

1 Probabilistic models of cognition (36)

Cognitive science has seen many approaches to modeling: symbolic/logical systems, connectionist architectures, and most recently, probabilistic models of cognition. Simultaneously, the approach of rational analysis has also gained traction in cognitive science, and is complementary to probabilistic models. Rational analysis emphasizes focusing on the problems that the system is trying to solve, and what possible solutions there are to those problems under certain environmental constraints. Probabilistic modeling is a framework for explicitly writing down solutions to these problems as well as the the desired constraints.

In this topic, I have included papers that start with the foundations of rational analysis, and move on to papers that discuss or reflect the core concepts behind probabilistic models of cognition. I also include several papers that are success stories for probabilistic modeling, both in higher-level cognition as well as perception. One of the core concepts in probabilistic modeling is that of generative models, and thus I also include sections on generative models, analysis-by-synthesis, and theory learning, which span a range of thinking in terms of what generative models are. Finally, I include several papers that challenge the probabilistic approach to cognition, and several papers on rational process models which address some of the “optimality” concerns with the probabilistic/rational analysis approach.

1.1 Rational analysis (3)

- Marr, D. (1971). The Philosophy and the Approach. In *Vision* (Chap. 1). Retrieved from http://web.stanford.edu/class/psych209a/ReadingsByDate/01_07/Marr82Philosophy.pdf.
- Anderson, J. R. (1990). Introduction. In *The adaptive character of thought* (Chap. 1, pp. 1–40). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Chater, N. & Oaksford, M. (1999). Ten years of the rational analysis of cognition. *Trends in Cognitive Science*, 3(2), 57–65. doi:[10.1016/S1364-6613\(98\)01273-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1364-6613(98)01273-X).

1.2 Bayesian models of cognition (7)

- Tenenbaum, J. B. & Griffiths, T. L. (2001). Generalization, similarity, and Bayesian inference. *The Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 24, 629–640, discussion 652–791. doi:[10.1017/S0140525X01000061](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X01000061).
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- Kemp, C. & Tenenbaum, J. B. (2008). The discovery of structural form. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 105(31), 10687–92. doi:[10.1073/pnas.0802631105](https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0802631105).
- Griffiths, T. L., Chater, N., Kemp, C., Perfors, A., & Tenenbaum, J. B. (2010). Probabilistic models of cognition: exploring representations and inductive biases. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 14(8), 357–364. doi:[10.1016/j.tics.2010.05.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2010.05.004).
- Tenenbaum, J. B., Kemp, C., Griffiths, T. L., & Goodman, N. D. (2011). How to grow a mind: statistics, structure, and abstraction. *Science*, 331(6022), 1279–85. doi:[10.1126/science.1192788](https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1192788).
- Teglas, E., Vul, E., Girotto, V., Gonzalez, M., Tenenbaum, J. B., & Bonatti, L. L. (2011). Pure reasoning in 12-month-old infants as probabilistic inference. *Science*, 332(6033), 1054–9. doi:[10.1126/science.1196404](https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1196404).
- Jacobs, R. A. & Kruschke, J. K. (2011). Bayesian learning theory applied to human cognition. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Cognitive Science*, 2(1), 8–21. doi:[10.1002/wcs.80](https://doi.org/10.1002/wcs.80).

1.3 Probabilistic models of perception (3)

- Weiss, Y., Simoncelli, E. P., & Adelson, E. H. (2002). Motion illusions as optimal percepts. *Nature Neuroscience*, 5(6), 598–604. doi:[10.1038/nn858](https://doi.org/10.1038/nn858).
- Ernst, M. O. & Banks, M. S. (2002). Humans integrate visual and haptic information in a statistically optimal fashion. *Nature*, 415(6870), 429–433. doi:[10.1038/415429a](https://doi.org/10.1038/415429a).
- Körding, K. P. & Wolpert, D. M. (2004). Bayesian integration in sensorimotor learning. *Nature*, 427(6971), 244–247. doi:[10.1038/nature02169](https://doi.org/10.1038/nature02169).

1.4 Generative models (6)

- Helmholtz, H. (1924). Concerning the perceptions in general. In J. P. C. Southall (Ed.), *Treatise on physiological optics* (Chap. 26, pp. 1–37). New York: Dover Publications.
- Craik, K. (1943). Hypothesis on the nature of thought. In *The nature of explanation* (pp. 50–61).
- Dayan, P., Hinton, G. E., Neal, R. M., & Zemel, R. S. (1995). The Helmholtz machine. *Neural Computation*, 7(5), 889–904. doi:[10.1162/neco.1995.7.5.889](https://doi.org/10.1162/neco.1995.7.5.889).
- Ng, A. Y. & Jordan, M. I. (2002). On Discriminative vs. Generative classifiers: A comparison of logistic regression and naive Bayes. *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems*, 14.
- Battaglia, P. W., Kersten, D., & Schrater, P. R. (2012). The Role of Generative Knowledge in Object Perception. In J. Trommershauser, K. P. Körding, & M. S. Landy (Eds.), *Sensory cue integration*. Oxford University Press.
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1.5 Analysis by synthesis (3)

- Halle, M. & Stevens, K. N. (1962). Speech recognition: a model and a program for research. *IRE Transactions on Information Theory*, 8(2), 155–159. doi:[10.1109/TIT.1962.1057686](https://doi.org/10.1109/TIT.1962.1057686).
- Yuille, A. L. & Kersten, D. (2006). Vision as Bayesian inference: analysis by synthesis? *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 10(7), 301–308. doi:[10.1016/j.tics.2006.05.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2006.05.002).
- Bever, T. G. & Poeppel, D. (2010). Analysis by Synthesis: A (Re-)Emerging Program of Research for Language and Vision. *Biolinguistics*, 43(2), 174–200. Retrieved from <http://www.psych.nyu.edu/clash/dp-papers/bever.poeppel.pdf>.

1.6 Theory learning (4)

- Kemp, C., Perfors, A., & Tenenbaum, J. B. (2007). Learning overhypotheses with hierarchical Bayesian models. *Developmental Science*, 10(3), 307–321. doi:[10.1111/j.1467-7687.2007.00585.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7687.2007.00585.x).
- Griffiths, T. L. & Tenenbaum, J. B. (2009). Theory-based causal induction. *Psychological Review*, 116(4), 661–716. doi:[10.1037/a0017201](https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017201).
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- Ullman, T. D., Goodman, N. D., & Tenenbaum, J. B. (2012). Theory learning as stochastic search in the language of thought. *Cognitive Development*, 27(4). doi:[10.1016/j.cogdev.2012.07.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cogdev.2012.07.005).

1.7 Challenges for probabilistic models of cognition (6)

- Kahneman, D. & Tversky, A. (1973). On the psychology of prediction. *Psychological Review*, 80(4), 237–251. doi:[10.1037/h0034747](https://doi.org/10.1037/h0034747).
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- Mozer, M. C., Pashler, H., & Homaei, H. (2008). Optimal predictions in everyday cognition: the wisdom of individuals or crowds? *Cognitive Science*, 32(7), 1133–1147. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1080/03640210802353016/abstract>.
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1.8 Rational process models (4)

- Hay, N. J., Russell, S. J., Tolpin, D., & Shimony, S. E. (2012). Selecting Computations: Theory and Applications. *arXiv preprint arXiv:1207.5878v1 [cs.AI]*. arXiv: 1207.5879. Retrieved from <http://arxiv.org/abs/1207.5879>.
- Lieder, F., Griffiths, T. L., & Goodman, N. D. (2012). Burn-in, bias, and the rationality of anchoring. *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems*, 25. Retrieved from <http://papers.nips.cc/paper/4719-burn-in-bias-and-the-rationality-of-anchoring>.
- Vul, E., Goodman, N. D., Griffiths, T. L., & Tenenbaum, J. B. (2014). One and Done? Optimal Decisions From Very Few Samples. *Cognitive Science*, 38(4), 599–637. doi:10.1111/cogs.12101.
- Griffiths, T. L., Lieder, F., & Goodman, N. D. (2015). Rational Use of Cognitive Resources: Levels of Analysis Between the Computational and the Algorithmic. *Topics in Cognitive Science*, 7(2), 217–229. doi:10.1111/tops.12142.

1.9 Questions

1. What are probabilistic models of cognition? In particular, what are probabilistic models in the broad sense, and how does this contrast with how they are used in practice? How are they related to generative models and structured types of representations (such as theories)?
2. Are probabilistic models of cognition formulated at the computational level of analysis useful to the study of the mind? Discuss the ways in which they have been successful, and the ways in which they have not (or, alternately, weaknesses to the approach). How might such failures or weaknesses be resolved?

2 Aspects of simulation in cognitive science (38)

“Simulation” is a bit of a loaded term in cognitive science, as it has been used in many different ways to refer to many different lines of research. To complicate things further, there are areas of research that could be construed as a type of simulation, but which are not referred to as such. Based on the amount of research that touches on simulation, it seems as if there is some important underlying theme that many different cognitive scientists have been picking up on, even if they do not all necessarily use the term in the same way. In this topic, I explore different definitions of simulation which span the following areas of research: perception, language, motor control, theory of mind, and thought experiments.¹

2.1 Mental imagery (7)

- Shepard, R. N. & Metzler, J. (1971). Mental Rotation of Three-Dimensional Objects. *Science*, 171(3972), 701–703. doi:[10.1126/science.171.3972.701](https://doi.org/10.1126/science.171.3972.701).
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- Kosslyn, S. M. (1988). Aspect of a Cognitive Neuroscience of Mental Imagery. *Science*, 240(4859), 1621–1626. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1701012>.
- Finke, R. A. & Slayton, K. (1988). Explorations of creative visual synthesis in mental imagery. *Memory & Cognition*, 16(3), 252–257. doi:[10.3758/BF03197758](https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03197758).
- Grush, R. (2004). The emulation theory of representation: motor control, imagery, and perception. *The Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 27(3), 377–96, discussion 396–442. doi:[10.1017/S0140525X04000093](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X04000093).
- Flusberg, S. J. & Boroditsky, L. (2011). Are things that are hard to physically move also hard to imagine moving? *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 18(1), 158–164. doi:[10.3758/s13423-010-0024-2](https://doi.org/10.3758/s13423-010-0024-2).
- Schacter, D. L., Addis, D. R., Hassabis, D., Martin, V. C., Spreng, R. N., & Szpunar, K. K. (2012). The Future of Memory: Remembering, Imagining, and the Brain. *Neuron*, 76(4), 677–694. doi:[10.1016/j.neuron.2012.11.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2012.11.001).

2.2 Embodied language (3)

- Matlock, T. (2004). Fictive motion as cognitive simulation. *Memory & Cognition*, 32(8), 1389–1400. doi:[10.3758/BF03206329](https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03206329).
- Bergen, B. K., Lindsay, S., Matlock, T., & Narayanan, S. (2007). Spatial and linguistic aspects of visual imagery in sentence comprehension. *Cognitive Science*, 31(5), 733–64. doi:[10.1080/03640210701530748](https://doi.org/10.1080/03640210701530748).
- Fischer, M. H. & Zwaan, R. A. (2008). Embodied language: a review of the role of the motor system in language comprehension. *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 61(6), 825–850. doi:[10.1080/17470210701623605](https://doi.org/10.1080/17470210701623605).

2.3 Mental models (5)

- Gentner, D. & Stevens, A. (Eds.). (1983). *Mental Models*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Retrieved from <http://amzn.com/0898592429>.
- Kuipers, B. (1986). Qualitative Simulation. *Artificial Intelligence*, 29(3), 289–338. doi:[10.1016/0004-3702\(86\)90073-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/0004-3702(86)90073-1).
- Forbus, K. D. (2011). Qualitative modeling. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Cognitive Science*, 2(4), 374–391. doi:[10.1002/wcs.115](https://doi.org/10.1002/wcs.115).
- Johnson-Laird, P. N. (2012). Inference with Mental Models. In *The oxford handbook of thinking and reasoning* (pp. 134–145). doi:[10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199734689.001.0001](https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199734689.001.0001).
- Khemlani, S. S., Mackiewicz, R., Bucciarelli, M., & Johnson-Laird, P. N. (2013). Kinematic mental simulations in abduction and deduction. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 110(42), 16766–71. doi:[10.1073/pnas.1316275110](https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1316275110).

¹Note, however, that this is a very crude breakdown of what is a very complex overarching topic. Even the subtopics here are not necessarily separable: for example, several of the mental models papers could arguably also go under physical reasoning.

2.4 Motor control and action (4)

- Parsons, L. M. (1994). Temporal and kinematic properties of motor behavior reflected in mentally simulated action. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, 20(4), 709–730. doi:[10.1037/0096-1523.20.4.709](https://doi.org/10.1037/0096-1523.20.4.709).
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- Flanagan, R. R., Vetter, P., Johansson, R. S., & Wolpert, D. M. (2003). Prediction precedes control in motor learning. *Current Biology*, 13(2), 146–150. doi:[10.1016/S0960-9822\(03\)00007-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0960-9822(03)00007-1).
- White, P. A. (2012a). The experience of force: The role of haptic experience of forces in visual perception of object motion and interactions, mental simulation, and motion-related judgments. *Psychological Bulletin*, 138(4), 589–615. doi:[10.1037/a0025587](https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025587).

2.5 Physical reasoning (5)

- Freyd, J. J., Pantzer, T. M., & Cheng, J. L. (1988). Representing Statics as Forces in Equilibrium. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 117, 395–407. doi:[dx.doi.org/10.1037/0096-3445.117.4.395](https://doi.org/10.1037/0096-3445.117.4.395).
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2.6 Representational momentum (3)

- Freyd, J. J. & Finke, R. A. (1984). Representational Momentum. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 10(1), 126–132. doi:[10.1037/0278-7393.10.1.126](https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-7393.10.1.126).
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- White, P. A. (2012b). The impetus theory in judgments about object motion: A new perspective. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*. doi:[10.3758/s13423-012-0302-2](https://doi.org/10.3758/s13423-012-0302-2).

2.7 Theory of mind (6)

- Goldman, A. I. (1992). In Defense of the Simulation Theory. *Mind & Language*, 7(1-2), 104–119. doi:[10.1111/j.1468-0017.1992.tb00200.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0017.1992.tb00200.x).
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- Gordon, R. M. (1992). The Simulation theory: Objections and misconceptions. *Mind & Language*, 7(1-2), 11–34. doi:[10.1111/j.1468-0017.1992.tb00195.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0017.1992.tb00195.x).
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2.8 Thought experiments (5)

- Kahneman, D. & Tversky, A. (1981). *The simulation heuristic*. Retrieved from <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA099504>.
- Gendler, T. S. (1998). Galileo and the Indispensability of Scientific Thought Experiment. *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 49(3), 397–424.
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- Brown, J. R. & Fehige, Y. (2014). Thought Experiments. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* (Fall 2014). Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/thought-experiment/>.

2.9 Questions

1. What is “simulation”? Discuss the various ways that the concept of simulation has been used in explanations or models of the mind. How are these uses of simulation similar or different? Is there any core insight that can be gleaned from the intersection of these topics?
2. What is the relationship between simulation and probabilistic models of cognition? Specifically, one interpretation is that simulations might be thought of as samples from a probability distribution. Does this interpretation work for all the ways in which simulation has been used to explain cognition? Discuss why or why not.

3 Simulation and physical reasoning in computer science and robotics (34)

“Simulation” has also been used extensively in computer science and robotics, in almost as many different ways as it has been in cognitive science. For example, models of physical dynamics have been used in planning algorithms for robotics; approximate physical simulations are computed in computer graphics; and simulations are run to approximate posterior distributions in machine learning. These are, as in cognitive science, quite different interpretations of the term “simulation”.

In this topic, I begin with two foundational topics: probabilistic simulation, and planning and decision making in reinforcement learning (with an emphasis on model-based and/or simulation-based planning). Next, I include several papers on planning under uncertain dynamics in order to better understand the challenges (and potential solutions) to using simulation when the dynamics of the world are unknown. The next two subtopics focus more directly on the particular area of physical reasoning, both implicitly (e.g. for motor control) and explicitly (e.g. for predicting what will happen in a scene). In order to understand where simulation is useful, and where it is not, I survey a collection of papers that either do or do not use an explicit dynamics model. Finally, the last topic covers the fundamentals of physically-based animation for computer graphics.

3.1 Probabilistic simulation (4)

- Chib, S. & Greenberg, E. (1995). Understanding the Metropolis-Hastings algorithm. *The American Statistician*, 49, 327–335. doi:[10.1080/00031305.1995.10476177](https://doi.org/10.1080/00031305.1995.10476177).
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- Neal, R. M. (2011). MCMC using Hamiltonian dynamics. In S. Brooks, A. Gelman, G. Jones, & X.-L. Meng (Eds.), *Handbook of markov chain monte carlo* (Chap. 5). Chapman & Hall. arXiv: [1206.1901](https://arxiv.org/abs/1206.1901). Retrieved from <http://arxiv.org/abs/1206.1901>.

3.2 Planning and decision making (6)

- Sutton, R. S. & Barto, A. G. (1998). *Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Retrieved from <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/reinforcement-learning>.
- Dearden, R., Friedman, N., & Andre, D. (1999). Model based Bayesian exploration. *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Conference on Uncertainty in Artificial Intelligence*, 150–159. Retrieved from <http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=2073814>.
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- Browne, C., Powley, E., Whitehouse, D., Lucas, S., Cowling, P. I., Rohlfshagen, P., ... & Colton, S. (2012). A survey of Monte Carlo tree search methods. *IEEE Transactions on Computational Intelligence and AI in Games*, 4(1), 1–10. doi:[10.1109/TCIAIG.2012.2186810](https://doi.org/10.1109/TCIAIG.2012.2186810).
- Guez, A., Silver, D., & Dayan, P. (2013). Scalable and efficient Bayes-adaptive reinforcement learning based on Monte-Carlo tree search. *Journal of Artificial Intelligence Research*, 48, 841–883. doi:[10.1613/jair.4117](https://doi.org/10.1613/jair.4117).
- Mnih, V., Kavukcuoglu, K., Silver, D., Rusu, A. a., Veness, J., Bellemare, M. G., ... & Hassabis, D. (2015). Human-level control through deep reinforcement learning. *Nature*, 518(7540), 529–533. doi:[10.1038/nature14236](https://doi.org/10.1038/nature14236).

3.3 Planning under uncertain dynamics (3)

- Bertuccelli, L. F., Bethke, B., & How, J. P. (2012). Robust adaptive Markov decision processes: Planning with model uncertainty. *IEEE Control Systems Magazine*. doi:[10.1109/MCS.2012.2205478](https://doi.org/10.1109/MCS.2012.2205478).
- Aoude, G. S., Luders, B. D., Joseph, J. M., Roy, N., & How, J. P. (2013). Probabilistically safe motion planning to avoid dynamic obstacles with uncertain motion patterns. *Autonomous Robots*, 35(1), 51–76. doi:[10.1007/s10514-013-9334-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10514-013-9334-3).
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3.7 Questions

1. How has simulation been used in the context of planning and decision making for robotic systems? In what ways has been successful, and in what ways has it failed? What are challenges for simulation-based algorithms in terms of tractability? What potential improvements over model-free methods do they bring to the table?
2. How does use of simulation in computer science and robotics relate to the use of simulation in cognitive science? Are there ways in which simulation is used in robotics and computer science that could be applicable to cognitive modeling? Be sure to discuss multiple types of simulation, including probabilistic simulation, simulations in planning (e.g. Monte-Carlo Tree Search), physical simulation for computer graphics, and combinations thereof.