

We are delighted to share the news that [Lewis Johnson \(AleloCEO\)](#) and [James Lester \(Distinguished Professor, North Carolina State University\)](#) have been honoured with the [IFAAMAS Influential Paper Award](#). You can read the paper from our website:

W. Lewis Johnson, Jeff W. Rickel, James C. Lester (2000)

[*Animated pedagogical agents: Face-to-face interaction in interactive learning environments*](#)

International Journal of Artificial Intelligence in Education, Volume 11, pages 47-78

IFAAMAS (the International Foundation for Autonomous Agents and Multiagent Systems) presents this award to "papers that have proved a key result, led to the development of a new subfield, demonstrated a significant new application or system, or simply presented a new way of thinking about a topic that has proved influential".

This work, by pioneers and leaders of AIED, has provided the foundation for a whole new way to frame innovative educational software. The article introduced and surveyed a new paradigm for interactive learning environments: animated pedagogical agents. The article argued for combining animated interface agent technologies with intelligent learning environments, yielding intelligent systems that can interact with learners in natural, human-like ways to achieve better learning outcomes. The concept has become an essential element of engaging, effective learning experiences. For example the first Marine battalion that returned from Iraq without any combat fatalities learned Arabic language and culture in an immersive Alelo game that was populated with pedagogical agents.

This award reflects the long and distinguished record of important research publications at IJAIED. I am sure the IAIED community will want to share my congratulations to Lewis and James on this well-deserved award.

Vincent Aleven and Judy Kay
editors-in-Chief, IJAIED