Chapter 13

A Conceptual “Cybernetic” Methodology for Organizing and Managing the E-Learning Process through [D–] CIVEs: The Case of “Second Life”

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents a conceptual-pedagogical “cybernetic” methodology for cyber entities’ (avatars’) spatial awareness, in an innovative way by using Second Life (SL). According to this section, it’s crucial to answer the major question of how teachers can permit effective actions through the organizational complexity of virtual and technical interactions that SL governs, making it more practical for Higher Education. Additionally, the chapter’s objective emphasizes the creation of an organizational-educational (multi-) method, which is essential for effective planning and conducting in distance learning programs. Furthermore, the construction effort is based on Anthony Stafford Beer’s “Viable System Model” (VSM) principal characteristics, in which the chapter contends the pedagogical analysis of teaching and didactic process that should be supported by any “open,” “viable,” and “sustainable” virtual learning environment. The systematic description and classification of groups’ interaction scripts aim is to help facilitating and enhancing teams’ knowledge management by providing reusable patterns that leverage the ample possibilities.

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INTRODUCTION

Modern virtual worlds combine elements of social networking and 3D computer games. We must also remember that from the mid 1990’s, gaming consoles like Nintendo, Sega and Sony, have a small connection to the Internet. As a result of this “gaming revolution” from the recent generation of consoles (see Play station 2, Microsoft Xbox) were followed the un-structured way that allows users to have more freedom of options and movements, as was the *Grand Theft Auto*, games as well as typed as “god game” (Au, 2001), such as “*The Sims online*”. Later of course came forefront, the MMORPGs (Massively multiplayer online role-playing games), such as World of Warcraft (WoW) and Everquest, in which users have specific tasks to be completed in order to take over world leaders and gain their avatars and not really the same, superhuman skills and abilities.

According to Schroeder (2008), these types of virtual worlds consider as “persistence”, which continue to exist and to operate even after the departure of the user, in which people feel that they are there with others and can to interact with them. The element of continuity is explicitly mentioned in the mode structure (tools and system requirements) and second the existence of cyber entities (online & offline users) of cyberspace. Even when someone decides to leave, the virtual environment will continue to exist, yet overwhelming the guest’s/user’s computer shut down, the temporal flow of things, and data changes do not stop. When the user gets back, he can see the changes in both the active site and changes to other people. The presence of the users that are not needed for the development and operation of the virtual space, but each user’s personal contribution is extremely important for the perpetuation. We should not forget that a virtual world includes, among two others, an ever-changing economy and growing community, which in essence, is something that can be described as a “cyber-ecosystem”. There are developed and enhanced to the greatest extent as possible as they can humans’ interactions at a distance through virtual representatives, communication between themselves and the public environment of action. Most new users (“newbies”), felt the need to create virtual communities through which they will meet each other, they will exchange views and even implement joint programs. The 3D-graphic anthropomorphic figure of a user enables to actively control the dynamic interaction of users via keyboard and mouse. The difference from those who support the 1st personally dimension of virtual reality, is listed in online social spaces with spatial and temporal continuity, regardless of the party that it is and whether or not the user was there. The form of social interaction is now a continuation of social networks and blogs in cyberspace which is really differentiated and distinguishes them from MMORPGs. Their “philosophy” is to reach users a specific goal and to strengthen gradually and successfully passed the difficult situations, which they are found on the road to glory and this is really their absolute pleasure.

A simple virtual environment (VE), is a computer system that produces a three dimensional virtual environment for users, in which interacts and receives real-time feedback. If multiple users are connected and interact with one another, then the above definition is extended to a multi-user or shared VE. A collaborative system of the virtual world (CVE: Collaborative Virtual Environment), aiming at a cooperative target, can produce a well-designed virtual reality (VR) world, with additional educational tasks, such as synchronous and asynchrony communication, experience and deepening the “collective” presence of distributed users. Within this context, the developments of virtual environments, which we are presented, unveil the [D-] CIVEs ([Distributed-] Collaborative Immersive Virtual Environments). A [D-] CIVE is a whole virtual world or separated virtual worlds, supported by an educational function. Users are
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