

## II Project Information

Project Title (in English) Development of a Self-access Reading and Listening Package for Enhancing English Learning Effectiveness for Community College Students in Hong Kong	Project Title (in Chinese) 提升香港社區學院學生英語學習效能： 英語閱讀及聆聽自學教材的發展
---	---

### A. Project Summary

The project aims to:

- explore the needs of full-time HKU SPACE Community College students to acquire both academic reading and listening skills in English; and
- develop a self-access English learning package focusing on both academic reading and listening skills.

The self-access learning package is developed to help students (1) enhance their academic reading and listening skills, (2) explore their language learning strategies and (3) enhance their independent learning abilities.

The project will be conducted in three stages:

#### **Stage 1: Needs Analysis**

A background survey and a questionnaire on language learning strategies will be designed to identify the selected HKU SPACE Community College students' problems with learning academic reading and listening skills in English. These students will be divided into both selected and control groups. All students will take a pre-test and receive different treatments in a later stage of the project.

#### **Stage 2: Design of the Self-access Reading and Listening Package**

The self-access reading and listening package will be designed and tested in a pilot study involving a small number of students. The package will be modified in response to the feedback collected from the participating students in the pilot study.

#### **Stage 3: Implementation of the Package**

The selected group of students formed in Stage 1 will be guided to use the self-access learning package designed in Stage 2 in the Multimedia English Language Centre at HKU SPACE Community College. However, the control group of students will not be required to use the language learning package. Both groups of students will take a post-test to see whether the use of the learning package has made any significant improvement on the students' learning of academic reading and listening skills in English.

## **B. Project Objectives**

*(please identify the needs of the target recipients and explain how the project aims to address the needs).*

### **1.1 Background**

There is a general perception that the English standards of Hong Kong students have been declining for a number of years. With the new “3+3+4” English curriculum, which mainly focuses on generic language skills in secondary schools, there is a growing concern about the academic English proficiency of post-secondary school students before they move on to university education. According to some literature on second language education (e.g. Murphy, 1996), academic English reading and listening skills are crucial for academic success of students at university. To bridge the academic English gap of the students in between post-secondary and university education, it is necessary for students of post-secondary institutions, such as community colleges, to master these two English skills. In the context of community college education, students are of diverse backgrounds and levels of English language proficiency. Apart from regular English courses, the students need more input, which caters for their individual needs/ levels, and effective language learning strategies. To promote independent learning and enhance their academic English skills, this project will develop a self-access learning package on academic English reading and listening skills.

### **1.2. Project Objectives**

The project aims to:

- explore the needs of HKU SPACE Community College students to acquire both academic English reading and listening skills;
- develop a self-access learning package, including guidelines and a progress-monitoring scheme, to enhance the students’ focused skills and foster their independent learning strategies.

**C. Outcomes and Deliverables of Project**

*(please include the expected number of target beneficiaries and explain how they will benefit from the project).*

All 5,871\* full-time students in HKU SPACE Community College and the students of other community colleges in Hong Kong will benefit from the project. For the students of HKU SPACE Community College, through using the self-access learning package, they can be trained to (1) enhance their academic reading and listening skills, which are important to their preparation for university education, (2) explore their own language learning strategies and (3) enhance their independent learning abilities. For other community colleges in Hong Kong, they can adopt the package we have developed and study the data (e.g. language proficiency and needs of community college students) and findings of the project (in the form of reports, publications and/or conference papers). Copies of the instruction manual and the related publications will be sent to other community colleges in Hong Kong for their adaptation.

\*Enrollment figure of HKU SPACE Community College in February 2009.

**D. Implementation Details**

### **Stage 1: Needs Analysis**

A background survey is designed to find out the students' backgrounds (e.g. their English proficiency when applying to the Community College), and analyze their public examination (e.g. HKCEE and HKALE) results. In addition, a language learners' strategies questionnaire is also designed to explore the students' problems related to academic English reading and listening skills<sup>1</sup>, the collected information will be used to design the self-access English learning package in Stage 2. About 70 students<sup>2</sup> will be selected on a random basis<sup>3</sup>. The proportions of the participating students from different community college programmes of the Community College in the project will be in line with the proportions of students studying for different community college programmes in the College as a whole. The participating students will later on be randomly allotted to two different groups<sup>4</sup>: a selected group and a control group. Both the selected and control groups will take a pre-test in the form of an internationally recognized English language test (e.g. IELTS) at the beginning of the project. Only the selected group will be working on the self-access reading and listening package throughout the project.

### **Stage 2: Development of the Self-access Reading and Listening Package**

In order to design an effective package to enhance the academic English reading and listening skills of our college students and foster their independent learning strategies, a pilot study on the draft of the package will be conducted, prior to the participation of the targeted learners in Stage 3. The features of the package are as follows:

1. A self-access manual that includes a set of guidelines on how to use the package to meet individual learners' needs. For example, it consists of strategies for users to select available material/tasks to identify and improve on their weaknesses, and to monitor their progress.
2. Activities/tasks designated to enhance a repertoire of academic reading and listening skills necessary for our College's students, based on the results of the needs analysis conducted in Stage 1.
3. Self-evaluation/diagnosis tasks designed to guide users to evaluate their performance at different stages.
4. Progress monitoring scheme that records attendance and tasks completed by users at different stages.

A group of 10 students will be invited to test the effectiveness and feasibility of the package. The feedback on the package and the entire implementation procedures will be collected by the researchers and people involved in the project. Modifications to the package and/or the implementation procedures can be made in response to the collected feedback.

### Stage 3: Implementation of the Package

The selected group of students will be required to use the self-access learning package together with the guidelines, and take part in the progress-monitoring scheme, which records their attendance and performances at various stages, in the Multimedia English Language Centre of HKU SPACE Community College for two semesters. The progress of the participants and their attendance and performances will be recorded regularly. When the implementation is complete, both the selected and the control groups of participants will take a post-test<sup>5</sup>. A survey and some interviews will be conducted at this stage in order to elicit more in-depth data on the effectiveness of the package and the implementation. The package will be maintained by HKU SPACE and be adopted by approximately over 5,500 students of HKU SPACE Community College students after the completion of the project.

*Notes:*

<sup>1</sup> A list of reading and listening skills suggested in research studies and literature on second/ foreign language acquisition is provided (Nunan, 1999; Richards, 1983; Yurdaisik, 2007). For more information, please refer to Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> According to Central Limit Theorem, if  $n$  (the random sample size)  $\geq 30$ , it is usually regarded as sufficiently large (Freund & Perles, 1999).

<sup>3</sup> All selected students will be invited in writing and they will not participate in the project unless their consent has been obtained. Therefore, all participating students will take part in the project on a voluntary basis.

<sup>4</sup> Each group will also consist of the same portions of students from different community college programmes.

<sup>5</sup> In the post-test, the participants will take the same English language test as they did in the pre-test in Stage 1.

#### **E. Implementation Schedule** *(Please extend this table if necessary.)*

Estimated start date of project:

**September 2009**

<b>Action</b> <i>(please indicate key milestones)</i>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cashflow</b>
--	------------------	-----------------

**E. Implementation Schedule** *(Please extend this table if necessary.)*Estimated start date of project: September 2009

<b>Action</b> <i>(please indicate key milestones)</i>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cashflow</b>
<u>Stage 1</u> - Completion of needs analysis in September 2009 - Selection of 70 participants by January 2010 - To organize a pre-test (e.g. IELTS)	September 2009 / February 2010	498,725
<u>Stage 2</u> - Completion of the package in June/July 2010	March 2010 / August/ 2010	331,625
<u>Stage 3</u> - Completion of the pilot study -To complete the finalized version of the package (with modifications) -Implementation of the package between October and December 2010	September 2010 / February 2011	341,625
<u>Stage 4</u> - To continue the implementation of the package between January and April 2011 - Completion of post-test by June 2011 - Evaluation of the effectiveness of the package by July 2011	March 2011 / August 2011	508,025

Estimated completion date of project: August 2011

## F. Projected Budget

<b>Projected Expenditure</b>	<b>Stage 1</b> September 2009 – February 2010	<b>Stage 2</b> March 2010 – August 2010	<b>Stage 3</b> September 2010 – February 2011	<b>Stage 4</b> March 2011- August 2011
<b>Manpower</b>				
Package	<b>94,500</b>	<b>94,500</b>	<b>94,500</b>	<b>94,500</b>
Developer (half time):	(Salary :\$15,000 X 6) (MPF: \$ 750 X 6)	(Salary :\$15,000 X 6) (MPF: \$ 750 X 6)	(Salary :\$15,000 X 6) (MPF: \$ 750 X 6)	(Salary :\$15,000 X 6) (MPF: \$ 750 X 6)
Project Officer (full time)	<b>180,000</b> (Salary: \$29, 000 X 6) (MPF: \$1,000 X 6)	<b>180,000</b> (Salary: \$29, 000 X 6) (MPF: \$1,000 X 6)	<b>180,000</b> (Salary: \$29, 000 X 6) (MPF: \$1,000 X 6)	<b>180,000</b> (Salary: \$29, 000 X 6) (MPF: \$1,000 X 6)
Research Assistant (part time)	<b>8,125</b> (Salary: \$50 X 125 hours) (MPF: \$ 312.5 X 6)	<b>8,125</b> (Salary: \$50 X 125 hours) (MPF: \$ 312.5 X 6)	<b>8,125</b> (Salary: \$50 X 125 hours) (MPF: \$ 312.5 X 6)	<b>8,125</b> (Salary: \$50 X 125 hours) (MPF: \$ 312.5 X 6)
Gratuity				<b>104,400</b> (for full-time staff)
<b>Equipment and resources</b>				
<b>Learning equipment for students</b> <i>(e.g. listening equipment)</i>	<b>39,100</b>			
<b>References</b> <i>(e.g. books, magazines, on-line resources)</i>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>		
<b>Software for the project</b> <i>(e.g.data analysis)</i>		<b>15,000</b>		

<b>Services</b>				
Copyright clearance/ licence			<b>35,000</b>	
<b>General Expenses</b>				
Design of questionnaires	<b>5,000</b>			<b>5,000</b>
Printing of questionnaires	<b>3,000</b>			<b>3,000</b>
Printing and photocopying of the self-access package			<b>20,000</b>	
<b>Miscellaneous</b> <i>(e.g. tapes for interviews, postage, stationery, auditing fee)</i>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>
<b>IELTS application fees</b> (HK\$1500 X 70 students)	<b>105,000</b>			<b>105,000</b> (HK\$1500 X 70 students)
<b>Total</b>	<b>498,725</b>	<b>331,625</b>	<b>341,625</b>	<b>508,025</b>

**Grand Total: 1,680,000**

**Sources of Funding**

- a. Amount of grant sought under this application: 1,680,000
- b. Other sources of funding (*this may include donations, contributions from the applicant/its parent organization, etc. Please give the name(s) of the sponsor(s), the amount of funding, and indicate whether the funding has been secured.*):
- (i) \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) \_\_\_\_\_
- ...

**G. Monitoring and Self-evaluation Mechanism**

A progress-monitoring system will be implemented; students' performance will be recorded and monitored regularly.

**H. Management Support and Key Personnel Involved**

College Principal, HKU SPACE Community College: Professor Kin Fai Cheng

Chief Investigator: Prof. Mimi Chan

Researchers (in alphabetical order):

Dr. Jessie Choi, Ms. Irene Hui, Mr. Tommy Lui, Dr. Sabina Mak, Dr. Michael Wong

**I. Special Justifications if the Grant Sought Exceeds \$2 million**

Nil

### III Other information

**1 Project Sustainability** (*If applicable, please describe how the recurrent expenditure involved will be met after completion of the proposed project*)

The learning package developed in this project will be maintained by HKU SPACE after completion of this project. Approximately, over 5,500 students will be able to use the package to enhance their reading and listening skills.

**2 Preparatory work done** (*If any*)

Nil

**3 Past experience in organizing projects of similar or relevant nature and achievements** (*If any*)

Please refer to Appendix 2.

#### References:

Freund, J.E., & Perles, B.M. (1999). *Statistics: a first course*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Murphy, J. M. (1996). "Integrating listening and reading instruction in EAP programs." *English for Specific Purposes*, 15 (2), 105-120.

Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching and learning*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Richards, J. C. (1983). Listening comprehension: Approach, design, procedure. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17 (2): 219-239.

Yurdaisik, A. (2007). Teachers' views about and approaches to reading. *Unpublished MA thesis*. Cukurova University.