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Authors

Skirzyski, Julian

Wasilewski, Dr Piotr

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Flexible Strategy Use in Soar's Tic-Tac-Toe

Julian Skirzyski

Max-Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems, Tuebingen, Germany

Dr Piotr Wasilewski

University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

Abstract

Modeling cognitive processes is one of the major tasks of cognitive science. This work presents a model of a study described in Flexible Strategy Use in Young Childrens Tic-Tac-Toe (Crowley & Siegler, 1993) in which the authors made an attempt to characterize decision-making in a conflict-of-interests-like environment. In the experiments, kindergarten/primary school children and an algorithm-based opponent played a series of games in Tic-Tac-Toe. The outcomes seemed to indicate the existence of a hierarchy of rules that is constructed with experience. Although already tested algorithmically, the simulation detailed in the paper was applicable to a narrow class of problems only. The model shown in this work was built using a cognitive architecture, i.e. computer-based structure mimicking the general functioning of the human mind. Concretely, we used a rule-based system Soar that operates in mental rules paradigm and in most part replicated the results of the mentioned study.