

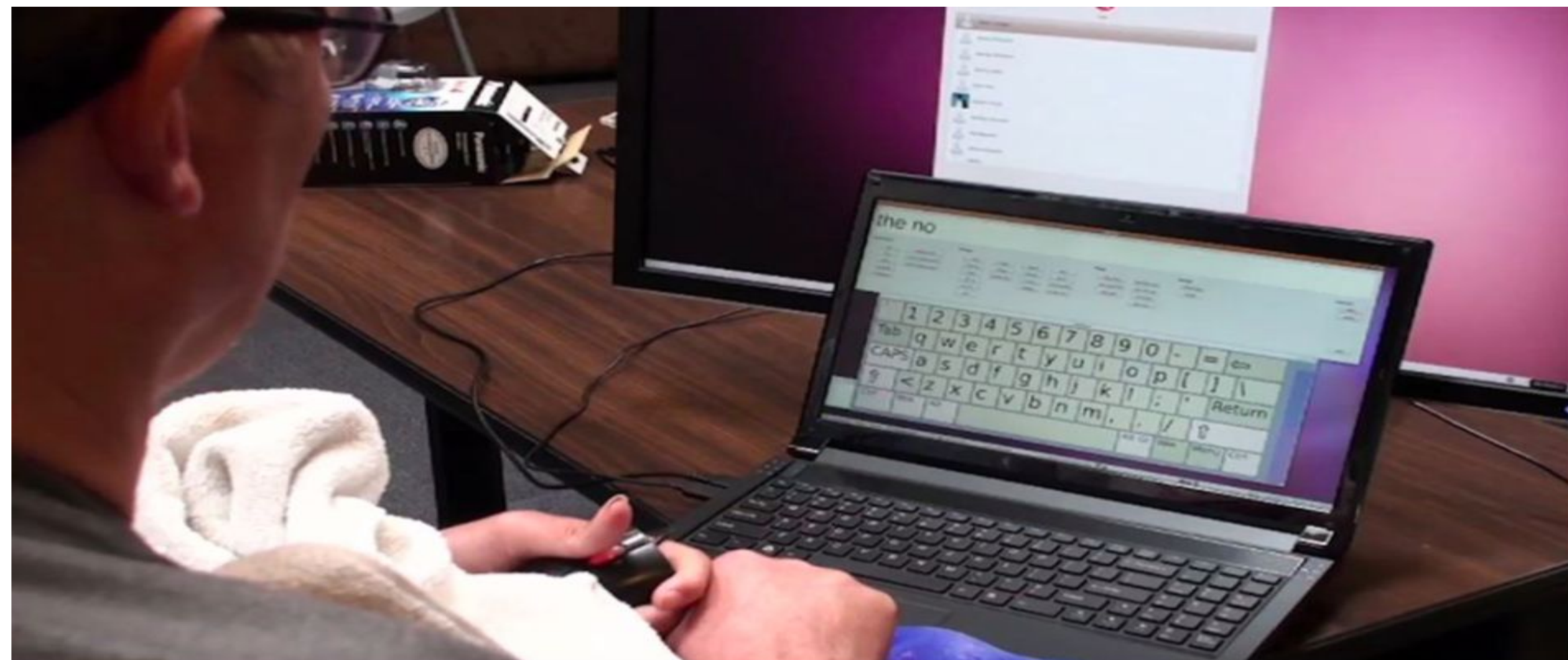
Social Assistive Robotics May Facilitate Positive Interactions for AAC Device Users and Their Conversation Partner: A Focus Group Study



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INTRODUCTION



Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices are commonly used by individuals with severe communication impairments, neuromuscular dysfunction and developmental disabilities.[1]¹ Several studies show that because of the delay in response time, and long pauses between responses, communication can be a challenge, especially when communicating with a stranger not familiar with AAC devices.

FUTURE WORK



Blossom Robot [2]



METHODOLOGY



The 90 minute focus group took place at the Salem Hospital consisting of **9 participants**. The participants included 4 ALS patients and their caretaker, and a communication mediator from the support group. Questions were asked to better understand the communication needs for individuals with progressive neuromuscular dysfunction.

FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

WHAT COMMUNICATION BEHAVIORS ARE GOOD?

WHAT COMMUNICATION BEHAVIORS ARE BAD?

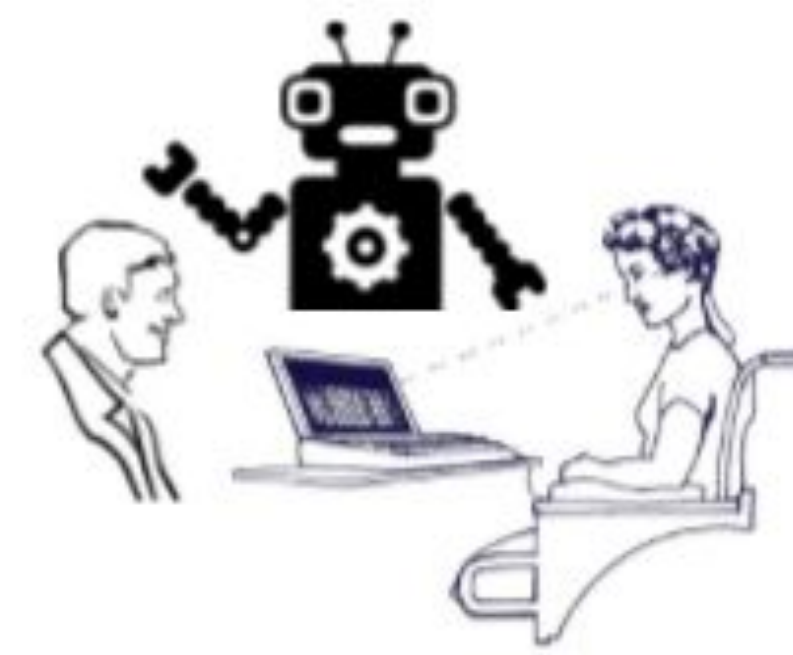
HOW COULD A ROBOT HELP IN THESE SITUATIONS?



EYE CONTACT, ENGAGEMENT, ANTICIPATION



WANDERING EYES, DISTRACTEDNESS, BOREDOM



SIGNAL BEFORE THE AAC USER SPEAKS: EX. SOUND/FLASHING, SIGNAL FOR WAITING, POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

RESEARCH TEAM



Duy Nguyen



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Contact us!

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REFERENCE

- [1] International Society for Augmentative Alternative Communication. (1985). *Augmentative and Alternative Communication* (Baltimore, Md. :1985)
- [2] Ackerman, E. (2017). Blossom: A Handmade Approach to Social Robotics from Cornell and Google. *IEEE Spectrum*.

