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# Active Exploration for Inverse Reinforcement Learning

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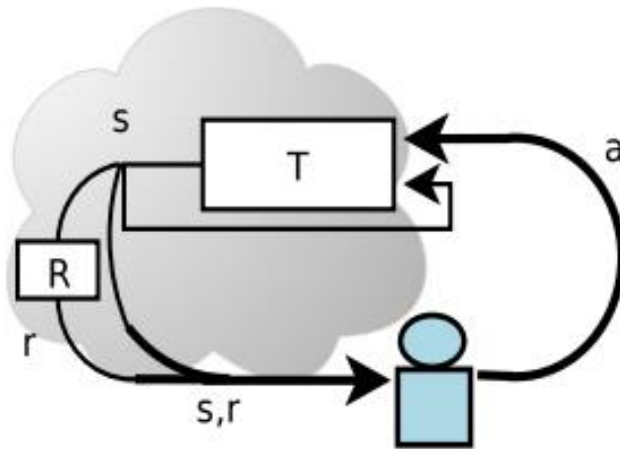
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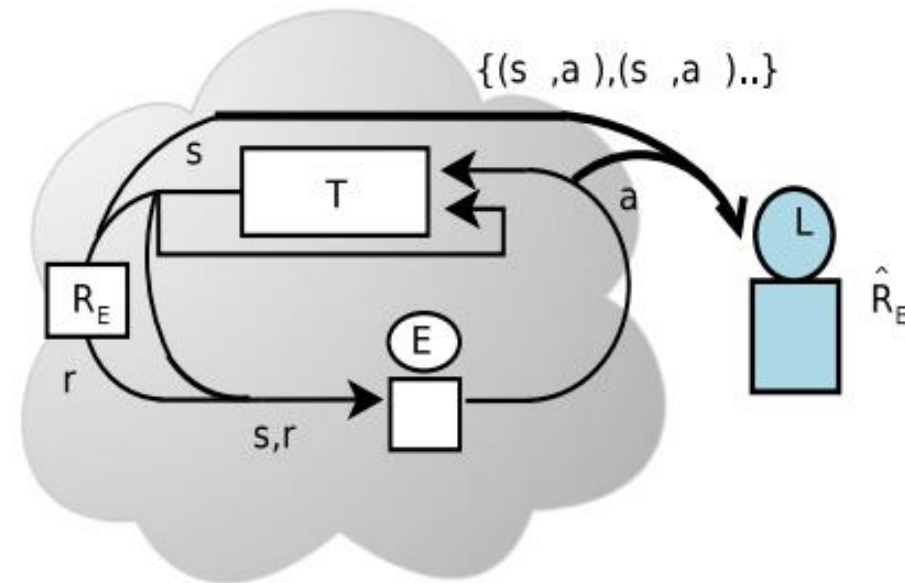
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IRL recovers the **feasible reward function** in which the **optimal policy** is the **expert policy**.



RL paradigm



IRL paradigm

MDP: [MDP] An MDP  $\mathcal{M} := \langle S, A, T, R, \gamma \rangle$

Transition:  $T : S \times A \rightarrow \text{Prob}(S)$

Reward:  $R : S \times A \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$

Value:  $V^\pi(s_0) = E_{s, \pi(s)} \left[ \sum_{t=0}^{\infty} \gamma^t R(s_t, \pi(s_t)) | s_0 \right]$

MDP goal:  $V^{\pi^*}(s) = V^*(s) = \sup_{\pi} V^\pi(s)$

Visit frequency:  $\psi^\pi(s) = \psi^0(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} T(s, \pi(s), s') \psi^\pi(s')$

Value:  $V^*(s) = \sup_{\pi} \sum_{s \in S} \psi_*^\pi(s) R(s, \pi(s))$

MDP without reward:  $\mathcal{M} \setminus R$ .

Feature reward:  $R(s, a) = w_1 \phi_1(s, a) + w_2 \phi_2(s, a) + \dots + w_k \phi_k(s, a)$   
 $= \mathbf{w}^T \boldsymbol{\phi}(s, a).$

Feature reward count:  $\mu^{\phi_k}(\pi) = \sum_{t=0}^{\infty} \psi^{\pi}(s_t) \phi_k(s_t, \pi(s_t))$

Empirical feature count:  $\hat{\mu}^{\phi_k}(\mathcal{D}) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{t=0}^{\infty} \gamma^t \phi_k(s_t, a_t).$

Value:  $V^{\pi} = \mathbf{w}^T \boldsymbol{\mu}^{\phi}(\pi) = \sum_{s,a} \psi^{\pi}(s) \mathbf{w}^T \boldsymbol{\phi}(s, a)$   
 $= \sum_{s,a} \psi^{\pi}(s) R(s, a).$

Margin Optimization:

$$\sum_{s \in S} Q^\pi(s, a^*) - \max_{a \in A \setminus \{a^*\}} Q^\pi(s, a)$$

$$|\boldsymbol{\mu}^\phi(\pi) - \hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}^\phi(\mathcal{D})|.$$

$$\hat{\pi}_E(a|s) - \pi_E(a|s)$$

Entropy Optimization:

$$\max_{\Delta} - \sum_{\tau \in (S \times A)^l} Pr(\tau) \log Pr(\tau)$$

$$\min_{P \in \Delta} \sum_{\tau \in (S \times A)^l} P(\tau) \log \frac{P(\tau)}{Q(\tau)}.$$

Bayesian Update:

$$P(\langle s, a \rangle | \hat{R}_E) \propto e^{\left( \frac{Q^*(s, a; \hat{R}_E)}{\beta} \right)}$$

| Method                                                                                         | $\hat{R}_E$ params | Optimization objective                                                                 | Notable aspect                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Max margin methods - maximize the margin between value of observed behavior and the hypothesis |                    |                                                                                        |                                                       |
| MMP                                                                                            | $w$                | value of obs. $\tau$ - max of values from all other $\tau$ (Eq. 8)                     | provable convergence                                  |
| MAX-MARGIN                                                                                     |                    | feature exp. of policy - empirical feature exp. (Eq. 9)                                | sample bounds                                         |
| MWAL                                                                                           |                    | min diff. in value of policy and observed $\tau$ across features                       | first bound on iteration complexity                   |
| HYBRID-IRL                                                                                     |                    | empirical stochastic policy - computed policy of expert (Eq. 10)                       | natural gradients and efficient optimization          |
| LEARCH                                                                                         | $R(\phi)$          | value of obs. $\tau$ - max of values from all other $\tau$ (Eq. 8)                     | nonlinear reward with suboptimal input                |
| Silver et al. [26]                                                                             |                    |                                                                                        | normalization of outlier inputs                       |
| Max entropy methods - maximize the entropy of the distribution over behaviors                  |                    |                                                                                        |                                                       |
| MAXENTIRL                                                                                      | $w$                | entropy of distribution over trajectories (Eq. 11)                                     | low learning bias                                     |
| STRUCTURED APPRENTICESHIP                                                                      |                    | entropy of distribution over policies (Eq. 12)                                         | efficient optimization                                |
| DEEP MAXENTIRL                                                                                 |                    | gradient of likelihood equivalent of MaxEnt (Eq. 13)                                   | nonlinear reward                                      |
| PI-IRL                                                                                         |                    |                                                                                        | continuous state-action spaces                        |
| REIRL                                                                                          |                    | relative entropy of distribution from baseline policy (Eq. 14)                         | suboptimal input and unknown dynamics                 |
| Bayesian learning methods - learn posterior over hypothesis space using Bayes rule             |                    |                                                                                        |                                                       |
| BIRL                                                                                           | $R(s)$             | posterior with Boltzmann data likelihood (Eq. 16)                                      | first Bayesian IRL formulation                        |
| Lopes et al. [38]                                                                              |                    | entropy of multinomial( $p_1(s), p_2(s), \dots, p_{ A -1}(s)$ ) derived from posterior | active learning                                       |
| GP-IRL                                                                                         | $f(r, \theta)$     | Gaussian process posterior                                                             | nonlinear reward                                      |
| MLIRL                                                                                          | $w$                | differentiable likelihood with Boltzmann policy (Eq. 16)                               | first ML approach                                     |
| Classification and regression - learn a prediction model that imitates observed behavior       |                    |                                                                                        |                                                       |
| SCIRL                                                                                          | $w$                | Q-function as classifier scoring function                                              | actions as state labels                               |
| CSI                                                                                            |                    |                                                                                        | provable convergence                                  |
| FIRL                                                                                           | regression tree    | norm of ( $\hat{R}_E$ - projection of $\hat{R}_E$ )                                    | unknown dynamics<br>avoids manual feature engineering |

$$\text{MDP} \backslash \mathcal{R} \quad \mathcal{M} := (\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{A}, P, H, s_0)$$

$$\mathcal{R}(s, a, h) \quad \mathcal{S} \times \mathcal{A} \times [H] \rightarrow [0, R_{\max}]$$

$$Q(s, a) \quad Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \mathcal{R}}^{\pi, h}(s, a) = r_h(s, a) + \sum_{s', a'} \pi_{h+1}(a' | s') P(s' | s, a) Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \mathcal{R}}^{\pi, h+1}(s', a')$$

$$V(s) \quad V_{\mathcal{M} \cup \mathcal{R}}^{\pi, h}(s) = \sum_a \pi_h(a | s) Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \mathcal{R}}^{\pi, h}(s, a)$$

$$A(s, a) \quad A_{\mathcal{M} \cup \mathcal{R}}^{\pi, h}(s, a) = Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \mathcal{R}}^{\pi, h}(s, a) - V_{\mathcal{M} \cup \mathcal{R}}^{\pi, h}(s)$$

$$\text{Feasible policy} \quad \Pi_{\mathcal{M} \cup \mathcal{R}}^*$$

$$\text{Frequency} \quad \eta_{\mathcal{M}, \pi}^{h, h}(s' | s) := \mathbb{1}_{\{s' = s\}} \quad \text{and} \quad \eta_{\mathcal{M}, \pi}^{h, h'+1}(s' | s) := \sum_{s'', \tilde{a}} P(s' | s'', \tilde{a}) \pi_{h'}(\tilde{a} | s'') \eta_{\mathcal{M}, \pi}^{h, h'}(s'' | s).$$

**Definition:** We can define a policy is optimal iff the  $A \leq 0$  for any states and actions.

**Definition 1 (Feasible Reward Set).** A reward function  $r$  is feasible for an IRL problem  $(\mathcal{M}, \pi^E)$ , if and only if the expert policy  $\pi^E$  is optimal in  $\mathcal{M} \cup r$ . We call the set of all feasible reward functions  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{M} \cup \pi^E}$  the feasible reward set. If we estimate the transition model and expert policy from samples, we refer to the recovered feasible set  $\mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathcal{M}} \cup \hat{\pi}^E}$  in contrast to the exact feasible set  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}} = \mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{M} \cup \pi^E}$ .

**Definition 2 (Optimality Criterion).** Let  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}}$  be the exact feasible set and  $\mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathcal{B}}}$  be the feasible set recovered after observing  $n \geq 0$  samples collected from  $\mathcal{M}$  and  $\pi^E$ . We say that an algorithm for Active IRL is  $(\epsilon, \delta, n)$ -correct if after  $n$  iterations with probability at least  $1 - \delta$  it holds that:

$$\inf_{\hat{r} \in \mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathcal{B}}}} \sup_{\hat{\pi}^* \in \Pi_{\mathcal{M} \cup \hat{r}}^*} \max_{s,a,h} |Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*,h}(s,a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \hat{r}}^{\hat{\pi}^*,h}(s,a)| \leq \epsilon \quad \text{for each } r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}},$$

$$\inf_{r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}}} \sup_{\pi^* \in \Pi_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^*} \max_{s,a,h} |Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*,h}(s,a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \hat{r}}^{\hat{\pi}^*,h}(s,a)| \leq \epsilon \quad \text{for each } \hat{r} \in \mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathcal{B}}},$$

where  $\pi^*$  is an optimal policy in  $\mathcal{M} \cup r$  and  $\hat{\pi}^*$  is an optimal policy in  $\mathcal{M} \cup \hat{r}$ .

Def: IRL( $\mathcal{M}, \pi^E$ ),  $\mathcal{M}$  为 MDP/R,  $\pi^E$  为专家策略.

① Feasible Reward Set:  $r$  is feasible  $\Leftrightarrow \pi^E$  is optimal for  $\mathcal{M} \cup r$ .  
考虑转移和策略误差 (MDP 误差, trajectories 与  $\pi^E$  的误差)  
 $\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}} = \mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{M} \cup \pi^E}$   $\mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathcal{B}}} = \mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathcal{M}} \cup \hat{\pi}^E}$   $\rightarrow$  真值.

② 最优性标准:

$$\inf_{r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}}} \sup_{\hat{\pi}^* \in \Pi_{\mathcal{M} \cup \hat{r}}^*} \max_{s,a,h} |Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*,h}(s,a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \hat{r}}^{\hat{\pi}^*,h}(s,a)| \leq \epsilon \quad \text{for each } r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}},$$

$$\left( \inf_{r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}}} \sup_{\pi^* \in \Pi_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^*} \max_{s,a,h} |Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*,h}(s,a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \hat{r}}^{\hat{\pi}^*,h}(s,a)| \leq \epsilon \quad \text{for each } \hat{r} \in \mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathcal{B}}}. \right.$$

$\rightarrow \exists \hat{r} \in \mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathcal{B}}}$ ,  $\forall \pi^* \in \Pi_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^*$  对于  $\forall r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}}$  均有  $|Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*,h}(s,a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \hat{r}}^{\hat{\pi}^*,h}(s,a)| < \epsilon$

$\left( \exists r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}}, \forall \pi^* \in \Pi_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^* \text{ 对于 } \forall \hat{r} \in \mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathcal{B}}} \text{ 均有 } |Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*,h}(s,a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \hat{r}}^{\hat{\pi}^*,h}(s,a)| < \epsilon. \right.$

$\rightarrow$  recall  
 $\rightarrow$  防止不必要地扩大可行集. precision -

2. 有限 horizon 的可行集.

Recall: 存在一个  $\hat{r}$  产生的策略能和  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}}$  里均有相近的表现, 说明查全率高。

Precision: 存在一个  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{B}}$  里的  $r$  能够和  $\mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathcal{B}}}$  中的所有  $\hat{r}$  都有相近的表现, 存在限定了范围

**Lemma 3** (Feasible Reward Set Implicit). A reward function  $r$  is feasible if and only if for all  $s, a, h$  it holds that:  $A_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi, h}(s, a) = 0$  if  $\pi_h^E(a|s) \geq 0$  and  $A_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi, h}(s, a) \leq 0$  if  $\pi_h^E(a|s) = 0$ . Moreover, if the second inequality is strict,  $\pi^E$  is uniquely optimal, i.e.,  $\Pi_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^* = \{\pi^E\}$ .

**Lemma 4** (Feasible Reward Set Explicit). A reward function  $r$  is feasible if and only if there exists an  $\{A_h \in \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}^{S \times A}\}_{h \in [H]}$  and  $\{V_h \in \mathbb{R}^S\}_{h \in [H]}$  such that for all  $s, a, h$  it holds that:

$$r_h(s, a) = -A_h(s, a) \mathbb{1}_{\{\pi_h^E(a|s)=0\}} + V_h(s) + \sum_{s'} P(s'|s, a) V_{h+1}(s')$$

4.2, 有限 horizon 的可约集.

$r$  is feasible  $\Leftrightarrow A_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi, h}(s, a) = 0$  if  $\pi_h^E(a|s) \geq 0$  且  $A_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi, h}(s, a) \leq 0$  if  $\pi_h^E(a|s) = 0$ .

Implicit:  $A_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi, h}(s, a) = r_h(s, a) + \sum_{s', a'} \pi_{h+1}(a'|s') P(s'|s, a) Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi, h+1}(s', a') - \sum_a \pi_h(a|s) Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi, h}(s, a)$   
 $= r_h(s, a) + \sum_{s', a'} P(s'|s, a) V_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi, h+1}(s') - V_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi, h}(s) \rightarrow \text{Sarsa?}$

Explicit:  $r$  is feasible  $\Leftrightarrow \exists \{A_h \in \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}^{S \times A}\}_{h \in [H]}$  且  $\{V_h \in \mathbb{R}^S\}_{h \in [H]}$  对  $\forall s, a, h$  存在.

$r_h(s, a) = -A_h(s, a) \mathbb{1}_{\{\pi_h^E(a|s)=0\}} + V_h(s) + \sum_{s'} P(s'|s, a) V_{h+1}(s')$

不明白.

$A_h(s, a) \leq 0$  且  $\pi_h^E(a|s) = 0$   
 已选择了但优势较小, 期望  
 对当前选择为 0, 对未选为  $A_h(s, a)$

**Theorem 5** (Error Propagation). Let  $(\mathcal{M}, \pi^E)$  and  $(\widehat{\mathcal{M}}, \widehat{\pi}^E)$  be two IRL problems. Then, for any  $r \in \mathcal{R}_{(\mathcal{M}, \pi^E)}$  there exists  $\widehat{r} \in \widehat{\mathcal{R}}_{(\widehat{\mathcal{M}}, \widehat{\pi}^E)}$  such that:

$$|r_h(s, a) - \widehat{r}_h(s, a)| \leq \underbrace{A_h(s, a) |\pi_h^E(a|s) - \widehat{\pi}_h^E(a|s)|}_{\text{专家策略误差}} + \underbrace{\sum_{s'} V_{h+1}(s') |P(s'|s, a) - \widehat{P}(s'|s, a)|}_{\text{转移模型误差}}$$

and we can bound  $V_h \leq (H - h)R_{\max}$  and  $A_h \leq (H - h)R_{\max}$ .

专家策略误差

转移模型误差

**Lemma 6.** Let  $\mathcal{M}$  be an MDP  $\setminus R$ ,  $r, \widehat{r}$  two reward functions with optimal policies  $\pi^*, \widehat{\pi}^*$ . Then,

$$Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*, h}(s, a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup \widehat{r}}^{\widehat{\pi}^*, h}(s, a) \leq \sum_{h'=h}^H \sum_{s', a'} \left( \eta_{\mathcal{M}, \pi^*}^{h, h'}(s', a'|s, a) - \eta_{\mathcal{M}, \widehat{\pi}^*}^{h, h'}(s', a'|s, a) \right) \underbrace{(r_{h'}(s', a') - \widehat{r}_{h'}(s', a'))}_{\text{可用Theorem5代入获得专家策略和转移模型各自的误差}}$$

可用Theorem5代入获得专家策略和转移模型各自的误差

$$\hat{P}_k(s'|s, a) = \frac{\sum_{h=1}^H n_k^h(s, a, s')}{\max(1, \sum_{h=1}^H n_k^h(s, a))} \quad \hat{\pi}_{k,h}^E(a|s) = \frac{n_k^h(s, a)}{\max(1, n_k^h(s))}.$$

In Appendix B.3 we derive Hoeffding's confidence intervals for the transition model and the expert policy. Combining these with Theorem 5, we can compute the uncertainty on the recovered reward as:

$$C_k^h(s, a) = (H - h)R_{\max} \min \left( 1, 2\sqrt{\frac{2\ell_k^h(s, a)}{n_k^h(s, a)}} \right),$$

where  $\ell_k^h(s, a) = \log(24SAH(n_k^h(s, a))^2/\delta)$ . We can show that for any pair of reward functions  $r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathfrak{B}}$  and  $\hat{r} \in \mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathfrak{B}}}$ , the difference  $|r_h(s, a) - \hat{r}_{k,h}(s, a)| \leq C_k^h(s, a)$ . **This uncertainty estimate will be a key component in all of our theoretical analysis.**

**Theorem 7** (Sample Complexity of Uniform Sampling IRL). *The uniform sampling strategy fulfills Definition 2 with a number of samples upper bounded by:*

$$n \leq \tilde{\mathcal{O}}\left(H^5 R_{\max}^2 SA/\epsilon^2\right),$$

where  $\mathcal{O}$  suppresses logarithmic terms.

# Ace-IRL without generative model

**Definition 2** (Optimality Criterion). Let  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathfrak{B}}$  be the exact feasible set and  $\mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathfrak{B}}}$  be the feasible set recovered after observing  $n \geq 0$  samples collected from  $\mathcal{M}$  and  $\pi^E$ . We say that an algorithm for Active IRL is  $(\epsilon, \delta, n)$ -correct if after  $n$  iterations with probability at least  $1 - \delta$  it holds that:

$$\inf_{\hat{r} \in \mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathfrak{B}}}} \sup_{\hat{\pi}^* \in \Pi_{\hat{\mathcal{M}} \cup \hat{r}}^*} \max_{s,a,h} |Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*,h}(s,a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\hat{\pi}^*,h}(s,a)| \leq \epsilon \quad \text{for each } r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathfrak{B}},$$

$$\inf_{r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathfrak{B}}} \sup_{\pi^* \in \Pi_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^*} \max_{s,a,h} |Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*,h}(s,a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\hat{\pi}^*,h}(s,a)| \leq \epsilon \quad \text{for each } \hat{r} \in \mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathfrak{B}}},$$

$$\longrightarrow \hat{e}_k^h(s, a; \pi^*, \hat{\pi}^*) = |Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*,h}(s, a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\hat{\pi}^*,h}(s, a)|.$$

Error Setting

where  $\pi^*$  is an optimal policy in  $\mathcal{M} \cup r$  and  $\hat{\pi}^*$  is an optimal policy in  $\hat{\mathcal{M}} \cup \hat{r}$ .

$$E_k^h(s, a) = \min \left( (H - h) R_{\max}, C_k^h(s, a) + \sum_{s'} \hat{P}(s'|s, a) \max_{a' \in \mathcal{A}} E_k^{h+1}(s', a') \right). \quad (\text{EB1})$$

$$4 \max_a E_k^0(s_0, a) \leq \epsilon.$$

Q/AceIRL, without generative model. — 需要通过探索策略来获取关于环境的理想信息。

定义由  $r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathfrak{B}}$  产生的最优策略  $\pi^*$  和由  $r \in \mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathfrak{B}}}$  产生的最优策略  $\hat{\pi}^*$  的误差上界为

$$\hat{e}_k^h(s, a; \pi^*, \hat{\pi}^*) = |Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*,h}(s, a) - Q_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\hat{\pi}^*,h}(s, a)|.$$

同时, 由  $|r_k(s, a) - \hat{r}_{k,h}(s, a)| \leq C_k^h(s, a)$  可以推出:

$$E_k^h(s, a) = \min \left( (H - h) R_{\max}, C_k^h(s, a) + \sum_{s'} \hat{P}(s'|s, a) \max_{a' \in \mathcal{A}} E_k^{h+1}(s', a') \right).$$

显而易见,  $\hat{e}_k^h(s, a; \pi^*, \hat{\pi}^*) \leq E_k^h(s, a)$ .

从而令  $r = C_k^h$  即得.  $\rightarrow$  AceIRL Greedy

探索策略, 在  $4 \max_a E_k^0(s_0, a) \leq \epsilon$  时停止. 采样复杂度为

这可以理解为我在这项任务上学得不好,  $C_k^h$  就大, 所以我要去多学这个状态下的  $r$ .

$$\tilde{O}(H^2 R_{\max}^2 SA / \epsilon^2)$$

在这里已经可以单纯的将误差上界作为奖赏去进行探索了, 可以理解为误差上界越高代表当前的状态信息越少, 越需要更多的信息多reward进行更好的近似。

这种探索策略称为AceIRL-Greedy.

Drawbacks of the AceIRL-greedy:

1. AceIRL-greedy doesn't reduce the future uncertainty.

AceIRL 缺陷: ① 探索了高不确定性状态, 但我们的目标在于在下次迭代减少不确定性。

② AceIRL 探索为减少所有策略的不确定性, 但目标是减少合理的策略最优策略的不确定性。

所以作者提出我们需与一个在探索过程中减少不确定性的探索策略, 即我们需要一个能够最大化  $E_{k+1}^h$  的探索策略。但  $E_{k+1}^h$  不好算, 可以通过对当前转移模型的估计。

① 
$$\hat{C}_{k+1}^h(s, a) = (H-h) R_{\max} \min(1, 2 \sqrt{\frac{\gamma \hat{C}_k^h(s, a)}{\hat{h}_k^h(s, a) + \hat{h}_k^h(s, a)}})$$

$$\hat{h}_k^h(s, a) = N_E \cdot \eta_{\pi}^{0, h}(s, a | s_0) \rightarrow \pi \text{ 在时间 } h \text{ 访问 } (s, a) \text{ 的期望数。}$$

$\times$   $N_E$  为使用  $\pi$  探索的总次数。

尽管我们目标是不确定性采样, 但现在这个能更好地衡量选择一个探索策略的信息量。这个问题不基于 IRL, 并拟用于提升 reward-free 探索。

Drawbacks of the AceIRL-greedy:

2. AceIRL-greedy reduce all policies' uncertainty.

AceIRL 缺陷: ① 探索了高不确定性状态, 但我们的目标在于在下次迭代减少不确定性。  
② AceIRL 探索为减少所有策略的不确定性, 但目标是减少合理的策略的不确定性。

② 我们只对  $\pi^* \in \Pi_{\text{MUL}}^*$  和  $\hat{\pi}^* \in \Pi_{\text{MUL}}^*$  感兴趣,  $r \in R_B$ ,  $\hat{r} \in R_B$ 。  
假设我们能构造出一组可靠最优策略  $\hat{\pi}_k$ , 其中包含有  $\pi^*$ ,  $\hat{\pi}_k^*$  (大概率)。  
重新定义上界  $\rightarrow$   $h$  步后的误差差上界  
$$\hat{E}_k^h(s, a) = 0$$
$$\hat{E}_k^h(s, a) = \min(C_k^h(s, a) + \sum_{s'} \hat{p}(s'|s, a) \max_{\pi \in \hat{\Pi}_{k-1}} \pi(a'|s') \hat{E}_k^{h+1}(s', a'))$$

与前面的差别在于最优  $\hat{\pi}_k$  中的策略而非所有动作。  
停止条件  $\downarrow$   $\max_a \hat{E}_k^0(s_0, a) \leq \epsilon \rightarrow R_B$  满足 Def 2.

**Theorem 8.** [AceIRL Sample Complexity] AceIRL returns a  $(\epsilon, \delta, n)$ -correct solution with

$$n \leq \tilde{\mathcal{O}} \left( \min \left[ \frac{H^5 R_{\max}^2 S A}{\epsilon^2}, \frac{H^4 R_{\max}^2 S A \epsilon_{\tau-1}^2}{\min_{s,a,h} (A_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{*,h}(s, a))^2 \epsilon^2} \right] \right)$$

where  $\epsilon_{\tau-1}$  depends on the choice of  $N_E$ , the number of episodes of exploration in each iteration.  $A_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{*,h}(s, a)$  is the advantage function of  $r \in \operatorname{argmin}_{r \in \mathcal{R}_{\mathfrak{B}}} \max_{h,s,a} (r_h(s, a) - \hat{r}_{k,h}(s, a))$ , the reward function from the feasible set  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathfrak{B}}$  closest to the estimated reward function  $\hat{r}_k$ .

This result is the minimum of two terms. The first term is problem independent and it is achieved both by AceIRL Greedy and the full AceIRL. This bound matches the bound we saw previously with a generative model. Hence, AceIRL achieves the same results without access to the generative model. Using (ACE) can yield a better sample complexity, represented by the second term in the minimum. This bound depends on two main components: the ratio  $\epsilon_{\tau-1}/\epsilon$  and the advantage function  $A_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{*,h}(s, a)$ . The ratio depends on the choice of  $N_E$ , the number of exploration episodes per iteration. If  $N_E$  is small, then the  $\epsilon$ -ratio will be also small. If  $N_E$  is large the algorithm will perform similarly to a uniform sampling strategy. Appendix B.5 provides the full proof of this theorem.

**Implementing AceIRL.** To implement the full algorithm, we need to solve an optimization problem:

$$\pi_k \in \operatorname{argmin}_{\pi} \max_{\hat{\pi} \in \hat{\Pi}_{k-1}} \hat{E}_{k+1}^0(s_0, \hat{\pi}(s_0)) \quad (\text{ACE})$$

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**Algorithm 1** AceIRL algorithm for IRL in an unknown environment.

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- 1: **Input:** significance  $\delta \in (0, 1)$ , target accuracy  $\epsilon$ , IRL algorithm  $\mathcal{A}$ , number of episodes  $N_E$
  - 2: Initialize  $k \leftarrow 0$ ,  $\epsilon_0 \leftarrow H/10$
  - 3: **while**  $\epsilon_k > \epsilon/4$  **do**
  - 4:     Solve (convex) optimization problem (ACE) to obtain  $\pi_k$
  - 5:     Explore with policy  $\pi_k$  for  $N_E$  episodes, observing transitions and expert actions
  - 6:      $k \leftarrow k + 1$
  - 7:     Update  $\hat{P}_k$ ,  $\hat{\pi}_k$ ,  $C_k^h$ , and  $\hat{r}_k \leftarrow \mathcal{A}(\mathcal{R}_{\hat{\mathfrak{B}}})$
  - 8:     Update accuracy  $\epsilon_k \leftarrow \max_a \hat{E}_k^0(s_0, a)$
  - 9: **end while**
  - 10: **return** Estimated reward function  $\hat{r}_k$
-

|                                         | Uniform sampling<br>(gener. model) | TRAVEL (gener. model)<br>(Metelli et al., 2021) | Random<br>Exploration        | AceIRL<br>Greedy             | AceIRL<br>(Full)                   |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Four Paths (Figure 1)                   | 1900 $\pm$ 71                      |                                                 | 17840 $\pm$ 1886             |                              |                                    |
| – $N_E = 50$                            |                                    | 1560 $\pm$ 76                                   |                              | 24180 $\pm$ 1747             | <b>10780 <math>\pm</math> 1369</b> |
| – $N_E = 100$                           |                                    | 2000 $\pm$ 0                                    |                              | 32760 $\pm$ 2172             | 14080 $\pm$ 1603                   |
| – $N_E = 200$                           |                                    | 4000 $\pm$ 0                                    |                              | 52000 $\pm$ 4057             | 16160 $\pm$ 2033                   |
| Double Chain<br>(Kaufmann et al., 2021) | 1980 $\pm$ 66                      |                                                 | 23640 $\pm$ 2195             |                              |                                    |
| – $N_E = 50$                            |                                    | 1120 $\pm$ 46                                   |                              | 16240 $\pm$ 842              | <b>11580 <math>\pm</math> 870</b>  |
| – $N_E = 100$                           |                                    | 2000 $\pm$ 0                                    |                              | 22200 $\pm$ 1329             | 15440 $\pm$ 1031                   |
| – $N_E = 200$                           |                                    | 4000 $\pm$ 0                                    |                              | 37200 $\pm$ 1664             | 20400 $\pm$ 1629                   |
| Metelli et al. (2021):                  |                                    |                                                 |                              |                              |                                    |
| Random MDPs ( $N_E = 1$ )               | 22 $\pm$ 1                         | 27 $\pm$ 1                                      | <b>22 <math>\pm</math> 1</b> | 23 $\pm$ 1                   | <b>21 <math>\pm</math> 1</b>       |
| Chain ( $N_E = 1$ )                     | 78 $\pm$ 2                         | 76 $\pm$ 4                                      | 161 $\pm$ 8                  | 153 $\pm$ 8                  | <b>142 <math>\pm</math> 9</b>      |
| Gridworld ( $N_E = 1$ )                 | 43 $\pm$ 2                         | 35 $\pm$ 2                                      | <b>45 <math>\pm</math> 2</b> | <b>46 <math>\pm</math> 3</b> | <b>48 <math>\pm</math> 2</b>       |

Table 1: Sample complexity of AceIRL compared to random exploration and methods that use a generative model. We show the number of samples necessary to find a policy with normalized regret less than 0.4. We report means and standard errors computed over 50 random seeds each. For each environment, we highlight in **bold** the method that achieves the best performance without access to a generative model. If multiple methods are within one standard error distance, we highlight all of them. Overall, AceIRL is the most sample efficient method without a generative model if  $N_E$  is chosen small enough. In Appendix C.3, we show learning curves for all individual experiments.

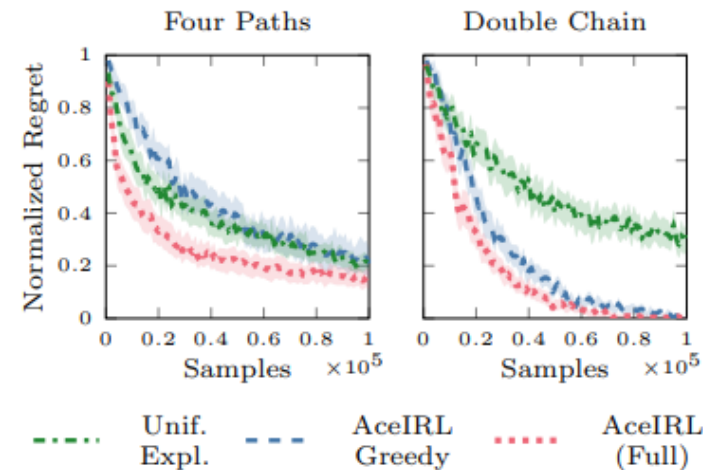


Figure 2: Normalized regret (lower is better) of the policy optimizing for the inferred reward in the estimated MDP as a function of the number of samples. The plots show the mean and 95% confidence intervals computed using 50 random seeds. We use  $N_E = 50$ .

Our main evaluation metric is a *normalized regret*:

$$(V_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*, 0}(s_0) - V_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\hat{\pi}^*, 0}(s_0)) / (V_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\pi^*, 0}(s_0) - V_{\mathcal{M} \cup r}^{\bar{\pi}^*, 0}(s_0)),$$

where  $\pi^*$  is the optimal policy for  $\mathcal{M} \cup r$ ,  $\hat{\pi}^*$  is the optimal policy for  $\widehat{\mathcal{M}} \cup \hat{r}$ , and  $\bar{\pi}^*$  is the worst possible policy for  $r$ , i.e., the optimal policy for  $\mathcal{M} \cup (-r)$ .

**Thanks**