

**Kung Bakit Walang Buto at Tinik ang Pugita:
The Development of a Multimedia Storybook in Filipino**

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Abstract

Filipino educators and policy-makers observe that there is a dearth of Filipino- and Philippine-related computer based learning materials. While instructional software for math, science, and English abound, software for the teaching and learning of the Filipino language and Filipino social studies is limited.

In the second semester of school year 2002-2003, two of the CS 175 Introduction to Multimedia classes of the Ateneo de Manila University created a collection of interactive multimedia Filipino myths and legends for the Ateneo Grade School. The projects serve two purposes: to partially fulfil the requirements for successful completion of CS 175 and to add to the available materials for Filipino teaching and learning.

The development process began with the selection of the story. Students were required to submit a photocopy of the story that they were going to adapt into a multimedia storybook. It was made clear to them that the story had to be a bonafide Filipino myth or legend. Students had to submit a script of the adaptation and a storyboard showing key frames of major scenes. Students were also required to indicate the multimedia elements they were using. The projects were implemented using Macromedia Flash. A total of 12 storybooks were submitted, representing the work of 50 students. were constructed over a period of six weeks.

This paper discusses the development process that the students followed in order to produce the storybooks. The paper examines the development process of one storybook in particular: *Kung Bakit Walang Buto at Tinik ang Pugita*.

For the purposes of the CS 175 course, the group was able to successfully use Flash to create an engaging and imaginative storybook. They made use of a variety of media elements, most notably graphics, text, and sound. Interactivity was generally limited to navigation. Although the group was not able to insert voice narration, the final output

showed sufficient mastery of Flash to merit an above average grade for this particular course requirement.

A presentation to representatives of the target audience was successful. The sample audience was able to understand the storyline and found the presentation format entertaining.

The module was also presented to a group of grade school Filipino teachers. The teachers recognized the potential of the module. They believed that it and other modules like it could be used for motivation, for the lesson proper, or for drills and practice.

The authors recommend that similar endeavors be undertaken with closer coordination with the Filipino teachers. It would also benefit future developers and teachers if the current storybooks were tested with an actual Filipino class.

Context

The Filipino Department of the Ateneo de Manila Grade School aims study and eventually implement the integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in classroom instruction. The Filipino teachers believe that computer-based instructional modules will help remove the stigma that Filipino is a “boring” subject. The use of multimedia materials may help students see Filipino as a language and culture that are dynamic, changing, adaptable, fast-paced, modern, and therefore, exciting.

Problem

However, Filipino educators and policy-makers observe that there is a dearth of Filipino- and Philippine-related computer based learning materials. While instructional software for math, science, and English abound, software for the teaching and learning of the Filipino language and Filipino social studies is limited.

In the second semester of school year 2002-2003, two of the CS 175 Introduction to Multimedia classes of the Ateneo de Manila University created a collection of interactive multimedia Filipino myths and legends for the Ateneo Grade School. The purpose of CS 175 is to introduce students to the tools and techniques for creating and evaluating text, graphics, sound, animation, and video.

In line with the course objectives, students must successfully complete several multimedia projects: posters, photographs, videos, and animated features. The multimedia storybook was the animated feature assigned for this particular term. The project served two purposes: to partially fulfill the requirements for successful completion of CS 175 and to add to the available materials for Filipino teaching and learning.

Relationship to Curricular Goals

The use of multimedia, interactive storybooks is consistent with the Filipino curriculum's content and methodologies. In terms of content, the Filipino curriculum includes anything related to Filipino culture: heritage, language, traditions, beliefs, and history.

In terms of methodology, reading activities help students achieve the different levels of reading and understanding: literal meaning, comprehension, critical thinking, creation of new concepts, value for knowledge and skills. The teachers expose students to different forms of literature such as short stories, poetry, essays, biographies, narrative accounts, fables, legends, and folklore.

Objectives of the Paper

This paper discusses the development process that the students followed in order to produce the storybooks. It examines the development of one story in particular, *Kung Bakit Walang Buto at Tinik ang Pugita* (Why the Octopus has no Bones and Spines). The authors hope that the development process may be used as a model by other schools and agencies who are interested in developing software of this kind.

Development process

The development process began with the selection of the story. Students were required to submit a photocopy of the story that they were going to adapt into a multimedia storybook. It was made clear to them that the story had to be a bonafide Filipino myth or legend.

The group chose the story *Kung Bakit Walang Buto at Tinik ang Pugita*. **Summarize the storyline here.**

They chose his this story for two main reasons. First, the intended audience was comprised of grade one to grade three students. The group wanted the characters to be animals to appeal to the readers. Second, the group wanted a story that had a climax or action scene. The part where the king punished the "pugita" provided this.

After selecting the story, the group began by making a storyboard which would serve as our guide. The storyboard represented the story's key scenes the key scenes were, action sequences, and dialogues. The storyboard enabled the group to identify the media elements that it would need to produce (text, graphics, animation, and sound). The storyboard also gave the group an estimate of the length of the entire production.

Insert scenes from the storyboard here.

The entire storybook was implemented using Macromedia Flash. The background was drawn in layers because changing one layer or one part will not affect the entire picture. It also allowed the group to modify certain areas for scenes with the same setting. The group also made some parts of background as movies (e.g. the sea and bubbles) so that the group could add animations to make the storybook more lively and interesting.

Show screen shots

To bring the characters to life, the group first drew basic images of each character. Then, the group made several movies/movements, to suit the different scenes, for each character using the basic drawing. Making the characters as movies allowed the group to conveniently pick from the library and insert them in the scenes where they were supposed to appear.

Show screen shots

The group added text to show dialogue and narration. The font for the text was childlike but legible. The group chose simple words when writing the narration and dialogue.

When assembling the final storybook, the group included animations for the dialogues. Aside from adding visual interest, the animations provided the group with a way to tell the audience which character will be talking first.

Finally, the group added the sounds/background music. The group chose music that would help to convey the emotions for a certain scene. For instance, fast-paced music for the punishment scene while sad and solemn music for the scene where the “pugita” lost his bones.

As we presented our project to the class, our teacher brought in some kids to be the judges. We were very happy to see their expressions as they watched the movie. We noticed that they really liked the animations and the sounds. It really was very nice to see the kids learn, appreciate, and even enjoy our project.
major scenes.

Evaluation

For the purposes of the CS 175 course, the group was able to successfully use Flash to create an engaging and imaginative storybook. They made use of a variety of media elements, most notably graphics, text, and sound. Interactivity was generally limited to navigation. Although the group was not able to insert voice narration, the final output showed sufficient mastery of Flash to merit an above average grade for this particular course requirement.

To evaluate the quality of the product itself, the storybook was presented to three Filipino children, ages 7 to 10, to elicit their reactions. The children had an easy time using the software. The navigation was simple and intuitive. They did not need any assistance in manipulating the software.

The youngest of the children was not able to read the narrative text because his skill in the Filipino language and his reading ability were limited. The older children had no

problem reading the text and understanding the storyline. All three children enjoyed the animation, the music, and the interactivity.

The storybooks were also presented to a group of grade school Filipino teachers for comment. The teachers believed that the modules could be used in a variety of ways:

- a) Prelection – The module may serve as a motivation tool. It can also be used as springboard for the lesson at hand.
- b) Lesson Proper – The module may “assist” the teacher in explaining the lessons. This would mean less “chalk-talk”. More time would now be available to deepen learning. Stories and other forms of text would be shown in more interesting “packages”, thus, gaining the students’ attention and interest in learning more about Filipino literature.
- c) Drills/Practice – An interactive module may help in either oral or written exercises for the students which will help enhance student learning.
- d) Evaluation – The module may even be used to assess student’s performance and learning.

The teachers did have certain concerns. One of their first observations was that the story selected was not among those that students are required to read. The Filipino teachers have a prescribed list of stories which all students must read. The group’s storybook would have been much more useful if the story selected came from this list. It should be noted, though, that the specifications for this project were formulated primarily by the CS 175 teacher, without consultation with the Filipino teachers. At the start of the term, the primary objective of the CS 175 teacher was for the students to undertake a project that would demonstrate their proficiency in Flash. The needs of the Filipino teachers were therefore secondary.

The teachers also noted that the modules would only be effective if handled properly by the Filipino teacher. The teacher still has the important responsibility to facilitate learning.

They underscored the importance of module design. If not developed well, the module may simply be another variation of an OHP-transparency lecture or a Powerpoint presentation. The modules should be interactive and student-centered.

The teachers also noted that they should be prepared for technical problems. If the modules fail to work during class time, the teacher should be ready with a backup plan.

The teachers’ final concern had to do with cost. The cost of developing modules and investing on technology tools for classroom instruction should also carefully rationalized.

Overall, though, the teachers were extremely positive about the storybook. They saw the storybook as a useful educational tool that they looked forward to using in their classes. They expressed willingness to take part in the development of other storybooks and ICT-based materials.

Recommendations

The authors see this endeavor is a starting point for further research in the use of multimedia in Filipino education. The process would have greatly benefited from close coordination with the Filipino teachers from the beginning. In this case, the Filipino teachers were only able to contribute to the process during the evaluation phase.

It would also benefit future developers and teachers if the current storybooks were tested with an actual Filipino class. After students are given the opportunity to use the books, they should be tested for comprehension. They should also be surveyed regarding their attitudes towards the media and the subject.