György MOLNÁR – Zoltán SZŰTS

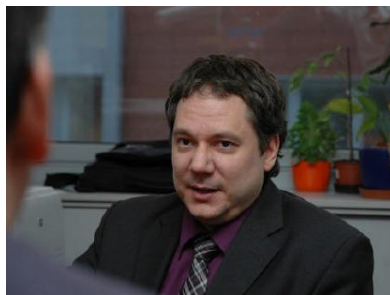## *Visual Learning – Picture and Discourse in Virtual Worlds*

It is said that one lives in an age of pictures, and iconic turn is victorious. Virtual worlds are embedded into physical ones, and new technologies as 3D and augmented reality are on rise. In these virtual worlds the sense of time and space is altered.

Learning nowadays in virtual worlds is mostly visual and 3D orientated. No surprise that sometimes virtual worlds can carry more information that the real ones. Examples as Second Life, Cloudparty and Oculus (3D Facebook) can be mentioned. In these worlds characters interact with each other as they were virtual objects. This is also the way knowledge is often gained. Still, some aspects of learning depend on verbal culture and written discourse. Besides using their avatars, users in virtual worlds prefer written, real-time communication – chat. This world is depicted by writer and theorist Ernest Cline.

At the same time another theorist Manfred Spitzer, who published a book titled *Digital Dementia*, argues that that during childhood and early adolescence the human brain is astonishingly plastic. It means that it forms its circuitry of neuron paths in response to the way the brain is used during this age; later, in adulthood, these wires become fixed. Having this is mind it is essential to give developing brains the full range of stimuli that comes from interacting with the real world, not a virtual one. So that comes from confronting physical obstacles through problem solving to social interactions. Spitzer says that, by comparison, the virtual world offers less stimuli and less opportunity for the developing brain to achieve its full potential.

In our paper we intend to argue that virtual worlds which rely on the iconic turn cannot be exact and whole without verbal elements, while at the same time chat in virtual worlds defers digital dementia.

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E-Learning, 2011, vol. II, Roma: 2011, pp. 405–408; and "New Learning Spaces? M-Learning's, in Particular the Ipad's Potentials in Education", IGIP, INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INTERACTIVE MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES 7:(1), pp. 56–60, 2013. E-mail: molnar.gy@eik.bme.hu.

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