

Localisation Education Teaching Aid Toolkit

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Localisation is the adaptation of digital content to a target combination of language and culture, called locale. We present an educational programme which encourages children to appreciate the cultural and linguistic diversity of the world. The Localisation Research Centre at the University of Limerick, the Curriculum Design Unit at Mary Immaculate College and the Centre for Next Generation Localisation develop a Primary School Localisation Toolkit.

This toolkit provides a safe collaborative environment for students to interact with each other and to learn about multicultural awareness topics such as dancing, food, clothing, etc. Each teacher is given a variety of administration tools and is responsible for creating student accounts, setting up class lists, and selecting the educational games which the pupils can access; this provides security to the toolkit.

The toolkit is a web-aware desktop application with a plugin architecture allowing new modules to be added as the platform matures. We are encapsulating the lessons taught at the "Irish Centre for Talented Youth" along with other topics relevant to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) primary school curriculum into a variety of educational games. This allows us to reach a larger audience and provide a more engaging experience for the pupils. Teachers will also be provided with offline material relating to these topics such as posters, workbooks, and videos to aid the learning process.

In July 2009 we ran a primary course called "Japanese Language Culturally Localising Web Pages" at the Irish Centre for Talented Youth and this gave us inspiration for our educational toolkit. In this course, pupils were introduced to the sets of Japanese characters, the basic concepts of localisation, and website creation. Nintendo websites which are designed for global audiences were used as an example to teach the localisation concept, for example, the differences in the measurement system and the different names of the game characters between the English and the Japanese website. Moreover, drawing a bus and a beach was used in order to experience cultural diversity. We also addressed issues why one part of region on earth is called Middle East and another Far East; Japanese pupils wonder why Japan is Far East when it is located in the middle of "their" world map.

The toolkit also helps pupils acquire a second language more effectively when they are aware of the cultural differences between their native language and a foreign language. We believe that learning language and culture-related aspects from the point of localisation is essential and that this interactive educational toolkit is an effective way to teach the next generations of students.

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