Practice Spanish: A Task-Based Immersive and Mobile Language Learning Game

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Game Design Overview

The PracticeSpanish game is designed to provide additional practice for first year Spanish students. The game uses a Task-based approach to language learning - students will first prepare their language skills for a task, and then use that language to carry out meaningful tasks in contextual situations communicating with game characters in immersive scenes. The game will support single-player play, with optional multiplayer experiences available.

The game consists of several primary parts: an immersive, interactive 3D game- **the Main Game** where the player will accomplish tasks by using their knowledge of Spanish; and a series of phone-based **Pre-Task Games** where the student will practice the skills they need to succeed in the adventure game.

The student's experience and progress in the Pre-Task games and Main Game will be controlled and motivated by a **Metagame**. This metagame will control unlocking of Tasks in the Main Game, scoring and points, student advancement, and adaptive capabilities to direct students to Pre-Task games for additional practice where needed.

The Metagame will be run from the MH Practice website, and progress information and feedback will be given there. the MH Practice site will also provide Instructor tools and reports and Student feedback and tools, as well as controls to set up multiplayer play.

Immersive Task-based language learning Game: Study Abroad Adventure

The core of Practice:Spanish will be an immersive task-based language learning game. Students will complete a series of Task-based scenarios which will take place in immersive 3D game locations set in appropriate cultural locations. Students will customize and control an Avatar, taking on the role of a student studying abroad, facing the challenges of travel abroad and taking part in adventures with game characters in locations in South America and Spain. The game will include useful real-world travel-abroad interactions including travel communication, meeting families and friends, and more.

The game will include 16 Task Activities in which the student must uses language and language skills to complete a useful, meaningful task.

Figure 1: Constructing conversations in quest-based game environmen

The game will use a set of mastery-based language-interaction mechanics, where the student must use and prove vocabulary and grammar skills to complete tasks and advance in the game. Many of the language interactions will be with computer-controlled game characters, and it will be possible to play the entire game as a single player. Optional multiplayer game features will also be available.

Pre-Task Games

Practice: Spanish will include Pre-Task preparatory games designed to run on iOS and Android smartphones. These will be designed to provide adaptive vocabulary and grammar practice to prepare for Task Based Scenarios in the Main game. There will be two Pre-Task game types, each designed to support a variety of vocabulary or grammar content. For each Task in the Main Game, there will be a "set" of one or two Pre-Task games outfitted with the vocabulary and grammar content needed to prepare for that task.

Figure 2: Mobile pre-task games prepare players for the Quest

How the Study Abroad Adventure and Pre-Task games work together

Players play the Pre-Task games in order to practice the language skills necessary to successfully complete the Scenarios of the Study Abroad Adventure. When a player has demonstrated mastery of the targeted Spanish vocabulary and grammar by playing the Pre-Task games, the associated Task unlocks. Once the player has completed this Task, the Pre-Task game for the next Task can be unlocked. Each Pre-Task provides new vocabulary and grammar topics for the student to practice, and then apply in the following Task.

Figure 3: Screenshot from Quest 1 showing Goals and Mastery Mechanic.

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