

## PhD studentship (Full-time)



Institution	Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China
Department	Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering
Supervisors	Principle supervisor: Hai-Ning Liang (Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University) Co-supervisor: Phil Jimmieson University of Liverpool, UK)
Application Deadline	Open until the position is filled
Funding Availability	Funded PhD project (world-wide students)
Project Title	VR Games for Second Language Acquisition 基于虚拟现实游戏技术的第二语言学习
Contact	Please email <a href="mailto:haining.liang@xjtlu.edu.cn">haining.liang@xjtlu.edu.cn</a> (principal supervisor's email address) and copy <a href="mailto:doctoralstudies@xjtlu.edu.cn">doctoralstudies@xjtlu.edu.cn</a> with a subject line of the PhD project title

### **Requirements:**

The candidate should have a first class or upper second class honours degree, or a master's degree (or equivalent qualification), in Computer Science or a closely related subject. The ideal candidate should have a strong interest in Human-Computer Interaction, gaming and VR technologies, and interaction design (e.g., experiment design, hypothesis testing, and data analysis). Evidence of good spoken and written English is essential. The candidate should have an IELTS score of 6.5 or above, or an equivalent qualification, if the first language is not English. This position is open to all qualified candidates irrespective of nationality.

### **Degree:**

The student will be awarded a PhD degree from the University of Liverpool (UK) upon successful completion of the program.

### **Funding:**

The PhD studentship is available for three years subject to satisfactory progress by the student. The award covers tuition fees for three years (currently equivalent to RMB 80,000 per annum) and provides a monthly stipend of 3500 RMB as a contribution to living expenses. It also provides up to RMB 16,500 to allow participation at international conferences during the period of the award. It is a condition of the award that holders of XJTLU PhD scholarships carry out 300-500 hours of teaching assistance work per year. The scholarship holder is expected to carry out the major part of his or her research at XJTLU in Suzhou, China. However,

he or she is eligible for a research study visit to the University of Liverpool of up to three months, if this is required by the project.

### **Project Description:**

Learning through games has become an important research topic. One area of particular interest within the subject is Second Language Acquisition (SLA). There have been many studies regarding the advantages of using games for teaching. However, a new technology that can expand the topic further has emerged in the form of immersive virtual reality (VR) headsets. There have been studies supporting the superiority of this type of VR systems over desktop-based learning on some subjects. Nevertheless, VR games for SLA is a topic that seems extremely promising, but with many open questions and very little research conducted at the moment. The primary aim of this work is to advance our knowledge of how to design and develop VR games for SLA. To achieve this aim, the project has two related objectives. First, there is a need to understand the principles that can underline the design of such games. Second, based on this understanding, we need to develop a set of games for second language learning to make the process efficient, enjoyable, and entertaining. The PhD student will have the potential to work with a company on this project.

For more information about doctoral scholarship and PhD programme at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU): Please visit

<http://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/admissions/phd/entry-requirements.html>

<http://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/admissions/phd/feesscholarships.html>

### **How to Apply:**

Interested applicants are advised to email [haining.liang@xjtlu.edu.cn](mailto:haining.liang@xjtlu.edu.cn) (principal supervisor's email address) the following documents and copy [doctoralstudies@xjtlu.edu.cn](mailto:doctoralstudies@xjtlu.edu.cn) (please put the project title in the subject line).

- CV
- Two reference letters with company/university letterhead
- Personal statement outlining your interest in the position
- Proof of English language proficiency (an IELTS score of above 6.5 or equivalent is required)
- Verified school transcripts in both Chinese and English (for international students, only the English version is required)
- Verified certificates of education qualifications in both Chinese and English (for international students, only the English version is required)

**Informal enquiries** may be addressed to Dr. Hai-Ning Liang ([haining.liang@xjtlu.edu.cn](mailto:haining.liang@xjtlu.edu.cn)), whose personal profile is linked below,

<http://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/departments/academic-departments/computer-science-and-software-engineering/staff/hai-ning-liang>