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Wizard of Oz studies – why and how

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Abstract

Current approaches to the development of natural language dialogue systems are discussed, and it is claimed that they do not sufficiently consider the unique qualities of man-machine interaction as distinct from general human discourse. It is concluded that empirical studies of this unique communication situation are required for the development of user-friendly interactive systems. One way of achieving this is through the use of so-called Wizard of Oz studies. The focus of the work described in the paper is on the practical execution of the studies and the methodological conclusions drawn on the basis of the authors' experience. While the focus is on natural language interfaces, the methods used and the conclusions drawn from the results obtained are of relevance also to other kinds of intelligent interfaces.

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interface design; interface evaluation; Wizard of Oz studies; dialogue; natural-language interfaces

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