

Pulse



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Spoken-Tutorial Initiative of IIT Bombay - A Boon to students in rural India

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Recently, Our College was upgraded as a **FOSS Resource Centre of Spoken-Tutorial program, IIT Bombay**. It was a proud and historic moment for our college.

So, What is this Spoken-Tutorial Program?

The Spoken Tutorial project is the initiative of the ‘Talk to a Teacher’ activity of the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (ICT), launched by the Ministry of Human Resources and Development, Government of India.

The Spoken Tutorial Project is about teaching and learning Free and Open Source

Software(FOSS) via an easy audio-video tool called Spoken Tutorials. The following are some of the salient features of this program:

- Spoken Tutorial is a 10 minute audio-video tutorial on IT topics.
- Its is a distance education method which is highly conducive to self-learning.
- Any student or faculty can master the FOSS and also get certificates, Silver/Learner's and Gold (based on clearing an assessment test)
- UG, PG or Research scholar students and even teachers of Science, IT, Engineering, Commerce, Management, MCA disciplines can learn any of the FOSS.
- Spoken Tutorials cover many useful IT topics, such as Basic IT Literacy, Tux Typing, KTurtle, C, C++, Java, PHP, Linux, Scilab, Python, OpenFOAM, PERL, Ruby, LibreOffice, Blender, GeoGebra, Jmol, GChemPaint and Inkscape.
- There are about 630 original spoken tutorials, created in English.

- These spoken-tutorial videos are dubbed into all 22 Indian languages. Some examples are: Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Nepali, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and urdu. Including the dubbed tutorials, there is a total of 4200 videos.
- Spoken Tutorials can be downloaded free of cost from the website, <http://spoken-tutorial.org>.
- Spoken Tutorials training are presently conducted in about 5,000 colleges. These are taking place in engineering, science, arts, commerce and polytechnic colleges and ITIs.

Why should we promote and use FOSS?

- Free stands for “***Freedom***” or “***Libre***”. -The freedom to run the program, for any purpose.
- The freedom to study how the program works, and adapt it to the user's needs.

- The freedom to redistribute copies so that the users can help each other.
- The freedom to improve the program, and release the improvements to the public.
- In order to do all the above, source code must be available with you.

All such software are commonly referred as “Free /Libre Open Source Software” or FOSS

Popularity Of FOSS in India

- Open Source Software is gradually moving into schools and govt. offices.
- From this year to fill tax returns online, Linux, Ubuntu and Java are recommended.
- 2600 schools in Kerala, close to 1.5 million children are using FOSS
- 18 out of India’s 28 states are either using Linux or have pilot projects running.

- Western state of Maharashtra is using Linux and Libre Office to revamp its health care systems.

How does it Work in Our College?

Our college is located in a rural area in Kerala state, India. It is now upgraded as a FOSS Resource centre of Spoken-tutorial program. It means that, all the students of our college across departments and batches are registered in various courses of this program. Faculty and admin staff are also trained. The FOSS subjects are mapped to the semester subjects in the syllabus at the beginning of each semester. Audio-video spoken-tutorials are used to teach these mapped subjects in computer labs. These are like lectures in classrooms.

Another added advantage is that these audio-video files are available in English and several Indian languages. So, the students can learn the FOSS in English or in their mother tongue. Some of the FOSS are given as add-on courses in our college. Students can take up these short-term courses and attend online exams to get certified in various software. Eg: 3D Animation using Blender.

We have a dedicated FOSS Computer lab now, where students can come and learn softwares with the help of these spoken-tutorial audio-video files. The accessibility and easiness in which the students can learn these softwares, has made this program hugely popular among our students.

Spoken-tutorial program has definitely made a change in the way IT education is imparted in rural India. It has made a big impact on students in rural areas. This program literally takes the software education to the masses and tries to Bridge the Digital Divide! Thank you for reading this post.

Checkout : <http://spoken-tutorial.org>

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