

# A methodology for Virtual Reality interfaces assessment in Civil Engineering Education

Fábio Dinis, João Poças Martins, Bárbara Rangel, Ana Sofia Guimarães  
Department of Civil Engineering  
FEUP  
Porto, Portugal  
fabiodinis@fe.up.pt

**Abstract** — The Architecture, Engineering, Construction and Operations (AECO) sector has been gradually experiencing developments in working practices and innovative Information Technology (IT) implementations [1]–[3]. Additionally, construction industry is recognized for being a multidisciplinary field, where several participants are actively involved in the project development [4]. To bridge the gap between technological implementation and user-performed operations, in recent years, new approaches have been tested. Indeed, research has been widely documenting potential benefits from the implementation of new methodologies and technological tools such as Immersive Virtual Reality (IVR) interfaces in the AECO sector and related fields [5]–[7]. These favorable outcomes are presented in several areas, such as Civil Engineering Education and Training [8]–[10]. Indeed, authors have stated benefits from the application of VR interfaces in Engineering learning scenarios [11]. However, there is a lack of common frameworks and methodologies to assess learning outcomes that may arise from the usage of IVR technologies in the particular case of Civil Engineering. Hence, the present document describes a methodology for the development of assessment tools to provide comparative, quantitative, and user-centered results in what regards learning outcomes from IVR. The methodology combines and builds upon similar research to assemble a conceptual map geared towards Civil Engineering and related fields of application.

**Keywords** — *Virtual Reality; Civil Engineering; Engineering Education; Engineering Training; Assessment*

## REFERENCES

- [1] A. A. Costa, P. M. Lopes, A. Antunes, I. Cabral, A. Grilo, and F. M. Rodrigues, “3I Buildings: Intelligent, Interactive and Immersive Buildings,” *Procedia Eng.*, vol. 123, pp. 7–14, January 2015.
- [2] G. P. Hancke, B. de C. e Silva, and G. P. Hancke Jr., “The Role of Advanced Sensing in Smart Cities,” *Sensors*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 393–425, 2013.
- [3] T.-H. Chuang, B.-C. Lee, and I.-C. Wu, “Applying Cloud Computing Technology To Bim Visualization and Manipulation,” *Iaarc*, pp. 1–6, 2011.
- [4] Y. Liu, S. van Nederveen, and M. Hertogh, “Understanding effects of BIM on collaborative design and construction: An empirical study in China,” *Int. J. Proj. Manag.*, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 686–698, May 2017.
- [5] D. Paes, E. Arantes, and J. Irizarry, “Immersive environment for improving the understanding of architectural 3D models: Comparing user spatial perception between immersive and traditional virtual reality systems,” *Autom. Constr.*, vol. 84, pp. 292–303, December 2017.
- [6] A. Kunz, M. Zank, M. Fjeld, and T. Nescher, “Real walking in virtual environments for factory planning and evaluation,” *Procedia CIRP*, vol. 44, pp. 257–262, 2016.
- [7] P. S. Dunston, L. L. Arns, J. D. Meglothlin, G. C. Lasker, and A. G. Kushner, “An Immersive Virtual Reality Mock-Up for Design Review of Hospital Patient Rooms,” in *Collaborative Design in Virtual Environments*, Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2011, pp. 167–176.
- [8] F. M. Dinis, A. S. Guimaraes, B. R. Carvalho, and J. P. P. Martins, “Development of virtual reality game-based interfaces for civil engineering education,” in *2017 IEEE Global Engineering Education Conference (EDUCON)*, pp. 1195–1202, April 2017.
- [9] T.-H. Wu, F. Wu, C.-J. Liang, Y.-F. Li, C.-M. Tseng, and S.-C. Kang, “A virtual reality tool for training in global engineering collaboration,” *Univers. Access Inf. Soc.*, pp. 1–13, December 2017.
- [10] B. Wang, H. Li, Y. Rezgui, A. Bradley, and H. N. Ong, “BIM Based Virtual Environment for Fire Emergency Evacuation,” *Sci. World J.*, vol. 2014, pp. 1–22, January 2014.
- [11] J. I. Messner and M. J. Horman, “Using Advanced Visualization Tools to Improve Construction Education,” in *Proceedings of CONVR 2003*, pp. 145–155, September 2003.

The authors acknowledge the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union under grant agreement number 2016-1-PT01-KA201-022986. The information and views set out in this article reflects only the author’s view and the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.