

Project Title : Developing and promoting digital literacies for effective English communication: The Multimodal Online Digital Literacy Lab (MODLL)

Leading University : The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Participating UGC-funded University(ies) : The University of Hong Kong

Project Leader(s) : Ms Jessica CHAN, Lecturer, Center for Language Education, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Summary of Proposal

This project aims to create an environment, opportunities and resources for both teachers and learners of English to develop digital and English communication skills. By directly connecting an HKUST common core course, an HKU experiential learning programme, and online and physical digital literacies labs, we will create new opportunities that will enable students to: (1) learn digital communication skills and (2) become more critically aware of their English language development. We will do this by providing students with both theory and authentic experiences, by promoting reflective learning through digital media production and through developing best assessment practices for digital literacies.

A project such as this will (1) allow learners to prepare for their future, literate lives in a digitally mediated world; (2) match learners' literacy practices in out-of-class environments; and (3) engage and empower learners to participate in language and literacy instruction. Current research suggests that by empowering students with the abilities to create digital media through authentic tasks, we will enable them to engage with the target language (English), create opportunities to reflect on language development for professional and academic communicative purposes.

Summary of Final Report

This project has created an environment, opportunities and resources for both teachers and learners of English to develop digital and English communication skills. By directly connecting an HKUST common core course, HKU elective courses, and online and

physical digital literacies labs, new opportunities have been created that will enable students to: (1) learn digital communication skills, and (2) become more critically aware of their English language development. This has been achieved by providing students with both theory and authentic experiences, by promoting reflective learning through digital media production and through developing best assessment practices for digital literacies.

A project such as this will (1) allow learners to prepare for their future, literate lives in a digitally mediated world, (2) match learners' literacy practices in out-of-class environments, and (3) engage and empower learners to participate in language and literacy instruction. Current research suggests that by empowering students with the abilities to create digital media through authentic tasks, students are enabled to engage with the target language (English), raising their awareness of digital communicative competencies in the process, while creating opportunities for them to reflect on language development for professional and academic communicative purposes.

This project has provided much inspiration for continued development of digital literacy training at both HKUST and HKU respectively. Beyond this and most valuable of all, what has been achieved has created the perfect climate for ongoing inter-institutional collaboration. This includes the continuation of a podcast dedicated to sharing knowledge and best practices for teaching in the higher education sector, the influence of HKU's experience in cultivating opportunities for student partnership and experiential learning through digital storytelling on curriculum and pedagogic design at HKUST and Poly U, as well as extracurricular language learning activities in support of a drive to improve extended curriculum programmes in higher education.