

IN5480 – Specialization in Research in Design of IT

1.1 Concepts, definition and history of AI

1.1.1 The history of AI

The term ‘Artificial Intelligence’ was formally founded at a Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, at a conference regarding the ‘Dartmouth Summer Research Project on Artificial Intelligence’ in 1956 (Anyoha 2017), (Grudin 2009, p. 49). But the story of AI begins longer ago than one would think. The earliest influences can be traced back to Greek philosophy about 800 B.C. – were some of the philosophers had ideas about inanimate objects ‘coming to life’. The Greek writer Homer (author of the Illiad and the Odyssey) wrote about mechanical ‘tripods’ (a small table or stool with three legs) who were imagined ‘mechanical assistants’ able to ‘enter the gathering of the Gods’ – with their ‘golden wheels’ (Kraggerud 2019), (Buchanan 2006, p. 53). These and similar thoughts where one gives human characteristics to non-humans such as objects, animals, fantasy figures etc. is called ‘Antomorphism’, is something that influenced both science, religion, and human imagination for decades to come. Examples of ‘Antomorphism’ can be found in fantasy stories like Wizard of Oz, Beauty and the Beast, Frankenstein and Star Wars - but also real-world AI innovations like Apple’s ‘Siri’, Boston Dynamics ‘Spot’ or Japan’s ‘Weird Hotel’ staffed with robots (Løøv 2019), (Buchanan 2006, p. 53-54).

Modern day AI is a field influenced by many different disciplines; engineering (cybernetics), biology (neural networks), psychology, communication theory, game theory, mathematics, statistics, logics, linguistics and like mentioned before – philosophy (Buchanan 2006, p. 54-55). But one of the most pivotal events in the history of AI was the code breaking machine ‘Bombe’ – designed by Alan Turing (amongst others) in 1939. Turing developed the first systematic method for breaking encrypted messages, which successfully decrypted German messages in World War II (Copeland, 2021). It is said that this effort shortened the war by several years (Goodwin and Thormodsæter, 2019). Further, Turing wrote a paper in 1950 about the possibility of an electronic computer who could behave intelligently. The paper also included some criteria for differentiating between an intelligent machine and an unintelligent machine – known as the ‘Turing Test’ (or ‘Imitation Game’). The test is; if a person is communicating with a computer or another person just by using a keyboard and a screen and he/she cannot decide if they are communicating with a machine or not – the machine is in fact ‘intelligent’ (Goodwin and Thormodsæter, 2019).

Despite the 1950s innovations, AI does not become a major research field until Mid-1960s to the Mid-1970s. AI pioneer Herbert Simon (one of the founding fathers of AI) wrote in 1960, ‘Machines will be capable, within twenty years of doing any work that a man can do’ (Simon in Grudin 2009, p. 50). Even today, with machines more powerful and able than one might could have imagined at the time, we have yet to develop AI that can do ‘any work’ that a human can do. Still, in the last twenty years our modern computers have had enough memory and processor power to be able to test some of the grand ideas proposed in the 20th century (Buchanan 2006, p. 56). The 21st century is so far known for multiple AI achievements – for instance AI technology being used to remotely control robots (The Mars Quests), develop self-driving cars (Tesla Autopilot), be used as virtual assistants/chatbots, in the health care sector, security and surveillance sector and much more.

1.1.2. Definitions of AI

There are many definitions of AI, and I have selected three different definitions to present in this section. One from the author/AI expert Lasse Rouhiainen, another one from the computer/cognitive scientist John McCarthy, and one from the Oxford Dictionary.

Rouhiainen defines AI as; ‘[...] using computers **to do things that normally require human intelligence**’ (Rouhiainen 2019, p. 3). McCarthy’s definition of AI is; ‘It is the science and **engineering of making intelligent machines**, especially intelligent computer programs. It is related to the similar task of **using computers to understand human intelligence**, but AI does not have to confine itself to methods that are biologically observable’ (McCarthy in IBM, 2020). The Oxford definition is; ‘(AI is) The theory and development of **computers systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence**, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages’ (Oxford University Press, 2021).

It is clear that McCarthy emphasizes something different than Rouhiainen, by this I mean that Rouhiainen’s definition is computers **doing things that requires human intelligence**, and McCarthy’s definition is **using computers to understand human intelligence**. For me I would say that the first is more action-focused than the latter. McCarthy also states that AI does not have to **confine itself** in relation to things **that are biologically observable**. In other words – AI computers can go beyond the scope of human biology (even human intelligence). I would also argue that Rouhiainen’s definition of ‘**doing things**’ is quite broad – and gives the reader the impression that AI has a wide variety of possibilities, which we know is true. At the same time, I start to wonder; what aspect of human intelligence does Rouhiainen mean? Is it the ability to speak, to read, to make sense of the world or being able to communicate emotions? Is it the ability to understand reality in form of past, present and the future or to be able to solve complex problems within a variety of contexts? Maybe all the above? From my point of view, I am leaning a bit towards the Oxford definition by claiming; **AI is developing computer systems that able to perform a variety of human tasks and imitate human behavior and intelligence**. I say ‘a variety of tasks’ and imitate’ because my belief is that machines (however ‘seamlessly’ the technology) will never fully understand human intelligence. Compared to the other definitions. who comes from a cognitive and mathematical/logical perspective, I put more emphasis on the social, biological and contextual perspective, stating the difference between what is artificial, and what is biological.

1.1.3 Review of the article “AI and HCI: Two Fields Divided by a Common Focus”

The article mentioned in the title by Jonathan Grudin tries to outline the history of AI and HCI, and the tension between the two fields. The main focus is to give the reader and overview of the background and the forces which historically kept AI and HCI apart – but also explain the current situation of ‘Usable AI’ (in other words; human-robot interaction). My main objection with this article is that it seems to be lacking some in-depth context (being that it is a bit short), thus being a bit fragmented. I was also left with some questions after reading this sentence; ‘conferences are increasingly populated by students, who bring wonderful energy but uncertain commitment. Many prominent HCI researchers have moved from computer science departments to information schools, introducing new identity issues and distancing them from AI colleagues’ (Grudin 2009, s. 55). Why is there a lack of commitment, and why is there a distance from AI colleagues? In my view, HCI and AI can learn much from each other’s domain, and seems like a ‘perfect partnership’ on paper, especially when it comes to solve complex world issues like AI-ethics, participatory AI, health-care robotics, and the threat of unemployment (due to AI and robots).

1.1.4 ‘Emotech’ - a contemporary company that work with AI

‘Emotech’ brands itself with the slogan ‘Reimagining the relationship between humans and technology’ and is (in their words) ‘emotion technology’. The company makes multi-modal home solutions, which they claim makes a new way of interaction (Emotech 2021). The company talks about AI as a series of service products and frequently uses the term ‘proactive interaction’ – and sells products that do text to video, event- and behavior detection, stress-, emotion- and speech analysis/recognition etc. They can also provide tailored solutions for both homes and offices. It seems that their ‘proactive interaction’ is an idea they hope would change how humans interact with AI. Olly, branded as ‘the first home robot with personality’ anticipates the user’s needs, and won several CES (Consumer Technology Association) Innovation Awards in 2017 (Emotech 2017). Olly uses a ‘character engine’ to create an unique personality, so that it will relate to the user in a distinctive way.

1.1.5 The fictional film “I, Robot” starring Will Smith

This is an American Sci-fi movie from 2004. The plot is set to 2035 in a dystopian world, where the main character Del Spooner (Will Smith) investigates the alleged suicide of Alfred Lanning – the founder of a company called U.S. Robotics. US Robotics has successfully filled the world with highly intelligent humanoid robots - which all have the same appearance and has an assisting role for humans. The movie is based on some elements from the novel ‘I, Robot’ written in 1950 by Isaac Asimov. The unique feature of Asimov’s book series about robots are ‘The Three Laws of Robotics’ – rules that ensures that the robots does not turn against their creators (Øverland 2019). These rules sometimes result in ethical dilemmas, for instance the car accident where a robot decides to save Spooner instead of a little girl (which is why Spooner does not like robots). Spooner suspects that a humanoid robot called ‘Sonny’ killed Lanning and somehow was able to break (hack) one of The Three Laws in his code. The interaction between robots and humans in this movie mostly being done by voice, tangible interaction - but also through behavior- and emotion recognition. These robots manipulate the same objects as humans and seem very ‘evolved’ in terms of technology and human ‘embodiment’. Still, there is a significant difference between the robots and humans as their speech, manor and looks make them easy to differentiate from humans.

1.2 Robots and AI systems

1.2.1 The word ‘Robot’

The word ‘robot’ was first introduced as the word ‘robota’ in the Czech play ‘Rossum’s Universal Robots’ (R.U.R.) written by Karel Čapek in 1921. The meaning of the word is ‘mandatory work’, so the robots in the play served humans by doing their jobs. The robots in this play did not have feelings or intelligent life, but after some time they revolt and destroy humankind (Wallén 2008, p. 4), (Blekastad, 2020). However, the term ‘robotics’ (and the Three Laws of Robots mentioned in the previous section) were introduced by Isaac Asimov (Wallén 2008, p. 5).

1.2.2 ‘Robot’ definitions

I have selected two different ‘robot’ definitions to present in this section. One from the The Robot Institute of America and another from the Merriam Webster’s collegiate dictionary. The Robot Institute of America defines a robot as: *‘A reprogrammable, multifunctional manipulator designed to move materials, parts, tools, or specialized devices through various*

programmed motions for the performance of a variety of tasks’ (The Robot Institute of America in Thrun, 2004, p. 3), and Merriam Webster’s dictionary defines it as; ‘*An automatic device that performs functions normally ascribed to humans or a machine in the form of a human*’ (Merriam Webster’s collegiate dictionary (1993) in Thrun, 2004, p. 3). I would say that both definitions make it clear that we are talking about a physical device (‘manipulator’) that can do tasks. This separates it from being a mere computer program, but I still think that the Robot Institute focuses more on the program and the mechanics behind the ‘motions’ than Webster’s – who talks about the human aspect of it (the robots so-called imitating human behavior). In my eyes, a robot is a programmed device that can perform functions normally ascribed humans and/or other machines by using their own built-in program and/or continually reprogramming their own system through learning. I think that the ‘learning’ aspect is important to incorporate as more and more of our systems are able to learn new skills through learning (making them even more ‘like us’).

1.2.3 The relation between AI and robots

The relation between AI and robots is that robotics involves building mechanical devices, and AI is the program that can be used to make the robot ‘intelligent’. If I were to compare it to something known I would say that the robot is the ‘body’ and the AI is the ‘brain’.

1.2.4 The iRobot Roomba

Roomba is a robot vacuum cleaner. The company markets it by stating ‘[...] your Roomba robot vacuum will make sure you come back to a clean home. Just the way you like it’ (iRobot, 2021). In other words, it moves from room to room, floor to floor – vacuuming your dust. Humans mostly interact with Roomba the first time it is set up or when they empty it for dust. In the set-up process the owner chooses the settings in the accompanying app (which rooms it should clean, at what time, how many times a day etc.) before Roomba begins its initial ‘room scan’ which will become the default pattern it follows for every vacuum session – unless chosen otherwise by the owner. The robot moves slowly in a pattern movement, only vacuuming places it can access with its round shape. After the session is done, the robot returns to its designated charging place to ‘rest’ between vacuum sessions. I would say that the ‘normal’ interaction between a Roomba and its owner is nearly non-existent if used like intended – e.g., the owner relaxing in the couch or making dinner while Roomba is cleaning the house automatically.

1.3 Universal Design and AI systems

1.3.1 Universal Design

The Norwegian Digitalization Agency defines Universal Design as this; ‘Universal design is about providing good technological solutions for everyone’ (The Norwegian Digitalization Agency, 2021). The definition specifically states, ‘good technological solutions **for everyone**’, which involves making solutions that is accessible to all people – regardless of their physical and/or cognitive ability. Personally, I think that Universal Design should strive to be more than accessible – it should also be *used* and *understood* – have a real-life value for the people that uses it. Only when the people of representation can use the design seamlessly, I would say that it is inclusive.

1.3.2 AI and Universal Design

The potential of AI with respect for human perception, movement, cognition and emotions is in my opinion huge. The question is, how can we make sure that AI is including? There are some known examples of more inclusive innovations like speech recognition technology – for instance known from voice-assistants like ‘Siri’ and ‘Alexa’. Auto-generated captions on YouTube-videos or real-time transcriptions of conversations using ‘Google Live Transcribe’ are also some other known examples (Cahalane, 2019). The first two can be helpful for people with visual impairment, and the other two can be used by people with hearing loss and/or in situations where the context makes it is hard to hear or understand sounds. Still, there is a big ‘but’ here – because the potential of AI becoming including or excluding depends on *who* trains the AI and *how* it is trained. The more diversity is represented, and more diverse datasets are being used – the better. This is very important since recent reports has shown that AI can become biased, even racist, if the team who builds it aren’t aware of ethics, what data they use to train it, or are transparent about how the decisions are being made (Borgan 2019). The thing is, there is a difference between lab-settings, and real-life and observed effects can have many different causes (more about this in the next part) (Heaven, 2020).

1.3.3 The concept of ‘Understanding’

In the WCAG 2.1 principles and in many of the Human AI-Interaction guidelines the concept ‘understand’ and “understanding” is used. So, what does it mean to ‘understand’ and what is ‘understanding’ really? According to Guideline 3.1 in WCAG 2.1, ‘the information and operations of user interface must be understandable’, meaning; the text content and the operations must be readable and understandable. Then, when it comes to machines – do they understand? The answer is both yes and no. Yes, in terms of that they can read program code and execute operations, but also no because they do not understand ‘context’ or cause-and-effect like we humans do. To exemplify this, there is a difference between correlation (if this happens, then this happens, e.g., if I pull down this handle, the door will open) and causality (one thing affects something else, e.g., if I pull down this handle, an alarm might go off). In other words, humans can use knowledge they’ve learned in one context, in another context, using their intuition. What I mention here, is defined as the ‘frame problem’ or ‘alignment problem’ by John McCarthy (Goodwin and Thormodsæter 2021).

1.4 Guideline for Human-AI Interaction

1.4.1 Human-AI interaction Guidelines

One of the 18 guidelines for human-AI interaction from Microsoft states this; 13. ‘Learn from user behavior. Personalize the user’s experience by learning from their actions over time.’ If I were to describe this guideline, I would say; Learn the user’s actions continually over time and reuse this information to make the user experience more accurate and valuable for the specific user. I use the word ‘continually’ here because humans are both static and dynamic. Our habits might be static, and never change – but we can also change them or gain new knowledge throughout life.

1.4.2 HCI design guidelines

Some of the HCI design guidelines have similarities with the Human-AI Interaction Design Guidelines (IDC from here) – but the main difference in my view, is that the Human-AI IDC has their guidelines inside categories for the different steps in the interaction. For example, they have a category called ‘initially’, then ‘during interaction’, ‘when wrong’ and ‘over time’. Compared to the HCI design guidelines, these are more ‘general’. Consequently, most of them apply to all parts

of the design, the ‘entire time’. For example, ‘strive for consistency’, ‘cater to universal usability’, ‘reduce short term memory load’. At the same time the HCI guidelines also have some principles that apply when something that halts the interaction (like the principles under ‘when wrong’ for Human-AI IDC); ‘offer informative feedback’, ‘design dialogs to yield closure’. Personally, I favor the Human-AI IDC because they appear more detailed, with more specific examples than for instance ‘cater to universal usability’.

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