

Teaching without Boundaries?

Being a Teacher in Virtual Environments

Nicole Steils

CURLIEW - Coventry University Research into Immersive Educational Worlds
funded by the Leverhulme Trust

Learning Innovation ARG, Coventry University

<http://cuba.coventry.ac.uk/leverhulme/>

Content

- Argument
- Background
- Being a Teacher in Virtual Environments
Experiences & Challenges
- Future Research
- References

Argument

Teaching in virtual worlds offers
a new kind of teaching
which asks for a different type
of teacher

Background

Changes in university (Barnett 2000, Bentley 1998)

- Changing requirements
- Change of student body

→ Need for change of ways of teaching and teacher role

‘New’ Technologies in Education

- Virtual 3D environments, e.g. Second Life (Linden Lab Inc. 2003ff.)

→ Do they offer ‘Teaching without Boundaries’?

Being a Teacher in Virtual Environments



Being a Teacher in Virtual Environments

Challenges

Teacher Roles:

- Being a learner (Larsen *et al.* 2008)
- Being a mentor (Rappa *et al.* 2009)
- Being an instructor (Gaimster 2008)

→ Sharing control and authority

Future Research

Further investigations:

- Teacher and student needs
- Pedagogies and Methodologies
- Development of teachers

Own interest:

- Learner and teacher identity

References

- Barnett, R. (2000) *Realizing the University in an Age of Supercomplexity*. Buckingham: SRHE/Open University Press.
- Bayne, S. (2005) 'Deceit, desire and control: The identities of learners and teachers in cyberspace'. In *Education in Cyberspace*. ed. by Land, R. and Bayne, S. London: Routledge: 26 – 42.
- Bentley, T. (1998) *Learning beyond the classroom: education for a changing world*. London: Routledge.
- Gaimster, J. 2008. 'Reflections on Interactions in virtual worlds and their implication for learning art and design'. *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education*. 6, (3), 187 – 199.
- Larsen, A. K., Sanders, R., Astray, A. A., and Hole, G. O. (2008) 'E-teacher Challenges and Competences in International Comparative Social Work Courses'. *Social Work Education*. 27, (6) 623 – 633.
- Linden Lab Inc. (2003ff.) *Second Life*. <<http://secondlife.com>>.
- Rappa, N.A., Yip, D.K.H., and Baey, S.C. (2009) 'The role of teacher, student and ICT in enhancing student engagement in multiuser virtual environments'. *British Journal of Educational Technology*. 40, (1) 61 – 69.
- Salmon, G. (2009) 'The future for (second) life and learning'. *British Journal of Educational Technology*. 40, (3) 526 – 538.
- Westmoreland Bowers, K., Ragas, M. W. & Neely, J. C. (2009) 'Assessing the value of virtual worlds for post secondary educators: a survey of innovators and the early majority in Second Life'. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*. 3, (1) 40 – 50.

Thank you

Contact:

Nicole Steils

Learning Innovation ARG

Coventry University

Email: steilsn@coventry.ac.uk