

## **Chatbots em campanhas de sensibilização, narrativa conversacional e possibilidades interativas: o caso do bot Fabi para Unicef Brasil e Facebook**

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### **Chatbots in awareness campaigns, conversational narrative and interactive possibilities: the case of Fabi bot for Unicef Brazil and Facebook**

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**Resumo:** Neste artigo, analisamos o dispositivo conversacional proposto no âmbito da campanha de sensibilização sobre segurança on-line e vazamento de imagens íntimas do Unicef Brasil e do Facebook, na qual internautas podem interagir com um chatbot chamado Fabi. A partir de uma abordagem pragmática da comunicação, estudamos as características da narrativa supostamente baseada em experiências pessoais contada pelo bot e ainda os aspectos interativos, levando em conta os princípios de circularidade e de equifinalidade associados às interações humanas (WATZLAWICK, HELMICK-BEAVIN e JACKSON, 1992). Nosso objetivo é analisar a utilização de chatbots para a construção de “narrativas conversacionais” com propósito persuasivo.

**Palavras-chave:** chatbots; narrativa conversacional; campanhas de sensibilização.

**Abstract:** In this article, we analyze the conversational device proposed by UNICEF-Brazil and Facebook awareness campaign about online security and distribution of intimate images. In this campaign, Internet users can interact with a chatbot called Fabi. From a pragmatic approach to communication, we study the characteristics of the narrative supposedly based on personal experiences told by the bot as well as the interactive aspects, taking into account the circularity

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*and equifinality principles associated with human interactions (WATZLAWICK, HELMICK-BEAVIN e JACKSON, 1992). Our objective is to analyze how chatbots can create a “conversational narrative” with a persuasive purpose.*

**Keywords:** *chatbots; conversational narrative; awareness campaign.*

With the arrival of “social web” (MILLERAND, PROULX and RUEFF, 2010) the advertisement communication integrated in its array of actions and strategies an apparently banal and daily practice: conversation. With the development of social-technological devices (blogs, wikis, social networks, chat apps, etc.) Which allow the users to produce and publish content, as well as creating and feeding relationships through online interactions, communication and marketing professionals did not hesitate in highlighting the importance of brands to dialogue with their consumers, hear their wishes and complaints and develop them in the creation and diffusion of content.

Celebrate conversational practices among potential brands and consumers and effectives mean, in a certain way, “to reject the model that links an enunciator to a recipient to privilege possible co-enunciators in equality with an exchange situation ideally symmetrical” (Patrin-Lecière, 2011, p. 17, our translation). It means, still, in appearance, to perform a less “vertical”, more “horizontal” communication that favors the enunciative logic frequently associated to social media in detriment to traditional media: “The intransitive character of communicational contract, based by the absence of conversation and, in bulk, the absence of direct response, is replaced by a reciprocity of interlocution” (HANSEN, 2018, p. 18). But if conversations among individuals tend to be evolutionary, free and unpredictable, brands need to integrate them into their own system of enunciation. For that, they try to guide and control such conversations, because their objective still is the persuasion for stimulating certain consumption practices.

In this article, we are interested by a specific situation of mediated online conversation that, despite not having a commercial purpose, is persuasive as it aims at raising awareness and changing social behavior of the interlocutors. It is an awareness campaign about online safety and the act of sharing intimate pictures released in conjunction with the United Nations Children’s Fund (Unicef) in Brazil and Facebook in February, 2018. Teenagers - the target audience of the campaign, according to the press release published in the event of the release (UNICEF

E FACEBOOK APRESENTAM FERRAMENTA..., 2018) - and adults can interact through the chat tool at Facebook with the fictional character Fabi, a bot (robot) linked to an artificial intelligence platform called Caretas.<sup>2</sup> The conversational exchanges between the robot and a user can last for up to 48 hours.

In fact, conversational robots - frequently called chatbots or even “Animated Conversational Agents” (ACA) - managed by autonomous and supposedly intelligent informative programs that are already known in the world of advertisement and marketing and are being increasingly used in the management of the relationship between companies and their clients.<sup>3</sup> It’s about animated characters capable of following an objective of adapting their behaviors in a virtual environment (Poncin and Ben Mimoun, 2011, p. 33). Integrated, most of the time, the message exchange apps already used by internet users in their cellphones, tablets and computers, chatbots bring the promise of making life easier for their users, responding to questions and giving information, interacting in a personalized and instantaneous way.

In the case studied in this article, the fictional character Fabi is recovering from the end of a relationship when she finds out her ex-boyfriend leaked an intimate video of them. At the same time teenagers and adults talk to Fabi, they find out what they are living and help her overcome the traumatic experience created by the leak of the intimate video, “she” must show how damaging can be the act of sharing intimate images without the consent of the people involved, explain how to look for help in those situations and encourage a reflection about exposure and safety on the internet. Unlike chatbots that give information and service to clients, Fabi discusses about sexuality and warns about the risks of the internet through her experience, bringing facts and proof (pictures,

2 The campaign was idealized and created by the Argentinian content agency Sherpas.

3 Proof of that, the collective Bots Brasil, formed by professionals in the field of marketing and communication interested in conversational interfaces, launched the prize Bots Brasil Awards in 2017. The prize was attributed through an open online poll, awarding company bots in five categories – Personal assistant, Entertainment, Media, Retail and Services (PACETE, 2018).

documents), which, although they are fictional, they inscribe to what we call “conversational narrative”.

To define the notion of narrative, we come from the works of the philosopher Paul Ricœur (2010a, 2010b, 2010c), author influenced by the notion of “mimesis” from Aristotle. According to Ricœur (1991), the narrative consists in a discursive form that articulates and organize events, circumstances and intentions to build a unit of meaning; that works both for historic narrative and fictional narratives, as it is the case of the bot Fabi. In other words, the narrative agencies events as a way of indicating a passage from an initial state to a final state in an understandable manner. In this sense, the conversational narrative gives the necessary coherence to the understanding of a space-time experience, but it is built in an interlocutional way. In other words, it is the narration’s responsibility - the narrative construction as discursive form - is shared between the narrator and its interlocutors, it is made in verbal and non-verbal exchanges characterized in a conversation. The interest in the conversational narrative is that, even when the narrator has a pre-built narrative, the interlocutive situation imposes the participation of the interlocutors, impeding the narrator of doing what was initially foreseen and demanding of him a constant adaptation: in these cases, the narrative is never exactly the same, because the context of narration also varies.

About the methodology employed in this job, we’ve adopted an empirical approach and performed a discursive analysis of the exchanges we’ve made with the bot Fabi in June 2018. In addition, we also analyzed in a non-systematic and qualitative way the comments left with over 20 thousand evaluations published in the page of project Caretas on Facebook.<sup>4</sup> The goal was to compare our experiences of exchange with the bot with the experience of other users through the comments published. The analysis allowed us to observe two main aspects that work conjointly, but we separated them in order to deepen the observation: the narrative told by the bot Fabi, based on a supposed personal

4 Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/ProjetoCaretas>. Accessed in: July 30th, 2018.

experience, and the bot's interaction with the user, observing specially the way they exercise the phatic function (JAKOBSON, 1970) in conversational exchanges.

In addition, we've adopted a pragmatic approach to communication, which focus less on the emitter and in the receptor of speech and interests oneself in the relationship that gathers different interlocutors and the co-production of meanings in a communicational relationship (WATZLAWICK, HELMICK-BEAVIN e JACKSON, 1992). In the case we've studied, we questioned the relationship created between the bot Fabi and her interlocutors, coming from the situation of communication to analyze the exchanges performed and the narrative dimension of the discourse presented. Our objective is to analyze the use of a chat-bot to the construction of a conversational narrative that has a persuasive purpose - of sensitization and awareness - as well as the potential and limits of this use.

The article is organized, thus, in two times. The first part examines the way the personal narrative of Fabi motivates the adhesion of their interlocutors, making use of the "factualization" (DULONG, 1997) to erase or minimize the fictional character of the reported facts. The second part is dedicated to the conversational aspects of the discourse co-produced by the bot and its interlocutors, taking specially into account the principles of circularity and equifinality associated to human interaction (WATZLAWICK, HELMICK-BEAVIN and JACKSON, 1992).

### **Personal narratives: the factualization as factor of adhesion**

For many years, narrative and persuasive practices are manifested conjointly in discursive fragments and feeding from one another. According to Walter Benjamin, the narrative almost always have an utilitarian dimension: "This utility may consist either on a moral lesson, or a practical suggestion" (Benjamin, 1987, p. 9). The narrative isn't, therefore, only

an alternative found by individuals to apprehend the temporality of existence, as Ricœur (2010) affirms. Its strategic dimension has been more recently explored through the notion of storytelling proposed by Christian Salmon (2007), which presents the narrative practice as a technique of communication employed with the objective of influencing political and economical contexts. In this case, storytelling is considered by the author as a tool of control and manipulation of citizens and consumers according to the desires of their financial and political directors:

The subject of this new narrative order is neither the alienated consumer, nor the exploited worker, not even the indoctrinated citizen, but rather a bewitched individual, immersed in an universe, stuck in a narrative network that filtrates perceptions, stimulates the effects and directs conducts (Juste Mill, 2017, p. 93)

Even if we don't agree in considering storytelling in a strictly manipulative manner (which would erase the different possible intentions of the narrators, as well as the critical spirit and the participation of the interlocutors in the construction of meaning), the narrative can, in fact, be considered a technique used by advertisement communication, solidary and of sensitization, and, in a broader sense, by any discourse of persuasive character. If the narrative demands the use of "[...] Gears through which the individuals are conduced to identify with models and conform with protocols" (SALMON, 2007, p. 17), it is because "it can become a well ordered sequence of events lived that could seem chaotic, unpredictable" (Giroux, 2006, p. 47, our translation), enabling, thus, the understanding of a story and the adhesion of the interlocutors. In other terms:

The storytelling doesn't consist in only narrating one story, but it reveals a form of communication that [...] Intents to mobilize shared emotions to comfort, externally and internally, the strategic and social practices that are related (ZOZZOLI, 2012, p. 13).

Adopting an self-diegetic model (GENETTE, 1972), where the character is, at the same time, narrator and lead character of what is told,

Fabi Grossi brings back facts from her past and what has happened in the present of narration. She organizes the events and allows, thus, the interlocutor to find out that her ex-boyfriend shared an intimate video of the couple, showing the consequences and twists from this introductory fact.

One of the particularities of the narrative analyzed is that the users that want to talk to the bot Fabi know she is a fictional character. However, one of the goals of the campaign is precisely show that many girls have stories that are similar to Fabi's, or, in other words, that the experience "lived" by Fabi could be true, that it is based in a factual reality. In this sense, it becomes indispensable that the narrative is elaborated privileging the procedure of "factualization".

According to Renaud Dulong (2009), sociologist that studies practices of testimony and personal stories, the factualization consists in telling a fact supposedly lived by the narrator in the most plausible and coherent way possible, the closest to what has actually happened or what could have happened. Thus, factualization is articulated as it proposes an intersubjectively shared world – in other words, the facts narrated comfort people as they ensure that the narrator and its interlocutors are dealing with a shared reality, created through common references. The narrator can, thus, establish parallels between what he tells and the interlocutors experiences: "A story or a description, as inventive, poetic or fantastic as it may be, is only intelligible if the world described builds at least a few bridges to the world of the reader" (Dulong, 1997, p. 74, our translation) According to Jean-Michel Adam (1992, p. 42, our translation), investing in factualization gives the narrative "[...] The alternative of true and fake in the logic of an universe of shared references, unlike the text of fiction, based on the similarity with reality and not necessarily subject to rules in a shared references universe". But how does Fabi convince us of the factual character of her narrative?

Benveniste (1966, p. 264) believes that the factual character of a personal story goes through subjectivity, i.e., through the capacity of the narrator Fabi – who, in this case, is also the character of the narrative

– inscribing herself on her story. In order to do that, one of the elements that can be identified in the narrative are the modalizers, defined, generally, through words or expressions capable of giving the enunciation an affectionate value, of judgement or evaluation; in other words, modalizers are employed to mark the narrator’s point of view. In Fabi’s case, numberless modalizers are used, especially to describe the situation she is going through (are suggested feelings of sadness, shame, anger, despair, etc.) And do evaluate people who participate in her exposure in the internet (her ex-boyfriend and his ‘friends’ who contributed for the video being leaked).

The use of the first person in singular (“I”) reinforces the singular character of the story, which, precisely because of that, is shared: the subjectivity and the narrative and stylistic construction, two aspects that seem to be opposed in personal narratives, participate, however, entirely in these story as transmission of experiences that the narrator tries to share affectionately with their interlocutor (Blanckeman, 2001, p. 78, our translation). In this sense, the use of modalizers motivates an adhesion of the user to Fabi’s experience, giving them the role of privileged listener that will help her out of this humiliating situation to what she is subject to.

Still according to Benveniste (1966, p. 264), subjectivity goes through the use of deictics, expressions that only make sense in the context of enunciation and allow the narrator to tell what is happening in the moment of narration, or, still, presentifying past events. The bot Fabi doesn’t only tell her story in first person, but also send selfies to present herself (an actress played the character), sends audios telling where she is and what she is doing, talks about her family and friends. In addition to that, Fabi’s story is inscribed into a routine, which accentuates the human character of the character and facilitates the constitution of bridges between her experience and the interlocutor’s experience: “It’s obvious I didn’t get a wink of sleep last night, right?” (sending a selfie); “Now I need to go” or “My battery is dying, we’ll talk when I get home”.

Dulong (1997) identifies still other factualization operators that go beyond the indexes of subjectivity proposed by Benveniste. For the author, the preface of a story, or even its introduction, gives indications of its *modus operandi*: there is a significant difference starting a story with “Once upon a time” and “Did you know what happened to me?” Or even, “Did you see on TV what happened last night?” – the three sentences can introduce the same story, but indicating narratives with different sources, from fiction, personal experience or current fact. In the campaign’s case, if the presentation found in the Facebook page of the project proposes “a special conversation, an experience between fiction and reality”, from the moment you get in touch with the bot, the interlocutor is directly presented to the character’s personal experience, which introduces the story with the following sentences: “Let me tell you. My ex sent a video of ours to A video of ours, you know? (*sic*)”, inviting them to forget that this is fiction.

Still according to Dulong (1997),, presenting the main characters names of an event, the date and the location, organization and context help to become factual a supposed personal experience. In addition, “material” proof like photos, audio files, documents, letters, etc. also collaborate for the process of factualization. In the case analyzed, the bot Fabi introduces these elements in the narrative, giving the name of his ex-boyfriend and her lawyer and sending a series of material proof whose function is to guarantee the veracity of what she is telling, like the screen captures of messages exchanged with her ex, links of news found on the internet and pictures of the character to show her mood (dark circles around her eyes from crying, with a new look to show she’s happy, etc.) These material proof do not only contribute for the factualization of the story being told, but are also inscribed in the dynamic of online exchanges, that are not only limited to verbal messages, but are, most of the time, multimedia: Fabi send pictures from subjective angles, showing her point of view, selfies and audios replacing text and collaborating for the contextualization of the story (background noise coherent with the place described, tone of the character’s voice allowing

to confirm certain feelings described, etc.). The sentences are short and the language adopted is informal, with slangs used by young people at her age (the character says she's 21), abbreviations and, of course, many emojis – images that mostly work to represent emotions and sensations.

There are different ways of factualizing a narrative based on personal experiences, but all need coherence, they have to establish a certain degree of plausibility and they seek the interlocutor's adhesion. This adhesion can also be accomplished through elements that the narrator inserts in its narrative and that go through factual references (dates, names, coherence with previous experiences, etc.) And traces of subjectivity that allow the narrator to create their "own" story told, expressing, thus, emotions and points of view. The context of narration, in other words, of how the narrative is told, also demands coherence. In the case we've analyzed, this narration happens through chat in a social media, and it must, therefore, inscribe in the linguistic and social codes normally used by their users. The script proposed in the experience with bot Fabi presents a factualized narrative adapted to the conversational practices of the mediatic device used and the characteristics of their users, being, thus, prone to obtain the adhesion of the interlocutors that are willing to find out more about the story. However, the device proposed by the campaign made by Unicef and Facebook does not expect only the adhesion of the interlocutors, in other words, a symbolic acceptance of what is told: in order to an interaction to be established, it is fundamental that the interlocutors engage, working with the narrative.

### **Conversational narratives: a sociointeractive ideal?**

The conversation is the excellence spot of sociability. The first registers of reflections about the conversation, at least regarding western practices, go back to the Greek philosopher Cicero (106 a.C.-43 a.C.), which said that conversation should be pleasurable and spontaneous, as well as give each interlocutor the possibility of taking a stand of the exchanges, participating of interactions. According to the philosopher of language Francis Jacques, conversation imposes a "state of being together", forges

the simple reactivation of the common code in a convivial connivance” (JACQUES, 1985, p. 117, our translation). When we talk, something linked to the social order is produced. The role of a conversation becomes, thus, collaborating to give the individual a feeling of belonging, constituting or reconstituting the bond between the interlocutors. To talk, the ideal is “[...] First, choose a subject that interest the different interlocutors and gives each one the occasion of participating” (JACQUES, 1985, p. 119, our translation)

The narratives around personal experiences are examples of subjects easily apprehended by the interlocutors in a situation of conversation: they don't necessarily demand the knowledge in specific dominions and allow the sharing of experiences. In fact, conversations, especially when they have as subject personal experiences, privilege the social dimension and allow the creation of a supposed proximity between interlocutors. Elinor Ochs (2014) says that the stories of personal experience, when transmitted and shared in conversation, participate in the construction of social bonds and shared lives. To the author, at the same time conversational narratives of daily life seek to give coherence to the lived facts, they also create an intersubjective space of exchange and reception between interlocutors that are available to share their experiences. Goodwin (1984) says that conversational narratives, as social activities, tend to be dialogic, co-told and co-built by those who take a stand in the social interaction in question, not only getting close to the interlocutors, but creating a sense of belonging to the extend they enable the identification of similarities in their way of thinking, feeling and acting.

Supporting oneself in the social dimension created to the conversational narrative, one of the characteristics of the device studied here is the fact that part of a narrative told by the bot Fabi is developed in the present of narration, and it can, at first, adapt according to the interactions and exchanges produced between the character and her interlocutor. In other words, the narrative told presents different screenplays (UNICEF E FACEBOOK APRESENTAM FERRAMENTA..., 2018) that are adapted according with the reactions of each interlocutor:

if the bot detects that she is talking to a victim of intimate images being leaked, she begins to ask more questions about the experience; if the interlocutor is someone who thinks that Fabi didn't protect herself enough and that it's her fault she was exposed, she begins to explain why she is a victim of the situation. In order to do that, the bot intertwines her narrative with questions, which allow her to obtain information and better trace a profile of the interlocutor, like "do you know someone that is going through the same thing?" (*sic*) – to know whether he/she already lived the experience of having an intimate image leaked – or "do you think it's my fault?" (*sic*) – in order to understand the user's opinion. The conversational device proposed allows, thus, the interlocutors to feel included in the conversation and participants in the narration, since the story is adapted throughout the message exchange.

However, although the device proposed by Unicef and Facebook was elaborated to establish a proximity between the bot and the interlocutor, in the sense that they can give their opinion about the situation lived by Fabi and even tell their own story (if they were a victim of something similar of what happened to the lead character), the spontaneous character of the conversation is not optimized. That is because the bot does not necessarily respond the interlocutor's questions<sup>5</sup> – even when they enter the context of the narrative –, with the objective of ensuring that the exchanges respect the predefined script and the plot twists initially foreseen. For instance, when we ask "Did you look for help? Did you turn him in? [the ex-boyfriend]? (*sic*)", Fabi responds: "I can only imagine if someone in my family sees this. Should I talk to my parents now? (*sic*)" deviating the subject to the issue with the parents (to which the lead actress will return to, according to the proposed plot) and leaving the complaint for later, which will also be followed with practical information about how to ask for help and where to make a complaint.

5 Despite the evaluations being globally positive in the Facebook page dedicated to the project, praising especially the initiative of the campaign and the possibility of 'putting yourself in Fabi's shoes', the non-coherence of answers to the questions made by the interlocutors appears in a recurring manner in the comments associated to a weak survey (one or two stars).

In a pragmatic approach, the essential of communication is in the interaction and what she says about the relationship between her interlocutors, relationship that allows the co-production of meanings. According to Watzlawick, Helmick-Beavin and Jackson (1992), communication is seen as a system of elements in interaction that also depend of the discursive and social context where the interlocutors are inserted. Thus, the elements of a communicational system are not linked in a causal or linear manner, but according to the principles of retroaction and circularity. In other words, when two individuals are in interaction, the behavior of each influences the other (*princípio da circularidade*). In addition, the communication when seen as a system through the pragmatic logic, is self-regulated and constantly evolves due to the interactions nurtured by the interlocutors and influenced by the context. Therefore, a situation of communication is not determined only by the initial conditions and pre-established (even if they can influence them), she always keeps a certain dimension of unpredictability (*principle of equifinality*). The “here and now” of internal interactions (among interlocutors) and external (of interlocutors with the context where they are inserted) consists, thus, in a way of apprehending and understanding how the communicational system works. According to Berlo (1991 apud PRIMO 1998), there is a relation of interdependence in the relationships between interlocutors, each one depending of the other and influencing one another. This interdependence is, obviously, variant in degree and in relation to context. But the author also believes that we cannot understand this interdependence through a causal logic of action/reaction, because that would mean to adopt a point of view of the source (in other words, the emitter, even if the receptor can become emitter in the next turn) and reveal a sequence process imposed by actions and not by relations of meaning.

Due to these two principles that rule interactions (of circularity and equifinality).<sup>6</sup> It is expected that the conversational agent – in this case,

6 Watzlawick, Helmick-Beavin and Jackson (1992) establish, beyond the principles of circularity and equifinality, the principle of globality, which means that the elements of a communication system are linked in such a way that, if one of them are modified, it can cause modifications on

Fabi – can adapt to the questions made or even say the interlocutor that their message does not correspond to the subject that is being discussed, avoiding deviations, but taking into account the expression of the user. The regulation proposed in the conversational narrative of Fabi does not entirely consider the “here and now” of exchanges, because it is based in predetermined scripts and in previously defined discursive actions:

At the same time it appears that the user acts creatively in the choice, it only circulates through questions that were made before the arrival of interaction and obtain answers that were emitted before this relation is established. Therefore, the user which appears to be agent in the process is only reacting to the pre-established questions and possibilities (PRIMO, 1998, p. 09).

The production and negotiation of meanings are, thus, limited and not entirely shared.

### **Conclusion, possibilities and limits of chatbots in persuasive communication**

Our case study confirms that the animated conversational agents are a tool available to contribute to the storytelling of brands, organizations and institutions. Three aspects identified in this article reinforce this affirmation.

The first aspect corresponds to the possibility of attributing human characteristics to the animated conversational agent. These characteristics are not only morphologic (when an actor or actress embodies a character that gives life to a robot or when an animation or illustration allows to associate the robot to a human representation), but are manifested in the language codes adopted by the robot, which associate it to a name and an identity (to an age, a personality, a lifestyle, etc) Chatbot is transformed, thus, into a personification of brands and organizations,

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the others. Like in a football team, the replacement of a player can influence the whole team. This principle also reinforces the idea that, when there is communication, it is impossible to maintain unilateral relations, were A affects B, but the contrary doesn't happen.

enabling, in many cases, the identification of audiences that are recognized in language, values and preferences embodied by the chatbot.

The second one is regarding to the sensation of individualization of exchanges. Thanks to the questions made by the chatbot, interactions can adapt to the profile of the interlocutor, encouraging their participation.

The third aspect evidences the participative dimension. Despite following, frequently, predefined scripts (as it is the case of the narrative proposed by the bot Fabi), chatbots also give the impression that the interlocutors participate – even in an illusory manner – of the construction of this narrative, enabling the adhesion to values or behaviors for stories: “the fact of participating is, at first, much more engaging (than the fact of only watching, for instance): it literally re-inscribes the consumer as part of a whole, as the ingredient of an ecosystem, not as a mere observer” (PYN SON, 2011, p. 65, our translation).

If the chatbots are considered interesting narrative tools, it is the interactive dimension that seem to concentrate bigger limitations. The Japanese roboticist Masahiro Mori (2012) proposed the theory of the Valley of the Stranger, affirming that, the more a robot looks like a human being, the more their imperfections are considered uncomfortable to the user that interacts with this robot. In other words, the more the robot approaches the human model (we can consider that Fabi corresponds to this aspect, since an actress represents her), the bigger are the expectations of the user. If there is not adequation between what is expected and what is received, the interactions can be interrupted. Methods of automatic learning associated to natural language (like “deep learning” <sup>7</sup>) advance so it could be possible to propose conversational agents capable

7 Getting inspiration in the functioning of human neurons and their connections, deep learning allows an informatic system to learn to perform tasks through data comparison put to their disposal. These tasks can consist in identifying a voice or a representation of an object in an image or even making predictions. Therefore, instead of organizing data to be executed through pre-defined equations, deep learning sets up parameters over data and trains the informatic system to learn to perform a task automatically through recognizing patterns in different layers of processing.

of establishing a situation of communication still less retroactive and more interactive, as we previously defined.

However, from an ethical point of view, the more an animated conversational agent “looks” like a human model (both morphologically and in terms of language and interaction), the more it is necessary to look after the intentions of the discourse that is vehiculated. In fact, due to its ancestral and daily character, even when mediated through a digital platform, conversation gives the impression of being a communicational activity free of any persuasive instrumentalization – which we know it is not Always the case. If, for the brands, the use of animated conversational agents can mean a bigger proximity with their effective and potential consumers, beyond allowing more personalized exchanges according to taste and preference of their audiences, for consumers, it is essential to remember that conversational situations don’t always leave their interlocutors – human or non-human – in a relation of equality, and they can presente, as in other communicational situations, persuasive and ideological intentions.

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