

Title: Additional Digital Resources in Russian Study Abroad Programs

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Abstract:

The paper presents a set of new materials developed for an intermediate-low and intermediate-mid level Russian language course at Yale University, with the support of a Yale Digital Education Innovation Grant. These materials supplement the course textbook using the Canvas platform and consist of three modules for completion over three weeks.

Following recent research on using the internet in language learning (Evans 2009; Brandl 2000) and the principles of communicate language teaching (Brandl 2008; Schmid, Whyte 2014), the materials offer a guided exposure to authentic language in straightforward social situations and provide an experience of dealing with nonlinear (hypermedia) information. For example, the materials use Yandex taxi and Yandex maps; train schedules from the Russian railroad website; and online menus of restaurants.

Furthermore, the paper will discuss notions of symbolic and intercultural competence, and how this competence can be enhanced through the use of authentic resources.

The paper concludes by returning to its guiding question: How can one design digital components of the language exercises sustainable for future use while respecting the terms of fair use?