

English abstract for research article

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Kids' Club's new sprouts: music as a motivator for computer-assisted special education

Abstract

In a subproject for the project "Technologies for Children with Individual Needs", organized by University of Joensuu in Finland, it was examined how music could be used as a motivator for special education. New project extends the goals of the original project and its Kids' Club framework to new collaboration networks and further research. The structures and expressiveness of music could be used more than currently in interactive ways to create goals and expectations while studying various topics. Software called ImageOrder was developed in this project and used for experiments to analyze what kind of stance the learners with special needs take when music is introduced to express periodical features while performing mathematical exercises. Aim was to create mappings between learner's correct choices and sensations of succeeding that would be achieved as expectations concerning evolution of simultaneously played music would become fulfilled. Based on the user experiments carried out with learners with special needs it appeared that logical recognition of even simple melodies is uncertain and it is challenging to apply them to create clear goals and expectation for a learner. Anyway, the results indicate that in this domain there is hidden potential and need for further research.

Translated 16 March 2010 by Lauri Lahti.