Through the eyes of Teachers or Students? Evaluating the Impact of Perspective Changing on a Smartphone VR Application for Teacher Training

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Introduction

- **Problem**
  - Lack of practical training in teaching professions
  - Theory-practice gap
  - Lack of mentoring
- **Solution**
  - Virtual Reality (VR) in teacher education can revolutionize the way teachers are trained and developed.

VR-based teacher training

- Under the VRTEACHER project a VR application was developed to enhance the personal and professional development of teachers.
- Use of participatory design to ensure that the VR application was user-friendly and met the needs of teachers in different educational contexts.
- 3 scenarios were developed
  1. Distance education and domestic verbal abuse
  2. Phobias related to COVID and panic attacks
  3. Refuge Students
- The VR application was pilot tested by more than 200 teachers in five different countries.
- Preliminary results validate the promise of the VR application, as a highly useful tool for teacher training.

Conclusions

- In all scenarios, the participants felt part of the virtual world and found their experience consistent with a real-world experience regardless of the perspective that they experienced.
- Entering the position of the student in all scenarios had an impact on the participants, allowing them to experience the scenarios through the eyes of their students, promoting empathetic behavior.

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