

Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

Progress Report
Project No. : 01/QEGS/B08-09

 Reporting Period : From January 2011 (month/year) to June 2011 (month/year)

Part A

 Project Title : e-Assessment System for English and Putonghua Learning

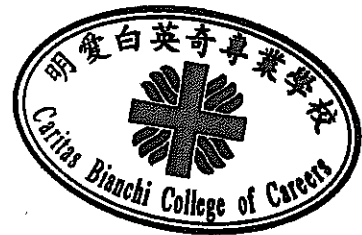
 Name of Grantee : Caritas Bianchi College of Careers

 Project Period : From January 2010 (month/year) to December 2011 (month/year)

Part B

Please use separate A4-size sheets to report the progress with regard to the following aspects:

1. Types and brief descriptions of Project activities held/completed during the reporting period (*the information may be presented in the form of a table*).
2. The dates, time, venues and number of participants / beneficiaries of Project activities held, and resources (e.g. equipment, manpower) used for the implementation of Project activities.
3. Project milestone(s) and deliverables attained at the end of the reporting period and evidence showing the attainment of milestones and deliverables.
4. The percentage, in terms of key tasks, of the Project completed at the end of each reporting period.
5. Project variation*, if any, during the reporting period, together with details and justifications

 Signature:  Organization Chop: _____

 Name of Authorized Person: Reggie KWAN

 Name of Grantee Organization: Caritas Bianchi College of Careers

 Position of Authorized Person: Professor and President

 Date: 29 JUL 2011

* A separate written application should be submitted to the Grantor for **prior** written approval.

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1. Project activities held/completed during the reporting period

Dates, time and venues	Brief descriptions of activities and resources used for implementing the Project *	Number and types of participants (if applicable)
<p>Mar - May 2011</p> <p>CBCC Tseung Kwan O Campus</p>	<p>Performing overall testing and modification</p> <p><u>English Academic Writing</u></p> <p>As indicated in previous reports, the 400 questions in the data bank of Academic Writing are categorized into: S1 – Format, Structure and Process; S2 – Style and Tone; S3 – Reading, Summarizing and Paragraphing; S4 – Language, Grammar and Proofreading; and S5 – Research and Referencing. The questions in each category are then subdivided into three levels of difficulty. Since the categories differ in their nature and complexity, the number of questions contains in each category also differs. Effort during this reporting period concentrated on testing the validity of each question in each category. In order to hold other variables constant, the same groups of students from the same programme and year levels with similar language standards were selected for two separate rounds of testing respectively held in March and May of 2011. The students formed two groups to attempt the questions which were further divided into batches of 40 each.</p> <p>Computer generated results indicated that participants fared better in attempting questions under the category of “S2 – Style and Tone” in Academic writing. Regardless of the levels, participants seemed to show more familiarity with the kind of language style and tone they should use for academic writing. One commonality among these “highly-scored” questions was they seemed to provide contextual clues to participants. By comparison, participants seemed to perform less satisfactory for “S3 – Reading, Summarizing and Paragraphing” and “S5 – Research and Referencing” questions. The following findings can be drawn from the test results:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Level of difficulty seems to have less effect on level of attainment than the nature of the question. In general, participants find questions related to style and tone much easier to answer than questions related to summarizing and condensing, and questions that require knowledge of research and referencing. 2. The way the question is phrased may affect the result. Participants tend to look for contextual clues to arrive at some 	<p>Forty students from the Translation Programme for the English Academic Writing testing, and 103 students from the Design and Hospitality Management Programmes for the Putonghua testing</p>

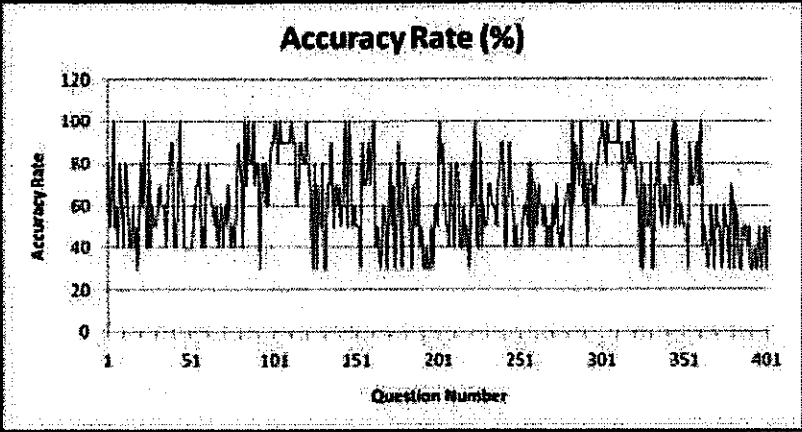
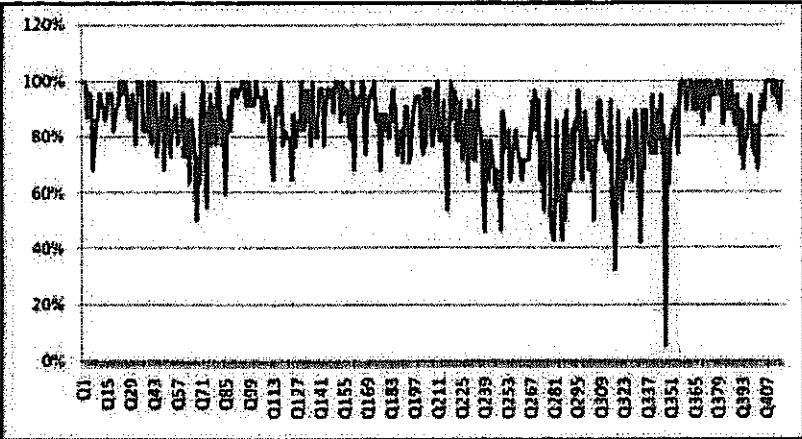
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	<p>intelligent answers. In fact, this is precisely what the system originally sets out to do. The main aim of setting up this e-Assessment system is not to test how much learners can remember about academic writing from their previous studies, but to instigate a self-learning process. Obviously, the participants had worked out the answers to the questions based on contextual clues. As they were given ample time and a relaxed atmosphere conducive to active thinking and reasoning, they were able to contemplate on each question to reach logical and appropriate answers. Post-testing feedback sessions with the same groups of participants indicated that most of them treated the system as something that could help them to learn and revise concepts about academic writing rather than a highly stressful test or examination. More importantly, they were keen on reading the error analysis reports generated by the system and the recommended remedial actions they could take to improve their competency level.</p> <p>Based on the testing results, the Project Team has already modified the questions. As such, ambiguous terminology and ways of questioning have been eliminated altogether and the system is ready to be launched in full scale at the start of the 2011-12 academic year in September.</p> <p><u>Putonghua</u></p> <p>Four classes comprising 103 foundation and year one students, from the Departments of Design and Hospitality Management, participated in the preliminary testing of the online Putonghua e-Assessment platform this May. Foundation students had already read one semester of Putonghua while year one students had read two semesters of Putonghua. The system exposed students to a selection of 400 questions. Students responded to questions ranging in difficulty from level 1 to 6.5, with level 1 being the lowest in difficulty. Criteria for level difficulty was based not only on complication of tonal combinations but were also ranked from mono-syllabic to tri-syllabic combinations of words. No time limit was set for students to complete the test, thus engendering an atmosphere conducive to a relaxed pace of testing.</p> <p>Following the individual reports produced by the computer at the end of the testing, basic expectations were met in knowledge arcs displayed in foundation and year one students; year one students, on average, scored</p>	

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	<p>higher in level 1 to 2 questions than foundation year students. Furthermore, foundation year students progressed at a slower pace and needed more reinforcement through the test in comparison to their year one peers. This highlights the e-assessment platform's ability to track differences in the pace of basic subject knowledge acquisition between the two year groups.</p> <p>In terms of tracking problem areas and strengths in a student's learning, the system also highlighted questions where respondents answered the same questions incorrectly. For example at the foundation level, many respondents displayed difficulties in answering questions related to the fourth tone correctly, which is a problem common to Hong Kong learners of Putonghua.</p> <p><u>Conclusion</u></p> <p>The testing sessions on questions from both data banks distinctly highlight the effectiveness of the system in tracking down participants' strengths and weaknesses. This feature of the system will be very useful for educators and language instructors to actively relate curriculum planning to system results in order to tailor curriculum content to the weaknesses and strengths of the learners, in this case educators may put greater emphasis on the teaching of the fourth tone in Putonghua toning, and research, summarizing and referencing skills in English academic writing.</p> <p>In conclusion, the e-Assessment system allows educators to effectively track the progression of individuals and groups of students in their self-learning process. It both empowers learners to be aware of their own strengths and weaknesses, thus aiding in their personal growth within the subjects, and educators in tailoring the curriculum to meet the needs of their students. The platform embodies what many teachers and professional educators have been lacking for years: a tool that effortlessly and effectively facilitates assessment for the sake of learning and development, and not for intimidating and stifling learners.</p> <p>The following charts show the Accuracy Rate of Participants in the testing sessions:</p>	

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	<p><u>English Academic Writing</u></p>  <p><u>Putonghua</u></p> 	
<p>July 2011 and early October 2011</p> <p>CBCC Tseung Kwan O Campus</p>	<p>Provision of training sessions for teachers and students</p> <p>A series of training workshops for lecturers is scheduled to be held in early July. As students will resume their study in late September, the training workshops for them will be scheduled in early October 2011.</p>	<p>Teachers and lecturers from CBCC, other tertiary institutions and secondary schools</p>
<p>* Evidence showing the attainment of milestones scheduled for completion during the reporting period should be attached (e.g. photos, learning materials, webpage screens, promotion leaflets / posters, relevant reports, etc.).</p>		

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2. The percentage, in terms of key tasks, of the project completed at the end of the reporting period

Milestones scheduled for completion during the reporting period **	% attained	Remarks
Performing overall testing and modification	100%	Several rounds of testing on the validity of questions from the two data banks were conducted respectively in March and May 2011. Additional testing and evaluation will continue in the next reporting period. Participants will be encouraged to use the diagnostic function of the system to learn about their mistakes in English academic writing and Putonghua pronunciation and toning. Remedies and solutions offered by the system will give directions and pointers for further improvement.
Provision of training sessions for teachers and students	50%	A series of training workshops for lecturers is scheduled to be held in early July. As students will resume their study in late September, the training workshops for them will be scheduled in early October 2011.
Implementation of the e-Assessment system	100%	Effort in the next reporting period would be directed towards perfecting and launching the system in full scale at the commencement of the 2011-12 academic year.
Overall Project	85%	<i>As the training sessions for students will be held in early October 2011, we will forward a supplementary report afterwards.</i>
** Please seek prior approval from the QEGS Secretariat if the project milestones cannot be completed at the end of the reporting period.		

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3. Project variation (a separate written application should be submitted to the QEGS Secretariat for prior written approval.)

Descriptions of variations (e.g. change of the project scope or duration, deferral of completion date, relocation of an amount exceeding 10% between items of expenditure in the budget)	Date of approval sought from QEGS Secretariat
To purchase the Adobe Flash Builder Premium 4.5 Eng Multiple Platform (EDU Box) instead of SPSS	29 June 2011

4. Financial position as at the end date of the reporting period

Expenditure items	Approved budget (a)	Committed or actual expenditure (b)	Balance [(a)-(b)]
a. Manpower	\$945,000	\$817,410.97	\$127,589.03
b. Equipment / facilities	\$113,000	\$107,708	\$5,292
c. Services	\$0	\$0	\$0
d. General expenses	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
e. Others	\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000
Total	\$1,079,000	\$925,118.97	\$153,881.03
<i>Project Income (if any)</i>			<i>\$0</i>
<i>Total Balance</i>			<i>\$153,881.03</i>