Virtual Reality in English Language Teaching

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Aim

To de-mystify Virtual Reality
Task

How much do you **know** about VR?

0 / 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

Have you **used** VR within a language teaching context?

Overview

• Research
• VR in language teaching
• Practical ideas

Based on the chapter on VR for the **LT SIG** publication ‘Digital Innovations in Language Learning’

Definition

“A **virtual reality** system is an interactive technology setup (**software, hardware, peripheral devices and other items**) that acts as a human-to-computer interface and immerses its user in a computer-generated three-dimensional environment”.

“Most virtual reality systems stimulate the senses of sight, hearing, touch, and other tactile-kinaesthetic sense perceptions”.

(Moro, Stromberga and Stirling: 2016).

Research

Searching literature

Questionnaires

Observation one

• **Term complex**
• **Multiple definitions**

Refining search terms

• **Virtual Reality** + ‘language learning’
• ‘Head mounted devices’
• ‘Oculus Rift’
• ‘wearables’
Observation two

the prevalence of a vast range of articles covering Second Life

Observation three

Vast range of articles on VR from a huge range of other disciplines

Psychology

Phobias

Surgeons

Flight simulators

Military

Lloyd, Rogerson & Stead
2016
Imagining the Potential for Using Virtual Reality Technologies in Language Learning

Questionnaires

• Teachers

2004

2006

1993

2016

13

14

15

16

17

18
• **Q4 Please write about your VR experience(s) e.g. positive / negative? Why**

Teacher

“Best experience was with Oculus Rift VR set up - 3 experiences 2 game type experiences, medical education (travelling through arteries and human heart) and advised on VR adaption of Yeats poem for BBC VR project”

Teacher

• “Feeling not in control of everything in my environment, as I normally would be in real life, was an extremely disconcerting experience. I can see it increasing any tendency I might have of developing 'VR rage’!

Q7 What would you like to see in VR in the future to help language learning?

Students

I would like to make a very friendly AI language teacher in VR which can understand me well and be equipped with various phrases and vocabulary.

I hope I could have a private language teacher online with VR technology so as to practice my oral English with him/her in my daily life.
New book:
‘Digital Innovations in Language Learning’

VR in language teaching

YouTube360
Cardboard
Samsung Gear
Oculus Rift
Oculus Go

Three levels of VR experience

HIGH MEDIUM LOW

YouTube 360

Low

Google Cardboard

Expeditions

Medium

Controller
Apps

Titans of space

Game-changer?

Gaming

Language teaching

Source: www.mondly.com

Voice recognition

Avatar

Business English?
Virtual reality and ESP
(English for specific purposes)

Chernobyl

You can do stuff in VR which you cannot do in real life.....

Seven aspects of VR of interest

• Immersiveness
• Interaction
• Memory
• Motivation
• Context
• Games
• Collaboration

Immersiveness

Linked with ‘immersion’ is the term ‘presence’. The concept of presence is defined as “being there” (Biocca & Delaney in Cho 2011).

Interaction

the extent that participant actions such as gestures are recognised by the system

Memory

“VR can affect memory retention” (Cho 2011)

Motivation

Does VR motivate language learners?
Context

VR can expose learners to relevant and inspiring content, providing context for lessons in areas such as science, history and geography.

.....especially appropriate for CLIL content and language integrated learning.

Collaboration

Effective collaborative learning is easier with VR: “Learners can interact in real-like environments which enhance learning gains”

Lloyd et al (2016) write: “Facebook’s acquisition of Oculus Rift suggests that the future of popular VR is likely to be based on social networks.”

Games

VR in games is popular and growing.

Issues

• Individual experiences vs collaboration
• Classroom vs self-study
  • Tutor or tool?
  • VR or voice recognition
• Claims for VR
  • Motivational software vs how it is used

Practical idea one: Blended Presentations

face-to-face    blended    online
Blended course - elements

- Practising fixed phrases: e.g. ’I’ve divided....’
- Doing a ’Dry-run’
- Practising fielding questions
- Learning Prezi
- Giving feedback on a presentation

Presentations course

classroom

Brainstorm possible topics
Deliver dry run
Final presentation

between classes

Practical idea two

• Immersive preparation
• Orienting students to a reading topic through 360-degree videos
• Writing topic
• Using emotive language and adventure vocabulary
• “swim happily” – “swim nervously”
• Story-telling – more vivid?

Practical idea three

• Gap-fill activities
• report-back by one student with a VR headset on an experience to another learner without a headset

Practical idea four: Language of instruction

One group VR attempt task. Second group can see what is happening onscreen - give instructions

Johnathan Dykes (IH Barcelona): IATEFL PCE 2018
Practical idea five: Cambridge beta

Google Cardboard – French schoolchildren

The stress of taking language tests!

Practical idea six:
Report back on project work

Try it!

YouTube360 Cardboard
Bosch
Samsung Gear
Dinosaur
HTC Vive
Oculus Go

Class VR

Haven’t we been here before?
Second Life!

“Years and years of COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING and now we strap on a Headset…..!!!”

Silver bullet
Critical thinking
Fast-moving
PEDAGOGY!

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Have you used VR within a language teaching context? E-mail your idea!

Thanks!