

Cognitive Science Brown Bag Series
presents

From Chatterbots to Virtual Friends

Speaker: Prof. Dana Vrajitoru
IUSB Dept. of Computer and Information Sciences

Date: Friday, January 31st
Time: 12:30pm
Place: IUSB Student Activity Center (SAC) 225

Abstract

Chatterbots are computer programs that simulate intelligent conversation. The first chatterbot ever written, Eliza, by J. Weizenbaum, 1966, was based on a very simple and small set of rules. Although the program did not embed an extended knowledge of the natural language, not even a large vocabulary, it was quite effective in creating the illusion of having a conversation with a real person. Since Eliza, chatterbots have evolved and multiplied, and hundreds of them are available in all shapes and forms on and off line. Among their variations, some virtual characters simulate a given personality (ex. John Lennon). As a recent development we can find virtual agents intelligently assisting the user in exploring a commercial web site or a database, or in searching for information on the web. Finally, chatterbots may evolve in the future into virtual friends, "remembering" personal data about the user and capable of emotional interaction.



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