

Massive Multiplayer Online Games for Teaching Languages

Oscar Gil Gonzalo

Universidad de Salamanca (Spain)

oscar.gil@usal.es

Abstract

Spanish is currently the second most used language in the world for communication, and the second most studied foreign language. It is estimated that by the year 2030 Spanish will be the second most spoken language in the world, spoken by 7.5% of the world population. This development has given rise to the importance of Spanish on the internet, as evidenced by the vast amount of content available in the Spanish language, and in the publishing, tourist and service industries in general, particularly concerning the teaching of Spanish as a second language.

The University of Salamanca (USAL) is recognized worldwide as the "University of Spanish". Its language and culture courses for foreign students were conceived and developed in 1929, giving the University of Salamanca the longest standing tradition in Spain for this field as well. Each year the university welcomes more than 10,000 international students, including Spanish language students, Erasmus scholars, and undergraduate and graduate students, for all of whom Spanish is not their native tongue.

With the aim of innovating Spanish language teaching, the Vice-Chancellor of Innovation at the USAL encourages the development of different projects, such as the use of 3D videogames, for teaching Spanish. The project aims to build a Massive Multiplayer Online Game (MMOG), set in the city of Salamanca where users engage in the same type of daily routine situations as any other language student. This tool will be used to support Spanish language teaching by practicing communicative situations in a fun and engaging way, while strengthening the collaboration and interaction among students.