

Language for Health: How to Use the Website

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The Language for Health website is the only existing content-based Hindi and Urdu language learning website on the Internet.

It is based on unscripted and semi-scripted authentic video materials recorded by an Indian team of documentary film professionals and it also includes a collection of Internet sites related to health.

It is created for Hindi and Urdu learners to use the language as a medium in order to develop new knowledge in disciplines related to health and with teacher support to express this new knowledge in communication.

Its main pedagogical objective is to allow for the integration of culture, content and language.

Instructors can create presentational, interpretive and interpersonal tasks. Examples of cognitively engaging performance tasks are:

1. Explore and discuss:

a) culture-specific gestures, behaviors and attitudes in doctor-patient interactions and/or in the context of health.

b) age-related health concerns and issues

c) gender-related health concerns and issues

2. Compare and contrast:

a) conventional vs traditional methods, medicines, beliefs, etc.

b) rural vs. urban health centers, interactions, issues, etc.

c) male vs. female health-related issues

3. Argue and support your opinion about:

a) traditional views on nutrition and health benefits

b)

The audio, visual and script-based resources and materials on the website offer opportunities for project-based product-oriented learning scenarios:

1. Students explore a specific topic, such as children's hygiene, dental hygiene, use of plants, benefits of yoga exercise, etc.,
2. They prepare specific products with increasing difficulty:
 - a) written products include flyers, brochures, pamphlets, etc.
 - b) oral products include phone conversations, commercials, infomercials, TV talk shows, informational sessions, etc.
 - c) mixed media (written and oral) products include power point presentations, poster-boards, etc.
3. In order to use the appropriate register, learners need to have in mind:
 - a) a specific setting, such as a doctor' office, TV interview, debate, fair, event gathering, school environment, etc.
 - b) a specific audience (e.g. school students, rural or urban residents of a certain age, government officials, media representatives, etc.) .

The website allows for differentiated teaching and learning:

1. Differentiation based on heritage vs. foreign language

- a) Students learning Hindi and Urdu as their heritage languages benefit from literacy-based interpretive and presentational tasks and these learners can explore the content of the website with emphasis on reading and writing.
- b) Students learning Hindi and Urdu as foreign languages benefit from interpersonal tasks and these learners can explore the content of the website with emphasis on listening and speaking.

2. Differentiation based on skills and levels

a) development of receptive skills – reading of uploaded materials and listening to audio files:

- at the Intermediate level – identify a detail, comprehend gist;
- at the Advanced level – identify issues, attitudes, recent developments, etc.

b) development of productive skills – speaking and writing based on glossaries and visuals:

- at the Intermediate level: describe, report, express opinion, etc.;
- at the Advanced level – report, argue, defend opinion, discuss in abstract terms, etc.