

Invited talk:
**Making (Virtual) Friends and Influencing (Virtual)
People**

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Abstract

Harmony or rapport between people is essential for relationships as diverse as seller-buyer and teacher-learner. In this talk I describe the kinds of discourse behaviors – such as common ground and other interactional structures and narrative resonance – and non-verbal behaviors– such as attention, positivity, and coordination – that function together to establish a sense of rapport between two people in conversation. These studies are used as the basis for the implementation of virtual peers - adults, but also more recently embodied conversational virtual children who are capable of acting as friends and learning partners with real children from different ethnic traditions, collaborating to tell stories from the child's own cultural context, and aiding children in making the transition between home and school language.