

Appendix A

Algorithms

We used a rather typical Memory-Based Learning (MBL; see, for example, Haykin, 1999) implementation, k-Nearest Neighbors (kNN) using Euclidean distances. It has been shown that this simple principle straightforwardly ensures the smallest probability of error over all possible decisions for a new exemplar (as discussed in Cover & Hart, 1967). The neighborhood size was set to $k = 7$, following previous computational experimentation (Milin, Keuleers, & Đurđević, 2011). All MBL simulations we made in the **R** software environment (R Core Team, 2021) using the **class** package (Venables & Ripley, 2013).

Two Error-Correction Learning (ECL), Widrow-Hoff (WH; Widrow & Hoff, 1960; Milin, Madabushi, Croucher, & Divjak, 2020) and Temporal Difference (TD; Sutton & Barto, 1987, 1990), were implemented in the **MATLAB** programming and numeric computing environment (MATLAB, 2022). In particular, at time step t , learning assumes small changes to the input weights w_t (small to obey the Principle of Minimal Disturbance; cf., Milin et al., 2020) to improve current state of “knowledge” in the next time step $t + 1$. This is achieved by re-weighting the *prediction error* (which is the difference between the targeted outcome and its current apprehension) with the current input cues and a *learning rate* (free parameter): $\lambda(o_t - w_t c_t) c_t$, where λ represents the learning rate, c_t is the vector of input cues, $w_t c_t$ is the apprehension and o_t is the true outcome. The full WH update of weights w in the next time step $t + 1$ is then:

$$w_{t+1} = w_t + \lambda(o_t - w_t c_t) c_t$$

For TD, however, the apprehension ($w_t c_t$) is additionally corrected by a future apprehension as the (temporal) difference to that current apprehension: $w_t c_t - \gamma w_t c_{t+1}$, where γ is a *discount factor*, the additional free parameter that weights the importance of the future, where $w_t c_{t+1}$ is the apprehension given the future – i.e., the next input c_{t+1} . The update rule for the TD thus becomes:

$$\begin{aligned} w_{t+1} &= w_t + \lambda(o_t - [w_t c_t - \gamma w_t c_{t+1}]) c_t \\ &= w_t + \lambda(o_t + \gamma w_t c_{t+1} - w_t c_t) c_t \end{aligned}$$

Using two closely related ECL algorithms, WH and TD, allows for a detailed examination of the effect of the future apprehension of the TD rule, by explicitly making use of that future data (i.e., $w_t c_t - \gamma w_t c_{t+1}$). Note, however, that if we set the discount factor γ to zero, the whole correction for future predictions $\gamma w_t c_{t+1}$ becomes zero too, and TD becomes identical to WH.

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