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Generating and evaluating hypothesis testing strategies

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Abstract

Optimal decision making depends on people's ability to generate and test hypotheses of their environments. To understand how hypotheses are tested, researchers often focus on uncovering and documenting the typical testing strategies that people spontaneously use (e.g., a positive or confirmatory testing strategy). Under this approach, it is difficult to account for people's capacity to overcome the limitations of their existing hypothesis testing strategies and/or to invent completely new strategies. Here we sketch a model for how hypothesis testing strategies can themselves be generated and evaluated and discuss its implications for existing models of hypothesis testing.