Participatory Design for Persons with Cognitive or Sensory Impairments

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Abstract. When designing for users with impairments involving cognitive or sensory abilities affecting communication (e.g. Autism Spectrum Disorder, Alzheimer's Disease or hearing impairments), common research and design techniques for involving such users might not be usable or need to be adjusted. This full-day workshop aims to 1) bring together researchers and designers who work on participatory design for persons with cognitive or sensory impairments; 2) exchange ideas and experiences regarding participatory design techniques for such persons; 3) identify general principles for participatory design for such persons.

The workshop has a creative, generative character and has four parts:

Introduction. Participants introduce themselves to create an informal atmosphere to share best practices and common problems.

Technique mapping. In small groups, using a template poster, participants discuss participatory techniques they have used with persons with impairments. Next, the groups discuss which elements of each technique they would keep, change, add or delete for future design. Finally, they formulate six 'take home messages'.

Critique. The groups critically review the other groups' take home messages (cf. design critique) by indicating elements they fully agree with, elements they would adjust, and elements they don't agree with at all.

General discussion. Finally, the critiques on the take home messages are presented. Commonalities and differences between the messages are identified, and general principles and key research questions regarding participatory design for persons with impairments are extracted.

The workshop has two follow-up activities: 1) Participants are invited to join a wiki that was set up for sharing information, literature, techniques, etc.; 2) A call for papers for a special issue of the journal CoDesign.

More information on the workshop can be found at the workshop website: http://interact2013impairmentsworkshop.wordpress.com/

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