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Supervisor's contact details

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Title of the project

Telepresence robots in synchronous hybrid education

MSCA-PF Research Panel

☐ Chemistry (CHE)

☒ Social Sciences and Humanities (SOC)

☐ Economic Sciences (ECO)

☐ Information Science and Engineering (ENG)

☐ Environment and Geosciences (ENV)

☐ Life Sciences (LIF)

☐ Mathematics (MAT)

☐ Physics (PHY)

Description of the project

This opportunity is connected to an existing research project titled Telepresence robot mediated embodied interaction in hybrid language learning environments (Hybrid bodies), which is funded by the Academy of Finland (2021-2026). The project is based at the Department of English in the School of Languages and Translation Studies, and is part of the Centre for Language Learning Research (https://sites.utu.fi/kielen-oppimisen-tutkimuskeskus/en/). Telepresence robots are remote-controlled, mobile videoconferencing devices, and Hybrid bodies explores how they can be used to support possibilities for remote participation in classroom-based language education. The project studies telepresence robots in naturalistic environments by videorecording language lessons where they are used and analysing the video data using multimodal conversation analysis (CA). The aim is to increase understanding of the interactional possibilities and challenges of telepresence technologies.

We are looking for an MSCA Postdoctoral Fellow in Applied Linguistics or English studies with research expertise in language education, video-mediated teaching, and/or (multimodal) analysis of social interaction to investigate telepresence robots. The research to be undertaken by the MSCA Fellow may address any of the main research objectives of Hybrid bodies (see below) or build on and combine them in a meaningful way. We are particularly keen to encourage postdoctoral projects that may explore interactional practices

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in hybrid teaching or other professional meetings by using multimodal research perspectives. The MSCA Fellow can use the already collected dataset of Hybrid bodies for the duration of the fellowship and use the project's technological infrastructure to collect additional data. The applicant's precise research topic will be formulated in collaboration with the project supervisor Academy Research Fellow Teppo Jakonen.

Research objectives or research questions of the project

Video-mediated synchronous hybrid education and meetings have become considerably more prevalent in recent years. At the same time, hybrid activities involve considerable interactional challenges that relate to how technological platforms and tools can mediate a broad range of human social conduct, including embodied and multimodal resources such as gestures, movement, emoticons and other kinds of semiotic signs. Hybrid bodies examines the use of telepresence robots with a focus on i) interactional practices and asymmetries, ii) embodiment and multimodality, and iii) relevant pedagogical competences in hybrid language teaching.