



### von Wright's 1951 System and SDL

It is fair to say that von Wright 1951 launched deontic logic as an area of active research. There was a flurry of responses, and not a year has gone by since without published work in this area. von Wright's 1951 system is an important predecessor of SDL, but the variables there ranged over *act types* not propositions. As a result, the deontic operator symbols (e.g., **OB**) were interpreted as applying not to sentences, but to names of act types (cf. “to attend” or “attending”) to yield a sentence (e.g., “it is obligatory to attend” or “attending is obligatory”). So iterated deontic sequences (e.g., **OBOBA**) were not well-formed formulas and shouldn't have been on his intended interpretation, since **OBA** (unlike *A*) is a sentence, not an act description, so not suitable for having **OB** as a preface to it (cf. “it is obligatory it is obligatory to run” or “running is obligatory is obligatory”). However, von Wright did think that there can be negations, disjunctions and conjunctions of act types, and so he used standard connectives to generate not only complex normative sentences (e.g., **OBA & PEA**), but complex act descriptions (e.g., *A & ~B*), and thus complex normative sentences involving them (e.g., **OB(A & ~B) → PE(A & ~B)**). The standard connectives of PC are thus used in a systematically ambiguous way in von Wright's initial system with the hope of no confusion, but a more refined approach (as he recognized) would call for the usual truth-functional operators and a second set of act-type-compounding analogues to these.<sup>[1]</sup> Mixed formulas (e.g., *A → OBA*) were not well-formed in his 1951 system and shouldn't have been on his intended interpretation, since if **OBA** is well-formed, then *A* must be a name of an act type not a sentence, but then it can't suitably be a preface to  $\rightarrow$ , when the latter is followed by an item of the sentence category (e.g., **OBA**). (Cf. “If to run then it is obligatory to run.”) However, this also means that the standard violation condition for an obligation (e.g., **OBp & ~p**) is not expressible in his system. von Wright also rejected NEC, but otherwise accepts analogues to the basic principles of SDL.

Researchers quickly opted for a syntactic approach where the variables and operators are interpreted propositionally as they are in PC (Prior 1962 [1955], Anderson 1956, Kanger 1971 [1957], and Hintikka 1957), and von Wright soon adopted this course himself in his key early revisions of his “old system” (e.g., von Wright 1968, 1971 (originally published in 1964 and 1965, respectively). Note that this is essentially a return to the approach in Mally's Deontic Logic of a few decades before.

Return to Deontic Logic.

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## Standard Deontic Logic (SDL)

- A1. Όλες οι ταυτολογίες (TAUT)
- A2.  $OB(P \rightarrow Q) \rightarrow (OBP \rightarrow OBQ)$  (OB-K)
- A3.  $OBP \rightarrow \sim OB \sim P$  (OB-D)
- R1. Αν  $\vdash P$  και  $\vdash P \rightarrow Q$ , τότε  $\vdash Q$ . (Modus Ponens)
- R2. Αν  $\vdash P$ , τότε  $\vdash OBP$ . (OB-NEC)

## Τυπικά θεωρήματα και παραγόμενοι κανόνες

- (1)  $OB \top$
- (2)  $\sim OB \perp$
- (3)  $OB(P \& Q) \rightarrow (OBP \& OBQ)$
- (4)  $(OBP \& OBQ) \rightarrow OB(P \& Q)$
- (5)  $OBP \vee OBP \vee IMP$
- (6) αν  $\vdash P \rightarrow Q$ , τότε  $\vdash OBP \rightarrow OBQ$
- (7) αν  $\vdash P \leftrightarrow Q$ , τότε  $\vdash OBP \leftrightarrow OBQ$ .

### Αποδείξεις.

(2) Χρησιμοποιούμε τη μέθοδο απαγωγής σε άτοπο.

Έστω λοιπόν  $OB \perp$ . Από την κλασική προτασιακή λογική, ξέρουμε ότι  $\vdash \perp \leftrightarrow (p \& \sim p)$ .

Αρα, με βάση το (7), θα έχουμε ότι  $\vdash OB \perp \leftrightarrow OB(p \& \sim p)$ .

Έπεται λοιπόν ότι  $\vdash OB(p \& \sim p)$ , οπότε, λόγω του (3),

παίρνουμε ότι  $\vdash \text{OB } P \& \text{OB } \neg P$  και συνεπώς  $\vdash \text{OB } P$  και  $\vdash \text{OB } \neg P$ .

Όμως, από το Α3, έχουμε ως αξίωμα τον προτασ. τύπο

$$\text{OB } P \rightarrow \neg \text{OB } \neg P.$$

Άρα, εφαρμόζοντας τον κανόνα R1, προκύπτει ότι

$$\vdash \neg \text{OB } \neg P.$$

Έπεται ότι  $\vdash \text{OB } \neg P \& \neg \text{OB } \neg P$ , που αποτελεί αντίφαση.

(3) Από την κλασική προτασιακή λογική, ξέρουμε ότι

$$\vdash (P \& Q) \rightarrow P,$$

για οποιουδήποτε προτασιακού τύπου P, Q.

Άρα, λόγω του (7), προκύπτει ότι

$$\vdash \text{OB}(P \& Q) \rightarrow \text{OB } P. \quad \textcircled{*}$$

Όμοια μπορούμε να δείξουμε ότι

$$\vdash \text{OB}(P \& Q) \rightarrow \text{OB } Q. \quad \textcircled{*} \textcircled{*}$$

Από τις  $\textcircled{*}$  και  $\textcircled{*} \textcircled{*}$  και την κλασική προτ. λογική,

έπεται ότι

$$\vdash \text{OB}(P \& Q) \rightarrow \text{OB } P \& \text{OB } Q.$$

(6) Έστω ότι  $\vdash P \rightarrow Q$ . Τότε, λόγω του κανόνα R2,

$$\text{έπεται ότι } \vdash \text{OB}(P \rightarrow Q).$$

Όμως, λόγω του Α2, έχουμε  $\vdash \text{OB}(P \rightarrow Q) \rightarrow (\text{OB } P \rightarrow \text{OB } Q)$ .

Άρα, εφαρμόζοντας τον R1, προκύπτει ότι

$$\vdash \text{OB } P \rightarrow \text{OB } Q.$$



## Supplement to Deontic Logic

### Alternative Axiomatization of SDL

The following alternative axiom system, which is provably equivalent to SDL, “breaks up” SDL into a larger number of “weaker parts” (SDL *a la carte*, as it were). This has the advantage of facilitating comparisons with other systems that reject one or more of SDL's theses.<sup>[1]</sup>

- SDL': A1. All tautologous wffs of the language (TAUT)  
 A2'.  $\mathbf{OB}(p \ \& \ q) \rightarrow (\mathbf{OB}p \ \& \ \mathbf{OB}q)$  (OB-M)  
 A3'.  $(\mathbf{OB}p \ \& \ \mathbf{OB}q) \rightarrow \mathbf{OB}(p \ \& \ q)$  (OB-C)  
 A4'.  $\sim\mathbf{OB}\perp$  (OB-OD)  
 A5'.  $\mathbf{OB}\top$  (OB-N)  
 R1. If  $\vdash p$  and  $\vdash p \rightarrow q$ , then  $\vdash q$  (MP)  
 R2'. If  $\vdash p \leftrightarrow q$ , then  $\mathbf{OB}p \leftrightarrow \mathbf{OB}q$  (OB-RE)

We recall SDL for easy comparison:

- SDL: A1. All tautologous wffs of the language (TAUT)  
 A2.  $\mathbf{OB}(p \rightarrow q) \rightarrow (\mathbf{OB}p \rightarrow \mathbf{OB}q)$  (OB-K)  
 A3.  $\mathbf{OB}p \rightarrow \sim\mathbf{OB}\sim p$  (OB-D)  
 MP. If  $\vdash p$  and  $\vdash p \rightarrow q$  then  $\vdash q$  (MP)  
 R2. If  $\vdash p$  then  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}p$  (OB-NEC)

Below is a proof that these two system are “equipollent”: any formula derivable in the one is derivable in the other.

I. First, we need to prove that *each axiom (scheme) and rule of SDL' can be derived in SDL*. A1 and R1 are common to both systems, so we need only show that A2'-A5' and R2' are derivable.

Recall that **OB-RM**, and **OB-RE** (i.e. R2') are derivable in SDL:

Show: If  $\vdash p \rightarrow q$ , then  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}p \rightarrow \mathbf{OB}q$ . (**OB-RM**)

Proof: Assume  $\vdash p \rightarrow q$ . By **OB-NEC**,  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}(p \rightarrow q)$ , and then by **OB-K**,  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}p \rightarrow \mathbf{OB}q$ .

Corollary: If  $\vdash p \leftrightarrow q$  then  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}p \leftrightarrow \mathbf{OB}q$  (R2' or **OB-RE**)

So it remains to show A2'-A5' are derivable in SDL, and to do so we make free use of our already derived rules, **OB-RM** and **OB-RE**.

Show:  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}(p \ \& \ q) \rightarrow (\mathbf{OB}p \ \& \ \mathbf{OB}q)$  (A2' or **OB-M**)

Proof: By PC,  $\vdash (p \ \& \ q) \rightarrow p$ . So by **OB-RM**  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}(p \ \& \ q) \rightarrow \mathbf{OB}p$ . In the same manner, we can derive  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}(p \ \& \ q) \rightarrow \mathbf{OB}q$ . From these two, by PC, we then get  $\mathbf{OB}(p \ \& \ q) \rightarrow (\mathbf{OB}p \ \& \ \mathbf{OB}q)$ .

Show:  $\vdash (\mathbf{OB}p \ \& \ \mathbf{OB}q) \rightarrow \mathbf{OB}(p \ \& \ q)$  (A3' or **OB-C**)

Proof: By PC,  $\vdash p \rightarrow (q \rightarrow (p \ \& \ q))$ . So by **OB-RM**  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}p \rightarrow \mathbf{OB}(q \rightarrow (p \ \& \ q))$ . But by **OB-K**, we have  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}(q \rightarrow (p \ \& \ q)) \rightarrow (\mathbf{OB}q \rightarrow \mathbf{OB}(p \ \& \ q))$ . So from these two, by PC,  $\vdash \mathbf{OB}p \rightarrow (\mathbf{OB}q \rightarrow$

SDL+ = SDL και, επιπλέον, το αξιωματικό σχήμα

A4.  $OB(OB P \rightarrow P)$ .

Παρατήρηση. Στο σύστημα SDL+ αποδεικνύεται ο

$OB OB P \rightarrow OB P$ .

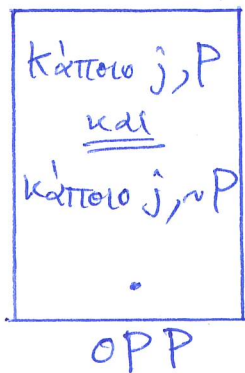
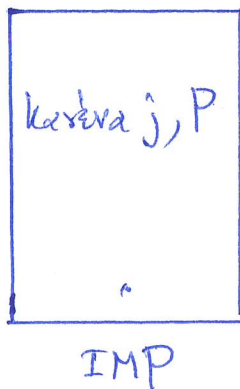
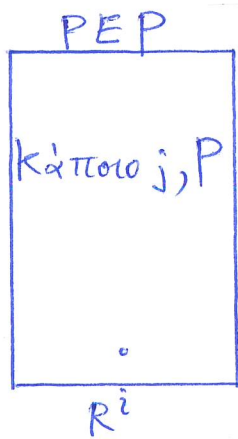
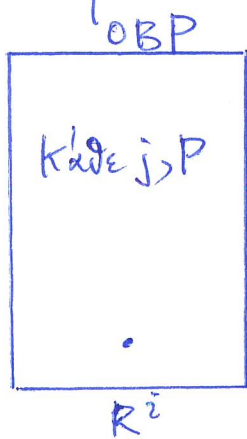
Πράγματι, έχουμε την ακόλουθη απόδειξη:

- 1.  $OB(OB P \rightarrow P)$  αξιωματικό σχήμα A4
- 2.  $OB(OB P \rightarrow P) \rightarrow (OB OB P \rightarrow OB P)$  αξιωματικό σχήμα A2
- 3.  $OB OB P \rightarrow OB P$ . — 1, 2, κανόνας R1.

Συνθήκες αλήθειας για δεοντικούς τελεστές

OB = obligatory IM = impermissible OP = optional

PE = permissible OM = omissible



Σημασιολογία δυνατών κόσμων

$W$  σύνολο δυνατών κόσμων

$R$  σχέση προσβασιμότητας ( $R \subseteq W \times W$ )

$Rij$  ή  $R(i,j)$  ή  $\langle i,j \rangle \in R$

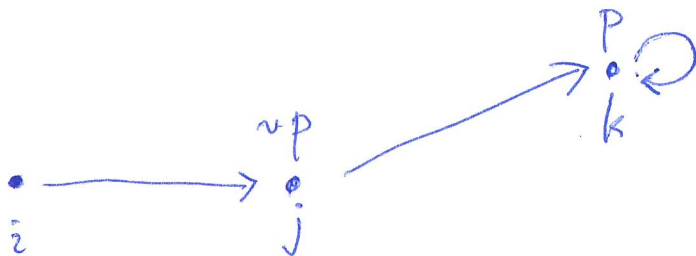
Θα λέμε ότι η  $R$  είναι "σειριακή" (serial), αν για κάθε  $i \in W$  υπάρχει τουλάχιστον ένα  $j \in W$  τέτοιο που  $j \in R^i$  ή  $Rij$  (ή  $R(i,j)$  ή  $\langle i,j \rangle \in R$ )

(Υποθέτουμε ότι θεωρούμε μόνο δυνατούς κόσμους στους οποίους η  $R$  είναι σειριακή)

Όλα τα αξιώματα και οι κανόνες της SDL είναι έγκυρα.

Αντιπαράδειγμα.  $\not\models_{SDL} A4$ , δηλ.  $\not\models_{SDL} OB(OBp \rightarrow p)$ .

Αρκεί να βρούμε δυνατό κόσμο  $(W,R)$ , με  $R$  σειριακή, στον οποίο να μην αληθεύει ο τύπος  $OB(OBp \rightarrow p)$ .



$$W = \{i, j, k\}$$

$$R = \{\langle i, j \rangle, \langle j, k \rangle, \langle k, k \rangle\}$$

παρατηρούμε ότι η  $R$  είναι σειριακή

Ισχυριζόμαστε ότι ο  $OB(OBp \rightarrow p)$  είναι ψευδής <sup>(5)</sup>  
σεν συγκεκριμένο κόσμο που είδαμε πριν, δηλαδή,

$$F_{(W,R)} \sim OB(OBp \rightarrow p).$$

Αυτό θα αληθεύει, αν πράγματι υπάρχει κόσμος σε  $W$   
όπου είναι ψευδής ότι  $OB(OBp \rightarrow p)$ .

Παρατηρούμε ότι σεν κόσμο  $j$

(i) αληθεύει ο τύπος  $OBp$  και

(ii) δεν αληθεύει ο τύπος  $(OBp \rightarrow p)$

Για το (i), βλ έπαυσε ότι ο τύπος  $p$  αληθεύει σε όλους  
τους κόσμους σεους οποίους έχει πρόσβαση ο  $j$   
(δηλαδή, ακριβώς σεν κόσμο  $k$ ).

Για το (ii), βλέπουμε ότι (με βάση το (i)), αληθεύει ο  $OBp$ ,  
αλλά δεν αληθεύει ο  $p$  (αφού αληθεύει ο  $\neg p$  σεν  $j$ ).

Κατά συνέπεια, υπάρχει κόσμος σεν οποίο έχει πρόσ-  
βαση ο  $i$  και σεν οποίο δεν αληθεύει ο  $(OBp \rightarrow p)$  —  
πράγματι, ένας τέτοιος κόσμος είναι ο  $j$ .

Συνεπώς δεν αληθεύει σεν κόσμο  $i$  ο τύπος

$$OB(OBp \rightarrow p)$$


και επομένως αληθεύει ο  $\neg OB(OBp \rightarrow p)$  σεν  $i$  (και  
σεν  $(W, R)$ ).

6

Αν θεωρήσουμε μόνο δυνατούς κόσμους σε αυτούς οποίους η σχέση  $R$  είναι "δευτερευόντως ανακλαστική" (secondary reflexive), τότε αληθεύει  $\bullet \text{OB}(\text{OB}P \rightarrow P)$ .

Λέμε ότι η  $R$  είναι "δευτερευόντως ανακλαστική", αν για κάθε κόσμο  $i \in W$  και κάθε  $j \in R^2$  ισχύει  $Rij$ .

Σχηματικά:



The diagram shows a world  $i$  on the left. A horizontal arrow points from  $i$  to a world  $j$  on the right. Above the arrow, there is a self-loop arrow on  $i$  that also points towards  $j$ .

Παράδειγμα.  $\models_{\text{SDL}} \text{OB}(\text{OB}P \rightarrow P)$ , αν  $R$  δευτερ. ανακλαστική.

Πράγματι, έστω δυνατός κόσμος  $(W, R)$ , όπου η  $R$  είναι δευτερευόντως ανακλαστική, και  $i$  τυχόν κόσμος σε  $W$ . Θέλουμε να δείξουμε ότι ο τύπος  $\text{OB}(\text{OB}P \rightarrow P)$  αληθεύει σε  $i$ . Έστω, προς άσκοπο, ότι σε  $i$  αληθεύει το αντίθετο, δηλ.  $\sim \text{OB}(\text{OB}P \rightarrow P)$ .

Τότε υπάρχει επόμενος κόσμος  $j$ , στον οποίο είναι ψευδής ο τύπος  $\text{OB}P \rightarrow P$ . Λόγω των εβλ. της συνεπαγωγής, αυτό σημαίνει ότι υπάρχει  $j \in R^2$  τέτοιος που  
(α) ο  $\text{OB}P$  αληθεύει σε  $j$  και  
(β) ο  $P$  δεν αληθεύει σε  $j$ .

Όμως, επειδή η  $R$  είναι δευτερευόντως ανακλαστική,  $Rij$  και συνεπώς, λόγω της σηματολογικής συμπεριφοράς του τελεστή  $\text{OB}$ , έπεται ότι  
(γ) ο  $P$  αληθεύει σε  $j$ .

Προφανώς όμως τα (β) και (γ) αλληλόαντι-εξαιρούνται.



We now provide a counter model to show that  $OB-U, OB(OBp \rightarrow p)$  is indeed a genuine (non-derivable) addition to SDL.

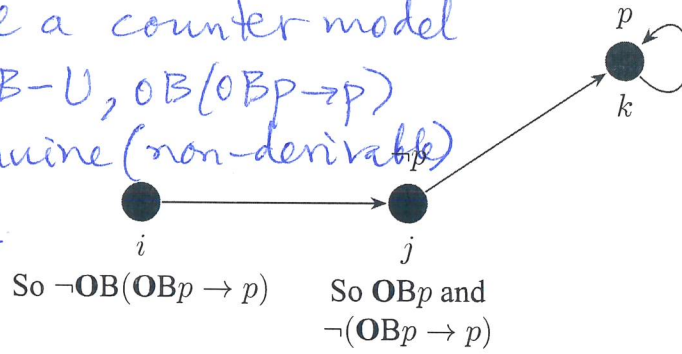


FIG. D.1 [An extended description of figure D.1.]

Here, seriality holds, since each of the three worlds has at least one world acceptable to it (in fact, exactly one), but *secondary* seriality fails, since although  $j$  is acceptable to  $i$ ,  $j$  is not acceptable to itself. Now look at the top annotations regarding the assignment of truth or falsity to  $p$  at  $j$  and  $k$ . The lower deontic formulae derive from this assignment and the accessibility relations. (The value of  $p$  at  $i$  won't matter.) Since  $p$  holds at  $k$ , which exhausts the worlds acceptable to  $j$ ,  $OBp$  must hold at  $j$ , but then, since  $p$  itself is false at  $j$ ,  $(OBp \rightarrow p)$  must be false at  $j$ . But  $j$  is acceptable to  $i$ , so not all  $i$ -acceptable worlds are ones where  $(OBp \rightarrow p)$  holds, so  $OB(OBp \rightarrow p)$  must be false at  $i$ .<sup>[102]</sup> We have already proven that seriality, which holds in this model, automatically validates NC. It is easy to show that the remaining ingredients of SDL hold here as well.<sup>[103]</sup>

We proved above that  $(OBOBp \rightarrow OBp)$  is derivable from  $OB-U$ . Here is a model that shows that the converse fails:

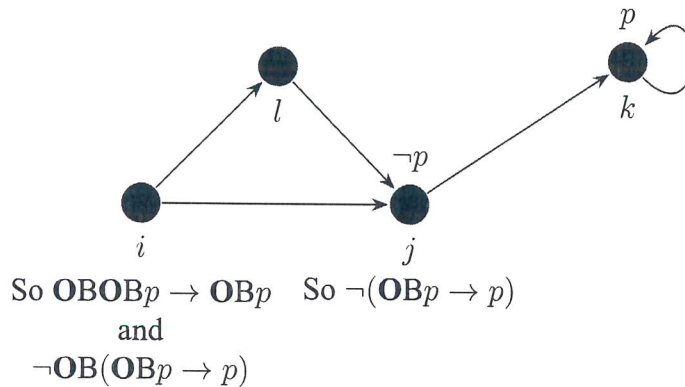


FIG. D.2 [An extended description of figure D.2.]

It is left to the reader to verify that given the accessibility relations and indicated assignments to  $p$  at  $j$  and  $k$ ,  $OBOBp \rightarrow OBp$  must be (vacuously) true at  $i$ , while  $OB(OBp \rightarrow p)$  must be false at  $i$ .

## E. Non-Performance versus Refraining/Forbearing

Another interesting operator can be defined via a condition involving embedding of “BA”:

$$RFp \stackrel{def}{=} BA \neg BAp.$$

This expresses a widely endorsed analysis of refraining (or “forbearing”).<sup>[104]</sup> In quasi-English, *it is a case of refraining by our agent that  $p$*  if and only if our agent brings it about that she does not bring it about that  $p$ . The importance of this in agency theory is based on the assumption that refraining from doing something is distinct from simply not doing something. In the current agential framework, this boils down to the denial of the following claim: