LDTE 5120- Donna Davis

Personal Case Study:

Development of Foreign Language E-Learning Lessons for GLOSS

Executive Summary

The following case study examines a foreign language e-learning project that I conducted for the Global Language Online Support System (GLOSS), a leading provider of online language learning resources. The project aimed to improve language proficiency among diverse user bases, including military personnel, diplomats, and international business professionals. GLOSS aims to tackle several critical challenges in language learning resources, such as accessibility, engagement, and effectiveness, by using cutting-edge technology and innovative instructional design.

The project used the ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) methodology to organize its activities and ensure a systematic approach to instructional design. The project began with a comprehensive needs assessment to identify the absence of lessons in the current assignment topics, the skill level needed for the lessons in each subject, and the technical requirements. I collected data through meetings with the project manager and the Defense Language Institute team. The information obtained was used as the foundation for the project planning phase, during which objectives and the stages for evaluating lesson development were discussed. Key activities included content development, technology integration, and user interface design to ensure that the platform was user-friendly and accessible.

Execution and implementation involved collaboration with subject matter experts, instructional designers, and software developers. My focus was on sourcing new materials from authentic sources and designing proficiency-level-appropriate interactive lessons, multimedia resources, and adaptive learning paths to cater to reading and listening comprehension and grammar for different learning styles.

It was essential to assess and evaluate the project, so our team established continuous monitoring and feedback loops to measure effectiveness and user satisfaction. The project

successfully increased user engagement and language proficiency, meeting its objectives and providing valuable insights for future e-learning initiatives.

Organizational Background: GLOSS

GLOSS, which stands for Global Language Online Support System, is a respected organization committed to offering high-quality language learning resources online. Founded in the early 2000s, GLOSS has been a leader in language education, catering not only to the U.S. Department of Defense but also reaching out to a broader audience, including civilian learners across the globe.

GLOSS is dedicated to supporting language learners by providing comprehensive, accessible, and effective online resources. The organization uses advanced technology and pedagogical expertise to deliver lessons that meet various learning needs and proficiency levels. GLOSS offers a wide range of learning materials covering multiple languages, making it a popular choice for individuals looking to improve their language skills for personal or professional reasons.

The organization's structure includes a team of linguists, instructional designers, and technology experts collaborating to create engaging and compelling learning experiences. GLOSS is committed to continuous improvement and innovation. It regularly updates its content and incorporates new instructional methods and technologies to meet the evolving needs of its users. This dedication ensures that GLOSS remains at the forefront of language education, always offering the most relevant and effective resources.

The reputation of GLOSS for excellence is based on its capability to offer customized learning experiences that are flexible and scalable. GLOSS ensures its resources stay relevant and practical by prioritizing user-centered design and utilizing data-driven insights. The organization's commitment to supporting language learners in various contexts highlights its significance in online education.

Setting the Stage

The creation of each e-learning language lesson for GLOSS was a detailed process aimed at covering specific areas of information known to a native speaker while remaining current and relevant. The main goal was to develop engaging, effective, and accessible reading and listening lessons that could address the needs of different proficiency levels and learning styles, particularly for the students at the Defense Language Institute.

One of the main challenges was ensuring content relevance and accuracy. Given the diverse user bases, including military personnel and diplomats, the lessons needed to cover practical and context-specific language skills. This required the instructional designer to be preferably a native speaker with a linguistics background and extensive collaboration with subject matter experts to ensure that the lessons were accurate, culturally, and contextually appropriate.

One of the main challenges we faced was keeping the learners engaged. The traditional language lessons in the curriculum were often outdated, dull, and uninspiring, which resulted in high failure rates on the final exam (DLPT5). Since creating a new and updated curriculum is time-consuming for each school, we took the initiative to develop new online lessons to supplement the existing materials. This initiative aimed to support teachers and schools at DLI by providing relevant content. The GLOSS team incorporated interactive elements such as brainstorming, quizzes, simulations, and multimedia resources to address this challenge. These components were specifically designed to make learning more dynamic and enjoyable, fostering continuous engagement and ultimately reducing the failure rates on the DLPT5 exam.

The lessons were designed to focus on personalized proficiency learning. Traditional one-size-fits-all approaches were not enough for the diverse needs of GLOSS users. Each lesson included in-depth feedback on students' work, ensuring that every learner received the necessary support to progress at their own pace and improve their language skills.

To sum up, GLOSS's e-learning language lessons were developed to focus on overcoming challenges related to content relevance, learner engagement, and personalization. We aimed to address these issues to create a solid and effective language-learning platform that could meet the diverse needs of its users.

Case Study Description

Defining the Problem

The development of GLOSS e-learning lessons began with addressing several critical problems:

- The absence of content related to daily life
- Ensuring content relevance and accuracy
- Identifying proficiency levels
- Maintaining learner engagement
- Providing personalized learning experiences

- Offering detailed feedback for correct and incorrect answers

Front-End Analysis

The front-end analysis phase was crucial in gathering detailed information to address these problems. We did not conduct surveys or interviews with existing users because most instructional designers (including myself) were previous team leaders actively using GLOSS lessons for their teams. I had several meetings with the Defense Language Institute (DLI) subject matter experts and instructional designers to understand their goals, needs, and expectations.

The analysis highlighted the need for more interactive and engaging content. In the meetings with the DLI team, we found traditional e-learning materials boring and uninspiring, negatively impacting their students' motivation and engagement. The analysis also underscored the strategies of using a level-appropriate approach's content to provide personalized learning paths and feedback.

Project Planning

After gaining insights from the front-end analysis, the project planning phase clarified the learning objectives. It determined the number of required lessons and each lesson's coverage topic and educational resources.

The project roadmap outlined vital facts, including discussing the available authentic websites and what was considered authentic to obtain original reading or listening sources without violating copyrights, using images, audio records, and videos, and the allocated budget for possible purchasing copyright.

Collaboration with subject matter experts was planned to ensure the content's evaluation steps; we designed seven steps to complete each lesson from the beginning.

Execution and Implementation

The execution phase saw the transformation of the design specifications into a fully functional e-learning platform. This phase involved seven key activities:

1- finding a source in the target language and evaluate the proficiency level

2- Translating the source into English and evaluating the translation

3- Designing the lesson and evaluating the activities design

4- Alpha phase, completing all activities in general and evaluating this phase

5- Beta phase, adding in-depth information to the activities and evaluating the relevancy of the added information

6- Peer review conducted by another native speaker instructional designer to catch any typos or errors in the target language

7- Charlie phase: This phase covers each lesson's technical aspects to ensure the lesson is publishable. This phase also includes reviewing the searchable tags for each lesson so the learners can find the lesson they need to strengthen their skills.

Assessment

Evaluation and assessment were ongoing processes throughout the project. We established continuous monitoring and feedback loops to measure the platform's effectiveness and user satisfaction.

As a result of the evaluation loops, each lesson took almost a month to complete in a best-case scenario, and this put some pressure on instructional designers to finish all the determined lessons in a timeline discussed in the contract with DLI.

In my experience, the project's team members' interactions with the DLI team contributed to the faster approval and moving to the next phase. Some of the DLI's team members were pickier than others, and there wasn't a standard to measure some of the work; at some point, it was only a personal reference that could help a project move forward faster.

References

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