Ujwal Gadiraju wins Douglas Engelbart Best Paper Award at Hypertext 2017 in Prague, Czech Republic

Ujwal Gadiraju from the L3S Research Center, Jie Yang and Alessandro Bozzon from the Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands won the prestigious Douglas Engelbart Best Paper Award at the 28th ACM International Conference on Hypertext and Social Media (HT’17) in Prague, Czech Republic. The author’s paper was titled, ‘Clarity is a Worthwhile Quality: On the Role of Task Clarity in Microtask Crowdsourcing’ (http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=3078715).

Workers of microtask crowdsourcing marketplaces strive to find a balance between the need for monetary income and the need for high reputation. Such balance is often threatened by poorly formulated tasks, as workers attempt their execution despite a sub-optimal understanding of the work to be done.

In this paper the authors highlighted the role of clarity as a characterising property of tasks in crowdsourcing. They surveyed 100 workers of the CrowdFlower platform to verify the presence of issues with task clarity in crowdsourcing marketplaces, reveal how crowd workers deal with such issues, and motivate the need for mechanisms that can predict and measure task clarity. Next, the authors proposed a novel model for task clarity based on the goal and role clarity constructs. They sampled 7.1K tasks from the Amazon mTurk marketplace, and acquired labels for task clarity from crowd workers. Authors showed that task clarity is coherently perceived by crowd workers, and is affected by the type of the task. They then proposed a set of features to capture task clarity, and use the acquired labels to train and validate a supervised machine learning model for task clarity prediction. Finally, the authors performed a long-term analysis of the evolution of task clarity on Amazon mTurk, and showed that clarity is not a property suitable for temporal characterisation.