
Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	15
1.1 What is an adaptive autonomous agent?	15
1.2 Some basic concepts	17
1.3 Focus of attention in learning	18
Chapter 2: The Basic Framework	23
2.1 Focus of Attention Methods.	23
2.1.1 Introduction	23
2.1.2 Perceptual selectivity	25
2.1.3 Cognitive selectivity	26
2.2 The testbed microworlds	28
2.2.1 The infant/eyehand scenario	29
2.2.2 The Hamsterdam scenario	32
Chapter 3: Goal-independent Learning	39
3.1 Model of the learning system.	39
3.1.1 The sensory system: Items	40
3.1.2 The motor system: Actions	40
3.1.3 The knowledge base: Schemas	41
3.1.3.1 What is a schema?	41
3.1.3.2 How are schemas created? The marginal attribution mechanism	42
3.1.3.2.1 Bare schemas	43
3.1.3.2.2 Result spinoffs	43
3.1.3.2.3 Context spinoffs.	44
3.1.3.2.4 Conjunctive contexts and results	45
3.1.3.2.5 Summary of marginal attribution.	46
3.1.3.2.6 Synthetic items.	46
3.2 Improving learning via focus.	48
3.2.1 The work of learning	48
3.2.2 The basic learning algorithm	51
3.2.3 The focused algorithm	52
3.2.3.1 How has focus changed the computational effort?	53
3.2.3.2 Why were these parameters chosen?	55

Table of Contents

3.3	Results	57
3.3.1	Evaluation of the focused algorithm	57
3.3.1.1	Completeness	57
3.3.1.1.1	Manual evaluation methods	58
3.3.1.1.2	Automatic evaluation methods	59
3.3.1.1.3	Completeness results	61
3.3.1.2	Correctness	61
3.3.2	Comparison of the different strategies	62
Chapter 4: Goal-dependent Learning		67
4.1	Introduction	67
4.2	Why goals?	68
4.2.1	Where do goals come from?	69
4.2.2	The relation of goals to planning	70
4.3	General concepts	71
4.3.1	Goals	71
4.3.1.1	The structure of goals	72
4.3.1.2	Using goals for learning	76
4.3.2	Evaluating learning	79
4.3.2.1	Using chaining to evaluate learning	80
4.3.2.2	Should we learn during evaluation?	80
4.3.2.3	When to plan?	81
4.3.2.4	How to plan?	82
4.3.2.4.1	Chaining	82
4.3.2.4.2	Path metrics	83
4.3.2.5	Exceptional conditions while planning	87
4.3.2.5.1	Actions having “no effect”	87
4.3.2.5.2	Serendipity	87
4.3.2.5.3	Goal loops	88
4.3.2.5.4	Other ways to be stymied	89
4.3.2.6	Planning for learning versus planning for evaluation	90
4.3.2.7	Randomizing the world	91
4.3.2.8	Lobotomies	92
4.3.2.9	Scorecards	92
4.4	Results	94
4.4.1	The work required for learning with goals	94
4.4.2	Changes in the characteristics of the schemas learned	95
4.4.3	Competence	99

Chapter 5: Related Work	111
5.1 Related Work in Machine Learning	111
5.1.1 Introduction	111
5.1.2 Selective attention as filtering	113
5.1.3 Selective attention as goal-driven learning	117
5.2 Related Work in Cognitive Science	121
5.2.1 Introduction	121
5.2.2 The plausibility of attention as a system of limitations	124
Chapter 6: Conclusions	133
6.1 The effectiveness of focus of attention	133
6.2 Future work	134
6.2.1 Generalization and abstraction.	134
6.2.2 Filtering	135
6.2.3 Experimental strategy	136
6.2.4 Goals	137
6.2.5 Occasional defocusing	138
Appendix A: System Architecture	139
Appendix B: Implementation of Efficient Planning	147
B.1 Introduction	147
B.2 Reachability	147
B.3 Cached (lobotomized) reachable schemas.	149
B.4 Computing paths from one arbitrary schema to another	150
B.5 Computing a path between the INITIAL and FINAL sets.	152
B.6 The promise of randomized algorithms	153
Bibliography	155

