad hoc agent can predict its teammate at time n:

$$L_ au(h_{1:n}) riangleq \sum_{t=0}^{n-1}\ell_ au(h_{1:t},a_{-lpha}(t+1))$$

• We need a more generalized *predictor* mapping $P: \mathcal{H} \times \mathcal{A} \rightarrow [0, 1]$ such that for any history $h_{1:n}$:

$$\sum_{a\in\mathcal{A}}P(h_{1:n},a)=1$$

Similarly, there is the expected loss of predictor P and cumulative loss of P:

$$\ell_P(h_{1:n},a_{-lpha}) riangleq \sum_{a' \in \mathcal{A}} P(h_{1:n},a') \ell(a',a_{-lpha})$$

$$L_P(h_{1:n}) = \sum_{t=0}^{n-1} \ell_P(h_{1:t}, a_{-lpha}(t+1))$$

Determining a predictor that minimizes the *expected regret*:

$$R_n(P,\mathcal{E}) = \mathbb{E}\left[L_P(h_{1:n}) - L_ au(h_{1:n})
ight]$$

Choice of predictor *P*: exponentially weighted average predictor

$$P(h_{1:n}, \hat{a}) \triangleq \frac{\sum_{\tau \in \mathcal{T}} e^{-\gamma_n L_\tau(h_{1:n})} E_\tau(h_{1:n}, \hat{a})}{\sum_{\tau \in \mathcal{T}} e^{-\gamma_n L_\tau(h_{1:n})}}$$

Algorithm 1 Exponentially weighted forecaster for the ad hoc teamwork problem.

1: Initialize $w_t^{(0)} = 1, h = \emptyset, t = 0.$ 2: for all t do 3: Let $t \leftarrow t + 1$ 4: Let

$$P(h,a) = \frac{\sum_{\tau \in \mathcal{T}} w_{\tau}^{(t)} E_{\tau}(h,a)}{\sum_{\tau' \in \mathcal{T}} w_{\tau'}^{(t)}}$$

5: Select action
$$\hat{A}(t) = \operatorname{argmax}_{a \in \mathcal{A}} P(h, a)$$

- 6: Observe action $A_{-\alpha}(t)$
- 7: Compute loss $\ell_{\tau}(h, A_{-\alpha}(t))$ as in (4), $\tau \in \mathcal{T}$
- 8: Update

$$w_{\tau}^{(t)} \leftarrow w_{\tau}^{(t-1)} \cdot e^{-\gamma_t \ell_{\tau}(h, A_{-\alpha}(t))}$$

9: end for

- Two agents collaborate to assemble a computer.
- Each needs to purchase one of LCD monitor or motherboard.
- Each is optimized to assemble one of the two and will be less efficient in the other.
- Un-optimized job assignment incurs \$2 in cost.
- Same supplier shipment incurs \$2 in reward.
- Task is to maximize the profit, where each computer is sold at \$25.

- τ₁: Replace the agent optimized to build LCD Monitors
 τ₂: Replace the agent optimized to build desktop computers.
- $T^* = \tau_2$ is the target task.
- (Z, W): the action of purchasing part W from supplier Z.
- α: ad hoc agent
 - $-\alpha$: teammate agent.

 $\mathcal{A}_{\alpha} = \mathcal{A}_{-\alpha} = \{(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{LCD}),(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{LCD}),(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{MB}),(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{MB})\}$

and $p_0(\tau_1) = p_0(\tau_2) = 0.5$.

	LCD panel price	Motherboard price	Shipping cost	
Supplier A	\$10	\$7	\$2	
Supplier B	\$7	\$7	\$5	

Figure 2: Price and shipping cost of different parts

	A, LCD	B, LCD	A, Motherboard	B, Motherboard
A, LCD	-22	-24	6	1
B, LCD	-24	-19	4	6
A, Motherboard	4	2	-16	-21
B, Motherboard	-1	4	-21	-19

Figure 3: Payoff matrix for the task "Replace the agent optimized to build LCD Monitors"

	A, LCD	B, LCD	A, Motherboard	B, Motherboard
A, LCD	-22	-24	4	-1
B, LCD	-24	-19	2	4
A, Motherboard	6	4	-16	-21
B, Motherboard	1	6	-21	-19

Figure 4: Payoff matrix for the task "Replace the agent optimized to build desktop computers"



Figure 5: Average cumulative regret of the exponentially weighted average predictor in the e-commerce scenario. This result corresponds to the average of 1,000 independent Monte-Carlo trials

- *P* is able to identify the strategy of the teammate.
- The theoretical bound is an overestimate.
- The task has a well-defined set of optimal actions.

Online Learning Agent Evaluation

What have we missed from the online learning agent model?

Online Learning Agent Evaluation

Missing elements:

- Prior knowledge about the target task.
 - \Rightarrow Bayesian approach to the problem. [10]–[12]
- Impact of α 's action on teammate agents.
 - \Rightarrow Re-evaluate *regret* function.

Better modeling:

- Minimize the expected loss (better prediction of the action of $-\alpha$.
- Maximize the payoff in the target task.

 T^* is considered as an unobserved random variable. The ad hoc agent keep a distribution p_n over the space of possible tasks at each time n.

$$p_n(au) = \mathbb{P}\left[T^* = au \mid H(n-1)
ight], orall au \in \mathcal{T}$$

 $p_n(\tau)$ is referred to as the *belief* of the agent α at time step n related to what the target task is.

POMDP Agent Modeling[13]

$$\mathcal{M} = (\mathcal{X}, \mathcal{A}, \mathcal{Z}, \mathsf{P}, \mathsf{O}, r, \gamma)$$

- $\mathcal{X} = \mathcal{H}_N \times \mathcal{T}$ is the *state-space*, i.e, random variable $X(n) = (H_N(n-1), T^*).$
- $\mathcal{A} = \mathcal{A}_{\alpha} \times \mathcal{A}_{-\alpha}$ is the *action-space*. At each time-step *n*, the ad hoc agent must select an action $\hat{\mathcal{A}}(n) = \langle \mathcal{A}_{\alpha}(n), \hat{\mathcal{A}}_{-\alpha}(n) \rangle$.
- $Z = A_{-\alpha}$ is the *observation-space*. $X_{\mathcal{H}}(n)$ is fully observable to α .
- P represents the *transition probabilities*.

 $\mathsf{P}(h', au'\mid h, au,a)=\mathsf{P}_{\mathcal{T}}(au'\mid au,a)\mathsf{P}_{\mathcal{H}}(h'\mid h, au,a).$

• O represents the *observation probabilities*, which indicates the dependence between the observation on the state and the agent's action.

$$egin{aligned} \mathsf{O}(a_{-lpha}'\mid h, au,a)&\triangleq\mathbb{P}\left[Z(n+1)=a_{-lpha}'\mid X(n+1)=(h, au),A(n)=a
ight]\ &=\delta(a_{-lpha}',a_{-lpha}(N)), \end{aligned}$$

POMDP Agent Modeling

■ *r* is the *reward function*

$$egin{aligned} r(h, au,a) &= \left(1-\sum_{\hat{a}\in\mathcal{A}} {E}_{ au}(h,\hat{a}) \ell(\hat{a},a)
ight) \left(\sum_{\hat{a}\in\mathcal{A}} {E}_{ au}(h,\hat{a}) U_{ au}(a_{lpha},\hat{a}_{-lpha})
ight) \ &-\sum_{\hat{a}\in\mathcal{A}} {E}_{ au}(h,\hat{a}) \ell(\hat{a},a) \max_{a} |U_{ au}(a)|\,, \end{aligned}$$

where ℓ is the loss function defined earlier.

• γ is the *discount factor* for future rewards.

? Why do we penalize reward with the maximum possible rewards?

POMDP Agent Modeling



Figure 6: POMDP performance in the e-commerce scenario for different reward functions

Empirical Evaluation

- Methodology for Empirical Evaluation
- Performance on a Set of Experiments
- Scalability of Proposed Approach
- POMDO Evaluation and Tradeoff

Methodology

Sets of experiments.

- 1. Performance of both approaches, with control groups.
- 2. Scalability of both approaches to increasing complexity.
 - Number of tasks.
 - Number of agents.
 - Number of actions.
- One ad hoc agent with multiple "legacy agents".
- Ad hoc agent must identify task, teammates and do planning.
- Results are from averages over 1000 independent Monte Carlo trials, each consisting 100 learning steps.

Agents Used for Comparison

Agent	OL	POMDP	OL (k.t.)	RL	MDP
Knows T*	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Preplans	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Learns online	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Has state	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Performance	Both	Both	Loss-only	Payoff-only	Payoff-only

The last line reports the performance indicators (loss, payoff or both) used to evaluate the different agents

Figure 7: Summary of all agents used for comparison

	Agent	H = 1	H = 2	H = 3
Loss	POMDP	1.468 ± 1.403	1.365 ± 1.181	1.255 ± 1.060
	OL	1.500 ± 1.565	1.389 ± 1.269	1.294 ± 1.026
	OL (known task)	1.510 ± 1.399	1.395 ± 1.173	1.298 ± 0.946
Payoff	POMDP	571.0 ± 36.2	571.0 ± 31.3	572.0 ± 32.0
	OL	505.7 ± 112.0	503.6 ± 111.8	497.9 ± 114.2
	MDP (known task)	522.8 ± 82.7	531.0 ± 83.00	541.1 ± 79.7
	RL	426.6 ± 116.4	273.2 ± 185.6	-113.1 ± 364.2

Figure 8: Performance of the different approaches in the e-commerce scenario for different horizon lengths.



Figure 9: Average discounted payoff of the different approaches in the e-commerce scenario for a horizon H = 3.



Figure 10: Average loss of the different approaches in the e-commerce scenario for different horizon lengths.



Figure 11: Average payoff of the different approaches in the e-commerce scenario, for different horizon lengths.

Scalability on Number of Tasks



Figure 12: a Performance of the different approaches in randomly generated scenarios as a function of the number of possible tasks. b POMDP computation time as a function of the number of tasks

Scalability on Number of Actions



Figure 13: a Performance of the different approaches in randomly generated scenarios as a function of the number of actions per agent. b POMDP computation time as a function of the number of actions per agent

Scalability on Number of Agents

2-actions, 5 tasks with number of agents ranging from 2 up to 50. H = 2



Figure 14: **a** Performance of the different approaches in randomly generated scenarios as a function of the number of agents. **b** POMDP computation time as a function of the number of agents

POMDP Evaluation and Tradeoff

- POMDP outperforms OL and other agents in most settings.
- POMDP is close to MDP in different domains.
- Performance of POMDP comes at a computational cost.

$$|\mathcal{H}_N| = \left|\mathcal{A}
ight|^{K \cdot N}$$

 Both approaches outperform "pure learning" approach based on standard RL.

Paper Conclusions

- Novel perspective of the ad hoc teamwork problem, focusing on task and teammate identification for better planning.
- Sequential decision formalization of the ad hoc teamwork problem.
- Two approaches for ad hoc agent modeling.
- Bounded rationality for both proposed approaches.
- Performance comes at a cost.

My Conclusions

- Real-life scenarios involve large action space, POMDP might not be optimal strategy.
- Scalability issue with infinite memory on the horizon.
 - History component is simplified to the most recent actions only.
 - Real life humans have way more memories to make decisions on actions.
- Pre-processing of action space to better suit POMDP computation?

My Conclusions

- How does the agents perform in an open environment?

- Agent openness and task openness essentially leads to dynamic action space.
- POMDP could perform well since it has a faster "start-up" speed.
- Bounded rationality relies heavily on "no mistake" agents.
 - Online learning will not perform well if the actions are noisy or certain agents start to behave "crazy".
 - In other settings when risk assessment needs to be considered, will both approaches will be applicable?

Thank you! Q & A

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 $\begin{array}{l} \textbf{Theorem 1}\\ If \ \gamma_t = \sqrt{2\ln|\mathcal{E}|/t^{1/2}} \ \text{for all } t > 0, \ \text{then, for any finite history}\\ h_{1:n} \in \mathcal{H},\\ R_n(P,\mathcal{E}) \leq \sqrt{\frac{n}{2}\ln|\mathcal{E}|}. \end{array}$

- Provides a minor improvement over previous existing bounds. ([14], Theorem 2.3)
- Matches the optimal bound for this class of prediction problems. [14]
- Independent of particular setting.
- Worst case performance does not deteriorate significantly with increasing number of tasks considered.

POMDP Agent

Theorem 2

The POMDP-based approach to the ad hoc teamwork problem is a *no-regret* approach, i.e.,

$$\lim_{n o\infty}rac{1}{n}R_n(P,\mathcal{E})=0.$$

With initial empty history $h_0 = \{\}$:

$$egin{aligned} &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_0,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{LCD})) = \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_0,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{LCD})) = \mathsf{0}, \ &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_0,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{MB})) = \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_0,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{MB})) = \mathsf{0}, \ &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_0,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{LCD})) = \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_0,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{LCD})) = \mathsf{0}, \ &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_0,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{MB})) = \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_0,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{MB})) = \mathsf{0}. \end{aligned}$$

Similarly for the teammate agent, the prediction is at random.

$$\begin{split} \hat{V}_{\tau_{1}}^{-\alpha}(h_{0},(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{LCD})) &= \hat{V}_{\tau_{1}}^{-\alpha}(h_{0},(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{LCD})) = 0, \\ \hat{V}_{\tau_{1}}^{-\alpha}(h_{0},(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{MB})) &= \hat{V}_{\tau_{1}}^{-\alpha}(h_{0},(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{MB})) = 0, \\ \hat{V}_{\tau_{2}}^{-\alpha}(h_{0},(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{LCD})) &= \hat{V}_{\tau_{2}}^{-\alpha}(h_{0},(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{LCD})) = 0, \\ \hat{V}_{\tau_{2}}^{-\alpha}(h_{0},(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{MB})) &= \hat{V}_{\tau_{2}}^{-\alpha}(h_{0},(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{MB})) = 0, \end{split}$$

Assuming the ad hoc agent picks action $A_1(1) = (B, LCD)$ with a prediction of $\hat{A}_2(1) = (A, MB)$, and the legacy agent's actual action is $A_2(1) = (A, LCD)$. The history becomes $h_1 = \{\langle (B, LCD), (A, LCD) \rangle\}$. Correspondingly, the loss and regrets:

$$L_{ au_1}(h_1)=1, \quad L_{ au_2}(h_1)=0.5, \quad L_P(h_1)=0.75, \quad R_0(P,\mathcal{E})=0.25$$

Now in the second step, with h_1 we have updated values:

$$egin{aligned} &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_1,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{LCD})) = -22, & \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_1,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{LCD})) = -24, \ &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_1,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{MB})) = 4, & \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_1,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{MB})) = -1, \ &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_1,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{LCD})) = -22, & \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_1,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{LCD})) = -24, \ &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_1,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{MB})) = 6, & \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_1,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{MB})) = 1. \end{aligned}$$

The ad hoc agent will select action $A_1(2) = (A, MB)$. Similarly the prediction:

$$egin{aligned} &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_1,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{LCD})) = -24, & \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_1,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{LCD})) = -19, \ &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_1,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{MB})) = 4, & \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_1}(h_1,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{MB})) = -6, \ &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_1,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{LCD})) = -24, & \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_1,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{LCD})) = -19, \ &\hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_1,(\mathsf{A},\mathsf{MB})) = 3, & \hat{V}^{lpha}_{ au_2}(h_1,(\mathsf{B},\mathsf{MB})) = 4. \end{aligned}$$

The ad hoc agent will predict (B, MB). Given $T^* = \tau_2, \hat{A}_2(2) = (B, MB)$, we have: $L_{\tau_1}(h_2) = 1, \quad L_{\tau_2}(h_2) = 0.5, \quad L_P(h_2) = 0.75, \quad R_1(P, \mathcal{E}) = 0.25$

Pursuit Domain Benchmark



Figure 15: Capture configurations a in the classical pursuit domain; b in the modified pursuit domain

Pursuit Domain Benchmark



Figure 16: Comparative performance of the OL approach, the BSKR approach of Barrett et al. [15] and a standard RL agent in the pursuit domain. All results are averages over 1,000 independent Monte Carlo runs