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Progress of the ICOSA project : findings of the needs analysis

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ICOSA

(Inter-institutional Collaborative Online Self Access)

Project

Progress report & results of needs analysis.

Speakers: Andy Morrall, Project Manager (PolyU); Fiona Williams, Project Originator (CityU); Marc LeBane, Project Coordinator (Lingnan)

Baptist University, City University, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong Polytechnic University & Lingnan University

Outline

- Background
- Project proposal
- Project tasks & timeline
- Information needed for needs analysis
- Methodology for needs analysis
- Results of needs analysis
- Discussion of needs analysis
- Next steps
- Conclusions
- Q&A

Background

Reasons for initiating the project.

Need for ...

- self access materials to support the new ELC curriculum for 2012
- online materials because of students' preferences & space issues
- materials to address the learning needs of Hong Kong students
- materials to be available from one point of entry

Why a collaborative project?

- culture of sharing amongst SACs (e.g. HASALD)
- UGC report on Language Enhancement Activities (2010) invitation
- inter-institutional collaboration prevents duplications, uses expertise & pools resources



Background

Project planning stage (Jan 2011-March 2011)

All institutions participated

Discussions regarding the scope of the project

- Hosting/accessibility e.g. issues with creating a website
- Format of the materials e.g. interactive materials & Word documents
- Needs e.g. to link to different diagnostic test results and/or support specific courses, to be suitable for different levels & specific needs

Creation of the application for funding

Project proposal

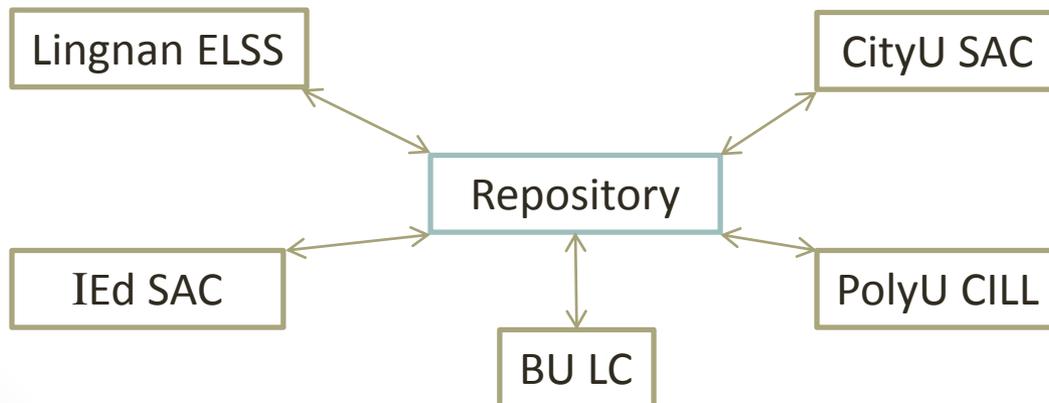
Baptist University, City University, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong Poly University & Lingnan University.

Create a repository for online self-access English language proficiency materials

Share existing materials through the online repository

Develop materials to address specific needs of HK students

Enable ongoing collaboration & sharing



Project tasks & timeline

Task	Chronology
Identification of common areas which students need to work on	Jan-March 2012
Devising indexing making materials searchable Uploading existing materials to repository	Apr-June 2012
Mapping existing materials against needs identified Identifying needs for materials development work	July-August 2012
Production of guidelines for materials development & division of work	August 2012
Development of specifically designed materials for areas not covered by existing materials	Sep 2012-Oct 2013
External review & feedback	Feb 2013
Preparation of final report	Nov-Dec 2013
Ongoing development of materials by individual institutions shared through the repository	Post project

Stage 1: Why do a Needs analysis?

- Why?
 - Satisfy stakeholders:
 - UGC – is the money being well-spent, and are we hitting milestones?
 - ELC Heads – do the benefits out-weigh the costs?
 - Teachers – will this help the students?
 - Students – will this help me?
 - Prioritise materials production:
 - What do we want / need?
 - What have we got?
 - For what we don't have:
 - Do we have something we can adapt?
 - What are the priorities?

Stage 1: Needs analysis-Methodology

The stakeholders

Centre Heads, 11 SAC staff, 25 ELC teachers, 14 managers (including Course & Assessment Coordinators), 1000+ students (ELC, non-ELC & SAC users).

How the needs analysis was done

- Focus Groups – students in ELC classes
- Interviews – SAC staff, teachers
- Questionnaires – students
- Reports & tables of results
- Combining results & prioritizing

Focus Group Questions

Course:

Date:

Number of students:

Explain a little about the project.

Number who use online materials for learning English. _____

Reasons for using online materials.

Materials they have used in the past.

Reasons for not using online materials.

Areas (sub-skills) they think they need to work on.

Areas they are happy to work on independently.

Areas they think they need a teacher for and find too difficult to work on independently.

What they would really like to see for online learning.

DELTA takers

Number who have done follow-up work after receiving DELTA report in September, 2011. _____

What follow-up work was done.

Needs Analysis Interviews

1. Explain the scope of the project.
2. Find out English language focus of interviewee e.g. course ILOs or assessment focus.
3. Find out what interviewees consider the main areas that students need the most work on – needs/wants.
4. Find out what gaps they think there are regarding online resources at present.
5. See if they have any ideas for online resources.
6. Find out if they have any pre-existing quality assurance data or analysis of students corpora that would be useful.
7. Find out if focus groups can be set up with the students they are working with.
8. Find out their thoughts/ideas on the project.

Survey Form

Inter-institutional Collaboration of Online Self-access Materials Needs Analysis (For Students)

Year: _____ Major: _____

1. Which area/ areas do you want to work on in order to improve your English level?
 Listening Speaking Writing Reading Grammar Vocabulary
2. Circle the problem/ problems you have with **Listening**.
 Recognizing accents Pre-listening preparation Difficulty in understanding the spoken words
 Others (Please specify): _____
3. Circle the problem/ problems you have with **Speaking**.
 Difficulty in recalling the right word to use Weak pronunciation Think in Chinese first
 Weak grammar Difficulty in organizing ideas Others (Please specify): _____
4. Circle the problem/ problems you have with **Writing**.
 Struggle with grammar Lack of vocabulary Lack of ideas Repeating phrases
 Difficulty in connecting ideas Difficulty in organising ideas
 Others (Please specify): _____
5. Circle the problem/ problems you have with **Reading**.
 Read too slow Difficulty in understanding the main ideas Too many new words
 Difficulty in finding information in the text Difficulty in understanding the writer's attitude
 Others (Please specify): _____
6. Circle the problem/ problems you have with **Grammar**.
 Sentence structure Tense Preposition Voice Others (Please specify): _____
7. Circle the problem/ problems you have with **Vocabulary**.
 Limited vocabulary range Difficulty in using the word accurately
 Unable to understand idiomatic language Others (Please specify): _____
8. What feedback concerning your use of English language have you received from your teachers? What are the areas you need improvement in?

9. What materials do you want to include in the language lab for your own self-learning?

10. What materials do you want to include on the SALL website for your own self-learning?

Thank you very much for filling in this form.

Report Template Sections

- 2. Findings
 - 2.1 Interviews and Focus Groups
 - 2.1.1 Self-access centre (SAC) staff
 - 2.1.2 Centre / department non-SAC teachers
 - 2.1.3 Students
 - 2.1.4 Managers
 - 2.1.5 Assessment coordinator
 - 2.1.6 Others: _____
 - 2.2 Diagnostic tests
 - 2.3 Analysis of Corpora

Section of a DELTA Report

Component Diagnostic Report

The four reports below show your performance on each of the four components in the DELTA. Your proficiency level as indicated by your DELTA Measure is also shown. Items BELOW the line of your proficiency level are those that you would be expected to answer correctly. Highlighted items indicate the items that you would be expected to answer correctly but DIDN'T. You are advised to work on those highlighted questions/sub-skills.

Listening

	Items	
More ↑	× Understanding information and making an inference	Overall Proficiency Level = DELTA 113
	× Interring a speaker's reasoning	
↓ Difficulty	× Identifying specific information	
	× Understanding main ideas and supporting ideas	
	√ Inferring a speaker's reasoning	
	√ Identifying specific information	
	√ Understanding information and making an inference	
	√ Identifying specific information	
	√ Interpreting a word or phrase as used by the speaker	
	√ Identifying specific information	
	√ interpreting a word or phrase as used by the speaker	
	√ Identifying specific information	
	√ Identifying specific information	
	√ Understanding information and making an inference	
	√ Understanding main ideas and supporting ideas	
	√ Identifying specific information	
	√ Interpreting an attitude or intention of the speaker	
Less ↓	√ Understanding main ideas and supporting ideas	

The report for Listening above indicates subskills that you should work on. You can find resources for improving your listening on the CEAL website at <http://www.in.edu.hk/ceal/usefullinks/listening.php>.

You will also find the following websites useful for improving your listening skills:

1. <http://www.esl-lab.com/> 2. <http://www.learnenglishfeelgood.com/eslvideo/> 3. <http://www.eslgold.com/listening.html> 4. <http://www.studygs.net/listening.htm>

You can also go to the Self Access Centre (SAC) in AR-121 for more help or you can visit the SAC online at for more help with your listening.

Needs Prioritisation

3. Conclusion

The following table organises and prioritises the above needs and wants in order of priority (highest first):

	Skill	Sub-skill	Sub-sub skill	Need / Want	Notes / Number of students served	Priority (High: 3, Medium: 2, or Low: 1)					
						Po ly U	B U	IEd	CU	LU	Tot
1.	O			Students want more practice opportunities with teachers		2	3	3	0	3	11
2.	O			Training in how to be a good student / expectations of students at university		2	1	2	0	1	6
3.	F			formal vs. informal language		0	3	3	3	3	12
4.	G	All levels	Common errors	common HK grammar errors (e.g. word order)		3	3	3	3	3	15

Stage 1: Needs Analysis Results

~ 280 needs / wants

- Grammar: 83 items
- Writing: 52 items
- Listening: 38 items
- Vocabulary: 31 items
- Reading: 31 items
- Pronunciation: 21 items
- Speaking: 13 items
- Higher-order skills: 2 items
- Formality: 1 item
- Others: 2 items

Top 5 Grammar Needs

1. Common HK grammar errors
2. Sentence structure
3. Contrast clauses
(e.g. despite, whereas....)
4. Phrasal verbs
5. Discourse markers

Top 5 Writing Needs

1. In-text referencing
2. Features of lexical referencing
3. Style and tone
4. Academic style
5. Logical linking words

Top 5 Listening Needs

1. Ability to distinguish main idea from supporting details (Weir, 1993) in a section of text
2. Ability to identify relationships among units within discourse (e.g. major ideas, generalisations, hypotheses, supporting ideas, examples)
3. Inferring a speaker's reasoning
4. Interpreting an attitude or intention of the speaker by understanding the use of prosodic features of language (tone, intonation, pitch, stress, etc.)
5. Interpreting the reasoning of the speaker (reason is explicitly stated)

Top 5 Vocabulary Needs

1. Collocation
2. General and academic vocabulary
3. Words in critique
(e.g. overlook, controversial, claim)
4. Focus on specific vocabulary for their department
5. Correct use of *moreover*, *besides* or *furthermore*

Top 5 Reading Needs

1. Argumentative texts
2. Interpreting an implied attitude
3. Identifying explicitly stated information
4. Identifying information in the presence of competing information
5. Interpreting explicitly stated

Top 5 Pronunciation Needs

1. Vowels: confused /æ/ and /e/
2. /d/
3. th
4. /r/
5. /v/

Top 5 Speaking Needs

1. Persuasive presentations
2. Interviewing and being interviewed
3. Suggesting and recommending
4. How to succeed in confirmation/viva presentation
5. Improving confidence in their speaking skills they already have

Other Needs

Higher order skills

1. Critical and analytical thinking
2. How to evaluate suggested solutions

Formality

- Formal vs. informal language

Others

1. Students want more practice opportunities with teachers
2. Training in how to be a good student / expectations of students at university

Stage 1: Needs Analysis - Discussion

Strengths

- All stakeholders included
- The needs analysis has resulted in practical results that prioritise needs and allow us to move on to the development stage

Challenges

- Some needs are in note form only, they need interpreting by the writer into a form that materials developers can use to base materials on
- What level of detail will the UGC want to see in the project Needs Analysis to give us the next budget tranche?

Next step

Reviewing Existing Materials-Institutional Analysis:

1. Determine what materials currently exists
 - a. Print
 - b. Multimedia (audio, video, etc.)
 - c. Other; Hot Potato, Lectora, HTML5, etc.
2. Decide what additional material to deposit
3. Ensure authenticity & currency
 - a. Plagiarism
 - b. Out Dated

Next step

The Repository:

Initial Deposits:

- a. Prior to uploading, each institution will provide the Project Coordinator with a list of items to be deposited.
- b. Each institution will then upload, tag and describe each of their items.
- c. Items may be tagged in more than one category.
- d. Descriptors will allow for easier search & retrieval
- e. Items will be checked to ensure authorship, etc.

Next step

Evaluation: Summer 2012

- Each ICOSA institution will be assigned specific areas to develop.
- Representatives will evaluate items on deposit and determine if they are complete, need some modification or do not exist and need to be created from scratch.
- In September, each institution will present a course of action:
 - a. Areas which need to be developed
 - b. Number of items to be developed
 - c. Timeline for completion & deposit

Conclusions

- Quality: Developing authentic materials specifically designed to meet the needs of Hong Kong students
- Pooling Resources: By sharing materials via the Repository, we can save time & energy by focusing on creating materials or modifying existing ones to meet our institutional needs.
- Versioning: Modified versions are re-deposited by ICOSA members to the benefit of all.
- Innovation: ICOSA will have a IT officer available to help convert materials into HTML5, Flash or other formats.

Conclusions

- Accessibility:
 - a. ICOSA members have 24 hour access to the Repository and are notified when new materials are deposited.
 - b. Newly developed materials available to students 'ONLINE'
- Future:
 - a. The Repository will allow all member institutions to continue to create & share self access materials.
 - b. Our initial needs have focused on current students & staff at member institutions. Once they have been met, further analysis will be required on the new cohort in 2014.



Q & A