

Application

Situated Learning Environment

Audience

- Adult Lithuanian learners, intermediate level
- Possible audiences: heritage Lithuanian speakers, graduate students, business people

General Knowledge Domain

Lithuanian language skills – vocabulary, grammar and the four skills – as used in daily life

Learning Outcomes

- Communicate effectively in Lithuanian to solve problems and reach goals
- Structure own language learning based on needs
- Develop strategies for continued language learning

Learning Problem

Fluency in a foreign language requires a high level of proficiency in the four skill areas of language use – reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Achieving high fluency in a foreign language is difficult, particularly for those learners who are not able to interact with native speakers of the language they are studying. Language immersion has been shown to be an effective language learning approach, however it is often difficult to find an immersive language environment, particularly with less commonly taught languages like Lithuanian. Finally, successful language learners take an active role in their learning – they find meaningful ways to use the language. It is essential that learners' language use is purposeful and self-directed.

Learning Activities

Learners will negotiate a series of authentic situations to achieve defined goals. First, learners will be able to engage in self-directed preparation for the task by practicing vocabulary, grammar, and the four skills in a series of learning modules. When prepared, they will enter a simulated immersive environment in which they will interact with native speakers to achieve defined goals. Hints on how to achieve the goals will be embedded in the scenario, specifically in the native speakers who are populating the scenario. Four skills practice will also be embedded, requiring the learner to use each skill to achieve their goal. Learners will be able to access the scenarios repeatedly, with varying goals to achieve. Learners can also access tutors for specific questions and coaching, a user community with special interest groups, and more resources on specific language issues and language learning strategies.

- Learners reflect on their language skills and what they need to improve
- Learners prepare for tasks through self-directed work on grammar, vocabulary and the four skills
- Learners achieve defined goals in authentic situations
- Information needed to achieve goal is embedded in the scenarios
- Learners self assess and are given feedback from native speakers
- Learners engage in a user community and special interest groups
- Learners reflect upon their learning and explore areas for further study

Evaluation

Assessment is based on the success of achieving the task as well as on feedback from the native speakers in the scenario. Learners will self-assess after each scenario, rating themselves on their success in achieving the goal and on the four skills. Native speakers will also provide feedback on the student's fluency. Feedback will focus on grammar and vocabulary, as well as register and cultural appropriateness of language use. Native speakers will suggest areas in need of further study and will direct learners to resources.