ZeMKI-Online-Forschungskolloquium

ZeMKI *Online* Research Seminar

via Zoom

02.02.2022, 16.15 – 17.45 (CET)

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Interview as Method in Human-Machine Communication Research: Identifying and Addressing Challenges in Conversations about AI Technologies

Abstract:

Interviewing is one of the most predominant methods used in social science research and has the potential to produce valuable insight into questions that are at the heart of Human-Machine Communication (HMC) research: How do people conceptualize artificial intelligence (AI), robots, and related technologies as communicators? How do people understand and view the integration of these applications across spaces of everyday life? What are people most concerned and hopeful about regarding communicative AI? At the same time, scholars engaging in talk about "talking with machines" are likely to experience certain methodological challenges, some of which are rooted in the dynamics of conversation about emerging technology more generally while others are tied more specifically to the nature and function of AI and the linguistic features of the language being used for the research. This presentation outlines some of the most predominant challenges experienced by scholars, examining the reasons why they are present in HMC research and how they can impact how research is conducted and its findings. The presentation then puts forward strategies for thinking through how to best navigate the complexity of talking with people about AI. Because some of the challenges to interviews about AI are rooted in dynamics of communication and language, the methodological hurdles and solutions presented are also of relevance to research methods beyond interviewing and qualitative approaches.

Bio:
Andrea L. Guzman is an associate professor of communication at Northern Illinois University and co-director of The Human-Machine Communication Lab at NIU. Her research focuses on HMC theory and people's perceptions of artificial intelligence, including voice-based assistants and automated news-writing programs. Guzman is editor of *Human-Machine Communication: Rethinking Communication, Technology, and Ourselves* and co-editor of the forthcoming, *The SAGE Handbook of Human-Machine Communication*. Guzman's award-winning research has been published in top journals, including New Media & Society, Computers in Human Behavior, Digital Journalism, and Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly and has been presented at leading interdisciplinary and disciplinary conferences. Guzman also is a sought-after speaker and media expert regarding artificial intelligence and human-machine communication. Guzman is currently the inaugural chair of the Human-Machine Communication Interest Group of the International Communication Association. https://andrealguzman.net