Stefanie Tellex

Week 10

This week's readings remind me of Larry Barsalou's work. He gave a talk here last month about simulation theory. He thinks that humans

Gallese Trends -

This is really really cool. Showing that we use our own body-mechanics to understand other's motion is evidence in support of grounding - that in order to build machines that understand motion, we have to build machines that can move.

I wonder what happens with cross-species observation? What if a human observes a dog walking, a bird flying, or a fish swimming? Are there similar mirror neurons that map to human motion? Perhaps at a higher level or something, but still tied to the human's body? Or at some point does it get far enough away that it doesn't tie into that any more?

Getting even more far out, if we really simulate, it is interesting to imagine our interactions with intelligent aliens - to imagine what happens when our simulation fails. We might get at some of this looking at "strange" humans who make irrational decisions... or even at inter-cultural conflict, when you meet someone raised in a different culture, which cannot be simulated accurately. They become unpredictable, scary, and bad.

Langton, Watt, and Bruce Do the eyes have it?

This reminds me of the cross-species study I cited in my project proposal. They had pet dogs, hunting dogs, and horses trained to respond to human cues about where food was. The dogs were able to respond to a human looking at the one with the food as well as pointing. It's interesting that non-human species also respond to human eye gazing.

Meltzoff and Decity. What Imitation tells us about social cognition

In the imitation study it would be interesting to see what side the children imitated. Especially for eye tracking, if they do a mirror image, their imitation would end up with their eyes or head looking towards the same thing as the adult. So that would seem to be adaptive, rather than a more faithful imitation where they move the "same" eye or turn in the "same" direction as the adult.