Learning Language through Story: Development of Storytelling Website Project for Amazighe Language Learning

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Abstract : Every culture has its share of a rich history of storytelling in oral, visual, and textual form. The Amazigh language, as many languages, has its own which has entertained and informed across centuries and cultures, and its instructional potential continues to serve teachers. According to many researchers, listening to stories draws attention to the sounds of language and helps children develop sensitivity to the way language works. Stories including repetitive phrases, unique words, and enticing description encourage students to join in actively to repeat, chant, sing, or even retell the story. This kind of practice is important to language learners' oral language development, which is believed to correlate completely with student's academic success. Today, with the advent of multimedia, digital storytelling for instance can be a practical and powerful learning tool. It has the potential in transforming traditional learning into a world of unlimited imaginary environment. This paper reports on a research project on development of multimedia Storytelling Website using traditional Amazigh oral narratives called "tell me a story". It is a didactic tool created for the learning of good moral values in an interactive multimedia environment combining on-screen text, graphics and audio in an enticing environment and enabling the positive values of stories to be projected. This Website developed in this study is based on various pedagogical approaches and learning theories deemed suitable for children age 8 to 9 year-old. The design and development of Website was based on a well-researched conceptual framework enabling users to: (1) re-play and share the stories in schools or at home, and (2) access the Website anytime and anywhere. Furthermore, the system stores the students work and activities over the system, allowing parents or teachers to monitor students' works, and provide online feedback. The Website contains following main feature modules: Storytelling incorporates a variety of media such as audio, text and graphics in presenting the stories. It introduces the children to various kinds of traditional Amazigh oral narratives. The focus of this module is to project the positive values and images of stories using digital storytelling technique. Besides development good moral sense in children using projected positive images and moral values, it also allows children to practice their comprehending and listening skills. Reading module is developed based on multimedia material approach which offers the potential for addressing the challenges of reading instruction. This module is able to stimulate children and develop reading practice indirectly due to the tutoring strategies of scaffolding, self-explanation and hyperlinks offered in this module. Word Enhancement assists the children in understanding the story and appreciating the good moral values more efficiently. The difficult words or vocabularies are attached to present the explanation, which makes the children understand the vocabulary better. In conclusion, we believe that the interactive multimedia storytelling reveals an interesting and exciting tool for learning Amazigh. We plan to address some learning issues, in particularly the uses of activities to test and evaluate the children on their overall understanding of story and words presented in the learning modules.

Keywords : Amazigh language, e-learning, storytelling, language teaching