Tell me about your day - Creating novel access to personal narrative

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Abstract

This two hour workshop follows on from our story-telling workshop. (Attendance at the first workshop is not necessary, but would be beneficial.) A one year feasibility study is exploring whether we can help children with complex communication needs create stories by developing a computer tool which uses data of the user's activities during the day. Leading on from the workshop on story-telling we will actively seek the input of both young people and adults who use AAC, their family and other expert users in the design process of the tool. Participants will engage in activities such as brainstorming on possible functionality and early prototype evaluation and development.

Long Abstract

Individuals with complex communication needs (CCN) can find it difficult to tell stories about every day life when they rely on AAC. A one year feasibility study is focusing on a specific story telling situation by investigating how children with CCN tell stories about their day at school. This type of story not only plays an important part in family communication but can also be linked to literacy acquisition (Peterson, Jesso and McCabe 1999).

We are exploring whether specially designed software can help children with CCN create stories about what they did at school. We are developing a computer tool which produces a draft story based on acquired data of the user's activities during the day. This data can include places the child has visited, activities in which the child has engaged and people the child has met during the day. The tool will feature an editing and narration facility enabling the user to adapt the story to be his/hers and not just the result of a computer program.

The workshop we will actively involve the participants in the ongoing design process and will have three sections:

- Participants will be asked to think of functions that they would like a story-telling device to provide. This brainstorming session will include discussion on how stories are collected and narrated.

- We will provide the background to the story project, explaining the development process to date and introducing the participants to early prototypes of a novel story telling device. Participants will be invited to discuss different aspects of usability, limitations and possibilities of these prototypes and their interfaces.

- The workshop group will collectively create the next version of the story-telling system.

- The participants will discuss extending these ideas for use by other groups, e.g. older children and adults.

References

C Peterson, B Jesso and A McCabe (1999). "Encouraging narratives in preschoolers: an intervention study." Journal of Child Language 26: 46-67.