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Designing a Russian Language Learning Course for  
Brigham Young University Independent Study

Jacob R. Burdis

A selected project submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science

Richard E. West, Chair  
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Department of Instructional Psychology and Technology

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## ABSTRACT

### Designing a Russian Language Learning Course for Brigham Young University Independent Study

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In 2010, Brigham Young University Independent Study (BYU IS) sponsored a development project for the creation of a second-year high school Russian language learning course. The objectives of the course were to implement the five standards for foreign language learning as constituted by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. The design project is an attempt to implement these principles in an independent distance learning course, with particular emphasis on encouraging meaningful communicative learning in authentic, real-world tasks and contexts. The product of the design is a course deliverable completely online through BrainHoney, a course management system utilized by BYU IS for its courses. The product consists of eleven homogeneous lessons, each with instructional content preparing learners to communicate in a specified context that reflect real-world situations. This paper discusses the obstacles of designing a distance education language learning course, especially facilitating communication in real contexts and the design objective and products geared towards overcoming these obstacles.

Keywords: language learning, language acquisition, distance education, online learning, independent study, foreign language learning

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I also express gratitude to my wife, Christie, who supported me throughout this project. She sacrificed time, energy, and sometimes sleep to help support me in the design and development of this course. Thank you.

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## Introduction

### Project Origination

As the availability and bandwidth of the internet increases, online distance education courses are becoming more popular. Many prestigious educational institutions have growing departments solely dedicated to the creation and improvement of online courses.

Notwithstanding the surge of growth in the online educational market, there is surprisingly little representation of studies regarding language learning in distance education journals. According to an analysis of the popular journal *Distance Education*, only eight out of one hundred ninety-three published articles (four percent) from the years 2000–2010 were on the topic of language learning (Oviatt, Burdis, & West, 2011). Designing online language learning courses has unique challenges. Principles of communication and the balance of the four foundational language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) are difficult to obtain through a course on a computer. Additionally, encouraging student engagement and motivation is also a challenge. Since more and more educational products are moving towards online deliverability, more research and design reports are needed to investigate solutions to the difficulties of designing online language courses.

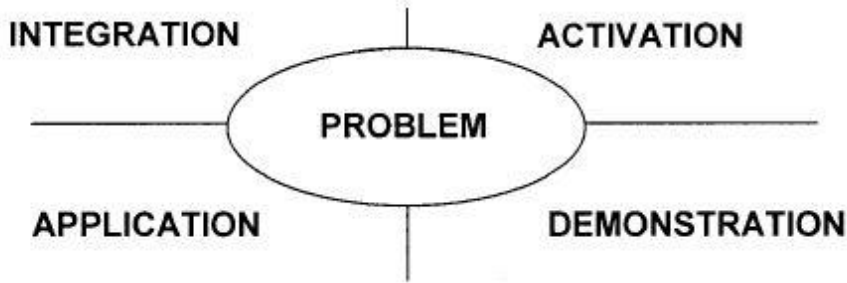
This project is an effort to merge current language learning and design theory to create an online distance course for second-year Russian language learners at the high school level. The course that was designed incorporates elements of meaningful communicative grammar instruction, speaking, and listening while at the same time following the nationally recognized standards of the American Center for Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL). See Table 1 for a list of the ACTFL foreign language teaching standards (ACTFL, 2012). The course also incorporates the first principles of instruction presented by Merrill (2007): engaging in real-

world problems, establishing existing knowledge as a foundation for new knowledge, demonstrating new knowledge, promoting the application of new knowledge by the learner, and promoting the integration of new knowledge into the learner's world (see Figure 1).

Table 1

*ACFTL Standards for Foreign Language Teaching*

Goal Area	Description	Standard
Communication	Communicate in languages other than English	1.1: Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions. 1.2: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics. 1.3: Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.
Cultures	Gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures	2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied. 2.2: Students demonstrate and understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.
Connections	Connect with other disciplines and acquire information	3.1: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language. 3.2: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its culture.
Comparisons	Develop insight into the nature of language and culture	4.1: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own. 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.
Communities	Participate in multilingual communities	5.1: Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting. 5.2: Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.



*Figure 1.* Representation of Merrill's First Principles of Instruction

The design and use of this course shows that online language courses can incorporate language learning and design theory that has previously been difficult to achieve through online delivery. This design has showcased how elements of communication, speaking, participation, and community can exist even when learners are only connected through the internet. It has also showed how further development and testing is needed that incorporates computer assisted language learning (CALL) programs in distance education.

The design project was sponsored by Brigham Young University Independent Study (BYU IS) under the direction and supervision of Mary Stevens, instructional designer and supervisor for the development of Russian language courses at BYU IS. Originally, Mary and BYU IS committed several resources for the development project, including a computer and workspace for my work, and a design team and a development team to support the design appearance and software capabilities. Because of shifting priorities within the organization, the design and development team did little towards fruition of the course. My role initially was to design the course, including designing the course structure, tasks, assessments, and content. My role shifted as resources were allocated elsewhere to include the development of the online elements of the course. Since my original commitment to BYU IS was the design of the course, and not the development, I agreed with Mary to fully develop the first lesson of the course in

order to conduct an evaluation of the design for this project. The remainder of the development work will be completed by her staff once BYU IS establishes the development of the course as a priority and reallocates its resources. The project officially began during the beginning of September, 2010. I completed the initial design work for the project in April of 2011, and completed the development of the content of the course, development of the first lesson, and the evaluation in April of 2012.

### **Evidence of Need**

BYU Independent Study provides both college and high school classes for students living across the United States and the world. Many of these students are deprived of traditional educational settings because of their family travel requirements for military, business, or other purposes. There are very few institutions that offer online Russian courses for high-school credit, and those that I found that do offer distance learning programs for Russian only offer first-year college courses at the 101 and 102 level. These students turn to BYU IS to receive a quality education delivered through the internet. BYU IS has implemented first-year Russian courses, and as of August 2010 had 28 students already registered for second-year courses with dozens more that have shown interested in progressing in their Russian language education. The second-year Russian courses that are currently offered from BYU IS (Russian 51 and 53) are incomplete and insufficient, consisting of just a few lessons with loosely organized content. For example, the Russian 51 (second-year first part) course's lesson topics include vague and unconnected titles such as "going places," "talking about the past," and "explaining with whom or what." See Appendix A for the content map for these courses. From the client's perspective, a working course was needed to meet the demands of the student population wishing to pursue their language instruction in Russian.

From a theoretical design point of view, more research and projects are needed to address specific, unique challenges that arise when teaching language in a distance education setting. Hurd (2006) has stated that language learning from a distance has unique challenges that aren't associated with other disciplines in distance education. This is primarily due to the limited opportunities to interact and communicate. Communication and interaction is vital in language learning. Language learning should model and match how language is used. The purpose of language is to communicate with others, and this can only happen with interaction; communication doesn't happen in isolation. Language learning methods are most effective when they are founded on these principles (Lee, 2003). Learners need the opportunity to not only receive input, but to produce output and interact in the target language to negotiate meaning. (Andrade, & Bunker, 2009). As mentioned previously, few articles in recent years explore the development of programs and methods for distance language learning (Oviatt, Burdis, & West, 2011). Certainly, more projects are needed to explore the development and use of technology in distance language learning.

### **Circumstance and Constraint**

When I agreed to conduct the project for BYU IS, I was working at the Missionary Training Center as a Russian Training Coordinator, a development project manager, and a teacher assistant for an MTC language methods course taught at BYU. All of these responsibilities equaled about 30 hours of work. As a full-time graduate student taking 8.5 credits, I was not allowed to work more than 30 hours for BYU. I petitioned to the student employment office and was granted 5 extra hours to work for BYU IS in developing this course. The initial expectation was for me to complete the design of the course by the end of 2010 and supervise the development of the course so that it could be operational in the fall of 2011. This

constraint was altered when BYU IS was unable to provide the development assistance that was originally promised. At this point, the agreement was made for me to develop the first lesson of the course in order to conduct an evaluation by the end of April 2012. In January 2011, I was hired to a full-time position at the Missionary Training Center. I could not continue working for BYU IS because of the conflict of interest policy. Instead, I continued to work on the project while taking internship credit through the instructional psychology and technology department at BYU.

Because BYU IS is accredited to offer credit in the state of Utah, the language courses offered must include the ACTFL standards for foreign language teaching (Utah State School Board, 2009). Designing an online, individual distance course that includes the aspects of communication and community presented a difficult challenge. Additionally, BYU IS allows for one teacher to manage anywhere from 20–100+ students. Not only are the students spread throughout the nation and world—putting them in different time zone—but they are also allowed to register at different times. Instead of having a start and end date that is standard for all students of the course, students can begin on a date they choose and are given a year to complete the course. This puts them all at different levels and different speeds of progress in the course. Online tools, such as web conferencing, make it possible for distance learners to participate in classroom-like settings, but this is virtually impossible when the students are in different time zones and places in the course (Hilton, Graham, Rich, & Wiley, 2010). This forces the instructor to rely on one-on-one communication, which is brief when the teacher is servicing up to 100 students.

## Needs Analyses

### Target Population Analysis

Most students taking the Russian 51 course have also completed the Russian 41 and 43 first-year courses; however, there are some exceptions. Over 80% of students who enroll in the Russian 51 course are between the ages of 16–18, taking this course for high-school credit. Legault (2006) synthesized and reported research showing that the majority of high school students lack intrinsic motivation to learn in their classes. She stated, “Although academic motivation has received much conceptual and empirical focus, the fact remains that an abundance of high school students lack academic motivation.” This obstacle reinforced my decision to structure the course in such a way to encourage and build motivation in the students by situating the learning around real-world tasks. Roblyer (1999) showed that high school students in distance education have similar issues with motivation, however the approach for instilling motivation differs from the approach with traditional high school students. According to the study, traditional high school students are best motivated through interaction with the instructor. High school students enrolled in distance education are best motivated when they have control over the learning. This strengthened the decision to relinquish as much control as possible to the learners through the course, by allowing them to learn at their own pace and to a degree engage in the activities in their preferred order.

In addition to the research, I relied on my five years of experience working with 19-year-old missionaries learning Russian. I have learned that typically, the missionaries who struggle to learn are those who either aren't motivated to serve a mission or don't see the connection between learning the language and serving a mission. The best way to instill motivation in these learners is to show how the learning is directly focused on preparing them to succeed in

situations that they will encounter on their mission. Similarly, this course was designed to prepare students for tasks and situations that they might actually encounter.

### **Training and Resource Analysis**

Currently, there are four Russian high-school courses offered through BYU IS: Russian 41, 43, 51, and 53. Russian 41 and 43 comprise the first and second half of the first-year courses. Russian 51 and 53 comprise the first and second half of the second-year courses. The current Russian 51 course through BYU IS includes four lessons, while the 41 and 43 first year Russian courses each have at least eight lessons. Accordingly, Russian 51 has a minimal amount of grammar principles compared to the Russian 41 and 43 first year courses, and includes virtually no review of previous grammar learned in other courses. Each first year course introduces fifteen to twenty new grammar principles, while the second-year courses only introduce seven to ten new grammar principles. This guided me in my decision to include more intermediate, appropriate grammar principles in the course design, and include review sections to review what should have been covered in the first-year Russian courses. I was able to ask Jennifer Bown, a BYU professor in charge of the course design for the 101–102 and 201–202 Russian courses, for the syllabi for the 101–102 courses. Since BYU IS courses are intended for high school students, the first-year courses through BYU IS were compared to the college-level 101 course, and the second-year courses through BYU IS were compared to the college-level 102 course.

I compared the grammar and vocabulary with the existing BYU IS courses and found that the Russian 51 and 53 courses lacked in grammar and vocabulary content; each BYU course introduced at least twenty new grammar principles. This led me to isolate which principles and topics were absent from the BYU IS courses and include them in my design. Additionally, I found that the first two courses, Russian 41 and 43, were set up by helping students participate in



connected introductory language tasks, while Russian 51 engaged students in a few vague, unconnected tasks. For example, the Russian 43 tasks all revolved around students going to Russia as tourists, while the Russian 51 tasks were not connected, ranging from expressing opinions to discussing sports. This contributed to my decision to design the Russian 51 course around connected language tasks as well. Also, the average days for completing the course (including each lesson) were on average twenty days less than the existing Russian 41 and 43 courses, showing that the course is not as fully developed as the other courses (See Table 2). This reemphasized the importance of adding content and organizing it by language task.

Table 2

*Average Number of Days to Complete BYU IS Russian Courses*

Course	Avg. Days per Lesson	Avg. Days per Course
Russian 41	18	154
Russian 43	14	144
Russian 51	21	96
Russian 53	26	125

### **Existing Products Analysis**

I will discuss the existing competition in terms of these aspects of the course design. The design product that I produced consists of several features. First, the structure of the online course is task-based, organizing the content of the course by helping learners use the language to accomplish specific language tasks, as opposed to simply organizing the material by grammar principles. Next, the design included several flash-based programs to help students memorize and learn vocabulary and phrases (see Figure 2). Finally, I designed grammar instruction activities entitled, *Learn the Grammar* that maximize students' abilities to communicate in a structured context (see Figure 3).

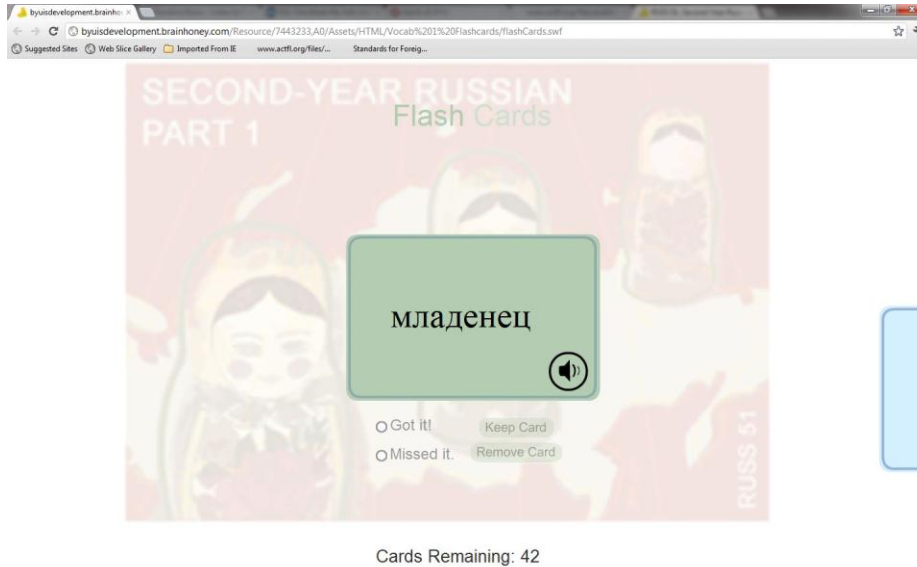


Figure 2. Example screenshot of the flashcard learning program in lesson 1.

<b>Да,</b> yes	<b>Мой</b>	<b>брат</b>	<b>очень</b>	<b>смешной.</b>	(?)
<b>Нет,</b> no	<i>My</i>	<i>brother</i>	<i>very</i>	<i>funny</i>	
<b>Какой</b> <i>Which...?</i>	<b>Мой</b> <i>My</i> <b>Ваш</b> <i>Your</i>	<b>брат</b> <i>brother</i> <b>отец</b> <i>father</i> <b>дедушка</b> <i>grandpa</i>		<b>строг <u>ий</u></b> <i>strict</i> <b>весёл <u>ый</u></b> <i>fun</i> <b>хорош <u>ий</u></b> <i>good</i>	<b>No change</b>
<b>Какая</b> <i>Which...?</i>	<b>Моя</b> <i>My</i> <b>Ваша</b> <i>Your</i>	<b>сестра</b> <i>sister</i> <b>мать</b> <i>mother</i> <b>бабушка</b> <i>grandma</i>	<b>очень</b> <i>very</i> <b>немного</b> <i>a little</i> <b>не</b> <i>not</i>	<b>плох <u>ой</u></b> <i>bad</i> <b>добр <u>ый</u></b> <i>good/kind</i> <b>симпатичн <u>ый</u></b> <i>cute/attractive</i> <b>любящ <u>ий</u></b> <i>loving</i>	<b>+ ая</b>
<b>Какие</b> <i>Which...?</i>	<b>Мои</b> <i>My</i> <b>Ваши</b> <i>Your</i>	<b>родители</b> <i>parents</i> <b>братья</b> <i>brothers</i> <b>сёстры</b> <i>sisters</i> <b>прародители</b> <i>grandparents</i>		<b>приятн <u>ый</u></b> <i>pleasant/nice</i> <b>высок <u>ий</u></b> <i>tall</i> <b>невысок <u>ий</u></b> <i>short</i>	<b>+ ые</b> <b>+ ие*</b>  <i>*use "ие" when the adjective ends in "ий"</i>
<b>Examples:</b>					
<b>Q.</b>	<b>Ваша сестра приятная?</b> <i>Is your sister nice?</i>			<b>Q.</b> <b>Какие ваши родители?</b> <i>What are your parents like?</i>	
<b>A.</b>	<b>Да, моя сестра немного приятная.</b> <i>Yes, my sister is kind of nice.</i>			<b>A.</b> <b>Мои родители очень строгие.</b> <i>My parents are very strict.</i>	
<b>A.</b>	<b>Нет, моя сестра не приятная.</b> <i>No, my sister isn't nice.</i>			<b>A.</b> <b>Мои родители не весёлые.</b> <i>My parents aren't fun.</i>	

Figure 3. An example screenshot of the *Learn the Grammar* lesson for the grammar principle adjective-noun agreement with gender in lesson 1.

**Online courses.** Russianlessons.net is a free online resource full of grammar explanations, vocabulary, and examples. This resource, however, does not provide contextual practice, communication, or learner engagement. Ruslang.com is also a free online resource with an expanse of grammar lessons and vocabulary. Many of the lessons are in Russian, which might deter beginning students. There is a lack of listening and other practice activities, and like the other site, no way to communicate or practice in context. There is, however, quite a rich sample of Russian culture from food recipes to pictures. Masterrussian.com is yet another free online resource very similar to Russianlessons.net. It has grammar explanations and vocabulary lessons, but contains very few practice opportunities. Listen2russian.com is an online resource that is unique and different from the other free online resources because it contains its own language learning methodology, focusing on the principles: read, listen, understand, remember. This provides reading helps and incorporates listening into language-learning. It costs \$15 a year for an online subscription.

UCLA, DU, and Cornell University have free beginning Russian websites that include grammar explanations, listening and reading comprehension, and vocabulary drills. They also include homework activities in which learners must repeat and remember words, create sentences, and respond to written and spoken excerpts. University of Minnesota, University of Missouri, University of Northern Carolina, University of Oklahoma, and University System of Georgia all offer independent study courses, but only for 1<sup>st</sup> year Russian courses; none of them offer a second-year course. The price varies from \$700 per course for residents to about \$3200 per course for non-residents. Each course offers 3–5 college credits upon completion.

**Vocabulary memorization.** Pimsleur is a world-renowned language learning company that offers language-learning audio CDs and USB chips. This focuses on helping learners learn

phrases by hearing them used in context and then isolating the phrases and allowing the learner to repeat the phrases and memorize them. This series does not explicitly teach about grammar, reading, or writing. Pimsleur offers a basic package for \$29.95, 3 complete level packages for \$149.95–\$265.00, and a conversational lesson package for \$39.95–\$49.95. Facebook has several free applications that users can place on their profile for learning vocabulary words. Most of these applications simply place a random word a day in a box on a user's profile with the English equivalent, and a few include a spoken recording. There are several android and iPhone applications ranging from \$0.99 to \$24.99. Many of these applications include vocabulary learning games and programs that basically consist of showing a word and showing the English translation.

**Communicative grammar instruction.** Rosetta Stone is a program that can be downloaded or purchased and run on a computer. The principles behind Rosetta Stone are focused on learner interaction. The methodology claims that learning a language happens best when it mirrors L1 learning—that is associating objects and actions with things and experiences, rather than translating words from another language. They have many vocabulary, phrase, and non-direct grammar learning techniques that revolve around listening, visuals, object-identification and practice. Also, they are incorporating video conferencing and chatting with native Russian speakers as part of their course. Rosetta Stone does not, however, offer any kind of credit for their language learning software, and most of their lessons are categorized by language-level as opposed to language tasks. Additionally, Rosetta Stone does little in the way of grammar instruction. It presents grammar in a factual manner (explaining the rules, etc.) and focuses practices on comprehension. Nevertheless, Rosetta Stone is most likely the biggest

competitor, and it is shown in the price. Rosetta Stone offers several courses, starting at about \$250 per course.

Few of these resources have ample practice opportunities, only Rosetta Stone provides an opportunity for communicative practice, and the university continuing education courses offer credit for first-year Russian courses but there really are no second-year courses available in these institutions. Additionally, I did not find any resources in which High School students can receive credit. BYU IS offers courses to this demographic for about \$136.

### **Summary**

It is evident from the analyses mentioned in this section that there was a need for the design and development of the Russian 51 course. The previous Russian 51 course did not include appropriate content (grammar and vocabulary). Also, the course was structured around loosely connected language tasks. There was a need to provide the client, BYU IS, with a course that implements the ACTFL language standards, incorporates learning activities that focus on meaningful communication, and is structured around engaging language tasks.

## **Design Criteria**

### **ACTFL Standards**

The most important design goals that were imposed on the project came from the ACTFL's five C's. I was given direction by BYU IS to include these standards in my design. These standards fit very well with my own personal goals shaped by my experience and education. I will briefly explain the standards and practical applications of the five C's, communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and communities, as outlined by ACTFL (Utah State School Board, 2009). Communication includes the exchange of information that takes place face-to-face, through recordings, and through writing. This standard includes three sub-standards: students engage in conversations to provide and obtain information, students understand and interpret written and spoken language, and students present information to an audience. This standard was met through several different mediums, which will be discussed in more detail in this report. The course included listening exercises, reading exercises, and several speaking exercises, all with the focus of providing and obtaining information from the instructor, other students, or other characters introduced in the course.

The culture standard focuses on helping students gain knowledge and understanding of cultures where the language is used, stating that true language mastery depends on the understanding of the target language's culture(s). This standard includes two sub-standards: students understand the relationship between practices and perspectives of the target culture, and students understand the relationship between products and perspectives of the target culture. This standard was met both from a linguistic standpoint and a content standpoint. First, in several lessons there are grammar principles that conceptually differ from English grammar. Such differences are dealt with through an activity called "Learn the Concept" which gives students

and understanding of the conceptual difference in English before learning the difference in the target language. Additionally, the content of the comprehension exercises (listening and reading practices) include informative pieces of Russian culture. For example, the listening assignment for the first lesson is a native Russian speaker telling about her family and the reading assignment is a brief report of Vladimir Putin's family (the newly re-elected president of the Russian Federation). Finally, the course includes a writing assignment, in which students are expected to research an aspect of Russian culture that coincides with the task of the lesson and write a brief report.

The connections standard allows students to use the language to learn things from other disciplines. This standard has two sub-standards: students further their knowledge of other disciplines through the target language, and students learn about things that are only available through understanding the target language and culture. This standard was met through the practice sections of the course. As mentioned above, each lesson includes practice activities for speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The majority of these activities are focused on directing learners to learn about Russian culture, history, and events. A few of the lessons have students learning about Russian writers and literature. The richness of Russian literature, especially its poetry, is only available through the Russian language.

The comparisons standard focuses on helping students compare and contrast the elements of their native language and culture with the target language and culture. This standard includes two sub-standards: students understand the nature of language through comparing their language to the target language, and students understand the concept of culture through comparing their culture to the target culture(s). As mentioned above in the discussion of the culture standard, this course contains lessons entitled "Learn the Concept." The focus of these lessons is to contrast the

concept of a Russian grammar principle to an English principle. For example, the way Russians form a possessive sentence is typically not through the verb “to have” as it is in English. Russians instead use a phrasing that roughly translates to “at me there is.” This lesson briefly introduces this distinction and then allows learners to both practice phrasing and English sentence in the way that a Russian would say it, and deciphering the way a Russian would say a phrase into how it is properly said in English. Several of these instructional pieces include a short explanation about why Russian culture might affect the phrasing of a particular principle.

The communities principle is focused on helping students participate in multilingual communities. This standard has two sub-standards: students use the language both within and beyond the school setting, and students become lifelong learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment. The course is structured so that many of the activities for a lesson include having students interact with other students in the course through evaluating another student’s work, listening to another student’s narration, or several other similar activities. This aspect has helped the ironically named “Independent Study” course become more communal in nature. Additionally, each of the tasks of the lesson are centered around practical situations that the students are likely to find themselves in outside of the classroom. For example, the first lesson is focused primarily on asking others about and telling about one’s family. If and when the students meet someone who speaks Russian, it is likely that these skills will be needed and utilized during the conversation.

### **Communicative Instruction**

In addition to the above-mentioned standards, I was expected to follow current research in language learning to make the course a successful language-learning experience. My goal was to provide a way for students spread across the world to reach an intermediate proficiency level



in Russian, learning the appropriate vocabulary and mastering the grammar at a high-school second-year level. This was to be accomplished by engaging the learners in meaningful communicative activities rooted in authentic contexts. Through my experience teaching Russian at the Missionary Training Center, my education in Linguistics and TESOL, and my research of language acquisition, I have found that language learning is most successful when learners use the language to engage in authentic, meaningful communication. Additionally, many research articles have been published to show that communication and interaction are vital elements in effective language-learning programs (Long, 1996; Swain, 1995).

Communicative language instruction began to become a focus in language learning classrooms in the late 1970s (Spada, 2007). Savignon (2001) has explained that instruction that is focused on communication “promotes the development of functional language ability through learner participation in communicative events.” According to this definition, communicative instruction not only prepares learners to communicate at some future point, but the instruction itself utilizes principles of communicative participation as an instructional element.

Communication and functional ability in a language depend on more than language accuracy, but also heavily relies on fluency. Instruction that is based on providing opportunities to communicate as part of the instruction provides learners with the opportunity to use the understanding of grammar and vocabulary that they have to improve both accuracy and fluency. This type of instruction also allows learners to discover grammar rules through the communicative practice (Richards, 2006). Communicative instruction provides a shift in the role of grammar in a language course. Traditionally, courses have revolved around mastery of grammar principles and vocabulary. Richards (2006, p. 9) asserted, “While grammatical competence is needed to produce grammatically correct sentences, attention has shifted to the

knowledge and skills needed to use grammar and other aspects of language appropriately for different communicative purposes such as making requests, giving advice, making suggestions, describing wishes and needs, and so on.” Modern research in language learning suggests that the focus of course ought to revolve around communicative competencies instead of grammatical mastery.

### **Real-world Tasks**

There is considerable research that supports the notion that effective learning is most likely to occur as students engage in solving real-world problems (Merrill, 2007; Naidu, 2003). Problems for language learners are simply communicative obstacles, where the learner wishes to communicate in a certain situation and cannot because a lack of language ability. Language learning research refers to this phenomenon as an information gap. When one person has information that he or she desires to share with another or when an individual requests information from another, communicative language ability is necessary (Neu & Reeser, 1997). Authentic communication is more likely to occur as activities in a course are structured such that students need to use their language ability in order to either share or obtain information (Richards, 2006). This is why the goal of the course design was to enable students to solve these problems by learning to use the target language to communicate certain language tasks in context.

When dealing with the design of a distance learning language course, the goal mentioned above is met with many challenges. These challenges become evident through several questions. How can a learner communicate when the mode of presentation is through a computer screen? In the last decade, much research has been conducted on computer-assisted language learning, or CALL. Many of these articles discuss the challenge of using a computer as a source for

interactive communication. Most of the research accepts that communicating with computers is impossible, and focuses on using computers and technology to perform other functions in language learning, like providing feedback. Warschauer (1996) shows how computers and programs can effectively create environments through which students can elicit spontaneous responses and thus communicate. Others have suggested that the only way to really use computers in communication is by providing the means for students and teachers to communicate with each other, through chats and video-conferencing. (Blake, 2000; Hurd, 2006; Hymes, 1971; Poon, 2003).

How can individual online learners feel engaged in the context of the lessons? The topic of participation and engagement is an important topic discussed in lots of the literature on distance learning. In the journal *Distance Education*, one of the leading journals in research for distance learning, 10% of the articles from 2000 to 2010 deal directly with exploring learner participation and engagement in distance learning. Additionally, the word “participation” appears in the top 15 most common words in the titles of the articles for the same time frame. (Oviatt, Burdis, & West, 2011). Mazzolini and Maddison (2002) have discussed the benefits of engaging students through online discussion forums, where instructors act more as facilitators (guide on the side) rather than dominate the discussion (sage on the stage). Kuboni and Martin (2004) also suggest that incorporating some form of online discussion between students increases participation and learning in the course.

How can learners view language in its proper role as a means for communication, and not an end of study? When learners sign up for a class, learning the subject material of that class is usually the purpose in their minds of why they are taking that class. When students sign up to take a language-learning class, learning the language becomes the primary goal of the class.

Research has shown, however, that language learning is more effective when the language is viewed more as a tool or means to accomplish some other objective rather than being an end in itself. Spolsky (1989) lists a variety of conditions for effective language learning in his synthesis of literature. Among these conditions that he found was contextualized learning, meaning learning language to accomplish specific objectives in a context. He argues that this is a necessary condition in order for a learner to be able to functionally communicate in another language. Additional research in distance learning found that if interaction and usage ability is the goal of the learning program, it is advisable to situate the learning in a context in which the acquired skills will be used (Ronteltap & Eurlings, 2002).

As a summary, the following criteria were established for the project, derived from both the imposed criteria from the ACTFL 5 C's and from modern research in both language acquisition and distance learning. .

- The course will incorporate the ACTFL's standards of foreign-language instruction.
- The course will be structured around allowing students to learn through meaningful communicative grammar instruction.
- The contexts of the lessons will be engaging by encouraging user interaction and focusing the instruction around real-world language tasks and contexts, for example making purchases and meeting people.

In later sections I will discuss how the design attempted to include solutions to the obstacles of the course by following these criteria.

## Design Process

### Rationale

I have reviewed and considered several design approaches for this project. Andrade (2009) presented a new model for language learning design in distance education. She promoted a design where students are given the expectation of becoming self-regulated learners. She showed how a design can have a structure-like scaffolding that allows language-learning students to exercise their own initiative in learning. Her design rests on six dimensions, or principles of design that enable this kind of learning. They are: motive, methods, time, physical environment, social environment, and performance. These dimensions guide the designer in answering for students the following questions about their learning: Why should they learn? How should they learn? When should they learn? Where should they learn? With whom should they learn? And what should they learn? There is one dimension that I found compelling and included in my design approach. The time dimension helps the designer give learners direction as to *when* they should learn. In typical designs, the designer either coerces or instructs the users to engage in certain parts of the course in a set order for a set time. Rather Andrade stated that the designer should only dictate a learning schedule when absolutely necessary, and all other times allow learners to engage in the content in the order they feel best. This helps the students feel more in control and autonomous in the learning process. While following this model entirely would have taken me away from my goals of focusing on communication and context in distance language learning, I adopted the time portion in my design approach (Andrade, 2009). Below as I introduce my design narrative, I will discuss in particular how this aspect informed my design.

Another design model that I considered was rapid-prototyping. Tripp and Bichelmeyer (1990) presented an ISD model for implementing rapid-prototyping. The basic model includes

conducting needs and content analysis, and then setting objectives, constructing prototypes, utilizing prototypes, and installing maintenance systems in no specific order. They showed that the design facilitates flexibility in the last four steps, and that each step has the potential to inform another (Tripp and Bichelmeyer, 1990). Whitten (1989) analyzed the pros and cons to a rapid-prototyping approach. Although rapid prototyping increases creativity, accelerates the development cycle, and encourages client and student participation, it isn't amenable to a design environment where there exists prescribed, set objectives from the start (Whitten, 1989). Since my design falls into this situation with the ACTFL standards, I decided against this model. Additionally, BYU IS was unable to devote the appropriate resources to accomplish the development of several prototype iterations throughout the design.

The main design approach that I chose for this course centered around five principles of instruction described by Merrill (2007) (see Table 3). After studying several design models, he stated that every design model includes these five principles. First, the design promotes learning when it engages learners in real-world problems. Next, the design promotes learning while activating prior-knowledge as a foundation for new knowledge. Next, the design promotes learning when it demonstrates new knowledge to the learners. Next, the design promotes learning when it helps learners apply the new knowledge. Finally, the design promotes learning when it helps the students integrate the new knowledge into the learner's world (Merrill, 2007). Since these five principles are extracted from a collection of theories and models for design, I decided to establish these principles as the backbone of my design.

Table 3  
*First Principles of Instruction Description from Merrill*

Principle	Description	Example
Problem	Learning is promoted when learners are engaged in solving real-world problems.	Exposing the students at the outset of the instruction to the problem they will face and be expected to solve upon completing the instruction.
Activation	Learning is promoted when existing knowledge is activated as a foundation for new knowledge.	Encouraging students to use prior experience and knowledge by designing tasks that build upon previously completed tasks.
Demonstration	Learning is promoted when new knowledge is demonstrated to the learner.	Demonstrating how using the instructional pieces of a course individually prepare the student for addressing the problem.
Application	Learning is promoted when new knowledge is applied by the learner.	Providing structured opportunities to use what was learned to participate in practices and provide feedback relevant to the learning problem.
Integration	Learning is promoted when new knowledge is integrated into the learner's world.	Providing the learner with an authentic opportunity to address and solve the learning problem.

For my design approach, each lesson was designed to meet each of Merrill's five principles. For language learning, real-world problems include accomplishing language tasks, such as making purchases or meeting someone. Accordingly, each lesson begins with the presentation of a language task or "problem." I began the design by organizing the content of the course into language tasks. Next, each lesson includes a review of previous grammar and vocabulary that is relevant to the task. This will allow learners to realize what they already know that can be useful in solving the problem presented. Each lesson also includes the demonstration of new knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, and culture) pertaining to accomplishing the task. In my design, I not only presented the new material, but demonstrated how this material is helpful in solving the language problem of the lesson. Each lesson includes activities and assignments

that help the learners apply the knowledge (both existing and new) in each of the fundamental language skills (writing, reading, speaking, and listening). The students are directed to apply what they have learned (or already knew) for each language skill in activities focused on solving the problem. Finally, the learners are expected to integrate the knowledge by actually solving the problem. If the problem is learning how to tell someone about one's family, then the learner will actually "solve" this problem by telling someone about his/her family in the target language. This "solution" acts as a performance evaluation that comprises a large portion of the assessment plan for each lesson. While the presentation of the problem will always be the first thing the students engage in and the assessment will always be the last thing students do, the rest will be open for the students to do in whichever order they prefer. This having been said, the course will give suggestions that will help students know which activities might be more helpful in which order (for example, it would encourage students to study certain vocabulary before engaging in a communicative grammar activity that uses this vocabulary). Appendix B includes the outline of the individual lesson structure.

### **Design/Development Narrative**

As mentioned previously, the original design/development plan was for me to complete the majority of the design process by the end of December in 2010 in order to oversee the development process that would ensue upon completion of the design process by the end of April, 2011. At that point, the plan was to conduct a limited implementation of the course and conduct an evaluation over the course of the next several months. The evaluation was to be completed in August of 2011, at which time BYU IS was to implement the course in full. Several compounding, unforeseen factors led towards a large deviation from both the plan and the ultimate development of the course (see Table 4). Below I will outline the major deviations of



the plan, including the cause of the deviation, the affect the deviation had on the design and development of the course, and the practical lessons learned about designing a course for a large institution.

During the Fall of 2010, I was able to design the structure of the course, including a detailed content map, assessment plan, and lesson format. I also provided the conceptual framework, including detailed storyboards of the vocabulary learning and communicative grammar instruction programs that were to be developed for use in the course. I presented the design to Mary Stevens and other BYU IS personnel on October 28, 2010. Subsequently, I began working with a programmer employed at BYU IS that was assigned to develop the grammar instruction program that I had designed. I met with the developer often for the next couple of months to check on the progress and help the developer identify issues with the emerging program. In the beginning of 2011, development of the lessons in the course was to ensue, but this was the time that BYU IS was unable to supply developers to work on the course. Additionally, the developer that I was meeting with to develop the grammar instruction program was given several other assignments. He was only able to allocate a small portion of his time to the development of the program. For a time, both design and development progress stopped. Until I was sure that the program could be developed, I was hesitant to continue creating storyboards for the rest of the grammar instruction activities for the remaining lessons in the course. Additionally, no work had been done to create the vocabulary learning program that I had designed. I learned that as a designer of a course for a major institution, I was at the mercy of the priorities of said institution. Since my project fell lower on the priority list, I lost valuable resources needed to keep the development progressing as planned.

Table 4  
*Proposed vs. Actual Deadlines for Design and Development*

Proposed		Actual	
Date	Event	Date	Event
September 2010	Begin project design	September 2010	Began project design
December 2010	Finish design of course structure	December 2010	Finished design of course structure
April 2011	Finish development, launch initial implementation	August 2011	Adjusted assessment plan
August 2011	Collect implementation data for evaluation	February 2012	Finished content development
		April 2012	Finished development of entire 1 <sup>st</sup> lesson
		May 2012	Conducted limited implementation and new evaluation plan
		Future date	Finish development of remaining lessons
		Future date	Implement course in its entirety

In April 2011, I began reviewing my design of the course, hoping that I could spend the time waiting for the developers productively to find ways to improve my design. During this term, I was enrolled in IP&T 652 – Assessing Learning Outcomes. I realized that my assessment plan for the course was primarily based on performance evaluation. While this was a necessary part of the course, I realized that additional assessment tools were required in order to adequately provide an assessment of whether students were actually achieving the intended outcomes of the course. In order to assess retention of vocabulary words and understanding of grammar principles, I decided to include a supplied-response test. In the summer of 2011, I adjusted my

assessment plan to include an exam-type assessment format to supplement the performance assessment tools already present in the design. I was able to develop an exam for the first lesson, but quickly realized that I was unable to proceed without having first developed the grammar instruction pieces for the later lessons. Progression halted as I found myself again at the mercy of the BYU IS developers. I learned that the assessment plan for a course is vital in order to learn whether the objectives of the course are actually being met, and that a diverse assessment plan was needed in my case to accomplish this goal.

By the end of 2011, I began to grow uneasy at the stalemate that was the development of the course that I had designed. BYU IS had recently implemented a new course delivery platform and was busy updating the high-demand courses to the new platform. I realized that if the design project was to continue, I would need to take matters more into my own hands. I contacted Mary and was told that there was a student that was able to devote a few hours a week to begin developing the course outlines to be used by the new platform. It was at this point that I realized how deviant my design was from the standard design of courses at BYU IS. I learned that the typical practice for deploying a course was to first create the lesson elements in Adobe InDesign, then export them into Adobe Dreamweaver to obtain the HTML code to add the element to BrainHoney (the new course delivery platform). This was done for the majority of the elements with the exception of the interactive elements that BrainHoney could deploy natively. After learning about this process, I realized that the interactive nature of my design would be severely dampened through this process. In the beginning of 2012, I agreed with Mary Stevens to develop the first lesson of the course through HTML, CSS, and the native BrainHoney applications in an effort to preserve the interactive nature of my design. I learned that understanding the process of

development was a fundamental aspect that would inform early design decisions, and that I made a significant error by not understanding the process in the beginning.

By mid-April 2012, I had completed the development of the first lesson of the course. Since the grammar instruction program and vocabulary program hadn't been developed into workable versions, I was forced to adjust my design into a more static version aimed at accomplishing the same goals. After the first lesson had been developed, I carried out the evaluation step of my design and was finished by early May 2012.

### **Lesson Design**

The course that I designed consists of 11 individual lessons. The lessons are designed to build on each other in terms of the complexity of the tasks of each lesson and the vocabulary and grammar principles introduced. About every three lessons, there is a review lesson that introduces no new grammar principles but allows students to review what they have learned in a connected but new context. Each lesson follows a template in terms of structure and type of learning activities. The lessons begin with a brief welcome page that is meant to act as a transparent description of what the students will be expected to learn in the lesson, and how this builds on what they have already learned in previous lessons. The students are then led to a page that outlines the tasks that they will be expected to do at the end of the lesson. At this point, they can listen to an audio clip of an example of a Russian speaker completing the task.

### **Vocabulary**

The students are then free to progress through the lesson in any order they choose, though the default order is suggested. Following the page that introduces the performance tasks, there is a page that outlines the various vocabulary lists and activities that the students will need to learn to be successful in the tasks. This page contains links to PDF vocabulary lists separated by topic that contain the Russian word and the English translation for the word. For example, lesson 1 contains two vocabulary groups centered on getting to know about another person's family. One group is a list of various family members and the other is a list of relevant descriptive adjectives the students can use to describe their family members. In addition to the vocabulary lists, this page also contains a link to a flash-based flashcard activity that helps students memorize the vocabulary for each vocabulary group. This page also contains a link to a flash-based game that

tests retention of the vocabulary. These games vary from lesson to lesson, but include an interactive matching activity, memory activity, and multiple choice type activity.

### **Grammar**

The students are then directed towards a page that links all of the grammar activities for the lesson. This page includes three types of documents. The primary mode of grammar instruction is an activity entitled “Review/Learning the Grammar.” This activity is present for each grammar principle reviewed in the lesson and for each new principle introduced. There are typically three to five grammar principles either reviewed or presented in each lesson. These documents contain a list of vocabulary organized in a way that enables learners to create questions and responses relevant to their tasks centered on a particular grammar principle. These activities and their potential will be discussed in more detail in the “Design Solutions” section of the report.

As discussed earlier in the constraints section of this report, there are also activities entitled “Learn the Concept.” These activities are geared to help learners understand the concept of the grammar principle in English before they are exposed to the principle in Russian. Only a handful of these lessons will be included in the course, as they are only necessary when the phrasing of a particular grammar principle differs drastically from English. These activities illustrate the differences by comparing several examples of how a phrase would be said in English, and then how it would be said in English by applying the concept of the Russian grammar. For example, the English phrase “I need a friend” would be phrased “to me is needed a friend” when applying the concept of the Russian grammar to express need. The learner is then directed to either take an English phrase and phrase it according to the Russian concept or take a phrase that applies the Russian concept and show how it is properly said in English. The final

piece of grammar instruction is simply directing learners towards the Russian grammar book, “Russian Course: A Complete Course for Beginners (see Appendix C) (Brown, 1996).” The learners are directed towards specific pages that give more explanation and practice opportunities for the grammar principle.

### **Practice Activities**

The next section of the course gives learners the opportunity to practice the vocabulary and grammar in the context of the tasks of the lesson. The learners engage in activities for each of the language skills, (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). The Reading, writing, and listening practices were developed using BrainHoney native applications. They consist of a page of instructions and then a prompt. For the reading practice, there is a small Russian passage about the task or Russian culture that pertains to the task, and the students are asked to answer a few comprehension questions about what they read. For the writing practice, the learners are given a prompt and expected to answer the prompt in a paragraph in Russian. Often, the learners are expected to research an aspect of Russian culture or history to adequately answer and respond to the prompt. For the listening practice, the learners listen to a short audio clip about the task or culture pertaining to the task and answer a few comprehension questions. The speaking practice is conducted individually with the instructor of the course. The learners are directed to schedule an appointment with the instructor via email. They are given a role and the instructor is given a role and they are directed to conduct a conversation with the instructor while playing the role. The role is directly connected to the performance task at the end of the lesson, and incorporates the vocabulary and grammar presented in the lesson.

## Assessment

The vocabulary, grammar, and practice sections comprise the instructional pieces of the lessons. The final section of each lesson is the assessment section. This page gives an overview of the entire assessment plan for the lesson, including both the tasks that serve as performance assessments and the lesson test. This page also directs learners toward the content outline and table of specifications for the exam to help them know the number and type of items, and the content that will be covered on the exam. The assessment plan for the course is iterated for each lesson. Each lesson employs a combination of a performance assessment and an item-response exam. Both types of assessment are meant to be formal, and are placed at the end of the lesson.

**Performance assessment.** The performance assessments are conducted through the lesson tasks that drive the instruction of each lesson. The strength of the performance assessment is its ability to mimic real-world performance expectations (Wiggins, 1989). In language learning, a real-world performance expectation is the ability to communicate with another person through a conversation or through another written medium, including email and notes (Pica, Kanagy, & Falodun, 1993). The performance assessment for each lesson consists of the completion of two to three tasks. In each lesson, there is at least one task in which the student is expected to upload an audio file of that he or she has recorded and at least one task in which the student contributes a written response. This assessment is designed to assess the higher levels of creating and evaluating according to Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, 1956; Shavelson, Baxter, and Pine, 1991). Students are expected to synthesize what they have learned into a coherent response that communicates information to the listener. The student is given specific criteria for the completion of each task, which also comprises the rating scale given to the instructor. Figure 4 shows a screen shot of task 1 for lesson 1 in which students are expected to upload an audio



recording of a narration of the members in their family. They are given specific criteria, including a time limit of one to two minutes, a requirement to describe at least five family members and a requirement to include at least three sentences describing each of the five members.

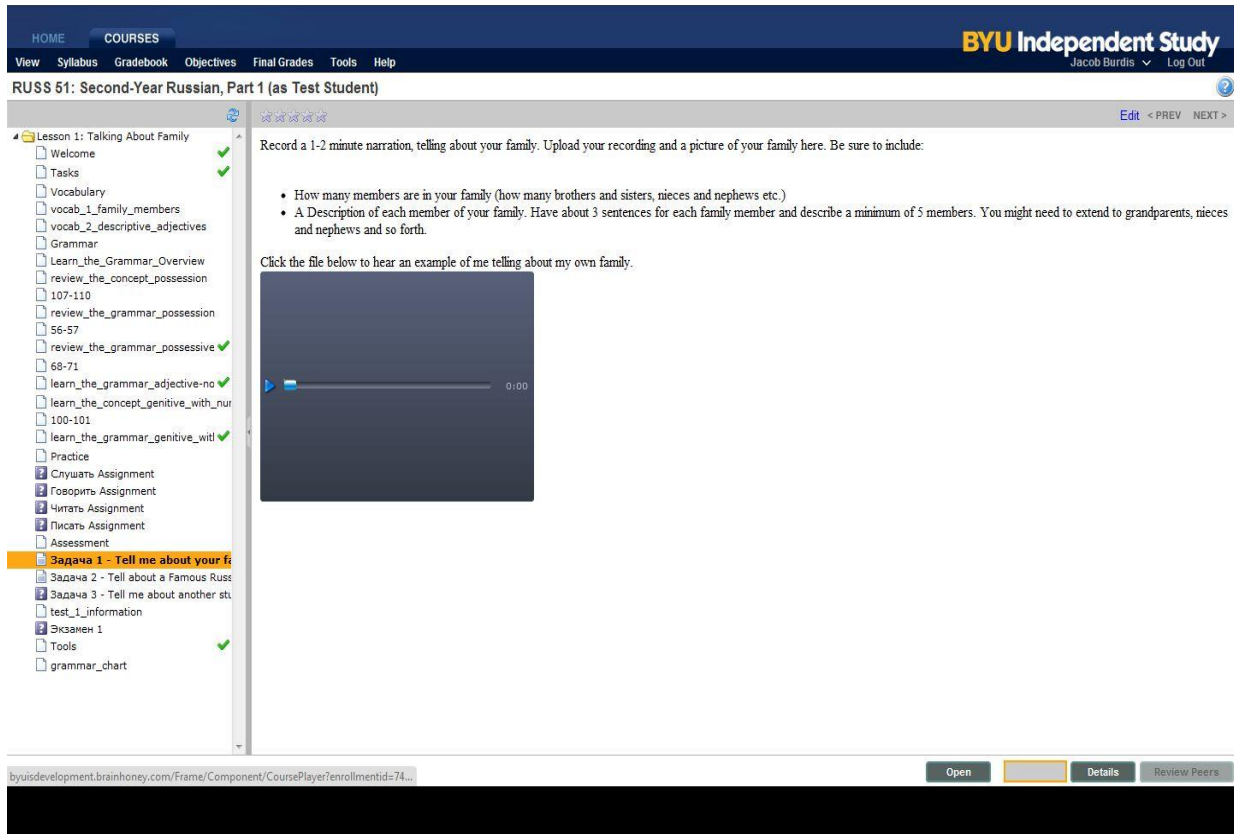


Figure 4. Screen shot of the BrainHoney assessment item for task 1 in the 1<sup>st</sup> lesson of the course.

I chose to use a rating scale as the assessment grading tool because of its ability to help the assessor measure complex performance in a holistic manner (Matthews, 1990; Upshur and Turner, 1994). Figure 5 shows the rating scale given to the instructor to assign points to the students' responses according to the criteria mentioned above and also according to their correct

use of the vocabulary and grammar presented in the lesson. In this case, the use of appropriate family members, descriptive adjectives, and correct adjective endings are included in the rating scale in addition to the criteria mentioned above. The scores of the assessments are posted to the grade book section of BrainHoney and are immediately available to the students.

<b>Rating Scale for Task 1</b>									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students describe 1-2 family members</li> <li>• Students use 1 sentence to describe each family member</li> <li>• Students rarely use new vocabulary words correctly</li> <li>• Students make more than 5 grammar mistakes with genitive case and numbers</li> <li>• Students make more than 5 grammar mistakes with adjective endings</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students describe 3 family members</li> <li>• Students use 1 sentence to describe each family member</li> <li>• Students sometimes use new vocabulary words correctly</li> <li>• Students make 3-5 grammar mistakes with genitive case and numbers</li> <li>• Students make 3-5 grammar mistakes with adjective endings</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students describe 4 family members</li> <li>• Students use 2 sentences to describe each family member</li> <li>• Students mostly use new vocabulary words correctly</li> <li>• Students make 1-2 grammar mistakes with genitive case and numbers</li> <li>• Students make 1-2 grammar mistakes with adjective endings</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students describe 5 family members</li> <li>• Students use 3 sentences to describe each family member</li> <li>• Students use new vocabulary words correctly</li> <li>• Students make no grammar mistakes with genitive case and numbers</li> <li>• Students make no grammar mistakes with adjective endings</li> </ul>	

Figure 5. Rating scale used by the instructor in order to assign a grade to the students’ performance on task 1 in lesson 1.

**Examination.** Each lesson includes an item-response examination that is meant to act as a tool to assess students’ progress in learning the vocabulary and grammar of the lessons. The examination consists primarily of multiple-choice items, but also includes matching, short answer, and essay items. The examinations are created through a native assessment builder application of BrainHoney. The items are intended to assess students’ progress on multiple levels

of learning, including knowing, understanding, and higher-level learning (analyzing, applying, etc.)(Bloom, 1957). The creation of each examination followed the steps mentioned by Miller (2009). I began by identifying the generalized instructional objectives and student learning outcomes of the course (see Appendix D). These objectives and outcomes were taken from the design goals mentioned earlier in this report, including the ACTFL standards. Gronlund (1995) explained that general instructional objectives need to be constructed from the design criteria that describe what the student does, describe the intended product of learning, and maintain the appropriate level of generality to be applicable to varied content in each lesson. Student learning outcomes should start with a verb, be observable, and be free from a specific context. I constructed objectives following these criteria and then proceeded to create a content outline for the lesson that identifies the vocabulary groups, grammar principles, and language skill competencies that are instructed in the lesson. After establishing these outcomes and outline, I followed the item-creation principles presented by Miller. I selected items that most appropriately accomplished the specified objectives and content for each lesson. The items varied from selected response items, such as multiple choice, matching, and alternative response to supplied response items such as short answer and essay questions. After creating the items, I created a document to give to the students that gave an overview of what was included on the test in order to establish clear expectations and transparency. This document included a table of specifications (see figure 6), content outline, and item type analysis.

**Content Outline:**

This test is a summative assessment for lesson 1 for the Russian 51 course. This lesson includes a grammar review for possession, gender, and the genitive case and includes instruction for adjective-noun agreement and genitive with numbers. The lesson is also focused on learning about the role of families in Russian culture. The outline below shows specifically which content will be covered.

A. Vocabulary

1. Descriptive adjectives
2. Titles of family members

B. Grammar.

1. Possession
2. Gender
3. Genitive Case with numbers
4. Adjective/noun agreement

C. Reading and writing proficiency

1. Russian Families

**Table of Specifications for Project 4**

Content	Knows	Understands	Higher-Level	Total # of items	Percentage of items
1. Vocabulary	9			9	38%
2. Grammar	1	9	3	13	54%
3. Reading/Writing			2	2	8%
Total # of items	10	9	5	24	
Percentage of items	42%	38%	21%		

**Item Type:**

- 6 Matching
- 14 Multiple Choice
- 3 Short Answer
- 1 Essay

Figure 6. An example of the test information sheet given to students on the assessment page of the course.

The examinations were administered through the BrainHoney course system. Students were only allowed to attempt each test 1 time, and the selected-response items are automatically scored upon completion through the software. The supply response items were graded by the instructor—the essay responses graded by a rating scale similar to the one used for the other performance assessment items. The instructor has the freedom through the course to give individualized feedback on the individual items. Students will be able to see which items they get

correct and incorrect, and the instructor can choose to give individualized feedback on any item, especially the free response items.

As a summary, the design consists of 4 major pieces—vocabulary, grammar, language skill practice, and the assessments. The students are confronted with the assessment expectations at the beginning of the lesson through the tasks. Then they engage in the instructional pieces as tools to help them prepare to accomplish the lesson tasks. It is also important to note that there is a resources page that is the same for each lesson that includes a grammar case-ending chart for Russian that I developed and links to several resources to help the learners know how to type in Russian. The case-ending chart provides the endings for each type of noun, adjective, and possessive adjective for each gender in each of the six cases for singular and plural patterns.

### **Design Criteria Solutions**

As noted above, this project addressed and aligned to certain design criteria imposed by the client from ACTFL and modern research in language acquisition and distance learning. These criteria include (1) incorporating ACTFL's standards, the five C's: communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and communities; (2) engaging the student in meaningful communicative instruction; and (3) structuring the course around realistic tasks. In this section, I will discuss how this design product followed these criteria and addresses the problems mentioned above.

#### **ACTFL Standards**

As prescribed by the ACTFL standards for language instruction, each lesson of the course incorporates the principles of communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. The principle of communication is accomplished through several aspects of the course. The grammar instruction pieces of the course entitled "Learn/Review the Grammar" specifically prepare students to be able to communicate by enabling them to ask and answer questions in the context of the lesson task (more of the design of these instructional pieces is mentioned below in the communicative instruction section). Additionally, the students' assignments in each lesson are built on sharing information about each task with other students in the course. At least one of the tasks of each lesson involve students listening and responding to the audio recordings submitted by other students in the course. Also, in each of the lessons the students will engage in a communicative conversation with the teacher through a speaking appointment mediated either through a video chat format (Skype, Gmail chat) or over the telephone. The student and teacher will role play a situation that requires the use of the grammar and vocabulary presented in the lesson in the context of the task of the lesson.

Each lesson includes assignments and readings that expose students to Russia's unique culture. These assignments show the students how knowledge of a piece of Russian culture is relevant to their performing the assignments and being prepared to accomplish the task. For example, in the "giving directions" lesson, students learn about the transportation system in Russia, which is vital in knowing how to get around in Russia, and subsequently giving and receiving directions. Also, the entire structure of the course encourages learners to view the language as a means to an end. Students use the language to learn a variety of things in the course, including grammar, history, and culture. None of the instructional pieces of the course are presented as important in and of themselves—they are always presented as tools that learners can add to their tool belt in order to succeed in accomplishing the real-world tasks.

Students are enabled and assigned in the course to make comparisons for both the culture and the language. In each lesson, the students are asked to make judgments and express their opinions about what they learn about Russian culture. Additionally, many of the assignments are to compare what they learn about Russian culture to their own. For example, the writing assignment for the second lesson directs students to read about the educational system in Russia and compare it with the educational system of their own country. Comparisons between the languages happen in each lesson as the grammar is internalized through the *Learn the Grammar* lessons. This activity shows how a certain grammar is presented in Russian and compares it, more implicitly than explicitly, to English. Also, where Russian grammar and usage significantly deviates from English, the "Learn the Concept" activity is designed to compare the differences and allow learners to make comparisons between the phrasing and usage of the two languages.

The principle of communities is possibly the most difficult to accomplish because of the nature of independent, distance education. The course takes advantage of the BrainHoney system

by creating tasks and activities that force students to review the work of their peers and respond, creating a feeling of communal collaboration. For example, the second lesson directs students to choose their favorite occupation and write a paragraph about why they plan to engage in that occupation. Then they are directed to read another student's submission and respond, telling why they prefer their own choice to the choice of the other student. In addition to this feature in the course, the tasks encourage students to participate in legitimate communities by helping them practice and role play situations that they will actually be in if they ever get the opportunity to interact with a native Russian speaker.

### **Meaningful Communicative Instruction**

The principle of communication was briefly discussed in the context of the ACTFL standards for language teaching, but its significance rises above its place as one of the 5 C's. As stated in the design criteria section, communication is the fundamental building block of language. Language is the fundamental tool through which human communication and interaction takes place. The design of this lesson focuses on enabling communication as much as possible. The *Learn the Grammar* lessons utilized in this course were based off of instructional materials used at the Missionary Training Center (MTC) in Provo, UT. The MTC refers to these instructional pieces as board displays. Board displays are a communicative method developed and used at the Missionary Training Center to provide teachers with tools to introduce new grammar concepts in communicative settings. The goal of an effective board display is to ensure that authentic and engaging communication in the target language occurs from the very beginning and throughout grammar instruction. This approach and method frowns upon lengthy grammar explanations followed by sparse and disconnected sentence writing or mindless



patterning. The methodology behind using board displays includes enabling the learners to communicate using the target language from the very beginning of the learning process.

A board display follows specific criteria to accomplish this task. Figure 7 shows an example of a board display. A board display includes a header sentence, which is a sentence in the target language that illustrates the particular grammar principle being taught. Nothing is done to manipulate or emphasize the header sentence. This sentence serves as the organizer for the rest of the display. Underneath the English translation of the header sentence, a line is drawn to separate the header sentence (which is in a larger font) and the rest of the display. Below the line, columns of words are formed underneath each word of the header sentence. The focus of the display is the formation of the target grammar principle, and how this is done depends upon the principle. Typically, the word that is changed or modified by the principle is included in its base form and then additions or changes to the form are shown. Often this is done in the way of charts, but not always. For example, a board display showing verb conjugations would show a column of infinitive verbs and then a chart directly to the right showing the endings needed for each conjugation. The display also clearly indicates how questions and negative responses are formed, giving an example of each at the bottom. This provides learners with the tools to begin communicating through asking and answering questions with a finite list of words using a particular grammar construction.

**Possessive Pronouns**

	<b>Иисус Христос</b> <i>Jesus Christ</i>	-- <i>is</i>	<b>мой</b> <i>my</i>		<b>Спаситель.</b> <i>Savior.</i>	
<b>Да,</b> <i>Yes,</i>	<b>Иисус Христос</b> <i>Jesus Christ</i>	-- <i>is/are</i>	<b>мой (мои)</b> <i>my (pl)</i>	<b>наш(и)</b> <i>our (pl)</i>	<b>Спаситель.</b> <i>Savior.</i>	?
<b>Нет,</b> <i>No,</i>	<b>Бог</b> <i>God</i>	<b>(есть)</b> <i>is/are</i>	<b>твой (твои)</b> <i>your (pl)</i>	<b>ваш(и)</b> <i>your formal (pl)</i>	<b>Искупитель.</b> <i>Redeemer.</i>	
<b>(Кто...?)</b> <i>(Who...?)</i>	<b>Святой Дух</b> <i>The Holy Ghost</i>	<b>(не)</b> <i>(not)</i>	<b>его/её</b> <i>his/hers</i>	<b>их</b> <i>their</i>	<b>Небесный Отец.</b> <i>Heavenly Father.</i>	
	<b>Они</b> <i>They</i>				<b>друг (друзья).</b> <i>friend(s).</i>	
	<b>Это</b> <i>That</i>				<b>папа / брат / дедушка.</b> <i>dad / brother / grandfather.</i>	
			<b>моя</b> <i>my</i>	<b>наша</b> <i>our</i>	<b>основа.</b> <i>foundation.</i>	
			<b>твоя</b> <i>your</i>	<b>ваша</b> <i>your formal</i>	<b>надежда.</b> <i>hope.</i>	
			<b>его/её</b> <i>his/hers</i>	<b>их</b> <i>their</i>	<b>радость.</b> <i>joy.</i>	
					<b>мама / сестра / бабушка.</b> <i>mom / sister / grandmother.</i>	

<p><b>Святой Дух -- ваш друг?</b> <i>Is the Holy Ghost your friend?</i></p> <p><b>Святой Дух -- наш Небесный Отец?</b> <i>Is the Holy Ghost our Heavenly Father?</i></p> <p><b>Кто есть Иисус Христос?</b> <i>Who is Jesus Christ?</i></p>	<p><b>Да, Святой Дух -- мой друг.</b> <i>Yes, the Holy Ghost is my friend.</i></p> <p><b>Нет, Бог -- наш Небесный Отец.</b> <i>No, God is our Heavenly Father.</i></p> <p><b>Иисус Христос -- моя надежда.</b> <i>Jesus Christ is my hope.</i></p>
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about and expressing possession or ownership  
Context: Testimony / Sharing a Family Picture

Figure 7. An example of a board display in Russian that focuses on teaching how numbers affect the case of the following nouns. The context of the display is asking and talking about family members.

The use of board displays also follows a specific methodology that enables learners to use the grammar form in communication. An instructor would begin by modeling the header sentence using the grammar construction and any other difficult-to-pronounce words. Then, the instructor would demonstrate how to manipulate the words below the header sentence by asking and answering basic (mostly yes or no) questions. Yes or no questions allow communication to occur while constricting the response to repeat the grammar form. Then the instructor would engage the class in asking and answering yes or no questions, first as a group and then in pairs or small groups. Afterwards, the instructor would model asking and answering open-ended

questions, and again engage the class as a group and then in small groups. This allows learners to communicate from the beginning with simple yes or no questions, and then progress to asking and answering more open-ended questions that use the principle. By the end of the experience, learners have used the principle in multiple sentences and can typically give an accurate explanation of how the grammar principle works (without ever receiving such an explicit explanation themselves).

Since this course design is for an independent study distance education course, the learners do not have the luxury of having a teacher to model and use a board display. For this reason, I have created a demonstration page as part of the lesson that walks the students through the process step by step. This demonstration page includes four steps that the learners follow in order to make the best use of the “Learn/Review the Grammar” activities: get the pattern, manipulate the pattern, ask and answer questions, and create your own sentences. Figure 8 shows an example of the second step on the demonstration page. The first step encourages students to read the header sentence and example sentences out loud several times, focusing on the way that each sentence uses the grammar pattern. The next step encourages students to use the header sentence as a model and to use the vocabulary in the display to interchange one word of the header sentence at a time to manipulate the header sentence, creating new sentences that use the same pattern. The next step directs students to pose a question and then answer the question, using the structure of the lesson. Once they have mastered the words in the activity, they are directed to add vocabulary words either from their vocabulary lists, previous experience, or from the dictionary to create new, meaningful sentences following the pattern that will be more applicable to them individually in completing the language tasks. This activity helps students engage in communicative language learning that is focused on the message they are attempting

to share instead of the grammar they are supposed to use. Krashen (1982) stated, “Acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language – natural communication – in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding.” This process enables students to use each *Learn the Grammar* activity as an opportunity to prepare for communication during the language skill practice activities and also during the language tasks.

**Step 2 - Manipulate the Pattern**

- Using the header sentence as an example, pick one of the words and switch it with a word in the column below. Say the new sentence **outloud**. Repeat with other words in the column.

	<b>У</b> At	<b>меня</b> me	<b>есть</b> there is	<b>хорошая семья.</b> a good family.	<b>(?)</b> raise voice to ask a question
Да, yes				<b>хорошая семья.</b> a good family	
Нет, но				<b>большая семья</b> a big family	
(Что...?) (What...?)		меня me		<b>маленькая семья</b> a small family	
		нас us	(есть) there is/are	<b>много братьев и сестёр</b> many brothers and sisters	
		тебя you (inform)		<b>собака</b> a dog	
		вас you (form/pl)		<b>кот/кошка</b> a cat	
		него/ней him/her			
У at					
(Чего...?) (What...?)	Марк Mark		нет there is/are not	<b>маленькой семьи</b> a small family	(Genitive case)
(Genitive case)	Дженни Jenny			<b>много братьев и сестёр</b> many brothers and sisters	
	Кэйти Katy			<b>собаки</b> a dog	
	Feminine American names don't change in Genitive case			<b>кота/кошки</b> a cat (mf)	

**У вас есть хорошая семья.**

**Examples:**

<p>Q. У тебя есть собака? Do you have a dog?</p> <p>A. Да, у меня есть собака. Yes, I have a dog.</p> <p>A. Нет, у меня нет собак. No, I don't have a dog.</p>	<p>Q. У Джэйкоба есть хорошая семья? Does Jacob have a good family?</p> <p>A. Да, У Джэйкоба есть хорошая семья. Yes, Jacob has a good family.</p> <p>A. Нет, у Джэйкоба нет хорошей семьи. No, Jacob doesn't have a good family.</p>
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Figure 8: Step 2 of the demonstration page designed to help students use the communicative grammar activities to their full potential.

In addition to the grammar instruction, students will engage in communication during a speaking activity with the instructor through either a video-chatting program (like Skype) or simply over the telephone. These activities will be spontaneous speaking and listening practices

based on the communicative context of the lesson. For example, if the context of the lesson is talking about families, the conversation will revolve around the instructor and student asking and answering questions about the other's family. In summary, the lesson always begins with the presentation of the communicative language tasks that students will need to engage in at the end of the lesson. They will then learn the vocabulary necessary to participate in the grammar instruction, which directly prepares them to be able to communicate. They will practice communicating during the language skill practice activities, and then complete the communicative language tasks by uploading their own audio recordings, written paragraphs, or responding to the submissions of other students.

### **Realistic Tasks**

The third design criterion for this course was that the course was to prepare students to engage and succeed in tasks that simulate real-world situations and contexts. This criterion is met primarily through the structure of the course. The foundational principle and goal of this design is to allow students to learn the target language by engaging in meaningful communication in authentic contexts. Each lesson revolves around a specific task that the learner will most likely engage in when speaking the language in authentic contexts and situations. As previously mentioned much research shows that learning is enhanced as learners engage in real-world contexts rather than fabricated ones. While the students might or might not engage in conversations in these contexts, they are engaging because students see the potential of being in the situation. Below is a list of the tasks/contexts of each lesson.

- Talking about family
- Talking about school and work
- Making purchases (Review)

- Sharing experiences
- Talking about goals and plans
- Giving directions
- Talking about vacations (Review)
- Talking about holidays and leisure time
- Talking about famous Russians in history
- Giving advice
- Preparing a friend for a visit to Russia (Final Review)

## **Course Production, Implementation, and Evaluation**

### **Use of Media and Technology**

The design of the course incorporates several different types of technology and media. The basic framework of the course will be delivered online through BrainHoney, an online learning management center. BrainHoney acts very similar to an internet hosting service. Files are uploaded to a resource folder, and then can be used and linked together to create the structure of the course (see Figure 9). The structural files that constitute the course web page are HTML documents. I originally produced the lesson structure story boards in Microsoft PowerPoint slides that illustrated the interactivity of the course through hyperlinks. The original plan was then to have a developer that was familiar with the BrainHoney system convert these files into HTML documents to build the course. There emerged two problems with this plan. First, as mentioned previously, the developers were not able to spend enough time on developing the HTML files of the course. Second, the steps that the developers took in creating the HTML files diminished the interactivity of the original design. They created files in Adobe InDesign (a product used primarily for the creation of printed materials), exported them to Adobe Dreamweaver and converted the files into HTML documents. The results were HTML web files that resembled textbooks. The files were then transplanted into BrainHoney, with no hyperlink structure. The students were expected to progress through the course by simply clicking on the “next” button, similar to turning the pages of a textbook.

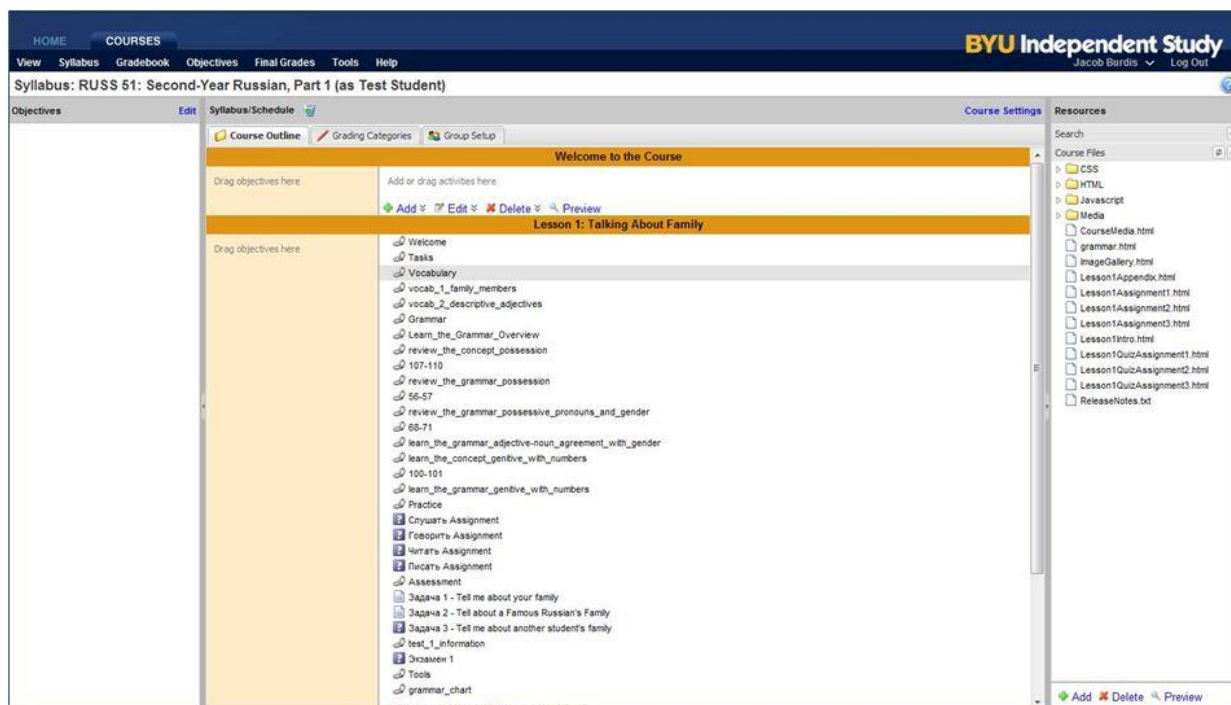


Figure 9. Screen shot of the course builder application of BrainHoney.

After agreeing with Mary Stevens to develop the first lesson of the course for implementation and evaluation purposes, I set about creating HTML documents straight from the code, avoiding the process that resulted in textbook-style web pages. I used the open source program Notepad++ to create a cascading style sheet (CSS) document and the HTML documents that linked the elements of each lesson together, in an interactive format. Instead of relying on the “next” button, students could choose from a menu which part of the lesson they would like to engage in next, giving them more control of their learning and their progress. See Figure 10 to compare an example of the webpage through the InDesign process and the same webpage developed through HTML and CSS. I created seven HTML pages, one for each section of the lesson: a welcome page, a task introduction page, a vocabulary page, a grammar page, a language skill practice page, and assessment page, and a resources page. Each of these hub pages contains links to the other interactive, media activities of the course.



The other media activities in this course included Adobe Flash files, Adobe PDF files, and native BrainHoney applications. I received Adobe Flash templates for a flashcard activity and vocabulary games created for the BYU IS introductory Arabic course. I used Notepad++ to edit the xml files to input the Russian vocabulary words and their equivalent English translations. I created the vocabulary lists, *Learn the Concept* and *Learn the Grammar* activities, and the grammar chart in the resources section using Microsoft Word and Powerpoint, which were converted to PDF documents that are read and displayed directly by the internet browser. I created the lesson tasks, practice activities, and test through native BrainHoney applications. See Appendix E to see an example of each lesson and document type.

The final step of media production was to produce audio files used to populate the flash-based vocabulary activities and for the listening practice assignment. I enlisted the help of a native Russian speaker from Yekaterinburg, Russia. We received permission from the Missionary Training Center to use a sound recording booth equipped with a high-quality microphone and computer equipment. The software used to capture the audio was Adobe Audition. I captured the native speaker reciting all of the vocabulary words and the excerpt for the listening assignment. I then used the same program to splice the audio recordings and master them for use in the course.

### **Implementation**

The final implementation date for the course has still not been decided by BYU IS. The shifting priorities mentioned above resulted in this course's production and development to be put on hold. However, for purposes of this project, I developed all the pieces of the first lesson of the course in order to facilitate a limited implementation and evaluation of the course. Since each

lesson follows a similar format, I implemented the first lesson and use it as an example of how the rest of the lessons would operate.



*Figure 10.* The image on the left is a screen shot of the welcome page for the first lesson created by a developer using the InDesign process. The image on the right is the same page created using HTML and CSS.

The implementation process for the course is made very simple through BrainHoney. Students are added to the course through BrainHoney's roster system, and then are issued a username and password. Current BYU students can use their BYU username and password to gain access to the course. There is one instructor for the course that plays a limited role in its implementation. The instructor's role is to monitor the student's progress in the course, respond to appointment requests made by students to conduct a speaking appointment, and grade the free-response items of the course, including the performance tasks and the free-response items on the examination. Once the course is implemented, the instructor is the only one needed in the management of the course.

## Evaluation

The original evaluation plan consisted of combining quantitative and qualitative data received after the course had been implemented for a semester. Because of the adjustments to the

timetable of developing and implementing the course, I was forced to adjust my original plan. The new plan consisted of finding five to ten students to engage in the first lesson of the course. These students were recruited from among those who had completed the Russian 101 course through BYU. According to my analysis, I determined that students completing the 1<sup>st</sup> semester college Russian course had exposure to about the same grammar principles and vocabulary as the first-year BYU IS high school Russian courses. Five students agreed to participate in the evaluation. I was able to negotiate fifty-dollar compensation from BYU IS for the evaluation of the course. The students were added to the course and given the link to the first lesson. They were given two weeks to complete the course. Upon completion, I obtained qualitative interview data from the participants by engaging each of them in a 15–20 minute interview about their experience with the lesson. Appendix F shows the complete evaluation plan document, including the questions I asked while conducting the interview. I focused my questioning on whether the design criteria were met, namely the ACTFL five C's, preparing students for meaningful communication, and engaging them in real-world contexts. Table 5 shows how several of the evaluation questions relate to the specific design criteria of the course. After the data of each interview were collected and written down, I analyzed the data in order to identify themes regarding whether the design goals were accomplished.

Table 5

*Evaluation Questions by Design Criteria*

Design Criteria	Evaluation Question
ACTFL 5 C's	
Communication	How were you able to share and receive information through the course?
Connections	What did you learn about Russia through this lesson?
Culture	What insights (if any) did you gain about Russian

	culture?
Comparisons	What are some similarities and differences you noticed about Russian and English?
Community	What did you learn about the other students taking the course?
Meaningful Communication	How did this course prepare you to communicate in Russian?
Real-world Tasks/Problems	How does the Russian used in the course relate to the Russian you expect to use when speaking with a native Russian?

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**Evaluation results.** As shown above in Table 5, the questions of the interview were primarily designed to gather evidence to determine whether the design criteria were met through the lesson. Five of the questions were directly related to the ACTFL standards, but several of the other questions also gave information about whether the participants felt that these design goals were met. In response to the questions about communication, the participants all recognized that communication happened through the speaking practice assignment with the instructor. Two of the participants mentioned how the lesson tasks were also helpful in preparing them to communicate. None of the participants mentioned the grammar instruction when asked how the course prepared them to communicate, but when asked how they used the grammar instruction four of the participants explained that they used the *Learn the Grammar* lessons to help them prepare for the speaking practice assignment and for completing the lesson tasks. These responses show that learners recognized that communication happened most when they were actually speaking with the instructor. The learners didn't recognize the grammar instruction pieces as communicative activities, but used them to prepare for communicative activities. The standard of communication was met, although the connection between grammar in communication was not as apparent as intended.

Of the five participants, only two of the students commented that they learned something about Russia through the course. This question was designed to evaluate how the standard of making connections through the language was met. Both students stated that they learned about Russian families during the reading practice where they read about Vladimir Putin's family. This standard was not met satisfactorily through this lesson. I believe that other lessons have students do more to learn about things other than the language through Russian, but more should have been done in this lesson to incorporate this standard. The same two participants commented that they learned about the culture through the reading assignment. The other participants, however, commented that they learned about the culture through the grammar instruction. One participant mentioned that the examples made in the *Learn the Grammar* lessons provided insight about Russians and their relationships to family members. The other two participants said that during the *Learn the Concept* lessons they learned more about Russians by learning how they say certain phrases. This gave evidence that although it wasn't necessarily through the activities intended to provide cultural understanding the students were able to learn about the culture through the course.

Four of the five participants mentioned the *Learn the Concept* lesson in helping them make comparisons between Russian and English. They responded that the similarities and differences they noticed about the languages were how Russians express possession. They mentioned specifically how in English, we say, "I have" to indicate possession but instead in Russian they say, "at me is." The remaining participant reported that Russian words are usually a lot longer than English words. It is interesting to note that although this participant spoke English fluently, this participant was a native Armenian speaker. It is also interesting to note that when asked if anything about the lesson was confusing, this participant responded that the *Learn the*

*Concept* activity didn't make much sense. This response was very insightful because it showed that this activity was effective at helping native English speakers make comparisons, but wasn't effective for non-native English speakers. Regardless, all of the students were able to make comparisons about English and Russian through the lesson.

Each of the participants responded that they learned about other students' families through the third task, which was to listen to another student's response to the first task and write a brief report about it. Although this is the case, three of the participants mentioned that learning Russian through this online course was worse than learning in the classroom because they missed being able to ask questions to the teacher and get to know other people in the class. This suggests that even though the participants were able to find out more about the other students participating in the lesson, they did not feel a strong sense of community with the other participants. More should be done to incorporate this standard in the course.

In addition to analyzing the participants' responses to the questions about the design goals, I coded the open-ended responses from the interview in order to find additional themes and patterns among the participants. The codes emerged through the analysis as themes and patterns became apparent. In the course of coding, five main codes emerged. Table 6 describes each of the codes and provides an example from the participants' responses.

Table 6

*Evaluation Analysis Codes*

Code	Description	Example
Interaction	These statements refer to responses of participants about the level of interactivity in the lesson.	Positive: <i>"I liked the games the best because I was actually doing something to learn."</i> Negative: <i>"I missed having a teacher I could ask questions to..."</i>
Innovation	These statements include	Positive: <i>"I would rather take an</i>

Learning Style	<p>participants’ responses about which aspects of the course were innovative and modern, and which aspects were “old fashioned.”</p> <p>These statements indicate how different aspects of the lesson did or did not appeal to the participants’ perceived learning style.</p>	<p><i>online course because everything is up to date.”</i></p> <p>Negative: <i>“The grammar book seemed pretty old...”</i></p> <p><i>“I’m a visual person, so I liked all of the games and activities.”</i></p>
Previous Experience	<p>These statements refer to responses about how the participants’ previous experience affected their learning in the lesson.</p>	<p>Positive: <i>“That activity (talking about Learn the Grammar) was helpful ‘cause it was a review from 101.”</i></p> <p>Negative: <i>“...but honestly some of it was over my head.”</i></p>
Engagement	<p>These statements include participants’ responses regarding their level of engagement in different parts of the lesson.</p>	<p>Positive: <i>“It was cool to learn a little about Russians and their family life.”</i></p> <p>Negative: <i>“The grammar book was boring... I just wanted to skip this part.”</i></p>

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There were a total of 84 coded responses from the interviews. Figure 11 shows the frequency of each of the coded responses.

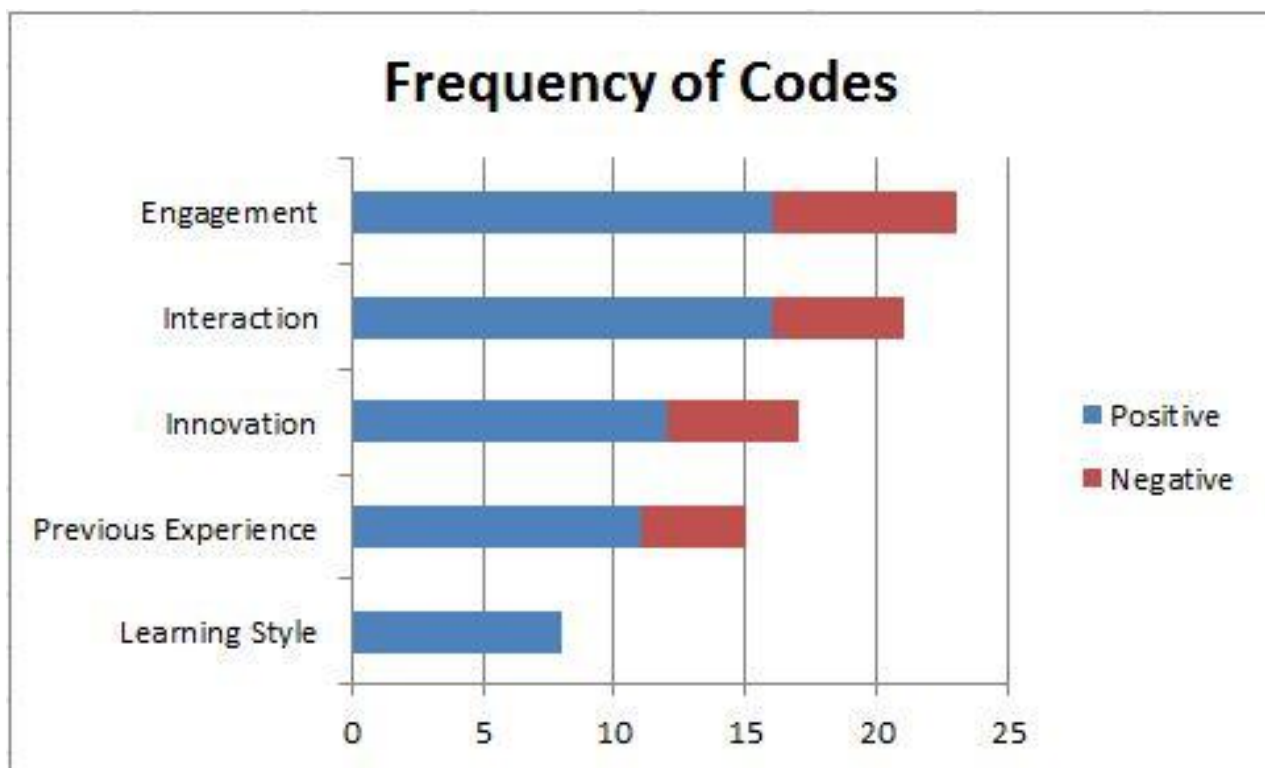


Figure 11. Bar graph displaying the frequency of the positive and negative coded responses from the participant interviews.

**Evaluation analysis.** The responses from the interviews illuminated what the participants valued in the lesson. The participants commonly commented on their level of engagement in the course. Most of the participants liked the structure of the course and felt that each piece fit together well. They commented that while the overall structure was engaging, a few of the activities were not. Five of the seven responses that were coded negative for engagement were about the grammar book that was included in the course. This was interesting because the grammar book's role in the course was intended to be a supplement to the other instructional pieces. Additionally, the participants commented that the vocabulary exercises were innovative and helpful, but the grammar book seemed "old fashioned." Another interesting insight from the evaluation is that several of the students commented on how the lesson appealed to their perceived learning style. There were no negative coded responses, showing that each student that



brought up learning style commented on how the lesson was helpful to their own particular style. This is interesting because there was little thought put into the design of the course to cater to students' perceived learning styles.

In summary, the evaluation showed that the course has the potential to accomplish its objective of engaging students through the task-based structure. All of the five ACTFL standards were met through the course at varying degrees. The goal of communication was met primarily through the speaking appointment and partly through the grammar instruction. The evaluation indicated that developing a more interactive approach to replace the static nature of the grammar lessons would help the course meet this standard to a higher degree. Although this lesson might not be representative of all the lessons in terms of what the students learn about Russia, the evaluation suggested that more can be done to help students make connections about Russian. However, students did report that the course provided enlightenment about the Russian culture. Of all of the standards, the evaluation showed that the community standard was met to the least degree compared to the other standards. Several students reported that they felt, to a small degree, like they were in a community because they were asked to listen and respond to other students' recordings. More similar activities are needed to establish this standard more firmly in the lesson.

### **Conclusion**

The design of this course is meant to meet both client and research needs. BYU IS is in need of a better-developed, more thorough second-year Russian course to offer online for students to receive high school credit. The field of distance learning and language learning needs more projects to explore how to develop effective distance-learning language courses that offer similar benefits to face-to-face class instruction. The difficulties in designing a language course for distance learning are facilitating communication and interaction and including relevant, real-world contexts into the design. Existing online language learning programs and courses do not adequately solve these issues. This design attempts to tackle these obstacles by building the structure of the course around contextualized language tasks and facilitating communication and interaction through interactive programs and technology-supported collaboration. In this section I will share the insights that I have gained by conducting this design, including the aspects that I would do differently as a result of these insights.

I realized that as a designer, I did a relatively poor job in the beginning of helping others catch a vision of what I wanted my design to accomplish. First of all, I did little in the way of learning and understanding the process at BYU IS that took place to take a course design from an idea to a product. Had I understood that the process involved taking a rather convoluted path using programs not meant for web design, I would have made it more clear the importance of designing the course using a web design tool in order to preserve the interactivity. As mentioned in the report, the progression of learning should be dictated as little as possible. Learners need to feel empowered to progress at their own pace and in their own way as much as possible. Menu items on a webpage make it much easier for learners to do so. While this was clear in my understanding from the beginning of the project, it wasn't clear to anyone else involved until the

end, primarily because I did little to understand the current development process. I would encourage other designers to make a more dedicated effort to understand all aspects of the current process, even ones that they might not be directly participating in, like web page development. This effort will pay big dividends in being able to communicate to all parts of the design and development team what exactly needs to happen with the new design.

Another example where communication could have been improved was in the development of the vocabulary and grammar programs for the course. Neither of these pieces was actually developed nor will they be used in the course. This in most part is due to the fact that BYU IS was not able to commit the resources that they had originally promised. Part of the problem, however, was the lack of shared vision between myself and the programmer that began the grammar program's development. In order to communicate my vision, I created an elaborate Microsoft PowerPoint presentation, complete with hyperlinks that simulated the UI and interactivity of the proposed program. A user could click through the links and see one path of how the program would work. I thought that this demonstration of the usability of the program was sufficient. While this story board did a good job communicating the usability of the program, it did not explicitly communicate the underlying principles behind the usability. Looking back on the experience, I now realize that each time I met with the programmer, he had a specific question about the how the program should work, and the way to help him understand the answer was to share more about the grander vision of the design. For example, the programmer had several questions about how and why the program incorporates both yes/no questions and open-ended questions. Once I helped the programmer catch a vision that yes/no questions allow users to communicate in a very limited domain. When a yes/no question is posed, the response is typically a slightly modified repetition of the question. This allows for

learners to learn and retain the pattern of the grammar while still communicating. When the programmer understood the progressive nature of communication in the program, he was able to overcome several of his programming obstacles. I learned that more effort from the start was needed to communicate the vision of the design along with the particulars.

I realized that I received a relatively small amount of information through the target population analysis. This analysis reinforced my decision to create the lesson in a task-based structure, but didn't do much else. Although my assumptions regarding the level of motivation for high school students were grounded in research, they are not necessarily generalizable for the students who took the Russian 51 course. In order to obtain more helpful and population-specific information, I should have sought approval to contact students who were either enrolled in the course or who had enrolled in the course in the past in order to learn about their motivation level and reasons for taking the course. I could have verified the assumption that I made, or learned that for some reason students who take the course are more motivated than typical high school students, which would have impacted my design.

Another very important insight I gained was that the design and development mountain looks a lot smaller from the bottom, meaning the entire process took a lot more time and effort than originally anticipated. I didn't realize how ambitious the design project was in the beginning. As I conducted the analyses, I realized that there were several aspects of the original design that were innovative for designing for distance language learning. The scope of what I had originally tried to accomplish was too large for one project. I realize that the process of design and research to gain and implement new insights from theory is a step by step process. My original design was to create a grammar program that facilitated structured communication with an individual. This in itself would have been a leap forward in the field of CALL and

independent language learning. Additionally, I planned on creating a vocabulary learning program founded on modern memorization research, implementing principles of user control, scheduled review, and levels of appropriate feedback. Again, this in itself would have been an insightful design project for the field of memorization and language learning. While neither of these projects came to fruition, the project was still insightful in the field of language learning and design for distance learning. The design incorporated instruction based on facilitating communication and increasing motivation by engaging students in real-world tasks and contexts. If I had the opportunity to conduct this design project again, I would have chosen one aspect of innovation and theory to focus on. Trying to accomplish too much in one design project was time consuming, and became impossible when resources were limited.

The original implementation and design plan for the project was different from what actually happened. My original plan was to implement the course over the course of a semester and have several students take and complete the course. I hoped to collect data about how long the students took to complete each lesson, and their scores for the lesson activities and assessments. I was then planning to use this data to gauge the appropriateness of the content of the course. Because of the previously mentioned resource and time constraints, the actual implementation consisted of the first lesson, and the evaluation was more qualitative in nature with fewer students. The insights gained from the interviews conducted as part of the evaluation were incredibly helpful in terms of how the course was able to accomplish its design objectives. I learned that, although I did not receive enough quantitative data to effectively analyze, the qualitative data was able to reveal more helpful insights about the students' experiences in the course. I am almost glad that the original implementation plan was altered because of the insights that came from the interviews.

Ultimately, this design project took several different turns during its development. Regardless, the design effectively prepared students to not only understand the particulars of the Russian language, but also prepared them to be able to communicate using Russian in real-world situations. The design of the course also effectively incorporated the ACTFL standards for language learning courses. Mary Stevens at BYU IS will use the design of this course as an example of what changes need to take place for other language courses at BYU IS. This course design has taken a step forward in the area of language learning in distance education. I consider this project a success, and plan to progress the development of the other pieces of this design, particularly the grammar instruction program, in my doctorate work.

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**Appendix A: Content Analysis of BYU IS Russian Courses**

Grammar Principles for BYU IS Russian 41, 43, and 51

<p>Russian 41</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alphabet</li> <li>2. Russian names</li> <li>3. Numbers (10)</li> <li>4. Gender</li> <li>5. Pronouns</li> <li>6. Possessive pronouns</li> <li>7. Nominative case</li> <li>8. Genitive and numbers</li> <li>9. Numbers (100)</li> <li>10. Interrogative words</li> <li>11. Numbers (1000)</li> <li>12. Adjective gender agreement</li> <li>13. Like (dative construction)</li> <li>14. Telling time</li> <li>15. Days/months</li> <li>16. Past, present, future</li> <li>17. Prepositional</li> </ol>	<p>Russian 43</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Singular/plural nouns</li> <li>2. Instrumental declensions</li> <li>3. Accusative</li> <li>4. Demonstrative pronouns</li> <li>5. Short-form adjectives</li> <li>6. Comparative adjectives</li> <li>7. Prepositions for location</li> <li>8. Verbs of motion</li> <li>9. Aspect</li> <li>10. Imperative commands</li> <li>11. Dative noun declensions</li> <li>12. Dative impersonal constructions</li> <li>13. Subjunctive</li> <li>14. “let”</li> </ol>
<p>Old Russian 51</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Whose</li> <li>2. Dative</li> <li>3. Soft and hard</li> <li>4. Soft adjective endings</li> <li>5. Verbs of motion</li> <li>6. Motion words</li> <li>7. Past tense</li> <li>8. Numbers</li> <li>9. Genitive with numbers</li> <li>10. Days of the week</li> <li>11. Instrumental endings</li> </ol>	<p>New Russian 51</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Genitive and numbers</li> <li>2. Adjective-noun agreement</li> <li>3. Instrumental case</li> <li>4. Prepositional case</li> <li>5. Genitive case</li> <li>6. Verb conjugations</li> <li>7. Reflexive verbs</li> <li>8. Dative impersonal constructions</li> <li>9. Past tense</li> <li>10. Verb aspect</li> <li>11. Future tense</li> <li>12. Conditional</li> <li>13. Verbs of Motion with prefixes</li> <li>14. Instrumental prepositions</li> <li>15. Comparative</li> <li>16. I want, so that</li> </ol>

## Appendix B: Generic Lesson Outline and Outlines for Each Lesson

### Generic Lesson Outline

- Introduction to task
  - The task is introduced as a whole and then broken into manageable components
- Vocabulary Instruction/review
  - Vocabulary relevant to the task is presented and learned with a flashcard program
  - Students engage in various vocabulary games to enhance retention
- Grammar Instruction/review
  - Previously learned grammar is reviewed
  - New grammar relevant to the task is presented through communicative instruction.
    - Principles that deviate strongly from English are practiced through conceptual activities.
- Practice—emphasizing the elements that pertain to the task
  - Listening Comprehension
  - Speaking/conversation practice
  - Reading comprehension
  - Writing practice
- Assessment – based on accomplishing the task
  - Speaking and listening are primarily assessed through BrainHoney tasks.
  - Reading, writing, and grammar are assessed through examinations

### Lesson 1 – Talking about Family

- Task – Students will tell about their family, ask about others' families, and learn about the culture of families in Russia.
  - Students will
    1. post a picture of their family and tell other students in the class about their family.
    2. post a picture of a famous Russian and tell about his/her family.
    3. listen to a student's voice thread and write a biography about that student's family.
- Vocabulary – (family words, question words)
  - Students will engage in a flashcard program.
  - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game.
- Grammar
  - Students will review possession, gender, and cases
  - Students will engage in an interactive communicative grammar activity for:
    - Adjective-noun agreement
    - Genitive and Numbers/quantity words
- Practice
  - Listening – students will listen to the instructor introduce their family and answer comprehension questions.
    - The instructor should post his/her picture and explanation as an example for students.

- Speaking – Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers and compare them to the program.
  - Students will practice recording and listening to their family biographies.
  - Students will schedule an appointment to ask the teacher about his/her family, and tell about their own.
- Reading – students will read a biography of famous Russian's families,
- Writing – students will write a personal biography
- Assessment
  - Speaking, Listening, and Writing – Students will:
    - post a picture and record their biographies of their families.
    - post a picture of a famous Russian and tell about his/her family.
    - listen to at least 1 other student's task 1 post and write a biography about that student's family.
  - Reading and Grammar – Students will:
    - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activities with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.

## Lesson 2 – Talking about School and Work

- Task – Students will tell about their favorite subjects, where they and their family members work, and learn about the education and various occupations in Russia.
 

Students will

  1. post a picture of their family and tell about their favorite subject, where they work, and where members in the family study/work.
  2. post a picture of an occupation in Russia and tell about the occupation and why they are interested in it.
  3. listen to other student's occupation choice. Write why their own choice is better than the choice of the other student .
- Vocabulary – (Occupations, learning verbs, place nouns ex. school, university, etc.)
  - Students will engage in a flashcard program.
  - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game.
- Grammar
  - Students will review conjugations, accusative case endings, & past tense.
    - Learn - овать conjugations
  - Students will engage in an interactive communicative grammar activity for:
    - instrumental and prepositional case
    - reflexive verbs
    - genitive prepositions
- Practice
  - Listening – students will listen to the instructor's explanation of families and answer comprehension questions.
    - The instructor should post his/her picture and explanation as an example for students.
  - Speaking - Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers and compare them to the program.
 

Students will:

- practice recording and listening to their biographies of families.
- practice recording and listening to the occupations they chose (after the reading assignment).
- schedule an appointment to ask teacher about his/her job and family, and tell about their own.
- Reading – students will read about several occupations and the education system in Russia.
- Writing – students will write about the occupation that interests them most and why.
- Assessment
  - Speaking, Listening, and Writing – Students will:
    - post a picture and record information about what their family does (school and work).
    - post a picture of an occupation in Russia and tell about the occupation and why they are interested in it
    - listen to 2 other students' occupation choice and write why their own choice is better than the choices of the other students.
  - Reading and Grammar – Students will:
    - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activities with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.

### Lesson 3 – Making Purchases (Review)

- Task – Students will make a purchase and get to know people in the process and learn about Russian markets and bazaars - and haggling.
 

Students will

  1. create a dialogue between someone buying food at a grocery store. Post a picture and narrate the dialogue.
  2. post a picture of someone (can be real or fictitious) and tell about what they do and about their family.
  3. compare Russian markets to supermarkets here. Write something describing at least 1 similarity and 1 difference.
- Vocabulary – (foods, other nouns that you would find in the market)
  - Students will engage in a flashcard program.
  - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game.
- Grammar
  - Students will review conjugating хотеть, genitive and numbers (5 долларов), questions with сколько, adjective-noun agreement, prepositional case, and reflexive verbs
    - Focus on getting to know someone
  - Students will engage in an interactive communicative grammar activity for Dative impersonal constructions
    - Где мне найти хлеб?
- Practice
  - Listening – students will listen to the instructor's dialogue and answer simple questions about it (what was purchased, how much etc.)

- The instructor should post his/her picture and explanation as an example for students
- Speaking - Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers and compare them to the computer.
  - Students will:
    - practice making purchases of simple market-like things, and asking where to find them.
    - practice getting to know someone with the review grammar.
    - schedule an appointment with the teacher. The student will ask about certain products and try and negotiate price on what they want. (After reading about negotiating).
- Reading – students will read about Russian markets and haggling.
- Writing – students will look over Russian cars and write an e-mail to the company expressing their desire to buy their favorite car.
- Assessment
  - Speaking and Writing – Students will:
    - create a dialogue between someone buying food at a grocery store. Post a picture and narrate the dialogue.
    - post a picture of someone (can be real or fictitious) and tell about what they do and about their family.
    - compare Russian markets to supermarkets here. Write something describing at least 1 similarity and 1 difference.
  - Reading, Listening and Grammar – Students will:
    - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activities with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.

#### Lesson 4 – Sharing Experiences

- Task – Students will tell others about an experience that they have had in their life (according to a list of topics) and learn about famous Russian stories and folk tales.
  - Students will:
    1. post a picture that represents their experience and narrate the experience.
    2. be able to read simple Russian folk tales and write one of their own.
- Vocabulary – (Narration phrases, ex. a few years ago etc. and narration verbs)
  - Students will engage in a flashcard program.
  - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game.
- Grammar
  - Students will review command form, reflexive verbs (находиться, добратсья), & instrumental case endings
  - Students will engage in an interactive communicative grammar activity for:
    - Communicative grammar activity for Simple Past Tense endings
    - Communicative grammar activity for Verb aspect and past tense
  - Students will engage in a conceptual practice for verb aspect.
  - Students will practice recognizing perfective and imperfective verbs.
- Practice

- Listening – Students will listen to the instructor tell about an experience he/she has had and answer simple summary questions.
  - The instructor should post his/her picture and explanation as an example for students.
- Speaking - Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers and compare them to the program.
  - Students will practice recording and listening to sharing different experiences.
  - Students will schedule an appointment to ask the teacher and tell about some experiences (have one or two chosen from a list).
- Reading – students will read several different Russian folk tales.
- Writing – students will write out an experience from a list of topics.
- Assessment
  - Speaking and Writing – Students will:
    - post a picture that represents their experience and narrate it
    - write their own Russian folk story
  - Reading, Listening and Grammar – Students will:
    - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activities with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.

#### Lesson 5 – Talking about Goals and Plans

- Task – Students will tell others about their future plans and goals (school, languages, travelling etc.) and learn about Russian politicians vision of what Russia will be like. Students will
  1. post a picture that represents their future plans and goals and describe their goals.
  2. Summarize a Russian politician’s vision of the future of Russia.
- Vocabulary – (review occupations, wanting/planning verbs)
  - Students will engage in a flashcard program
  - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game.
- Grammar
  - Students will review verb aspect and conjugations.
  - Students will engage in interactive communicative grammar activities for:
    - Future tense
    - Verb aspect and future tense
    - Simple conditional
  - Students will engage in a conceptual practice for verb aspect and future tense.
  - Students will practice recognizing perfective and imperfective verbs.
- Practice
  - Listening – students will listen to the instructor's personal goals and answer simple summary questions.
    - The instructor should post his/her picture and explanation as an example for students.
  - Speaking - Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers, and compare them to the computer.
    - Students will practice recording and listening to sharing their goals and plans.



- Students will schedule an appointment to ask the teacher and tell their goals and plans.
- Reading – Students will read several different excerpts from Russian Politicians about Russia's future.
- Writing – Students will summarize one of the readings about the future of Russia.
- Assessment
  - Speaking and Writing – Students will:
    - post a picture that represents their future plans and narrate it.
    - write a reaction to what the politicians say about Russia's future and say what they think it will be.
  - Reading, Listening and Grammar
    - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activities with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.

#### Lesson 6 – Giving Directions

- Task – Students will give a fellow Student directions to get to and from places in Moscow (Give them an option and have them choose), and learn about the transportation system in Russia.
    - Students will:
      1. give directions to and from a list of places on an already-posted map of the city center.
      2. compare the benefits to different modes of transportation in Russia.
  - Vocabulary – (Transportation nouns, verbs of motion, prepositions of location, directional adverbs)
    - Students will engage in a flashcard program
    - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game.
  - Grammar
    - Students will review command form, reflexive verbs (находиться, добраться), & Instrumental case endings
    - Students will engage in an interactive communicative grammar activity for:
      - instrumental prepositions
      - verbs of motion and motion words (куда, туда)
      - prefixed verbs of motion w/ prepositions
      - comparative
  - Practice
    - Listening – Students will listen to the instructor give directions, using a program where students mark the points on a map.
      - Also, the instructor should post his/her picture and explanation as an example for students.
    - Speaking - Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers and compare them to the computer.
- Students will:
- practice recording and listening to Give directions to and from different places.
  - practice recording and listening to their comparisons of transportation modes (after the reading).

- schedule an appointment to have the teacher ask how the students get to certain places in their own city (school, work, the store etc.).
- Reading – Students will read about the different modes of transportation in Russia.
- Writing – Students will send an e-mail to a friend explaining how to get from the airport to his house (With a map of the city given).
- Assessment
  - Speaking and Writing – Students will:
    - pick a starting point and destination (from a list of options) from a map of Moscow's center.
    - write a short essay comparing and contrasting modes of transportation.
  - Reading, Listening and Grammar – Students will:
    - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activities with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.

### Lesson 7 – Talking about Vacations (Review)

- Task – Students will tell others about a recent vacation they have been on and tell about their dream vacation and learn about Russian vacations.
 

Students will:

  1. post a picture of a recent vacation and tell about it.
  2. post a picture of their dream vacation and tell about it.
  3. send an e-mail to a friend to try and convince them to accompany them on their dream vacation
- Vocabulary – (Vacation words and destinations. Review previous vocab)
  - Students will engage in a flashcard program
  - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game.
- Grammar
  - Students will:
    - review verb aspect with communicative grammar activity
    - review past tense with communicative grammar activity
    - review future tense with communicative grammar activity
    - review verbs of motion with communicative grammar activity
- Practice
  - Listening – students will listen to the instructor's dream vacation and answer simple questions about it.
    - The instructor should post his/her picture and explanation as an example for students.
  - Speaking - Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers and compare them to the computer.

Students will:

  - practice recording and listening to each of the topics of the communicative grammar activities.
  - practice recording and listening to their comparisons of transportation modes (after the reading).
  - schedule an appointment to ask the teacher about a recent or dream vacation and to tell about their own.

- Reading – Students will read about some famous hotspots in Russia to vacation (Sochi, the black sea, etc.).
- Writing – Students will choose a place in Russia to vacation and write about their plans during the visit.
- Assessment
  - Speaking and Writing – Students will:
    - post a picture of a recent vacation and their dream vacation and tell about it.
    - send an e-mail to a friend to try and convince them to accompany them on their dream vacation.
  - Reading, Listening and Grammar – Students will:
    - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activities with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.

### Lesson 8 – Talking about Holidays and Leisure Time

- Task – Students will tell others about their favorite holiday and a tradition they had growing up and learn about Russian Holidays and how they spend their free time.
    - Students will:
      1. post a picture representing their favorite holiday and tell about why it's their favorite.
      2. post a picture representing a family tradition for their favorite holiday and explain the tradition
      3. write about their favorite Russian holiday and explain where it came from, and how it is celebrated.
  - Vocabulary – (holidays, leisure activities)
    - Students will engage in a flashcard program.
    - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game.
  - Grammar
    - Students will:
      - review past tense with a communicative grammar activity.
      - Engage in an interactive communicative grammar activity for чтобы (in order to).
      - Engage in an interactive communicative grammar activity for чтобы (so that).
        - Include want, so that
  - Practice
    - Listening – Students will listen to the instructor's favorite holiday and family tradition and answer simple questions about it.
      - The instructor should post his/her picture and explanation as an example for students.
    - Speaking - Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers and compare them to the computer.
- Students will:
- practice recording and listening to each of the topics of the communicative grammar activities.
  - practice recording and listening to explanations.

- schedule an appointment to ask the teacher and answer questions about their favorite holidays and traditions.
- Reading – Students will read about the various holidays and choose to read at least 2 about where they came from and how they are celebrated.
- Writing – Students will make up a new holiday, say what it celebrates and how you would celebrate it.
- Assessment
  - Speaking and Writing – Students will:
    - post a picture representing their favorite holiday and tell about why it's their favorite.
    - post a picture representing a family tradition for their favorite holiday and explain the tradition.
    - write about their favorite Russian holiday and explain where it came from, and how it is celebrated.
  - Reading, Listening and Grammar – Students will:
    - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activities with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.

#### Lesson 9 – Talking about Famous Russians in History

- Task – Students will tell others about famous Russians (past and present) and their contribution to society, and learn about historical and modern figures who have shaped Russian society (Marx, Stalin, Dostoevsky, etc.).
  - Students will:
    1. post a picture of several influential Russians (5 or more) and tell about their accomplishments and additions to society.
    2. create and label a presentation or diagram showing how and when the above mentioned people have influenced Russia.
- Vocabulary – (Russian names, words about accomplishments (Soviet Union, war, novel, poem, etc.)
  - Students will engage in a flashcard program.
  - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game.
- Grammar
  - Students will review past tense with a communicative grammar activity and questions with *кто*
  - Students will engage in an interactive communicative grammar activity for:
    - *который*
    - Demonstrative - adjective - noun agreement
- Practice
  - Listening – Students will listen to the instructor's posts of several influential Russians and their accomplishments. Engage in a simple matching activity.
    - The instructor should post his/her pictures and explanation as an example for students.
  - Speaking - Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers and compare them to the computer.

Students will:

- practice recording and listening to several explanations of some famous Russians and their accomplishments using *который*.
  - schedule an appointment and have the teacher ask the students who they think was the most influential of the people and why.
- Reading – Students will read about the influential Russian people and their accomplishments. Have them choose at least 5.
- Writing – Students will write a brief biography about the most influential person from your country and list his/her accomplishments.
- Assessment
  - Speaking and Writing – Students will:
    - post a picture of several influential Russians (5 or more) and tell about their accomplishments and additions to society.
    - create and label a presentation or diagram showing how and when the above mentioned people have influenced Russia.
  - Reading, Listening and Grammar – Students will:
    - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activity with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.

#### Lesson 10 – Giving Advice

- Task – Students will listen to others as they share concerns or ask question and be able to give them advice and learn about Russian generosity and their willingness to help foreigners.
  - Students will:
    1. articulate a question or concern and post the recording with a picture of their choosing that represents the concern.
    2. listen and respond to at least 2 other student's concerns/questions by replying to their threads with pictures of their choosing.
    3. write about an experience where they have either answered a friend's question or given a friend advice.
- Vocabulary – (need words, question words and phrases)
  - Students will engage in a flashcard program.
  - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game.
- Grammar
  - Students will review asking questions with a communicative grammar activity and *чтобы* with *хотели бы* and *хочется*.
  - Students will engage in an interactive communicative grammar activity for:
    - *нужен*, showing the varying level of influence words (*требоваться, придётся, необходимо* etc.)
    - *должен*
- Practice
  - Listening – Students will listen to the instructor both post a few questions and concerns and answers and advice to other questions and concerns.
    - The instructor should post his/her picture and explanation as an example for students.

- Speaking - Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers and compare them to the computer.
- Students will:
- practice recording and listening to questions and concerns.
  - practice recording and listening to answers and advice to questions and concerns.
  - schedule an appointment to ask for advice, and also to give advice to a concern the teachers brings up.
- Reading – Students will read about an experience of a foreigner who went to Russia and how the Russians helped him - about their eagerness to help.
  - Writing – Students will write a letter to your own society with at least 3 pieces of advice. (Ex. My society needs to be more frugal, etc.).
- Assessment
    - Speaking and Writing – Students will:
      - articulate a question or concern and post the recording with a picture of their choosing that represents the concern.
      - listen and respond to at least 2 other student's concerns/questions by replying to their threads with pictures of their choosing.
      - write about an experience where you have either answered a friends question or given a friend advice.
    - Reading, Listening and Grammar – Students will:
      - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activities with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.

### Lesson 11 – Preparing a Friend for a Visit to Russia

- Task – Students will engage in the following scenario: “Your friend is planning a visit to Russia, and knows that you have been studying Russian and Russian culture. You friend asks you for advice about what he/she needs to learn, where they should visit, what they should know about Russian culture, and any other helpful information. You will give them advice about all of the topics we have learned this semester.”
- Students will:
1. Have a choice of 3 or 4 questions from their friend that comes from each lesson. They will need to choose 1 from each lesson and respond
    - a. Ex. What are some of the best places for me to visit?
    - b. Ex. Tell me about the best way to get to know a Russian person
  2. write an e-mail to the friend listing the 3 most important things that someone would know before visiting Russia, and they can choose whatever they want to be the three things.
- Vocabulary – (review all of the previous vocab)
    - Students will engage in a flashcard program.
    - Students will engage in a vocabulary retention game?
  - Grammar
    - Have all previously used communicative grammar activities available for students to use.

- Change each one so the emphasis is how to use the grammar to help with one of the questions listed above for each lesson
- Practice
  - Listening – Students will listen to the instructor answer one of the questions posted above. Encourage students to go back and listen to the older posts for each lesson.
    - The instructor should post his/her picture and explanation as an example for students.
  - Speaking - Using the communicative grammar activities, students will answer questions, record answers and compare them to the computer.
- Students will:
  - practice recording responses to each of the questions asked by the friend and listen to your responses.
  - schedule an appointment and role play with the teacher as the friend asking 3 questions and the students forming responses.
- Reading – Students will review the previous reading that is relevant to the task at hand.
- Writing – Students will practice writing answers to each of the questions listed above.
- Assessment
  - Speaking and Writing – Students will:
    - have a choice of 3 or 4 questions from their friend that comes from each lesson. They will need to choose 1 from each lesson and respond
    - write an e-mail to the friend listing the 3 most important things that someone would know before visiting Russia, and they can choose whatever they want to be the three things.
  - Reading, Listening and Grammar (Final) – Students will:
    - take a test with content based on sentences from the communicative grammar activities with multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching questions, and a brief reading comprehension sections that use the grammar.
      - This will be comprehensive from all of the communicative grammar activities

## Appendix C: Grammar Book, Russian Course: A Complete Course for Beginners

Example Instruction and Practice Activities from the Book

LESSON 10

**У вас есть сын?** Do you have a son?  
**Есть.** I do.

Or the answer could be **Нет** 'No, I don't'.

If you want to say 'My brother has a car', the structure is the same: **у + genitive of the possessor + есть + thing possessed in the nominative:**

**У брата есть машина.** (My) brother has a car. ('By brother is car.')

### 10.3 Genitive Pronouns

The genitive forms of **я, ты** etc. are the same as the accusative forms we met in 6.7: **меня, тебя, его [у-во], её, его, нас, вас, их.**

Remember that after a preposition, **его, её** and **их** have an initial **н:** **него, неё, них.** Here are examples of the 'have' construction with all the personal pronouns:

**У меня есть сын.** I have a son.  
**У тебя есть доллар?** Do you have a dollar?  
**У него есть жена?** Does he have a wife?  
**У неё есть муж?** Does she have a husband?  
**У нас есть время.** We have time.  
**У вас есть деньги?** Have you any money?  
**У них есть дети?** Have they any children?

You will also meet the **У вас** construction without the **есть**. For example, **У вас большой дом?** 'Is your house large?' In this case you are not being asked whether you have a house, but whether your house is a big one or not. That is, the question with **есть** asks about existence ('Do you or do you not have a house?'); without the **есть**, the question asks about some feature of the thing possessed.

**У вас есть сын?** 'Do you have a son?' (Does a son exist?)

If you reply, **Да, есть**, the next question might be: **У вас сын большой или маленький?** 'Is your son big or small?'

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## 'TO HAVE'; MORE ON THE GENITIVE

## Exercise 10/1

Translate:

1 У Вадима есть жена? 2 У него есть русская подруга. 3 У Евы есть брат? 4 Брата у неё нет. 5 Do you have (any) white wine? 6 They have a daughter and two sons. 7 Does she have (any) money?

## 10.4 EXTRA: иметь 'to have'

There is also a verb **иметь** (*знать*-type): я **имею**, ты **имеешь** 'to have'. This verb is not used in the everyday sense of possession ('I have a car' is **У меня есть машина**, *not* Я **имею** машину). Instead, it is used with abstract nouns in a number of fixed expressions:

**иметь право** 'to have the right'  
**иметь место** 'to take place'  
**иметь возможность** 'to have the opportunity'  
**иметь в виду** 'to have/bear in mind'  
**иметь значение** 'to matter'

**Вы имеете право.** You have the right.

**Это не имеет значения** (gen.). It doesn't matter.

## 10.5 There isn't: нет + genitive

The opposite of **есть** 'there is/there exists' is **нет** 'there isn't'. This word looks and sounds the same as the word **нет** meaning 'no', but it is actually a shortened form of the phrase **не есть** 'not there is'.

Whatever there isn't is put in the *genitive* case:

A: Чай <b>есть</b> ?	Is there tea?
B: Ча́г <b>нет</b> .	There is no tea.
A: У вас <b>есть</b> са́хар?	Have you any sugar?
B: Са́хара <b>нет</b> .	There's no sugar/No, we haven't.

Note the idiomatic use of **нет** + person to mean 'not here'.

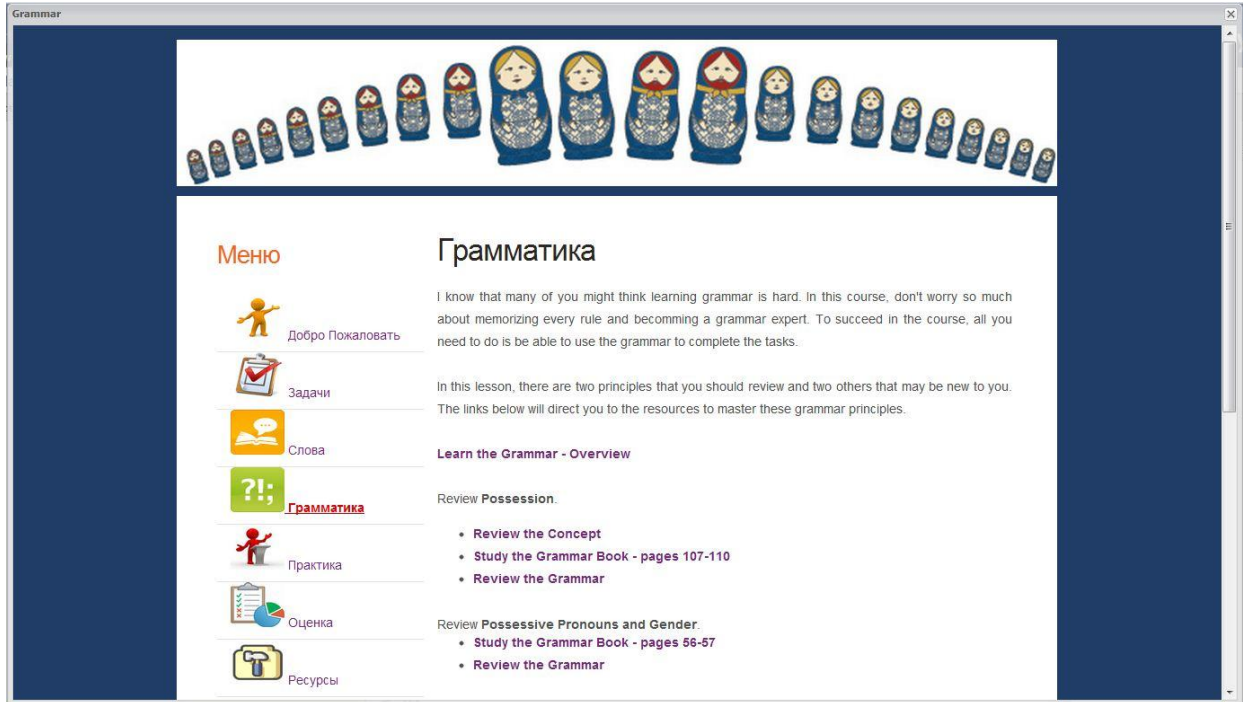
**Appendix D: General Instructional Objectives (GIO) and Student Learning Outcomes****(SLO)**

## GIOs and SLOs

1. Knows basic vocabulary and phrases
  - a. Recalls appropriate words and phrases
  - b. Identifies correct translations for words and phrases
  - c. Matches words and phrases with English translations
2. Understands basic grammar principles
  - a. Identifies when to use certain grammar principles
  - b. Explains essential grammar principles
3. Demonstrates proficiency in communicating
  - a. Uses appropriate vocabulary correctly in writing
  - b. Uses grammar principles correctly in writing
  - c. Demonstrates fluency in conversational communication
  - d. Uses appropriate vocabulary correctly in speaking
  - e. Uses grammar principles correctly in speaking
4. Understands and interprets written and spoken language on a variety of topics
  - a. Responds intelligibly to written prompts in Russian
  - b. Responds intelligibly to spoken prompts in Russian
  - c. Demonstrates ability to interpret information through written prompts in Russian
  - d. Demonstrates ability to interpret information through spoken prompts in Russian
  - e. Demonstrated ability to learn about Russian culture through written prompts.
5. Applies language structure to authentic utterances
  - a. Identifies uses for specific grammar principles
  - b. Suggests appropriate modifications to incorrect sentences
  - c. Distinguishes between correct and incorrect language use
  - d. Uses language appropriately to accomplish specific language functions

**Appendix E: Example Screen Shots of the Design Document**

HTML Webpage for the “Grammar” Section



Vocabulary Group 1 List

Section 1 Words – Family Members			
sister	сестра	nephew	племянник
sisters	сёстры	niece	племянница
brother	брат	cousin (female)	двоюродная сестра
brothers	братья	cousin (male)	двоюродный брат
mother	мать	family	семья
mom	мама	relative	родственник
father	отец	wife	жена
dad	папа	husband	муж
parents	родители	spouse	супруг
grandfather	дедушка	father-in-law (husband's father)	свёкор
grandmother	бабушка	father in law (wife's father)	тесть
grandparents	прародители	mother-in-law (husband's mother)	свекровь
son	сын	mother-in-law (wife's mother)	тёща
sons	сыновья	son-in-law	зять
daughter	дочь	daughter-in-law	невестка
daughters	дочери	step-mother	мачеха
baby	младенец	step-father	отчим
child	ребёнок	step-brother	сводный брат
children	дети	step-sister	сводная сестра
aunt	тётя	step-son	пасынок
uncle	дядя	step-daughter	падчерица

Vocabulary Group 1 Flashcard Program

SECOND-YEAR RUSSIAN  
PART 1  
Flash Cards

ДОЧЬ

Got it!  Missed it.

Keep Card Remove Card

RUSS 51

Cards Remaining: 42

## Vocabulary Group 1 Matching Game

**RUSSIAN 51**

**Instructions**

сёстры
братья
мать
мама
сестра
отец
брат

**Match Terms**

- sister
- sisters
- brother
- brothers
- mother
- mom
- father

**Shuffle** **Skip Page** Words Completed:0/42

“Learn the Concept” Grammar Activity for Genitive with Numbers

## Learn the Concept – Genitive with Numbers

**Genitive with Numbers**  
 In English, making objects plural after numbers is as simple as adding an “s” to the end of the word. Ex) 1 dog, 2 dogs, 5 dogs, etc. Any number other than one makes the object plural. In Russian, case plays a big role in making objects plural after numbers. **1 dog is nominative singular. 2-4 dogs is genitive singular. 5-20 dogs is genitive plural.** So Russians would say, “**1 dog, 2 dog (genitive), 4 dog (genitive), 5 dogs (genitive).** Also, once you reach 20, the pattern continues. Ex. **21 dog (nominative), 22 dog (genitive), 25 dogs (genitive).** Also,

- 5 apples → 5 apples (genitive)
- 101 Dalmatians → 101 Dalmatian (nominative)
- 43 friends → 43 friend (genitive).

*Below are clips from the case-ending chart found in the “Ресурсы” section of your lesson. Highlighted are the different noun endings for each gender/type.*

		<b>Masculine Endings</b>				<b>Neuter Endings</b>				<b>Feminine Endings</b>												
Examples:		мой	наш	добрый	дом	Игорь	музей	моё	наше	доброё	слово	морё	здание	моя	наша	добрая	книга	семья	Мария	цель		
		Poss.	Pron.	Adj.	Nouns				Poss.	Pron.	Adj.	Nouns				Poss.	Pron.	Adj.	Nouns			
<b>Nom</b>		ой	—	ый, ой	—	ь	й	ё	е	оё	о	е	ие	я	а	ая	а	я	ия	ь		
<b>sg</b>	<b>Gen</b>	его	его	ого	а	я	я	его	его	ого	а	я	ия	ей	ей	ой	ы	и	ии	и		
<b>Plur</b>	<b>Gen</b>	их	их	ых	ов	ей	ев	их	их	ых	—	ей	ий	их	их	ых	—	ь	ий	ей		

**Change the sentences below to the way Russians would say the numbers. Ex. 5 doors → 5 doors (genitive)**

1. 4 brothers	6. 21 cousins	11. 32 points	16. 114 pennies
2. 2 sisters	7. 2 parents	12. 99 red balloons	17. 10 kids
3. 7 nieces	8. 6 brothers	13. 86 dollars	18. 1 daughter
4. 1 nephew	9. 4 sisters	14. 1212 years	19. 24 teammates
5. 13 members of the family	10. 16 puppies	15. 3 cats	20. 18 games

**Go to the next page to see the correct answers**

Learn the Grammar Communicative Grammar Activity for Genitive with Numbers

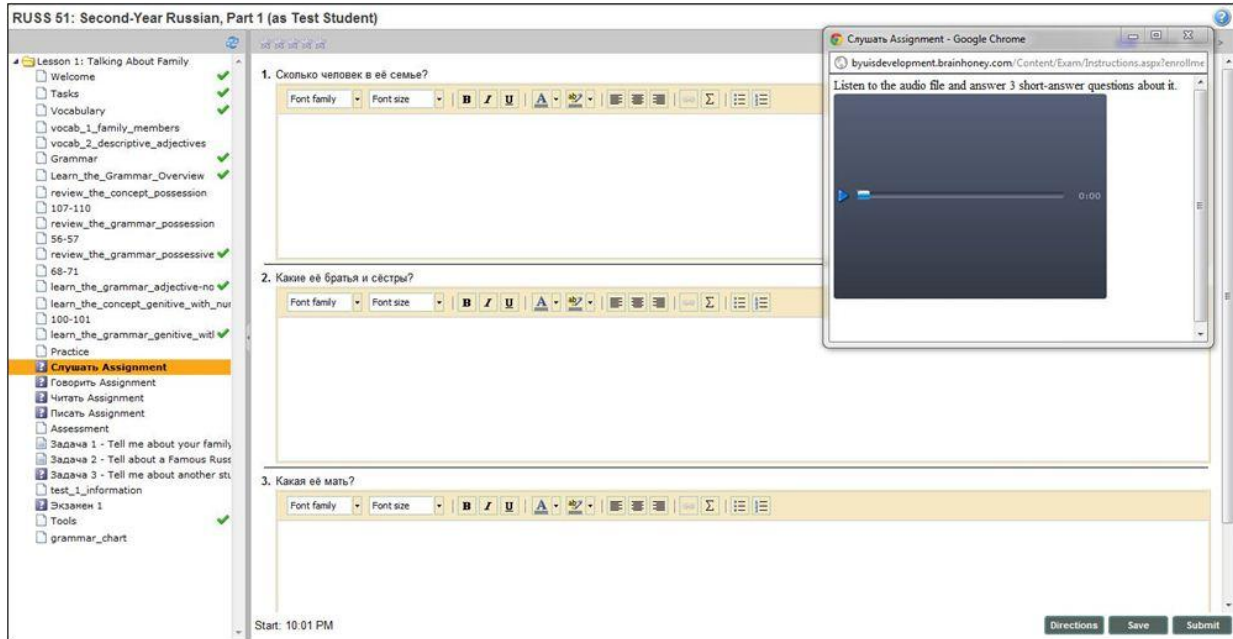
	<b>У</b> <i>At</i>	<b>меня</b> <i>me</i>	<b>есть</b> <i>there are</i>	<b>пять</b> <i>5</i>	<b>братьев</b> <i>brothers</i>	<b>(?)</b>
		<b>меня</b> <i>me</i>		<b>один/одна</b> <i>1 (m/f)</i>	<b>брат.</b> <i>brother</i>	<b>племянница.</b> <i>niece</i>
		<b>вас</b> <i>you</i>			<b>сын.</b> <i>son</i>	<b>сестра.</b> <i>sister</i>
		<b>моего отца</b> <i>my father</i>			<b>племянник.</b> <i>nephew</i>	<b>дочь.</b> <i>daughter</i>
<b>Да,</b> <i>yes</i>	<b>у</b> <i>at</i>	<b>моей матери</b> <i>my mother</i>	<b>(есть)</b> <i>there is/are</i>	<b>два/две</b> <i>2 (m/f)</i>	<b>брата.</b> <i>brothers</i>	<b>племянницы.</b> <i>nieces</i>
<b>Нет,</b> <i>no</i>		<b>него</b> <i>him</i>		<b>три</b> <i>3</i>	<b>сына.</b> <i>sons</i>	<b>сестры.</b> <i>sisters</i>
		<b>неё</b> <i>her</i>		<b>четыре</b> <i>4</i>	<b>племянника.</b> <i>nephews</i>	<b>дочери.</b> <i>daughters</i>
<b>Сколько</b> <i>How many...?</i> <i>(Always uses Genitive Plural)</i>		<b>вашего отца</b> <i>your father</i>		<b>пять</b> <i>5</i>	<b>братьев.</b> <i>brothers</i>	<b>племянниц.</b> <i>nieces</i>
		<b>вашей матери</b> <i>your mother</i>		<b>шесть</b> <i>6</i>	<b>сыновей.</b> <i>sons</i>	<b>сестёр.</b> <i>sisters</i>
				<b>много</b> <i>many</i>	<b>племянников.</b> <i>nephews</i>	<b>дочерей.</b> <i>daughters</i>
				<b>нет</b> <i>no</i>		

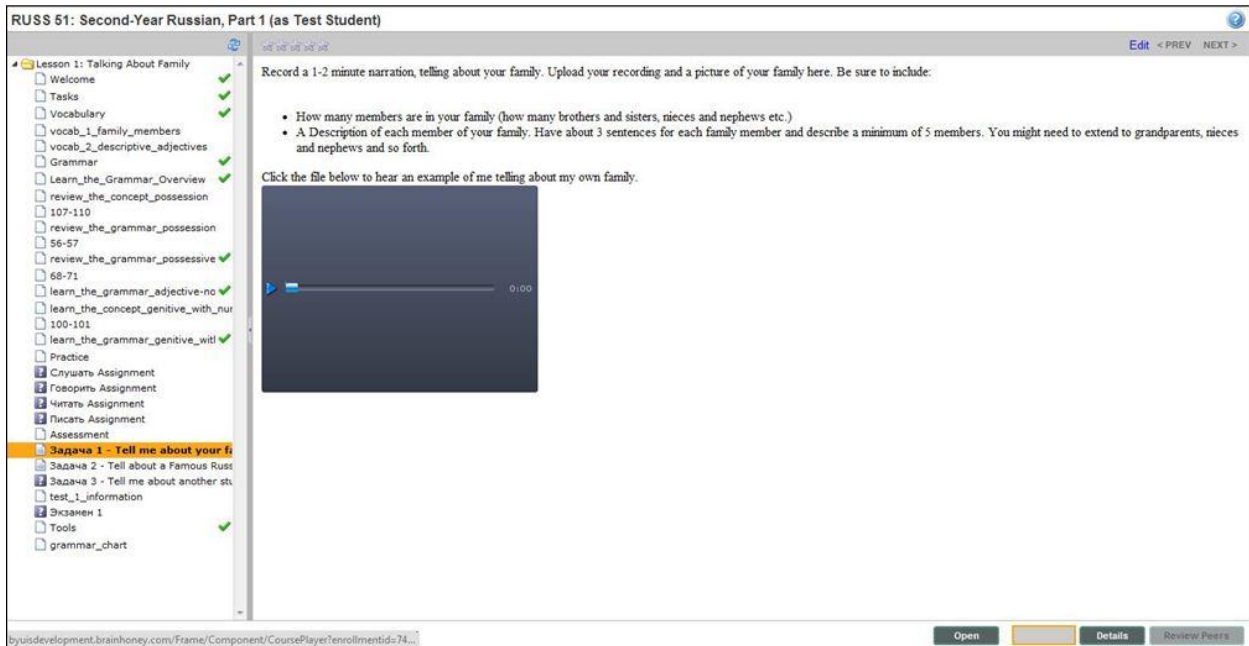
**Examples:**

<p><b>Q. У вас есть братья?</b> <i>Do you have any brothers?</i></p> <p><b>A. Да, у меня есть четыре брата.</b> <i>Yes, I have 4 brothers.</i></p> <p><b>A. Нет, у меня нет братьев.</b> <i>No, I don't have any brothers.</i></p>	<p><b>Q. Сколько сестёр у вашего отца есть?</b> <i>How many sister does your father have?</i></p> <p><b>A. У моего отца есть одна сестра.</b> <i>My father has 1 sister.</i></p> <p><b>A. У моего отца нет сестёр.</b> <i>My father doesn't have any sisters.</i></p>
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### Listening Assignment BrainHoney Application



### Task 1 BrainHoney Application





Test 1 BrainHoney Application

RUSS 51: Second-Year Russian, Part 1 (as Test Student)

Lesson 1: Talking About Family

- Welcome
- Tasks
- Vocabulary
- vocab\_1\_family\_members
- vocab\_2\_descriptive\_adjectives
- Grammar
- Learn\_the\_Grammar\_Overview
- review\_the\_concept\_possession 107-110
- review\_the\_grammar\_possession 56-57
- review\_the\_grammar\_possessive 68-71
- learn\_the\_grammar\_adjective-no
- learn\_the\_concept\_genitive\_with\_nur 100-101
- learn\_the\_grammar\_genitive\_wit
- Practice
- Слушать Assignment
- Говорить Assignment
- Читать Assignment
- Писать Assignment
- Assessment
- Задача 1 - Tell me about your family
- Задача 2 - Tell about a Famous Russ
- Задача 3 - Tell me about another st.
- test\_1\_information
- Экзамен 1**
- Tools
- grammar\_chart

1. Хотя он проводит много времени на работе, Путин очень здоровый.

- cheerful
- fun
- pleasant
- in shape
- overweight

2. For the question below, choose the correct form of "ваш" to fill in the blank  
"У \_\_\_\_\_ отца нет братьев и сестёр?"

- ваш
- вашего
- вашей
- ваша
- вашего

3. For the question below, choose the correct form of "ваш" to fill in the blank  
"Джон и Мэт \_\_\_\_\_ дяди?"

- ваши
- вашэй
- ваши
- вашей
- ваш

4. For the sentence below, choose the correct form of "мой" to fill in the blank  
"\_\_\_\_\_ братья и сёстры очень умные."

- мой
- моих
- моя

Start: 10:08 PM

Directions Save Submit

Noun Declension Grammar Chart

## Russian Pronoun, Noun, and Adjective Endings

		<b>Masculine Endings</b>			<b>Neuter Endings</b>			<b>Feminine Endings</b>												
Examples:		мой	наш	добрый	дом	Игорь	музей	моё	наше	доброё	слово	море	здание	моя	наша	добрая	книга	семья	Мария	цель
Cases	Singular	Poss.	Pron.	Adj.	Nouns			Poss.	Pron.	Adj.	Nouns			Poss.	Pron.	Adj.	Nouns			
		Nom	ой	---	ый, ой	---	ь	й	ё	е	оё	о	е	ие	я	а	ая	а	я	ия
Acc In	ой	---	ый, ой	---	ь	й	ё	е	оё	о	е	ие	ю	у	ую	у	ю	ию	ь	
Acc An	его	его	ого	а	я	я	его	его	ого	а	я	ия	ю	у	ую	у	ю	ию	ь	
Gen	его	его	ого	а	я	я	его	его	ого	а	я	ия	ей	ей	ой	ы	и	ии	и	
Prep	ём	ём	ом	е	е	е	ём	ём	ом	е	е	ии	ей	ей	ой	е	е	ии	и	
Dat	ему	ему	ому	у	ю	ю	ему	ему	ому	у	ю	ию	ей	ей	ой	е	е	ии	и	
Inst	им	им	ым	ом	ём	ём	им	им	ым	ом	ём	нём	ей	ей	ой	ой	ей	ией	ью	
Cases	Plural	Poss.	Pron.	Adj.	Nouns			Poss.	Pron.	Adj.	Nouns			Poss.	Pron.	Adj.	Nouns			
		Nom	и	и	ьё	ы	и	и	и	и	ьё	а	я	ия	и	и	ьё	ы	и	ии
Acc In	и	и	ьё	ы	и	и	и	и	и	ьё	а	я	ия	и	и	ьё	ы	и	ии	и
Acc An	их	их	ьх	ов	ей	ев	их	их	ьх	---	ей	ий	их	их	ьх	ы	и	ии	и	
Gen	их	их	ьх	ов	ей	ев	их	их	ьх	---	ей	ий	их	их	ьх	---	ь	ий	ей	
Prep	их	их	ьх	ах	ях	ях	их	их	ьх	ах	ях	иях	их	их	ьх	---	ь	ий	ей	
Dat	им	им	ьм	ам	ям	ям	им	им	ьм	ам	ям	иям	им	им	ьм	ах	ях	иях	ях	
Inst	ими	ими	ьми	ами	ями	ями	ими	ими	ьми	ами	ями	иями	ими	ими	ьми	ам	ям	иям	ям	

\*Hard endings. (For soft endings change the first "о" to "е", "ы" to "и", "а" to "я", or "у" to "ю".)

## Appendix F: Evaluation Plan and Interview Questions

### Evaluation Plan

- Enroll in the 1<sup>st</sup> lesson of the course 5-10 participants who have recently finished Russian 101 through BYU. Theoretically, they should be at the same level as a student who finished a year of Russian 41 and 43 through BYU Independent Study.
- Allow the students 2 weeks to complete the course
- Encourage participation by offering \$50 as compensation for time and effort.

### Data Collection

- Collect data through BrainHoney about how long students were logged into each section, scores on assignments, etc.
- Personal Interview - Conduct 15-20 minute interviews with each participant.

### General Interviews Questions

- What was most helpful in this lesson?
- What was least helpful in this lesson?
- Were there times that you were confused/didn't know what to do? Where? What did you do?
- Did you feel like it was too structured or not structured enough? Why?
- How much of the vocabulary was new? How much were words that you would actually use?
- How did you use the grammar activity? Did it help? How?
- Was there ever a time that you felt that you were doing an assignment just to do it instead of doing it to learn? Where?
- What would you change about this lesson?
- How is this lesson better than or worse than ways you have learned Russian in the past?
- Did you feel prepared for the assessments (tasks and exam)?
- How were you able to share and receive information through the course?
- What did you learn about Russia through this lesson?
- What insights (if any) did you gain about Russian culture?
- What are some similarities and differences you noticed about Russian and English?
- What did you learn about the other students taking the course?
- How did this course prepare you to communicate in Russian?
- How does the Russian used in the course relate to the Russian you expect to use when speaking with a native Russian speaker?

### Conclusions

- Identify themes in the qualitative data (coding)
- Identify the strengths and identify what needs to be changed