Working with Heritage Learners

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In this session we will:

• discuss ways of creating safe and supporting learning environment for heritage learners

• look at how the local community resources might be used to enrich the program

• see how project-based learning can push the students to explore real-life problems while increasing their language proficiency

• share and discuss our program’s best practices in working with heritage learners: projects, interviews, and field trips to the Museum of Flight (Seattle)
UW Student Program for Russian Heritage Speakers

Russian in the Sky and Outer Space

- 4-week intensive (5 hours/day) language program at the University of Washington
- Designed for high-school age Russian Heritage Language Learners (HLLs)
- Focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) and academic language to increase language proficiency
UW STARTALK 2014
Student Profiles

• 22 students (ages 14-17 years old)
• Born in the US or arrived before age 3 (13)
• Age at immigration: 4-9 (4)
• Age at immigration: 9-14 (5)
• Target language proficiency (according to ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines):
  ✓ Intermediate Mid or higher in Speaking/Listening
  ✓ Intermediate Low or higher in Reading/Writing
STEM Components in UW STARTALK Russian Program

- STEM Unit Lessons
  - Voyage to Mars
  - Airplanes

- Role plays and labs at the Museum of Flight
  - Voyage to Mars
  - Pilot for a day

- Interviews with professionals
  - Boeing
  - Microsoft
  - Philips

- Elective Projects
  - Lego Robotics
  - Linguistics
  - Russian History
Interviews with Professionals
Why Interviews?

- Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational modes of communication;
- Real-life task;
- Preparing students for interviews as a complex genre of communication;
- Content-based communication;
- Academic language style in use;
- Thank-you letter (via MOODLE Forum)

Increases students sensitivity to cultural norms
Interviews with Professionals: Standards and Expected Outcomes

- Meet, greet and introduce people in formal and informal settings (Communication: Interpersonal);
- Listen to and understand oral presentation about STEM topics (Communication: Interpretive);
- Begin to use social registers and academic language style in discussing STEM topics with peers and a guest speaker (Communication: Interpersonal);
- Ask questions and understand answers about history of aircraft building and aerodynamics (Communication: Interpersonal);
- Recognize differences in Russian and American educational approaches for studying scientific disciplines through interviews with Russian professionals (Culture, Comparisons);
- Express post-activity feelings and experiences in short reflections using Moodle and thank-you letters (Communication: Presentational).
Post-Interview Student Reflections

(some excerpts from a thank-you letter)

Нам было очень интересно узнать о Вашем опыте и о вашей карьере.

It was very interesting to learn about your experience and career.

Было очень интересно услышать о новом программном обеспечении, новых технологиях и истории компании Майкрософт.

It was very interesting to learn about new computer technologies, and the history of the Microsoft company.
Field trips

• provide opportunities for experiential learning
• help develop learners’ interest and motivation
• collaboration with community resources and museums bring a language to life and make the learning of complex vocabulary and language structures worthwhile
“Voyage to Mars” Simulation at the Museum of Flight

• Introduction of specific vocabulary and structures students need to understand and use to complete the simulation
• Role-play communication during flight simulation
• Post-activities reflection
“Aviation Learning Center” at the Museum of Flight

- Introduction of specific vocabulary and structures that students need to talk about how airplanes are constructed and why they fly
- Create a flight plan in Russian and conduct a pre-flight check
- Post-activities reflection
Student Activities: Lab at the Museum of Flight
Projects: So Many Choices

• Linguistic research project “The Life of Words in Another Language”
• Research Project in Math/Robotics “Mars investigation with LEGO-robotics”
• Historical project “Russia in the 20th Century”

Other projects in the past:
• Drama
• Film and Culture
• Digital Storytelling
Why Projects?

• meet students’ various interests by giving a choice of a project and a research topic
• extend the main theme of the program above and beyond the STEM topics
• provide a deep cultural context connecting STEM with historical, social, cultural and linguistic content and explore it through the use of various authentic materials in Russian
• give heritage students a real-life task to make an oral presentation of their findings in academic style
• involve Russian community at the end of the program “conference”
At the End of the Program
Student Research Projects Conference

• **Choose** elective projects from Linguistic, Robotic & Astronomy, and History;
• **Explore** research topics through the use of various authentic materials in Russian;
• **Create** a PowerPoint presentation in the target language;
• **Present** orally their research findings in front of their classmates, parents, teachers, and experts;
• **Compete** to be the best presenter of the project;
• **Get feedback** from the Russian-speaking experts from the community.
Projects: Setting Goals

Interpretive tasks:
• Read and understand authentic texts: Russian dictionaries, linguistic articles and technical descriptions;
• Understand other students’ presentations, video and audio materials, take critical notes;

Interpersonal tasks:
• Discuss ideas and opinions related to their research topics;
• Participate in after-presentation discussions with peers and experts;

Presentational tasks:
• In order to make an oral presentation of their findings at the end of the program in front of their parents, teachers, classmates, and experts, the students write PowerPoint Presentation
• The students present findings from research projects orally with computer presentation slides.
Collaboration with Local Russian Newspaper “Russkiy Mir”

- Tell Russian community about the program
- Advertise the program to attract students
- Publish students’ articles
Город на Марсе
Алексей Быкович, студент программы 2013г.

Планета Марс была загадкой для ученых многие годы, но мы все ближе к тому моменту, когда человеческая нога станет на эту красную планету. Люди всегда мечтали о человеческом поселении на Марсе, но могли ли эти сказки стать реальностью? Всего 40 лет назад такие вещи как смартфон были фантазией, и мы продвигаемся в развитии технологий каждую минуту. Что может принести нам будущее?

Чтобы человек жил на другой планете, ему нужны кислород, вода, еда… Проблема в том, что на Марсе существует нехватка всего этого. А также там очень низкое давление, ядовитая атмосфера, нет кислорода и повышенный уровень радиации.

Поскольку свинец хорошо поглощает γ-излучение, он используется для радиационной защиты в рентгеновских установках и в ядерных реакторах. Поэтому на первом этапе наш город будет под свинцом. Потом под городом можно будет строить туннели. Второй этап – терраформирование. Биосфера планеты будет защищать людей от солнечной и галактической космической радиации.

Также для жизни на Марсе нужно электричество, которое предполагается получать из солнечных батарей и ветряных мельниц.

Ниже приведен проект города на Марсе, в котором будут электростанции, оранжереи, научные лаборатории, квартиры для людей…
Task for our session:

• Briefly introduce yourself (name, program, language and students’ level)
• Choose one of the activities that you think might work in your program and form corresponding groups
• Think and discuss in corresponding groups how this activity might fit with your program’s goal and how it can be organized
• Choose three best ideas and write them on the group poster
You Can See and Use Our Materials

- Program and lesson plans
- Scenarios and texts
- PowerPoint presentations
- Videos of the lessons

at UW STARTALK website
http://depts.washington.edu/startalk/

THANK YOU!