

THE OZNAKI ROBOTICS LANGUAGE OZ

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OZ is a computer language for children of primary school age in which the child calls upon a computer termed the WIZARD to direct the activities of a simple robot called ZONKY. The child commands the WIZARD by punching the buttons of a specialised keyboard: the layout of the keys being based on the syntax of OZ. The string of commands to the WIZARD is displayed on a CRT which serves as a message screen. Control characters sent by the WIZARD to ZONKY also appear on the message screen. The WIZARD can "remember" the name given to a string of commands - that is the child can define programs and execute them. The inclusion in OZ of modifiers akin to adjectives/adverbs enables relatively sophisticated iterative programs to be written.

Currently the WIZARD is a PDP-10 computer but a microprocessor WIZARD is under construction. The construction of ZONKY and the implementation of OZ is part of an educational development endeavour called the OZNAKI Project.

Key Words and Phrases: Message passing, Iteration, Robotics.

CR Categories: 1.50, 3.89, 4.29.

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