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Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Regional Conference "*Literacy challenges in the Arab Region:*"
Building partnerships and promoting innovative approaches,
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"From Illiteracy to Computer Literacy"
(*Teaching and Learning Using Information Technology*)

Programme name: From Illiteracy to Computer Literacy (Teaching and Learning Using Information Technology)

Implemented by: ECE - Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, American University of Beirut

Basic facts

Country: Lebanon

Starting year: 2006

Outreach:

Target Population: Adult illiterates

Language of instruction: Arabic

Operating in:

Main Funding: Rothmann Family Foundation

Website:

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Brief Description

As information and technology are increasingly shaping our society, the basic competencies we need in order to function successfully have gone beyond reading, writing and numeracy; thus, literacy has come to include computing and problem-solving skills. ECE's project aims to combat illiteracy by developing a computer-aided tutoring tool based on the programme of the National Committee for Literacy (NCL) of the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs.

Rationale

One of the challenges faced when combating illiteracy is finding a sufficient number of qualified teachers and facilitators to deliver the literacy programmes. The use of ICT-based programmes offers a means to overcome this lack in human resources. It also provides a means to speed up the learning process and to increase its effectiveness while at the same time bridging the "digital divide" by moving the learner from illiteracy directly to computer literacy.

Objective

ECE's ICT-based programme aims at teaching illiterate users how to read, write and compute in an interactive way through the use of images, sounds and text. The user learns by seeing images, hearing sounds, speaking words into a microphone, writing letters and words on a writing pad, a touch screen, or a tablet PC.

Conceptual Model and Methodology

The educational model is based on the initiative of the NCL. This model is composed of two programmes for educating adults, one targeting working people who cannot pursue daily tutoring, the other being a programme divided into three levels, each

conveyed in 160 hrs of instruction over 9 months, roughly averaging 5 hours per week.

These programmes all have accompanying textbooks, workbooks and instructor's manuals.

Innovative features

The novelty of the approach is to use information technologies to provide an educational model that not only reaches more people and moves them faster towards literacy, but also familiarises them with technology. Thus, by becoming literate, learners also become computer literate and have access to a large array of information.