

Virtual Reality Simulation in Legal Education

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BACKGROUND

- Simulated learning is widely used in legal education to teach practical skills (Daly and Higgins, 2011).
 - Benefits of simulation found in studies:**
 - Increased Motivation, Increased Confidence, Deeper Learning and Improved Practical Skills
- However, studies have also revealed a number of limitations of using simulated learning (Waters, 2016).
 - Limitations of simulation found in studies:**
 - Lack of Immersion, Lack of Authenticity
- Virtual Reality has recently seen an increase in use in the education sector due to its novelty and realistic quality (Kavanagh et al., 2017).
 - Benefits of Virtual Reality found in studies:**
 - Increased Engagement, Motivation and Immersion
- However, there is currently **very limited research** on the use of VR in the context of legal education.

OBJECTIVES

- To **critically review** three bodies of knowledge including **learning theories**, **simulation in legal education**, and **virtual reality in general education**.
- What are the **effects** of virtual reality as a form of simulation on the **learning experience** of students in a legal education context?
- What are the factors that affect the **suitability** of using **VR technology** in the context of simulation in legal education?
- What are the contributing **affective factors** that influence the learning experience in the context of VR in legal education?
- Development of **theoretical framework** to portray the **effects** of VR as a form of simulated learning in legal education.

METHODOLOGY

Research Phase 1
Literature review
[Achievement of Objective 1]

Research Phase 2
Single pilot case study
Manchester Metropolitan University
Semi-structured interviews
[Insight into Objectives 2 and 3]

Research Phase 3
4 case studies
4 different universities
Semi-structured interviews + observation
[Achievement of Objectives 2 and 3]

Research Phase 4
4 case studies
4 different universities
EEG + semi-structured interviews
[Achievement of Objective 4]

Outcome
Theoretical framework
[Achievement of Objective 5]

VR DESIGN

- Collaboration with HEC Liège (Belgium) to design an interactive VR mock trial courtroom.
- Accessed via Oculus Quest 2 headsets.

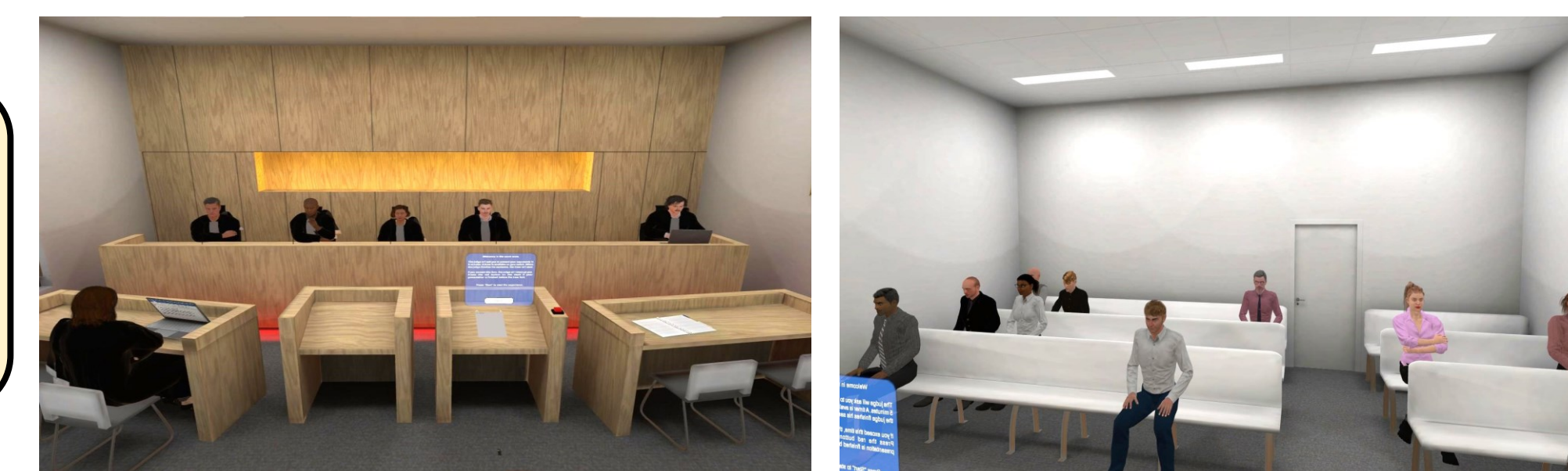
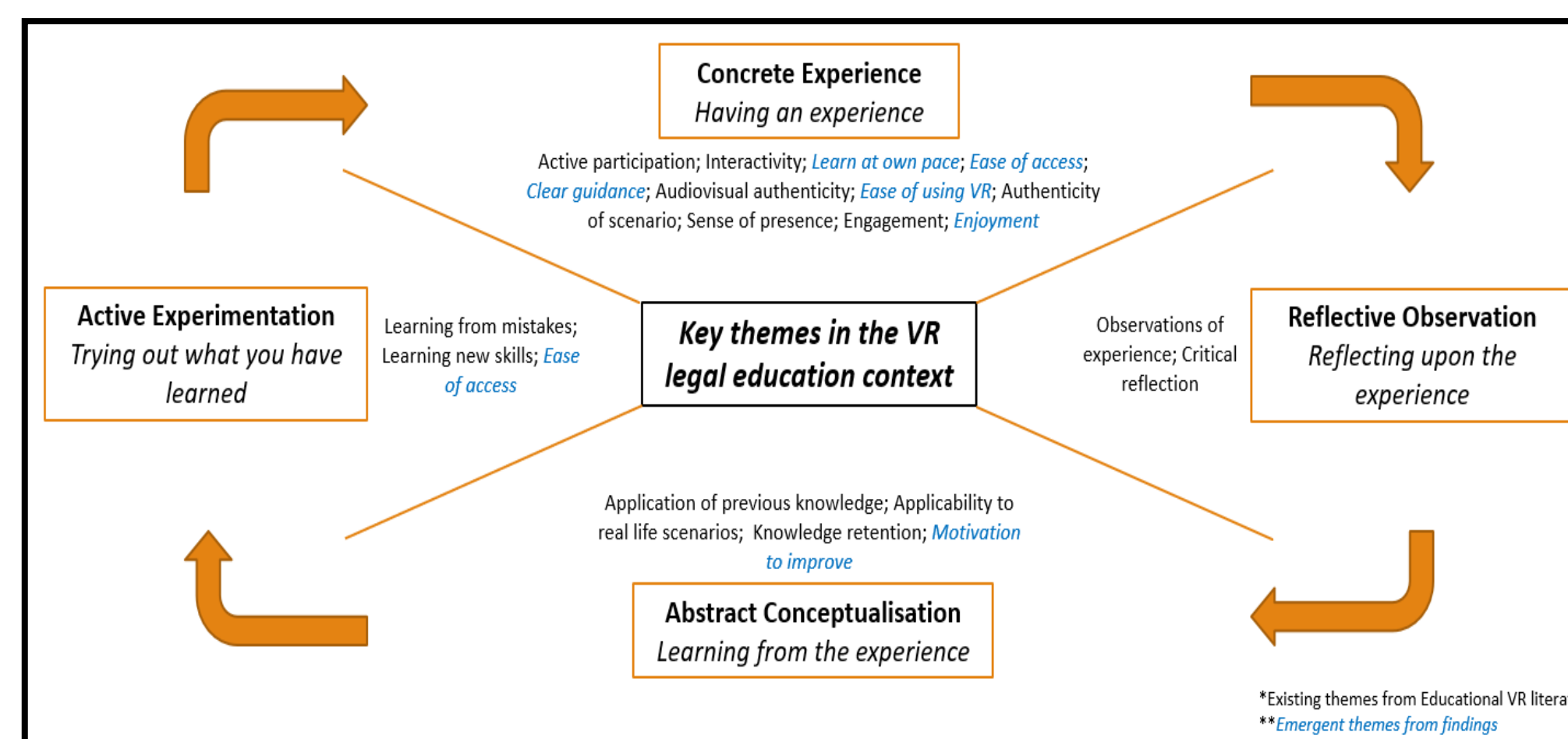


Figure 1 & 2: Screenshots of VR mock trial courtroom

PHASE 2 OUTCOMES



NEXT STEPS

- Research Phase 3:** Extension of Phase 2 to increase saturation of data and increase accuracy of framework.
- Research Phase 4:** Investigation of impact of emotions on learning through the use of electroencephalography to detect emotional activity in the brain. Addition of role of emotions to framework.
- Contribution:** Development of a theoretical framework to guide and inform the implementation of virtual reality in legal education simulation contexts.

- Daly, Y. and Higgins, N. (2011) The Place and Efficacy of Simulations in Legal Education: A Preliminary Examination. *All Ireland Journal of Higher Education*, 3(2)
- Kavanagh, S., Luxton-Reilly, A., Wuensche, B. and Plimmer, B. (2017) A systematic review of Virtual Reality in education. *Themes in Science & Technology Education*, 10(2), pp. 85-119.
- Kolb, D. (1984) *Experiential Learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Waters, B. (2016) "A part to play": the value of role-play simulation in undergraduate legal education. *The Law Teacher*, 50(2), pp. 172-194

Contact