

## Annual reports

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# Annual Reports

## A. The Advanced Skills Project

**Project Coordinator:** Luke Rowland

**Committee Members:** Andrew Redgrave, Will Lingle, David Faulhaber, Nick Canning

### SUMMARY

This year has seen the group become familiar with the principles of multiliteracies pedagogy. In addition to reading relevant articles and book chapters, the Advanced Skills committee undertook a collaborative research project which involved an evaluation of the teacher generated materials on the server. Using the Knowledge Processes (KP) framework (Kalantzis & Cope 2012), the group established that many of the materials which are currently available on the server are focused on the Knowledge Process of experiencing (*the known and the new*). In contrast, there was a distinct lack of materials which encouraged analytical and creative application Knowledge Processes (KPs). The group presented the findings from their research at JALT Hokkaido 2012 and the group members are currently collaborating on an article to disseminate the results of their research to a wider audience. The following sections outline what the group has learned about the KPs in 2012 and how they applied this knowledge to the second year reading and writing curricula at KUIS.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 1996, a group of teachers, researchers and academics - the New London group - wrote a collaborative paper introducing a new view of literacy education. They termed it, 'multiliteracies', and it was driven by two ideas which the group felt were not being adequately addressed in literacy education: 1) that literacy learners deserve an education which recognises and respects their socio-cultural and individual differences and 2) that linguistic literacy (both oral and written) was dominating the other modes of communicative literacy to the learners' detriment, especially in an increasingly digital age. In response, they proposed a literacy pedagogy which embraces and positively exploits learner differences and explicitly teaches students how people make meaning through the visual mode, the audio mode, and the gestural mode etc. Whereas literacy education (in the singular) had become a tool to ensure social conformity, multiliteracies or just literacies (in the plural) is an acknowledgement of the diversity inherent in all literacy learning. This includes diversity of literacy pedagogies, of types of students, of student histories and potential futures, and the multiplicity of modes of communication.

From this theoretical starting point, Mary Kalantzis and Bill Cope devised a practical approach to literacies pedagogy called Learning by Design, in which teachers select and sequence learning activities and tasks into units of work by making reference to the KPs of experiencing, conceptualising, analysing and applying. The Knowledge Processes can be described as the different ways that people create new knowledge and make meanings for themselves. The idea of Learning by Design is that teachers carefully plan and examine their teaching and

consciously identify the KPs that they hope to stimulate in the learners by doing various classroom activities. In this regard, the KP framework is also well-suited to evaluating existing literacy materials, syllabuses and curricula and examining how students are currently being helped to make meaning in foreign language classes. The Advanced Skills committee used the KP framework in this way, as a curriculum evaluation tool, in 2012. The next section details what the group has learned about the various KPs.

## **THE KNOWLEDGE PROCESSES**

### ***Experiencing***

*Experiencing the known* refers to a situation in which learners reflect on their own experiences and in doing so connect with their identities and interests. They articulate these and other everyday experiences through participation in activities in which they draw upon their own perspectives, ideas and styles of communication. Language teaching examples include basic introductory activities that orientate students to a topic or theme through students' reflections on their own experiences and interests. Typically, 'experiencing the known' tasks dominate warmer activities or pre-reading exercises.

Experiencing the new describes a learning context in which learners are immersed in new situations, process new information or engage with new ideas. They may be observing new or unfamiliar stimuli, participating in new or unfamiliar contexts, or making sense of new meanings. Relevant examples for language teaching include the meaningful engagement with new texts: 'new' in the sense that the texts contain new information or are of an unfamiliar genre. In this

process students may acquire new factual information (with particular details and terminology) or infer new meanings with appropriate comprehension. By doing so learners are exposed to new meanings that are beyond their everyday experiences.

### ***Conceptualising***

*Conceptualising by naming* describes a learning context in which learners are engaged in the classification of the common properties of a text (or text type) and describe its design elements. Such conceptualization may be limited to simply labeling text elements, or may involve deeper conceptions about a text's structure and its elements. This knowledge process generally involves meta-representations due to the fact that among learners an understanding develops of the relationship between a representation and what it represents. Examples that are relevant to language learning are activities that elicit conceptions about a text's superstructure and ask learners to identify and name its constituent parts.

*Conceptualising with theory* relates to learning contexts in which learners put concepts together into interpretative frameworks, making generalizations and developing theories. By doing so learners will build cognitive models and the process allows representations of knowledge to be articulated. If, for example, you have your language learning students reconstruct a dismantled text then they are both conceiving of a text's framework and building in their minds models for how knowledge can be represented. In general learners involved in this process are drawing concepts together to explain how a text achieves meaning.

## ***Analysing***

Analysing involves cognitive processes of logical reasoning, drawing conclusions, and identifying logical connections between ideas. Performing this process at a basic level is called *analysing functionally*. When students analyse functionally they are looking at how texts work to create meaning, for example, how different ideas are connected logically to build an argument. An example of analysing functionally is looking at a premise and deciding whether it supports a proposition or argues against it. This can also include looking at social meaning, as when students look at a text and identify how a text creates close levels of social distance in a casual register versus high levels of social distance in a formal register. In our classes, we always try to show students that ‘purpose dictates content and form’. When students look for the logical connections between the purpose of a text and its form, style and structure, for example why a research paper needs an introduction and what jobs an introduction needs to do, then they are analysing functionally, looking at how texts work to create meaning.

Analysing functionally is a basic skill, which can be extended further to *analysing critically*. Analysing critically takes the analysis a step further, and here students look at the possible interests and motivations of the text creators. Looking at a Japanese or American history textbook, or a news article, and considering how the perspective and interests of the text creators shape the content of the message are examples. This is where a literacy curriculum can help students move towards Critical Media Literacy, which is a very important part of literacy. Analysing critically does not have to be too sophisticated: for example, in a low-level advanced reading class, students can look at different news photos from the October 2000

Palestinian Intifada and talk about how different photos tell a different story about who the Israelis and Palestinians are, and what they are doing. They can see immediately that news editors' choice of photos has a very important influence on how the public perceives news events. The creators of history textbooks and advertisements have clear motivations for presenting their messages the way they do, and even children can identify these motivations. This type of critical analysis is an important part of any literacy curriculum.

### ***Applying***

Applying involves the cognitive processes of students applying their knowledge to create meaning. Applying at a basic level is called *applying appropriately*. When students apply appropriately, they use their knowledge, especially knowledge gained in class, to create texts in appropriate and predictable ways. Writing an argumentative essay with the correct structure and in the correct style is an example of applying appropriately. The emphasis here is on communicative practice, so here students are taking knowledge out into the world and creating meanings of their own. In KUIS Advanced Writing classes, there is an emphasis on the communicative function of the texts students write, and they are asked to consider their audience to help shape the text, instead of simply creating something inert just for a class.

If creating a text in typical ways is applying appropriately, *applying creatively* involves students using their knowledge in more creative ways. Once students learn how to build an argument, for example, you can give them ridiculous positions and ask them to build an argument for them, like arguing that owning a

pet should be mandatory, or that ice cream should be illegal. If you are teaching students to write formal letters, you could ask them to write very polite, formal letters between Batman and the Joker where both characters explain what they would each like the other to do. One of our extensive reading activities asks students to explain how they would change the genre of a story, for example, how they would turn Cinderella into a detective story. The process of applying helps students use the knowledge they've gained in class to create texts, both in appropriate and in creative ways, to help them create their own meanings out in the world.

## **METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS**

As a group, we examined extant reading and writing materials on the server in order to code them according to the KPs. To better familiarize ourselves with the task at hand, we first began with a norming session where all group members coded the various activities comprising the Argumentative Essay pack (a collection of materials focusing on argumentative essay writing which spans multiple lessons). While the group acknowledged that most activities and/or materials incorporate multiple KPs, a holistic approach was taken to analysis and thus each document analysed was coded with only one KP tag.

Having arrived at a general agreement on definitions of the KPs, the group set out to code a much larger sample of reading (both intensive and extensive) and writing materials. We looked at a total of 94 documents (= teacher generated materials) in all (53 from reading, 41 from writing). To afford a measure of inter-rater reliability, each document was analysed by three group members,

independently of each other. Tags were entered into a shared spreadsheet and reviewed together during Tuesday meetings. Where the three raters applied different tags to a single document, a majority rule (2 out of 3) prevailed. Where the three raters coded a single document with three different tags, all five members reviewed the document in question and put it to a group vote.

Our findings revealed that the bulk of materials we looked at overwhelmingly favor the KP of experiencing: 80% for the combined (intensive and extensive) reading materials and 39% for writing materials. In contrast, there is very little call for students to analyse (either functionally or critically) when using the teacher generated materials, with only 6% of coded materials regarded as primarily invoking that KP. The collective breakdown of all 94 documents into the various knowledge processes is represented in the graph below.

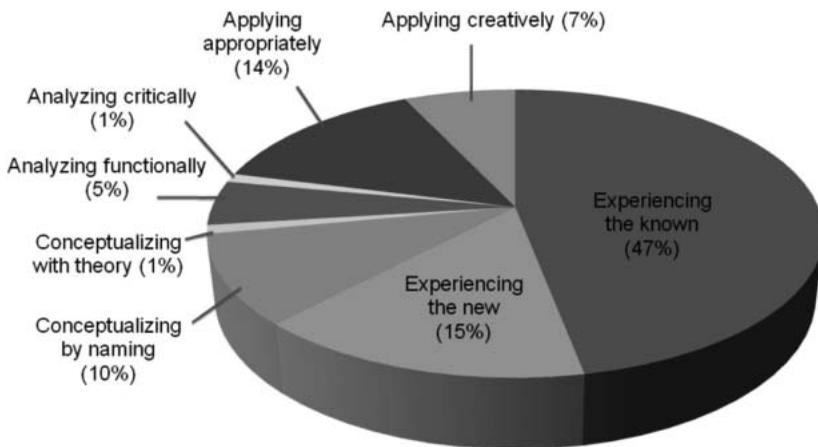


Figure 1. Percentage breakdown of Advanced Reading and Writing teacher generated materials according to dominant Knowledge Processes exhibited.

## **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

The group encountered some difficulties in coding the material from the second year courses. For example, it was difficult to code some materials out of the context of the lesson and in particular without knowing the overall learning goals that the materials were designed to achieve. A further difficulty was the different interpretations of how materials would be used by different teachers in different classrooms. Depending on how the material was interpreted different knowledge processes may prevail in different lessons. Some materials also resisted being coded with a single KP. As the next step in the research process, the group hopes to talk to the teachers who produce the materials to better understand the intentions behind their creation.

Overall, the research process gave the Advanced Skills committee the opportunity to reflect on materials design and what our materials ask of our students. A large proportion of assessment material for the intensive reading course was coded as experiencing the known and the tasks were largely vocabulary recall activities with few applications for creativity. The group would suggest that additional tasks to encourage a more creative use of language would benefit second year students. The Advanced Skills committee also benefited from a broader perspective on course design through this research project. For example, the analysis which the group performed indicated that certain Knowledge Processes are being over-emphasised while others are being neglected curriculum wide. The next stage will be to develop curricula which foster multiliteracies and incorporate a better balance of KPs within our courses.

## REFERENCES

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- New London Group (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(1), 60-92.

### B. The Advanced Skills Committee - 2012 Year-end Report

**Project Coordinator:** Richard O'Loughlin

**Committee Members:** Peter Harrold, Nathan Johnson, James Owens, Shelley Wright

This year, the members of the Basic Skills Project continued working collaboratively on the development of a new curriculum for use in the 2013 academic year. This curriculum design project was started last year using Nation and Macalister's (2010) model of language curriculum design as a guide with the aim of developing a new Basic Reading program. However, during the course of the first semester the scope of the project expanded into the development of a new reading and writing course, named Foundational Literacies, which will replace the existing Basic Reading and Basic Writing courses. When it became clear that the scope of our project was to change discussions took place amongst the group and with Neil Johnson on how best to move the project forward. This led to James Owens being moved to a special committee working on the development of a new curriculum for the incoming top-tier students while the remaining members of the

Basic Skills Project continued their work on designing a curriculum for the second- and third-tier students for use within the Foundational Literacies course.

The committee started the first semester by working through the steps of the ‘waterfall’ model of curriculum design (Nation & Macalister, 2010). These steps are: Environment Analysis, Needs Analysis, Principles, Goals, Content and Sequencing, Format and Presentation, Monitoring and Assessment, Evaluation (pp.142-44). The committee spent the beginning of the first semester looking at the results of the needs analysis administered at the end of the 2011 academic year. The committee also discussed the principles which should underpin the design of the course as well as its goals. In the second semester, when looking at the content and sequencing step, genre was decided upon by the committee as a suitable unit of progression for the course given that the university is moving towards a multiliteracies framework. Next, a model unit based on procedural texts was put together by Richard O’Loughlin using the teaching cycle in Feez’s ‘Text-based syllabus design’ (1998, p. 28) and shared with the group. Using the definitions outlined by Feez (1998) the group is now designing the first semester materials around three units: informational texts, procedural texts, and story texts (pp.86-90). The units on informational texts and story texts are being designed by Nathan Johnson and Peter Harrold, respectively.

Another aspect of the curriculum in development is an extensive reading thread which will run throughout the course. Extensive reading addresses the constraint of limited class time and is one way students can access large quantities of comprehensible input outside the classroom.

All materials will be completed by the end of this academic year and, time allowing, the piloting of these materials is planned. Next year, the group aims to develop materials for the second semester, as well as evaluate these new materials, through feedback from teachers and learners.

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- Feez, S. (1998). *Text-based syllabus design*. Sydney: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research/Adult Migrant English Service.
- Nation, I.S.P., & Macalister, J. (2010). *Language curriculum design*. New York: Routledge.

### **C. The Basic English Proficiency Project (English)**

**Project Coordinators:** Rochelle King and Alex Selman

**Committee Members:** James Atcheson, Caroline Hutchinson, Kristy Welch, Alex Worth, Marnie Brown, Chris Kowalchuk.

### **Introduction**

The BEPP Freshman English group continued their curriculum renewal and development project this year embracing the ideas of Awareness, Interaction, and Multiliteracies (AIM). During the first half of the year, the committee worked on refining the course objectives. In semester two, focus turned to redeveloping the orientation unit. Additionally, two new members joined the committee mid-year to allow for the creation of an advanced track project which is producing a syllabus for the 2013-14 academic year.

## **Group Projects**

The Freshman English Project is responsible for managing the low/mid tier syllabus and handling administrative matters concerning all Freshman English courses. Their focus this year has been the design and implementation of a mid-year oral assessment and the updating of the orientation unit. The mid-year oral assessment provided teachers and students with the opportunity to reflect on student growth during the first semester and identify areas where they could improve during the second semester. The orientation unit is being redesigned to focus more on basic academic skills, classroom language, and student welfare in order to provide students with the foundational skills they need to succeed in their studies. To provide students with models, example videos of core skills are being created. These videos and other lesson materials will be posted on Moodle which will allow students to preview and review course materials throughout the year. In the coming academic year, the group plans to update the current units to be in alignment with the advanced track syllabus.

The Advanced Track Freshman English Project is designing a syllabus for implementation in April 2013. The goal of this syllabus is to embody the concepts of AIM and provide high-tier students with a more academic focus. A set of key activities are being defined to allow for more student self-direction within a solid framework. These activities will lead to projects allowing students to demonstrate their language skills and competencies. The strong focus on multiliteracies provides students with a way to delve deeper into topics and expand their critical thinking skills. The course is being mapped to the Common European Framework

for the purpose of standardization across the curriculum and department. As many of the students are expected to study abroad in their second year, there will also be an element of preparation for international standardized English tests. The committee members currently working on the advanced track will be teaching the course next year and will continue to improve and develop materials for the course.

### **Individual Research**

This year, Alexander Worth has been working on the BEPP English/CALL project investigating the use of iPads during selected Freshman English lessons. The research group has finished writing an article about their findings and is hoping to publish it in the near future. His next research project is related to the new advanced track course, primarily the adaptation of the existing 'recording a conversation lesson'. The goal of the research is to investigate the students' ability to analyze their own conversation and whether this analysis transfers into tangible benefits for the students.

James Atcheson proposes to investigate learner perceptual mismatches during two of the orientation lessons. A perceptual mismatch occurs when a learner either does not understand or misunderstands the didactic purpose of a particular classroom task or activity. For example, a learner might mistakenly assume the purpose of a discussion activity is learning new vocabulary. James will investigate what kind of perceptual mismatches are happening during the lessons and whether changes to the lesson plans and materials based on learner input can significantly reduce learner perceptual mismatches in second instances of each lesson.

Caroline Hutchinson plans to investigate whether a focus on goal-setting has a positive effect on student self-efficacy (self-belief in one's ability to succeed) and task achievement. Classroom materials will focus on the identification of relevant study activities within the context of improving group discussion skills, rather than the open-ended deep-end approach of existing curriculum materials relating to independent study. Students will be guided in their choice by a pre-test, and grouped to provide mutual support; they will reflect on their progress in assessed group presentations. She intends to collect pre- and post-test group discussion data to measure task achievement, and utilize questionnaires and interviews to track self-efficacy.

Rochelle King is in the final stages of analyzing the interview data from her research project with Jennie Roloff-Rothman investigating how teachers' understanding and beliefs of learner autonomy affect the promotion of autonomy in the classroom. They hope that the findings from their research will help the committee better support teachers in achieving learner autonomy objectives. Next year, Rochelle will expand her work on the Freshman English Mid-year Oral Assessment into a research project investigating how teachers and students can use the test feedback to direct their learning goals in the second semester.

Alex Selman has been investigating methodology for advanced literacy and multiliteracies for inclusion in the Advanced Track courses. When learners reach a level at which they can complete communicative classroom tasks, there is a risk that they settle into particular patterns and their learning may slow, stop, or even atrophy. The methods under analysis aim to provide ways for students to move

from conversation at a personal level to discussion of deeper social issues; from interpersonal to ideational communication.

The goal of Erin Hughes' proposed research project is to assess the effectiveness of a set of video-viewing/listening strategies which she is currently compiling for the Freshman English curriculum. This set of strategies will be presented to the students throughout one semester to develop their multi-literacy and critical thinking skills with the objective of preparing them to access authentic English language material in an autonomous way. She is currently working on the research design and will conduct the study in April 2013.

Kristy Welch looks to examine the challenges students may face in the transition from high school to university. In particular, she wishes to investigate whether these issues could impinge on students' attendance rates, success in the classroom and, in turn, their motivation towards their studies. Some of the student issues she will address are: a new language classroom learning environment, living alone for the first time, working to support this move, moving away from family and support networks, forging new relationships and social circles, and looking after one's own health and well-being. She aims to investigate different avenues the curriculum and institution could take in order to support students during this transitional period.

## **D. The Basic English Proficiency Project: Department of International Communication—BEPP (IC)**

**Project Coordinators:** Joe Geluso and Jared Baierschmidt

**Committee Members:** Allan Nicholas, Andy Schouten, Danielle Fischer,  
Donald Patterson, Lucius Von Joo, Stuart Benson,  
Andrzej Szeib

### **Introduction**

The BEPP IC group welcomed three new members this year: co-coordinator Jared Baierschmidt, Andrzej Szeib, and Allan Nicholas. Last year much time was spent identifying curricular goals and objectives with the aim of creating a stronger, more up-to-date, and integrated curriculum. Through last year's efforts, a solid curricular framework based on a multi-literacies approach was fleshed out to provide direction for this year's curriculum development. As the BEPP IC group is charged with five courses, it was decided to focus first on the Freshman courses (i.e., EIC-1 and Reading and Writing). Thanks to last year's efforts, the group was able to quickly get down to the business of curriculum and materials development as will be discussed below. However, the group realizes that curriculum development is a cyclical process and will be revisited on a regular basis.

### **Curriculum and Materials Development**

This year's materials development was carried out in close coordination with Neil Johnson, the ELI Director of Curriculum, and focused on the creation of original materials, with an eye on rooting these materials in a robust multi-literacies frame-

work. Lessons were crafted mainly for the first-year integrated reading/writing course. Units from this course include: writing emails, paragraphs, summaries, instructions, narratives, product reviews, etc. Special attention was paid to creating materials and lessons that raise students' awareness regarding audience and authorship—key tenets of the multi-literacies construct—for these different text types. For example, in the email unit students were asked to identify potential recipients of their emails and note the social distance and position of that recipient with relation to themselves. The aim was to elicit and teach the difference between sending an email to a friend and, say, the admissions office of a university where a student wishes to study abroad. All materials are available on the shared server and interested parties are encouraged to view them. This integrated approach course was piloted by three teachers in the IC Department this academic year, will be more widely adopted for the 2013-2014 academic year, and fully integrated for the 2014-2015 academic year.

In the EIC-1 course, curriculum development related to the explicit instruction of conversation skills continued. A number of lessons were created and integrated into the existing unit packs that make up the base of the course. These lessons were designed to draw the students' attention to phrases that have a pragmatic function, such as asking for clarification and extending a conversation. In addition to making these curricular additions, the IC Department realized its first course-wide speaking test within the EIC-1 course. This test was modeled after the KEPT test and is intended to give students experience in an oral testing environment as well as generate concrete scores related to their speaking performance. The test is administered at the end of both semesters so students can track their performance.

The second-year courses began the process of examining how the proposed AIM (Awareness, Interaction, and Multi-literacies) curriculum model might impact future curriculum development. Informal meetings of second-year teachers were held to brainstorm ideas for how to integrate the AIM model into the current curriculum designs. Andrew Schouten has already kick-started this process by piloting materials in Media English that raise students' awareness of text purpose and audience in various types of newspaper articles.

### **Research projects**

This year also saw a range of research projects related to the curriculum take place. In alphabetical order by first name, Allan is developing and trialing a variety of pragmatics assessment types, including student self-assessment and simulated tasks, with the aim of both aiding learner pragmatic comprehension and tracking learner pragmatic development over an extended period of time. Andre is currently working on revising his research proposal on digital stories and working on a digital story with his freshman IC class for the culture unit. Andy is investigating the extent of media literacy awareness among sophomore students in the IC Media English course. Dani engaged in integrating authentic short stories into the extensive reading portion of the reading and writing curriculum as an alternative to graded readers. Donald continued his examination of the efficacy of task repetition on affect and performance with a focus on the effect of peer feedback given in looped performances. Jared collected and shared with the group literature relevant to the AIM development model. Joe, Stuart, Dani, and Lucius continued their research looking into the efficacy of the explicit instruction of conversation skills in the EIC1 curriculum. Preliminary findings from this project were

presented at JALT in October, 2012. Stuart is now writing up a study he began last year that investigates the vocabulary load of the EIC1 units.

### **Future Directions**

The coming years will see the BEPP IC group refining the Reading and Writing curriculum as the integrated course launches department-wide. The group will also need to focus energies on updating English for International Communication I and II, as well as Media English within the AIM framework. Whether the group decides to give curriculum development for one course the bulk of attention in any given academic year, or try to divide its attention equally between the five courses it is charged with maintaining remains to be seen.

## **E. The Basic English Proficiency Project Department of Languages and Culture (BEPP-ILC)**

**Project Coordinators:** Jake Breaux & Glichelle Pereyra

**Committee Members:** Carol Begg, Eric Hall, Tetsuko Fukawa & Robert Smith

### **Introduction**

The 2012-2013 academic year welcomed the addition of Tetsuko Fukawa and Robert Smith to the BEPP-ILC Committee. Now under new guardianship, the group sought to continue the established core literacies projects, and meet a number of new challenges in the form of departmental changes, ELI curriculum overhaul, and an increasingly close relationship with Kanda's public relations

department.

## **Curriculum Development**

In light of the ELI's move towards an A.I.M. curriculum development framework, the department felt the need to reexamine core guiding principles, particularly with regard to how it differentiates itself from the English and IC departments. Committee members agreed that the existing literacies documents contained too much focus on course details without having a clear mission statement for the Department as a whole. As such, it was important to first consider the purpose of the English program within the ILC Department at the macro level; this would then help direct the development of specific course goals and objectives, and refine the existing core literacies. In addition to A.I.M., the ILC also strives to incorporate the following into our core curriculum:

- the World Englishes paradigm;
- Cross-cultural communication and competence;
- Multicultural studies; and
- Global citizenship.

The ILC core course descriptors, which form part of the ILC Curriculum Handbook, were also reviewed by the Materials Development Teams and updated to reflect the focus on A.I.M. and the new program principles outlined above. They will serve, together with our core literacies documents, as guiding principles for the ongoing development of the ILC curriculum framework.

With the new program definitions in mind, a number of materials were developed in each of the core courses:

### Freshman English

In order to prepare the students for Media and Sophomore English, more lessons that foster global awareness were introduced. The Relationships Unit was also revised to reflect relationships in a broader sense, including global and international relationships. Due to gaps in the courses and time restrictions, students were encouraged to use self-selected resources (in the SALC, at home, or otherwise). The team is now working on the inclusion of autonomous learning elements into the FE journal and throughout the course.

### Media English

The historic dichotomy between Sophomore (speaking and listening) and Media English (reading and writing) is considered obsolete, and thus, no longer stands as both courses now support integrated skills. The second semester of the course was revised considerably to include issues of pertinence to the new program definitions; hence, more materials that focus on global media literacy and cross-cultural advertising were produced. A Speed Reading program was also created and will be implemented in the next academic year.

### Sophomore English

The Sophomore English MDT has also taken an integrated skills approach to its curriculum development this year. New materials have been created to foster cultural awareness and global citizenship. The Sophomore course seeks to build upon the work students have completed in their Freshman year, with a greater focus on critical assessment and informed analysis of the issues being covered in the materials. Curriculum evaluation will continue in line with the ILC framework and broader institutional aims.

## **Testing**

The committee is collaborating with KAP to develop descriptors for the KACE components, which are to be included in the ILC handbook and distributed to current and future members of the Department. These will provide incoming teachers with a detailed outline of the KACE test and its assessment criteria. Drafts for the oral section were released for review by all committee members. Work on other section of the exam is now in progress.

## **Public Relations**

Another big part of the committee's activities this year was public relations. Each member had an opportunity to take part in working with the regional language teachers to create and participate in lessons for high school guidance visits and summer seminars throughout Japan as part of a major marketing effort for multilingual programs at Kanda being run by the PR Department. The MULC is now also sponsoring events (i.e. Open Campus) that would further promote the growing relationship that the ELI members of the ILC Department have with the regional language instructors.

## **Research Projects**

### Glichelle Pereyra & Jake Breaux

Glichelle and Jake are continuing their study on learner perceptions of the effect of simultaneous L2 and L3 instruction, particularly with regard to their identities and attitudes towards English. The data collection, through surveys and group interviews, has already been finished. Results indicate that multilingual programs are raising new challenges, and potentially fundamentally altering

traditional views of learner identity and investment in EFL contexts. This study aims to discuss possible implications of multilingualism in foreign language education, and open a dialogue for future research in the field. They hope to present this research at an international conference before the academic year ends.

#### Carol Begg

Carol is continuing to look at ML students' relationship with and interest in their L2/3, in connection with their study abroad experiences. Building on the mixed methods study of sophomore students last year, she will center her study on the next cohort of Portuguese majors preparing to study for one year in Brazil. In conjunction with the Portuguese department, she will conduct stimulated focus groups and administer a refined version of the previously used questionnaire, before and after the group have undertaken the sojourn.

#### Eric Hall

Eric is focusing on the development of methods by which students can be offered the opportunity to experiment with adapting language they already know to unfamiliar and abstract subject matter. He will use student-generated photographs because the personal connection each student has to the photographs they have taken themselves causes them to be more invested in the process. He will utilize student projects where photographic themes and intended visual impact on the viewer is pre-conceptualized and planned by the students, goals are set, and photographs are taken.

#### Tetsuko Fukawa

Tetsuko is investigating the relationship between students' perception of their teacher's nationality and/or ethnicity and motivation for English use and learning.

She seeks to increase student awareness of World Englishes and encourage students to become language users capable of having meaningful language exchange with other speakers of English. Her first step is a pilot study to collect data from freshman English students on the following: their attitudes towards the non-native speaker English teacher, their experience of using English outside of English class, their perceived motivation on learning and using English, and their *ideal L2 self as well as ought to L2 self*.

#### Robert Smith

Robert is referencing Simon Cooke's (a former ILC member) a research paper that focuses on noticing strategies and how they can improve L2 acquisition. He is adapting the initial study in three ways. Firstly, the language point will be taught explicitly. Secondly, he will collect data on only one language point, namely hesitation devices such as; well, let me see, um and uh. These have been chosen because even unmotivated students need to use them, and they are also highly frequent in both English and Japanese conversations. Thirdly, the control group will also be doing the transcription and reflection activities but without the explicit instruction.

## **F. Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) Project 2012-13 RILS Report**

**Project Coordinators:** Joachim Castellano

**Committee Members:** Keith Barrs, Marnie Brown, Thomas Lockley, Carey Nakata, Jason Ropitini, Raswan Sockol

### **Year Summary**

CALL has mainly worked collaboratively in 2012-13. We have created a draft of CALL guidelines for the new ELI curricula in development. The guidelines are based on the group members' previous research on student technology competencies, Japanese students' ICT background, and trending CALL tasks with mobile technologies, including tablets. The guidelines outline technology policies from the institution to task level, so that that technology is integrated appropriately in the KUIS language learning environment. The guidelines, in addition to the group's other traditional activities are outlined below.

### **ELI Support**

Support has continued through workshops, one-on-one sessions, and online through the Kanda CALL blog (<http://kandacall.wordpress.com>). A series of four workshops were offered in April 2012: Japanese Students' ICT background, Moodle and Edmodo, Using Media, and learning with iPads. These workshops were recorded and uploaded to the blog.

CALL members continue to support the ELI in informal settings as well. The CALL

representatives for the 2012-13 academic year are:

BEPP English: Keith Barrs

BEPP IC: Raswan Sockol

Basic Skills: Jason Ropitini

SALC: Thomas Lockley

KEPT: Marnie Brown

CSK/Media English: Carey Nakata

ILC, Advanced Skills, ELI management and KUIS faculty: Joachim Castellano

## **Materials Development**

With an integrated role for CALL within the new ELI curriculum, it is important to consider CALL not only from the task level, but also from the institutional, program, and course levels as well. The CALL group has drafted the following set of recommendations and guidelines. It is hoped that this provides managers, curriculum coordinators, and lecturers best practices in creating materials incorporating CALL. More importantly the guidelines below describe the necessary factors for maximizing CALL's potential at KUIS.

### **A. The New CALL mission statement**

Technology offers many benefits to language learners. As part of the language learning curriculum in all departments at Kanda University of International Studies, the use of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is encouraged and supported across campus. The use of CALL is driven first by learning goals. Of particular importance to the ELI, CALL can: expand the learning environment, develop learner autonomy, and enhance pedagogical goals of an academic multi-

literacies curriculum. The role of the CALL group is to recommend, support, and research uses of technology that enhance the learning goals of the curriculum.

It is expected that students, on all courses in all departments, will become familiar with a range of technology-related skills and the critical thinking skills that should accompany them. The implementation of CALL across the campus necessitates that teachers and learning advisors are familiar with the range of hardware and software supported at KUIS. Workshops and online resources are offered to support this aspect of educator professional development.

### **B. Institutional CALL priorities in 2013**

In order to carry out CALL tasks successfully, the ELI CALL group recommends:

1. Expansion of an open Wi-Fi network campus-wide
2. Adequate equipment to successfully complete CALL tasks
3. Standardization of Moodle use across KUIS
  - a. Appropriate resources to support Moodle
  - b. The linking of Moodle/student email logins and passwords
4. A mandatory tech orientation unit in Freshman English classes, similar to SALC orientation

### **C. Student Technology Needs**

From the CALL Group's previous research, we have identified student technology needs for KUIS students. These are the most basic skills that ELI courses require. These skills are outlined below:

#### **Student Technology Needs:**

1. Students need to develop their **word processing skills**

Suggested software = Word (PC) Pages (Mac) Google Docs (net-based)

2. Students need to develop their **digital presentation skills**

Suggested software = PowerPoint (PC) Keynote (Mac) Google Presentation (net-based)

3. Students need to develop their **researching skills**

Suggested software = Google.com/Wikipedia/Google Scholar

4. Students need to develop their **collaborative skills**

Suggested software = Wordpress blogs/Google Docs/Edmodo

#### **D. General CALL task guidelines:**

CALL tasks should be designed to carry out a specific learning goal. The following are a set of guidelines in creating CALL materials. CALL tasks should strive to:

- make possible activities that could not be done as easily, if at all, with printed materials
- allow the integration of digital media
- allow students and teachers greater flexibility in terms of when and where learning occurs
- allow access to a wide-range of information
- allow for a focus on both the products and processes of learning
- allow didactic material to be stored and recycled
- encourage discussion and consultation
- provide a channel for feedback and assessment
- save time, over time (adapted from Towndrow & Vallance 2004)

## Research Activities

- Joachim Castellano completed research on tablets from an institutional perspective, and is currently publishing the results. The CALL-BEPP iPad collaborative research project with Marnie Brown, Erin Hughes, and Alex Worth was presented at JALT CALL Conference 2012 and will be published in the December 2012 issue JALTCALL Journal. Joachim is now evaluating new technologies at the ELI with Phil Murphy.
- Thomas Lockley has continued his research on students' competencies, in particular with reference to previous experience before university. A paper has been submitted for publication. He also published a paper on a related topic in the proceedings of the CALL Research Conference, 2012, Taichung Taiwan.
- Raswan Sockol has continued his individual research on visual instruction and phonetic production which is now in the data collection stage. He is also collaborating with Marnie Brown and Jason Ropitini on student technology competencies; a project which is planned to follow students from their freshman through senior years.
- Keith Barrs continued his research into digital photography explorations of the linguistic landscape and published a short article in *The Language Teacher* detailing the practicalities of the project. He is currently in the process of writing up a longer research article reporting on the data collected through the research.
- Carey Nakata is collaborating with Jo Mynard on a pilot study investigating whether a social network environment would be effective for SALC module work.

- Marnie Brown completed a joint research project on tablets with the BEPP group. The project was completed successfully with Joachim Castellano, Erin Hughes, and Alex Worth. Marnie is still continuing her research with Raswan Sockol and Jason Ropitini on student technology competencies. This project is an ethnography and will follow students for the next several years. She is also working on her own institutional project, English Fashion Blogging: A study on written discourse and the promotion of learner independence.
- Jason Ropitini is collaborating with Raswan Sockol and Marnie Brown on research investigating students' use of technology with respect to learning and perceived competencies. Independently, he is continuing his research into how students interact with technology and one another in a blended learning environment.

### **G. CSK (English for Chinese, Spanish, Korean majors)**

#### **2012-2013 Year End Report**

**Project Coordinator:** Lara Promnitz-Hayashi

**Committee Members:** Karen Hoshino, Jaclyn Pitts, Yulia Nikolskaya

The CSK (English for Chinese, Spanish and Korean majors) Research committee is in its second year. The committee consists of Lara Promnitz-Hayashi, Karen Hoshino, Jaclyn Pitts and Yulia Nikolskaya.

CSK consists of Freshman English, Sophomore English and Advanced English

and all three subjects are compulsory for Chinese, Spanish and Korean majors. They have two lessons a week whereby *Speaking* and *Listening* are with a native English speaker teacher and *Reading* and *Writing* are with a Japanese teacher.

The basic objectives for each course are:

*Freshman English*- Acquire basic proficiency in English for practical communication.

*Sophomore English*- Building on the English proficiency acquired in Freshman English, students further improve their reading, listening, and speaking skills for practical purposes.

*Advanced English*- Based on the proficiency acquired in Freshman and Sophomore English, students further build on all four skills, while placing emphasis on business English.

The 2012 academic year has been a very busy year with the committee focusing on establishing a much needed curriculum. This year the committee has decided on a theme for Freshman English and developed materials which incorporate Communicative Language Teaching, integrated skills and critical thinking. This is the first year that the CSK classes have had access to technology therefore parts of the curriculum have been developed to integrate the use of laptops and/or iPads with a very positive response from the students.

Semester one focused on developing units and materials while semester two has focused on piloting the materials in selected Freshman classes. Necessary changes to lessons will be made based on feedback received. Materials will be available to all ELI Freshman CSK teachers in April 2013. The committee is also in the early stages of beginning curriculum and materials development for Sophomore English which will be designed to follow on from Freshman English while adopting a more academic and critical thinking approach.

## **RESEARCH MATTERS**

This year committee members have not focused on new research as the main focus has been curriculum design. It is projected that a paper will be written in 2013 outlining the process of our curriculum and methodology. However, Karen Hoshino has been completing her research from 2011.

### **Karen Hoshino**

Karen has been continuing a study from last year which examines the effect of blogging on the collegiality of two Basic Writing classes. She has been experimenting with using a blog for the first time as part of an alternative curriculum for Basic Writing. She has examined the students' blog posts and comments and found common themes and patterns which suggest rapport-building and collaborative learning. She also surveyed the students about whether or not they perceive blogging to be useful for providing peer feedback and vocabulary/grammar practice and their answers were positive in both respects.

## **THE FUTURE**

As English remains a compulsory subject for three years for CSK students, objectives and curriculum and materials design will continue to be the main focus for the committee. The 2014 academic year will see a continuation in curriculum development and new research projects.

### **H. The Kanda Assessment Project (KAP)**

**Project Coordinators:** Yuko Sugiyama and Eric Setoguchi

**Committee Members:** Chris Kowalchuk, Tamatha Roman, Arthur Nguyen,  
Aurelie Treadwell, James Herbach, Robert Werner

**Director of Assessment:** Paul Lyddon, Ph.D.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The activities of the Kanda Assessment Project (KAP) committee continue to mainly involve the development of the Kanda Assessment of Communicative English (KACE) test and conducting of professional development workshops related to assessment and testing.

Administratively, the KAP team has focused the efforts of its committee members' creative development skills according to particular sections of the test. To do so, each KAP committee member was responsible for 2 of the following sections of the test: Speaking Group Oral, Speaking Picture and Graph, Listening, Reading, Academic Writing, Email and Summary.

## **COMMITTEE RESEARCH PROJECTS**

A grant funded study through Educational Testing Services (ETS) of the Speaking Group Oral and Speaking Picture and Graph tasks is entering its' second year. In the previous year data collection and analysis was completed, and participating KAP members are in the process of writing up a final report and preparing the study for presentation at international professional venues and for publication.

Additionally, in March Yuko Sugiyama presented at the TESOL Arabia on the KACE Literacy Section, specifically on the Email and Summary Writing Task. This presentation provided an overview of the two tasks, including why they were selected, the manner in which they are administered and how they are rated. It was also demonstrated how these tasks were linked with the tasks students learn in their English courses.

## **TEST DEVELOPMENT**

This year's test will again be conducted differently by each department. The English department will take the KACE oral assessment, which has a warm-up speaking activity, followed by a group oral exam, and the KEPT academic writing component. The ILC will take the KACE Multiple choice listening, reading, and writing integrated skills test designed to better align with the curriculum. Lastly, 1st and 2nd year students from the Chinese, Spanish and Korean (CSK) departments will participate in taking the KACE Oral Section. The Picture and Graph task will be developed by the KAP committee and SALC production designers are currently in the process of hand drawing the pictures to be used in this year's KACE group oral. The decision to have the pictures for the picture and

graph activity hand drawn was made to help create pictures that have equal amounts of salient points. This decision has also given the added benefits of having specific criterion added to the pictures and a significant reduction in the cost of creating this task.

This year's integrated skills test will be video mediated, and staff members of the Media Educational Center (MEC) were involved with the filming of the listening test and completed all of the editing. The MEC staff also completed the pilot DVDs and are working on the writing prompt DVDs for the KEPT writing component. The work completed this year was very much a collaborative effort, and is hopefully a sign of the way forward in Kanda's future test development efforts.

Leading up to the January and March administrations of the test, rater training sessions are being prepared for both the writing scales and the speaking scales. This is being done to accommodate for new sections of the KEPT group oral, and to accommodate raters who are working with the new ILC KACE test. Rater training sessions are necessary elements to a testing program as they have been shown to improve the validity and reliability of the scores.

Specific activities undertaken this year by individuals in the KAP group or working in collaboration with KAP members include the following:

**The KACE/KEPT Oral Section (Group Oral task and Picture & Graph task)**

Preparing the Oral Section required:

- a) Creating a new version of the Picture & Graph task in collaboration with the

SALC production designers (Noriko Takasago and Yuko Monden)

- b) Amending and adapting speaking prompts for the Group Oral

**The KEPT Academic Writing Section (Timed Essay Task)**

- a) Creating new writing prompts
- b) Changing/piloting revisions to the writing bands

**The KACE (The ILC curriculum's new integrated skills test)**

Preparing the KACE administration required:

The KACE Listening team completed the following:

- 1) Reviewed ILC curriculum
  - a) Goals/objectives
  - b) Classroom tasks
  - c) Old KEPT-prep activities on the server
- 2) Critiqued old tests (Mexico 2006, and 2011)
  - a) Watched videos for a meta perspective of:
    - i) Context
    - ii) Lexical difficulty
    - iii) Nonverbals
  - b) Analyzed questions and options for:
    - i) Question type (global/local)
    - ii) Talled question types and word usage (i.e., word lists for frequency breakdowns)
- 3) Wrote scripts for listening passages (based on pilot done before summer break)

- a) Wrote 6 character-passages
  - i) Realistic situations, casual dialogue
  - ii) Fixed piloted test items with helpful feedback from KAP members
- 4) Developed items
  - a) Wrote multiple choice (MC) items
  - b) Brainstormed new productive task (may–or may not–be used in the future pending piloting and ILC departmental needs)
- 5) Filmed video (with MEC video staff)
  - a) Selected actors
  - b) Distributed and discussed script with actors, revised w/actors’ input
  - c) Filmed video for editing
- 6) Revised items with feedback from the committee members
  - a) Viewed video
  - b) Adjusted items

The KACE Literacy team completed the following:

- 1) Contributed input, insights, to the development of new productive items (Email & Summary Task)
- 2) Met testing coordinator and ILC coordinators for brainstorming, consultation, and clarification regarding the objectives for the Literacy Section in light of ILC curriculum needs.
- 3) Met with Dr. Paul Lyddon for consultation with passage and item development.
- 4) Coordinated with the KACE listening team to synchronize narrative consistency throughout integrated sections of the new KACE test.
- 5) Completed passages for the KACE Literacy section.

- 6) Completed items for KACE Literacy section.
- 7) Designed and formatted Literacy section pilot booklet.
- 8) Piloted the Literacy section with the help of CSK and IC Freshman teachers
- 9) Revised the literacy section based on the pilot data analysis

## **I. Media English Project**

**Project Coordinators:** Troy Rubesch

**Committee Members:** Jennie Roloff Rothman, Angela Sun, Shawn Hupka

### **Introduction**

The 2012-2013 academic year was one of transition for the Media English (ME) research project committee. The committee oversees materials development and research for the 19 classes of sophomore Media English in the English Department. At the beginning of this year, the committee received full committee status. Troy Rubesch took over as coordinator and welcomed new members Jennie Roloff Rothman, Angela Sun, and Shawn Hupka.

### **Background Readings**

For the first part of the semester, the committee concentrated on reviewing both theoretical and practical articles related to media studies and media literacy in EFL, especially those concerning critical media literacy and multiliteracies pedagogy. It was agreed that developing a thorough understanding of these areas would be essential to guide further research goals and committee members were encouraged to share relevant articles. As there seems to be a very limited amount

of published research on media literacy in English language education, we realized that any future research would most likely be experimental and exploratory in nature. The committee also read and discussed the ELI's AIM document and regularly consulted with the Curriculum Coordinator to clarify related issues.

### **Course Goals**

Historically, Media English teachers have been provided with shared guidelines and suggestions, but ultimately given nearly complete freedom in designing their own individual iterations of the course. This has led to teachers developing a wide variety of goals for the course. It has become clear that, for the integrity of the course, a clear and explicit set of course goals was needed. The committee determined that outlining such goals would be a primary task.

Continuing on from last year's syllabi analysis project, the committee, in cooperation with the Curriculum Coordinator, set out to develop shared course goals. A draft of the course goals was completed towards the end of the first semester. The goals were based on current Media Literacy pedagogical theory, the AIM document, the curriculum coordinator's input, past course content, and the English Department's suggestions. These were vetted by the Curriculum Coordinator and approved for implementation.

### **Course Objectives**

Based on the newly developed course goals, the committee began work on developing unit objectives, scope, and sequence for use by all teachers of the course.

## **Materials Development**

The committee spent the first semester focusing on much needed materials development for the course. Specifically, members worked on developing, workshopping, piloting, and implementing materials designed to improve student's critical media literacy (e.g. development of critical thinking skills and discerning attitudes toward media use) and grasp of multi-literacies (especially in the areas of blogs, online forums, and social media). Members developed several lessons which are now available on the shared server:

- Angela- applied genre analysis (handout)
- Jennie- media stereotypes (handout)
- Shawn- censorship (PowerPoint)
- Troy- fact vs. opinion (handout)

## **Sharing of Materials**

Recognizing that it was not in the purview of the committee to develop the entirety of the course lessons, we worked towards fostering a community of practice to share effective materials among all teachers of the course. Committee members were assigned a number of "tier-peer" teachers whom they were routinely contacted about lessons they had created. They were also asked to share their effective lesson plans on the server, preferably with a short introduction or teacher's notes.

In mid-June, the committee invited the Curriculum Coordinator along with visiting scholar Mark Nelson for a demonstration of a "digital storytelling" project and discussion of practical multiliteracies pedagogy. We discussed the many facets of

media education with Mark's digital story project as an example of the multifaceted nature of digital literacy and its contrasts with the CLT approach.

### **SALC Media English Resources**

Recognizing the great potential for the SALC to support students understanding and enjoyment of English media, the committee was asked to provide suggestions to the SALC management of ways to renew the Media English section. This included recommending the decommissioning of some of outdated materials and the adoption of more student-centered, self-access materials designed for English-speaking young learners. The committee recommended printed, digital video, and online resources.

### **Research Matters**

In October, we presented materials reflecting the curriculum-wide renewal and the course's increased emphasis on critical media literacy at the 2012 national JALT conference in Hamamatsu. The presentation was well-attended and well-received. The committee has now renewed its commitment to planning a semester-long research project which will attempt to measuring and track changes in students' ability to critically analyze and discuss media-related issues. Data will be triangulated by means of case studies as well as surveys and sampling. Background research on this project is underway and appropriate instruments are being developed.

### **Looking Ahead**

In the 2013-2014 school year, the committee will continue with its research project

involving the assessment of change in students critical thinking skills. In addition, committee members will continue to develop materials for the course, fulfilling the newly-established objectives.

### **Individual Group Members' Contributions**

**Troy Rubesch**, as curriculum coordinator, focused on providing support and guidance to the 14 teachers of the course. He reorganized the folders on the server around the newly developed course goals and created an expansive hyperlinked media resources page highlighting useful online resources for Media English teachers. In addition, he created the ME library stocked with dozens of articles, teachers resource books, and textbooks on digital and media literacy media studies, critical thinking, and content and language integrated learning. The library is freely available to all teachers of the course.

**Jennie Roloff Rothman** has been developing and piloting materials on a variety of media-related topics. She developed a semester-long newspaper project that culminates in students putting the skills and language learned into use. The final product students create is a 6-article newspaper, in which they are expected to show bias and censorship by altering content and also produce an op-ed on an issue here at KUIS. In addition to this project, Jennie has been working with Joachim Castellano to design and implement a social media unit, which introduces blogs, social networking sites (ex. Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, etc.), memes and viral videos. The final project currently under design will aim to have students make connections between cyber-initiated events and the real world. In addition to developing this unit, Jennie and Joachim conducted a student survey to receive

feedback on the materials and measure the likelihood that these materials would increase their use of social media in English. The results of this research will be available soon.

**Angela Sun** has been creating and adapting materials to teach media literacy and critical thinking to mid- and high-tier students. Her lessons and handouts on news genre analysis and advertising have been shared in the Media English server folder. Activities fostering the development of critical media literacy have been presented at the Japan Association for Language Teaching Hokkaido Chapter Conference. She is currently revising a comprehensive course project that requires students to utilize the accessing, analyzing, and evaluating processes learned in the first semester to create various media messages. An earlier version of this project has been presented at the 2011 Task-based Language Teaching in Asia Conference.

**Shawn Hupka** has developed and adapted classroom materials with four broad aims in mind: introduce and discuss current affairs, examine the language of news stories in their written and spoken modalities, critically examine media messages and the motivations of writers and producers of media and lastly, and use this knowledge to create ‘messages’ using a variety of media. In the first semester, Shawn developed lessons on censorship, bias, and identifying intended audiences. More recently, his class has been examining the use of video in communicating messages and examining the similarities and differences between amateur video (e.g. iPhone shots posted to YouTube) and professionally-produced videos online. Using techniques learned in class, students will produce short videos on subjects

important to them.

## **J. The Self Access Centre Learning Project (SALC)**

**Project Coordinators:** Brian Morrison, Katherine Thornton

**Committee Members:** Akiyuki Sakai, Atsumi Yamaguchi, Diego Navarro,  
Elizabeth Lammons, Keiko Takahashi, Jennifer  
Yphantides, Jo Mynard, Junko Baierschmidt, Yuki  
Hasegawa, Yuko Momata

### **Introduction**

The SALC research group has taken a new direction this academic year in order to provide opportunities to focus on the curriculum project (CP) or individual SALC research group (SRG) projects. This decision allowed SRG membership to once again extend to teachers following last year's membership restriction, which permitted only learning advisors and SALC assistant managers to participate. On-going materials development projects, such as newsletters and module updates continued as in previous years.

The curriculum project, which started in 2011-12 has continued to stimulate group discussions around curriculum issues and has seen several collaborative projects designing, building, piloting and implementing data-gathering instruments for Needs Analysis. More detail will be given in the SALC Curriculum Development Project section below.

## Research

The 2012-13 academic year has resulted in a drop in the number of research projects undertaken as some members of the group focus exclusively on CP. The research this year ranges from an auto-ethnographic study into self-directed language learning to an investigation into the identities and positioning of SALCers (student members of staff in the SALC).

A general overview of each project is presented below.

### 1. *A self-directed learner's literacy development strategy*

*Brian Morrison*

This research is a case study of an exceptional learner who chose to focus on critical essay writing. The strategies she employed are clearly identifiable and these evolved as she chose to move from a focus on grammar and vocabulary to structure to content over the two-month period.

The research was designed to investigate the following questions:

- How did an exceptional student achieve success in writing?
  - o What was her original learning plan?
  - o How did her learning plan evolve as the module progressed?
  - o What were her perceptions of this change?

An ethnographic content analysis of the learning journal and final report documents was carried out to identify the activities in the learning plan and how these were adapted and added to as the course progressed. This allowed a picture to emerge of how the learner's activities evolved.

In the original learning plan, the student had prepared a learning cycle of: reading a newspaper article; selecting vocabulary from this; using the vocabulary in an academic critique; asking for feedback from the writing centre. As she implemented the plan there were several obstacles she met, namely: lacking topic knowledge; focusing on errors; knowing when to stop re-drafting; identifying good exemplars. She overcame these challenges by modifying her learning plan. She read about how to write, searched for good exemplars, found more information on the topics, considered the benefit of writing another draft vs. starting a new essay, and paid attention to what was good about her final drafts. A summary of her perceptions of the changes she made come from her report: *I am totally satisfied with my module. I was able to improve my writing skill and improve how to look at things from different angles in English.*

2. *Comparing the learning behavior change in LHL students between those that follow a diagnostic framework worksheet (DFW) process and those that do not*  
*Brian Morrison*

This research focuses on Speaking DFWs and was designed to investigate the following questions:

- How do LHL students change their learning behavior in terms of ‘study’, ‘use’ and ‘review’ over the course of 8 weeks?
- Do any patterns emerge in the relevance of ‘study’, ‘use’ and ‘review’ between those that follow the DFW fully and those that do not?

A document analysis of 20 learning journals, where speaking has been selected as a big goal, will be carried out. The SURE model will be used as a framework for

categorization and further categorized as *relevant or relevance unknown*.

To date all the LHL students who have chosen speaking as their big goal have been given the same DFW. Research permission will be sought from relevant module takers after all parts of the module have been completed and data (photocopied LHL journals) will be gathered by mid-January. By mid-February all the data will have been input into a spreadsheet, and the analysis will be complete with results available in April.

### 3. *Investigating student staff's perceptions of a Self-Access Centre*

*Elizabeth Lammons*

This study was designed to explore how SALC student staff (SALCers) perceive their position within the SALC. Insights derived from the following questions may inform staffing and training practices in the future:

- What are the SALCers' perceptions of their position with the SALC?
- What benefits do SALCers feel they are getting from working in the SALC?

The researcher has conducted background reading on identity in self-directed learning, near-peer role modeling and positioning theory. Meetings with the Assistant Manager in the SALC responsible for SALCers helped the researcher understand the expectations that the managers have of the students who become SALCers as well as the training that SALCers receive.

In the next stage of the study, unstructured interviews will be conducted with 10 SALCers to establish their thoughts about the SALC and their position within it.

The interviews will be transcribed and the data coded based upon themes that emerge from the interviews. This research will be completed and the results available before the end of February 2013.

#### 4. *Studying Japanese: An account of an language teacher's experience*

*Jennifer Yphantides*

The general area of inquiry guiding the research is an examination of the reasons why an autonomous student may be a successful language learner in certain situations and not in others. This research project aims to produce results that will:

- Reconsider certain aspects of the researcher's approach to teaching at the tertiary level in Japan.
- Point towards unique suggestions on how the Self Access Learning Center (SALC) at Kanda University can help autonomous learners achieve their language learning goals.

To date, the researcher has individually prepared three sources of data: a general language learning history, a Japanese language learner history, and a journal documenting one semester of Japanese language study. To analyze the data, the researcher is applying Grounded Theory (GT). The data are currently being coded and classified according to some of the general principles of GT. The research will be complete and findings available by the end of January 2013.

#### 5. *Investigating Social and Cognitive Presence in a Social Networking Environment*

*Jo Mynard*

This research aims to inform the potential use of social network sites in order to

develop social and cognitive engagement in self-directed learning. The research builds on earlier work (McLoughlin & Mynard, 2009; Mynard, 2011; Thornton, 2012) and investigates potential affordances of an online social network site used as part of an English department elective course. The social network environment complemented the regular classroom environment and provided a space for learners to post blog entries about their weekly self-directed language learning and to read and comment on other students' blogs.

The course was an elective, two-credit course taught (by the researcher) over one semester with nine third-year English department students. An analysis of written entries to the social network site over a one-semester period was subsequently conducted. The blogs/forums were analyzed using an adapted version of the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000, 2001) to investigate evidence of social presence, i.e. how the learner participates within the community.

The results showed evidence of a higher level of social presence when the task involved self-disclosure, and student initiated posts which involved multiple participants. Single posts and teacher initiated posts did not result in a high degree of social presence. The results suggest that training could involve helping learners to interact in a way which promotes social presence through modelling, awareness-raising and direct training. In addition, requirements to reply to other students' posts increases the interaction opportunities.

Further work is needed, however the results from this and previous research indi-

cate that the social network environment has potential for developing social and cognitive presence when facilitated as a classroom component. Further research is in progress to investigate the feasibility as an outside-class self-directed learning component (see Mynard & Nakata below).

#### 6. *A Social Network Supported SALC Module: A Pilot Study*

*Jo Mynard & Mamiko Nakata*

This pilot study investigates the feasibility of asking students to post weekly reflections via a social networking site (SNS) instead of on a handwritten module pack. Preliminary investigations (Mynard, 2011; Thornton, 2012) indicated that a social-network enhanced learning environment is an effective way to promote reflection, support and social interaction between peers in a classroom environment. The present research will investigate whether a social-network environment would be effective for self-directed module work. The research questions under consideration are:

- What are students' views of participating in a module offered this way?
- To what extent do learners offer cognitive, metacognitive and affective support to other learners using the SNS?
- To what extent are learners successfully able to plan, implement and evaluate a course of self-directed study using the SNS?
- What evidence (if any) of social presence can be observed in the SNS?
- What evidence (if any) of cognitive presence can be observed in the SNS?

Currently, seven freshman students are participating in this study and submitting weekly reflections online using Edmodo. The research questions will be finalized,

and analysis and interviews conducted at the end of the module period in January 2013.

7. *Investigating the role of shared online reflections in a self-directed learning cycle.*

*Katherine Thornton*

This research was conducted to investigate the effect of having students on the EISO self-directed learning course share and comment on each others' self-directed learning reflections using Ning, a social networking platform. These reflections were read and commented on by several classmates each week. The aim of the research was to answer these questions:

- What did students choose to comment on in their comments on classmates' reflections?
- what were students' perceptions of
  - being required to share their reflections on their self-directed learning?
  - comments on others' work?
  - receiving comments on their own work from classmates?

Data was collected from two sources – the reflections and comments made by students each week on their classmates' reflective reports on Ning and responses to the anonymous course questionnaire completed at the end of the semester.

The comment data was analysed qualitatively, using discourse analysis, specifically by applying categories determined from a previous project which looked at advisor comments on student work in the First Steps Module. The questionnaire data was also analysed qualitatively, and classified into positive and negative stances towards the reflections and comments on them.

The data analysis revealed that comments which served an affective function (44%), such as encouraging, praising or empathizing were most common in the data, although students also commented regularly on metacognitive (21%) and cognitive (35%) aspects of learning. The majority of students' comments (59%) focused on their partner (the one who wrote the original reflection), while in 41% of comments the writer chose to share their own experiences of learning. All these were considered appropriate uses of the comment function, and showed that the students were, for the main part, engaged in the task.

When examining students reactions to the task itself, it was clear from the data that while the shared reflection and comment function was perceived as useful for sharing ideas about learning and motivating each other to continue, it was also seen as a troublesome extra task for some students, especially those who were not as familiar with the technology or did not own a computer or smartphone.

While social networking can be a valuable addition to a language course, allowing students an extra medium through which to communicate with each other, especially in a context when they were usually working individually, with little opportunity to share their ideas with their classmates, this research revealed that to be used effectively, all students need an appropriate level of access to the technology, and suitable scaffolding for the task.

8. *An investigation into freshman students' background of their English learning before entering KUIS*

*Yuki Hasegawa*

Although the students at KUIS come from a varied academic background their experience of English language learning prior to KUIS has not been given too much attention. Given the variety of school programs and the availability of additional language classes from private providers the potential variations are wide ranging. This research was designed to investigate pre-KUIS language learning experience and compare it with language learning at KUIS as perceived by ILC Freshmen. This study aims to answer the following questions:

- Based on their experience at KUIS and high school, what kind of differences do students see in their learning environments including self-study?
  - o What was their experience in their high school English classes? What kind of behavior was expected in the class?
  - o At KUIS, what kind of behavior is expected in English classes?
  - o In both English classes, in high school and at KUIS, were they encouraged to do any self-study? If so, were they given any guidance or support?

A questionnaire was created and after piloting and revising it three times it has been administered with ILC students who were taking the SALC Learning Course 1 in Semester 1 2012-13. To enrich the data, another data collection will be conducted with the students who are taking the SALC Learning Course 1 in Semester 2 2012-13. In January 2013, the data will be compiled and analyzed and the follow-up interviews will be conducted if further information is needed from any of the students. The results will be available in April 2013.

### **Materials Development**

While Assistant Managers (AMs) have designated responsibility for resources

within specific areas of the SALC, previously Learning Advisors SRG members have had a more general overview. This academic year the LAs divided areas of the SALC up and each took responsibility for a specific section to allow easier liaising with AMs and the Materials Development team.

On the whole, materials development projects have been given less priority as the entire ELI undergoes a curriculum overhaul. It is anticipated that once the new curriculum has been developed there will be more materials development activity to support these.

#### 1. *SALC Modules*

*Akiyuki Sakai, Atsumi Yamaguchi, Brian Morrison, Diego Navarro, Elizabeth Lammons, Keiko Takahashi, Katherine Thornton, Jo Mynard, Junko Baierschmidt, Yuki Hasegawa*

Review and modification of First Steps, Learning How to Learn and Sophomore modules has continued to involve all Learning Advisors in the SRG. This academic year only minimal modifications have been made in anticipation of more fundamental changes that may occur as CP research findings impact on the curriculum.

#### 2. *SALC Newsletter*

*Akiyuki Sakai, Elizabeth Lammons, Miho Funakura, Nathan Johnson, Noriko Takasago, Tomoko Hoshi, Yuko Monden*

The SALC Newsletter has been published since 2001 for the purpose of promoting the SALC. For the first issue of the academic year 2012-13, the new editorial team

consisted of an ELI teacher, a SALC Assistant Manager and two Learning Advisors. The team decided to continue to focus content on those working both in the SALC and in the ELI communities as well as activities within these communities. In addition, the team decided to include more scenes from the SALC on the cover and to continue to evaluate the content to make the articles more accessible to students.

The contents of the newsletter vary per issue, but the consistent columns include the following features: *Interview* and *People in the SALC*. Interview is based on an interview with an ELI teacher about their experiences living in Japan or traveling the world. The video of the complete interviews are available in the SALC. The Learning Advisors are introduced in *People in the SALC*. Other features that were included in the newsletter are SALC schedule, news (via SALC Twitter and Facebook) and SSC (SALC Student Committee) announcements and recommendations. In addition, a new section of the newsletter was introduced in the Autumn Issue called *How Do I Use?* This section will explain how students can use different sections of the SALC. In this issue, the Learning with Movies section was featured.

Two issues were published in July and October 2012. Two more issues will be published in January and April 2013. The articles are also available online. Archives are kept by a SALC Assistant Manager. The writers and editors are Nathan Johnson, Elizabeth Lammons, Akiyuki Sakai, Tomoko Hoshi, and Miho Funakura. Design is by Noriko Takasago and Yuko Monden.

3. *Student involvement in the SALC: the work of the SALC Student Committee (SSC)*

*Akiyuki Sakai*

The SSC continues to meet weekly to discuss possible ways to promote the SALC by providing insights using their own perception as students. The communication between the group and the LA conduit has been close and informative. The group has started to show a greater interest in promoting more frequent and extended use of various resources in the SALC rather than simply encouraging interest in the SALC as a general facility. The group is working highly autonomously, and collaborating harmoniously with the ELI Student Activities Committee.

The SSC co-ordinated with the Student Activity Committee to organize and promote three events this year: the wafuku party, Halloween party, and Christmas party. The Halloween party drew over 400 student participants, which made it the largest party so far since the SALC was established. The number of students following the SSC via Facebook or Twitter has grown significantly through the promotion they carried out during their participation as a SALC-affiliated group at Hamakaze Festival. The SSC is now working on drafting a proposal to send for the first and upcoming Student Involvement in Self Access Centers Conference scheduled to take place in Nagoya in 2013.

**SALC Curriculum Development Project**

*Members: Junko Baierschmidt, Elizabeth Lammons, Jo Mynard, Akiyuki Sakai, Keiko Takahashi, Katherine Thornton (Coordinator), Atsumi Yamaguchi*

This year, the SALC Curriculum Development Project Group has continued with the freshmen curriculum evaluation and modification project which was started in 2010-11. The group is following a framework adapted from the Nation and Macalister (2010) model, which aims to establish criteria, in the shape of clear Principles and Goals, based on an investigation of student needs. The projects conducted so far this year all relate to the Needs Analysis step of the project.

Long (2005) emphasizes the importance of triangulating needs analysis data, and discusses a number of sources that may be consulted to establish a comprehensive picture of needs: existing literature, in this case on self-directed learning and autonomy, and the views of domain experts, teachers and students. In the KUIS context, the team identified four major stakeholders in the SALC curriculum: students, learning advisors, teachers and the university senior management team. In order to conduct a thorough needs analysis to guide our curriculum evaluation and design, it was decided that each stakeholder's perceptions of students' self-directed learning (SDL) needs should be investigated, starting with learning advisors themselves, drawing on their understanding of the literature and as their status as domain experts. The results of each of these investigations were then compared and collated to produce an overall statement of freshmen student SDL needs.

1. *Learning Advisors' Perceptions of Student Needs*

*Akiyuki Sakai, Atsumi Yamaguchi, Brian Morrison, Diego Navarro, Elizabeth Lammons, Keiko Takahashi, Katherine Thornton, Jo Mynard, Junko Baierschmidt, Yuki Hasegawa*

In order to establish a coherent understanding of student needs among the LA team members (known as domain expert practitioner intuitions in Long, (2005)), each advisor brainstormed what they considered to be student needs, supporting their points with reference to the literature or their own personal experience. The individual responses of each advisor were then collated and categorized under 4 headings, socio-affective needs, cognitive needs, metacognitive needs and self-management needs. Advisors were then asked to indicate where they felt the SALC curriculum's priorities should lie, by completing a survey in which they would label each need as high, mid or low priority, or something that should not be covered in the freshmen curriculum. This has resulted in a detailed preliminary document of student SDL needs.

## *2. Students' Perceptions of their own SDL needs/wants*

*Junko Baierschmidt, Katherine Thornton, and Keiko Takahashi*

The aim of this group research project was to find out about KUIS freshman students' subjective needs. While Long (2005) cautions against the exclusive use of subjective opinions from students when conducting a needs analysis, it was felt that the views of students were vital in informing this process. In order to ensure that student views were as informed as possible, it was decided to conduct a survey of sophomore students in all departments who had completed their freshman year at KUIS. In all, 11 classes were surveyed.

The following research question was used to guide the design and analysis process:

- What support do current Sophomore students perceive they needed (from the SALC) to succeed in their freshman year?

There are several stages of the project that were accomplished during the first semester:

- Data elicitation for the survey through an open-ended written prompt administered to 11 students in Japanese (multiple revisions and follow-up interviews)
- Generation of survey items (need statements) through analysis and categorization of the open-ended data. Six categories of items were included: learning activities, time management, goal-setting, resources, affective factors, learning environment.
- Pilot of the survey response format and on-line survey
- Administration of the survey (11 classes, 236 respondents)
- Data analysis (see below)

### *Findings of the survey*

In order to find whether or not there are recognizable patterns, the data has been analyzed in two ways; the analysis of individual items and that of the categories. The analysis of each item shows that more than 50% of the students said they would have liked to have learned about the 23 items generated from the data elicitation process. It is not surprising to find this kind of result in a student needs analysis because students tend to think they want to learn every item. Of the most wanted 10 items from a total of 23, six items refer to their desire to learn more about how to use Resources, either human resources or university (SALC/ELI) facilities and materials.

According to the analysis of the categories, the average percentage for Resources

was higher than the other four categories. This finding shows a tendency of the participants' needs in Resources – both making use of human resources such as teachers and exchange students, and SALC facilities, such as the Writing Centre. Categories such as goal-setting and time management (which the SALC curriculum currently focused on more strongly) are less wanted (but still identified by over 50% of students surveyed).

More details about the methodology, the data analysis and the findings of the research can be found in the SALC Curriculum Project meeting minutes and reports uploaded on Moodle. See the SALC Director for access.

### *3. Teachers' Perceptions of Student Needs*

*Atsumi Yamaguchi, Akiyuki Sakai, Elizabeth Lammons*

ELI teaching staff were also identified as a major stakeholder in the Needs Analysis. The researchers assigned to the task of collecting and analyzing data from teaching staff of the ELI sought answers to the following research questions:

- What do teachers believe freshman KUIS students need in order to be effective independent learners?
- In what areas of independent learning should the SALC support the students?

The researchers adopted an exploratory design to first gather information about the relevant constructs to the topic of the research question from qualitative data and then develop and administer a questionnaire to examine the findings quantitatively. An open-response two-item questionnaire with a brief follow up interview to clarify the response was used for the initial data collection. A 105-item

questionnaire (101 closed-response and four open-response items) was used for the quantitative data collection.

In the initial data collection, responses were collected from 10 participants in the open-response questionnaire and the follow-up. The researchers then manually extracted text pointing out the quality or behavioral patterns shared by those who are thought to be effective learners as KUIS freshmen. As a result, the researchers found 22 traits and 18 actions in regard to being an effective independent learner. Those traits and actions were directly adapted as closed-response items for the quantitative data collection to make sure that the questionnaire as a measuring instrument was constructed based upon the qualitative data collected.

The questionnaire consisted of five questions with three different data sets to consider. Question 1 and 2 covered the traits as the items to consider while question 3 and 4 had the actions as the items. Question 5 had its own unique set of items. The questionnaire was designed in a way to allow the traits and the actions to be measured from two different angles: 1) how important each item is and 2) which items should be covered by the SALC curriculum. Thus question 1 and 3 had a 6-point Likert scale while question 2, 4 and 5 were simple checklist questions.

### *Findings*

The survey was sent to thirty-five teachers who have taught freshman year students, and 19 responded. The Likert scale questions (1 and 3) were analysed to find the average level of agreement, while the checklist questions (2, 4 and 5) were analysed for the number of respondents. In relation to RQ1, teachers believe

freshman KUIS students need to hold quality patterns, such as being proactive, determined, not afraid of being perceived to be silly or making mistakes, curious, confident, and hard-working. Teachers believe that students need to make the most of university facilities and learning materials, organize their time, ask questions, and focus on the tasks they are given. All the items mentioned here received a high rating average with 4.61 (out of 6.00) being the lowest for 'confident', 'hard-working', and 'ask questions'.

To answer RQ2, teachers expect the SALC to support students to become reflective, self-led to use English, and independent in making choices. Among behavioral patterns, teachers expect the SALC's support to help students make the most of university facilities and learning resources, to organize their time, to make the most of university human resources, not to depend on the teacher to learn, and to try new things. The items mentioned here had high response percentage with 56.3% being the lowest for the last three items mentioned. The gaps between Q1 and Q2 as well as Q3 and Q4 might indicate that what they believe to be important for effective independent learning and what they want the SALC to foster are somewhat distinct. In other words, teachers expect the SALC to support students' learning outside class by guiding them to make the best use of learning resources (including human resources and materials) and to effectively manage their time. In doing so, teachers expect the SALC to help students to be reflective and self-directed in making choices and using English.

In the light of current practices of the SALC, in general the results of the questionnaire indicate that teachers positively regard the areas that the current SALC

curriculum for freshman students addresses. Relatively speaking, teachers strongly expect the SALC curriculum to help students with using the most effective materials and strategies to achieve their learning goals, and evaluating their learning.

#### *4. Senior Management Perspectives on Self-directed Learning Needs*

*Jo Mynard*

This research investigates the perspectives that senior management at KUIS have of students' self-directed learning needs and views on how to address them. The research involved four participants, all of whom are senior academics at the university. The research took an interpretative, qualitative approach using Grounded Theory methods. The same prompt was sent to each participant prior to the meeting, and the researcher conducted a semi-structured individual interview with each participant. The initial prompt was:

What do you think our students' self-directed learning needs are in the freshman year. i.e. what do you think the ELI / SALC should be preparing students to be able to do in order to be effective learners? (we are not looking at language learning / proficiency for this study).

The interviews were transcribed, coded according to emergent themes and the initial interpretations were shared with the interviewees. The four coded documents were then combined which involved some re-coding (in line with grounded theory techniques).

The results contributed to two focus areas. Focus area 1 related to what

participants thought the ELI / SALC should do in order for freshman students to be effective learners and included eight categories:

- Affective factors
- Behaviour-related
- Cognitive skills
- Focus on future
- Metacognitive skills
- Resources
- Self-management
- Social factors

Focus area two related to participants' views on what needed to be done in order for freshman students to be effective learners and the responses were coded into the following categories:

- Incorporate elements into the classroom
- SALC / Classroom overlap
- What should the university do?
- Explicit competencies
- Learning advisors
- Peers

The next step is to look closely at ways in which this information can inform the curriculum evaluation process.

##### 5. *Collating different perspectives on student needs*

*Akiyuki Sakai, Atsumi Yamaguchi, Elizabeth Lammons, Keiko Takahashi, Katherine Thornton, Jo Mynard, Junko Baierschmidt*

The final step of the Needs Analysis was to collate the findings from each of the different stakeholders, in order to produce a final document detailing students' SDL needs. As the learning advisors are the domain experts who can confidently be considered knowledgeable on the subject, from their detailed knowledge of the literature on SDL and autonomy and their experience working with students to develop their SDL skills, it was decided that comparing each set of findings to the LA Perceptions of Student Needs document would be the most effective way to make sense of the data. Each group was asked to compare their findings with the LA perceptions of student needs document, stating for each "need" whether it was also present in their data set (and if possible to what extent), and also to list "needs" identified by their stakeholder group that were not mentioned by learning advisors.

### **The Future**

The SRG has continued the curriculum focus started last year with research into the perceptions of a range of KUIS stakeholders. There has been additional research on areas and materials development which also directly impact KUIS students and their relationship with the SALC. As the collaborative curriculum project data collection and analysis is complete, next year will see the development of a new pilot syllabus for Freshman students. Likewise, as other SRG projects reach conclusions, these will inform the ongoing work related to the daily running of the SALC and the community it serves.

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