

OVERVIEW

I was given the opportunity to review Lingoda's Language Learning services (www.lingoda.com) through Emanuel at yourdailygerman.com on October 27th. I had previously been learning German for approximately one year by watching 2-3 films in German and listening to German metal/pop on a regular basis (2 hours a week minimum). I had the ability to participate in 5 group classes and 5 private classes. I completed the following classes between November 1st and November 17th, 2016.

<p>11/01/2016 – 7PM</p> <p>Mein Deutschunterricht Talk about your course Speaking & Discussion Level A1</p> <p>GROUP CLASS - Vanessa</p>	<p>11/09/2016 – 6PM</p> <p>Temporale Präpositionen Talking about time Grammar & Structure Level A1</p> <p>PRIVATE CLASS - Norina</p>
<p>11/03/2016 – 4PM</p> <p>Lernen Talk about your course Speaking & Discussion Level A1</p> <p>GROUP CLASS - Elena</p>	<p>11/10/2016 – 5PM</p> <p>Dictation Richard's Letter Writing a Letter Reading & Writing Level A1</p> <p>PRIVATE CLASS - Soraya</p>
<p>11/04/2016 – 5PM</p> <p>Zahlen und Uhrzeit Talking about time Speaking & Discussion Level A1</p> <p>GROUP CLASS - Heike</p>	<p>11/12/2016 – 4PM</p> <p>Lokale Präpositionen Learning Unit: Giving directions Grammar & Structure Level A1</p> <p>PRIVATE CLASS - Judith</p>
<p>11/06/2016 – 9AM</p> <p>Meine Woche Talking about time Reading & Writing Level A1</p> <p>GROUP CLASS - Marie</p>	<p>11/13/2016 – 3PM</p> <p>Modalverben müssen/dürfen Talk about your health Grammar & Structure Level A1</p> <p>PRIVATE CLASS - Lamis</p>
<p>11/06/2016 – 6PM</p> <p>Modalverben: sollen Talk about your course Grammar & Structure Level A1</p> <p>GROUP CLASS - Heidrun</p>	<p>11/17/2016 – 7PM</p> <p>Konjunktionen Write a letter Grammar & Structure Level A1</p> <p>PRIVATE CLASS - Norina</p>

MENTOR:

I was assigned a mentor to meet through Skype. We were unable to schedule a time through Skype and I instead connected with the mentor through email. I was to establish a short-term and long-term goal:

I can't say that I really have a short-term goal. I have been working through song texts one-by-one and learning those, so I suppose you could say that memorizing lyrics and being able to sing them is a repeated short-term goal.

Long term or ultimate goal is to be able to find methods that help me to communicate with two of my German speaking co-workers and also to travel to Germany again and continue to attempt to speak to locals. Perhaps one day I will work there or live there or even just stay there a short while for tourism purposes.

I was able to continue to understand more spoken language in song and conversation. In this regard, I am content with my short-term goal progress.

WEBSITE INTERFACE:

I accessed the Lingoda website exclusively through Windows 10 computers and never through mobile access. I found the website to be extremely user friendly. Group or private lessons were simply displayed along with icons for easy reference. Searching for a class was easily customizable with immediate changes according to group/private, day, and two time limitations on a slider to modify the requested time frame.

The lesson titles were short and direct. If the class displayed didn't match what you wanted, there were additional arrows next to the class information card display that let you flip forward and backward through other available courses at that same time.

Clicking on "MORE INFO" displayed an overview for the class including the objectives or learning outcomes (ex. *Learn the formation and application of the modal verb "sollen", Express "should" in German, Practice its application by giving advice about language learning*), available "Download learning materials" which automated a download to your computer of an Adobe Acrobat Document. Lingoda uses this method to allow for easy distribution of materials per the low system requirements and free distribution of Adobe Acrobat Reader. Great idea!

On the top of the page there is an option for "My Course". You are encouraged to start at the beginning of Chapter 01 (up to 7 in level A1.2), and each level has different themes and is divided into at least 5 different sub-themes based on grammar, writing, and speaking. These same themes are used during different stages of each course. I chose to skip around and selected a mix of themes and grammar.

HANDOUTS:

Documents are plainly marked with page numbers and titled per the focus for the slides/page in both English and German (ex. *Introduction / Grammar / Exercises / Review / Homework*). Being able to click on the documents for any class was very helpful when deciding what class to take next. You can jump ahead in level and see themes that are available, download the pdf, and give it a once over to consider, *"too easy, that sounds good, or what the heck is ... no."*

The documents are additionally cited for images as well as cited and linked for text – making a specific effort to thank the content owners. Literally with the text *"Thank you"* and *"We would like to thank the following sources for their content"*. I appreciate this honesty about content ownership.

Pages are not cluttered with information, but are focused on the task and with guiding the learner explicitly toward the next activity. The text is clean, easy to read, and the colors on all slides aside from images are light green, light blue, black, and gray depending on what is being highlighted. These design choices keep the slides free of clutter and the task free of distraction or any difficulty with reading the text displayed. Let's say you wonder, *"Do I talk for this next activity?"* There's an icon of voluptuous lips and a "Sprechen/Speaking" right there – it doesn't get any more blatant than that. This makes it easy to find pages to review or to reference on your own copy (if you choose to write notes on your pdfs).

INSTRUCTORS:

All of my instructors were patient in group and private classes. I did not feel rushed through the content, but a few times a little bored in group classes. The instructors were also very punctual and were present in the

classroom through Adobe Connect or on Skype at the scheduled time. They were additionally selective with their vocabulary and changed speaking pace based on our ability to comprehend. For example, the teacher would speak to me a slower pace and much faster to another student in the group class. At our requests, teachers also delved into more detail in regards to conjugation, grammar, or orthography.

I did have one course where the connection was not great and there was significant lag between myself and the instructor. I felt that I would begin to talk over her as she spoke during a lapse in my talking, and the problem just continued to get worse at times and I instead stopped talking completely to let her finish and she would do the same for me. Overall, it was a pleasant class, but this technical issue made conversation frustrating.

To my benefit, I did have two instructors who asked given my low German level if I would prefer a class mostly in German or mostly in English. I did request that the course be done mostly or, if possible, exclusively in German and the instructor abided by my wish. This made for a great challenge for my level, but the instructor, Soraya, coached me on phonetics, grammar, and reading comprehension like a pro.

There were other cases where I did not want to know all of the grammar particularities and decided that, after being asked if I wanted to know more, I did not want to at the time and wanted to continue with the lesson. The instructor honored my request and class went on without any issue.

CLASSMATES:

The five group classes I attended all had at least one other person in the class and one class had two other participants. It was helpful to me to hear these other speakers who were struggling through making mistakes as I was. I felt it was encouraging to give my assistance and interact with their errors and offer solutions.

SUMMARY:

What an experience through just 10 classes! I felt encouraged and capable with the German language. I felt connected with the instructors and the language and I felt my knowledge was validated every time I started another class. Understanding directions became easier thanks to the consistent format of the lessons. Most of the time, I was at ease when spoken to by the instructor as I knew they would be patient and helpful. Thanks to so much available information from so many sources (yourdailygerman.com / YouTube / music / film), I was able to bring my own perspective to fruitful discussion with Lingoda. I am encouraged now more than ever that I can use German.