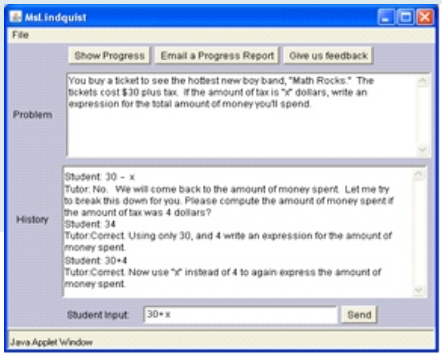
CHAT2 LEARN

Chatbot technologies for digital entrepreneurship and education and adult learners

Newsletter n.2

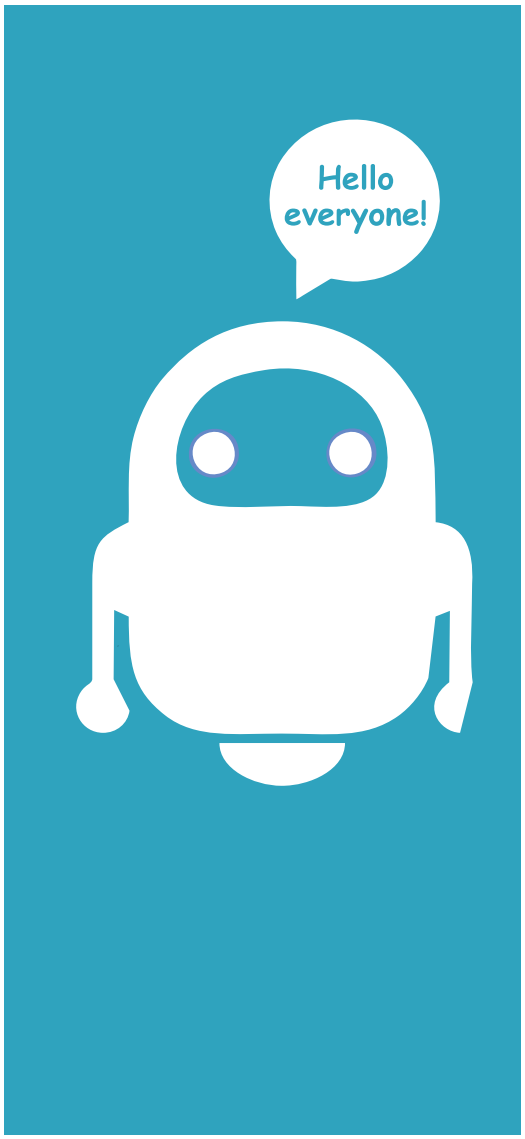
Hello everyone! This is the second newsletter of the Chat2learn project. We will describe some of the best practices identified by the partners to understand how to implement effective chatbots.
These are only 5 of the nearly 30 best practices collected and analyzed by the partners. We have chosen the most interesting or innovative ones, that show how to apply chatbots both to training and customer care and to other company activities (e.g. recruiting).
In the next newsletter, we will introduce some of the first outputs and results of the project.

Ms Lindquist



Ms Lindquist is a “3rd generation tutoring system” (or ITS - Intelligent Tutoring Systems) that is meant to engage in a dialogue with students to allow students to construct their own knowledge of the domain.
The task domain Ms Lindquist works on is symbolization, which is the task of writing an algebraic expression given the real-world problem context. Symbolization is fundamental because if students can not translate problems into a mathematical algebraic model, they will not be able to apply algebra to solve real-world problems.
Ms Lindquist was born as a research project of the “Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Constructive Learning Environment” (CIRCLE) of the University Carnegie Mellon (USA).
Miss Lindquist is an ITS that not only can model-trace the student's actions but can be more human-like in carrying on a running conversation, complete with probing questions, worked examples, positive and negative feedback, follow-up questions in embedded sub-dialogues, and requests for an explanation as to why something is correct.
One of the aspects that are most appreciated is the ability to face the problem from a multidisciplinary point of view as it constantly takes into account the real learning processes, tutor-student interactions, etc. to build an effective tutorial model.
Partner: ASSET Basilicata

For more info:
https://www.cs.cmu.edu/~neil/my_papers/postFinal-AAAI+cog-typo.html



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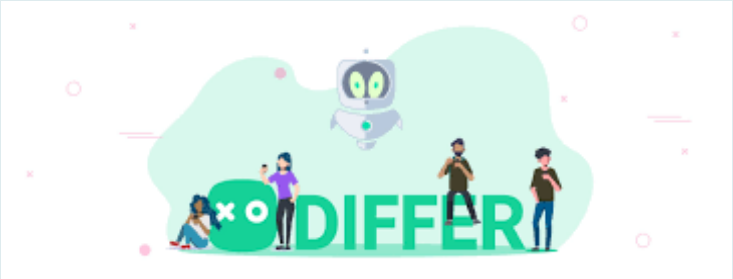
DIFFER



The purpose of Differ is to help new students of a University to develop friendship and a sense of belonging in transition to university with the aims of increasing both engagement and retention.
The system is created to provide immediate answers to students' questions, which, as a rule, are repeated every semester. From the information provided on the website of the company that created Differ (EdTech Foundry AS), it is known that the questions vary from general to more particular questions about the syllabi and the expectations of the course. Moreover, besides answering questions, chatbot sometimes offers academic articles and reading to students who are relevant to their coursework. Chatbot also offers clear ways that a student can contribute to the class, for example, posting on forums. To function, the chatbot uses special algorithms and must accumulate and work on questions and student-teacher interaction all the time to improve its ability to give proper answers and recommendations. The company reports that the results of its trial program showed five times higher participation of students in the messages sent by the bot, compared to the teacher-human.
Partner: SEIT Lab - University of Cyprus
For more info: https://www.differ.chat/

University of Cyprus

Cyprus

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ABILITICS

ABILITICS
ABILITY TO CREATE SUCCESS

The aim of the chatbot created by the firm Abilitics Ltd (Bulgaria) is to support companies in their HR practices and to provide digital solutions for improved learning effectiveness. The chatbot is focused on providing specialised HR solutions for:

- Recruitment – as a career portal for pre-screening candidates – the applicant interacts with the chatbot about their experience and expectations and the HR expert decides if s/he is suitable for further contact and setting up an interview. Employer branding – a potential job applicant interacts with the chatbot to see if the company and its culture are suitable for them.

- On-boarding – the newly hired employee interacts with the chatbot to learn about the company, internal policies and procedures, internal HR processes, etc. Here the chatbot allows to include videos, text documents, PowerPoint presentations, etc. The aim is for the chatbot to replace the HR staff in the period of the initial orientation of the employee.

- Training – here the chatbot provides support to: 1) individual learners, who can initiate self-learning and improve their skills prior to employment, and 2) companies, which can develop topics for micro-learning and send notifications to their employees when there is a new subject and material available, so they can initiate self-learning and take the session.

Partner: Nikanor Ltd
For more info: www.skillythebot.com

NIKANOR

Bulgaria

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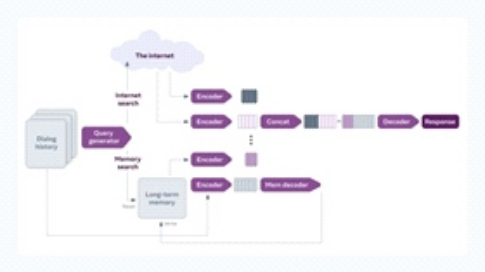
BlenderBot



Blender bot is a open-domain and open-source chatbot (an open source project) developed by Facebook.
The aim of the project is to create an online and comprehensive AI chatbot framework that would combine empathy, knowledge, and personality.
Blender is the first chatbot to build a diverse set of conversational skills like empathy, knowledge, and personality in one system. The blog stated that the bot in terms of engagement feels “more human” according to human evaluators. It has been designed in such a manner that it can assume a persona, discuss nearly any topic, and show empathy in natural, 14-turn conversation flows.
Blender incorporates not just large-scale neural models, with up to 9.4 billion parameters — or 3.6x more than the largest existing system — but also equally important techniques for blending skills and detailed generation. Common to other NLP research, the first step to create this chatbot was large-scale training. They also introduced BST (Blnded Skill Talk) for training and evaluating these desirable skills (it consists of: engaging use of personality, engaging use of knowledge; display of empathy and ability to blend all 3 seamlessly).
The pretrained and fine-tuned Blender models with 90 million parameters, 2.7 billion parameters, and 9.4 billion parameters are available on GitHub, along with a script for interacting with the bot (with safety filtering built in). All code for model evaluation and fine-tuning, including the data sets themselves, is available in ParAI.

Partner: DomSpain
For more info: https://ai.facebook.com/blog/state-of-the-art-open-source-chatbot/

DOM SPAIN CONSULTING S.L.

Spain

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Vakanties.nl

Chatbot Vera is part of a technical application of the Chatbot Technology in the tourism and hospitality industries. The target audience for the chatbot Vera is the customers of the website: www.vakanties.nl located in The Netherlands.
Booking a trip via an online platform has become the new standard for customers looking for a holiday. As the ultimate place to find the best holiday for the best price, customers find themselves at the place of being the decision makers and many of their demands continue to increase. The functionality of companies in the tourism, travel and hospitality industry were heavily tested at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, when due to travel restrictions, millions of travel plans were cancelled. While many companies which operate traditionally online experienced struggles and delays in their response rates, techy travel agencies, including Vakanties.nl. were able to meet customer demands and respond quicker to questions through the usage of their Chatbot Vera. The Vakanties.nl platform allows customers to:

- make combinations of flights, hotels and rental cars in real time
- compose your own holiday without stress of choice, but with hyper-personal suggestions.

Moreover, if you have any questions about your booking, you can contact the chatbot, Vera.

The chatbot Vera has been working with customer service for a year and has as a core task the responsibility to answer all questions from the company customers at lightning speed. Vera conducts these actions via a web chat and WhatsApp. Vera is getting smarter every day through machine learning. Behind the scenes the team works hard to make Vera everyone's personal assistant.

Partner: Lidi Smart Solutions
For more info: www.vakanties.nl

LIDI SMART SOLUTIONS

Netherlands

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https://chat2learn.eu/