Computer Assisted Language Learning for Today

Responding to the Call for Flexible and Interactive Language Learning Tools
Summary

Today there is an enormous demand for self-directed learning resources for foreign and second languages across a full spectrum of learners. These include people in higher education, commerce, government, the military, and those engaged in lifelong learning for personal development.

The Internet, and digital media in general, can contribute vastly toward fulfilling this end, but their promise is undermined when their use is not informed by sound pedagogical principles.

This paper outlines a commercial online language learning course that utilizes interactive digital media to create a participatory learning environment - one that builds flexibility into its design and caters to a range of learning preferences.
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Introduction

The telecommunications revolution of the computer age goes hand in hand with another revolution, that of language learning. The two drives are mutually enhancing: the more connected new technologies allow us to be, the more languages and cultures converge. At the same time, with digital multimedia learning a language has never been easier or more accessible. Digital technology has enabled advances in audio recording, interactive learning resources that provide real-time feedback, and social networking tools that cultivate learning communities, which may be as diverse culturally as they are geographically. All of these resources have powerful implications for language learning. In addition, many digital language learning resources are available in downloadable form online, so audio materials are often portable, and can be used in car stereos and MP3 players.

However, a disconnect remains between technology and methodology; that is, effective learning tools and learning methods. As Gerhard Fischer and Eric Scharff (1998) suggest:

One of the major misunderstandings in our current debate about enhancing learning with new media is the assumption that technological advances will, by virtue of their very existence, improve the quality of learning. New technologies and media must be more than add-ons to existing practices.

The difficulties with using learning technology and learning theory in concert are compounded by a relative lack of new knowledge about how people actually learn online and in rich media environments. Many of the models of learning styles and preferences in circulation today were constructed pre World Wide Web and do not fully account for the material conditions in which today's learners, who are now typically surfers, networkers, bloggers, podcasters, or gamers, find themselves. In some cases new media is used for the sake of new media, a problem often more pronounced in commercially produced courseware, which might be extremely advanced in terms of technical design but lacking in educational design. As Mark Warschauer (1996) writes:

While teachers themselves can conceivably develop their own multimedia programs ... the fact is that most classroom teachers lack the training or the time to make even simple programs, let alone more complex and sophisticated ones ... This has left the field to commercial developers, who often fail to base their programs on sound pedagogical principles.

Nonetheless, commercial courses that are sensitive to contemporary trends in pedagogy can provide effective language learning solutions. In fact, these courses can exploit new media technologies and offer a functionality and connectivity that extends well beyond traditional classroom environments. In order to do so, however, they must maintain a close relationship
between pedagogical developments in the field of computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and the affordances of digital media in today’s culture of online collaboration and information sharing.

Learning, Teaching, and Machines

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) refers to the use of computer-based learning materials designed to accommodate self-paced, student-centered learning of a target language. It can be traced back to the 1960s, well before the rise of personal computers and computing, and is often divided into three historical phases (Warschauer 1996).

The first phase is referred to Behavioristic CALL because it followed the prevailing "stimulus and response" theories of education modeled after B.F. Skinner. The computer simply provided a stimulus (question) for the student to input a response (answer), and then returned active feedback to the student based on immediate analysis of the student’s input.

Repeated engagement with material in a drill-based format was seen as essential to effective learning, and the computer was seen as an ideal medium to make this process more efficient by automating it. Computers could make rote-learning using drills much faster and more accessible by closing a feedback loop that previously required an actual person to analyze answers and give feedback. For example, the computer could respond with a bell for a correct answer, and a buzzer for an incorrect answer.

The PLATO system (Programmed Logic for Automated Teaching Operations) was an early mainframe computer system developed at the University of Illinois in the 1960s, and the first purpose-built for educational instruction. It is commonly considered as the starting point for CALL in general. Even though it is credited for innovating more dynamic functions, including online forums and message boards, and even multi-player online games (Wooley 1994), its popular legacy, along with other mainframe systems utilized up until the late 1970s, was the drill-based system of rote-learning activities. It focused on learning through analysis of the language.

A second phase, referred to as Communicative CALL, further recognized the communicative potential of the computer to aid the student in language learning. It coincided with the emergence of the personal computer, which, along with the first publicly available language learning software, dramatically expanded the field from the late 1970s and 1980s.

In this phase, analysis of the language, grammatical understanding, becomes secondary to a context-based understanding and its application. Drill-based formats were replaced by exercises where the student would have to demonstrate their comprehension of given material through self-paced reading exercises or task-based learning. For example, the
learner might be asked to provide directions to a computer-based character that is lost. The question, the answer, or the entire exchange can occur in the target language.

Communicative CALL also marked the use of computer games of the day, such as SimCity, to simulate conversational contexts where more dynamic dialogue could occur in the target language between a learner and an artificial agent. Input was still text-based, and in many cases, SimCity included, the games were not designed for language learning. But these simulations required more cognitive effort from the participant, who assumed more autonomy in the learning task.

In some ways Communicative CALL is more a sophisticated extension of Behavioristic CALL than a break from it, because the computer still holds the "correct" answer and retains a tutor-like position. Nevertheless, in this phase activities and exercises attain more complexity, learners gain more control over their learning, and in general the computer is reconceived as not simply a teaching machine that delivers content, but also a communicative tool. Still, many educators came to see shortcomings in the communicative approach, which they believed centered on using the computer to teach language skills in a disjointed and compartmentalized way (Warschauer 1996).

The third phase, described as Integrative CALL, seeks to address these shortcomings by integrating what were seen as discrete language-learning skills into more cohesive tasks or projects. Pedagogically, it is also the phase informed most heavily by constructivist theories of learning, whereby the student continually constructs new knowledge based on an active engagement with a diverse set of materials, people, experiences, rather than simply acting as the passive receptacle of pre-constructed knowledge that is transmitted from teacher to student.

This phase began in the early 1990s and, significantly, coincided with the ascendancy of multimedia technology and the World Wide Web. Beginning with programs based on CD-ROM, images, sound, and text were now able to be used together with greater ease to develop the four basic skills of language learning:

1. Listening
2. Speaking
3. Reading
4. Writing.

Even though these three phases are presented historically, it is important to recognize that there are valuable developments in each phase, and that each new phase does not necessarily replace what came before it. In fact, it is also possible to conceive of each category in a non-historical way, for example, respectively as "Restricted," "Open," and "Integrated" (Bax 2003).
A non-historical view highlights the fact that the integrated approach is truly a synthesis of the best aspects of the other language learning modes, all of which are still utilized in some form today.

But the project of integration itself is by no means straightforward. In fact, with computer-based tools now more available to learners and teachers alike than ever, embarking on a path of computer-assisted language proficiency can seem overwhelming rather than empowering.

### A Medley of Multimedia Tools

Many of the language learning tools that had already made use of technology, such as pre-recorded audio, were reinvented with the advent of digital media. For example, audio-based courses, which began their life on cassette tapes in the 1970s and 1980s, have migrated to CD or digital sound files with the movement from analog to digital recording technology. They can be incorporated much more easily into computer-based courses as a result. Indeed, we've come a long way since Barry Farber, in his popular guide book *How to Learn Any Language*, remarked that "the invention of the handy portable cassette player catapults language learners from the ox cart to the supersonic jet" (1998, 35).

The World Wide Web has also had dramatic implications for language learning, both as delivery mechanism for downloadable material and as a virtual learning environment in its own right. There are countless websites devoted to language learning, ranging from personal sites like Francois Micheloud's popular how-to-learn-any-language.com to the those that house the U.S. Government's Foreign Services Institute (FSI) Language Course materials, developed in the 1950s for diplomats and now in the public domain. There are also translation sites, like BabelFish, online foreign language dictionaries, and an array of foreign language newspapers, online magazines, and websites, which are all potential language learning resources.

The Web enables a host of computer-mediated communications, which, although present since the inception of the Internet in the late 1960s, were only fully realized and accessible with the advent of the browser-based interfaces of the WWW. These include synchronous communication tools in the form of instant text messaging or video-conferencing tools, and asynchronous communication tools like forums, discussion boards, and email.

There are also virtual learning environments that make use of synchronous communication in three dimensions. Multi-user role-playing games combine the networking capability of the Internet with the graphical and interactive capability of contemporary game engines to create formal and informal language learning contexts. In the virtual world of Second Life,
for example, one can pay tuition fees and enrol in a virtual language course that lasts several weeks or even months; or, in the same game, one can simply arrange to chat with another player in their target language. If that language is Spanish, they might be speaking to a bilingual person located in the same state, or a Spanish person living in Spain - the effect is the same.

All of these tools can be applied with great effect to language learning, and highlight the rise of social networking that began with Web 2.0. Today it’s all about connecting learners in peer-motivated communities that transcend geographical and cultural boundaries.

However, multimedia and Web-enabled tools alone do not fully represent the "now" of computer-assisted language learning. Any media-rich language learning solution must also strive to reflect current developments in educational theory and accommodate the varied needs of learners.

**Learning Methods in the Digital Age**

Multimedia language learning materials are often also multi-linear language learning materials; that is, they make use of hypertext and hypermedia to allow the learner multiple pathways through the subject matter. This can include anything from an omnipresent link that allows users to seek additional help or gloss certain verb changes, to the ability to do certain lessons before or instead of others. Or it might simply empower the learner to move seamlessly from one course component to another - from an interactive quiz, for instance, to a forum thread where peers are discussing some of the finer points of the quiz questions.

Interlinking resources is an important step toward empowering the learner, and one that is crucial to the integrative nature of CALL. It is something that commercial courses can achieve quite readily.

What is more challenging for commercial developers, however, is accommodating a diverse constituency of learners. This is a problem shared by teachers, but to a lesser extent. A high school teacher of first-year French knows, at the very least, that he or she will be teaching first-year French students, which makes it easier to create a curriculum.)

There is still much debate regarding the notion of "learning styles". More specifically, the idea that an individual is pre-disposed to learn in one way as opposed to another, and that this style simply needs to be identified by means of assessment, is contentious. The prevailing consensus is that different people do indeed learn in different ways, but there is little consensus on how to best determine or measure these differences. There have been nearly 80 models of learning styles proposed since this field of research began in the early 20th century, of those 13 are considered to be major models (Coffield, et. al., 2004, 1). Many
in the field have opted to deal with learning "preferences" rather than "styles," a framework that offers a productive way to circumvent this impasse.

Perhaps one of the most common and recognizable models of learning preferences is the VAK model that employs the distinction between Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic learners. In this model, even though learners use all three modes to receive and process new information, they tend to actively prefer one over the others. But even this model is noticeably outdated in its finer detail. For example, in Joy Reid's (1998) description of the "Visual Major Learning Style Preference," there are learners who "prefer to see words in books; understand material through reading; can learn alone with a book." And the "Auditory Major Learning Style Preference" in the same model refers to those who prefer to "hear words spoken; remember information from reading aloud; benefit from audiotapes, lectures, class discussion." (Cited in Felix 2001, 350-51)

How do these categories apply in online or multimedia environments, where visual and auditory modes are employed simultaneously and with markedly different tools?

Furthermore, would a role-playing game in a virtual world somehow extend the Kinesthetic learning preference, which refers to those who learn through touch and movement, or would their "movements" through a three-dimensional landscape onscreen warrant some kind of new category?

From these questions, it is clear that even the most basic models of learning preference need to be revisited in light of new digital and online tools.

In any case, as commercial developers of language learning products, we are not in a position to assess learning styles. What we can do, however, is allow learners to exercise choice in following what they consider to be their learning preference by providing a course that has in-built flexibility in terms of its educational design.

**A Flexible & Integrated Solution**

Rocket Languages is a commercial developer of language learning courses that integrate a wealth of learning resources via a single Web-based software platform. The courses include: interactive audio lessons; text-based grammar and culture lessons with dynamic exercises; online learning games for word and phrase building; and peer-to-peer learning tools in the form of a learners' forum. Much of this material is also available offline in CD-based packages, which allow learners to use the audio lessons without a computer, or download them in MP3 format for added portability.
The design of Rocket Languages’ courses ensures that material is presented in different ways to accommodate a degree of self-directed learning, and that there is genuine interactivity that draws on active learning strategies. The goal is to enable conversational fluency in the target language in the shortest possible time.

**Interactive Audio Lessons**

A popular feature of commercial language learning software is its ability to deliver audio material playable in portable media that allows users to learn on the go, while we commute, jog, or wait in line. Short of an intensive language immersion holiday, audio material is an ideal resource because it allows learners to hear the target language spoken by native speakers and, in turn, practice it in a comfortable (private) and convenient (portable) manner.

Many commercial courses, however, still present audio material in a way that reflects outmoded methods of computer-assisted language learning. Too often the listener is hooked into a repetitive cycle of "listen and repeat." Material is often compartmentalized, divorced from its context, and users become bored by a "drill-and-kill" method in audio form.

Rocket Languages recognizes that the best way to learn how to speak a new language is to actually speak it. Or, to paraphrase Barry Farber (1998, 5), it's not about learning the language before you use it - it's about using the language so you can learn it. That is the reason that Interactive Audio Lessons are the cornerstone of our learning program and are the first step for all users on the recommended learning path through the course materials.

Audio material can be presented in many ways. But in order to be effective, engaging, and enjoyable, it should incorporate several important criteria in its design:

Wherever possible, audio material should involve context-based learning. The 30+ interactive audio lessons included in each Rocket Languages course are based around conversations between the host and one or more native speakers. The host for each language is fluent in the target language, but it is not his or her native language. The conversations are organized into a governing narrative that moves from very basic interactions (greetings and survival phrases) to more advanced exchanges (booking a room, talking about sports, and dinner conversation). In doing so, the structure of the audio course draws on the appeal of both dialogue and narrative material for language learning.

Audio material should also promote active learning using techniques that prompt the listener for responses rather than simply instructing them to repeat words and phrases. American linguistics professor Dr. Paul Pimsleur refined many active learning techniques in
the latter half of the 20th century, which have been applied to a number audio-based language learning courses, including those sold under Simon & Schuster that bear his name.

One of those techniques involves "challenge and response," which prompts the learner to actively recall a word or phrase that they have previously learned. After a short pause in the audio, the host will confirm the correct response. A simple yet vital technique for retention of new vocabulary, this process can be carried out over the course of a single lesson, or can be a matter of bringing material learned in a previous lesson back into play in the new context of a current lesson.

Rocket Languages audio lessons do both. The challenge and response format is used to review and reinforce material within each lesson by way of Tests, which offer up words or phrases from the lesson in different ways, in English or the target language, audio or written, and prompts the learner to respond appropriately.
Another way is to use previously learned material in subsequent lessons. For an example, suppose in lesson 5 one learns how to say, in the target language, "I walked to the store" then, in lesson 10, a lesson about reading, introduces the word for "library." At some point in lesson 10 the host may combine both elements and ask the learner how to say, "I walked to the library?"

The final aspect of effective audio course design is using the audio-format to promote participatory learning; that is, staged participation in realistic conversations. Granted, nothing beats having a face-to-face conversation with a native speaker to steer the learner toward conversational fluency. But it is possible to exploit the audio format to stage simulated conversations between the learner and the characters who deliver the lessons. Rocket Languages’ interactive audio courses conclude with role-playing Track. In these tracks all of the conversations that appear in the previous lessons are assembled together and presented in three versions.

1. The first version includes both voices in the same way as they are presented in each lesson. During these recordings, the learner only listens.

2. In the second version, the voice of the non-native speaker is removed from all of the conversations, and a pause is left for the learner to play the part of this speaker.

3. The third version, then, gives the learner an opportunity to play the role of the native speaker, who typically has longer and more challenging lines.

Users are also able to refer to written transcripts of the conversation if they prefer, which are included as PDFs for all of the conversational dialogues and new vocabulary in each lesson. In fact, the extensive supplementary written material included with the audio lessons sets Rocket Languages courses apart from other audio courses, including the Pimsleur-branded courses. In these courses, learning without textbooks, written exercises, or drills is touted as a selling point. But given that many learners prefer to learn with this material, there appears to be no reason why they should not be given this choice.

### Language & Culture Lessons

Each of the 30+ Interactive Audio Lessons come with a corresponding Language and Culture lesson, which allows learners to explore the mechanics behind the spoken word. These lessons are Web-based and they include photos, illustrations, and embedded audio clips. In addition, they are interactive: they engage the learner with exercises on grammar, vocabulary, and cultural topics and provide immediate feedback.
Although exercises such as these are characteristic of the first phase of computer-assisted language learning, their inclusion is by no means a throw-back. As Robert Godwin-Jones (2007) writes:

*S*uch exercises continue to be created and used and can still play a useful role, particularly when paired with more open-ended, communicative tools and integrated into a multimedia-rich, collaborative on-line language instruction environment.

In addition, because these exercises are an integrated part of the whole, the results can be recorded, and exercises repeated, allowing learners to track their progress.

![Image of flags](image.png)

If you want to say what country you’re from, it gets more complicated. In Italian, you have to say “I COME from” – using the verb *venire*, for “to come.” But not only that, you have to use a different preposition to say FROM. You’ll quickly learn that in Italian the same prepositions can have several meanings, and that the same Italian prepositions can be used in different ways. It can all be easy of course!

Here, you need to know that *da* is the preposition you use to mean “from.”

So... your answer would look something like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vengo dagli Stati Uniti.</td>
<td><em>I come from the United States.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vengo dalla Francia.</td>
<td><em>I come from France.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vengo dall’Inghilterra.</td>
<td><em>I come from England.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See that *venire* means “I come.” And you’ll notice that the word for “from” – *da* – is joined with the Italian article for “the” in each example.

**Figure 1**: Example of content from a Rocket Italian Language & Culture lesson.

The cultural component of these lessons is a valuable one. Learning something of any new culture enhances understanding and a connection to the language.

For example, learning the elaborate system of Japanese honorifics is only really useful if you learn exactly when, where, and with whom to use them. The cultural etiquette that accompanies formal conversations and exchanges in Japanese cannot be separated from the words.
All of the lessons include a language and culture section, and the lessons in the Japanese and Mandarin Chinese courses include additional sections on writing instruction for their character-based scripts. In these writing sections, instructions on stroke order and helpful mnemonics are provided:

![Writing Instruction](image)

Figure 2: Example of writing instruction from a Rocket Chinese Premium Writing Lesson.

There is general debate about if or when grammar should be learned when acquiring a new language, especially when a learner is trying to attain conversational fluency as opposed to "mastery" - a term that tends to imply grammatical and syntactical ability.

But even though grammar can be a dirty word for some, conceptions of language learning as "academic" and "non-academic" are not mutually exclusive. While it can be a topic of serious study for some, a hobby, diversion, self-improvement exercise for others, and a business imperative for others still. It is a cold hard fact that there are concrete rules of language (i.e. grammar). The trick is to convey challenging grammatical concepts in plain English, so to speak, even when there are no equivalent grammatical concepts in English for certain rules of the target language.

In the audio lessons, Rocket Languages’ courses always introduce grammatical concepts in a need-to-know, context-based, and non-technical manner. For some learners, the Language
& Culture lessons that follow are a language learning panacea; for others, they are, in a word, optional.

**Testing: To Reinforce what you Learn**

Once you have taken a lesson, or interacted with some form of teaching mechanism, the next step is to make sure that you retain the information you have learned. Numerous recent studies, based on the work of Hermann Ebbinghaus in his *Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology* (1885), have determined that the rate of forgetting is exponential. That means that unless you do something to help you remember the information you’ve just learned then very soon it will be gone forever.

The forgetting curve is typically represented as follows:

What it shows is that we lose information very quickly. However repeating the learning regularly means we retain more and have less to relearn.

This is particularly important for language learning, where there is such a lot to know, and each part is dependent to some extent on other elements previously learned.

Rocket Languages deals with the issue of learning retention by providing a series of online tests that help you to master the vocabulary, syntax, and techniques described in each lesson. By adding these tests to your regular learning routine, and repeating them regularly, you are giving yourself the best chance to retain the information from the lesson, so that you can use it as you progress through the course, and in the real world.
Rocket Languages has four distinct tests and a 5 question multiple-choice quiz, and their self-rating system means that you can decide when you are ready to move on.
1. **Hear it Say it!**

Training your ear to your target language can be one of the things that new learners find the hardest to master. That’s why Rocket Languages designed Hear It Say It!

In this test a randomly selected audio track from within each lesson is played. After listening to the track you’re prompted to record yourself saying the word, compare the way you say it to the native speaker, and rate how well you reproduce what the speaker is saying. This is a very powerful way to tune your ear to the sound of the spoken language, and to train yourself to reproduce the sounds accurately yourself.
2. Write it!

Once you are able to pronounce words correctly in your new language, it's important to know how those sounds translate into written words.

Write It! lets you find out how well developed your ear really is. First, listen to the native speaker saying a word or phrase, and then try to write it correctly in the space provided. There's a special character keyboard available if you need it, so you can get it exactly right.

Not only is this a good way to learn about spelling in your target language, Write It! Also encourages you to think about which letters and combinations make what sounds, giving you a better understanding of the way your target language is put together.
3. **Know it!**

A common problem for all new language learners, which is often not addressed by language learning courses, is converting an academic understanding of a language into a practical application. Many learners do well at vocabulary, reading, and writing, but freeze up when it's their turn to speak out in the real world. Know It! is designed to replicate the process of recalling the right way to respond in real-world situations.

Know It! pulls randomly selected English words and phrases out of each lesson and prompts you to record yourself saying the word or phrase in the target language. Then you compare yourself to the native speaker, and rate how well you did! This test helps you to maximize the speed at which you can come up with the right thing to say when someone is speaking to you!
4. Play It!

The main focus of all Rocket Languages courses is conversational fluency, and most new language learners want to be able to communicate in their target language. The key to both of these goals is to be able to participate in actual conversations.

Play It! uses the conversations from the Interactive Audio Lessons and lets the learner play the part of one of the participants. There are varying levels of difficulty, a choice of which part the learner plays, and a fixed time for the learner to respond.

This test helps to get you thinking in the target language rather than translating in your head as you go.
The breadth and flexibility of Rocket Languages’ Testing suite has some advantages over other popular commercial platforms. Some programs use a system whereby audio clips of phrases spoken in the target language are paired with a choice of images, effectively flashcards. Once simple words are learned intuitively, more complex phrases and sentences are constructed using the vocabulary that has already been learned.

This system is designed to reflect the way in which we "naturally" learn languages as a child; however, it does not accommodate learning preferences of those who remember words by seeing them in translation, as it does not offer translations in textual or audible form. Not having any translation available potentially causes further problems given that the link between the target language and image is always to some extent arbitrary. For instance, an image of a woman reading a book could be used to suggest both "woman reading" and "woman studying." In such interfaces, there would be no clear way to know which verb is being used in the question in the target language.

In addition, it is debatable whether or not the attempt to mimic the way we learned our first language should be the ideal of foreign language acquisition. True, a child learning language represents the immersive ideal - a pure form of trial and error with constant feedback, and an unself-conscious environment in which to make all the right and wrong sounds while learning. But even if the ideal of learning a language "naturally" and like a child is only that - and ideal - it is not necessarily a well-guided one. After all, unlike children, adult learners already have the capacity to interpret symbols (i.e. read) and grasp abstract principles (i.e. understand and use grammatical and syntactical rules). They have gained a lot of skill and experience in learning one language. It only makes sense to exploit all of these faculties in the process of learning a second one.

**Learners’ Forum and Live Tutoring**

Rocket Languages courses also include moderated Learners’ Forums, which are organized around several topics. There is a vocabulary thread and grammar thread that serve as extensions of the material offered in the other lessons, along with a conversational section in which all posts must be written in the target language only. The Forum also plays a practical role in updating community members on company news or product updates, and includes a section devoted to customer feedback and suggestions.

Finally, Rocket Languages is developing a network of live tutors across all the languages we teach. Using the new Rocket Dollars, learners can already book live sessions with actual native speakers of Spanish or French. In the sessions the learner gets to set the agenda, or they can follow on from their most recent lesson. These are a great way to practice your language in a live one-on-one environment.
These tools utilize the Web in the true spirit of 2.0 technologies - generating social connectivity rather than simply propagating content. Through these networking tools, learners are not only able to participate in a community that shares the same language learning goals, but they are also able to observe a transfer of their language skills in genuine real-world communications.

In Conclusion

All of the tools and materials available in the course package are integrated online into the Rocket Express Learning System® for Rocket Languages. This system gives learners a single entry point to a wealth of varied resources and affords them not only all of the benefits of being part of cohesive learning community but all the tools to pursue their learning in their own time and on their own terms.

Rocket Languages has taken a proactive approach toward understanding the needs of learners in today's digital world and aims to offer an intelligent choice in the field of online and media-rich language learning tools. All in all, Rocket Languages is invested in creating an environment where language learning is:

**CONTEXTUALIZED** - with all of the material tied to situational dialogues that govern the overall delivery of course material

**PARTICIPATORY** - by incorporating active learning strategies and staging immersive conversations with native speakers

**FLEXIBLE** - through multiple learning resources and learning paths

**MOTIVATIONAL** - with realistic, relevant, and up to date material, with peer-driven learning environments, and with dynamic technologies that make the learning experience more enjoyable...

It is always a challenge to "engineer" enjoyment into any process, but it remains a design objective that Rocket Languages embraces to the fullest extent.
About Rocket Languages

Rocket Languages is a leader in online language-learning products. Formed in 2004, Rocket Languages now offers courses in Spanish, French, Italian, German, Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, Arabic (Egyptian), Hindi, Korean, Portuguese, ESL, and American Sign Language. By placing a strong and immediate emphasis on conversational learning, our dynamic learning courses have you speaking the language in realistic and contemporary contexts right from the start. Rocket Languages’ learning system has benefited over 1,257,846 members in more than 190 countries.

Our product packages are comprehensive language courses in themselves: they include Interactive Audio Lessons, online Master Games for words and phrases, and a range of fully illustrated Language & Culture Lessons with embedded audio and voice comparison technology.

We use the digital medium to make learning more convenient, participatory, and enjoyable. All of our Audio Lessons are available in MP3 format, and our online Learners Forums are effectively open for business 24 hours a day.

To find out more about learning a language with Rocket Languages contact us at:

http://www.rocketlanguages.com/contact.php
References


