

Critique of "Encounters with Kismet and Cog: Children Respond to Relational Artifacts"

This paper studies the children's interaction with robots and tries to demystify the machines and the impact of transparency that the general public has on the perceived sentience of robots. The study conducted reveals that children can maintain a solid emotional bond with robots even after learning their mechanical nature, this fact highlights the flexibility of children's perceptions of robots as social beings, challenging today's notions that transparency diminishes the role of robots as companions.

Pros:

- Gives insights into the emotional and intellectual connections that children form with robots;
- Uses two distinct robots for tests, Kismet and Cog, it is possible to analyze and compare different characteristics of each robot and how they affect and influence the children's interactions;
- It opens the discussion and emphasizes the potential for emotional relationships between children and robots.

Cons:

- It does not address the long-term effects or the potential impact of children's age on the reaction to robot transparency;
- It does not discuss the societal implications of children forming emotional bonds with robots.

The research in "Encounters with Kismet and Cog" calls into question long-held beliefs about the influence of robot demystification on children's perceptions. It emphasizes the critical role of emotional connections in human-computer interactions, sparking meaningful discussions regarding the ethical implications and societal ramifications of children developing deep attachments with artificial companions. As society considers the increasing integration of robots into daily life, a critical evaluation of the permanence of these relationships, as well as their impact on children's social and emotional development, becomes crucial.

These types of experiments involving children, to check how they interact and perceive robots, have been tested over these years [1], as has been documented in many surveys, being one of the most curious remarks the fact that children tend to conceive of robots as geometric forms with human features. Children offer a pure, non-influenced, and transparent insight into the robot's appearance and behavior.

In summary, this paper offers excellent insight into how children interact with and perceive robots, however further studies could be conducted to evaluate how the involvement of robots in early life for humans could impact their personal growth in the long term. The findings can also inspire additional research on how these robots can be integrated into children's lives, for example, in therapeutic applications or to promote the emotional well-being of children.

[1] Lin, Q., Fan, S., Zhang, Y., Xu, M., Zhang, H., Yang, Y., Lee, A.P., Woltering, J.M., Ravi, V., Gunter, H.M., Luo, W., Gao, Z., Lim, Z.W., Qin, G., Schneider, R.F., Wang, X., Xiong, P., Li, G., Wang, K., Min, J., Zhang, C., Qiu, Y., Bai, J., He, W., Bian, C., Zhang, X., Shan, D., Qu, H., Sun, Y., Gao, Q., Huang, L., Shi, Q., Meyer, A., Venkatesh, B., The seahorse genome and the evolution of its specialized morphology., *Nature*, 540 (7633) (2016), 395–399. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nature20595>.