

Artificial intelligence – Virtual assistant dialogs

Assignment 1

Have a conversation with a virtual assistant (e.g., Amazon Echo, Siri) and, in the space below, write down your questions and the answers given by the virtual assistant. Mark an X to indicate whether the virtual assistant was able to answer the question or not. You may use your own smartphone or a parent's phone for this assignment; the voice control function on a computer or home assistant is also suitable for this assignment (e.g., Amazon Echo or Google Home). Try the provided questions first. Then think of your own questions to ask the virtual assistant.

Question 1: What will the weather be like today?

Answer 1: The weather will be like this today: [weather app display]

- ☒ Answered correctly
- ☐ Answered incorrectly
- ☐ Not answered at all

Question 2: Can you tell me a joke?

Possible answer 2: What do you call a boomerang that doesn't come back? – A stick.

- ☒ Answered correctly
- ☐ Answered incorrectly
- ☐ Not answered at all

Challenge question, for example: How old am I? OR What is my favorite color?

The virtual assistant will probably give an evasive answer to this question or not (be able to) answer it at all because it actually knows nothing about the person. However, there is an exception: If personal information (such as age or address) was entered into the device, the virtual assistant can make connections and provide this information.

Assignment 2

Analyze your results in a class discussion. The following key questions may help:

- Which questions can “he” or “she” answer and which questions cannot be answered?
- How good are the answers?
- What did you notice?

Solution

Some questions are very easy for the virtual assistant to answer, especially if they are related to the purpose of the application (of the virtual assistant) and the virtual assistant is programmed for them. The question about the weather is an example of this.

Many virtual assistants are also programmed to answer users' “funny” questions, such as the request for a joke or “Do you love me?” In this way, the virtual assistant is supposed to seem more like a person and not like a machine.

Some questions are not answered at all or only evasively. This is always the case when the questions are unrelated to the purpose of the application or when the questions ask for information which the virtual assistant cannot access.