

Title: “Glagoly”: The Design and Development of a Mobile App for Language Learners
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Digital technologies have transformed much of our work in higher education over the previous twenty years; the latest wave is the rise of mobile devices such as the iPhone, iPad, and Android devices. What opportunities and difficulties will we encounter as we adapt or create teaching materials for these technologies?

To discuss these questions, I will use as a test case “Glagoly,” a reference tool on Russian verbs for the iPhone/iPad platform which is currently being tested by first and thirdyear Russian students, and which I will submit to the iTunes App Store in May 2011. While this project is similar in purpose to traditional reference books, designing such materials for the iPhone/iPad presented many new possibilities, as well as a number of practical challenges.

I will begin by with a brief demo of the app to illustrate its main features, pointing out ways in which it goes beyond limitations of printed materials. I will then outline the process by which I designed and programmed “Glagoly” in Xcode, the development environment provided by Apple for iOS projects. Since learning Xcode and the ObjectiveC language can require a significant commitment of time and/or money, I will also discuss alternate methods to develop interactive materials for mobile platforms.

Given that I am a language teacher and linguist by training rather than a programmer, I believe that my perspective on the opportunities and challenges of developing an app will be of interest to educators seeking to understand the potential and the pitfalls of these new platforms.

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