A multimedia, multilingual, multi-target scheme for learning French in Africa

Multimedia, multilingual scheme
- a bilingual radio serial in 25 seven-minute episodes using both French and the learner’s source language
- an activity booklet with the serial’s audio CD
- an internet site to listen to dialogues again and practise autonomously
- a teaching guide aimed at teachers

A multi-target, original and motivating way to promote French and give it new impetus in Africa

- for the general public: an enthralling radio serial
- for learners: a fun educational tool using authentic French for beginners, aimed at both non-Francophone Africa and areas where French is a second language
- for teachers: an amusing tool for teaching French and getting used to a communicative multimedia approach that mixes class teaching with autonomous learning.
Le talisman

RADIO SERIAL

‘Listen to the wind, it’s the Sahara crying. It’s waiting for the man of integrity who can make it green again.’

Kwamé is a gardener. He has never forgotten the story that his aunt used to tell him when he was a child. It’s the reason he came to Burkina Faso, at the edge of the desert, to work in Professor Omar’s experimental garden.

But one day, the professor is kidnapped right under his nose and, in the fight, his precious talisman gets broken. It’s the start of a dangerous adventure for Kwame, who isn’t Francophone: suspected by the police and threatened by strange individuals, he decides to lead his own investigation to find the professor.

Speaking hesitant French, which he improves with each episode thanks to his dictionary and the people he meets, Kwame follows the clues that take him on the abductors’ tracks, across the high spots of the Neolithic Sahara and the River Niger.

THE CONCEPT:
a bilingual serial for learning French

An action-packed serial to pick up French without feeling like you’re learning

In the hero’s shoes ► The listener follows the adventure as if he were Kwame, who thinks out loud in his mother tongue, which is the same as the listener’s.

Gripping trail of clues ► The listener figures out the linguistic and dramatic clues to find the truth with Kwamé. Just like a trail of clues, each episode provides hints to take our hero’s investigation further.

Immersion experience ► The sound conditions make it easier to understand French conversations, and the expressive professional acting immerses the listener into a French-speaking environment.

Police investigation and learning strategies ► In order to find the professor, Kwame gradually learns how to communicate with French speakers and express himself in French. As part of the investigation, language is an indispensable communication tool that must be acquired.

Guided progression ► The 25 episodes of the serial are organised into five acts, each with a linguistic and dramatic objective. The fifth episode of each act sums up the investigation’s progress and provides an occasion to revise the language content and move on to a higher level of communication know-how.

Act 1 ► Se présenter / Introducing yourself

Professor Omar’s abduction

Act 2 ► Décrire / Describing

Friends or enemies?

Act 3 ► Identifier / Identifying

New clues

Act 4 ► Agir / Taking action

On the kidnappers’ trail

Act 5 ► S’exprimer / Expressing yourself

Time is running out

Dans un français balbutiant, qu’il améliore au fil de mener seul son enquête pour retrouver le professeur, menacé par d’étranges personnages, il décide.

Commence alors pour Kwamé, le jardinier non francophone: suspected by the police and threatened by strange individuals, he decides to lead his own investigation to find the professor.

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Each media tool matches a different role and learning stage.

The radio serial motivates learners and gets them interested. It is accompanied by educational tools on paper and the internet so that listeners can work off air, in the classroom or on their own, with a focus on developing writing: establish the lessons learned.

Two products introduce learners to French: a website and a 64-page activity booklet. Both follow the themes, vocabulary and language points covered in the story, so that learners can practise methodically at the same pace as the serial.

- The website offers for each episode: a sound version, a summary in the source language, a transcript of the dialogues in French, a comic-style illustration, interactive audiovisual exercises, a databank for vocabulary and verbs, and a self-test at the end of each act. The work on the website is organized in short sequences that are lightweight enough for regular work in an Internet café.

- A booklet comes with the CD of the serial: the 25 episodes correspond to 25 double pages of learning matter. With a range of exercises and summary sheets for use in the classroom or autonomously, learners can refer to it as a handbook and teachers can use it as a guideline for their lessons.

- A printable teaching guide on the website gives instructions for teaching each of the 25 lessons for a total of 50 hours, as well as the activities featuring on the website. These lesson plans guide teachers so that they can learn to use the method’s multimedia component and get used to its communicative approach.

Radio has a strong presence throughout Africa and can be a powerful tool: Le talisman brisé will reach a wider audience than the usual language learners – in particular those who wouldn’t spontaneously turn to a book.

Multimedia project ► The media combination opens the project up to a wider audience and establishes its permanence on paper and the internet – making the project easier to teach and learn, both in the classroom and autonomously.

Multilingual project ► Inspired by Africa’s widespread bilingualism, the project mixes French – the target language – with different source languages: depending on requirements and the audience, Kwame’s language, which is English in the serial’s initial version, could be Portuguese, Lingala, Swahili, Hausa, etc. which becomes the website and booklet language.

Multi-target project ► This dynamic concept for introducing French targets listeners and learners in non-Francophone areas and people who have not received schooling in areas where French is a second language.
READY TO USE LOCALLY

The story, widely available as a multimedia resource in local languages:

- motivates non-Francophone young adults and professionals to learn French for cross-border professional and commercial relations in Africa (level A1)
- provides a fun, motivating complement to learning French in school or for work
- supports local efforts in bilingual teaching
- boosts and illustrates teachers’ efforts in promoting interactive teaching.

MULTIMEDIA AND RADIO AVAILABILITY

The radio serial is broadcast by RFI in Africa in its French-English, French-Swahili and French-Portuguese versions starting. It is available for repeat by local radios in French-English, French-Swahili and French-Portuguese.

The teaching kit is available as a website as well as a booklet + CD that can be ordered online: http://www.edicef.com

The website is also published on the website of RFI: http://www.rfi.fr/cours_de_francais/le_talisman_brise/le_site?lang=en

RFI and Edicef can advise local set-ups on how to include Le talisman brisé in the work they do to promote and teach French:

- Adaptation by translating and recording from a supplied template.
- Broadcast on local radio stations.
- Adaptation through translating the book.
- Training of linguistic, teaching and technical staff.
- Sale of local rights for the system.

For information on conditions for repeats, interested parties are invited to get in contact with the producers.