

Winner of the SIGCHI Finland thesis competition 2022

Receiver: Chia-Hsin Wu, Tampere University, Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences, Master's Degree Programme in Human-Technology Interaction

Title: Primary School Pupils Programming Robotic Applications: Learning Experience During a Long-Term Trial

The thesis was described by the reviewers as timely and suitable for the human-technology interaction context. In fact, the study taps into the emerging field of human-robot interaction and applications of robots in learning situations. The research was broad and ambitious for a Masters thesis, giving insight into exploring what robotics can do in the classroom. The reviewers agreed that the thesis was well-structured and logical. It was described as being easy to read and follow. There was a nice theoretical development that set the backdrop of the pre-study, leading to an understanding of how the study would be implemented and evaluated. Thus, readers felt that there was apt justification for the decisions made during the study. Additionally, the thesis features a good use of relevant literature.

The methods were appropriate, implemented well and carefully explained. There was also apt reflection by the student regarding aspects such as ethics, and therefore applying for ethical permission to undertake the study. This naturally was a challenge and a merit for this study as extra effort is demanded when students engage in research with children. Thus, the user experience dimension has been taken to the next level in this work. One point that was especially mentioned in addition to all these credits, were the design drivers presented in the thesis. These could prove valuable for future research and development.

The assessment of the submitted theses and the selection of the winners were done by a panel of experts, including both researchers and practitioners in the HCI field. The competition was organized by SIGCHI Finland, sponsored by Gofore and coordinated by Rebekah Rousi and Laura Havinen. The members of the panel were:

- Leena Arhippainen, University of Oulu
- Erika Halme, University of Jyväskylä
- Saana Mehtälä, University of Jyväskylä
- Teemu Mäenpää, University of Vaasa
- Antti Niemelä, Fraktio
- Sara Norja, Combitech
- Dorina Rajanen, University of Oulu
- Mikko Rajanen, University of Oulu
- Rahul Mohanani, University of Jyväskylä
- Satu Rantakokko, University of Vaasa
- Joni Salminen, University of Vaasa and Turku School of Economics
- Tomi Suovuo, University of Turku
- Mattias Wingren, Åbo Akademi University

In the final discussion, also the following people were present:

- Rosa Vanninen, Gofore
- Anna Pyyluoma, Gofore
- Saana Mehtälä
- Erika Halme
- Tomi Suovuo

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