

THE LANGUAGES OF LUXEMBOURG: A 5 LANGUAGE AUDIO AND WRITTEN SELF-TRAINING SURVIVAL TOOL (ABBREVIATION: S5)

Company name : AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Activity sector : Activités de services administratifs et de soutien

Company category : Fondation, Association, ONG

Description of the action

The project is carried out under the auspices of and with the funding support of *Oeuvre Nationale de Secours Grande-Duchesse Charlotte* within the MATENEEN initiative.

S5, a website/mobile phone application, helps to quickly gain survival levels of simultaneous multilingual communication competencies in the 5 most important Luxembourg languages: Luxembourgish, French, German, English and Portuguese. S5 simultaneously delivers audio and written content at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels targeting newly arrived refugees who need language self-training tools for immediate oral communication needs.

Context

Due to the language [diversity](#) of Luxembourg, refugees need to be competent in multiple languages at the same time to work or integrate: having competences in at least one language triggers the learning of the other 4. Research shows that oral language learning for an immigrant population happens, in a first phase, through the use of “formulaic structures” or prefabs: S5 is built on that theory (Wray, 2002). S5 is a flexible tool that fits everybody's schedule and access to digital devices, allows for group learning according to affiliations and empowers the newcomers to participate.

Approach

S5, a low-cost self-learning tool to accelerate the development of simultaneous multiple communication competences at a rapid pace: (i) can be used anytime/anywhere, (ii) fits the oral and digital use practices of the participants (iii) is self-directed, context/model-organized: conversation-oriented, with content fitting several activities (pivots) (iv) builds on already-acquired competences (procedural/content dense), (v) encourages interlanguage pattern reinforcement. The project sets 5 Ss as keywords: Survival, Synergy, Self-Learning, Simultaneous, Support.

Objectives

1. Faster and more diverse linguistic fluency for motivated users.
2. Awareness: the users became aware of the interlanguage affordances of the 5 languages (words with a similar sound/form in several languages; words that are used internationally in the same form, Escude & Janin, 2010).
3. Empowerment: increased linguistic fluency will facilitate access to information, services, jobs, educational opportunities and community activities by members of the refugee population on an equal basis regardless of gender, age or current educational level. This rapid acquisition of communicative competency is vital for all forms of communication and a powerful facilitator for integration.
4. Opportunities for communication: this type of context-based content affords patterned learning (once we learn the pattern of the dialogue in the post office, we should be able in time to transfer the model to producing a dialogue in the supermarket).
5. Opportunities for collaborative group-work: two or three users can work together on the content and learn from each other, enact dialogues together, etc. Likewise this tool provides a structure that would allow community

participation to engage with and support the language learning and coincidentally the integration of the refugees into the broader Luxembourg community.

6. Being part of a community, the S5 community: integration and the feeling of “belonging” to a country, can start at a smaller level, for example by belonging to a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). A critical part of achieving community identity is the ability to communicate which this tool is designed to provide.
7. Proactive participation: the users have an enhanced ability to take active action for their learning and for their advancement.

Impact

The key to ensuring effective integration between the local and the applicants or beneficiaries of international protection is the acquisition of communicative competences. By providing a tool that facilitates the rapid learning of multiple languages we support and enable the broadest degree of interactive communication acquired within the shortest possible time.

« To do »

- Approach language learning plurilingually.

« Not to do »

- Disregard one's languages as a resource for learning and interacting.