Virtual Reality, Real Challenges: Lessons Learnt from a VR Deployment In-the-Wild

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Abstract

Virtual Reality (VR) offers immersive, experiential learning experiences in computing education, however, its successful integration in classrooms require navigating a range of practical organizational and pedagogical challenges. This poster presents insights drawn from post-hoc educator interviews, and researcher reflections, who collaboratively deployed an 'in-the-wild' VR-based lesson in a higher education IT Professional Practice course. Our findings highlight several planning, logistical and class orchestration aspects that influence VR integration, rarely captured in controlled VR studies. We also draw attention to the importance of research aspects such as establishing partnerships with teaching teams, being flexible with classroom dynamics, educator safety and iterative refinements for sustainable VR integration. These findings can provide practical guidance for computing educators and researchers seeking to implement or study VR in authentic contexts.

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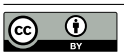
1 Introduction

As computing education increasingly prioritizes inclusive technology design [5], Virtual Reality (VR) promises immersive, experiential learning opportunities [1] that enable students to engage with diverse needs of users through embodied interactions [4] and perspective-taking [6] in digital simulated environments. While the educational potential of VR is well recognized, much of the evidence comes from controlled studies rather than *in-the-wild* [2], authentic classroom implementations [3].

To address this gap, we examine the practical realities of integrating VR into active computing classrooms, drawing on insights from educator interviews and researcher reflections on a recent VR deployment. We examine the question: **What lessons can be drawn from an *in-the-wild* VR deployment to plan, orchestrate and deliver authentic computing classroom experiences?**



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2 Findings

Educators reported that key planning tasks included equipment sourcing, curriculum alignment, staff training and configuring class space layouts for VR station setups. Educators also emphasized the importance of streamlined classroom workflows, starting with low-cost simulations and structured support for smooth in-class delivery. Several real class dynamics emerged during the lesson delivery such as staff coordination, VR workflow, and spatial and temporal constraints. Researcher insights include partnership-building with teaching teams, ensuring staff readiness, ethical considerations and iterative refinements for sustainable future VR deployments in higher education. Our poster presents the following key insights:

(1) An account of the **planning, logistics and orchestration** work involved in deploying VR in authentic classrooms.
(2) An account of the *in-the-wild* **classroom dynamics** that influenced VR delivery.
(3) **Lessons learnt** by the computing educators and researchers for future VR deployments.

We will also outline a **VR Integration Workflow for Authentic Classroom Contexts**, a four-stage process, including pre-integration alignment, preparation and capacity building, classroom orchestration, and post-integration reflection to plan pedagogically-aligned VR integration. The poster aims to spark discussions among educators and researchers on VR resource demands, classroom dynamics and integration challenges to support context-responsive strategies for effective VR deployment in real classrooms.

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