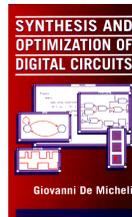


Modeling Languages and Abstract Models

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Module 1

◆ Objective

- ▲ Modeling requirements in systems
- ▲ Modeling styles

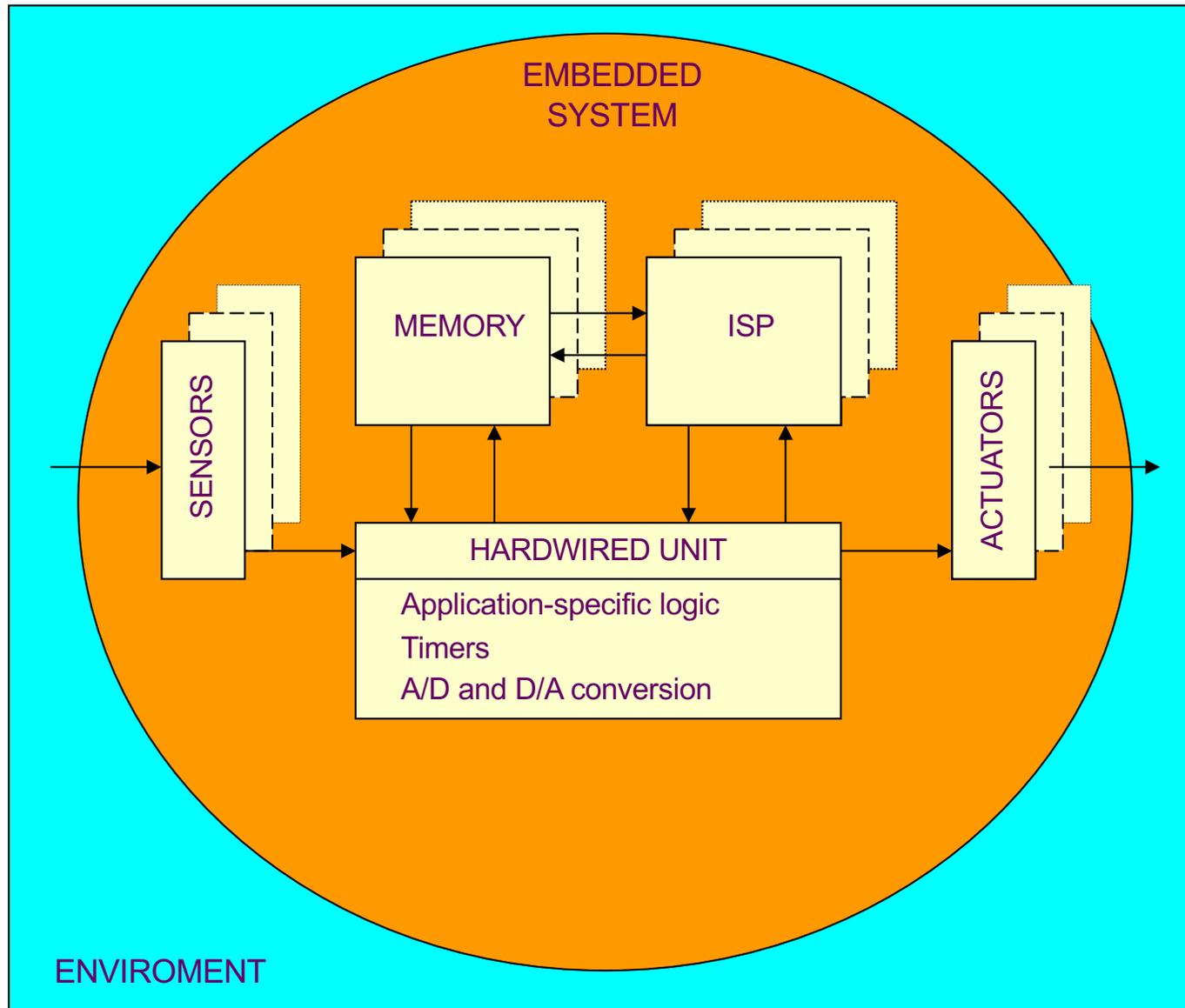
Electronic systems

- ◆ **A system is a combination of:**
 - ▲ **Hardware platform:**
 - ▼ Processors, memories, transducers
 - ▲ **Software :**
 - ▼ Application and system software
- ◆ **Attributes:**
 - ▲ **Application domain**
 - ▼ Computing, communication, consumer
 - ▲ **Integration level**
 - ▼ Chip, board, distributed/networked
 - ▲ **Function**
 - ▼ Autonomous, embedded

Trends and challenges

- ◆ Design increasingly more **complex** systems under higher *time to market* pressure
 - ▲ Raise level of abstraction
- ◆ Design starts are mainly for embedded system applications
- ◆ Use and **re-use** of high-level components
 - ▲ Processors, controllers, embedded memories
- ◆ Support **concurrent Hw/Sw** development
 - ▲ System customization via embedded software
- ◆ Support automated **synthesis** and **verification**

Embedded systems



Embedded system requirements

◆ Reactive systems:

- ▲ The system never stops

- ▲ The system responds to signals produced by the environment

◆ Real-time systems:

- ▲ Timing constraints on task execution

- ▲ Hard and soft constraints

System modeling

- ◆ **Represent system functions while abstracting away unnecessary details**
 - ▲ **Software *programming languages***
 - ▲ **Hardware *description languages***
 - ▲ **Flow and *state-based diagrams***
 - ▲ **Schematics**
- ◆ **No golden solution**
 - ▲ **System heterogeneity**

The limits of my language mean the limits of my world

Wittgenstein



Circuit Modeling

- ◆ **Formal methods:**
 - ▲ Models in hardware languages
 - ▲ Flow and state diagrams
 - ▲ Schematics
- ◆ **Informal methods:**
 - ▲ Principles of operations
 - ▲ Natural-language descriptions

Hardware versus software models

◆ Hardware:

- ▲ *Parallel* execution
- ▲ I/O ports, building blocks
- ▲ Exact event timing is *very* important

◆ Software:

- ▲ Sequential execution (usually)
- ▲ Structural information less important
- ▲ Exact event timing is *not* important

Hardware Description Languages

- ◆ **Specialized languages with hardware design support**
- ◆ **Multi-level abstraction:**
 - ▲ Behavior, RTL, structural
- ◆ **Support for simulation and synthesis**
 - ▲ ... but synthesis came in later

Software programming languages

- ◆ **Software programming languages (C) can model functional behavior:**
 - ▲ Example: processor models
- ◆ **Software language models support marginally design and synthesis:**
 - ▲ Unless extensions and overloading is used
 - ▲ Example: **SystemC**
- ◆ **Different paradigms for hardware and software**
- ◆ **Strong trend in bridging the gap between software programming languages and HDLs**

Module 2

◆ Objectives

- ▲ Language analysis
- ▲ Procedural languages (Verilog)
- ▲ Declarative languages (SystemVerilog)
- ▲ Object-oriented languages (SystemC)

Language analysis

◆ Syntax:

- ▲ External look of a language
- ▲ Specified by a grammar

◆ Semantics:

- ▲ Meaning of a language
- ▲ Different ways of specifying it

◆ Pragmatics:

- ▲ Other aspects of the language
- ▲ Implementation issues

Language analysis

◆ *Procedural* languages:

- ▲ *Specify the action by a sequence of steps*

- ▲ *Examples: C, Pascal, VHDL, Verilog*

◆ *Declarative* languages:

- ▲ **Specify the problem by a set of declaration**

- ▲ **Example: Prolog**

Language analysis

◆ *Imperative Semantics:*

- ▲ Dependence between the assignments and the values that variables can take
- ▲ Examples C, Pascal

◆ *Applicative semantics:*

- ▲ Based on function invocation
- ▲ Examples: Lisp, Silage

Hardware languages and views

◆ Physical view:

- ▲ Physical layout languages
- ▲ Declarative or procedural

◆ Structural view:

- ▲ Structural languages
- ▲ Declarative (with some procedural features)

◆ Behavioral view:

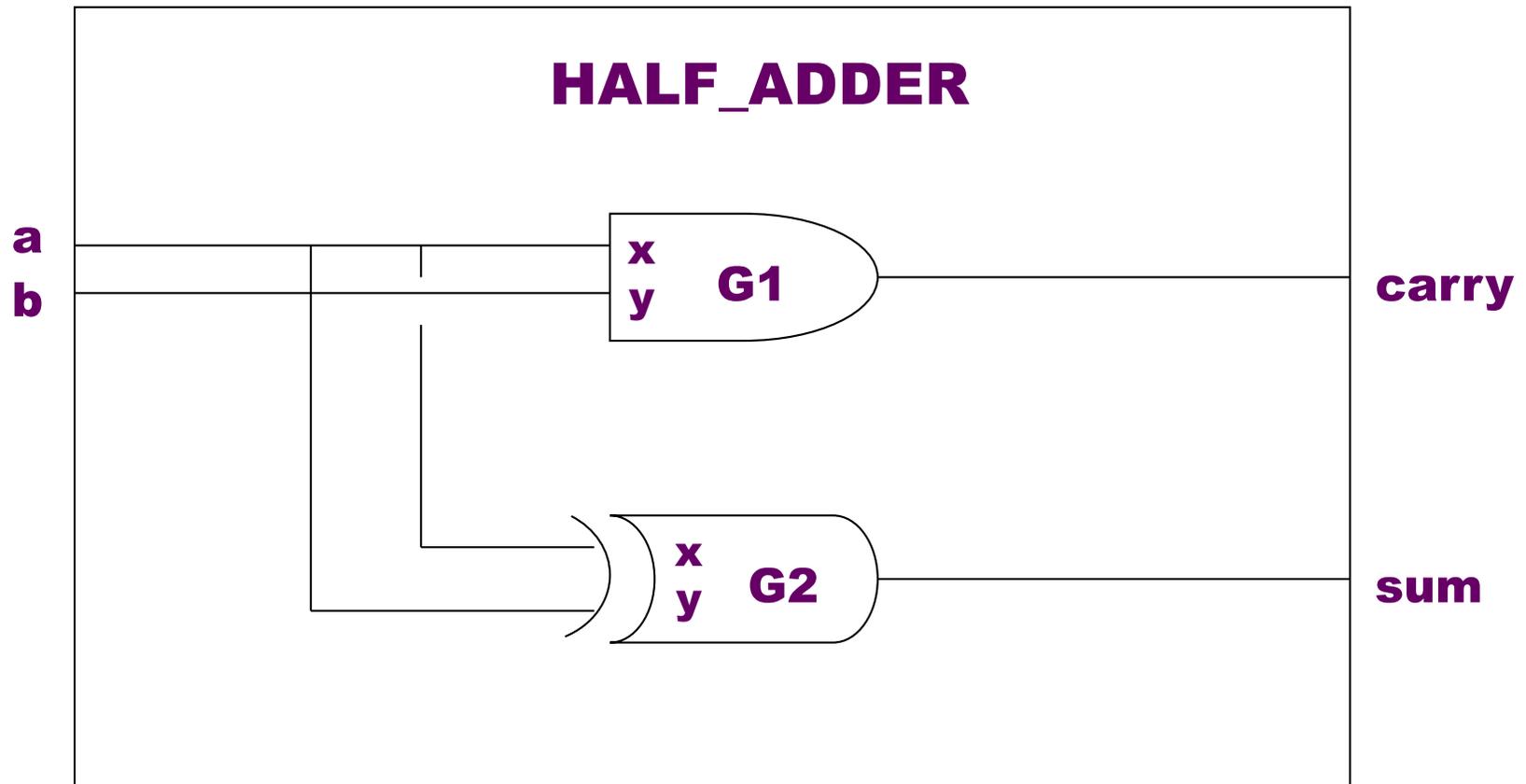
- ▲ Behavioral languages
- ▲ Mainly procedural

Structural view

- ◆ **Composition of blocks**
- ◆ **Encoding of a schematic**
- ◆ **Incidence structure**
- ◆ **Hierarchy and instantiation**
- ◆ **HDL examples:**
 - ▲ **VHDL, Verilog HDL, ...**

Example

(half adder)



Verilog example

Structural representation

```
module HALF_ADDER (a , b , carry , sum);
```

```
input  a , b;
```

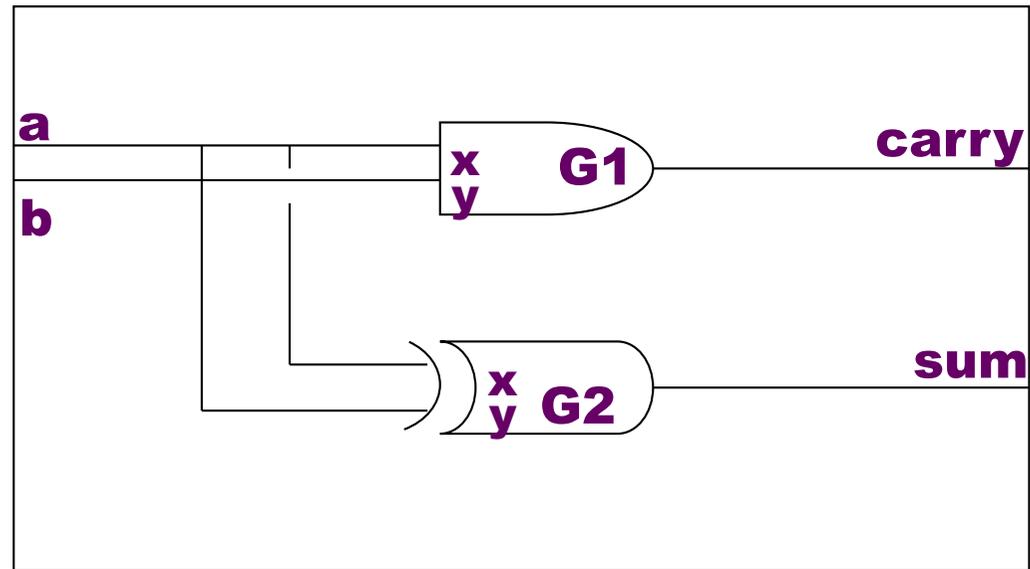
```
output carry, sum;
```

```
and
```

```
g1 (carry, a , b);
```

```
xor
```

```
g2 (sum, a , b);
```



```
endmodule
```

Behavioral view

procedural languages

- ◆ **Set of tasks with *partial order*:**
 - ▲ *Architectural-level*:
 - ▼ Tasks: generic operations.
 - ▲ *Logic-level*:
 - ▼ Tasks: logic functions.
- ◆ **Independent of implementation choices**
- ◆ **HDL examples:**
 - ▲ VHDL, Verilog HDL, ...

Verilog example

Behavior of combinational logic circuit

```
module HALF_ADDER(a , b , carry ,sum);  
  
    input    a , b;  
  
    output   carry, sum;  
  
        assign carry = a & b ;  
  
        assign sum = a ^ b ;  
  
endmodule
```

Verilog example

behavior of sequential logic circuit

```
module DIFFEQ (x, y, u , dx, a, clock, start);
Input      [7:0]      a, dx;
inout     [7:0]      x, y, u;
input                                           clock, start;
reg [7:0]  xl, ul, yl;
always
begin
    wait ( start);
    while ( x < a )
        begin
            xl = x + dx;
            ul = u - (3 * x * u * dx) - (3 * y * dx);
            yl = y + (u * dx);
            @(posedge clock);
            x = xl; u = ul ; y = yl;
        end
endmodule
```

Timing interpretation for design

- ◆ **Operations are synchronized to a clock**
 - ▲ By using a **wait** (or **@**) command
- ◆ **Wait and @ statements delimit clock boundaries**
- ◆ **Clock is a parameter of the model:**
 - ▲ Model is updated at each clock cycle

Main languages at structural/behavioral level

- ◆ Often called register-transfer level (RTL) languages
- ◆ Verilog (now System Verilog):
 - ▲ C-like, easy to write, harder to read
 - ▲ Motivated by high design productivity
- ◆ VHDL
 - ▲ Verbose, longer to write, easy to read
 - ▲ Motivated by large system design

Behavioral view

declarative languages

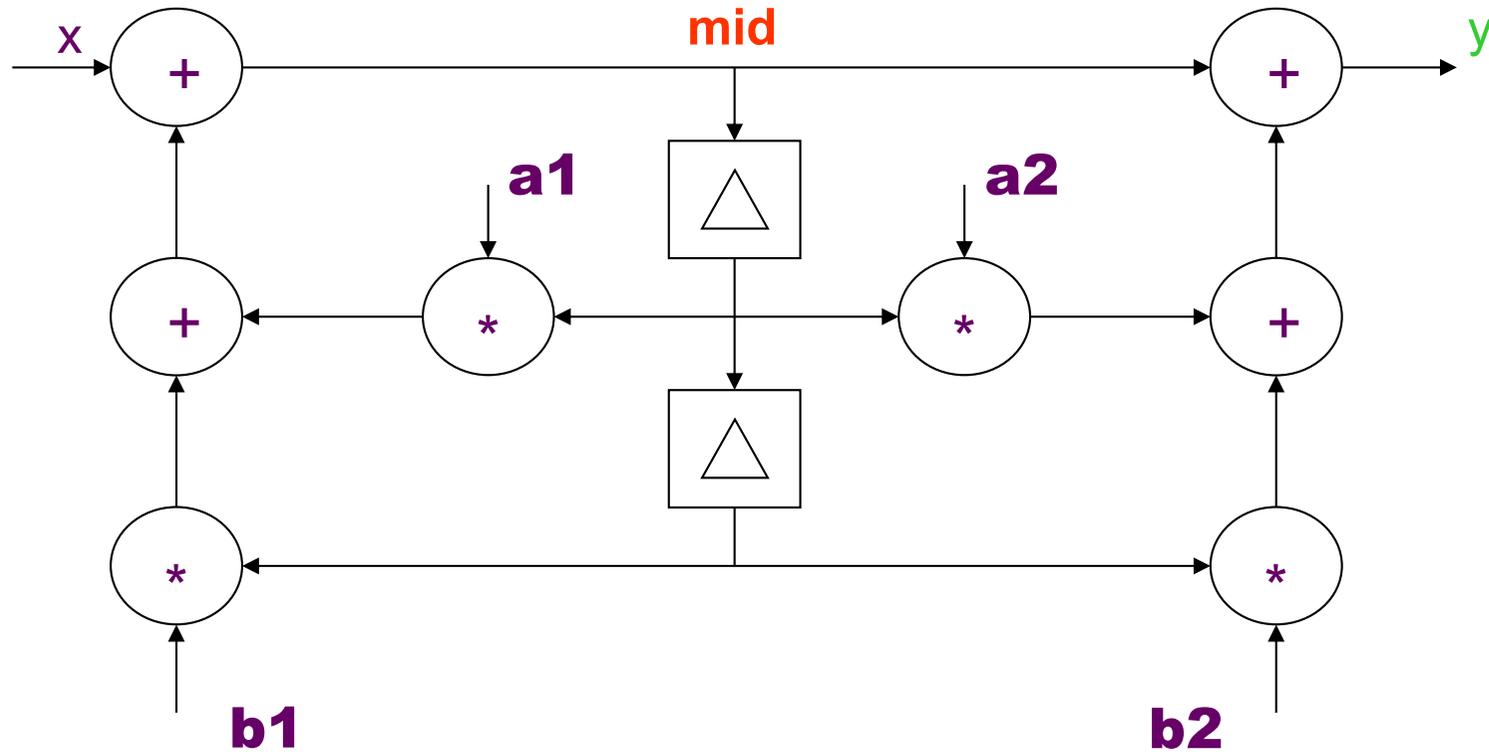
◆ Combinational circuits:

- ▲ Set of untimed assignments.
- ▲ Each assignment represents a virtual logic gate
- ▲ Very similar to procedural models

◆ Sequential circuits:

- ▲ Use timing annotation for delayed signals
- ▲ Set of assignments over (delayed) variables

Silage example



```
function IIR ( a1, a2 , b1, b2, x: num) /* returns */ y : num =  
begin
```

```
    y = mid + a2 * mid@1 + b2 * mid@2;  
    mid = x + a1 * mid@1 + b1 * mid@2;
```

```
end
```

Hardware primitives

- ◆ **Hardware basic units:**

- ▲ **Logic gates**

- ▲ **Registers**

- ▲ **Black-boxes**

- ▼ e.g., Complex units, RAMs

- ◆ **Connections**

- ◆ **Ports**

Semantics of variables

- ◆ **Variables are implemented in hardware by:**
 - ▲ **Registers**
 - ▲ **Wires**
- ◆ **The hardware can store information or not**
- ◆ **Two cases:**
 - ▲ **Combinational circuits**
 - ▼ **Resolution policy for multiple assignment to a variable**
 - ▲ **Sequential circuits**
 - ▼ **Variables keep values until reassigned**

Main languages at system level

◆ SystemC

- ▲ Object-oriented C++ hardware library

◆ System Verilog:

- ▲ Extension of Verilog to system level
- ▲ Support for system-level verification

◆ OpenCL

- ▲ Framework for heterogeneous system design
- ▲ Interface to parallel computing

System Verilog

- ◆ **Extensions to Verilog HDL**
 - ▲ Includes now the original Verilog language
- ◆ **Modeling:**
 - ▲ Transaction-level modeling
 - ▼ Higher abstraction level
 - ▲ Direct Programming interface
 - ▼ Enables calls to C/C++/SystemC
 - ▼ Co-simulation Verilog/SystemC
 - ▲ Interface modeling with encapsulation
 - ▼ Support bus-intensive design
 - ▼ IP protection by nesting modules
- ◆ **Verification:**
 - ▲ Procedural assertions
 - ▼ Built into the language
 - ▼ Avoid recoding errors, increase test accuracy

SystemC

- ◆ **Objectives:**

- ▲ **Model Hw with Sw programming language**
- ▲ **Achieve fast simulation**
- ▲ **Provide support for hw/sw system design**

- ◆ **Requirement:**

- ▲ **Give hw semantics to sw models**

- ◆ **Supported by a large consortium of semiconductor and EDA companies**

SystemC

- ◆ **C++ class library and modeling methodology**
 - ▲ **Hw semantics defined through the class library**
- ◆ **Object-oriented style**
 - ▲ **Components and encapsulation**
- ◆ **No language restriction or addition**
- ◆ **Some hw synthesis support**

SystemC features

- ◆ Enable C++ without extending the language (syntax) - use classes

Concurrency



Processes

Hardware Data Types



bit vectors, arbitrary precision
signed and unsigned integers,
fixed-point numbers

Notion of Time



Clocks

Reactive Behavior



Watching

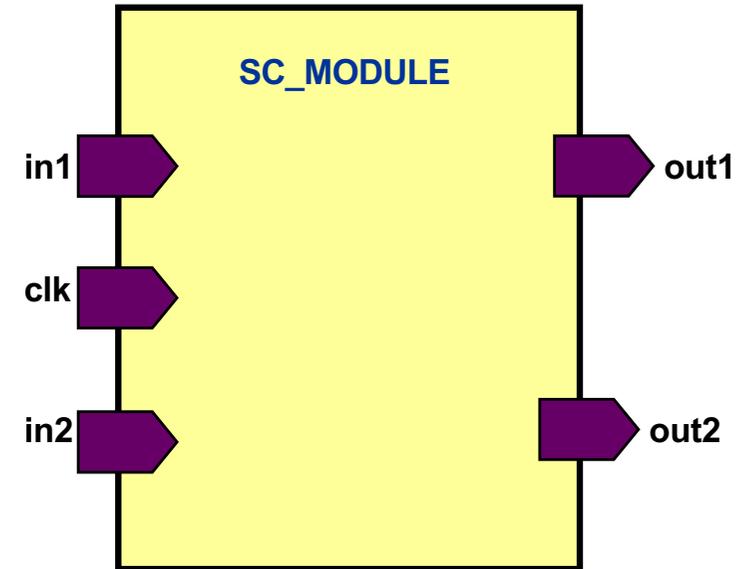
Communication



Signals, protocols

SystemC Classes: Modules and Ports

- ◆ Modules (`sc_module`)
 - ▲ Fundamental structural entity
 - ▲ Contain processes
 - ▲ Contain other modules (creating hierarchy)

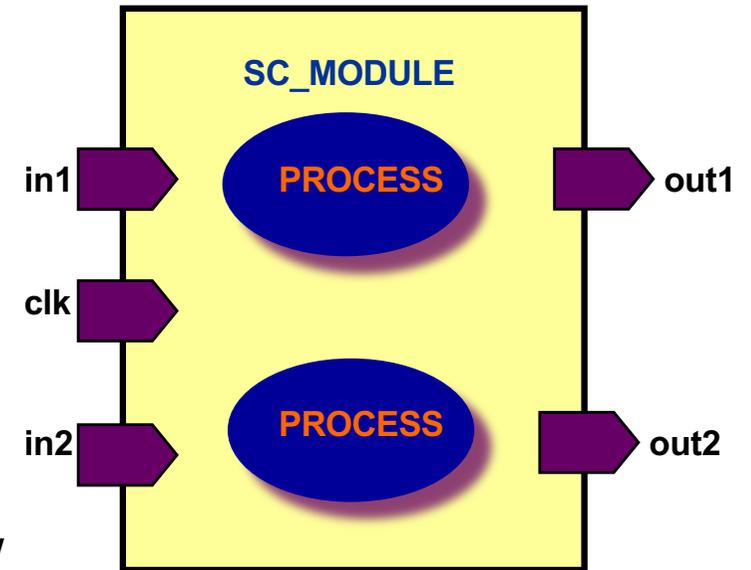


- Ports(`sc_in<>`, `sc_out<>`, `sc_inout<>`)
 - Modules have ports
 - Ports have types
 - A process can be made sensitive to ports/signals

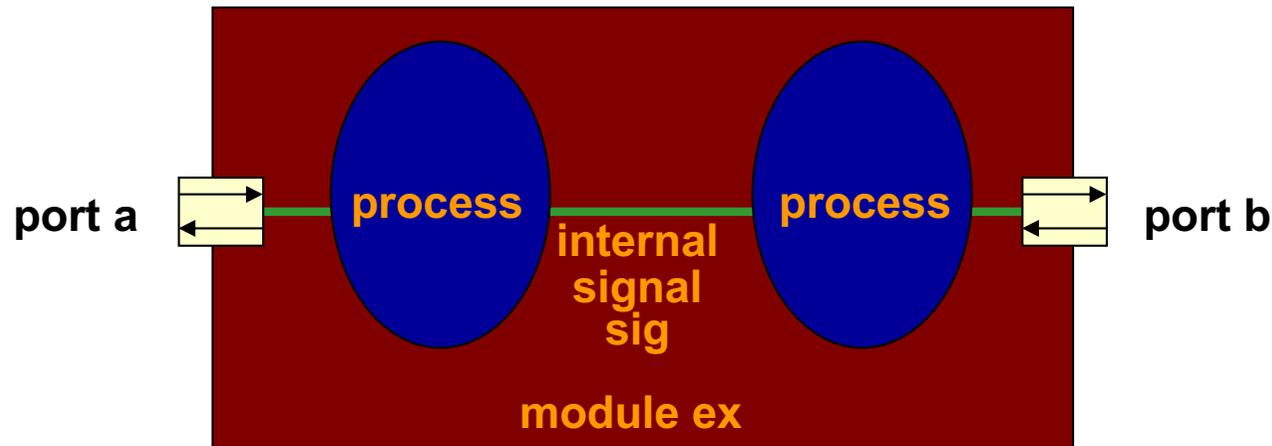
SystemC Classes: Processes

◆ Processes

- ▲ Functionality is described in a process
- ▲ Processes run concurrently
- ▲ Code inside a process executes sequentially
- ▲ SystemC has three different types of processes
 - ▼ SC_METHOD
 - ▼ SC_THREAD
 - ▼ SC_CTHREAD

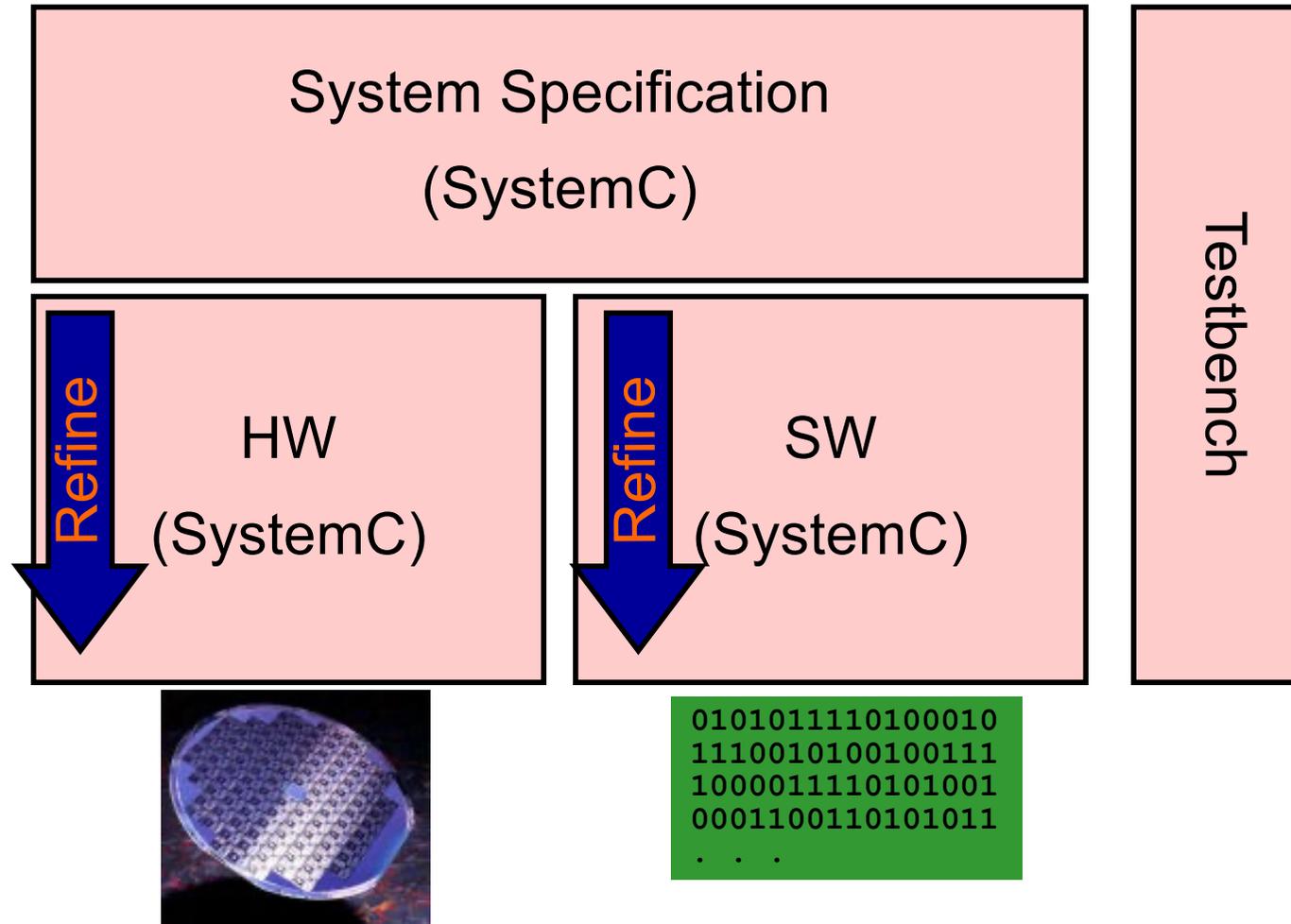


Execution of processes



- ◆ Not hierarchical, communicate through signals
- ◆ Execution and signal updates
 - ▲ request-update semantics
 - ▲ 1. execute all processes that can be executed
 - ▲ 2. update the signals written by the processes
 - ▲ 3. => other processes to be executed

SystemC Design Vision



◆ SystemC as a single design language

Module 3

◆ Objectives

- ▲ Abstract models

- ▲ The sequencing graph abstraction and its properties

Abstract models and intermediate formats

◆ Abstract models:

- ▲ Models based on graphs and discrete mathematics
- ▲ Useful for problem formalization, algorithm development and reasoning about properties

◆ Intermediate forms:

- ▲ ASCII or binary representations of abstract models
- ▲ Derived from language models by compilation

Abstract models

Examples

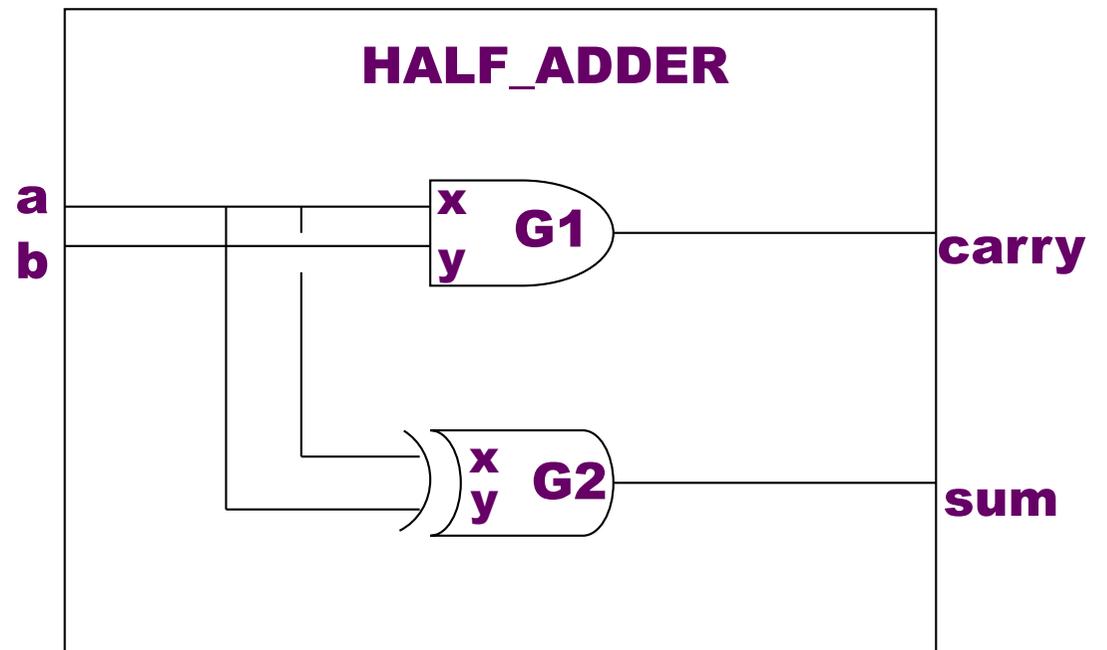
- ◆ **Netlists:**
 - ▲ **Structural views**
- ◆ **Logic networks:**
 - ▲ **Mixed structural/behavioral views**
- ◆ **State diagrams:**
 - ▲ **Behavioral views of sequential models**
- ◆ **Dataflow and sequencing graphs:**
 - ▲ **Abstraction of behavioral models**

Netlist

◆ Module-oriented netlist

▲ G1: a,b,carry

▲ G2: a,b,sum



Logic network

◆ Logic network

▲ An interconnection of blocks

- ▼ Each block modeled by a Boolean function

▲ Usual restrictions:

- ▼ Acyclic and memoryless
- ▼ Single-output functions

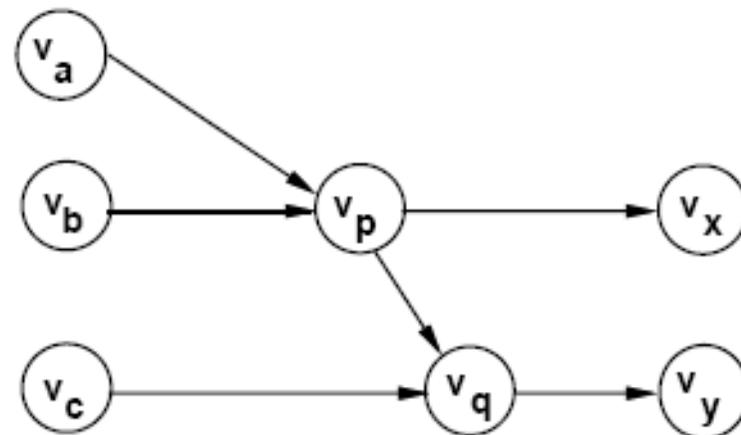
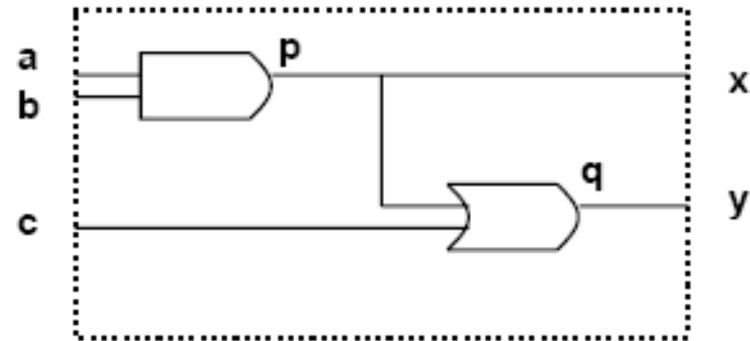
◆ The model has a structural/behavioral semantics

- ▲ The structure is induced by the interconnection

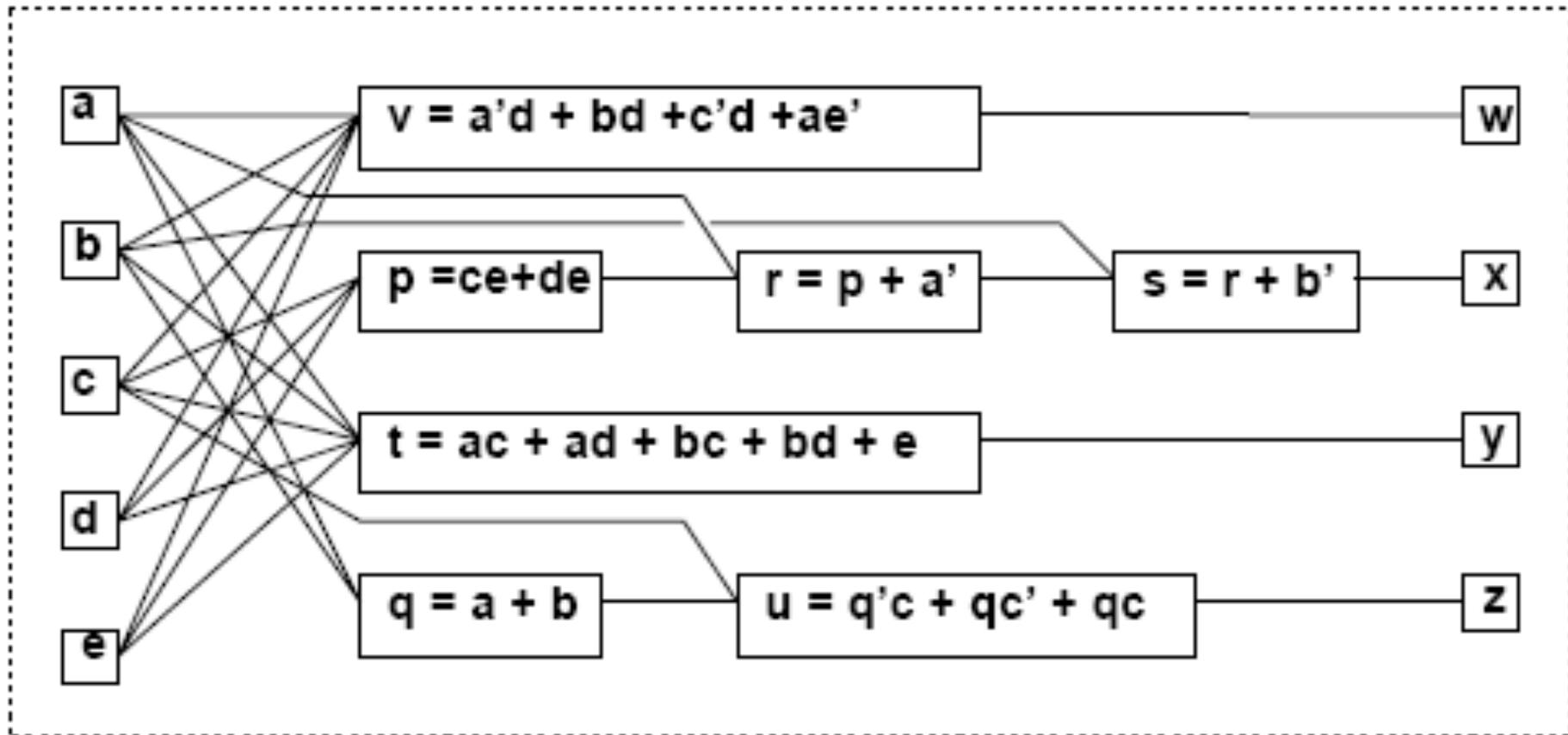
◆ Mapped network

- ▲ Special case when the blocks correspond to library elements

Example of mapped network



Example of general network



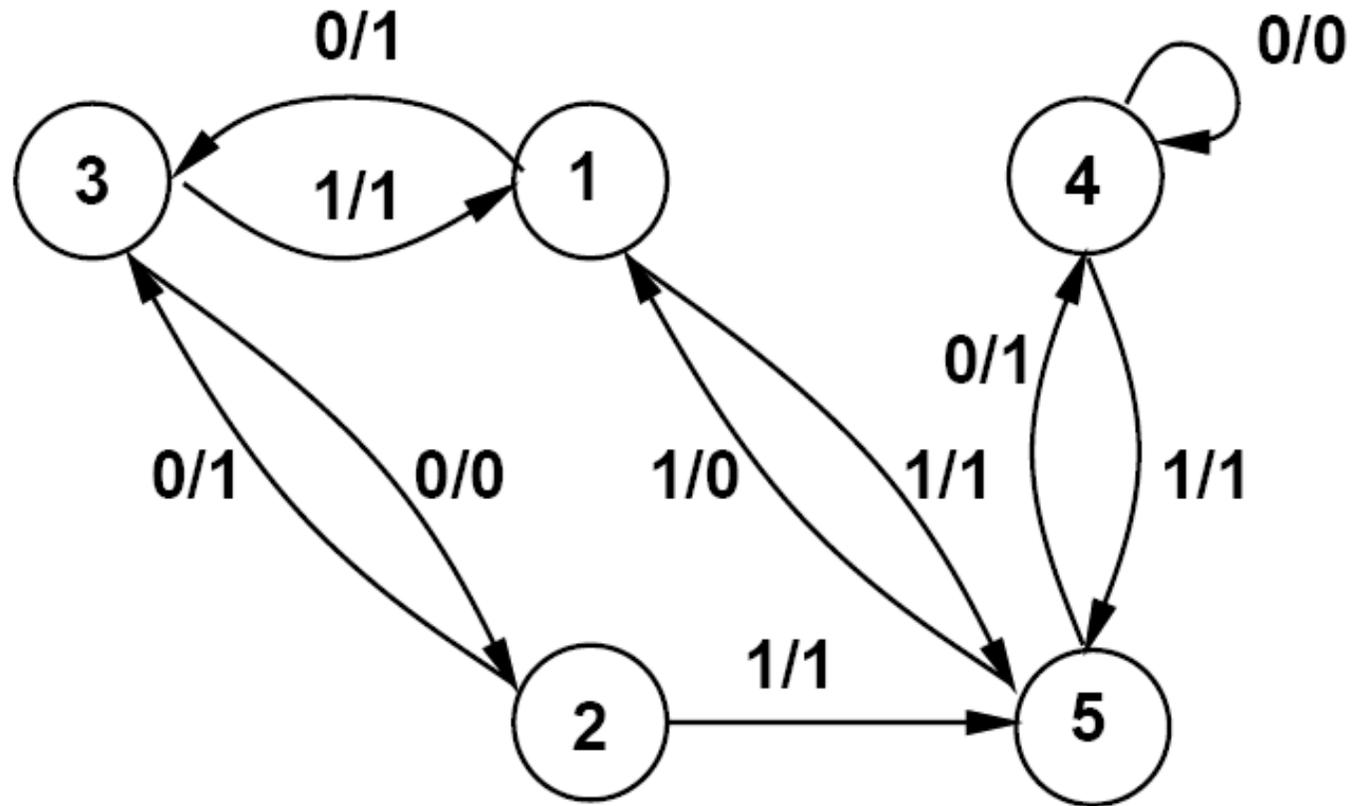
Formal finite-state machine model

- ◆ A set of primary input patterns X
- ◆ A set of primary output patterns Y
- ◆ A set of states S
- ◆ A state transition function: $\delta: X \times S \rightarrow S$
- ◆ An output function:
 - ▲ $\lambda: X \times S \rightarrow Y$ for **Mealy** models
 - ▲ $\lambda: S \rightarrow Y$ for **Moore** models

Example

INPUT	STATE	N-STATE	OUTPUT
0	s_1	s_3	1
1	s_1	s_5	1
0	s_2	s_3	1
1	s_2	s_5	1
0	s_3	s_2	0
1	s_3	s_1	1
0	s_4	s_4	0
1	s_4	s_5	1
0	s_5	s_4	1
1	s_5	s_1	0

Example



Dataflow graphs

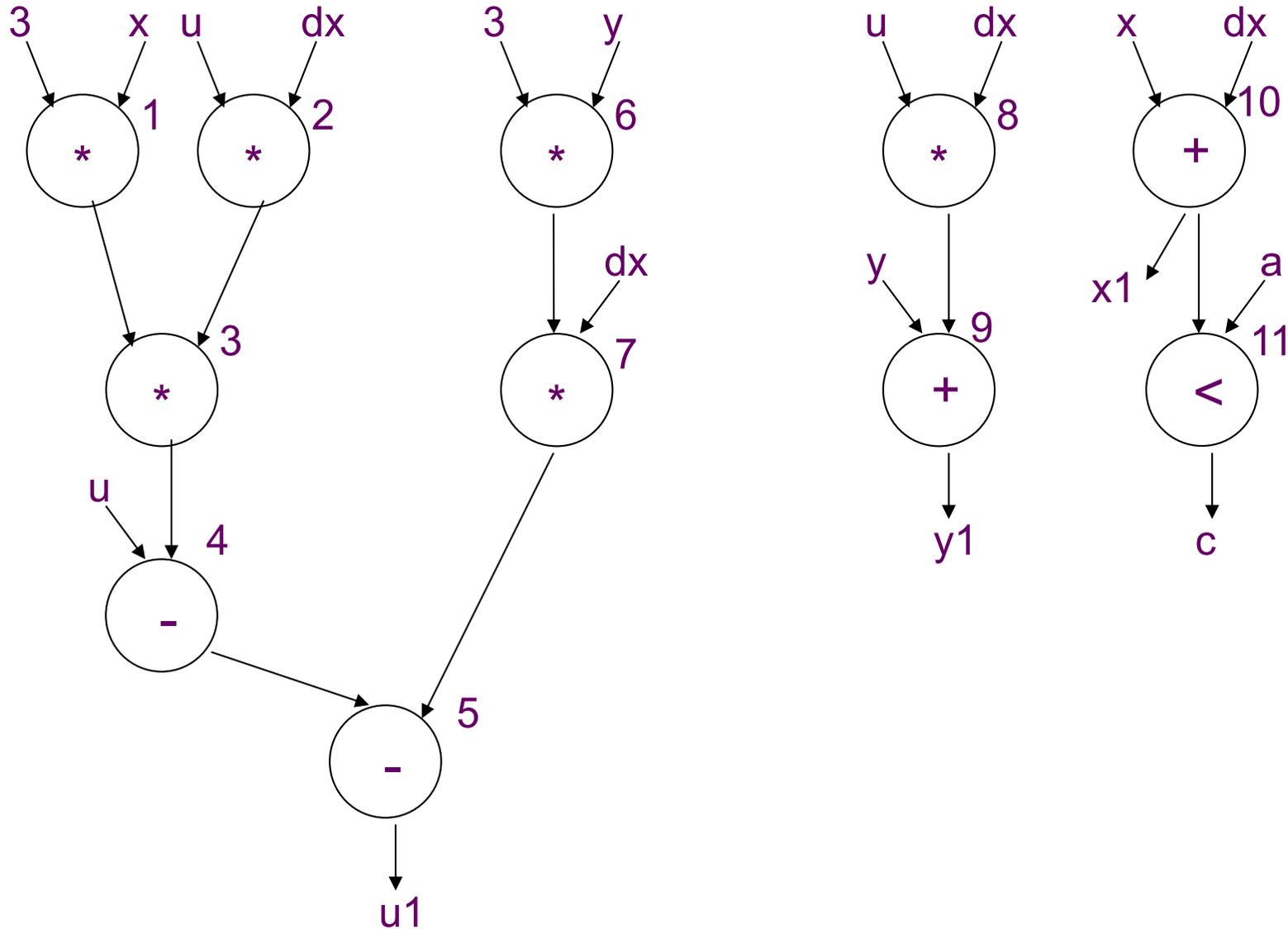
- ◆ Behavioral views of architectural models
- ◆ Useful to represent data-paths
- ◆ Graph:
 - ▲ Vertices = operations
 - ▲ Edges = dependencies

Example

Differential equation solver -- loop body

```
diffeq {  
  read ( x, y, u, dx, a ) ;  
  repeat {  
    xl = x + dx;  
    ul = u - ( 3 · x · u · dx ) - ( 3 · y · dx ) ;  
    yl = y + u · dx ;  
    c = x < a ;  
    x = xl; u = ul; y = yl ;  
  until ( c );  
  write ( y )  
}
```

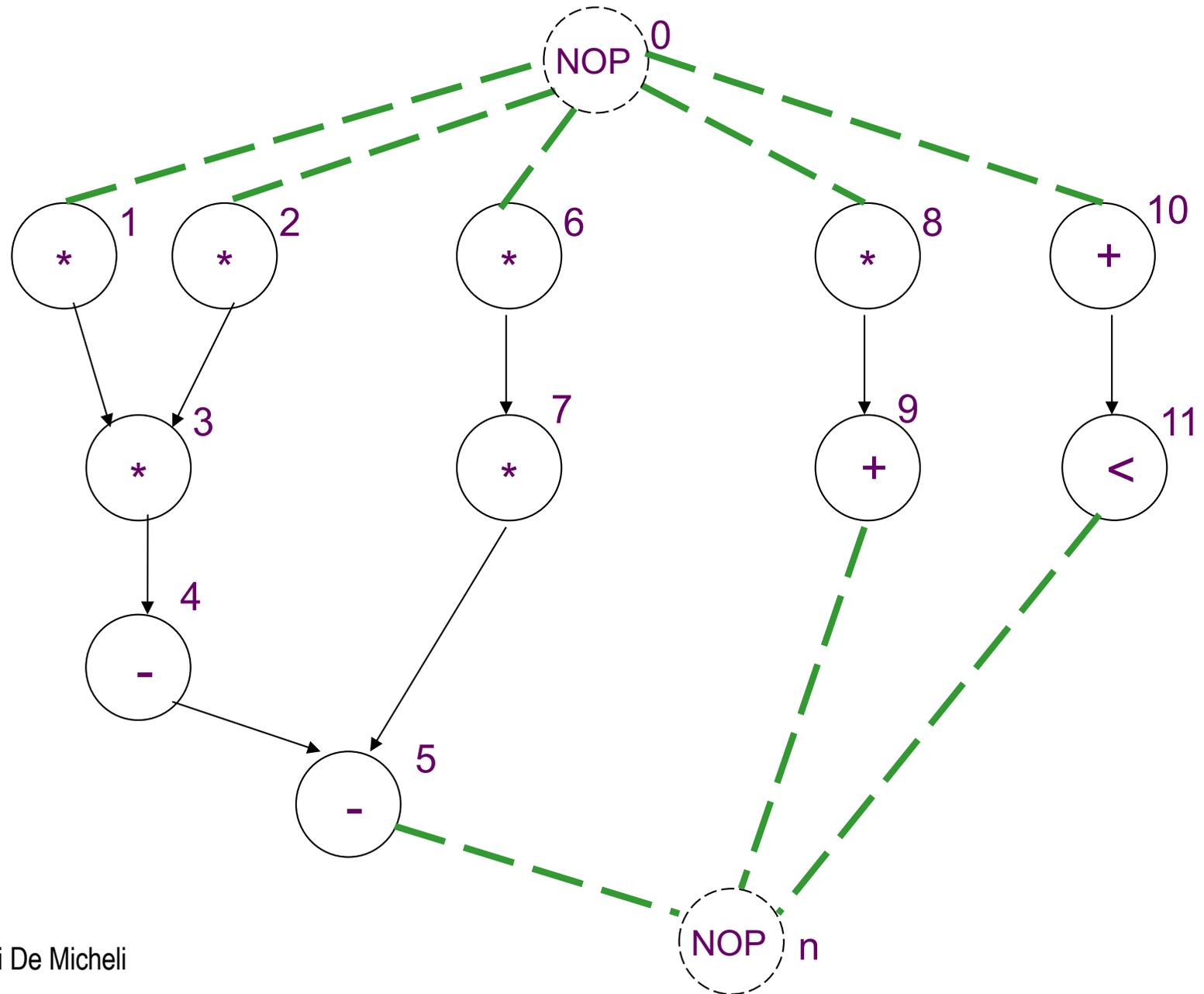
Example



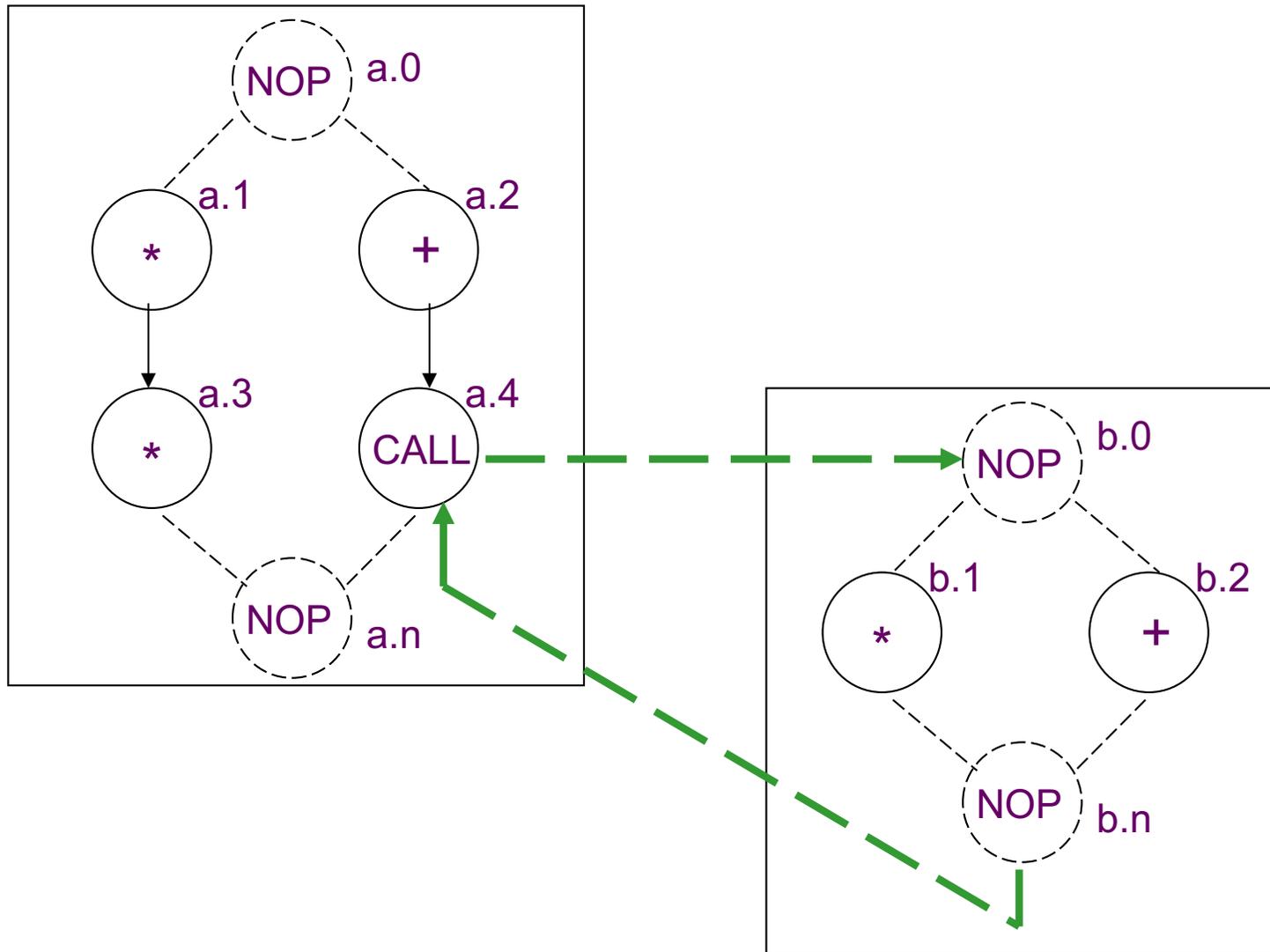
Sequencing graphs

- ◆ Behavioral views of architectural models
- ◆ Useful to represent data-path and control
- ◆ Extended dataflow graphs:
 - ▲ Operation serialization
 - ▲ Hierarchy
 - ▲ Control-flow commands:
 - ▼ Branching and iteration.
- ◆ Polar graphs:
 - ▲ Source and sink

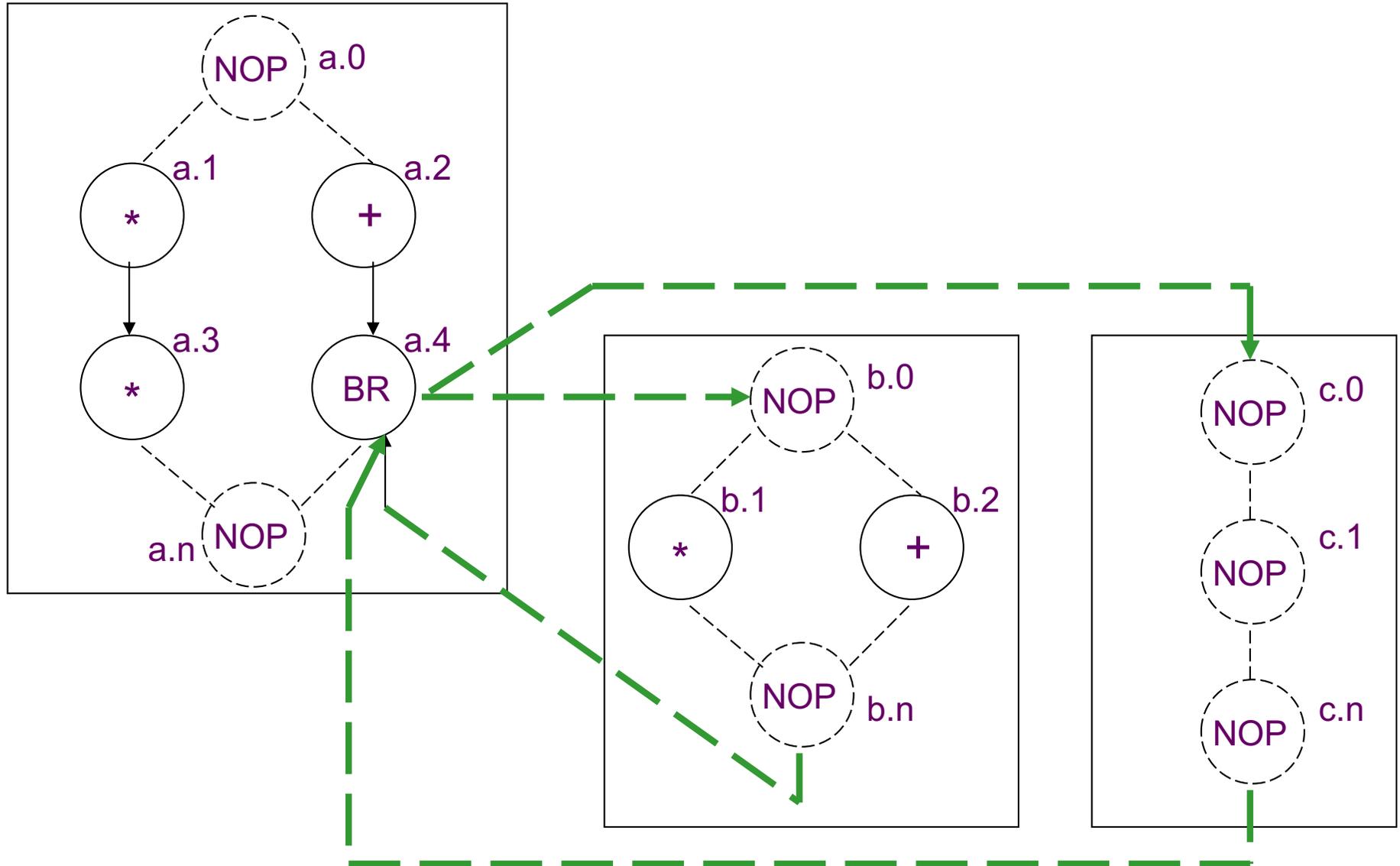
Example



Example of hierarchy



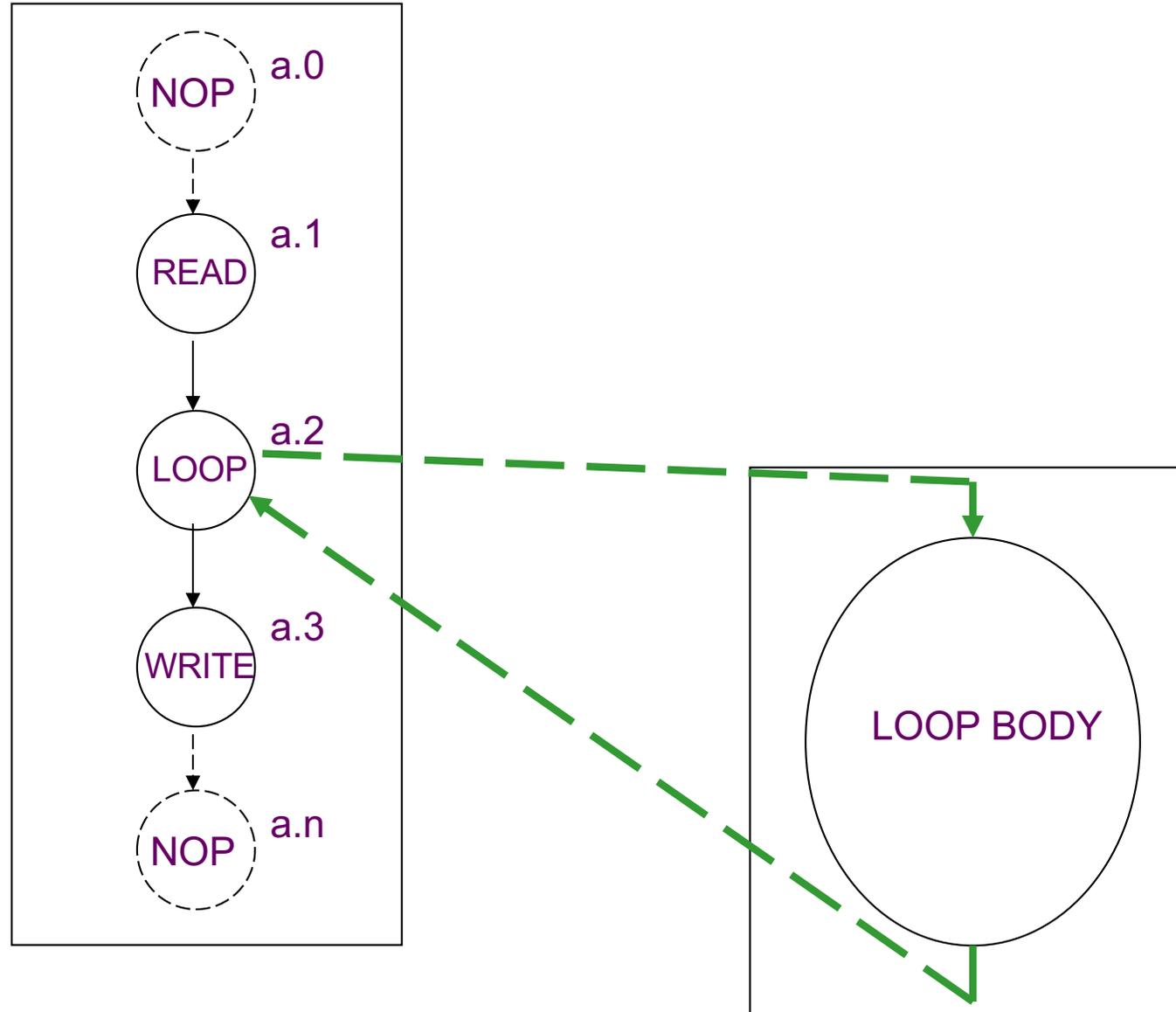
Example of branching



Example of iteration

```
diffeq {  
    read (x; y; u; dx; a);  
    repeat {  
        xl = x + dx;  
        ul = u - (3 · x · u · dx ;  
        yl = y + u · dx ;  
        c = x > a;  
        x = xl ; u = ul ; y = yl ;  
    }  
    until ( c )  
    write (y) ;  
}
```

Example of iteration



Semantics of sequencing graphs

◆ Marking of vertices:

- ▲ **Waiting** for execution
- ▲ **Executing**
- ▲ Having **completed execution**

◆ Execution semantics:

- ▲ **An operation can be fired as soon as all its immediate predecessors have completed execution**

Vertex attributes

- ◆ **Area cost**
- ◆ **Delay cost:**
 - ▲ Propagation delay
 - ▲ Execution delay
- ◆ **Data-dependent execution delays:**
 - ▲ Bounded (e.g. branching)
 - ▲ Unbounded (e.g. iteration, synchronization)

Properties of sequencing graphs

- ◆ Computed by visiting hierarchy bottom-up
- ◆ Area estimate:
 - ▲ Sum of the area attributes of all vertices
 - ▲ Worst-case – no sharing
- ◆ Delay estimate (**latency**):
 - ▲ Bounded-latency graphs
 - ▲ Length of longest path from source to sink

Summary

- ◆ **Hardware synthesis requires specialized language support:**
 - ▲ **VHDL and System Verilog are mainly used today**
 - ▼ **Similar features**
 - ▼ **Simulation-oriented**
- ◆ **Synthesis from programming languages is also possible:**
 - ▲ **Hardware and software models of computation are different**
 - ▲ **Appropriate hw semantics need to be associated with programming languages**
 - ▼ **SystemC**
- ◆ **Abstract models:**
 - ▲ **Capture essential information**
 - ▲ **Derivable from HDL models**
 - ▲ **Useful to prove properties and for algorithm development.**