
Child Computer Interaction

Janet C Read

ChiCI group
University of Central Lancashire
Preston, UK, PR1 2HE
jcread@uclan.ac.uk

Panos Markopoulos

Eindhoven University of
Technology
HG 2.38, P.O. Box 513
Den Dolech 2
5600 MB Eindhoven
p.markopoulos@tue.nl

Narcís Parés

Universitat Pompeu Fabra
Pg. Circumval·lació, 8. 08003
Barcelona, Spain
npares@iua.upf.edu

Juan Pablo Hourcade

Department of Computer Science
University of Iowa
14 MacLean Hall
Iowa City, IA 52242 USA
hourcade@cs.uiowa.edu

Alissa N Antle

School of Interactive Arts and
Technology
Simon Fraser University
2400 Central City, Surrey, B.C.,
Canada V3T 2W1
aantle@sfu.ca

Abstract

The study of Child Computer Interaction is a growing subfield of HCI. Child Computer Interaction encompasses traditional HCI but also specifically reaches out into the areas of child psychology, learning and play. The aim of this SIG is to bring together researchers and practitioners working in this area, to discover current themes, to explore the creation of a more formal working group, to locate publishing opportunities and to foster international co-operation.

Keywords

Children, HCI, learning, play

ACM Classification Keywords

H5.m. Information interfaces and presentation (e.g., HCI): Miscellaneous.

K.3.m Computers and education: Miscellaneous

Introduction

Since the earliest days when Seymour Papert [1] brought together the two words children and computers, through the work of Yasmin Kafai [2], and Allison Druin [3] to more recent global engagement with children and interactive technology evidenced by the continued success of the IDC conference and an increased showing of child centered HCI work at major HCI conferences like CHI [4], [5], [6], HCI [7],

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NordiChi [8], [9] and so on, the research community concerned with understanding child computer interaction has grown both in size and strength. Theoretical papers that demonstrate the increasing maturity of the field are now found in many conferences, journals and books. Examples include frameworks [10], case studies [11], reflective works [12], literature reviews [13], and summary works [14].

Now very much an international community, and spreading into areas beyond the traditional HCI domain [15], [16] this community is currently not represented as an international group, despite the existence of a lively international conference. The community is ripe for some formalization, creating a formal group would improve the organization and continuity of the IDC conference, provide a lobbying group for improved publication opportunities, and allow better collaboration across international boundaries.

The need for a separate agenda is also indicated as Child Computer Interaction has been identified as being fundamentally different from HCI [17], with different priorities and different methods. Research questions currently posed by the CCI community fall broadly into three areas of interest:

- How to do good research in this area?
- How to design interactive products for children?
- How to evaluate children's products?

In this SIG we hope to attract specialists from these three themes.

Aims and Objectives

As well as bringing together practitioners and researchers from around the globe, the SIG has three very specific aims and four smaller objectives.

- Aim1: To formalize the CCI community
- Aim2: To create an interactive 'home' for CCI research and development
- Aim3: To identify themes for future CCI events

In addition, the SIG hopes to answer the following questions:

- Q1: Fields of inquiry that need to be (more) represented in the CCI community
- Q2: Publishing in CCI. Are the opportunities there? Inventorizing conferences and journals with overlapping interests.
- Q3: Reflection: Which methods are well understood? Which need more research? How far have we come in the last ten years? Are reporting standards sufficient?
- Q4: Challenges and Opportunities for the growth of the CCI community. Things we want to keep and things we want to change about how this community is developing.

Outputs from the SIG are expected to include an international website (hosting already agreed), and an agenda paper setting actions for the future.

Related Events

There have been several related events in this area including the IDC conference, tutorials and workshops at major conferences like CHI, Interact and HCI, and special edition journals (Interacting with Computers, Cognition Technology and Work).

Audience

With CHI2008 being in Europe, one of the major goals for this SIG is to (rather uniquely) bring together both US and European personnel working in this area. We hope to attract practitioners and researchers as well as people who are first time at CHI and may not identify themselves as HCI practitioners but rather might come from one of the related areas.

SIG Session Plan

The plan for the 90 minute SIG is as follows:

Introduction of the SIG goals and the organizers. In this event, the organizers will each give a five minute overview of their own area of Child Computer Interaction and the goals for the event will be outlined (25 minutes)

Introduce the "Interaction Design and Children" (IDC) conference as a reference (5 mins)

Introduction to the main areas for discussion. (10 mins)

Group work on the main areas for discussion. Participants to break into groups, each to identify a note taker and facilitator. Groups shall discuss some of the questions noted and how the aims of the SIG should be addressed. Their objective will be to propose two Action Points in the first half of the discussion

(15'). After 15' minutes half of each group rotates to another group: the new mixed group will discuss and refine one of the points made by each constituent half (30 mins)

Summary Session: A member of each group presents group findings (10 mins)

Discussion for taking action points further (10 mins)

How will the SIG be conducted?

Working groups will be asked to appoint a note-taker to record on a small slide presentation some points to share with the rest of the participants and a facilitator whose task is to encourage a participation by all group members.

Why is this SIG timely?

The SIG as proposed here is an ideal opportunity to bring together the different communities engaged in Child Computer Interaction. The authors hope to attract into the discussion researchers who are unfamiliar with the IDC series, who may have previously not realized that there is a community that might meet their needs as well as some of the more experienced individuals who, it is believed, will gain great benefit from engaging with this SIG.

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