MAaV – an appliance for Adult Musicalization

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Abstract: MAaV appliance presentation, used to teach musical theory and perception to Elementary teachers who are music illiterate, in the Music Licentiate Course of Rio Grande do Sul’s Federal University (UFRGS) and Associated Universities, linked to the Pro-Licentiate Program of MEC (PROLICENMUS), in distance modality moderated by internet. This text also maps the components and describe MAaV interface available in http://www.caef.ufrgs.br/produtos/maav.

Keywords: Classroom of tomorrow, Learning management system, Net communities, Teacher education, Tools for learning.

1. The method in its context

The MAaV method (Wöhl-Coelho, 1990; Nunes, 2003) was created in a presentational context. After more than a decade of utilization and didactical-pedagogical progressive improvements, the research group responsible for its development (Borges & Schramm, 2003; Borges, 2005; Borges & Nunes, 2008) decided to bring it to the virtual learning environment context, motivated by challenges that appeared in the Musicalization to Elementary teachers, offered by UFRGS. Such courses were taken through distance modality and using the internet, in the field of teacher's formation at programmes from the Brazil's Ministry of Education (MEC/UFRGS, 2004 and 2005).

The work has been developed in a multidisciplinary team of pedagogues, musicologists, programmers and web designers. Its broadcast is, formally, by the internet; however it can count on teaching tutors, present in the centers, helping the students with the use of the tool and in the music subject. So, beyond the music-pedagogical foundation, technology limitations should be considered in the appliance development and implementation, like available computers, internet capacity and the target group’s digital inclusion level (Krüger, 2003; Fritsch, 2003; Rodrigues, 2006).
During the last eight years of research and development of MAav, the work group used several authoring softwares, aiming to obtain all the specific effects there are today, as Finale, Cubase, Word, Final Cut, properly orchestrated in Flash and with procedures written in ActionScript Flash. Technically, it is still a multimedia tool in a website form, containing the functionalities Scores, Analytical Cards, Synoptical Board and Exercises. Pedagogically speaking, it has its foundation in the Multimodal Approach (Verhaalen, 1987 APUD Nunes, 2005) and pertinent ideas to CAEF’s pedagogical principles (Rangel et alii, 2005), also promoting own interactions (Nunes, 2005).

2. The Appliance Components

Didactically, MAaV is structured in four models:

1) Score – Score Visualizer and editor in ActionScript Flash, which usage is allowed in any browser with Flash plug-in installed. For the scores’ new generation, a plug-in capable to import Music XML format was also developed. In this functionality, it is also possible to play (choosing one or more written voices) and print the available play.

2) Exercises – Recombining component group, developed in Flash, which makes the creation of new exercises easier, in ways of crosswords, multiple choice questions, blank-filling, etc, allowing the addition of multimedia resources. The previous construction of individual files with a posterior collocation in the templates maximizes the available resources. In these, there is a right or wrong feedback, and such results are sent to a database, building the performance record of each student.

3) Analytical Cards – Each part of the music analytic card admits new components (scores, videos, pictures, etc) addition. Each one is built using the respective authoring programs, saved in SWF and imported to the card models.

4) Synoptical Board – A map that links all the content in the appliance, and making the global visualization of the whole possible, and at the same time, fast and direct access to each selected topic. This way, the student can find topics of interest, without losing the whole sense and navigation (Tarouco, 2003).

3. First Results and Evaluation

The first academic period using MAaV as virtual learning object occurred from april 22 to december 22 2008. The target-population was formed by 648 teachers working in primary education without specific training and titration in Music, all students of the PROLICENMUS course, registered in 11 presential unit education
in five different regions of Brazil. Out of these 648 studentes, 77% have computers at home, but only 65% have Internet conexion, what for many need to go to the presential unit education in order to have access to the Study Units. Asked about the difficulties faced in understanding the presented contentes, 50% of the studentes stated that it is very dificult, 34%, that is normal, and 16% that it is easy. The final evaluation of the first year assessed a average rate of approval of 80,5%.

3. Some final considerations and conclusion

The user can freely navigate over the functionalities already available, using them or not, according to his option and specific necessities. The orientations are available like a Study Units in the Moodle Platform, in learning environments properly adapted to different demands. Together, Study Units and MAaV are what we could classify as associated websites, prepared by teachers and tutors settled in the university. MAav interface was created to be friendly and self-understandable, being explicit to the student what he is studying in each moment and where it is, in the site general map. Oriented by the Study Universities already referred to or chosen individually by each student, the navigation can happen by theme, content depth and functionalities, establishing different combinations among them. The navigation option, however, is essential in the learning process. Due to it, the menus are permanently exposed, in the screen borders in such a way that the student can keep control of everything and follow his own path. This format assures greater freedom and a larger participation of the student in the learning process, showing evidences of a procedure adequacy in each one’s possibilities and cognitive reality. The aim is to bring a self-sufficient software, a virtual object of learning and teaching independent and with permanent maximization possibilities. Its initial success obtained justified its inclusion as a teaching material in the other music courses in Brazil.

References


