

## Call for Papers

### ReCALL Special Issue 'Interactions for language learning in and around virtual worlds'

#### Guest editors (in alphabetical order)

Susanna Nocchi, Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland.

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#### Call for Papers

The following is a call for the submission of preliminary proposals in the format of a long abstract (max. 1500 words) for a Special Issue of the *ReCALL* journal on virtual worlds "Interactions for language learning in and around virtual worlds".

Pedagogical opportunities offered by three-dimensional virtual worlds and their application to language learning have generated a considerable amount of interest and dialogue among educators and educational researchers in recent years. We define virtual worlds as 3D, immersive, persistent, graphical environments in which participants are co-present through their avatars and interact with each other and the world's contents. When characterising virtual worlds, a distinction is frequently made between social virtual worlds and gaming virtual worlds. Whereas gaming virtual worlds have an embedded predetermined goal, social virtual worlds emphasise user-generated content and require users to fill the environment with meaning and to extend the environment in order to make sense. Social virtual worlds are therefore not goal-oriented and adhere to the description proffered by Boellstorff (2008) as a blank slate that allows for a new type of culture to develop. This special issue aims to bring together research that specifically focuses on social virtual worlds.

The special issue seeks to bring together papers that explore the theoretical frameworks and methodologies needed by researchers to analyse interaction data from social virtual worlds. It encourages contributions that study interactions in open-source, browser-based and custom-made virtual worlds, as well as in those worlds that use mobile-technology.

Papers that highlight the multifacetedness of interactions are encouraged. These include but are not limited to the following:

- interaction between the user and the social virtual world environment
- social interactions
- multimodal interactions
- interactions between self and avatar (embodied interaction)
- pedagogical and non-pedagogical uses (formal and informal learning)
- interplay between course design and instantiation of the course
- interplay between space, place, time and participants
- interplay between theoretical frameworks and practice
- interactions between different learning communities
- interactions between different online and offline spaces

- interactions between different data types (linguistic, visual (movement, positioning), tasks, builds...)
- interactions between teacher / designer beliefs and virtual builds
- interaction between research approaches and methods and inworld learning: what constitutes data in social virtual worlds? How to collect that data? (ethics, data storage, inworld consent)
- interactions between 'general language learning pedagogy' and social virtual world pedagogy?
- interactions between language learning / culture / identity / content in social virtual worlds
- immersive interaction (presence)
- simulation as interaction

The special issue will privilege research papers that offer critical reflection on both teaching practices (the rationale of using social virtual world platforms) and on the methodological tools of choice in analyses of empirical data. The editors encourage experimental methodological approaches building on the research affordances of social virtual worlds and are interested in papers that not only shed light on the potential of these environments and their added value but that also make suggestions about how virtual world educational activities and understandings have washback effects on our non-virtual world educational practices and thinking.

The guest editors encourage articles that encompass language learning in primary, secondary or tertiary education. Submissions that focus on the use of social virtual worlds for non-formal, informal and incidental language learning purposes are also welcome. The issue aims to reflect a range of target languages and offer insights on different approaches to language learning in social virtual worlds that could help to open up this type of environment to practitioners / researchers who were previously hesitant to use them.

## References

Boellstorff, T. (2008). *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press.

## Timeline

- Submission of preliminary proposals (long abstract, max. 1500 words) deadline: 1 September 2016.
- Proposals should be sent to [recallvirtualworlds@gmail.com](mailto:recallvirtualworlds@gmail.com) using the template provided. If authors have any questions or queries, please contact the guest editors at this email address.
- A template for proposals can be downloaded from the following link: [https://www.dropbox.com/s/vsk2up64cysilyw/recallvirtualworlds\\_template.docx?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/vsk2up64cysilyw/recallvirtualworlds_template.docx?dl=0)
- Authors notified of editorial decision (invitation to submit full-length paper if proposal accepted): 1 October 2016.
- NB: Invitation to submit a full paper does not guarantee publication.
- Submission of full-length papers (8000 words including references) for blind review using ReCALL ScholarOne submission system: 31 December 2016
- Authors notified of editorial decision: 1 March 2017
- Submission of revised papers: 1 June 2017
- Authors notified of final editorial decision: 31 July 2017
- Submission of production files (i.e., non-anonymised manuscript, tables, images, supplementary materials, etc.): 15 August 2017
- Accepted papers ready for copy-editing and production: 1 December 2017
- Publication date: 1st May 2018