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Information Processing Models and Computer Aids for Human Performance. Task 4: Studies of Human Memory and Language Processing.

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Abstract : The aim of the project was to determine how people store and retrieve factual (non-numerical) information and how they utilize this stored information in comprehending English text. Three of the studies investigated how people retrieve factual information, one evaluated possible strategies for interpreting text, and a final paper summarized conclusions about the requirements for building a computer-based, natural language-processing system. The results indicated that people use both deductive inference and inference by analogy in answering questions. The initial search for relevant facts is apparently a parallel process, while the checking of possible answers is a serial process. Depending on the information turned up by the parallel search and the constraints of syntax and context, people apply a variety of different specific decision rules in order to decide how to answer a question or how to interpret a sentence. Military operations in the future will utilize computer-based, question-answering systems that can store and retrieve factual information and that can interact with users in English. Knowledge gained from these experiments is being used in a computer project aimed toward developing such systems.

Descriptors : *MEMORY(PSYCHOLOGY) , CYBERNETICS , DECISION THEORY , ENGLISH LANGUAGE , MAN MACHINE SYSTEMS , SEMANTICS , SYNTAX

Subject Categories : Psychology

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