

Progress Report on Assessment Award

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Assessing the Language Component of the Manoa General Education Requirements

Principal investigator: Kimi Kondo-Brown (East-Asian Languages and Literatures)

Contact: kondo@hawaii.edu

Other Faculty Members Involved (LLL Assessment Committee, alphabetical order):

James Dean Brown (Second Language Studies)

Paul Chandler (Languages and Literatures of Europe and the Americas)

Precy Espiritu (Hawaiian and Indo-Pacific Languages and Literatures)

John Haig (East Asian Languages and Literatures)

Kathryn Klingebiel (Languages and Literatures of Europe and the Americas)

John Mayer (Hawaiian and Indo-Pacific Languages and Literatures)

1. Introduction

The present cross-departmental assessment survey research project aims at (a) identifying key concrete and measurable learning outcomes for the two-year Hawaiian/second language requirement at UHM, and (b) developing assessment instruments and procedures to systematically measure each objective. The project is still in progress and will be completed by June 2003. This progress report includes (a) the background of the survey project (purpose and significance of the project), (b) methodology adopted for the survey (participants, instruments, and procedures), (c) plans for the rest of the project period, and (d) an appendix (survey instrument).

2. Background: The purpose and significance of the project

All UHM students are required to complete a four-semester sequence in a Hawaiian/second language or demonstrate equivalent competence before graduation. The purpose of the present assessment project is to conduct an assessment survey for the faculty members (professors, instructors, and lectures) and graduate teaching assistants (TAs) teaching in the Manoa Hawaiian/second language programs in order to gather the cross-departmental information necessary for establishing an assessment system within the College of Languages, Linguistics, and Literatures (LLL) designed to regularly monitor the effectiveness of the existing two-year Hawaiian/second language programs.

According to the UHM general education descriptions, ". . . proficiency in Hawaiian or a second language is an integral part of the university's mission to prepare students to function effectively in a global society to preserve and promulgate Hawaiian, Asian, and Pacific language, history, culture and provide students an education experience with an international dimension." In order to achieve this goal, "before graduation all students must show competency at the 202 level."

However, the quoted description of the Manoa Hawaiian/second language requirement is very general. For example, we do not know what is meant by "202-level competency" in different language programs.

Thus, in order to make the assessment of the Hawaiian/second language programs an integral part of on-going curriculum activities within the College of LLL, first, we have to identify concrete and measurable learning outcomes or objectives, which may be common across all programs. Second, after these objectives are identified, we will then be in a position to develop appropriate assessment instruments for determining which objectives are being met and which ones are not. In other words, the survey results will become the foundation for redefining future learning objectives for the core Hawaiian/second language programs and developing assessment instruments to measure the effectiveness of these programs in achieving these objectives. This type of cross-departmental assessment project has never previously been conducted within the College of LLL. In order to make the assessment of the Manoa Hawaii/second language programs a regular part of our teaching activities, we believe the present initiative is crucial.

3. Research questions

The present assessment survey project for the faculty members and TAs of the Hawaiian/second language programs at UHM intends to answer the following questions:

- (a) What should the learning outcomes for the two-year Hawaiian/second language requirement at UHM be?
- (b) What would the potential assessment instruments be to systematically measure each of the identified outcomes?
- (c) In conducting assessment using the identified instruments, what assessment procedures should be adopted?

4. Method

Participants. All faculty members (professors, instructors, and lectures) and TAs teaching in the Hawaii/Second language programs were invited to participate in the study as volunteers. An assessment questionnaire was sent to a total of 192 faculty members and TAs in three departments (East Asian Languages and Literatures [EALL], Hawaiian Indo-Pacific Languages and Literatures [HIPLL], and Languages and Literatures of Europe and the Americas [LLEA]). Of those surveyed, 92 faculty members from the following 22 language programs responded to the survey (for a 47.9% return rate): Arabic, Cambodia, Chamorro, Classics (Greek and Latin), Chinese, Filipino, French, German, Hawaiian, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Ilokano, Indonesian, Maori, Russian, Samoan, Spanish, Sanskrit, Tahitian, Thai, and Vietnamese.

Instruments. The questionnaire was developed by the principal investigator primarily based on the information obtained through a preliminary electronic survey among program coordinators regarding the existing lower-division language programs (100-202 level) in terms of their

objectives and teaching practices focused particularly on assessment. On the preliminary survey, the following questions were asked:

(a) Do you have a document that lists learning objectives for students completing the two-year program in your language or for each level? If so, how can we get a copy?

(b) Has your program developed any assessment instruments to measure the learning outcomes of students completing the two-year program in your language? If so, please describe them briefly. If not, what do you think possible assessment instruments might be for measuring the learning outcomes of students completing the two-year program in your language?

After the principal investigator drafted the questionnaire based on the information obtained from the program coordinators, she circulated the draft among the members of the LLL Assessment Committee for feedback. The final version of the questionnaire has five sections. The first section asks the survey participants about their backgrounds (department, position, language(s) taught, and for which languages they are giving their opinions). The second section asks the participants to indicate the degree to which they agree with 42 statements as learning outcomes for students who complete a fourth-semester course in the language(s) for which they are giving their opinions. These learning outcomes are listed in five categories: four language skills and cultural knowledge. At the end of each category, the participants were asked to provide any additional learning outcome(s) they would suggest for the category. The third section asks the participants to choose potential assessment instruments for measuring the identified student learning outcomes in the five categories mentioned above. This section also includes a question asking about the participants' previous experiences with proficiency testing (e.g., training in an oral proficiency interview, development of other types of proficiency tests, etc.). The final section asks the participants how they would like to conduct assessment using the instruments of their choice (e.g., when and how often should we assess, who should be assessed, and who should do the assessment). The entire questionnaire is attached as Appendix A.

Procedures. A cover letter that explains the purpose and procedures involved in the survey and an anonymous LLL assessment questionnaire form were placed in the mailbox of each of the 192 faculty members and TAs in EALL, HIPLL, and LLEA on November 18th, 2002. Before the questionnaire was distributed, the project proposal had been reviewed by the UH Committee on Human Studies and exempted from Department of Health and Human Services regulations. The survey participants were asked to return the questionnaire to the box labeled "LLL assessment survey" located in their main department office by December 6th. They were also asked to make a check-mark by their name on the list when they returned the questionnaire so the investigator could keep track of the faculty who had responded to the questionnaire. By the survey deadline, approximately 40 faculty members and TAs had volunteered to participate in the survey and returned the questionnaire. Then, the Dean of LLL sent out a reminder letter on December 6th and, by the mid-December, an additional 51 faculty members and TAs had returned the questionnaire, allowing for the acceptable 47.9% return rate.

5. The plans for the rest of the project period

By the beginning of March 2003, the principal investigator will analyze the survey data and present the results to the LLL Assessment Committee. She will also present to the Committee a list of available assessment instruments and procedures in various languages. The Committee will examine the survey results and make recommendations for the learning outcomes/objectives of the two-year Hawaiian/second language programs offered by LLL. The Committee will also make recommendations about future college-wide assessment instruments and procedures for measuring each of the identified learning outcomes. By the beginning of April 2003, these recommendations will be shared with administrators, language coordinators, and all faculty members from the various programs as an on-line document and through a workshop. If the implementation of the recommended procedures requires the use of commercially available assessment instruments, the Committee will purchase such instruments using the award and make them available to LLL. When the Dean approves the recommendations of the Committee, the new Manoa foreign language requirement assessment procedures will be implemented following those recommendations.

**Appendix A: LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT ASSESSMENT PLANNING
QUESTIONNAIRE
(FOR LLL FACULTY)**

I. Background information

Your department (circle one) : EALL, HIPLL, LLEA Position : _____

Language(s) you teach this semester and/or taught before at UH : _____

II. Which of the following fourth-semester courses, are you giving your opinions for (mark all apply)?

<input type="checkbox"/> Ancient Greek 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Hawaiian 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Latin 202
<input type="checkbox"/> Arabic 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Hindi 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Maori 202
<input type="checkbox"/> Balinese 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Ilokano 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Russian 202
<input type="checkbox"/> Cambodian 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Indonesian 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Samoan 202
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Italian 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Sanskrit 202
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese 212	<input type="checkbox"/> Japanese 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish 202
<input type="checkbox"/> Filipino 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Japanese 212	<input type="checkbox"/> Tahitian 202
<input type="checkbox"/> French 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Thai 202
<input type="checkbox"/> German 202	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean 212	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese 202

III. Identifying learning outcomes: Please indicate to what degree you agree with the following statements as learning outcomes for students who complete the course(s) you marked above using the numerical scale 1-5 defined below.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree

Learning Outcomes of Listening Skills

When the target language is delivered in standard dialect, **the students will be able to:**

1 2 3 4 5 Understand conversations about everyday experiences (e.g., school, work, interests, preferences)

1 2 3 4 5 Understand factual content of paragraph-length descriptions/narratives on familiar topics (e.g., recorded telephone instructions, announcements in public areas)

1 2 3 4 5 Understand abstract content of paragraph-length descriptions/narratives on familiar topics (e.g., a speech about a social issue)

1 2 3 4 5 Get main ideas from every day TV news/reports of several paragraphs when accompanied by visual support (e.g., weather report or sport news with information in chart)

1 2 3 4 5 Figure out the meaning of unknown vocabulary in context through guessing strategies

1 2 3 4 5 Get main ideas of movies, plays, and orally-read stories

List here any additional learning outcome(s) you would suggest for listening skills:

Learning Outcomes of Speaking Skills

The students will be able to:

1 2 3 4 5 Perform a variety of "real-life" tasks in common social and transactional situations (e.g., shopping, making hotel reservations)

1 2 3 4 5 Sustain conversations/interviews about self, family, experiences, interests, and preferences

1 2 3 4 5 Express opinions and feelings about passages/stories read for class

1 2 3 4 5 Describe and narrate past and present experiences in paragraph-level discourse (e.g., recent travel experience)

1 2 3 4 5 Describe and narrate future plans in paragraph-level discourse (e.g., plans after graduation)

1 2 3 4 5 Give an oral presentation or demonstration of several paragraphs on a topic of interest (e.g., demonstrating how to make/use something, story telling)

1 2 3 4 5 Perform short skits with some details about characters and scenes

1 2 3 4 5 Conduct interviews to gather information for research on a topic of interest

1 2 3 4 5 Use language creatively by combining a variety of learned vocabulary, expressions, and structures

1 2 3 4 5 Initiate, sustain, and close a conversation using various communication strategies

1 2 3 4 5 Successfully negotiate through simple misunderstandings (e.g., misunderstanding of an order in a restaurant)

1 2 3 4 5 Seek and gather information to solve problems

1 2 3 4 5 Use appropriate registers for various formal and informal situations

List here any additional learning outcome(s) you would suggest for speaking skills:

Learning Outcomes of Reading Skills

The students will be able to:

1 2 3 4 5 Understand fully paragraph-length texts dealing with personal and social needs such as personal letters, messages, and memos

1 2 3 4 5 Get main ideas from authentic everyday practical materials written entirely in the target language (e.g., menus, ads for products)

1 2 3 4 5 Identify key facts and some supporting details in newspaper articles and short stories

1 2 3 4 5 Provide accurate, concise summary in English of a short reading passage

1 2 3 4 5 Form inter-textual connections between several readings or real-life events

1 2 3 4 5 Infer meaning from clues in a text or by "reading between the lines"

1 2 3 4 5 Translate short passages written in the target language into clear and natural English

1 2 3 4 5 Figure out the meaning of unknown vocabulary in context through contextual guessing strategies

1 2 3 4 5 Read texts written in the target language critically

List here any additional learning outcome(s) you would suggest for reading skills:

Learning Outcomes of Writing Skills

The students will be able to:

1 2 3 4 5 Meet practical writing needs and social demands by writing paragraph-length personal letters, messages, applications, and journals

1 2 3 4 5 Write paragraph-length summaries in the target language of reviewed reading or video material

1 2 3 4 5 Write paragraph-length opinions in the target language about reviewed reading or video material

1 2 3 4 5 Write narratives/descriptions of personal experiences, interests, and plans in several paragraphs

1 2 3 4 5 Write a report about the target culture in several paragraphs

1 2 3 4 5 Create short stories or skits with some details about characters and scenes in several paragraphs

1 2 3 4 5 Use language creatively by combining a variety of learned vocabulary, expressions, and structures

1 2 3 4 5 Use appropriate registers for formal and informal writing

List here any additional learning outcome(s) you would suggest for writing skills:

Learning Outcomes of Cultural Understanding

The students will be able to:

1 2 3 4 5 Demonstrate understanding of holidays and traditions celebrated in the target culture

1 2 3 4 5 Demonstrate knowledge of traditional and contemporary sports, music, arts of the target culture

1 2 3 4 5 Demonstrate understanding of how culture is embedded in the use of target language

1 2 3 4 5 Identify major similarities and differences in social practices between their own culture and the target culture

1 2 3 4 5 Identify the ways the native and target cultures affect or influence each other

1 2 3 4 5 Understand the bi-directional nature of cultural sharing

List here any additional learning outcome(s) you would suggest for cultural understanding:

IV. Identifying assessment tools: Check all assessment instruments you think could be adopted in order to measure the identified students' learning outcomes. For example, if you think the use of an available oral proficiency test could be used to measure the target students' listening and speaking skills, make check-marks as follows.

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Culture
Available Oral Proficiency interview (i.e., ACTFL OPI test)			NA	NA	
Available Simulated Oral Proficiency Interview test (SOPI)			NA	NA	
Faculty-made oral achievement test embedded in the final exam			NA	NA	
Write a report on a topic of interest and present it in front of an audience	NA		NA		
Write a short skit and perform it in front of an audience	NA		NA		
Faculty-made paper-and-pencil achievement test embedded in the final exam		NA			

Faculty-made computer-assisted achievement test		NA			
Available paper-and-pencil proficiency test (Specify _____)		NA			NA
Available computer-assisted proficiency test (Specify _____)		NA			NA
Self-assessment questionnaire (asking students to evaluate their own knowledge and skills)					
Portfolio assessment	NA				
Other instrument (specify)					
Other instrument (specify)					

Which of the following statements apply to you?

- I am a certified OPI tester.
- I was a certified OPI tester (certification expired in _____)
- I have developed or used a proficiency test that may be useful for a two-year

Hawaiian/second language program evaluation (explain _____)

V. Identifying assessment procedures: In conducting assessment using the instruments of your choice, which of the following procedures would be desirable? (Mark only one choice for each question)

1. When should the assessment be conducted?

- At the end of the fourth semester course (e.g., Spanish 202)
- At the end of the second AND fourth semester courses (e.g., Spanish 102 and 202)
- Other. Explain: _____

2. How often should we assess?

- Every semester
- Every year
- Every two-years

Other: Explain _____

3. Who should be assessed?

All target students in all languages

All target students in a few languages from each department

A randomly selected "manageable number" of target students in all languages

A randomly selected "manageable number" of target students in a few languages from each department

Other: Explain _____

4. Who should do the assessment?

All faculty members as part of their work

One faculty member from each department designated as an assessment coordinator with a possible course release

Two faculty members from each department designated as assessment coordinators with a possible course release

External evaluators hired from outside campus

Other: _____

Thank you for answering all the questions!!!