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Informatics Research Institute (IRIS) July 2004 newsletter

Rezgui, Y

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IRIS NEWS

This summer period has been rich in presence and dissemination related activities. Several important conferences, which have enjoyed a great international participation and success, have been organized by IRIS academics in Salford. These include NLDB04, CRIS 2004 and the LTSN workshop. Also, a substantial number of research projects have been secured from national as well as European funding sources. All these activities are contributing to reinforcing the leading position that IRIS is currently enjoying in the field of Informatics.

This newsletter gives an overview of all research activities that took place during this reporting period. It is hoped that this will help trigger further collaboration with existing and future colleagues from academia, research and industry to work together towards addressing the many societal and technological challenges engendered by the information age.

Yacine Rezgui
Director of IRIS

Congratulations

Sophia Ananiadou has been awarded a Daiwa Adrian Prize.

This award is specifically geared towards joint research between UK and Japan. Her application with Tokyo University was one of the six winning teams in Japan/UK. The award will allow collaborative research between the Universities of Salford and Tokyo.

European Doctoral Programme

IRIS has been selected out of 148 university applications across Europe to work under the theme "Innovative Practice in Doctoral Programmes". This Programme is funded by the European University Association aiming at analysing trends and practices in Doctoral programmes across the continent, with the objective of proposing European standards in order to foster more attractiveness towards European doctorates. Yacine Rezgui is the Salford representative for the project. Amit Mitra is representing IRIS.

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Who's Been Doing What?

- Ben Light served on the Programme Committee for the IFIP 8.2 2004, held in Manchester. He also served on the ECIS 2004 Programme Committee in Turku, Finland.
- Gordon Fletcher has received some media attention from one of his conference papers, 'Fight Club: Culture, Conflict and Everyday Life Amongst an Online Community'. Polly Curtis did a piece for the Guardian called "[chatrooms separate the men from the boys](#)"

This was based on an interview Gordon did with Steve Farrar from the Times Higher. He did an article called "fighting talk turns web forums into intellectual punch-ups" in the 26th March edition.

Inaugural Lectures

Terrence Fernando, 1 June 2004
Collaborative Workspaces of the Future

David Chadwick, 1 July 2004
Who are You? (On the Internet no-one knows you're a dog)

[International Conference on Applications of Natural Language to Information Systems](#)

The NLDB Conference was organized on the 23, 24, 25th of June and did enjoy an international participation from key academics in the field. NLDB aims at bringing together researchers, industrials and potential users interested in various application of Natural Language in the Database and Information Systems field.

[Critical Reflections on Critical Research in IS – The 2nd International CRIS Workshop](#)

The CRIS Workshop was hosted by the ISI on 14 July 2004. The one-day workshop consisted of a mixture of keynote speakers, full and positional refereed papers and opinion pieces in an Open Forum. Researchers from around the world attended the Workshop to progress the debate and critically reflect on the enactment of a Critical Research tradition in IS.

[Workbased Learning in Information and Computer Sciences: LTSN Workshop](#)

The national Learning and Teaching Network's Centre for Information and Computer Sciences (LTSN ICS) held a one-day event on Work Based Learning at Salford in January 2004.

Salford organisation was by Chris Procter and Paul Spedding from the ISI, together with Andrew Young from Computer Science. Over 40 delegates took part in a very productive and practical discussion on Placement Years, and other work based learning. A session on the ISI's team project work was led by Mark Jones and was well received.

LTSN ICS is an important vehicle for development work in our area of teaching. Those interested should see ics.ltsn.ac.uk. The national conference this year is to be held in Ulster on 31 August to 2 September.

Upcoming Events

[2nd Education in a Changing Environment Conference](#)

13-14 September 2004

The Conference is hosted by the Higher Education Research Centre and the Learning and Teaching Research Network. The Conference is open to staff and postgraduate students at Salford with an interest in learning and teaching scholarship and research.

[8th IFIP TC-6 TC-11 Conference on Communications and Multimedia Security \(CMS 2004\)](#)

15-18 September 2004

The event is a joint working conference of IFIP TC6 and TC11. The Informatics Research Institute and the Information Systems Security Research Group are organizing the conference at the University of Salford.

The opening keynote speech will be given by Karl-Heinz Brandenburg, the inventor of MP3, who will talk about DRM issues.

New Projects



"The current situation is bad for women. It means they are missing out on opportunities to earn the highest wages available in the IT sector. An IT industry dominated by men is only using half the available talent and creativity"

(Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt MP, Secretary for Trade and Industry and Minister for Women.)

This exciting new project will look at the role of women in IT and the reasons why they are hugely under-represented within this industry. The WINIT project will investigate four distinct career stages of women in IT: (1) Returners, (2) New Entrants, (3) Leavers, and (4) Progression. The aim is to identify ways to overcome the barriers faced by women today and also identify organisations that implement best practice. The research team, based in the University's Information Systems Institute, will use information and case studies supplied by women linked to the IT sector in the Northwest of England.

Alison Adam and Helen Richardson are the investigators working on this project. They are supported by Angela Tattersall and Claire Keogh.

WINIT

The principal investigators on this project are Alison Adam and Helen Richardson. Two new members of staff, Marie Griffiths and Dr Karenza Moore, are also working on this two-year WINIT (Women in IT) project funded by ESF. Undertaking an in-depth survey of women in the IT industry, WINIT will investigate why women are poorly represented in the IT sector as a whole (but in particular at senior levels) and will seek to find reasons for, and solutions to, the female 'IT brain-drain'.

A web-based questionnaire, interviews and case studies will be used to produce a picture of the experiences of women considering pursuing a career in IT, those currently in the IT industry, those who have left the sector, and those wishing to return. A significant outcome of the project will be the identification of good practice within the industry. This will provide a basis for offering solutions to the gender imbalance that may impact on government and employer policies of women in the IT labour market. WINIT will also contribute to current academic debates surrounding gender, technology and the workplace.

[National Centre for Text Mining](#)

Sophia Ananiadou is working on a collaborative JISC project with UMIST, Manchester and Liverpool to support provide a national service for "text mining in biomedical " area. This is the only national centre in text mining in the UK.

David Chadwick has been awarded the following JISC funded projects:

[A Policy Management Tool for PERMIS](#)

Working in collaboration with UCL. The project commenced February 2004 and will run for 6 months.

[Seamlessly Integrating PERMIS and Shibboleth \(SIPS\)](#)

The project commenced 1 June 2004 for 24 months.

[Multilayer Privilege Management for Dynamic Collaborative Scientific Communities over Environmental eScience Data Grids \(DyCom\)](#)

Working in collaboration with CLRCC the project will start on 1 September 2004 for 24 months.

[Dynamic Virtual Organisations in e-Science Education \(DyVOSE\).](#)

This is a joint bid with National e-Science Centre, Edinburgh, the University of Glasgow, and EDINA. The project commenced on 1 May 2004 and will run for 24 months.

[Flexible Access Middleware Extensions to PERMIS \(FAME-PERMIS\)](#)

This project started on 1 August 2004 in collaboration with the University of Manchester. The project will run for 24 months.

[Distributed Programmable Authorisation](#)

David Chadwick and Andrew Basden have been working on this EPSRC funded project since April 2004. This project is funded for 27 months.

Yacine Rezgui is leading the following two projects:

[FUNSIEC](#): Feasibility for a Unified Semantic Infrastructure for the European Construction sector. This is funded under the European eContent Programme.

[VE-Forum](#): The Portal for Projects and Communities in the Virtual Organisation Domain. This is a Specific Support Action funded under the IST FP6 Programme.

Publications

Refereed Journal Papers

Bell, F. & Heinze, A. 2004, 'With Regard to Respect – A Framework for the Governance of Educational Virtual Communities'. *International Journal of Web-based Communities*.

Bell, F. & Whatley, J. 2004, 'Trans-national Online Activities for Students – A Pragmatic Approach'. *Innovative Learning in Action*, University of Salford Inhouse Journal.

Jarvis, H. (2004). 'Investigating the Classroom Applications of Computers on EFL Courses at Higher Education Institutions.' *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, vol. 3, no.2, pp. 111-137.

Meziane, F. and Rezgui, Y. 'Document Management Methods Based on Similarity Contents,' *Information Sciences Journal*, pp 16-36, January 2004, Elsevier Ed.

Conferences

Adam, A. & Light, B. 2004, Selling Packages Software: An Ethical Analysis, at *12th European Conference on IS*, Turku, Finland (forthcoming).

Bell, F. & Adam, A. 2004, 'Whatever Happened to Information Systems Ethics? Caught between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea', at *20th Year IFIP WG8.2 Retrospective*, Manchester, UK.

Bell, F. & Adam, A. 2004, 'The Problem of Integrating Ethics into IS Practice', at *ECIS 2004 The European Information Systems Profession in the Global Networking Environment*, Turku, Finland.

Bell, F., Heinze, A. & Ferris, H. 2004, 'Respect and Values in Educational Discussion– Towards a Progressive Governance', at *UKAIS 2004 Conference*, Glasgow.

Bell, F., Caruana, V., Lees, M. & Whatley, J. 2004, 'Symposium: Internationalising the Curriculum: A Dubious concept, Variouslly Interpreted – What is Going on the UK and Europe?' at *Networked Learning Conference*, Lancaster, UK.

Bell F. & Whatley, J. 2004, 'Trans-national Online Activities for Students – A Pragmatic Approach', at *Networked Learning Conference*, Lancaster, UK.

Bell, F. & Heinze, A. 2004, 'Developing Governance of Educational Virtual Communities', at *IADIS International Conference*, Web Based Communities, Lisbon, Portugal.

Light, B. & Papazafeiropoulou, A. 2004, 'Reasons Behind the Adoption of ERP Packages: A Diffusion of Innovations Perspective, Proceedings of the 12th European Conference on IS, Turku, Finland (forthcoming).

Jarvis, H. 2004, 'Is CLT still the Answer?' *Malaysia International Centre for English Language Teaching (MICELT) 2004 Conference*, Malaka, Malaysia.

Jarvis, H. 2004, 'Defining a Pedagogical Practice of Computer Assisted Language Learning.' Chair of Panel on 'Information Technology and English Language Teaching'. *The Fourth International Symposium on ELT in China* in Beijing, China. Invited speaker

Jarvis, H. 2004, 'Integrating ICT by Exploiting the Skills of Practitioners and their Students'. *The Fifth Pan-Asian Conference on Language teaching* in Vladivostock, Russia. Featured Speaker with sponsorship from The British Academy.

Jarvis, H. 2004. Featured Speaker and Conference Panellist 'Computers in English for Academic Purposes: Trends and Issues'. *TESOL Arabia Conference 2004* in Dubai, UAE. With sponsorship from The British Council, U.A.E.

Book Chapter

Holland, C. & Light, B. (2003) A Framework for Understanding Success and Failure in Enterprise Resource Planning Implementation, in Shanks, et. al. (eds.) *Second-Wave Enterprsie Resource Planning Systems*, Cambridge University Press.

New Staff

Research Assistants/Fellows:

Simona Berresi – Working on Yacine Rezgui's European funded project FUNSIEC. Simona graduated from the ISI in 2004 with an MSC in Managing IT.

Marie Griffiths - WINWIT ESF Funded Project Marie Griffiths obtained her BIS Degree at the University of Salford. Marie then went on to successfully complete a Teaching Company Scheme and stayed with the company for three years. During that period Marie continued with her goal for research and embarked on a PhD. Her research interests are the use of metaphors in IS, organisational change, resistance and institutionalism.

Claire Keogh – WINIT ESF Funded Project Claire graduated from the ISI with a BSc Honours Information Technology.

Karenza Moore – WINWIT ESF Funded Project Karenza has just completed her PhD in Sociology on future-orientated discourses of mobile communication technologies. Her research interests lie in the sociology of science and technology, and youth studies.

Lin Ying Su – Is working on David Chadwick's EPSRC Distributed Programmable Authorisation funded Research Project. He comes to us from Staffordshire University.

Angela Tattersall – WINIT ESF Funded Project Angela graduated from the ISI with a BSc Honours Information Technology.

Zhi Ging WU – Working on David Chadwick's JISC funded project SIPS.

Wengsheng XU – Working on David Chadwick's JISC funded project DyCOM.

Academic Staff

Dr. David Kreps: David has substantial experience in a range of activities. During the 1990s, as an Arts Centre Director for Tamworth Borough Council, and then Portsmouth City Council, and as Chairman of Kaos Theatre UK since 1997, David has gained invaluable experience in managing a wide range of projects in the public sector. As a technician, he has been making websites for not-for-profit organisations since 1995 and has recently extended his portfolio to include organisations within higher education. David has been

responsible over the last several years for the production of a range of websites for the University of Manchester, and has provided CSS and Accessibility expertise to many of their Web Developers. David has presented a range of one day and half-day training courses in Web Design and Web Accessibility for Manchester Computing for the last three years. David is a Director of four quarters Information Solutions Ltd (<http://www.fourquarters.biz>), based in the University Business Park. Alongside his arts management, web development, and business interests, building on a Bachelors in Theatre and Arts Management, David undertook a part-time Masters in Cultural Theory during the mid 90s, specialising in Cybersociety, and between 1998 and 2003 undertook extensive research in this field, culminating in the award in January 2004 of a PhD from the University of Salford, for his doctoral thesis on Cyborgs. (<http://www.kreps.org/cyborg.htm>) In the same month, he joined the ISI full time, after several years lecturing part-time and supervising dissertations for the Institute. He has worked closely with Dr Amit Mitra in the creation of the eGovernment Masters programme.

Maria Kutar: Maria joined the ISI in January 2004, from the Department of Computer Science at the University of Hertfordshire. She holds an LLB in Law, and MSc and PhD in Computer Science. During the last few years she has been teaching Systems Analysis and Design, Human-Computer-Interaction, and Professional, Legal and Ethical Issues, focusing on IT law. Her research interests are focused on two areas: the effectiveness of representations used in system development, and temporal aspects of interactive systems. Her PhD thesis spanned both of these areas, examining the use of temporal logic in the specification of temporal properties of interactive systems. She is exploring ways to expand her research to include legal aspects of IS, enabling her to apply her background in law in both teaching and research.

Dr David Roberts: Dave's primary research interest is inhabited information systems specialising in collaborative virtual environments. He is a member of the CVE Research Centre.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

New Postgraduate Research Students

Ali Fauzi AHMAD (Supervisor: Prof Rezgui)	Jan 2004
Dongdong DAI (Supervisor: Dr Takruri-Rizk)	Jan2004
Husain HASHIM (Supervisor : Dr Campoy-Gomez)	Jan 2004

Emmanouil KARALAKIS (Supervisor: Prof Fernando)	Jan 2004
Uche MBANASO (Supervisor: Prof Chadwick)	Jan 2004
Sadian Suffain RAHMAT SUFFAIN (Supervisor: Prof Rezgui)	Jan 2004
Normahiran YATIM (Supervisor: Dr Mitra)	Jan 2004
Mohmoad AL RAWAD (Supervisor: Dr Mitra)	April 2004
Alaa EL-TALMAS (Supervisor – G Fletcher Split PhD)	July 2004
Tuan Auh NGUYEN (Supervisor – Prof D Chadwick)	July 2004
Gansen ZHAO (Supervisor – Prof D Chadwick)	July 2004

Graduated Postgraduate Research Students

Carlos DELGADO-MATA (Supervisor: R. Aylett) Emotion Signalling in Multiple Intelligent Virtual Agents for Believable Artificial Animals
Wukasha Ben LAGUDA (Supervisor: C. Procter) Electronic Government, Information Communication Technologies and Social Inclusion
Darren MUNDY (Supervisor: D. Chadwick) Secure Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (ETP) for the United Kingdom National Health Service
Oleksandr OTENKO (Supervisor: D. Chadwick) Policy-Based Privilege Management Using X.509 (The PERMIS Project)
Wendy ROWAN-BUTTON (Supervisor: R. Varey) Method and Metanota: Exploring Complexity Theory (An Ethnographic Case Study)
Anoush SIMON (Supervisor: A. Adam) Perceptions of an Information Society
Amrit TAKHAR (Supervisor: F. Bell) An Action Research Study Into the Use of Groupware in a Health Care Setting
William VENTERS (Supervisor: E. Ferneley) The Introduction of Knowledge Management Technology Within the British Council: An Action Research Study
Martha WALKER (Supervisor: A. Adam)

INTEGRATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Dr. Andrew Basden, Reader in Knowledge Systems and Human Factors, was awarded study leave in 2003. During this period he undertook three related pieces of work that are rare, and perhaps unique:

1. He attempted to find an framework for understanding information systems that integrates across five areas that are normally divorced from each other:

- # the nature of computer systems (the artificial intelligence question)
- # the shaping of information technologies (knowledge representation, visualization, etc.)
- # development of information systems or artefacts for human use
- # contextualized human usage of information system and artefacts
- # societal and environmental impacts of information technology.

A common framework of the type forged in this work might enhance mutual understanding between those working in the various areas, and reduce the disparity between areas.

2. He explored how such frameworks could be explicitly grounded in philosophy, employing a single philosophical approach to underpin all areas. In doing so, he found at least four distinct ways in which philosophy can be used for this process.

3. The philosophy he employed, that of the Dutch thinker Herman Dooyeweerd, has not often been applied to information systems, but proved successful here because, in acknowledging both human freedom and a law-like reality that enables such freedom, it can address both technological and human and social issues with equal ease. A summary of how the various elements of Dooyeweerd's philosophy have been useful in all five areas can be found on "<http://www.basden.u-net.com/Dooy/using/ffuis.html>".

The book, tentatively entitled 'An Integrative Framework for Understanding Information Systems', is being prepared for submission to publishers. Partial funding from the Herman Dooyeweerd Foundation is gratefully acknowledged.

Dr Andrew Basden
A.Basden@salford.ac.uk

Research Newsletter Submissions:

The next issue of the IRIS Newsletter will be published in December 2004.

Submissions to the Newsletter must be sent to Joanne Perrott at-mail: j.e.perrott@salford.ac.uk by **19/11/2004**.