

Virtual reality in Malaysian English as a second language learning: A systematic review and implications for practice and research

ABSTRACT

Virtual Reality (VR) technology was crucial in aiding remote teaching and learning session during the Covid-19 pandemic. Transitioning to the post pandemic era, VR technologies are deemed as a useful tool to facilitate learning. Several literature reviews have analysed and synthesized the use of VR in education; however, academic activity lacks a recent systematic literature review (SLR) on VR in the field of English as a Second Language Learning (ESL) in the context of Malaysian ESL learning. 13 scholarly manuscripts from 12 journals were retrieved from the year 2011 to 2021, analysed, and synthesized under the following focus: (a) VR technology utilized, the duration of educational activities, and the language learning settings in the Malaysian ESL context; (b) the possible benefits and drawbacks of adopting VR as a teaching tool in the Malaysian ESL classroom; (c) future directions regarding the educational use of VR. The study concluded that VR technologies encourage English language learning; intrinsically motivate pupils to learn; provide convenience for feedback and communication; practicality; and creates an enjoyable authentic classroom environment. However, challenges like lacks of technical support for practitioners; limited internet access; limited application designated for language learning; participants' unfamiliarity with VR; outdated software and/or hardware; and dearth number of research papers were also identified in this study. It is suggested that in the future, bigger-scale research on main language skills should be done; further research on VR technologies available; increase duration of study; research in other areas and levels of schools, and initiate more experimental studies.