Social Learning Between Groups: Imitation and the Role of Experience

Abstract:
We consider social learning between novices and experienced facing the same environment. Individuals repeatedly choose an action and then observe choice and performance of someone belonging to the other group. While it is known which group has more experience, the environment itself is unknown. We search for learning rules that make all individuals within the same group better off in each enviornment. We find that experienced should ignore novices. Novices should imitate any more successful experienced, and sometimes but not always also imitate experienced that are less successful.

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