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## LEARNING ENGLISH IN VIRTUAL SECOND LIFE ENVIRONMENT, CREATING MACHINIMA

Information and communication technologies are inevitably affecting each sphere of life. Today the exchange of information with use of ICT determines the economy and business, as well as social life. Individuals exist on the Internet. Sometime it is easier to find somebody in cyber space than in real life. Information and communication have become reality and are a part of every day life, treated either as a source of information, or as a tool for work, or as alternative reality. Today ICT supplements the learning process realized in real world. Still, a 3D technology determines the course of technological evolution. A three-dimensional virtual space creates educational opportunity - especially for language learning - and can revolutionize the didactic process.

Second Life (SL) is a virtual, three-dimensional environment that simulates reality. The user of SL creates an avatar that is kind of an alter ego enabling unrestricted individual creation. Avatars, like people, communicate with voice, text messages, body language and

gestures. SL is a place where people originating from different countries, environments and cultures contact one another in real time. The website provides the users with entertainment, social life, business support unities. It can also be a field of marketing activities and, more and more often, educational ones.

The most popular Serious Virtual World is Second Life - a product of Linden Labs. It is estimated that over 15 million people all over the world have their user accounts on the platform. Educational career of Second Life began in 2007, when the first language schools appeared on the platform. Their success initiated a new stage in development of e-learning. Due to an enormous educational potential of 3D environments, the usage of «second life» in educational process is gaining greater and greater popularity. Second Life belongs to a category of Serious Virtual Worlds. Even though they were initially made for entertainment, they are not games. They are an imitation of the real world, where each of the participants can realize his own objectives - connected with social life, entertainment or business. One of such objectives may also be education.

Second Life is an open world created by the users. Every one can join the platform and create his own part of the world. Currently schools and universities have their own islands in SL. They are accompanied by educational platforms and institutions existing only in virtual world. It is also a place where conferences, meetings and the exchange of scientific ideas take place. The virtual world is open for everyone. There are no age, cultural or national limits.

Still, Second Life attracts mainly those, who are easily assimilating technological innovations. A teacher and a student contact each other using avatars. Sometimes it helps students to overcome the feeling of embarrassment caused by presence of other people. Boundaries resulting from age differences, complexes or disabilities disappear too. The feeling of discomfort resulting from failures is limited. One does not need to lose time on commuting and instead of a few hours of classes a month one can spend unlimited time talking to friends. Moreover, all resources of the virtual world are available for the users after the classes.

Second Life can also be used as a browser. The platform provides access to virtual museums, cities and all kinds of visual materials. A 3D technology enables specific management of available materials - any information can be easily reached with

active links and displays spread around different spaces of SL. All elements of the virtual world have an interactive character - touching an object results in a text appearing. Students can skim through newspapers, readbooks, visit museums, galleries, cities, enter different room and at the same time receive textoraudio in formation related to a particular topic. The popularity as well as didactic results achieved with Second Life indicate that it is a way to motivate people of different age and different background to learn. It is assumed that in the future it will probably be inevitable to move the whole educational process to the World Wide Web and to the 3D environments in particular.

Th eeducational movies for students can be produced using Second Life . It is called Machinima (a port man teau word of cinema and machine, refers to filming actions, role-plays and dialogues between 3D virtual characters or avatars.) gives real opportunities to immerse students. The idea of creating and using videos produced in a virtual environment in the classroom has been developed in the CAMELOT project («CreAting Machinima to Empower Live Online language Teaching and learning») involving nine European partners (project awarded by the EU Lifelong Learning Programme). This technology is the art of creating movies from videogames or in the virtual environment. Moreover every one can be the director of the movies, even students. It strongly motivates them to learn and to be involved in this kind of learning.

«Creating machinima only requires a few people who control the avatars acting out scenarios, plus someone to record, edit and upload the video. These can often be the same one or two people. Real life video is much more demanding regarding resources and money. Producers, actors, cameras, sound recording equipment, editors and locations are all required for video that is made with real people and in the real world. Machinima is a cost effective way to teach students and, on occasion, the only way to teach students when the creation of the videos is not viable in real life due to monetary or physical constraints» [1, p. 37].

Machinima are able to:

1. Provide a uthentic language.
2. Offer opportunities for discussion and reflection
3. Stimulate further activities (i.e. roleplay, writing dialogues

etc.).

4. Provide a wide range of genres (e.g., information, instruction, idioms, grammar, sketches, story-telling).

5. Serve as a model for spoken language.

Some Ukrainian versions of Machinima are developed by instructors of English of military establishments in the frame of DEEP programme. The product is military-focused Machinima, which were focused on the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) issues. There is a promising future for immersive learning, and Machinima as its part.

#### List of references

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2. Christel Schneider, CAMELOT Using and Creating Machinima for Language Teaching, ICT for language learning, 2014.

3. <http://adlnet.gov/>

4. <http://camelotproject.eu>