

## Project Information

Project Title (in English)

Self-Access Language Centre

Project Title (in Chinese)

語言自學中心

### A. Project Summary

*(please provide an executive summary of the project proposal in no more than 500 words).*

Although cultural stereotypes of Asian students as being prone to rote learning, passive and teacher-dependent have been under criticism, the issue of the extent to which Asian heritage culture impacts on Asian students' learning attitudes and behaviour warrants further investigation. However, this seemingly cultural factor shall not be interpreted as an irremovable barrier to post-secondary young adults' language learning. In *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, Gan (2009) reported on an empirical study which compared self-directed language learning attitudes, strategies and motivation among university students in mainland China and Hong Kong. The findings of this study suggest that institutional contexts and social environments rather than cultural traditions tend to determine students' attitudes towards, strategies in and motivation for learning English.

Littlewood (1999) discussed autonomy in language related to East-Asian contexts, describing autonomy in language learning, proposing a framework for learners in all contexts, examining three sources of socio-cultural influence that could affect students' approaches to learning in East Asia, and considering attitudes and habits of learning that might result from such socio-cultural influences. He warned against stereotyping East-Asian learners. His findings illuminate the issues at stake -- the significance of tackling the low confidence in Hong Kong students' ability to speak without prior planning. Understanding why many students appear reluctant to participate in classroom learning discourse shall only be regarded as half-way down the road to find a more effective solution to reduce the second or foreign language learning barrier.

It's believed 'autonomy' shall be made the framework of learning a second language (i.e. both English and Putonghua) in Hong Kong. Hence, this proposal focuses on helping students make and execute choices in the domains of communication, learning, and their language enhancement for their personal life. These components form the basis of a conceptual framework for the establishment of a Self-Access Language Centre (SALC).

In the proposed Self-Access Language Centre we are going to provide updated language learning resources pitched at our student levels, which will be allowed to be used in SALC only, apart from books for extensive reading. SALC is also going to provide transcripts and graded worksheets (categorised into easy, intermediate and challenging), which are based on popular movies, magazines and books, etc., to consolidate students' knowledge and skills after they have read and listened to the learning materials in SALC. The language learning books provided will cover a wide range of topics, from general English/Chinese to business English/Chinese, from pronunciation to writing, which are expected to help students improve their languages in all aspects.

Assistance or advice on students' self-learning process will also be available from the Project Officer and assistant stationed at the advice desk. The project team can help identify students' needs and suggest ways to help students plan their learning and choose the suitable materials. Exploiting the updated and interesting learning materials (e.g. learning software and board games), students shall be stimulated in learning the languages. SALC will not only provide students with facilities and materials for facilitating their learning, it will also act as a platform for students to learn languages from each other and activities will be carried out in order to encourage peer learning among students outside classrooms.

The actual deliverables shall include –

1. Self-access language learning resources
2. eLearning platform
3. Seminars on self-access language learning skills
4. Workshops on sharing of successful learning experience
5. Individual and small group consultations
6. Reading groups
7. Writing lab
8. Virtual Language and Cultural Exchange

Further details can be found in Sections C, D, E and G of this proposal.

#### **References:**

Gan, Zhengdong (2009). *"Asian Learners' Re-Examined: An Empirical Study of Language Learning Attitudes, Strategies and Motivation among Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong Kong Students"* in Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, v30 n1: p41-58.

Koyalan, Aylin (2009). 'The Evaluation of a Self-Access Centre: A Useful Addition to Class-Based Teaching?' in System: An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics, v37 n4: p731-740.

Littlewood, William (1999). *'Defining and Developing Autonomy in East Asian Contexts'* in Applied Linguistics, v20 n1: p71-94.

Littlewood, William (1992). *Cognitive Principles Underlying Task-Centred Foreign Language Learning.*

Reinders, Havo & Noemi, Lazaro (2007). *'Innovation in Language Support: The Provision of Technology in Self-Access'* in Computer Assisted Language Learning, v20 n2: p117-130.

**B. Project Objectives**

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

Given that fact that only very limited resources at post-secondary levels (i.e. diploma and higher diploma) can be available in the university library and some of them may go too advanced for this level of students, teachers have to find a way to fill this learning gap. There is no doubt that learning resources and support are especially essential to students at the College as a majority of them are from low-income families, living in the northern New Territories. They cannot afford spending much on learning, let alone accessing language resources.

The establishment of Self-Access Language Centre is aimed at improving students' language ability and developing their initiative and independence in learning both English and Chinese by providing a wide range of materials and support. Students are given the opportunities to decide and take control of what to learn, when to learn and how to learn the two languages according to their own needs and levels with the advice or assistance provided by SALC. SALC shall add a new dimension of learning to many post-secondary students from this deprived North New Territories area.

In language teaching learning motivation is of vital importance, since learning can only occur if the learners are willing to learn. So, the students have to realise that their role in the process of learning is crucial. Students have different needs, styles of learning and interests. In addition, there are psychological and personal factors, varying study habits and levels of motivation and a variety of cultural traits. When students are taught how to learn by themselves in our 'self-access language centre (SALC)', a great many language teaching problems can be solved. Koyalan (2009) completed a study on the effectiveness of a SALC in terms of learners' attitudes, behaviours and practices in the light of the questions regarding what it was and what it should be. The results mainly showed that the SAC at Izmir University of Economics (IUE) offered opportunities for learning, encouraged learners to change their approaches to learning, and was being valued by both the teachers and the students. We can understand that SALC can emerge as a complement to the more traditional face-to-face learning model. It is suggested to set up our SALC with these four main roles in mind: bringing together language learning and independent learning, enabling the learner to improve both linguistic proficiency and independent learning skills, providing the necessary resources and providing learner support.

Self-access and language advising holds strong potential as learner-centred and highly flexible approaches. In addition, there are many sound practical reasons for offering self-access as complementary to or as an alternative to classroom teaching, especially in situations where existing learning needs are too great or diverse to be met by traditional language learning methods. SALC has attempted to take into account some of the challenges reported listed above by developing an electronic learning environment that better prepares students for and guides them in their self-directed learning. In addition it aims on the implementation of an extensive monitoring system of student learning, that allows for the provision of more tailored language support than previously possible. To assist learners' self-access learning experience, it is also proposed to adopt the task-based approach (see Littlewood, 1992) to increase the degree of learner involvement in purposeful work – a continuum from focus on linguistic form to focus on message. This shall help students to have a more focused learning objective each time they move into a self-directed language learning task.

To sum-up, the objectives of setting up the SALC are to –

1. provide a new dimension of language learning experience through various language learning resources and support to students from the deprived Northern New Territories area
2. improve students' language ability and develop their initiative and independence in learning both English and Chinese
3. improve both linguistic proficiency and independent learning skills of students
4. enhance existing classroom language learning experience
5. involve students actively in the self-access learning experience

### C. Outcomes and Deliverables of Project

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

The project is targeted at the (around 2,000) students of the Community College at Lingnan University and Lingnan Institute of Further Education, and the community in the northern New Territories during term breaks. The establishment of Self-Access Language Centre (SALC) is aimed at improving students' language ability and developing their initiative and independence in learning both English and Chinese by providing a wide range of materials and support. Students are given the opportunities to decide and take control of what to learn, when to learn and how to learn the two languages according to their own needs and levels with the advice or assistance provided by SALC. A peer learning atmosphere shall also help enhance a positive learning culture among our young learning adults. SALC shall add a new dimension of learning to many post-secondary students from this deprived North New Territories area.

The details of the actual deliverables are as follows:

1. Self- access Learning Materials on an eLearning platform  
Students are going to be provided with updated resources at their levels, which are expected to help them brush up their language skills and increase their self-motivation in learning by exploiting the learning materials.
2. Advice, assistance and activities  
The tutor stationed at SALC would provide advice and assistance in learning the two languages and organise the following activities:
  - 2.1. Language Buddies Scheme  
The Language Buddies Scheme enables students to learn and use the languages in pairs or groups. Students looking for more opportunities to practise speaking skills in pairs or groups can come to SALC and fill in a form on which they have to indicate the languages they want to practise and the topics they are interested in. The forms will be kept in a file that other students can browse if they like. The students can find the matches by themselves and contact the potential buddies at their email addresses written on the forms. Once the students find their buddies, they can have chats and learn the languages together in Chat and Game Zone in their free time in SALC. Peer learning is hopefully to be encouraged through this scheme.
  - 2.2. Seminars on Self-access Language Learning Skills  
Seminars are suggested to be held at the beginning of each academic year to orientate students into the various self-access learning opportunities in SALC.
  - 2.3 Workshops on Sharing of Successful Learning Experience  
These types of workshop shall operate before the start of term 2 in each academic year to reinforce the positive learning experience of some while encouraging the less successful learners to imitate a learning approach which may also work effectively on them.

#### 2.4 Individual and Small Group Consultations

Both individual and small group consultations can be run throughout the school year to offer more assistance to students who may benefit more from having a language teacher's instant feedback and interactive dialogues.

#### 2.5 Reading Groups

Reading Groups are set up to help students to improve their reading comprehension and component reading abilities. A peer learning atmosphere shall help enhance a positive reading culture among our young learning adults. Hopefully, a reading habit can be nurtured to help students for the rest of their lives. Mixed and differentiated ability groups can both be assigned so a more appropriate approach to learner grouping can be formulated.

#### 2.6 Writing Lab

Writing Lab shall be an opportunity for students to display their great works and a platform for them to exchange their ideas on issues of their concern. This is our scheme to make the fundamental shift in the learning task design under the outcome based learning approach – from teacher-centric to learner-centric.

#### 2.7 Virtual Language and Cultural Exchange

The Project Officer will establish connections with colleges or universities in Mainland China and overseas, and launch this Virtual Language and Cultural Exchange programme. Students who are interested in practising their speaking and listening skills, and explore the culture of that language can sign up and join this programme. The participants can chat online with net conferencing in SALC. The possible partners in the first year are Tianjin Professional College (Tianjin) and Washington & Jefferson College (Washington, Pennsylvania), which have been running the student exchange programmes with the Community College since 2003-2004 and with Lingnan University respectively.

## **D. Implementation Details**

The project will be delivered in three main stages over 2 years:

1. Phase I covers the period from January 2011 to June 2011 (6 months). In this period establishment of the Self-Access Language Centre, purchase of hardware and software, recruitment of staff, materials development and promotion are the main work. The facilities and materials to be included in SALC are as follows:
  - a. Computer Zone: computers with language learning software installed will be provided.
  - b. Audiovisual Zone: audiovisual materials, transcripts and graded worksheets will be available.
  - c. Reading Zone: books (for extensive reading) and magazines, and graded worksheets will be available.
  - d. Chat and Game Zone: students can have chats and play language learning board games there.
  - e. Tool Zone: Language learning books and tools (dictionaries and other reference works) will be provided.

The inventory for SALC is as follows:

- a. 15 workstations with X-class, headsets, microphones and webcams that can be used for recording and net conferencing, plus 2 computers for the project team
  - b. 1 colour laser printer
  - c. 1 scanner
  - d. A range of language learning software for post-secondary level student learning
  - e. A range of language learning books for post-secondary level student learning
  - f. IELTS and National Proficiency Test of Putonghua preparation materials and specimen papers
  - g. Dictionaries and other reference works
  - h. A range of books (for extensive reading) with graded worksheets
  - i. A range of magazines with graded worksheets
  - j. A range of DVDs / VCDs, CD-ROMs and CDs, with transcripts and graded worksheets
  - k. Language learning board games, e.g. Scrabble, Pictionary, Monopoly, MB Game of Life, and Cluedo.
2. Phase II covers the period from July 2011 to June 2012 (12 months), while the July to December 2011 is Phase II a; and January to June 2012 is Phase II b. Details of the deliverables can be found in Section C of this proposal.
  3. Phase III covers the period from July to December 2012 (6 months). During this period, regular data will be collected from students' feedback and eLearning platform for the purpose of analysis and evaluation of the ongoing project. It will also involve the evaluation of the outcomes of the project on the whole and planning for improvement. Further details of the self-evaluation are stated in the following sections.

The project implementation plan is as below:

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Implementation items</b>
Phase I January – June 2011 (6 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Furnish the language centre</li> <li>b. Research and purchase necessary learning items, including equipment, hardware, software and books</li> <li>c. Recruit a qualified project manager</li> <li>d. Grade the existing materials</li> <li>e. Prepare graded worksheets</li> <li>f. Categorise, set and test all self-access materials</li> </ul>
Phase II a July – December 2011 (6 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Promote and open the language centre</li> <li>b. Run preparatory training workshops for students and centre in operation</li> <li>c. Provide ongoing facilities (language learning materials and different learning zones in SALC) and services (workshops, individual and group consultations, virtual language exchange, etc.)</li> <li>d. Open the language centre to students of the northern New Territories during term breaks</li> </ul>
Phase II b January – June 2012 (6 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Update graded worksheets with new learning materials, e.g. periodic magazines</li> <li>b. Provide ongoing facilities (language learning materials and different learning zones in SALC) and services (workshops, individual and group consultations, virtual language exchange, etc.)</li> </ul>
Phase III July – December 2012 (6 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Collect data from users' feedback and the eLearning platform</li> <li>b. Analyse the data and seek improvement for next activities and the ongoing services</li> <li>c. Evaluate the outcomes of the project on the whole, including user's feedback and works produced during the activities, and students' results of external public English and Putonghua tests, e.g. IELTS</li> </ul> <p>Analyse the data and seek for improvement. Further details of the self-evaluation are stated in the following sections</p>

<b>E. Implementation Schedule</b> <i>(Please extend this table if necessary.)</i>		
Estimated start date of project: <b><u>January 2011</u></b>		
<b>Action</b> <i>(please indicate key milestones)</i>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cashflow Requirement</b>
<p><b>Phase I: <u>Establishment of the Self-Access Language Centre and the Project Team (First 6 months: January – June 2011)</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recruit and set up the project team</li> <li>2. Design and furnish the language centre</li> <li>3. Research and purchase necessary learning items, including equipment, hardware, software, books and magazines</li> <li>4. Grade the language learning materials</li> <li>5. Categorise, set and test all self-access learning materials</li> <li>6. Develop graded worksheets</li> </ol>	<p>(6 months)</p> <p>January – June 2011</p>	685,500
<p><b>Phase II a: <u>Ongoing provision of facilities and services for the students of the Community College and LIFE (6 months from July – December 2011)</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote and open the language centre</li> <li>2. Run Language Buddies Scheme throughout the school year</li> <li>3. Arrange individual and small group consultations during the academic year</li> <li>4. Set up reading groups throughout the school year</li> <li>5. Organise Writing Lab throughout the school year</li> <li>6. Arrange Virtual Language and Cultural Exchange programme</li> <li>7. Open the Language Centre to the learners of the northern New Territories during term breaks</li> </ol>	<p>July – December 2011</p>	206,000
<p><b>Phase II b: <u>Ongoing provision of facilities and services for the students of the Community College and LIFE (6 months from January – June 2012)</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deliver preparatory training seminars at the beginning of each academic year to orientate students in using SALC</li> <li>2. Conduct workshops on sharing of successful learning experience before the start of term 2 in each academic</li> </ol>	<p>January – June 2012</p>	206,000

year		
3. Update graded worksheets with new learning materials		
<p><b>Phase III: <u>Evaluation of the outcomes of the Project seeking for improvement</u></b> (6 months: July – December 2012)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect data from users’ feedback, work produced during the activities and the eLearning platform</li> <li>2. Seek improvement for next activities and the ongoing services</li> <li>3. Evaluate the outcomes of the project on the whole with the data collected from users’ evaluation forms, verbal feedback, works produced during the activities and the results of those who take part in external public English and Putonghua tests, e.g. IELTS.</li> <li>4. Analyse the data and seek for further improvement on the Self-Access Language Centre</li> </ol>	(6 months)  July – December 2012	220,500

Estimated completion date of project:

December 2012

<b>F. Project Budget</b>					
<b>Projected Expenditure</b> <i>(Please provide detailed breakdown under each item)</i>	<b>Amount in HK\$</b>				
	<b>Phase I</b> <b>(6 months)</b>	<b>Phase II</b> <b>a</b> <b>(6 months)</b>	<b>Phase II</b> <b>b</b> <b>(6 months)</b>	<b>Phase III</b> <b>(6 months)</b>	<b>Total</b>
a. Manpower  Total salary packages for One full-time Project Manager and/or ad hoc supports for part-time assistants	<b>175,500</b>	<b>175,500</b>	<b>175,500</b>	<b>175,500</b>	<b>702,000</b>
b. Equipment / Facilities					
- 15 workstations with X-class, headsets, microphones and webcams that can be used for recording and net conferencing, plus 2 computers for the Project Team and eLearning platform (\$20,000 x 17 = \$340,000)	340,000			0	340,000
- 2 colour laser printer	40,000			0	40,000
- A range of language learning software, language learning books, magazines and audiovisual materials for post-secondary level student learning, IELTS and National Proficiency Test of Putonghua preparation materials and specimen papers; Dictionaries and other reference works	50,000	12,500	12,500	10,000	85,000
- Furnishing	36,000				36,000
- Contingency	18,000	7,500	7,500	15,000	48,000
<b>Sub- total</b>	<b>484,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>549,000</b>
c. Services					
d. General Expenses					
- Promotion and grand opening	10,000	2,500	2,500	0	15,000
<b>Sub- total</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15,000</b>
e. Others – e.g. stationery, office supplies auditor's fee, etc	<b>16,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>52,000</b>
<b>Total Expenditure :</b>	<b>685,500</b>	<b>206,000</b>	<b>206,000</b>	<b>220,500</b>	<b>1,318,000</b>

Projected Income	Amount in HK\$					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
a. (e.g. fees received)						
b.						
<b>Total Income :</b>						

### Sources of Funding

- a. Amount of grant sought under this application: HK\$1,318,000
- 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

1. The first set of self-evaluation questionnaires, which will be designed for collecting feedback about the usage and effectiveness of SALC facilities as well as services provided by the SALC assistant, will be distributed to students three months after the launch of SALC.
2. Follow-up questionnaires will be designed and distributed to students from time to time in the future for collecting feedback and suggestions for further improving SALC, the services and activities, and purchasing new learning materials. Verbal feedback and photographs taken in the activities organized by SALC will also be considered in the evaluation process of the outcomes of the project as well.
3. The monitoring of students' monthly activities and performance on the eLearning platform is one of the objective evaluation mechanism that can track the users' learning progress and improvement, as well as their motivation in self-access language learning in terms of the frequency of the eLearning platform usage.

The students' results of external public English and Putonghua tests, e.g. IELTS, will also be considered as a self-evaluation mechanism if there are any students using the examination preparation materials and taking part in the public examinations during the implementation of the project.

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

Management support will be provided by the Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance division of the College.

The key personnel involved in this project include:

- Dr. Edward Fung Pui-wing, Dean of the Community College and Further Education
- Ms. Cindy Siu Sau-yin, Acting Associate Director
- Dr. Ka Sing Chan, Assistant Director (Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance)
- Ms. Daisy Chow Yuen-man, Assistant Director (College Advancement and Programme Coordination)
- Ms. Janice Choi Kin-ying, Head of Teaching Faculty
- Ms. Jennifer Lee Fung-yee, Deputy Head of Quality Assurance
- Mr. Paul Li Wan-hay, Head of Arts Programmes
- Ms. Eliza Lau Lai-yee, Convenor of Languages Enhancement Project
- Ms. Cindy Cheung Chung-ki, English Subject Coordinator
- Ms. Wendy Sze Wan-nga, Assistant College Lecturer

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

**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 Self-Access Language Centre will be operated on the resources of the College after the funding period.

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

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

#### IV Declaration and Consent of the Applicant

1. I certify that our organization meets the eligibility criteria for application and that there is no duplication of funding for similar projects from other government sources.
2. I certify that all the information given in this application is true and accurate. I understand that any inaccurate information will render the application invalid, any grant approved will be withheld and any payment made must be refunded to the Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme (the Scheme).
3. I agree that the information provided in this application form will be used by the Vetting and Selection Committee, the Scheme's Secretariat and related government bureaux / departments to process the application and for other directly related purposes. I also agree that information contained in this application form and subsequent submissions may be publicized by the Vetting and Selection Committee, the Scheme's Secretariat and related government bureaux / departments if necessary.
4. I have read and fully understood the *Guide to Application*, and hereby agree to be bound by all the terms and conditions set out in the *Guide to Application*.

Signature

Dr Edward FUNG

Name

Dean of the Community College and Further  
Education

Post Title

2616-7577

Telephone No.

The Community College at Lingnan University

Name of Applicant

23 August 2010

Date

Applicant's Chop

#### Reminder

**Please be reminded to submit the following supporting documents with this application:**

- Two copies of the duly completed application form;
- A disk copy or CD-ROM containing the soft copy of the duly completed application form;
- Copies of relevant school / company registration documents;
- Supplementary information in support of the application (e.g. project proposal, written confirmation from organizations collaborating / participating in the project, etc).