Tablet/Mobile Enabled Interactive Multimedia Application for CAL Programme

Background

The importance of teaching and learning of any foreign language has long been recognized and acknowledged in cultural diversity of India. The major components of learning any foreign language are reading, writing, speaking (communication), and listening skills for various levels (beginners to advanced). Unlike many academic disciplines, learning a language is challenging from the word go. From the beginning, language learners face unrecognizable letters and words, unfamiliar sounds, translations and explanations based on grammar, etc. On top of this it is expected from the learners to actually say something, and write. In this context the emerging ICT enabled technologies, especially mobile applications, offers a gamut of opportunities to support language learners to enrich the language teaching, and enhance the quality and effectiveness of learning. The technology part of a language learning course mainly consists of audio lessons, mobile and online learning and hands-on practice tools, and live speaking practice.

This concept is based on the discussions held with the Vice Chancellor and faculty of School of Foreign Languages, as regarding providing innovative technological solutions to the School of Foreign Language, taking Arabic language as a pilot case. Thus, NCIDE in collaboration with School of Foreign Languages developed a prototype for providing innovative technological solutions for teaching learning Arabic as a foreign language. The entire work from planning, identification of resources, instructional design, development and implementation of the above mentioned material was done by the coordinators of the project.

Need of the Innovation

Language is basically a medium of expression. In the 21st century in view of globalization it has become a necessity to learn a foreign or second language to communicate with the outside world. Learners need scaffolding to learn a foreign language. They are required to be engaged in active learning. The major components which were identified by us regarding learning Arabic as a foreign language included :

- reading,
- writing,
- speaking (communication), and
- listening skills for various levels (beginners to advance).

However, it was observed that there are certain challenges in learning Arabic as a foreign language. Some of them are given below :

- Unrecognizable letters and words,
- unfamiliar sounds,
- translations,
- grammar explanations.

Thus, in order to meet the above challenges of learning a foreign language and to ensure that all the components of learning Arabic as a foreign language are covered, NCIDE in collaboration with SOFL designed and developed an interactive multimedia rich game based multi-platform enabled content for Certificate Programme in Arabic Language.

Description of the Innovation

ICT enabled Language Learning (ICTeLL) has always been in the fore front since the inception of ICTs in education as far as foreign language learning is concerned. In today's world ICTeLL is an integrated system that combines interactive radio, interactive TV, computer, ubiquitous devices for delivering instruction and interactive multimedia content, by integrating audio-visual effects while presenting the material and storing the same, which adds more power to traditional Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) programs. Because of the features such as learner control, instant feedback, and use of authentic materials, ICTeLL provides learners with an environment that can satisfy the needs for exploration, manipulation, stimulation, knowledge to resolve problems, and self-enhancement.
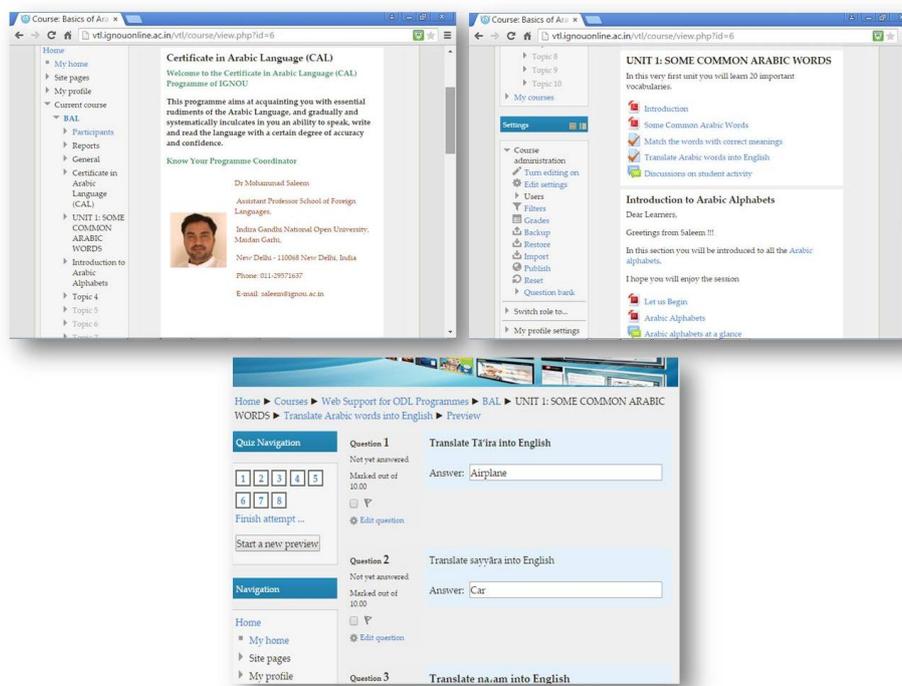

Figure 1 : Components of Web Support Accessible on Desktops, Smart TV/IP TV, Smartphone and Tabs

Innovative Features

The innovative features of the mobile enabled interactive multimedia rich programme are given below :

- It has learner-centred design.
- Each section will have a large number of structured components with built-in animations, practice exercises which will enable the learner to acquire Arabic reading, writing and communication skills effectively.
- There is a provision of E- Mentor.
- There is online access to Arabic Programme e-content with interactivity.
- It includes collaborative tools like Chat Sessions, Discussion forums, Blogs.

- It has provision of Learner Management.
- It has a provision of learner Authentication including free and paid learners
- Learning Analytics.
- Mobile Enabled Teaching Learning of Arabic language includes
  a. Mobilets
  b. Interactive Multimedia games
  c. Access from mobile to the Learning Management system
  d. Interactive package for tabs

Figure 2 : Mobile Application – Interactive Package for Smartphone/Tab

Achievements

A Prototype of ICT enabled highly interactive eLearning material including games was developed in-house by the faculty. The model (See Figure 4) and prototype was also presented in national and international workshop as an example of foreign language learning using ICTs. As the product is at the stage of prototype development it was tested among the students, professionals and teachers involved in teaching learning of Arabic. The prototype of the product was appreciated by everyone.
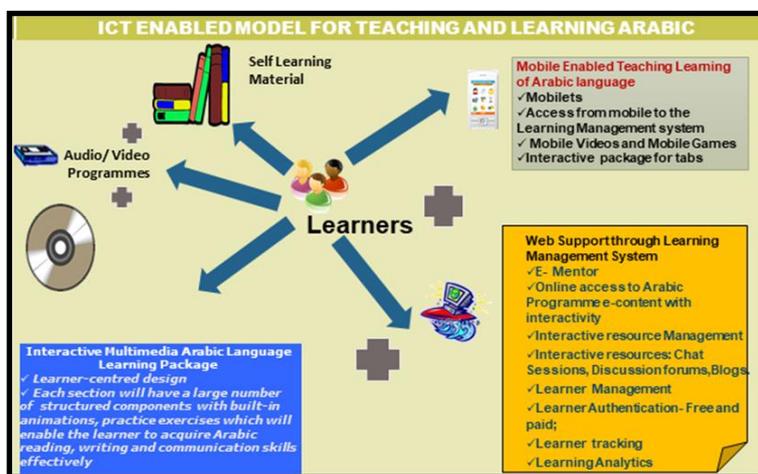

**Figure 4 : ICT Enabled Model for Teaching and
Learning Arabic as a Foreign Language**

Applications and Uses of Innovation

In fact on the same pattern a dedicated portal was also created for teaching and learning of Russian language and Functional English. Some of the screens of the application are shared in Figure 3 below :

Figure 3 : Future Prospects

Way Forward

The pedagogy, methodology and technology of the prototype developed can be scaled up to provide a platform for other foreign languages.

Coordinators and Innovators

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