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Alelo Develops Interactive Robot for Learning Chinese

Alelo and its collaborators are developing an exciting new project thanks to a grant from the National Science Foundation's Cyberlearning program.
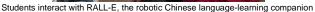
PRESS RELEASE

Alexandria, VA (February 24, 2015) - The Robot-Assisted Language Learning in Education, or RALL-E, project is a new social robot that has the potential to transform world language learning by giving learners new opportunities to practice their conversational skills.

The RALL-E robots are Chinese-speaking human-like robots that create a safe environment for learners to practice their conversational skills. These robots create the experience of a conversation through a lifelike range of facial expressions and gestures coupled with Alelo's innovative language acquisition-based dialog software.

Designed to increase intrinsic motivation and speaking competency, the RALL-E project offers students the unique opportunity to participate in a fun, alternative practice exercise that mimics real world language use and they love it. Students are already playing with these robots in Chinese classrooms at the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Alexandria, VA.

Students interact with RALL-E, the robotic Chinese language-learning companion

RALL-E Demonstration: Robot boy communicates in Chinese

Watch a demonstration video at: http://www.alelo.com/rall-e-project

During Alelo's most recent focus group at Thomas Jefferson High School, students had this to say about the RALL-E robots:

o "It was more interactive [than online courses and classroom activities] and… actually it's just more fun!"
o "The facial expressions make it feel like you're talking to an actual person."
o "If I make a mistake it's okay. I know that when I speak Chinese with my [in-class] speaking pal it's for a grade, but with the robot it's just practice where I'm free to learn and do whatever I need to do."
o Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is excited to be offering this new technology to their students. Dr. Evan Glazer, Principal, says:
o "I think RALL-E has a lot of potential to build excitement for learning languages. Students have opportunities to practice their skills, and the robot responds to the dialogue as confirmation that he understands. The potential is great to support individual learning needs, particularly at introductory levels."

The RALL-E project aims to increase speaking competency in Chinese classrooms by providing students with a novel and motivating conversation experience. These robots will allow students to get the real world experience of using a new language, without the anxieties that come with using a new language, and empower teachers to bring the conversations they want into their classrooms.
The RALL-E project is a collaboration between Alelo, Robokind, the Virginia Department of Education, and Curious Lab.

About Alelo Inc.:

Named after the Hawaiian word for "language" and headquartered in Los Angeles, California, Alelo is a spin-out of the University of Southern California. Alelo is committed to delivering effective e-learning tools and solutions to help people acquire knowledge, develop new skills and improve their performance. Alelo's Virtual Role-Play simulations combine innovations in software technology, social science, and learning science. This ability to combine multiple areas of expertise into effective training is what sets Alelo apart.