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339.4 The crisis in psychology

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The crisis of psychology is not the lack of psychologists or lack of literature being produced. It is in the poor development of our understanding of human life, the science itself, and the relationship of the science to the world. Three senses in which there has been loss, subject matter, method, and mission, are discussed. The loss with respect to subject matter is associated with the systematic denial of the self-evident fact that mentation is essential to human conduct. The recent historical role of psychology in promoting the unfortunate idea that the main purpose of education is to fix responses rather than to enlighten and liberate is indicated.

339.2 Virtual reality: A new technological tool for psychological assessment

Juan-Espínosa, M., & Colom R.
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We take Virtual Reality as a new technological device for psychological assessment assisted by computers. Basic concepts, such as "viewpoint", "navigation", "manipulation", and "immersion" will be introduced. Referring to a pilot study on spatial orientation, we present a comparison of the effectiveness and subjective experience of navigation over virtual versus real worlds. Also a contrast of virtual reality and traditional ways of assessment of spatial orientation will be included. Certain technical issues, such as autonomic navigation, stereo and non-stereo vision, touch, etc., will be discussed. Finally, we highlight the possibilities of some extension to other domains of psychological assessment and realistic training simulations.

339.1 SmarTest: A generative adaptive multidimensional cognitive test battery

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The SmarTest project goal is to develop a prototype aptitude battery incorporating all current, significant technology associated with abilities measurement. This includes computer delivery, item-generation (generative) technology, multidimensional adaptive technology, comprehensive cognitive abilities measurement, item windowing for response speed estimation, and a latent factor centered design. Testing projects in the USA and elsewhere are engaged in components of this research, but are working independently. Integration will produce a "next generation" prototype that measures a wider variety of abilities than are measured by current systems, in a shorter amount of testing time.

339.0 Cognitive science, new technologies, and psychological assessment

Convener: H. Westmeyer

Cognitive science, new technologies, and psychological assessment

Westmeyer H.
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In the interchange of cognitive science and cybernetics, new technologies have been developed and applied to psychological assessment during the last decades. Based on IRT and artificial intelligence, a new generation of adaptive measurement devices is now available. Utilizing the technology of virtual reality makes it possible to present visual stimuli as well as other environmental conditions in psychological assessment in a completely new way. Knowledge-based expert systems are beginning to support or replace the psychological assessor and are becoming essential components of a more comprehensive normative approach to the diagnostic process. Some of these new advances in psychological assessment will be presented and discussed.

340 IPS

Psychology of paranormal and pseudoscientific beliefs

(C.C. French)

340.1 Believing in luck

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This paper presents a qualitative analysis of the structure, nature and implications of individuals' beliefs about luck. Interview and questionnaire data were collected from 59 individuals who considered themselves either very lucky or very unlucky. The data strongly suggested that belief in luck is related to, but significantly different from, belief in the paranormal, fate and superstition. In addition, the beliefs also differed from the assumptions psychologists typically make about the nature of luck, and have implications for people's under-