Editorial

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This issue concludes the third year of publishing of the International Journal of Serious Games. I am thankful to the associate editors and to the reviewers, who have believed in the project and that have made it possible, with their daily work, with no external funding.

The field of the serious games is now growing, both in terms of market and of academic solidity. And this growth has been thoroughly accompanied by the IJSG and by our publisher, the Serious Games Society (SGS). Its activity, ranging from scientific publications to day by day communication on the social networks, is nurturing a community of practitioners and researchers who are engaged in the challenge of developing compelling games with an instructional/training value. In December, the SGS organized the 5th edition of the Games and Learning Alliance (Gala) Conference. It has been a success, for quality and number of the participants, presented works, demos and tutorials. I am thankful to the chairs, Remco Veltkamp, Rosa Maria Bottino, Johan Jeuring, Jannicke Baalsrud-Hauge, Carolina Islas-Sedano, Francesco Bellotti, Riccardo Berta, Antonie Wiedemann, and to everyone who contributed to organizing the event. Best papers have already been selected and we look forward to the dedicated special issue that is expected for Sept 2017.

The present IJSG issue features five valuable papers that bring new, significant insights in the field, providing different perspectives.

"Personalization in Game Design for Healthcare: a Literature Review on its Definitions and Effects" [1] is a huge literature review on the goal of aligning a game to the preferences and capacities of the end-user, thereby increasing the end-user's motivation to interact with the game. The authors conclude that involving stakeholders in the Tailoring Phase is valuable. However, to know if personalization is effective in the Product Design- and the Problem Definition Phase, more studies, and of better quality, are needed.

"Elements Explaining Learning Clinical Reasoning Using Simulation Games" [2] presents an experiment on which elements in a game-based simulation affect learning clinical reasoning in nursing education. Results show that usability, application of nursing knowledge, and exploration have the most impact on learning clinical reasoning when playing simulation games. Findings also revealed that authentic patient-related experiences, feedback, and reflection have an indirect effect on learning clinical reasoning.

"Understanding the Role of Achievements in Game-Based Learning" [3] describes a series of studies to evaluate the effects of one potentially effective gaming strategy—achievements— on learning in a game designed to teach about health resources. Results indicated that while single achievements were not as potent in motivating performance, certainly when combined they produced measurable changes in behavior. They also provide important information regarding the optimal design of achievements in game-based health education.

"Digital Games and Learning Mathematics: Student, Teacher and Parent Perspective" [4] reports on a set of interviews on the potential use of digital games in learning mathematics at secondary school level in a developing country such as Malaysia. The interviews involved all the three main actors in education: students, parents and teachers. Analyzing the outcomes, the authors argue that a combination of classroom teaching and computer games might the best mathematics pedagogy.

"Player Experiences and Behaviors in a Multiplayer Game: designing game rules to change interdependent behavior" [5] presents an experiment aimed at generating knowledge on designing game elements, particularly rules, for teamwork. Results showed that different types of rules led to different player behavior, discriminating in game design between interaction- and goal-driven rules seems relevant. Moreover, the research showed that game theory proved to be useful for understanding goal-driven rules.

References

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