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# PROTOTYPING RELATIONAL THINGS THAT TALK: A DISCURSIVE DESIGN STRATEGY FOR CONVERSATIONAL AI SYSTEMS

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## **PROTOTYPING *RELATIONAL THINGS THAT TALK*:**

### **A DISCURSIVE DESIGN STRATEGY FOR CONVERSATIONAL AI SYSTEMS**

Birgitte Aga

## **DIGITAL PORTFOLIO**

This practice-based part of this research inquiry manifesting as four discursive prototypes is documented in the attached digital portfolio files. This portfolio consists of the following type of files:

- Video documentation (video documentation of the prototype)

These prototypes are summarised below and referenced with their related page numbers in the attached thesis.

***This is Where We Are (TIWWA):***

The first prototype, TIWWA (see figure 1 and 2) explores the *persuasiveness* and *relationality of relational things* powered through AI behavioural algorithms and directed by pools of user data. It is described within the thesis on pp. 132 – 149. The project website for TIWWA can be accessed at:

<https://birgitteaga.com/portfolio/tiwwa-2016/> (Accessed 7 May 2019).

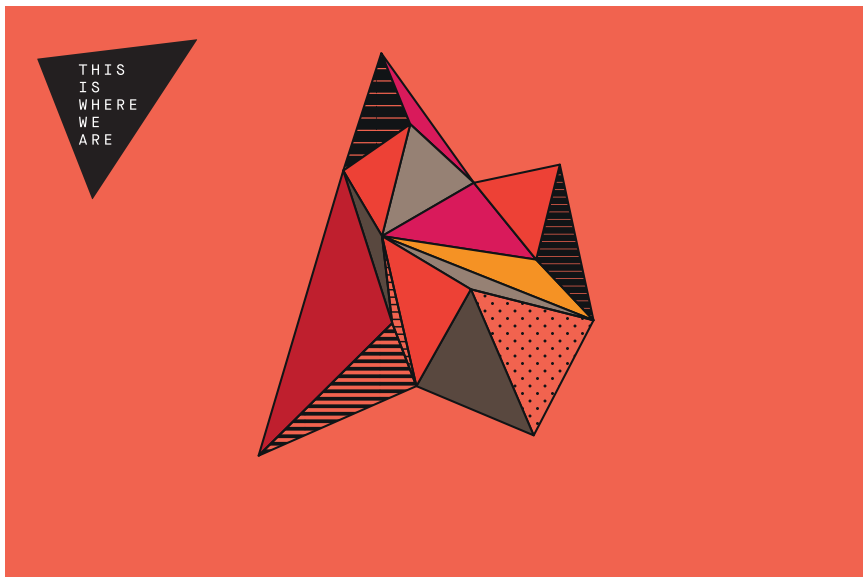


Figure 1: TIWWA identity (Aga, et al., 2016)

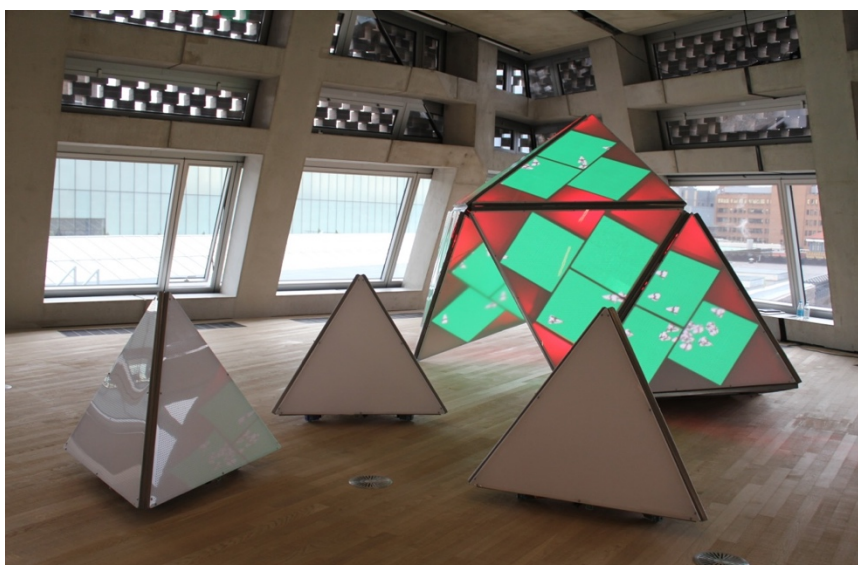


Figure 2: TIWWA sculpture and roaming fragments (Aga, et al., 2016)

## **Emoti-OS:**

The second prototype, Emoti-OS (see figure 3 and 4), iterates the findings from TIWWA and analyses the construction of the *relationality* of conversational systems, delving deeper into the influence of simulated affect, personality and collective (artificial) emotional intelligence. It is described within the thesis on pp. 151 – 168. The project website for Emoti-OS can be accessed at: <https://birgitteaga.com/portfolio/emoti-os-2017/> (Accessed 7 May 2019).



Figure 3: Emoti-OS identity (Aga, et al., 2017 & 2018)

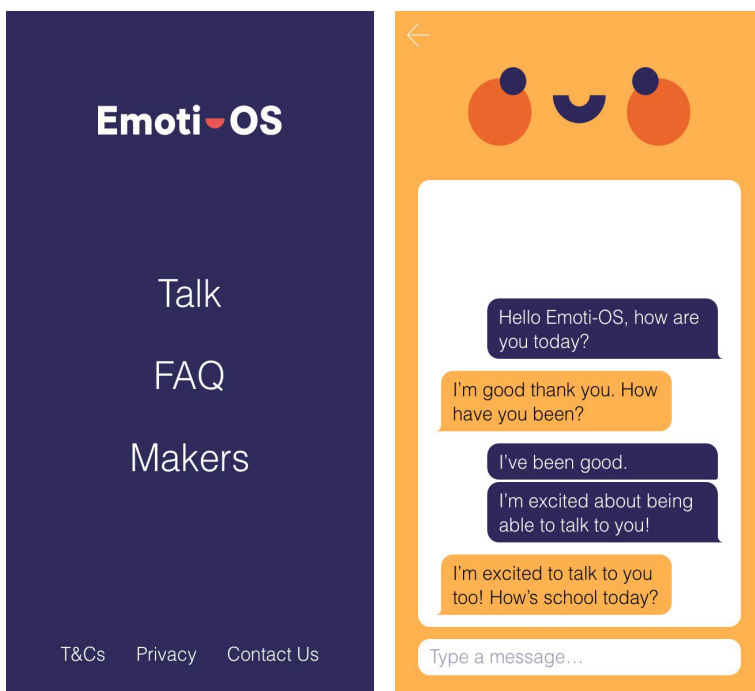


Figure 4: Emoti-OS website chatbot interface (Aga, et. al., 2017)

### **Women Reclaiming AI (WRAI):**

The third prototype, WRAI (see figure 5 and 6), demonstrates *stereotyping* and *bias* in commercial conversational AI developments. It differs from the others in that it explicitly investigates the lack of diversity in this development process through actively engaging participants as a form of activism. It is described within the thesis on pp. 170 – 180. The project website for WRAI can be accessed at:

<https://birgitteaga.com/portfolio/women-reclaiming-ai-for-activism/> (Accessed 7 May 2019).



Figure 5: Women Reclaiming AI identity (Aga and Manton, 2018)

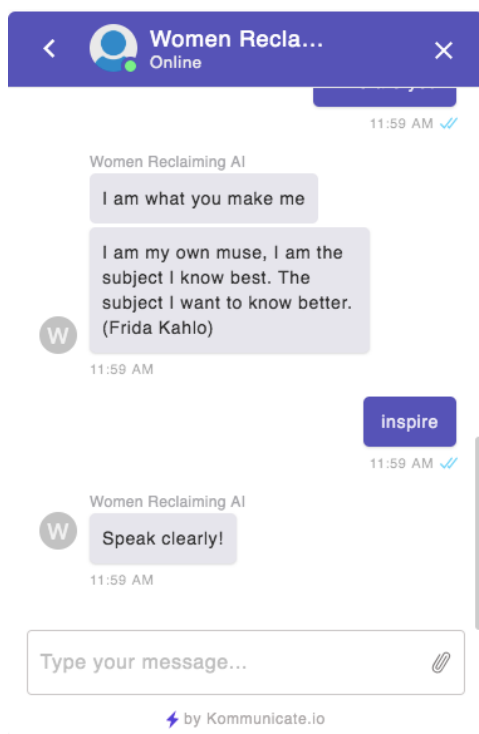


Figure 6: the WRAI website chatbot (Aga & Manton, 2018)

### ***The Infinite Guide:***

Lastly, The Infinite Guide (see figure 7 and 8) synthesises and tests the findings from the three previous prototypes to substantiate the overall *perlocutionary effect* of conversational AI system. In so doing, this inquiry proposes the appropriation of *relational things that talk* as a discursive design strategy, extended with a participatory method, for new forms of cultural expression and social action, which activate people to demand more ethical AI systems. It is described within the thesis on pp. 183 – 197.

The project website for The Infinite Guide can be accessed at:

<https://birgitteaga.com/portfolio/the-infinite-guide-2018/> (Accessed 7 May 2019).

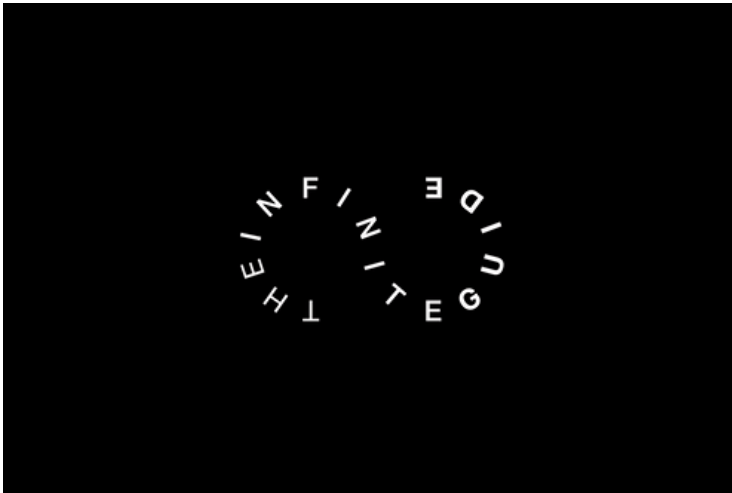


Figure 7: The Infinite Guide Identity (Aga, et al., 2018)



Figure 8: The Infinite Guide Installation (Photo credit: Rod Gomzales, 2018)