

Project Year

2003

Project Team

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Project Title

Advanced German

Audience

Students taking both second-year and third-year German. Some of these resources might be repurposed for the study of other foreign languages.

Pedagogical Issue

By the time students reach the advanced year in foreign language learning, there tend to be two major areas in need of remedial attention. One is vocabulary review and expansion, and the other is grammar review and remediation. Although it has often been assumed, in designing the curriculum, that the students are at roughly the same level, they frequently are not. To remedy this issue in the past, instructors have instituted several paper-based mechanisms and devoted a considerable amount of instructional time to addressing students' problem areas, rather than moving forward to new topics.

Solution

Access to online materials will provide a more consistent, reliable, and flexible way for students to systematically approach their own language learning. Having study modules readily accessible will allow students to review, jump ahead, and customize their own studying. Consequently, this team proposes to develop online materials for vocabulary and grammar review, tied directly to the curriculum, based on prior success using a similar program in the first year of German language instruction. These advanced modules will consist of exercises to assess the student's mastery of a specific grammatical structure, such as the passive voice, or a thematic group of vocabulary, such as human characteristics. The technology will allow for creative visual enhancement of textual material, which is important for strengthening memory networks and for capturing abstract or metaphorical content. Sound files will also enhance the learning program. The materials will be designed to give immediate feedback to the students, create a record of performance for the student and allow the instructor to monitor the students' progress.

Technologies Used

MySQL, HTML/Web Design, PHP, Java