VIRTUAL REALITY WITH DISTRACTORS TO OVERCOME PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Dr. Emma Rodero and Dr. Olatz Larrea

INTRODUCTION

Virtual reality, Facilitating practice in a controlled virtual environment should be part of the curricula of educational institutions.

Public speaking, people with this phobia often suffer from an intense fear of social performance

OBJECTS AND METHODS

This study aims to implement a training program using Virtual Reality (VR) with distractors to reduce the college students' anxiety. Anxiety was measured with two methods: electrodermal activity and self-report. We also analyze gender differences.

Two tests (before and after VR training)
+
Mixed factorial design applied to two genders (male and female)
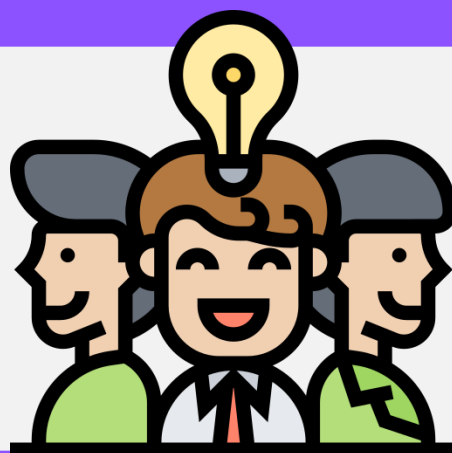
N=100 students

an experimental group (30 women and 20 men)

+

a control group (28 women and 22 men)

Instruments and procedures

- Script writing
- Psious Technology
- Bartholomay and Houlihan Public Speaking Anxiety Scale (2016)

CONCLUSIONS

The main contributions of this study were threefold

a) We demonstrate the effectiveness of a VR programme with distractors and questions to reduce students' anxiety.
b) We combined different methods, electrodermal activity (physiological response) and self-report (perception) to measure anxiety and achieve more reliable results.
c) We showed gender differences in public speaking anxiety, with male students showing higher levels and less reduction in the post-test.

Comunicar