The Centre for Intercultural Language Studies (CILS)

CILS Annual Report 2009-2010

Prepared by: Monique Bournot-Trites, Ken Reeder, Andrew Scales, and Angelika Sellick

A report on the past academic year's activities of CILS, an inter-faculty research and development centre at The University of British Columbia dedicated to the promotion of language teaching and learning within and beyond the University community.

Preface:
The report submitted last year included activities and events up to March 31, 2009. The current report and budget will focus on activities from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010. For previous activities, please refer to our 2008-2009 annual report.

<u>I. Mandate and Strategic Plan for the Past Year</u>:

Established in 1994, the UBC Centre for Intercultural Language Studies (CILS) is an interfaculty centre for research, outreach, and collaboration on issues broadly connected to language, culture, and education.

CILS is sponsored and supported by three major UBC bodies: the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Education, and Continuing Studies. Over the past sixteen years, CILS has provided service to the language teaching and learning community not only at the University of British Columbia, but also in the broader professional field and amongst our sister postsecondary institutions in British Columbia. The Centre relies on the work of dedicated individuals who are the driving force behind the life of the organization. Unlike other similar centres at UBC, CILS receives no funding for release time of their Director. All Advisory Committee members generously volunteer their time and expertise. This reality means that CILS' accomplishments represent significant value for the modest investment made by the University in its work.

The main goals for the 2008-2009 year were to:

- Grow as a catalyst for research collaboration and conduct a funded research project
- Continue service to the teaching community
- Co-sponsor events with other UBC departments and centres
- Involve more graduate students in CILS activities

Three secondary goals for the 2008-2009 year were:

- Hire a graduate student (MA) to act as an assistant to the director
- Enhance revenues by introducing some cost recoveries at the annual Symposium
- Transfer the responsibility for the maintenance of website to NCIE

II. Governance and Participation

CILS is led by a Director and an Advisory Committee. The Centre's membership comprises over two hundred individuals who participate as attendees and/or presenters during the various events and activities organised and (co-)sponsored by CILS. Last year, CILS relied on the work of a Graduate Assistant who was paid through a student appointment. This is the only paid position in the governance of CILS.

Director:
The Director is a member of either the Faculty of Arts, Education, or Continuing Studies. This is a volunteer position usually held for one or two years. Over the past years, finding a person who is willing to donate their time as director has proven challenging. Monique Bournot-Trites, from the Faculty of Education, has been the director for the past two years. Andrew Scales, Academic Director of the English Language Institute in Continuing Studies, has agreed to take over the directorship of CILS for the upcoming 2010-2011 year.

Graduate Assistant:
The person in this position assists the Director closely in organising the Advisory Committee meetings, as well as the events and activities of CILS. This position involves the preparation of the CILS Annual Research Symposium, as well as updating the CILS website, contacting CILS members by e-mail with announcements and invitations to various activities, and seeking opportunities to co-sponsor events of interest. During 2009-2010, Angelika Sellick (an MA student in the Department of Language and Literacy Education) was employed as the Graduate Assistant and has agreed to continue for another year in order to provide a smooth transition between Directors.

Advisory Committee:
The Advisory Committee comprises individuals representing the three contributing units: Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education, and Continuing Studies. Most of the current Advisory Committee members have been involved with CILS for a number of years and thus are familiar with the Centre's goals and regular activities. This has contributed to very fluid interactions and collaboration.

Members of the 2009-2010 Advisory Committee were:

Francis Andrew, Continuing Studies
Rebecca Chau, Department of Asian Studies
Duanduan Li, Department of Asian Studies
Stefka Marinova-Todd, School of Audiology and Speech Sciences
Ken Reeder, Department of Language and Literacy Education
Steven Talmy, Department of Language and Literacy Education
Carlo Testa, French, Hispanic and Italian Studies
Andrew Scales, Continuing Studies
Sandra Zappa-Hollman, Department of Language and Literacy Education

Members of Research Committee working on a research grant from the Canadian Association of University Continuing Education (CAUCE) 2009-2010 were:

Monique Bournot-Trites
Ken Reeder
Andrew Scales
Angelika Sellick (Research Assistant)
Mark Smith (UBC Learning Exchange Storefront Programs, Manager)
Sandra Zappa-Hollman

This year's activities included regular meetings of both the Advisory Committee and the Research Committee. In June 2009, the Advisory Committee met to plan the goals and events for the upcoming year, including the theme for the year *Writing in an Intercultural World*. In subsequent meetings, the Committee focused on organizing guest speakers, events, and the Annual Research Symposium. The Research Committee met several times to plan and advise on the research activities related to the research grant.

Who accessed the Centre:
The events organised by CILS were well attended. Many graduate students (past and present), as well as UBC faculty and staff from different departments and units, attended the presentations. Teachers from the Vancouver School Board and instructors from SFU and the local university colleges (e.g., Capilano University, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Vancouver Community College) participated in CILS events. Notably, teachers and personnel from the Italian Cultural Centre Society and government-sponsored language schools attended several CILS events and requested that their names be added to our mailing list.

III. How Goals for 2009-2010 were Achieved

CILS' goals for 2009-2010 can be divided into three categories: community service, research, and administrative.

Community Service

- Goal : Continue service to teaching community
- Goal: Co-sponsor events with other UBC departments and centres
- Goal: Involve more graduate students in CILS activities

This year CILS hosted its annual research symposium on language assessment in May 2009 and attracted 100 participants. Dr. Alister Cumming from OISE gave the keynote address entitled "Assessing Writing in Second Languages: Trends in Research and Pedagogy". This was followed by 18 presentations covering such diverse topics as language assessment, pedagogy, indigenous language revitalization, and technology in language learning. Speakers came from a wide range of institutions including graduate students and faculty from UBC, Simon Frasier University, BCIT, Thomspon River University, and Laval University. See appendix A & B for abstracts of the symposium presentations.

The symposium also engaged graduate students from various departments and institutions as volunteers, presenters, and attendees. As volunteers, the students' participation included registration, chairing sessions, offering technology support, and assisting with the service of refreshments and lunch.

CILS also co-sponsored four guest speakers during the 2009-2010 year:

In September 2009, Dr. Jörg Matthias Roche from Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, Germany gave a talk entitled "Media in language learning and teaching: added value or wasted time?" The presentation was attended by 50 participants.

In November 2009, CILS co-sponsored a talk by Dr. Nicola Cipani from New York University with FHIS, TAG, and the Italian Culture Centre Society. The title of his talk was "Task-Based Instruction at NYU: Models, Practices, Challenges" and there were 35 participants in attendance.

The third CILS sponsored presentation entitled "Feedback & Cross-Cultural Sensitivity in Academic Writing" was given by Dr. Deborah Healy from the University of Oregon in January 2010. Her presentation attracted 65 participants.

In March 2010, CILS hosted Dr. Jürgen M. Meisel from University of Hamburg in Hamburg, Germany. Dr. Meisel gave a talk entitled "Child Second Language Acquisition: Sensitive Periods in Early Childhood". Forty participants attended this talk.

See Appendix B for abstracts of these presentations.

Overall, the symposium and talks were successful in attracting a wide and diverse audience. All of these events were well-attended by students, faculty, and practitioners from various departments across UBC, as well as other external institutions. We received positive feedback and encouragement to continue offering similar types of events. One of our continuing challenges is to offer presentations that address the needs and expectations of highly academically-oriented members, as well as practitioners. The broad scope of the topics covered this year by the symposium and guest presentations therefore were important in appealing to our diverse membership.

These events allowed us to achieve our community service goals by increasing the number of people on our mailing list, as well as diversifying our membership. They also allowed CILS to provide students with opportunities to become more involved and to meet with academics and practitioners in their field of interest.

Research

- Goal: Grow as a catalyst for research collaboration and to conduct funded research projects

This year, we did not re-submit the TLEF and Hampton Grant since the feedback was received after the deadline to resubmit. In place of re-submission, we hope to develop an inter-disciplinary graduate student grant writing workshop. The goal of this graduate workshop is: first, re-write the two grant applications; and second, utilize the graduate workshop as a pilot for other possible series in the future.

This year, CILS was actively involved in conducting research. With funding from the Canadian Association for University Continuing Education (CAUCE) and Continuing Studies, CILS conducted an ethnographic study of the UBC Learning Exchange ESL Conversation Facilitators Program. Activities of the research included preparation of a literature review and submission of the research design, documents, and instruments for approval by the UBC ethics research board. Angelika Sellick, the Graduate Assistant for CILS and a MA graduate student, was hired as the Research Assistant to conduct the on-site data collection which included natural observations, questionnaires, and interviews. At the end of March 2010, most of the data had been collected and transcribed in preparation for analysis. See Appendix C for a summary of the research design, study, and research questions.

The CAUCE research project has allowed CILS to work in close collaboration with the UBC Learning Exchange, practitioners at the English Language Institute, as well as with members of the downtown Vancouver community, including immigrants with English language needs. This research project has been an excellent platform for CILS to reach out to the community and provide service while also addressing its research agenda.

Administrative

- Goal: Hire a graduate student (MA) to act as an assistant to the director
- Goal: Enhance revenues by introducing some cost recoveries at the annual Symposium

- Goal: Transfer the responsibility for the maintenance of website to Network of Centres and Institutes in Education (NCIE)

In August 2009, Angelika Sellick, a MA graduate student in the department of Language and Literacy Education, was hired to assist the director in the administrative and planning operations.

The Advisory Committee discussed, but decided against introducing a $10 registration fee at the 2009 annual research symposium. It was thought that the introduction of such a fee may deter people from attending. The committee agreed to re-visit this goal in the planning stages for the 2010 symposium (see planning goals for 2010-2011).

The transfer of responsibility for maintaining the CILS website to NCIE occurred in June 2009. Angelika Sellick worked in close partnership with Carmen Radut at NCIE in keeping the website current.

IV. <u>Future Planning</u>

In the next three years, CILS hopes to become further involved in research and increasingly work with graduate students and develop a critical mass of students from across various departments involved in common programmes of research. In this way, it will become easier to organise events corresponding to the needs of those graduate students. We also want to work more closely with our partners within UBC to bring together the theoretical expertise and the classroom experience of practitioners in order to answer research questions or problems from the field. In addition, we hope to explore an enhanced role as a research resource for the Faculty of Graduate Studies in relation to questions around the English requirements and tests used as entrance requirements for international students.

For 2010-2011, our goals include:

- Complete data collection, analyses, and publish results from CAUCE research project through reports, academic papers, and conference presentations.

- Continue to grow as a catalyst for research collaboration.

- Co-sponsor events with other UBC departments and centres, as well as external institutes.

- Increase inter-faculty representation on the CILS Advisory Committee and other CILS working committees.

- Continue to work collaboratively with NCIE to promote CILS events.

- Re-visit the issue of charging a $10 registration fee per participant at the annual symposium.

- Investigate means to redevelop CILS website.

- Run CILS administrative operations and catered functions in the most environmentally responsible way possible.

Appendix A:
Presentation Abstracts from CILS 5th Annual Research Symposium (May 15, 2009)

	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
A1	Angelika Sellick Department of Language & Literacy Education, The University of British Columbia	**Language Self-Assessment: An Overview & Cultural Questions** Attending conferees will be invited to self-assess their own preferences and beliefs about language assessment. Following this, an overview of what self-assessment is and when and why it entered into the language classroom and academic research will be presented. Next, the problematic concept of culture in relation to language self-assessment will be considered, followed by a discussion on how self-assessment and culture could successfully be integrated together in the classroom. Thought will also be given to how teachers' approaches may differ between an ESL and EFL context.
A2	Patricia Duff & CRCLLE Research Group Department of Language & Literacy Education, The University of British Columbia	**Chinese as an Additional Language: Transnational Contexts, Factors, and Narratives** This presentation describes significant new developments in both education and research in Chinese as an additional language worldwide. It then outlines priorities for an international research agenda on the teaching/learning of Chinese. Gaps in existing research are identified and recommendations for future research and development are presented. Finally, one research project currently being conducted at the Centre for Research in Chinese Language and Literacy Education of five adult English-speaking longtime learners of Mandarin is described.
A3	Brett Todd International Student Entry Program, British Columbia Institute of Technology	**Vocabulary: Teaching from the Academic Word List** This session will present teachers with strategies and resources to aid students in the acquisition of vocabulary. In a standard ESL classroom, in which teachers generally focus on a communicative skill or a topic, the polysemous nature of most vocabulary gets lost. Students tend to equate a new English word with a word in their L1, which works well at low levels and with simple concrete nouns and actions verbs. However, as vocabulary becomes increasingly abstract at higher levels, quick translation leads to errors and a breakdown in comprehension. This presentation seeks to answer such questions as: How can instructors encourage students to explore the many possible meanings and usages of new vocabulary? How do we aid students in making connections between words within the same word family? Word lists such as the GSL and AWL (based on frequency) are interesting, but how can they be used to plan lessons and as resources in the classroom?
B1	J. Dean Mellow, Simon Fraser University Lorraine Desjarlais, Simon Fraser University Maria Myers, Simon Fraser University Nicola Bergen. Simon Fraser University Jamie Hack, The University of British Columbia Loreley Wiesemann, Simon Fraser University	**Assessing diversity: Measuring grammatical complexity in English, Anihshininiinowin and Tsilhqut'in** This paper presentation discusses the challenges of measuring the complexity of utterances in languages that have diverse word and sentence structures. The paper adopts the emergentist approach to understanding language use and acquisition (Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2006) and focuses on the diverse linguistic constructions that exist within and across languages. First, the paper shows the value of using words per T-unit (Ortega, 2003; Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, & Kim, 1998) as a measure of complexity in a longitudinal case study of the written language of an ESL learner. Second, the paper shows the challenges in using mean length of words in morphemes (MLW) to assess grammatical complexity. The paper illustrates the use of MLW for Anihshininiimowin, an Algonquian language spoken in northern Ontario. MLW analyses were attempted for the spoken maternal utterances in 6 transcripts from a longitudinal first language acquisition study (Upper & McKay, 1987). The paper then illustrates the use of MLW for Tsilhqut'in, an Athapaskan language spoken in central British Columbia.

B2	Christine Rouget Department of French, Hispanic and Italian Studies, The University of British Columbia	**Corpus Linguistics and Language Teaching** Corpus Linguistics and the use of authentic material (in our case spoken French corpora) bring new perspectives on the teaching of French at intermediate and advanced levels. This is a demonstration of a teaching resource website aimed at exposing intermediate and advanced students of French to a range of speech acts (all authentic and diverse in types and provenances) in order to boost their oral comprehension. To take part in the website demonstration, native or near-native fluency of French is recommended (since all the material posted on the website is in French), but everyone is welcome to observe the session which will be held in English.
B3	Michael Trottier Department of Language & Literacy Education, The University of British Columbia	**Challenges and Opportunities of Genre-based Approaches to L2 Writing: Navigating the Intercultural Intersection of Meaning and Form** In a postmodern era of second language (L2) pedagogy, where neo-liberal discourses on culture and globalization threaten to further homogenize and commodify education at all levels, the need to engage international students critically and interculturally has never been greater. In terms of instructional approaches to L2 writing, the current "post-process" (Matsuda, 2003) era has contributed to this need by widening the pedagogical lens, thereby incorporating more of learners' own cultural identities, perspectives, and meaning-making habits(Hyland, 2007) into the writing process. As a complement, genre-based approaches offer learners an alternative means by which to explore the intercultural intersection of meaning and form, providing the metalinguistic tools with which to explore the meaning-making potential of language as a primarily social activity. Beginning with a brief background look at "critical contrastive rhetoric" (Kubota & Lehner, 2004) and "intercultural rhetoric" (Connor, 2008), this paper explores some of the challenges and opportunities of incorporating genre-based approaches to L2 writing.
C1	Kathy Michel, Chief Atahm School Jack Miller, Thompson Rivers University Susan Russell, Simon Fraser University	**Speaking Proficiency in Secwepemctsin for Kindergarten to Grade 1: Gathering Information Through Storytelling** This presentation reports on a research project that will be carried out with the involvement of staff and students of Chief Atahm School, a Secwepemctsin Immersion school located in the First Nations community of Adams Lake, near Chase, BC. The intent is to develop protocols for testing the Secwepemctsin language proficiency of Kindergarten and Grade 1 students using storytelling as the main testing methodology.
C2	Wendy Carr Department of Language & Literacy Education, The University of British Columbia	**English as Additional Language Learners in Intensive French: Performance in French and English** This session introduces a French second language program called Intensive French and the effect of its literacy-rich approach on the English performance of English as additional language (EAL) learners. Intensive French is a five-month experience in which Grade 6 students are immersed in a French Language Arts program for 80 percent of the day followed by five months in which students undertake a compacted curriculum of regular Grade 6 subjects taught in English. It has been implemented in Canada since 1998, in BC since 2004, and has now replaced core French in New Brunswick. Program founders, Netten and Germain (2004), have noted that with the development of French literacy skills comes an enhancement of English literacy skills; however, the populations studied across Canada have not included EAL learners. My research in Surrey, BC from 2004 to 2008 shows that significant gains also occur in the English performance of EAL students taking Intensive French. Excerpts of oral proficiency interviews and written samples (GRICS criteria) will be shared along with student clips.

C3	Ling He	**Assessing L2 Writing: Topic Knowledge and its Impact on Performance**
		The use of direct measures in large-scale writing assessment has been a trend. Does performance differ when prompts differ? Drawing on Messick's validity model (1989) and sociocultural theory, this study integrated a multi-phase sequential explanatory design, quantitative followed by qualitative, for a more complete understanding of the complexity of L2 writing. A total of 50 undergraduates across three English language proficiency levels in a Western institution participated in the study. 100 essays were scored on the basis of analytic measures in content, organization, and language. By comparing the performance in response to two prompts, one general and the other pertaining to the local culture, by the same groups of examinees, this study showed that writing performance on the cultural-specific topic was inferior to the performance on the general topic and that there was no obvious discrimination among advanced-proficiency-level writers.
	Department of Language & Literacy Education, The University of British Columbia	
D1	Shahrzad Saif	**Content-based writing instruction: An assessment-based approach**
		This presentation discusses how test constructs can be used as bases for the design of writing courses in content-based instructional settings. The study focuses on the accurate identification and selection of the language- and content-related abilities to be targeted and assessed by the writing course as a first step in the process of course development. The paper further illustrates how the model can be used to enhance the writing ability of freshman students in a teacher training program.
	Universite Laval Québec	
D2	Bonnie L. Waterstone	**International Graduate Students Writing Themselves into North American Educational Discourses**
		This presentation explores how international students begin to appropriate disciplinary discourses and practices in their first few weeks of graduate study in Canada. I will focus on students' "ideological becoming" (Bakhtin, 1981), investigating the following questions: 1) How do these multilingual writers negotiate entry into scholarly and disciplinary conversations? 2) What performances of self are enabled/constrained as they appropriate certain academic discourses?
	M.Ed. International Program, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University	
D3	Rita Santillan	**Emotional Intelligence and the Acquisition of a Second Language in Adult Learners**
		It is not fully known what assumption can be made regarding the Emotional Intelligence (EI) of adults willing to acquire a second language. This paper presentation is a summary of an exploratory study involving a control group of 12 EFL adult learners in Peru. The purpose of the study was to measure the adults' EI, determine the presence of meaningful differences in their Emotional Quotient (EQ), and identify which scales, if any, of EI can be assumed to have the greatest influence on adult learners in the acquisition of a second language.
	Continuing Studies, The University of British Columbia	
E1	Katherine Golder, British Columbia Institute of Technology Kenneth Reeder, The University of British Columbia Sarah Fleming, Simon Fraser University	**Determining the Appropriate IELTS Score for Admission to a Post-Secondary Polytechnic**
		This presentation will describe the research methods and findings of our investigation into the appropriate IELTS score for admission to two programs at a large Canadian polytechnic post-secondary institute.
		The project was undertaken with the support of the British Council, and examined typical instances such as course materials, activities, and assignments, in which students are required to read, write, speak, and listen in English. Next, we compared the proficiency in English required to complete these tasks to IELTS band score descriptors. Data were collected through interviews with students and faculty members, observations of lectures and labs, and content analyses of documents used in the courses. Because of the small number of interviewees and limited depth of content analysis, results of this study should be viewed as indicative rather than conclusive.

E2	Nina Parr	**Moodle (a web application) for Language Teaching**
		This presentation includes a demonstration of the free web application Moodle and a sampling of teachers' websites. Over the last eight months, UBC Languages, Cultures and Travel has been implementing the use of the program Moodle to facilitate the creation of websites by our individual teachers in our Continuing Studies language course. Moodle is a free web application that can be used to create effective online learning sites. Moodle is used in 207 countries around the world in 78 different languages, and it has proven to be a very useful tool in creating language learning websites. With a set of basic instructions a new user can create courses, upload existing files including word processed documents, images or sound files, add links to external websites and create individual web pages combining text, images and embedded video from the internet. With further practice, voice recordings and RSS feeds can be embedded. Following the demonstration will be an assessment of the implementation project thus far and plans for moving forward.
	Continuing Studies, The University of British Columbia	
E3	Won Kim	**Language through Literature: Real Language Experiences of Adult ESL Learners**
		This presentation reports on a three-month long descriptive case study of an ESL class at a private language institute in Canada with international advanced-level adult learners employing literature-based second language (L2) instruction (LBLI). The study aimed to investigate 1) the nature of teaching practices of the instruction, and 2) students' learning experiences with such instruction in an effort to contribute to the further scholarly discussion of "how" literature is being and can/should be incorporated for the development of L2. Based on the findings of the study, this presentation intends to suggest pedagogical implications to extend its feasibility as an alternative L2 teaching paradigm in light of Johnson's (2004) new model of second language acquisition, namely "dialogical approach" based on Vygotsky's Sociocultural theory and Bakhtin's Literary theory.
	Department of Language & Literacy Education, The University of British Columbia	
F1	Luisa Canuto	**"Living a Language from the Heart" or Learning Italian with Community Service Learning**
		Community Service Learning for second language acquisition purposes is still surprisingly underutilized. In this session, we will share our experience and lessons learned and invite you to consider how to help your students enjoy this truly experiential approach to learning a second language.
	Department of French, Hispanic and Italian Studies, and Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth, The University of British Columbia	In March 2007, eight students of one of our Italian language courses completed their Community Service Learning experience with elders and adolescents at the Italian Cultural Centre in Vancouver. It was our first attempt to introduce this particular educational approach, which involves a certain number of community work hours and specific expectations that students need to meet for part of their final grade. So encouraging was the feedback from all parties involved and so successful the outcomes of the experience that we decided to offer another similar opportunity to our students in the spring of 2009.
F2	Keiko Koizumi	**Mr. Monkey: An Internet-Assisted Spelling Learning Tool**
		"Mr. Monkey" is a web-based interactive spelling learning tool. Instructors can input data and Mr. Monkey can generate limitless sets of a spelling quiz-like game with ease. This presentation will demonstrate this learning tool with particular attention to the benefits from both the learner's and instructor's perspective. Mr. Monkey is currently being used in beginning Japanese language courses at UBC, and the presentation will be based on observations from actual on-going use of the tool as a classroom supplement.
	Department of Asian Studies, The University of British Columbia	

Appendix B:
Abstracts of Guest Speakers 2009-2010

Assessing Writing in Second Languages: Trends in Research and Pedagogy
Presented by Dr. Alister Cumming (May 15, 2010)
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

What principles inform assessment for education in writing in second and foreign languages? At the level of institutional policies, the major function of assessment is to describe students' proficiency in writing, either for the purposes of program placement, to determine achievements during a course, or to certify abilities for future studies or work. At the level of classroom instruction, the guiding purpose of assessment is to foster the improvement of students' writing, either
through teachers' responses to students' compositions, peer and self-assessment, or guided literacy tasks. These distinctions have generated a range of controversial issues, evident in our recent synthesis of published research (Leki, Cumming, & Silva, 2008, Routledge Publishers): How should writing assessments be designed and conducted? What evidence is needed to validate formal writing assessments? How should teachers respond to students' writing? What are the benefits of peer and self-assessment? What variations arise from the status of specific learner groups? Given the complexity of writing and of languages, what aspects of writing should teachers optimally address in their assessments? How should teachers develop their professional knowledge for assessing L2 writing?

Media in language learning and teaching: added value or wasted time?
Presented by Dr. Jörg Matthias Roche (September 3, 2009)
Ludwig Maximilians Universitaet, Munich, Germany

The learning and teaching of modern languages has experienced several waves of 'new media hype' that have generated more or less lasting effects on the profession. It is interesting to observe that the introduction of new media does not automatically lead to pedagogical improvements. With the introduction of computers into language teaching in the 1980s, for instance, developers rediscovered grammar and vocabulary drills as the main instruments for teaching abandoned many of the advances brought about by communicative approaches. Even today, language learning software seems to be dominated by rather uninspired pattern drill methodology, albeit in a flashier outfit. However, modern learning media offer an abundance of largely unused opportunities for authentic language use and language learning, both in carefully designed language programs as well as by means of freely accessible working and learning resources and communication tools. The question then is: how do we determine the benefits of media use in language teaching and how do we generate added value inside and outside our classrooms? By shifting the focus from technological aspects (the media) to functional aspects (e.g. facilitating communication) of language learning such benefits can be identified in an abundance of areas. Furthermore, the functional perspective also allows us to demonstrate how the specific needs of language learning may influence the design of more interactive and versatile technological tools in general, e.g. in the design of learner and content management systems, interactive dictionaries and more culturally sensitive communication tools.

Task-Based Instruction at NYU: Models, Practices, Challenges.
Presented by Dr. Nicola Cipani (November 12, 2009)
New York University

The department of Italian studies at NYU has recently implemented Task Based Instruction (TBI) at all curricular levels of the language program. This workshop provides insight into the benefits and challenges of adopting a TBI framework at the college level. Tools and practices developed for the TBI language curriculum will be discussed in connection with foreign language acquisition methodology, course design and assessment procedures.

In the first part of the workshop (1hr+Q&A), after an overview of the core principles of TBI theory, different task typologies and the structure of the specific TBI model adopted at NYU will be presented. Discussion around general criteria for selecting and sequencing authentic material and analyzing the impact of an input-heavy approach on planning lessons and courses will follow. As TBI redefines priorities between accuracy and fluency, we are challenged to rethink the role of instructor and textbook. Suggestions on how to test and how to evaluate are provided along with more general considerations on syllabus design and resources.

In the second part (50min+Q&A), participants will be walked through an entire TBI cycle. As illustration for each of the phases (pre-task, task execution, post-task), real examples taken from NYU courses will be used, focusing in particular on structured input/structured output. Specific feedback obtained by instructors who participated in the experiment will help to start a discussion on possible strengths and weaknesses of each of the components of the TBI formula. Although this part of the workshop will make use of material in Italian, the aim is to present it so as to include instructors of all languages in the discussion.

Feedback & Cross-Cultural Sensitivity in Academic Writing
Presented by Dr. Deborah Healey (January 19, 2010)
University of Oregon

This interactive presentation will address different approaches to feedback. Most writing teachers firmly believe in the value of feedback as a means of improving writing. How much to give, when, in what format, and how to frame the feedback in order to motivate better work are all pressing issues. As universities continue to recruit increasing numbers of international students, cross-cultural sensitivity also enters into our decision-making as writing teachers. A few clips from Writing Without Borders will be used to spark discussion about international student writing. We will then look at what different technology tools can provide, and the pluses and minuses observed in using the tools with students, both English language learners and graduate students/teachers. Participants will be encouraged to share what they do in their classes and discuss what role technology should play.

Child Second Language Acquisition: Sensitive Periods in Early Childhood
Presented by Dr. Jürgen M. Meisel (March 4, 2010)
University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany

Comparisons of monolingual (L1) and multilingual (2L1) first language development have shown that children exposed to two or more languages from birth are able to develop a native grammatical competence in each of their languages. Successive acquisition of languages, however, results in qualitative differences, as compared to (2)L1, at least for adult second language (aL2) learners. This raises the question of whether successive acquisition at an early age can lead to the same results as simultaneous acquisition. In this presentation, I will report on an ongoing research project investigating the acquisition of French by native German children. My hypothesis is that if the onset of acquisition happens at around age 4 or later, the acquired grammatical knowledge will resemble aL2 and be distinct from that of (2)L1 learners. Consequently, I will refer to successive acquisition of this age range as child second language acquisition (cL2). More specifically, I will argue that cL2 learners use certain constructions which are typically found in aL2 language use, but never in (2)L1 data. If cL2 is indeed more like aL2 in some respects but more like L1 in others, the crucial problem is to predict which parts of grammar will first be affected by the changes which the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) seems to undergo. Currently, we are not able to present theoretically motivated claims to this effect. I intend to show that it is primarily in the acquisition of inflectional morphology that cL2 resembles aL2, although certain aspects of syntax may also be affected by early maturational changes. I will present evidence referring to the acquisition of subject clitics and gender marking in French in order to support my claims.

Appendix C:
Summary of research design, study, and research questions

Project Title:
Building Transformative Learning Communities: A Formative Evaluation of the UBC ESL Conversation Facilitators Program

Funding: CAUCE Research Award 2009/10

Background
The UBC ESL Conversation Facilitator's Program is designed to develop the skills of English-speaking downtown eastside Vancouver residents so they can lead effective English language conversation classes with immigrants and refugees. Through training and support, the program enables the volunteer facilitators to contribute to their community and gain greater self-esteem in the process. The program requires participants to attend a series of training workshops focused on basic ESL conversation methodology and issues. The participants begin facilitating their conversation classes after the second workshop and are further supported through in-class observation and feedback. In 2007, the program was recognized with a CAUCE Award of Excellence.

The Facilitator Program is part of a larger initiative, the UBC Learning Exchange ESL Conversation Program, designed to recognize and value the resources and abilities of inner city residents by training them to engage in cross-cultural learning exchanges with the immigrants. This in turn supports the University's vision to strengthen civil society by developing learning based relationships between people from the inner city community and the university community.

Rationale
This study seeks to understand the most effective aspects of a university-community engagement program, in order that it can be strengthened, and successfully and sustainably replicated in other locations.

Research Questions
1) What are the strengths of the ESL facilitator training workshop?
2) How does the ESL facilitator training workshop work as a Community of Practice?

Project Timeline (July 1, 2009-March 31, 2010)

- Literature review: completed September 2009
- Background discussion with past and present staff members: completed October 2009
- UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) application: submitted November 2009
- Approval from UBC BREB: received November 2009
- First phase of data collection with participants (focus group interviews, observations of training sessions, questionnaire): conducted in December 2009
- Second phase of data collection with new group of participants: March 2010