公務出國或赴大陸地區報告提要

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>出國或赴大陸地區報告名稱：</th>
<th>「Virtual English village: A task-based English learning platform in Second Life」之論文發表</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>出國計畫主辦機關：</td>
<td>臺北市萬福國民小學</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>聯絡人：</td>
<td>邱雅莉  電話：29353123/111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>出國人員姓名/服務機關/單位/職稱/電話</td>
<td>邱雅莉/ 臺北市萬福國民小學/ 教務處/教務主任/ 2935-3123 轉 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>魏孝軒/ 臺北市萬福國民小學/ 英語情境中心/ 代理教師兼英語情境中心主任/ 2935-3123 轉 166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>出國類別：</td>
<td>其他</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 出席國際會議  □ 2 表演  □ 3 比賽  □ 4 競技  □ 5 洽展  □ 6 海外檢測</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>個人名義受邀之教育活動：</td>
<td>日本奈良舉辦的第二十二屆資訊教育會議 (22nd International Conference on Computers in Education, ICCE 2014)之論文發表</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>出國期間：</td>
<td>103/11/29 ~ 103/12/05 報告日期：104/01/05 出國地區：日本奈良</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

內容摘要說明：

臺北市萬福國民小學教務邱雅莉主任及情境中心魏孝軒主任，參與於日本奈良舉辦的第二十二屆資訊教育會議 (22nd International Conference on Computers in Education, ICCE 2014)。主要進行萬福國小與臺灣師範大學共同做的研究「Virtual English village: A task-based English learning platform in Second Life」之論文發表，以及與國際資訊教育的教授或老師做交流。

機關首長同意公假前往，課務自理，全程完全自費。

一、研究緣起

1. 因應未來全球化必然趨勢，萬福國小積極爭取成為臺北市文山區英語情境中心，透過國際與本土文化課程的設計，讓學生在寓教於樂的環境中，學習英文。
2. 考慮到學生於情境中心學習之後，後續的延伸學習與加強學習成效的問題，遂考慮臺灣師範大學藍玉如教授所主導的 Second Life 虛擬情境是否能應用於英語學習上面。
3. 雙方進行為期半年的合作研究，由英語情境中心所編寫的幾套課程，放置於Second Life的虛擬網路情境中。學生可以藉由觸碰Second Life虛擬網路情境的物件，預習、複習所學的單字，並且藉由操作虛擬人物，進行角色會話練習。
4. 萬福國小與師大完成此項論文研究後，論文（見附件一）獲得ICCE接受，於日本奈良發表。

二、ICCE 2014會議

1. 會議內容： 資訊融入教學會議
2. 會議日期：103年11月29日(六)至103年12月5日(五)實施，共計7天6夜。
3. 會議地點：日本奈良。
4. 行程活動: 發表論文、意見交流。

三、心得感想與收穫

1. 發表研究論文，除了分享萬福國小英語教學的努力成果之外，也與會中的教授、研究者、及教育工作者交流。
2. 吸取其他國家研究單位的資訊融入教育研究成果及想法，納為往後學校課程教學之參考。
3. 與Hakusan International School的校長聯繫，取得兩校學生進一步交流的共識。
Virtual English village: A task-based English learning platform in Second Life

Yu-Ju LAN\textsuperscript{a*}, Hsiao-Hsuan WEI\textsuperscript{b} & Ya-Li CHIU\textsuperscript{b}

\textsuperscript{a} National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan
\textsuperscript{b} Wanfu Elementary School, Taipei, Taiwan

*yujulan@gmail.com

Abstract: The purposes of the current study are to develop a virtual English learning village for elementary EFL learners in Taiwan to allow them to learn English beyond the regular school schedule. Four learning contexts were developed and used by 117 EFL learners from an elementary school in Taipei City for around 5 months. Learners’ motivation of learning English via executing language tasks in this virtual village were evaluated through questionnaire administration. The results reveal learners’ positive perception of the English learning mode as proposed in this study. Thus, a task-based English platform in virtual worlds can be a potential solution to the problems of the lack of authentic contexts nowadays in the traditional EFL settings, and consequently is able to provide elementary-school EFL learners with an immersive environment for building authentic experiences.

Keywords: Virtual worlds, task-based learning, English as a foreign language (EFL), English village

1. Introduction

In the digital era, English is regarded as an international language to which IT is widely applied in various fields around the world. In non-English-speaking countries, such as Taiwan, English proficiency is highly valued as a requisite feature of participating competitively in the international community (Lan, Sung, & Chang, December 2009). Traditionally, Taiwanese students often learn and practice English in static and old classroom activities, instead of learning from genuine or real world simulations of daily life. More and more teachers or scholars believe that a scenario environment is a pivotal component necessary for the acquisition of language (Lan, 2014). A meaningful language must be learned in conjunction with society, culture and personally relevant life experiences (Hedberg & Alexander, 1994; Krashen, 1981).

From this ideological frame of references, 12 elementary schools in Taipei City are selected and supported by the Taipei City Government to establish active and kinesthetic learning environment which is called \textit{English Village}, hoping that children can begin to dream of a life with a broader and more global perspective. The 12 chosen schools designed the English Villages based on the consideration following specific pedagogical purposes of their own schools. However, similar topics such as airport, local culture, restaurant, post office, hospital, etc. could be found in different Villages owned by different elementary schools. Typically, each English Village is not only used by the students of the elementary school with that Village, but it is also visited by the students from all the elementary schools located nearby in the same educational...
district due to the limited amount of government budget to support every school to own its own English Village. One obvious problem has been encountered since the Village is established: the lack of opportunity for students to preview the skills needed in experiencing the Village before visiting the setting or reviewing what they have learned or experienced in the setting.

The purposes of this study were to develop and evaluate an authentic learning environment in virtual worlds (Second Life, SL) which aim at providing all the students from the participating or other elementary schools with an immersive environment to pre- and review the materials embedded in the Village they visit in the real world. The methods are briefly described below, followed by the results and the conclusion.

2. Methods

2.1 Participants

117 students from an elementary school having an English Village (Wanfu English Sky Castle, WESC) in Taipei City, with three learning classrooms (the airport, the world style setting, and the setting with the local culture theme), participated in this study. They came to computer lab, logged in the virtual Village to preview or review what they would or had learned in WESC both before and after they visited the setting.

2.2 Research Design

A qualitative research design was adopted in the study. Students’ perception of English learning in SL was administered and analysed to determine what the participating elementary school learners thought about learning English in such a virtual village.

2.3 Instruments

2.3.1 Usability Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this study was revised from what was developed by Lan (2014). 22 items of 4-point Likert Scale belonging to 4 dimensions (pragmatic, ease to use, and ease to learn, and satisfaction) are included in the questionnaire to determine the participants’ perceptions of English learning in the virtual village.

2.3.2 Virtual English Village in SL

Four learning contexts aimed at providing students with learning scenarios identical to what they experienced in the real English Village (WESC) were developed in Second Life. The contexts include (1) an international airport for learning check-in and passport control, (2) a ring toss game for learning to play the game in a traditional night market in Taiwan, (3) a food court in a night market for learning the names of foods and sentences used for ordering foods in a night market, and (4) a restaurant for learning to order food in a restaurant. Figures 1 and 2 show the real and virtual contexts in WESC and SL used in this study, respectively.
2.3 Procedure

The study lasted for around 5 months. Each topic was learned for one month, plus another month for trainings on SL operation and questionnaire administration. At the beginning, all the students received the training on using SL, such as
moving their avatars, clicking virtual objects, and answering questions in SL. Then all the participating students went to the computer lab once a week to learn the vocabulary words and sentences needed in experiencing the real English Village in their school. Three-stage activities were designed for guiding students to learn the target materials: firstly, learning vocabulary words by clicking the objects in SL; secondly, learning sentences by listening to the demonstration given by the non-player character (NPC); and thirdly, learning to communicate with the NPC via choosing correct responses. All the learning activities in each stage are self-directed. Besides, students will receive feedback from the system while practicing the conversation. They will be also given rewards from the system for having completed the learning targets. After all the learning stage is completed, a usability questionnaire was administered to all the participants for understanding their perception of the learning mode in SL.

3. Results

Table 1 lists the descriptive results of the usability questionnaire. Based on the data listed in Table 1, it is found that all the dimensions of the questionnaire got pretty high scores from students’ responses (above 3 out of 4) and very low standard deviation (less than .01).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Scores (N=117)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatic</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease to use</td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease to learn</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the Mean and SD obtained from all the respondents as listed in Table 1, it is also found that for each item of the questionnaire, near 90 percent of the participants expressed that they extremely agree or agree with it that learning English in the virtual contexts in SL benefited their English learning.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The primary mission of the English Villages is *environmental stewardship, curriculum integration, and a sampling of global cultures*. Using varied subject matters and pedagogies, the English Village aims to develop a variety of lesson formats that can be adapted to the needs of diverse learning styles of elementary school children in keeping with contemporary theories of multiple types of intelligence. By incorporating virtual contexts in virtual worlds into the physical English Village, learning is enhanced by the self-directed and task-based learning platform without special or temporal limitations.

The results of this study are in line with many of the previous TBA researches in SL contexts (e.g., Ellis, 2003; Deutschmann et al., 2009; Grant, 2008; Jee, 2011; Lan, 2014; Nunan, 2004). SL combines network connectivity and virtual reality, providing users with a virtual yet “real” environment in which they can interact socially with others via resident avatars (James, 2005). According to Burdea (1993), a virtual environment consists of three essential features:
immersion, imagination, and interaction. Cooke-Plagwitz (2008) suggested that an environment such as SL can inspire language learners to reach learning goals without losing interest or motivation.

Based on the positive results obtained from the current study, it is suggested that virtual learning contexts should be included in regular EFL syllabus for providing elementary school EFL learners with an authentic and immersive English learning which has higher flexibility, lower costs and fewer limitations.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the Ministry of Science and Technology, Taiwan, R.O.C., for financially supporting this research under Grant Nos. NSC 101-2511-S-003-031-MY3 and MOST 103-2628-S-003-002-MY3. They are also thankful that this research is partially supported by the “Aim for the Top University Project” and “Center of Learning Technology for Chinese” of National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU), sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Taiwan, R.O.C., the “International Research-Intensive Center of Excellence Program” of NTNU and the Ministry of Science and Technology, Taiwan, R.O.C. under Grant No. NSC 103-2911-I-003-301.

References


附件二：照片

照片 1:

左起：師大籃玉如教授、萬福國小邱雅莉主任、萬福國小英語情境中心魏孝軒主任，於 ICCE (International Conference on Computer in Education) 之會場前合影。

照片 2:

萬福國小邱雅莉主任與情境中心魏孝軒主任於會場報到處合影。
照片 3:

萬福國小英語情境中心魏孝軒主任於會中報告研究論文及成果

照片 4:

與會學者、教師提問，雙方進行交流。
師大籃玉如教授、萬福國小邱雅莉主任、萬福國小英語情境中心魏孝軒主任，參與 ICCE (International Conference on Computer in Education) 之開幕會議。

師大籃玉如教授、萬福國小邱雅莉主任、萬福國小英語情境中心魏孝軒主任，參與 ICCE (International Conference on Computer in Education) 之茶會與學者互動討論。