DEVELOPING THE JAPANESE INSTRUCTIONAL MOVIE ARCHIVE USING JOOMLA

Heather Tillberg-Webb, Northern Virginia Community College, htillberg@nvcc.edu
Takako Shigehisa, Northern Virginia Community College, tshigehisa@nvcc.edu

Abstract: *Japanese I.M.A.* (Japanese Instructional Movie Archive) is a developing website that introduces Japanese learners to culturally relevant film clips with rich contextual use of language to aid in learning Japanese. These clips are augmented with learning activities and supplemental materials related to each film clip. The focus of this paper is the technical and instructional design decision-making process through the adaptation of Joomla as a content management system to organize these materials.
Keywords: movie, film, culture, content management, Joomla

INTRODUCTION

Japanese I.M.A., (Japanese Instructional Movie Archive-http://www2.nvcc.edu/japanese/ima) is a developing website of film clips in the original Japanese along with supplemental instructional materials. *Japanese I.M.A.* was conceptualized to explore the instructional uses of culturally relevant video clips posted on the site and the instructional rationale for the redesign of the site using Joomla for site management. As the technical aspects of how to design the site come together, our future questions will focus on the issue of building Japanese language learning community surrounding these resources.

DISCUSSION

The concept of Japanese IMA is rooted in research that video demonstrates rich contextual use of language that motivates students to learn a new language (Ryan, 1998; Shawback & Terhune, 2002); and aids in the development of both listening comprehension (Secules, Herron, & Tomasello, 1992) and cultural understanding from visual cues (Swaffar & Vlatten, 1997). Japanese language movies provide opportunities to view authentic interaction and dialogue between native speakers using verbal and body language. Students then must focus on the cultural implication of the dialogue. The story and visual context of the movie aid students offer a real context in which to apply vocabulary building.

The rationale for the archive was to supply Japanese language learners with video materials from popular films for class. The clips on the archive site are short, generally 30 seconds maximum, and focus on the particular theme selected by the instructor. As a web-based tool, students can view the scene as much as they like within a space where they feel comfortable. Further, Japanese students can contribute to the content on the site. Our pilot of student-created content in a Japanese anime elective course will further inform the efficacy of student involvement with the site.

Moving from the concept to the realities of development illuminated both pedagogical and technical concerns. These issues were reciprocal: By choosing Joomla as the content management system, the pedagogical planning was accordingly shaped and constrained. Though our concerns about instructional objectives were foremost, these were often simultaneously crafted by technical and logistical concerns.

Principally, we need a site that could easily be password protected. Secondly, we sought user logins that allowed varied functionality, so that users could submit their own

content. After examining a number of content management options, we chose Joomla as a platform in which to house the site. In addition to our required functionality, the appeal of Joomla's end-user interface was a deciding factor. Additional features can be added to Joomla, thus allowing us to embed flash video (with xevid-mambot) and create bilingual content and menus as appropriate. One limitation of Joomla is an inability to cross-label content, which we compensated for with the add-on Mosets Tree, which allows cross-labeling of content items. Trade-offs in functionality and thus instructional aims shifted with each new add-on considered. Also, the complexity of the administrator functions of Joomla demanded a steep learning curve. Working with these constraints eventually led to the following configuration of content as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1

As Figure 1 illustrates, each video module contains an embedded short video clip(1), underneath which is the transcript of the Japanese dialogue (2); and the final item is a link (3) that takes the user to a directory of all activities associated with that video clip. Within the directory of learning activities, contributors can add additional resources relevant to the movie clip.

CONCLUSION

Though still under development, Japanese I.M.A. promises to have the potential to help motivate learners to help them improve their language skills and at the same time create a community around building resources relevant to Japanese language and culture that will aid Japanese instructors and students of all levels.

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