Abstract

The purpose of this literature review is to determine the roles of animated agents in web-based distance education. The review was organized according to such themes as the structure and creation of animated agents, their cognitive and affective benefits, the importance of facial appearance and reality of animated agents in web-based distance learning and communication, and online animated agents. The instructional roles of animated agents were explored through a variety of experimental studies. The findings revealed that animated agents could take instructional roles such as a teacher, a mentor, a coach or an assistant in learning environments. Besides, multidisciplinary instructional environments enriched with animated agents could significantly contribute to the related literature in terms of the pedagogical outcomes they supply. The initiatives on the related context could be useful in order to fill the gap in Turkey. Therefore, it is suggested that animated agents should be integrated into web-based learning environments via considering the pedagogical elements in future studies.

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