

## A Globalised Writing-Across-the-Curriculum- Project (Empowered by Web 2.0)



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## The discrepancy

- General English language input may not be able to cater for the needs of students for their own discipline
- Course instructors were not trained to assess / give feedback on students' English proficiency
- Many students had difficulty doing as well in academic studies as their abilities suggested they should be able to do (Bruffee, 2008)



## The Need for a Writing-Across-the-Curriculum (WAC) Programme

- Many deans and programme leaders realised that good grammar and spelling skills alone are not enough to help students to communicate in technical content. (Shapiro, 1991)
- The demand for WAC programmes began to rise in the US in 1970s (Thaiss, 1998).
- Learning English through content has been regarded as a central concern in second language acquisition (Mohan, 1986).
- "Learning to write / writing to learn" is still a popular slogan for WAC programmes (Thaiss, 1998) .

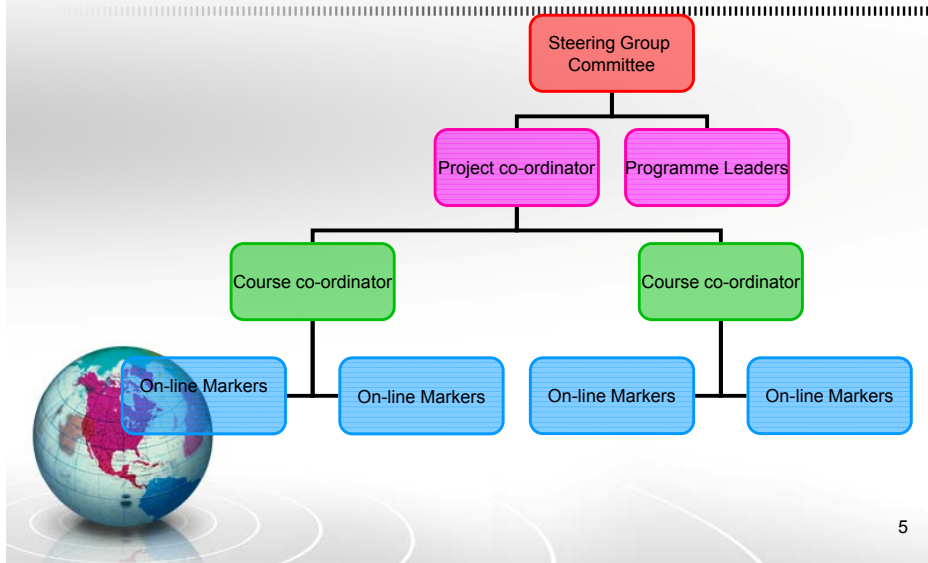


## The Language Companion Course (LCC)

- A WAC programme, empowered by Web 2.0 was introduced to assist students to
  - write accurately and coherently and to correct their own errors in the assignments
  - improve their English writing ability within their own subject discipline and to enhance their motivation in writing
  - develop autonomy in learning English
- Students learn to write and write to learn

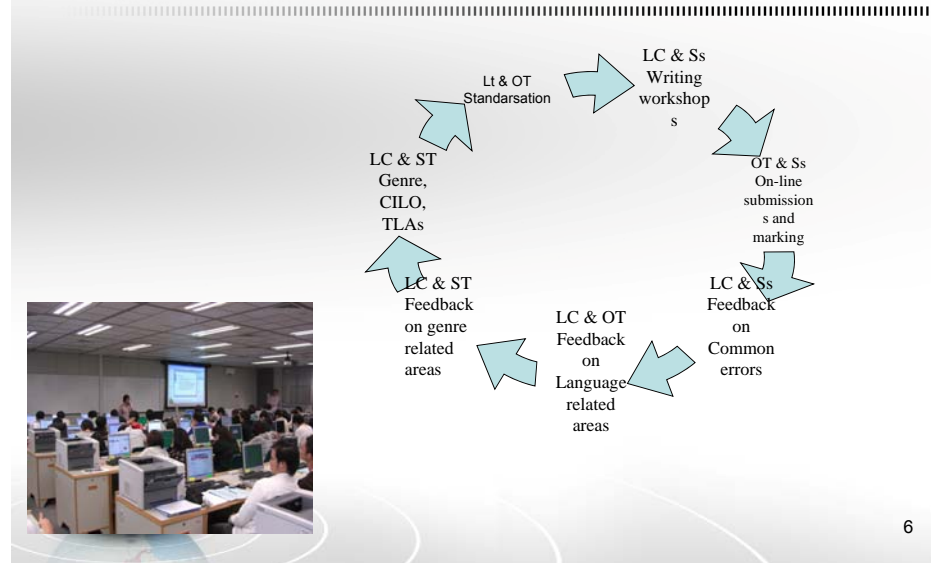


# Structure:



# The workflow

Key: LC- LCC co-ordinator  
Ss- Students  
OT- on-line tutors  
ST- Subject teacher



# The Schedule

Date	Students	Language Tutors
Sept-23-2008	Start drafting assignment.	Open the Blog.
Sept-25-2008 (2345) (First Submission Deadline)	Post first draft of assignment.	
Sept-25-2008 (2345) -- Sept-29-2008 (2345) (First Feedback Deadline)		Comment on first draft.
Sept-29-2008 (2345)	Check the blog for feedback. Start drafting second draft.	
Sept-30-2008 (2345) (Second Submission Deadline)	Post second draft of assignment.	
Sept-30-2008 (2345) -- Oct -3- 2008 (2345) (Second Feedback Deadline)		Comment on second draft.
Oct -3- 2008 (2345)	Check the blog for feedback. Start writing final version.	Create Assignment Drop Box.
Oct -6 2008 (2345) (Assignment Deadline)	Submit final version to assignment drop box.	
Oct -6 2008 (2345) -- Oct 10-2008		Collect and grade the final version.

72-hour turn around

72-hour turn around

A globe icon is positioned to the left of the table.

# The Development of a Comment Bank

Levels	No. of items on the Comment Bank (Pilot 1)	No. of items on the Comment Bank (Pilot 2)	No. of items on the Comment Bank (Pilot 3)	No. of items on the Comment Bank (Pilot 4)	No. of items on the Comment Bank (Pilot 5)
Word	9	17	18	34	36
Clause	17	31	32	15	15
Paragraph	0	9	14	14	14
Academic Style	1	2	2	13	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>78</b>

A globe icon is positioned to the left of the table.

# The Present Comment Bank

**Comment Bank**

Please Select

**Word Level** [top](#)

- Article missing [11] [Copy](#)
- Article unnecessary [2] [Copy](#)
- Article - wrong article [3] [Copy](#)
- Noun needed - Part of speech incorrect [4] [Copy](#)
- Noun - gerund [5] [Copy](#)
- Noun - uncountable [6] [Copy](#)
- Noun - countable [7] [Copy](#)
- Pronoun Missing [8] [Copy](#)
- Pronoun - agreement between demonstrative pronouns and nouns [9] [Copy](#)
- Pronoun - wrong use [10] [Copy](#)
- Pronoun - unclear reference [11] [Copy](#)
- Adjective needed - Part of speech incorrect [12] [Copy](#)
- Adjective Comparative / Superlative form [13] [Copy](#)
- Adverb needed - Part of speech incorrect [14] [Copy](#)
- Verb needed - Part of speech incorrect [15] [Copy](#)
- Verb - subject-verb agreement [16] [Copy](#)
- Verb - Modal missing [17] [Copy](#)
- Verb - Modal wrong use [18] [Copy](#)

http://lc.xsy.cityu.edu.hk/edolcc/200809/LC/C/CommentBank.asp

# Students posting their drafts on the blog

My CityU Teaching & Learning Content Collectio

Courses > Train 698 > **Assignment 1 (Blog)**

**Assignment 1 (Blog)** (permalink)

Post on January 12 2009 (permalink) - edit | history | delete |  
Created on Wednesday, 01/14/2009 10:47 AM by Student 001(b\_student001)  
 Updated on Monday, 01/12/2009 10:09 AM by Student 001(b\_student001)

**Background of Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited & Byford London**

**Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited**

Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited is company which is one of the subsidiaries of MacHan Holding Inc. (B.V.I.), concentrating in wholesale trade, retailing and product promotions it was successfully granted a license from Byford, which is a famous brand name of manswear supplying such items as sleepwear, underwear, shirts and so on. Luckily, Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited has gained high growing and market share through the operation of Byford in China. It have successfully extended the appeal of Byford brand to Mainland China, targeting men aged 28-50 with high incomes. This shows that Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited is a successful company. it can take advantage of the opportunity to grant Byford this license and expand my business.

**Byford London**

Byford is a recognized globally monowear brand with roots in England. Their products include ranges of socks, sleepwear, underwear, shirts and accessories. It cooperated with Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited in 1989. In the late 1990's the Byford brand penetrating the Asian market. Today, Byford's footprints have run over over twenty licensed territories throughout Europe, North America, Asia and Middle East. China is no exception isn't it? In China, Byford products are widely

**Actions**  
[new entry](#)  
[print \(w/ comments\)](#)

**Filters**  
 Show   
 by

**January 2009**

s	m	t	w	t	f	s
			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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**Archives**  
[January 2009 \(1\)](#)

**Recent Posts**  
[Post on January 12 2009](#)

**Create**

**Tools**

# Inserting comments on the blog

My CityU Teaching & Learning Content Collectio

Courses > Train 700 > **Assignment 1 (Blog)**

**Assignment 1 (Blog)** (permalink)

Post on January 12 2009 (User 700(b\_user700)) (permalink) - edit | history | delete |  
Created on Monday, 02/16/2009 2:35 PM by User 700(b\_user700)  
 Updated on Monday, 02/16/2009 3:50 PM by User 700(b\_user700)

**Background of Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited & Byford London**

**Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited**

Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited is [91]company which is one of the subsidiaries of MacHan Holding Inc. (B.V.I.), concentrating in [35]wholesale trade, retailing and product [36] It was successfully granted a license from Byford, which is a famous brand name of [36] supplying such items as sleepwear, underwear, shirts and so on. Luckily, Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited has gained high [94]and market share through the operation of Byford in China. It have [17] successfully extended the appeal of Byford brand to Mainland China, targeting men aged 28-50 with high incomes. This shows that Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited is a successful company. It [44] can take advantage of the opportunity to grant Byford this license and expand [11] business.

**Byford London**

Byford is a [51] recognized globally [51] menswear brand with roots in England. Their products include ranges of socks, sleepwear, underwear, shirts and accessories. It cooperated with Asia Merchandising (H.K.) Limited in 1989. In the late 1990's the Byford brand [28] the Asian market. Today, Byford's footprints have run over [78]over twenty licensed territories throughout Europe, North America, Asia and Middle East; China is no exception [74]? In China, Byford products are widely available at more than 170 sales points that include premium department stores and high-end independent retail stores. Now, Byford aiming [27] to expand its business in areas such as setting up more retailing [13] shops

**Actions**  
[new entry](#)  
[print \(w/ comments\)](#)

**Filters**  
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**February 2009**

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**Archives**  
[February 2009 \(1\)](#)  
[January 2009 \(1\)](#)

**Recent Posts**  
[Post on January 12 2009 \(User 700\(b\\_user700\)\)](#)  
[Post on January 12 2009](#)

**Tools**

# Qualitative feedback

There are still quite a lot of problems in passive constructions. Keep it up for the final version.

The student is able to	Not Evident	Emerging	Consolidating	Mastery
1. use appropriate sections for the progress report				√
2. develop each section fully			√	
3. organize different sections appropriately			√	
4. Use appropriate verb tense in different sections of the progress report		√		
5. express ideas concisely		√		
6. adopt proper academic style			√	



### Explanation notes

#### Word Level

<b>Comment</b>	Article missing
<b>Explanation</b>	A singular countable noun MUST have an article ( a/an or the ) or a similar modifier ( my, his etc )
<b>Examples of Wrong Use</b>	Fungus often grows on a host plant. Host plant loses some of its nutrients. Please open window for me.
<b>Correct Use</b>	<u>A</u> fungus often grows on a host plant. <u>The</u> host plant loses some of its nutrients. Please open <u>this</u> window for me. I can't reach it.
<b>External Links</b>	<a href="http://www.iei.uiuc.edu/structure/Structure1/grammar_articles.html">http://www.iei.uiuc.edu/structure/Structure1/grammar_articles.html</a> <a href="http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/determiners/determiners.htm#articles">http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/determiners/determiners.htm#articles</a> <a href="http://www.sussex.ac.uk/languages/1-6-9-7-4.html">http://www.sussex.ac.uk/languages/1-6-9-7-4.html</a>

Preposition - wrong use - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

<http://c.xsy.cityu.edu.hk/edolcc/200902/LCC/Com>

#### Word Level

<b>Comment</b>	Preposition - wrong use
<b>Explanation</b>	This is the wrong preposition. Try again.
<b>Examples of Wrong Use</b>	I have to finish this work <u>untill</u> tomorrow. I look forward to giving feedback <u>to</u> your assignment.
<b>Correct Use</b>	I have to finish this work <u>by</u> tomorrow. I look forward to giving feedback <u>on</u> your assignment.
<b>External Links</b>	<a href="http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/594/01/">http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/594/01/</a> <a href="http://grammar.uoregon.edu/prepositions/prepositions.html">http://grammar.uoregon.edu/prepositions/prepositions.html</a> <a href="http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/prepositions.htm">http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/prepositions.htm</a>

Grammar links

## Findings (1): The usefulness of the Grammar Links (BCH)

Grammar links	Usage rate
Word choice	100%
Preposition	63%
Countable / uncountable nouns	56%
Articles	44%



## Students' feedback on Grammar links (BCH)

- “The collocation website is the most useful for me because it teaches me how to use compound words which I have never learned before.”
- “The on-line dictionary is most useful for me because the explanation of words is very clear, including an illustrative sentence, forms in singular and plural and so on.”



## Findings (2): The Usefulness of writing workshops (FB)

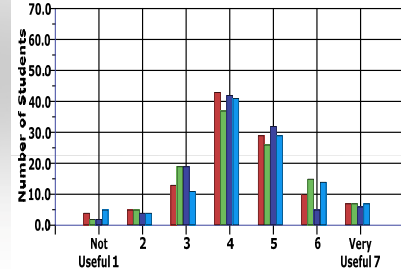
Questions	Total
Q1 ) This workshop is useful	5.3
Q2 ) The instructor is well prepared	5.8
Q3) I would like to know more about writing skills after attending the workshop.	5.8
Return rate ( N= 111)	97%

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree



## Findings (3): The Usefulness of LCC (FB)

FB2500 Student Feedback on LCC Usefulness (N=111)



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean
Comment Bank Explanations	4	5	13	43	29	10	7	4.31
Grammar Links	2	5	19	37	26	15	7	4.38
Marker's Comments	2	4	19	42	32	5	6	4.21
Overall Usefulness of LCC	5	4	11	41	29	14	7	4.4



## Findings (4): Differences in Submission Rates

Courses	Submission rate	Language mark assigned
FB2500 08-09 Sem A	99%	10%
EE3003 08-09 Sem A 08-09 Sem B	100% 100%	10% 10%
AIS 08-09 Sem A – assignment 1 assignment 2	80% 49%	0



## Findings (5): Common errors- A case study of BCH students

Top 10 Common errors	A1 (Summary)	A2 (Argumentation)	A3 (Comments)	A4 (Exposition)	A5 (Exposition)	A6 (Argumentation)
1	Singular / Plural	Singular / Plural	Article	Delete this	Word choice	Singular / Plural
2	Article	Article	Singular / Plural	Subject-Verb agreement	Singular / Plural	Word choice
3	Delete this	Word choice	Preposition	Word choice	Delete this	Delete this
4	Word choice	Delete this	Delete this	Preposition	Article	Tense shift
5	Part of Speech	Preposition	part of Speech	Article	Preposition	Preposition
6	Subject-Verb agreement	Subject-Verb agreement	Spelling	Singular / Plural	Punctuation	Article
7	Spelling	Part of Speech	Word choice	Punctuation	Part of Speech	Coherence
8	Verb form	Sentence fragment	Sentence fragment	Passive voice	Spelling	Subject-Verb agreement
9	Preposition	Missing Be	Subject-verb agreement	Pronouns	Subject-Verb agreement	Part of Speech
10	New Sentence	Verb form	Verb form	Spelling	Passive voice	Punctuation



## Common errors identified in 6 BCH assignments

- Singular / plural
- Article
- Word choice
- Subject-verb agreement
- Preposition



## Findings (6): Improvement in performance- A case study of EE 3003

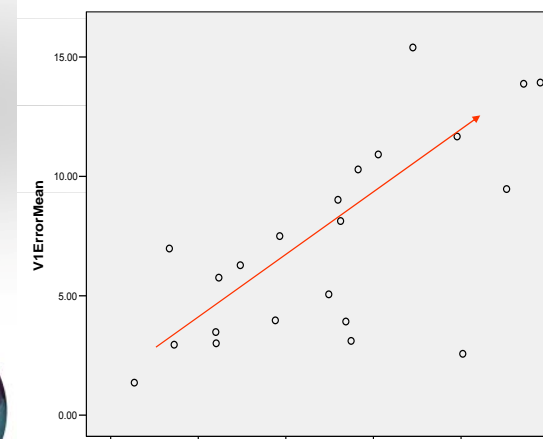
### A) Descriptive data:

	A1 V1 (N=52)	A1 V 2 (N=22)
Total number of errors	2233	858
Total number of words	38043	19389
Min error mean	0.77	0.54
Max error mean	18.05	9.81
Errors per 100 words ( $\Sigma$ mean)	5.87	4.425



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## B) Correlation of Versions 1 & 2



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## C) Differences in performance in Version 1: (between groups)

Group	N	Mean	Sig
1 (1 submission)	30	6.95	0.8
2 (2 submissions)	22	7.21	(n.s.)



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## D) Significant Improvement in Draft 2

(Within group)

	N	Mean	Correlation		Paired-sample T-test	
			(r.)	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Version 1	22	7.21	.68	0.001	3.388	0.03 (P<0.05)
Version 2	22	5.02				



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### E) Differences in performance in Version 2: (between groups)

Group	N	Mean	Sig
1 (1 submission)	30	6.95	0.05
2 (2 submissions)	22	5.02	



### Significance of findings:

1. Students are ready to use the grammar links– an initiation into independent learning
2. The LCC is effective in helping students to improve their performance in the writing of their own discipline
  - a) Students made significantly fewer errors in version 2 than in version 1.
  - b) Students who submitted twice made significantly fewer errors than their peers who submitted once only.
3. The LCC provides a suitable context for integrating writing input and practice with content-based instruction.



### Forward looking:

- Developing a discussion forum to facilitate peer review and critical thinking and increase communication among tutors and students.
- Setting up folders of model essays to encourage modeling.
- Providing quantitative feedback on common errors for individual students.



THANK YOU!

### References:

1. Mohan, B. A (1986). Language and content. Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.
2. Shapiro, A. (1991). WAC and engineering, or Why Engineers Can't Write. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (42nd , Boston MA, March 21-23, 1991)
3. Thaiss C (1998). The Harcourt Brace Guide to Writing Across the Curriculum. Florida: Harcourt Brace & Co.

