Learners' Attitudes and Expectations towards Digital Learning Paths

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Abstract : Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the sudden transfer to online teaching, teachers have struggled to reconstruct their teaching and learning materials to adapt them to the new reality of online teaching and learning. Consequently, the pupils' learning was disrupted during this orientation phase. Due to the above situation, teachers from all fields concluded that it is vital that their pupils should be able to continue their learning even without the teacher being physically present. Various websites and applications have been in use since then in hope that pupils will still enjoy a qualitative education; unfortunately, this was often not the case. To address this issue, it was therefore decided to focus the research on the development of digital learning paths. The fundamentals of these learning paths include the implementation of scenario-based learning (digital storytelling), the integration of media-didactic theory to make it pedagogically appropriate for learners, alongside instructional design knowledge and the drive to promote autonomous learners. This particular research is being conducted within the frame of the research project "Sustainable integration of subject didactic digital teaching-learning concepts" (InDiKo, 2020-2023), which is currently conducted at the University of Education Karlsruhe and investigates how pre-service teachers can acquire the necessary interdisciplinary and subject-specific media-didactic competencies to provide their future learners with digitally enhanced learning opportunities, and how these competencies can be developed continuously and sustainably. As English is one of the subjects involved in this project, the English Department prepared a seminar for the pre-service secondary teachers: "Media-didactic competence development: Developing learning paths & Digital Storytelling for English grammar teaching." During this seminar, the pre-service teachers plan and design a Moodle-based differentiated lesson sequence on an English grammar topic that is to be tested by secondary school pupils. The focus of the present research is to assess the secondary school pupils' expectations from an English grammar-focused digital learning path created by pre-service English teachers. The nine digital learning paths that are to be distributed to 25 pupils were produced over the winter and the current summer semester as the artifact of the seminar. Finally, the data to be quantitatively analysed and interpreted derive from the online questionnaires that the secondary school pupils fill in so as to reveal their expectations on what they perceive as a stimulating and thus effective grammar-focused digital learning path.

Keywords : digital storytelling, learning paths, media-didactics, autonomous learning
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