CYPRUS INTERACTION LAB

www.cyprusinteractionlab.com

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The Cyprus Interaction Lab of the Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts of the Cyprus University of Technology studies the interaction of people with technology in various fields. The lab aims to understand and enhance users' experience and interaction with technology.

Research in the Cyprus Interaction Lab revolves around two main research themes:
1) Human Computer Interaction and Inclusive Design
2) Instructional Technology and Social Computing.

Research topics include:

> Human Computer Interaction (HCI)
> Computer Mediated Communication (CMC)
> Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL)
> Computer Supported Collaborative Work (CSCW)
> Inclusive Design/Accessibility
> Social Aspects of Computing
> Computer Games and their social and pedagogical dimensions
> Technology-enhanced learning
> Technology integration in K-20

greetings from the lab management

Prof. Panayiotis Zaphiris
Lab Co-founder & Co-Manager

Assistant Prof. Andri Ioannou
Lab Co-founder & Co-Manager

FOUNDING THE 1ST INTERACTION LAB IN CYPRUS

The Cyprus Interaction Lab is an interdisciplinary research Lab dealing with topics in the areas of Educational Technology, Human Computer Interaction and Inclusive Design.

We study the interaction of people with technology aiming to understand the significant supportive and mediating role of technology in promoting learning, communication/collaboration and social change in varied circumstances and contexts. As a space the lab offers high quality research facilities. See http://www.cyprusinteractionlab.com for more details.

We are a team of 14 researchers and we carry complementary expertise across the educational technology and human-computer interaction arenas. Members of the lab are active researchers in the areas of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC); Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL); Computer Supported Collaborative Work (CSCW); Inclusive Design/Accessibility; Social Computing; Technology-enhanced learning; and Technology integration in K-20.

In 2015, we were happy to see our first PhD student graduating. Antigoni Parmaxi, was awarded her Ph.D. Dr. Parmaxi is now a post-doctoral researcher at the lab, expanding her research on computer assisted language learning and emerging technologies, and serving as the project manager for our NOTRE funded project. See http://antigoniparmaxi.weebly.com for more details.

2015 was a very productive year for the the Cyprus Interaction Lab in terms of research grants, having an active role in three new H2020 projects:

Network for Social Computing Research [NOTRE] 2015-2018; Coordinated by the Social Computing Research Centre (SCRC) of the Cyprus University of Technology (Cyprus Interaction Lab as participating partner). This 1 million EUR project aims to enforce excellence and strengthen the presence of SCRC by establishing a network with external partners in Germany, Greece, Spain and Switzerland.

Research Centre in Interactive media, Smart systems and Emerging technologies [RISE] 2015-2016; Coordinated by the Municipality of Nicosia-Cyprus and the three public Universities of Cyprus (Cyprus Interaction Lab as partner). The project aims at the establishment of a cross-disciplinary Research Center in Cyprus to integrate research in the Visual Sciences, Human Factors and Design, and Communications and Artificial Intelligence. The grant awarded is 0.5 million EUR for phase 1 with potential funding of 15-20 million EUR in phase 2 of evaluation.

EnhaNcing seCurity And privacy in the Social wEb: a user centered approach for the protection of minors [ENCASE] 2015-2019; Coordinated by the Social Computing Research Centre (SCRC) of the Cyprus University of Technology (Cyprus Interaction Lab as participating partner). This 2 million EUR project aims to design and implement a browser-based architecture for the protection of minors from malicious actors in online social networks and provide an effective protective net against cyberbullying and sexually abusive acts. The project will achieve this through an interdisciplinary secondment program for Experienced and Early Stage Researchers targeting exchange of expertise and transfer of knowledge between academia and industry across Cyprus, Greece, Spain, Italy, UK

The Cyprus Interaction Lab is the only research facility in Cyprus in the areas of Human Computer Interaction and Instructional Technology. We are proud to engage in research that helps unpack the potential of emerging technologies to positively influence our society. We hope you will enjoy reading our newsletter which highlights our major achievements of the year 2015.

The co-directors of the Cyprus Interaction Lab,
Prof. Panayiotis Zaphiris
Assistant Prof. Andri Ioannou

meet the lab staff


Antigoni Parmaxis
PhD Graduate

FEATURED CIL MEMBER OF THE YEAR!

Antigoni Parmaxi

Antigoni Parmaxi is a Research Associate at the Cyprus Interaction Lab and a Greek language instructor at the Language Centre of Cyprus University of Technology.

Antigoni received her PhD in May 2015 from the Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts of the Cyprus University of Technology. Her dissertation focused on the potential of social technologies as instructional tools that support social construction of an artifact by a group of learners. Following, is a brief description of Antigoni's work:

The rapid popularity of social technologies has led to a wide spread of research studies conducted in formal and informal contexts demonstrating a wide range of their benefits in teaching and learning. Yet, the burst of studies exploring the use of social/Web 2.0 technologies in teaching and learning confronts with two threads with regard to their theoretical and pedagogical alignment. Firstly, a substantial number of studies is not aligned to a theoretical framework; whereas the implementation of Web 2.0 technologies in classroom settings calls for better task-technology alignment. The conundrum raised is that, whilst students increasingly engage with these tools in their everyday lives, there is still lack of Web 2.0 practices that draw on the specific features of these tools and align them with educational goals under well-designed activities. With this in mind, this dissertation brought forward a long-term intervention, employing constructionism as an overarching theoretical framework, unpacking the potential of social technologies as instructional tools that support social construction of artifacts by groups of language learners.
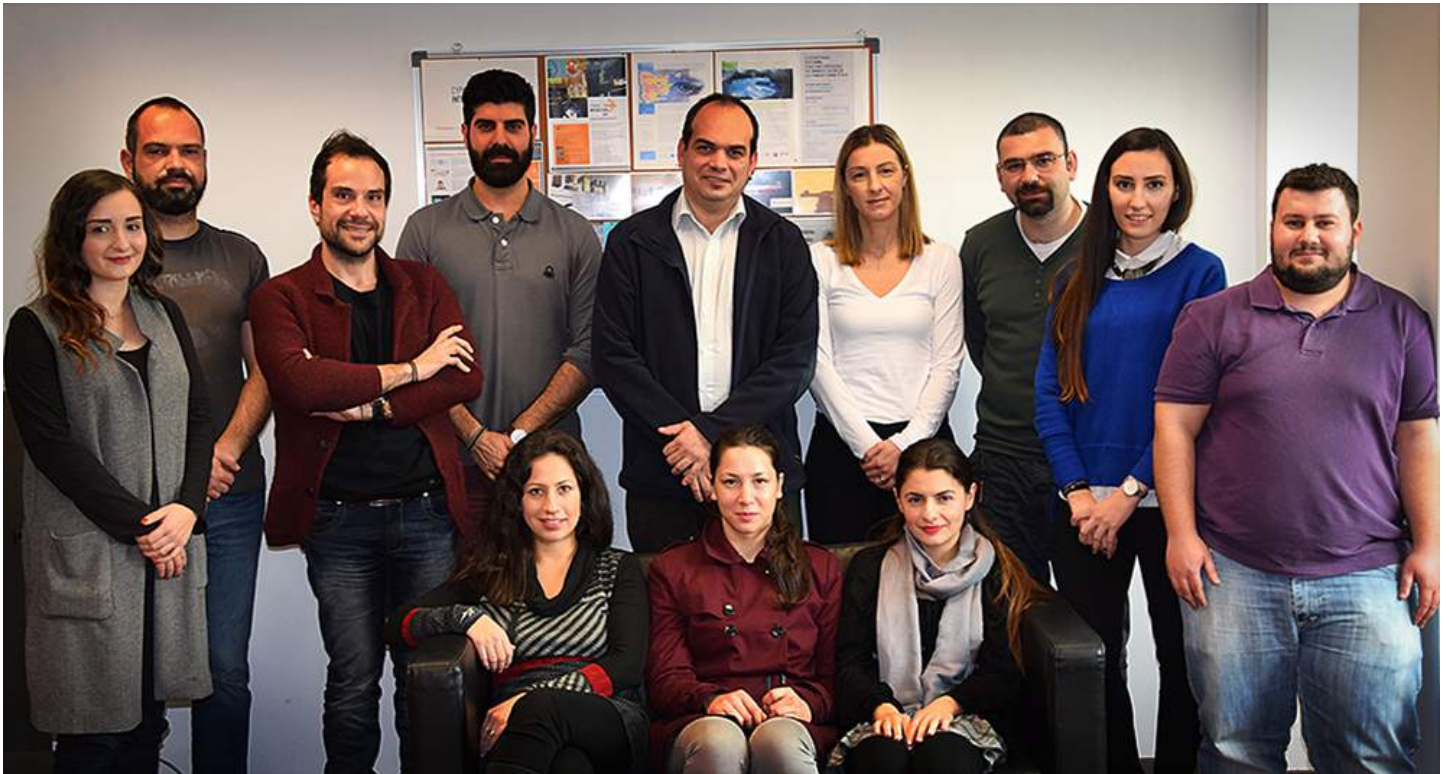
The Cyprus Interaction Lab members

More information at:
www.cyprusinteractionlab.com/people

news & highlites

FACEBOOK at the Cyprus University of Technology on World Usability Day 2016

The Cyprus Interaction Lab, at the Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts, Cyprus University of Technology (CUT), in collaboration with news portal Disrupt Cyprus have invited Facebook's Product Design Manager Jonah Jones and Product Designer Leo Mancini, to celebrate the World Usability Day (WUD) 2016.

The Cyprus Interaction Lab has been organizing the World Usability Day seminars since 2009. This year's theme was 'Innovation' and was attended by over 550 people.

In his welcome speech, the Dean of Fine and Applied Arts, and Director of the Cyprus Interaction Lab, Professor Panayiotis Zaphiris, highlighted the importance of such events, as they provide opportunities for establishing cooperation channels between the university and the local, as well as, the international business community. Moreover, this type of events help familiarize students with the way of thinking and actions of international experts, opening interconnecting bridges with the wider scientific community, while highlighting the profile of our academic and research programs.

Following his speech, Assistant Professor Andri Ioannou referred to the work and activities of the Cyprus Interaction Lab as well as the partnerships developed with institutions both within and outside Cyprus. The founder and editor-in-chief of 'Disrupt Cyprus', Panayiotis Pieri, also presented the areas of interest as well as the vision behind the respective news portal, which covers topics related to research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and mentoring for startup businesses.

The audience welcomed Facebook presenters, Jonah Jones and Leo Mancini, both leading designers at the international giant. Jonah Jones Head of Product Design group at Facebook, worked at Google for 8 years in Mountain View - Sydney, and Zurich. He was in charge of the redesign team responsible for making Google Maps a more user friendly, easier and convenient service.

Leo Mancini, also a Product Designer at Facebook, attended the School of Visual Arts in Manhattan and worked for various design studios and businesses in New York. In 2012 he joined Facebook in California and has worked on Facebook product design and functionality since then.

The speakers focused on Facebook's dominance in the social networks scene, as well as the way it overturned the state of data communication and information sharing. They also talked about the creation and development of innovative communication applications, namely the development of 'Riff', a collaborative video development tool for 'friends' on Facebook.

Following the presentations, participants had the opportunity to talk with the speakers about the work and activities of the Cyprus Interaction Lab and Facebook, as well as the opportunities for young, creative researchers. The Cyprus Interaction Lab and Facebook are examining the potential of developing collaborative projects between the two parties, as these can create employment and/or internship prospects for Cypriot researchers and students.

More information at:
http://cyprusinteractionlab.com/blog-2

news & highlights

September 2015

CIL joins the European Schoolnet's Future Classroom Lab network of learning labs

The Cyprus Interaction Lab has joined the European Schoolnet's Future Classroom Lab (FCL) network of learning labs though the Interaction and Technology Lab. Starting in September 2015, CIL will participate in activities of the FCL network and online meetings with educators around the world in order to continue its research and grant-writing relevant to advancements in technology-enhanced learning and design of learning environment for K-20.

July 2015

Research methods in HCI summerschool course

The Cyprus Interaction Lab together with Talinn University, Estonia, successfully organized the international summer school on "Research Methods in HCI" in July 2015. The participants included 50 PhD students from 16 countries, as well as speakers from leading universities and corporations (Google and Philips Research).

November 2015

NAO in play with hearing impaired children

Andri Ioannou, Assistant professor and co-director of the Cyprus Interaction Lab, Anna Andreeva, Assistant professor in the Department of Logopaedics at the South West University Neofit Rilski (Bulgaria), and Yiota Polycarpou, PhD student at the Cyprus Interaction Lab (CUT) worked with the School for Deaf children in Nicosia in an attempt to explore the possibility of using NAO with hearing impaired children. During the study, a total of 14 hearing impaired children interacted with NAO in games such as:

> Dance with NAO
> Work out with NAO
> Tell the shapes and colors to NAO
> Recognize NAO's emotions
> Shopping with NAO
> Cooking with NAO

We look forward to reporting our preliminary, yet encouraging, findings and results in the next few months.

June 2015

New online MSc course in Interaction Design

The Cyprus University of Technology and Talinn University jointly announce the offer of a new online MSc course in Interaction Design. The course aims to provide an online learning platform for students internationally, who are interested in Interaction design and wish to contribute to and participate to this multi-disciplinary community.

April 2015

Cyprus Interaction Lab hosts the first 'Women Power" fair in Cyprus

Cyprus Interaction Lab and the Women Power project team (winning project of the Mahallae program – funded by the UNDP) welcomed an audience of 80 people, who attended their successful 'Womenpower Fair'. The fair aimed to 'inspire, empower and link women mentors and mentees', and focused on the current state of gender-related issues in Cyprus as well as the challenges that women are faced with, in terms of social, career and personal development.

research projects

CIL PARTICIPATES IN NETWORK FOR SOCIAL COMPUTING RESEARCH [NOTRE] 2016-2018

The NOTRE project is funded (total budget: 1 million euro) by Horizon 2020 Twinning programme – TWINN – 2015 and the duration of the project is 36 months (01/01/2016-31/12/2018).

NOTRE aims to develop a network that will strengthen and enhance the research and innovation potential and capability of the newly established Social Computing Research Centre (SCRC) at the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT) for stimulating scientific excellence and innovation capacity in the area of Social Computing.

The Cyprus Interaction Lab participats in NOTRE in colaboration with two other research labs at the Cyprus University of Technology: Microsoft Computer Games and Emerging Technologies Research Lab (http://getlab.org) and Visual Media Computing Lab (http://cut.ac.cy/mga/research/vmc)

The advanced partners are four of most prominent European centres of excellence (FORTH-ICS, Greece; iMdea, Spain; MIRALab, Switzerland; University of Dusseldorf, Germany). They complement the NOTRE concept in different ways as they have strong research groups in areas related to Social Computing.

More information at:
http://notre.socialcomputing.eu

CIL PARTICIPATES IN ENHANCING SECURITY AND PRIVACY IN THE SOCIAL WEB [ENCASE] 2016-2020

ENCASE is funded by the Horizon 2020, Marie Sklodowska Curie Research and Innovation Staff Exchanges program. The EU budget amounts to 2.16M Euro.

The aim of the ENCASE project is to leverage the latest advances in usable security and privacy to design and implement a browser-based architecture for the protection of minors from malicious actors in online social networks. The overall vision of the project is to provide research and innovation contributions to end-user experience

research projects

assessment, large scale data processing, machine learning and data mining, and content confidentiality.

The project coordination is handled by the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT). The following partners participate in ENCASE: University College London, UK; Aristotle University, Greece; Università degli Studi Roma Tre, Italy; Telefonica Investigacion y Desarrollo, Spain; Innovators, SA, Greece; SignalGeneriX, LTD, Cyprus; Cyprus Research and Innovation Center Ltd, Cyprus).

More information at
http://encase.socialcomputing.eu
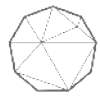
CIL PARTICIPATES IN RESEARCH CENTRE IN INTERACTIVE MEDIA, SMART SYSTEMS AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES [RISE] 2015-2018

RISE is funded by EU through the TEAMING program of HORIZON 2020. The consortium consists of the Municipality of Nicosia-Cyprus, the three public Universities of Cyprus — University of Cyprus, Cyprus University of Technology and Open University of Cyprus — and the prestige research institutes Max Plank Institute for Informatics – Saarbrucken, Germany and University College London (UCL) – UK.
The project aims at the establishment of an interdisciplinary Research Centre in Cyprus to integrate research in the Visual Sciences, Human Factors and Design, and Communications and Artificial Intelligence. The grant awarded is 0.5 million EUR for phase 1 with potential funding of 15-20 million EUR in phase 2 of evaluation.

More information at
http://www.rise.org.cy

CIL PARTICIPATES IN SEA TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT VALIDATION PROJECT [STM] 2015-2018

The STM Validation Project encompasses 39 partners (private, public and academic) from 13 countries and with a total budget of 43 million Euro. The project duration is 2015-2018. EU has decided to contribute with €21 million to the Sea Traffic Management Validation Project, a Motorways of the Sea project. Test beds in Northern Europe and Mediterranean Sea will engage 300 vessels, 10 ports of different sizes and 3 shore centres. These will validate the Sea Traffic Management (STM) concept and pave the way for smooth deployment of new collaborative services previously unknown to sea transport but existing for many years in other transport sectors.

STM will overcome many of the challenges of communication and information sharing between stakeholders in the maritime transport industry and create significant added value to, in particular, ship- and cargo-owners as well as ports.

The preceding MONALISA projects have brought advancements in technology and digital innovation to the maritime sector, a base for asustainableshipping industry, reducing the environmental impact while improving safetyand efficiency.

The STM Concept has been defined within the MONALISA 2.0 project. A technical protocol for route exchange has been developed and is in the phase of international standardization. This is a huge achievement and a pre-requisite for further development and deployment of Sea Traffic Management.

More information at:
http://monalisaproject.eu/eu-grants-e21-million-to-new-sea-traffic-management-validation-project/

research projects

COST ACTION IS1401:
STRENGTHENING EUROPEANS' CAPABILITIES BY ESTABLISHING THE EUROPEAN LITERACY NETWORK

Capabilities are not only abilities that reside inside humans, but they also comprise the political, social, and economic environment. Literacy is a capability whose fulcrum is far away from the individual, depending crucially on societal forces that can hinder or promote human development. The efficiency of this promotion is critically constrained by the availability of accurate knowledge. Knowing about literacy is contingent upon an interdisciplinary web of expertise that can, within a reasonable timeline, produce that sort of knowledge. Such networks already exist in Europe, but need to be sustained so that they can face the demands of the new digital era. Through this Action, reading and writing research communities across Europe are joining, integrating their findings, and aligning their agendas so that they can: 1) develop an integrated and inclusive approach to foundational literacy across Europe; 2) devise a comprehensive framework of developmental aspects of literacy and education in a digital world; and 3) further improve literacy technologies. This will be valuable for promoting citizens' interdependence, participation, and innovation, which are key assets to a united and diverse Europe. For that, Europe needs a Literacy Network via which capabilities can be strengthened to all of its citizens.

More information at:
http://www.cost.eu/COST_Actions/isch/Actions/IS1401

COST ACTION LUDI: TD1309
PLAY FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES (LUDI)

The "LUDI" COST Action aims at the creation of a novel and autonomous field of research and intervention on play for children with disabilities. The network has three main objectives: a) collecting and systematizing all existing competence and skills: educational researches, clinical initiatives, know-how of resources centers and users' associations; b) developing new knowledge related to settings, tools and methodologies associated with the play of children with disabilities; c) disseminating the best practices emerging from the joint effort of researchers, practitioners and users.

Play for children with disabilities is the object of a fragmented set of studies and it has given rise, in different countries and at different times, to niche projects (i.e. social robotics for autistic children, adapted toys for children with cognitive and motor disabilities, accessible playground areas). This theme is not yet a recognized area of research because of two main factors: a) disability represents a set of heterogeneous functioning frames; b) play is not leading the educational and rehabilitation contexts.

The multi-disciplinary cooperation of researchers and practitioners in the fields of psycho-pedagogical sciences, health and rehabilitation sciences, humanities, assistive technologies and robotics as well as the contribution of end-users' organizations will grant the right to play even for children with disabilities, and finally establish play as the main element for children's development.

LUDI will devote specific attention to the societal challenges identified in Horizon 2020 (i.e. the transfer of knowledge to clinical practice, the enhancement of the functionalities of children with disabilities through the implementation of technologies and practices).

More information at:
http://www.ludi-network.eu

New Publications

The Cyprus Interaction Lab has published a total of 17 papers in prominent journals and conferences in 2015.
For a full list of our publications, please visit our google scholar page at: http://tinyurl.com/jb4efd9
Below you can find details of a selection of our 2015 publications.
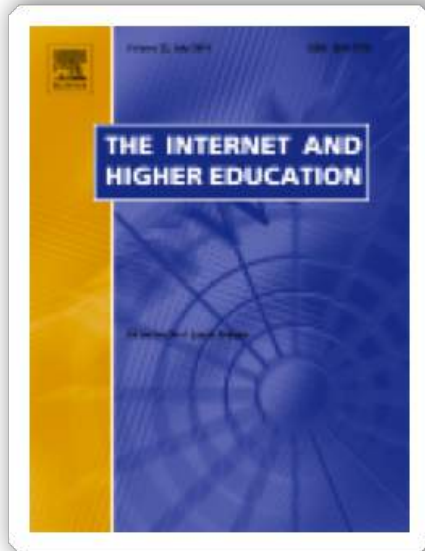
WIKIS AND FORUMS FOR COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM-BASED ACTIVITY: A SYSTEMATIC COMPARISON OF LEARNERS' INTERACTIONS

This article describes an experimental study that evaluated differences in students' discourse and actions when they used a wiki with discussion (i.e., an enhanced wiki) vs. a forum with attached MS Word documents for asynchronous collaboration on two case problems. The study used a counterbalanced within-subject design with 34 online learners working in small groups. A systematic content analysis of learners' interactions coupled with visual, analytical techniques showed within-group differences in using the technologies. The study revealed the expanding nature of a forum and the condensing nature of a wiki. Also, findings suggest that in a wiki, groups tend to be more collaborative, whereas in a threaded discussion, groups tend to be more cooperative. The study provides insights for instructors who use wikis and forums in their online courses to support collaborative problem-based activity.

Ioannou, A., Brown, S. W., & Artino, A. R. (2015). Wikis and forums for collaborative problem-based activity: A systematic comparison of learners' interactions. The Internet and Higher Education, 24, 35-45.

SPECIFYING THE DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGIES AS SOCIAL MICROWORLDS

This paper explores the affordances of social technologies for supporting the construction of a shareable artefact by a group of learners. A qualitative study that captures the use of five different types of social technologies (Facebook, blogs, wikis, Google Documents and Dropbox) in three different classroom settings sheds light on the potentials and challenges of these tools for supporting material exploration, artefact construction and evaluation. Qualitative content analysis of instructors' field notes, students' and instructors' reflections, interviews and focus groups sheds light on the potential of social technologies to transform the activity of learning across a new culture of computational tools. The affordances of social technologies are discussed as well as design principles that need to be followed in these new arenas.

Parmaxi, A., & Zaphiris, P. (2015). Specifying the dynamics of social technologies as social microworlds. Behaviour & Information Technology, 34(4), 413-424.

Contact us

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LOCATION:

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