

It's all about reality

Level: Pre-intermediate +

Time: 90 minutes +

Summary: This lesson is about virtual and augmented reality and the uses they can be put to in today's and tomorrow's business worlds. In this lesson, students:

1. study a text about VR and AR;
2. discuss potential uses of the technologies, including in language learning;
3. research the Fourth Industrial Revolution, considering how it might change the way we work.

Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student

Group size: Any

Note to teachers: Please be aware that in paragraph 8 of the article, the author mentions pornography and alludes to the possible uses to which VR and AR might be put within that industry. The lesson does not focus on this, as you may consider it inappropriate for your students.

Note: This lesson plan is for both pre-experience and in-work business students based on an original article first published in *Business Spotlight* issue 1/2017. This is a shortened version.

Warmer

Give the students five minutes to work on the task in pairs, discussing the meanings of the terms. Possible definitions are given below but you may prefer to ask students to check their answers by reading through paragraphs 2 and 3 of the article, which provide definitions and examples.

Key: 1. *images and sounds that are produced by a computer and connected equipment to make the user feel as if they are in real three-dimensional space;* 2. *the technology of putting images or information produced by a computer on top of a real view, image, video, etc so that the user can see both at the same time*

Key words

Students read the definitions and scan the article to find the keywords. In higher level groups, students could try to work out the answers from the definitions (if they need extra clues, you could provide the first letter of each word, the number of letters and the number of syllables) before scanning the article to check their answers. The clues are given in the order that the words appear in the article.

Key:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>automated</i> | 7. <i>cost-effective</i> |
| 2. <i>disruption</i> | 8. <i>damaged</i> |
| 3. <i>interact</i> | 9. <i>injured</i> |
| 4. <i>virtual</i> | 10. <i>potential</i> |
| 5. <i>GPS = global positioning system</i> | 11. <i>targeting</i> |
| 6. <i>solutions</i> | 12. <i>plot</i> |

Understanding the article

Students work together to decide whether the statements about the article are true or false and to rewrite any that are false, to make them true.

Key:

1. *F – At Innoactive in Munich, you can see attractive young people wearing virtual-reality headsets. The company provides pizza and beer for visitors.*
2. *F – Innoactive currently offers virtual-reality solutions to the retail and automotive industries.*
3. *F – Seidl believes it is possible to learn languages via virtual reality, putting the teacher and student in the same VR world, regardless of where they are.*
4. *T*
5. *F – Seidl says the company does not know what people are going to do with Innoactive's software.*
6. *T*

Useful phrases

This task can be done in pairs or groups of three. First, students match the phrases with the meanings. Then, they find and underline the phrases in the article to read them in context, noting what comes before and after them, and whether they are used at the beginning of a sentence or paragraph, or within a sentence. Finally, they use them in sentences of their own about the article.

Key: 1. d; 2. c; 3. a; 4. b

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Discussion

Students discuss the questions relating to the article.

Research

In pairs or small groups, students research the topics. You could divide the tasks up amongst the students and get them to present their findings to the rest of the group. This task can also be set for homework.

Vocabulary record

Here, students should be encouraged to record all of the new and useful vocabulary they have learnt during the lesson, not only in the form presented in the article but also in related forms.

Related topics on onestopenglish

The following set of news lessons looks into the phenomenon of Pokémon Go, an example of augmented reality:

www.onestopenglish.com/skills/news-lessons/monthly-topical-news-lessons/monthly-news-lesson-man-quits-job-to-become-full-time-pokmon-hunter/555459.article

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1 Warmer

Do you know what the terms below mean? Discuss your answers with a partner.

1. virtual reality
2. augmented reality

2 Key words

Read the definitions, then find the key words in the article to read them in context. The paragraph numbers are given to help you.

1. using machines or done by machines, instead of people (para 1)

2. a problem or action that interrupts something and prevents it from continuing (para 1)

3. If two or more things _____, they affect or change one another in some way. (para 2)

4. created by computers or appearing on computers or the internet (para 2)

5. a system for finding exactly where you are anywhere in the world using satellites (para 3)

6. ways and ideas to deal with problems and challenges (para 5)

7. giving the most profit or advantage in exchange for the amount of money that is spent (para 5)

8. harmed so that it is broken (para 5)

9. hurt in an accident or attack (para 5)

10. the possibility to develop or achieve something in the future (para 6)

11. trying to sell your product to a particular company or industry (para 9)

12. a series of related events that make up the main story in a book, film, etc (para 10)

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by Eamonn Fitzgerald



Hurrying through the streets collecting Pokémon or walking on Mars, both without leaving home? No problem with AR and VR. Read on to find out more.

- 1 More connected, more automated and faster than ever before. The Fourth Industrial Revolution continues to evolve and we can expect to see more innovation and disruption in the coming year. To understand these dramatic developments, we need to update our vocabulary regularly and this means learning about VR and AR.
- 2 VR stands for “virtual reality” and the idea is to interact with a virtual world designed so that people find it difficult to tell the difference between what is real and what is not. VR is usually experienced by wearing a specially designed headset that enables you to walk around Mars in your bedroom.
- 3 AR is short for “augmented reality”, which is the blending of real life and virtual reality. With AR, users are able to interact with virtual content in the real world. In the Pokémon Go game, for example, a mobile phone’s GPS is used to find creatures, called Pokémon, that appear on the screen as if they were in the same place as the player. That’s AR.
- 4 At the moment, AR appears to be winning the race for market share but Daniel Seidl is excited about VR.
- 5 Seidl is the managing director of Innoactive, a start-up offering virtual-reality solutions to companies in the retail and automotive sectors. He feels that VR could be a cost-effective way of training people. Imagine, he says, a company creating real-life scenarios in a safe virtual space, where workers can interact as if they were on a factory floor or on an oil rig. Using VR, trainers could guide them, step by step, and let them repeat actions as many times as they need, until they feel confident about doing a task. Nothing gets damaged, no one gets injured.

As Seidl talks about the potential of VR, attractive young people walk round the Innoactive office in Munich wearing headsets, smiling and laughing, immersed in virtual worlds. There’s pizza and beer for visitors and a chance to ask whether VR could be used to teach languages.

“Yes, it is possible to create a virtual reality-based training scenario helping and encouraging people around the world to learn new languages,” Seidl says. “In contrast to more traditional classroom training or e-learning programs, VR offers the opportunity to put both the teacher and the student in the same virtual world, allowing them to communicate and interact regardless of time and location,” he explains.

“Is virtual reality the future of online pornography?” That was the title of a BBC newsbeat article that began, “Without pornography, the internet as we know it today would not exist”. So will porn play a major role in VR development? Could the tools that Innoactive is working on be used by the creators of “adult entertainment”?

“We are not targeting this industry with our solutions, even though we do not know what people are going to do with our software,” Daniel Seidl says, adding: “You know, people are very creative ...”

Talking of creative, some say that all the world’s stories can be categorized into six types. One of these is “man in a hole”. A person falls into a hole and gets out again – that is the plot and it is the basis for all those romantic films in which someone gets into trouble before the happy ending. One day, when those headsets become a platform for Hollywood storytelling, VR will have a very happy ending.

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3 Understanding the article

Are these statements about the article true (T) or false (F)? Correct any that are false.

1. If you put on a virtual-reality headset at Innoactive in Munich, you can see attractive young people eating pizza and drinking beer.

2. Innoactive currently offers virtual-reality solutions to the oil industry.

3. Seidl believes it is only possible to learn languages via virtual reality if the teacher and student are in the same room.

4. Seidl says that virtual reality could provide a platform where people could safely learn and practise potentially dangerous work tasks.

5. Seidl knows exactly what people are going to do with Innoactive's software.

6. The author of the article thinks that, one day, we will watch films through virtual-reality headsets.

4 Useful phrases

a. Match the phrases with the meanings.

1. the idea is to

a. used when you are comparing two things and saying that the second one is very different from the first

2. at the moment

b. without being affected or influenced by anything else that happens or exists

3. in contrast to

c. now; currently

4. regardless of

d. the purpose of it is to

b. Find and underline the phrases in the article. What comes before and after them? Are they used at the beginning of a sentence or paragraph, or within a sentence?

c. Use the phrases in sentences of your own about the article.

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5 Discussion

- Could you imagine learning a language via VR or AR? What do you think the advantages and disadvantages might be?
- What other potential uses do you imagine VR and AR could have?

6 Research

- a. The author talks about the Fourth Industrial Revolution in paragraph 1. What is this? What does it involve? How will it change the way we work?
- b. What were the other industrial revolutions? How did they change the way people worked?
- c. Visit the Innoactive website www.innoactive.de/en/ to see people wearing the VR headsets and to learn more about the type of VR solutions the company offers.

