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Self-Access Centers: Maximizing Learners' Access to Center Resources

By

Benjamin L. McMurry

A master's project submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Linguistics and the English Language

Brigham Young University

August 2005

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Of a master's project submitted by

Benjamin L. McMurry

This project has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by a majority vote has been found satisfactory.

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of this candidate's graduate committee, I have read the project of Benjamin L. McMurry in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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ABSTRACT

Self-Access Centers: Maximizing Learners' Access to Center Resources

Benjamin L. McMurry

Department of Linguistics and English Language

Master of Arts

The Self-Access Study Center (SASC) at Brigham Young University's English Language Center (ELC) is a self-access lab where students can work independently to improve their language skills. Although some students have discovered how to use the SASC effectively, the majority of them appear to be unaware of the resources available in the center. Their trips to the SASC end up becoming more like a cyber cafe situation, where friends send email and chat online. If the SASC is used merely as a computer lab, then students are not using the resources available to fine-tune their English skills.

The current project addresses two points. First, in an effort to provide on-going support for students and teachers, a Web site and database were created to provide users with information regarding materials available in the SASC at Brigham Young University's English Language Center. Second, a SASC orientation for both students and teachers at the ELC was implemented in September of 2004. It took place in the SASC

and gave students and teachers a brief explanation about how to use the SASC effectively.

ELC students later completed a survey as means of gathering feedback regarding the use of the SASC. The survey data showed that the students felt the website was very helpful and that the orientation had a strong influence on how students used the SASC. A analysis of the data showed that students tended to be more autonomous as a result of the SASC Orientation. The results from the 2004 survey, with regards to the materials that students reported using, indicate that students used the SASC more for individual use and group work than to fulfill assignments or requirements from their teachers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee for their work and support. I would also like to recognize the staff, faculty and students at the ELC and thank them for helping me accomplish my goals. Finally, none of this would have been possible without my sweet wife. Thank you.

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Section 1: Introduction

A few times each week, Juan Lopez stops by the self-access Study Center (SASC). His teacher has told him to visit the SASC once each week to practice his pronunciation in English. Hwa Jin Lee goes to the SASC because she was told by her teachers to go twice each week and do some extra studying about passive voice. Both students enter the SASC, drop their book bags at the table, pull up a chair and sit. They fumble through a collection of handouts that their teachers have given them, listing a variety of materials available in the center that may be helpful for pronunciation work and grammar practice. Juan Lopez sees that the book “Pronunciation Pairs” is the only item listed on the paper his teacher gave him. He has already done every exercise in that book this semester and wants to do something different. Hwa Jin finds that the computer program “Focus on Grammar” is the only resource listed on her class syllabus.

After a few minutes pass, both students look up at the tutorial desk hoping to locate a lab attendant who is not too busy to help them. Unfortunately, there is a long line of students waiting for help. Juan and Hwa Jin look in the computer lab for other lab attendants, desperate to find someone who can show them other options available to practice the skill they wish to improve. Once again the students find that no lab attendant is available.

Juan decides to check his email, and Hwa Jin decides to use a computer to send instant messages to her friends. Thirty minutes later, Juan goes home. Hopefully, his thirty minutes in the lab will be sufficient to please the teacher. Hwa Jin remains in the lab in hopes that a lab attendant becomes available. She is uncertain how long she may have to wait. After waiting for another 20 minutes, she soon leaves for home as well.

As a lab attendant in the SASC, I have observed many students who have experienced similar frustrations as they use it to improve their English skills. How many times are students in other intensive English programs that have self-access centers repeating these scenarios? The SASC is the self-access lab where students can work independently to improve their language skills. Although some students make active use of the materials and computers available in the center, many students appear to be unaware of the resources available in the center. Their trips to the SASC end up becoming more like a cyber cafe situation, where friends send email and chat online. If the SASC is used merely as a computer lab, then students are not using the resources available to fine-tune their English skills.

Although language program administrators have focused on the use of technology to promote language learning, key questions still remain. Cotterall and Reinders (2003) analyzed the use of the self-access center at the University of Victoria in Wellington New Zealand. From the data collected they give four suggestions for improving student use of the center.

1. Self-access center administrators should explore learners' beliefs.
2. Students need an effective initial orientation to the self-access center.
3. Administrators should provide on-going support to students.
4. There should be more links between the self-access centers and the classroom

My experience working in the SASC made me ask questions as to how the center could be more effective. After reviewing the research by Cotterall and Reinders (2003), two of their suggestions led me to specific research questions. How can student and teacher orientations promote the use of the SASC? Do students who participate in this orientation make more active use of the autonomous learning activities in the SASC?

How can an organized database of available materials and resources help promote student use of the SASC?

Section 2: Review of the Literature

Defining Autonomy

In a plenary address, Nunan (2000) said that autonomy implies a capacity to exercise control over one's own learning. Autonomous learners should be able to determine the general focus of their learning, take an active role in the management of the learning process and have freedom of choice with regards to learning resources and activities. Benson and Voller (1997) seem to agree with Nunan. They claim that autonomy is taking charge of one's own education and learning. Within this idea of autonomy is the concept of "self access." Many times in the literature, autonomy is also referred to as "independent learning." For example, in Figure 1, Jones (1998) identifies independent learning as being a continuum. Class work and homework are learning activities that require the least amount of independence on the part of the learner. He puts self-access, teacher-led autonomy, and teach-yourself autonomy in the middle of the spectrum. Full autonomy and naturalistic immersion require the most amount of learner independence.

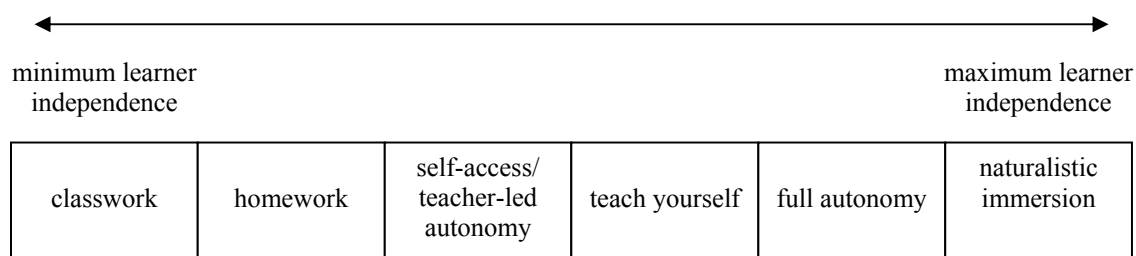


Figure 1. Jones' figure explaining the scope of his study. (Jones, 1998, p. 379)

Nunan (2000) also argues that autonomy is not an all-or-nothing concept, but rather a term in which there can be various degrees evidenced. In order to better understand how

the concept of autonomy is viewed in the literature, varying degrees and the types of autonomy will be investigated.

Jones (1998) places self-access learning between homework and teaching-yourself autonomy. One important question is how self-access truly fits in. Not many studies research naturalistic immersion in terms of autonomy. Even fewer (if any) include homework and class work as integral aspects of autonomous learning. Homework and class work leave students with little freedom. Assignments are fairly non-negotiable. With homework, students can choose when to do it. With class work, students can only decide if they are going to do it. Most of the literature reviewed by the researcher addressed self-access, teacher-led autonomy, self-instruction, and full autonomy as essential components of autonomous learning. However, these terms were often used interchangeably or at least differently. Self-access proved to be a broader term than portrayed in Jones' graphic. The purpose of self-access centers is to provide students with more than just a place to work on homework.

Teacher-Led Autonomy. Teacher-led autonomy is autonomous learning activities and strategies that are provoked by teacher intervention (Jones, 1998). This type of autonomy is usually invoked in a classroom atmosphere. The teacher might teach students skills to help them become more fully autonomous, but will also require students to complete a corresponding independent activity. This is the kind of autonomy that we see take place in intensive English programs. Teachers give homework, but also try to help students find other activities that will help them learn on their own. Self-access centers can play an important role in this type of autonomy because they provide a location and the materials necessary for students to follow their teachers suggestion of finding other materials to learn on their own.

Teach-yourself. Jones (1998) defines this approach of autonomous learning as self-instruction guided by a syllabus or course that is part of a purchased package that includes books, CDs, and videos to help learn language. Bookstores and other retail stores seem to always have books and audio packages that promise the buyer success in language learning. After examining several of these programs, Roberts (1995) found that many courses are overflowing with older, less eclectic approaches to language learning.

Rybak (1983) and Reeves (1993) both note that there is a high level of attrition in teach-yourself instruction. Rybak (1983) attributes this dropout rate to the lack of social contact and peer support. However, in a phase of her study, she reduced the attrition by providing social interaction through help-lines and support groups. self-access centers can be the place where this social interaction happens. Support from other students and additional materials would help lower the rate of attrition.

Not only can the centers provide social interaction, but the benefits of such learning are astounding. Reeves (1993) identified the links between teach-yourself packages and language learning success. In a study, he compared a teach-yourself program and a classroom that was using the same materials. Interestingly, he found that the teach-yourself students produced higher gains in proficiency than those in the classroom setting did.

Full autonomy. Dickenson (1995) defines full autonomy as the individual instruction based on a syllabus or course designed by the learner. This means that the learner is not part of any institution nor is there an instructor who guides the learner. The fully autonomous learner prepares materials specific to his needs. The learner is completely responsible for organizing a syllabus and selecting the content to be studied. At this level of autonomy, learners really only need access to materials. These types of

learners may use materials produced for institutionalized courses, but they themselves are the soul decision makers with regards to the process they use to learn the language. self-access centers can provide these fully autonomous students with resources.

Self-access. Jones (1998) actually lists self-access with teacher-led autonomy. Although, the distinction between the two types of autonomy may appear evident, self-access is often used synonymously with other terms for autonomy. The definition of self-access is by far one of the most disputed. Sheerin (1989) defines self-access as materials selected by learners to reinforce a traditional teacher-led classroom. This definition can be extended to engulf more areas of autonomy. Self-access actually refers to materials, people and other resources that learners can take advantage of to learn independently. These learners may or may not be associated with a traditional class or course. The idea is that self-access allows students to choose the materials and activities for their individual learning experience.

Continuing with this definition, we find that self-access can reach into many types of autonomous learning. In fact, full-autonomy would involve complete self-access. The learners would choose all of their own materials. Further down Jones' (1998) scale, teach-yourself autonomy would also include some self-access. Although students are learning through a program with prescribed materials, these learners may also choose other materials or resources to supplement their learning process. Teacher-led autonomy and homework may also include materials outside of what is provided. From independently seeking a tutor or asking someone a question to using outside materials, self-access reaches deep into all areas of autonomy. Jones' (1998) spectrum could be further adapted to show how self-access stretches across these different types of autonomy. Three important changes can help provide more information. First, self-access

can be removed from the teacher-led autonomy box. It now shows that self-access can be used in various types of autonomy. Self-access is portrayed as a resource to various types of independent learners. Also, the diagram can be divided into two sections. On the left we see types of learner independence that rely on the teacher. The three boxes on the left show three distinct types of student independence. Figure 2 shows these changes.

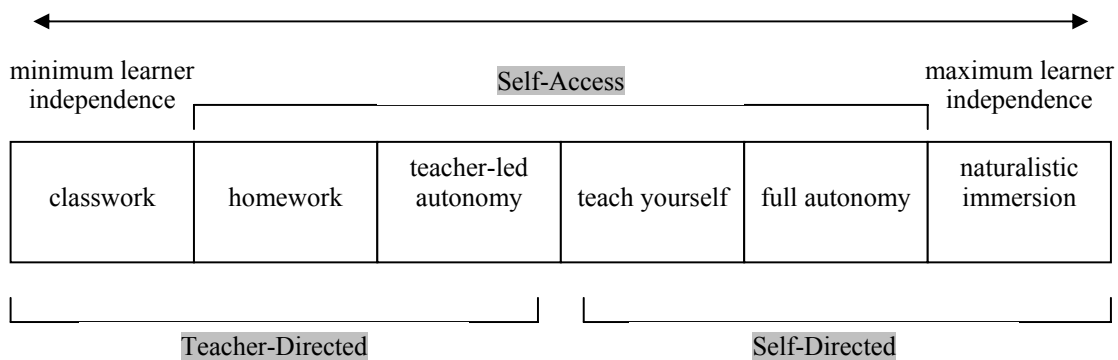


Figure 2. Jones' diagram representing his scope of study with adaptations to show self-access. (Jones, 1998, p. 379)

Promoting Autonomy

Teachers can promote autonomy without creating a teacher-dominated learning process. Sheerin (as cited in Benson & Voller, 1997) points out that teachers have a very important role in helping learners to become more autonomous. Helping teachers to develop the skills to help promote autonomous learning may involve orientations and training.

Thanasoulas (2000) suggests that autonomous learning is achieved when both cognitive and metacognitive strategies become part of the learner. The learner's motivation, attitude, and knowledge of language learning are all essential to developing autonomy. He refers to this as a type of metalanguage.

Cognitive strategies deal primarily with the manipulation of input such as repetition or note-taking. Thanasoulas (2000) suggests that the developing of these skills will contribute to the overall development of autonomy in language learners. Wenden (1998) defines metacognition as the “facts learners acquire about their own cognitive processes as they are applied and used to gain knowledge and acquire skills in varied situations” (p. 34). Metacognitive strategies are not learning strategies in the same way that cognitive strategies are. Metacognitive strategies deal with learning more about how the individual learns. They involve techniques such as self-monitoring and self-evaluation. Anderson (2002) defines metacognition “simply as thinking about thinking.”

Nunan (2000) suggests four ways to incorporate learner autonomy into L2 learning. They include learner strategy training, reflective lessons, learning contracts, and learner diaries. Training learners on how to become more autonomous involves helping students first realize how useful autonomous learning can be and showing them methods for making it effective. Reflective lessons could involve meeting with students who are becoming more independent and discussing the strategies being used. Learning contracts are contracts that may include deadlines that the learner sets in order to help him or her maintain motivation. Learner diaries may include self-reflections or detailed logs describing what the learner did during a learning session. These activities will help students develop cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Orientation and training may help learners to develop autonomous language learning skills.

Using Self-Access centers to Promote Autonomy

In an effort to promote autonomy, many institutions have developed self-access centers. These centers have become increasingly more popular in the last few decades. The first such center was developed by CRAPEL at the University of Nancy in France

(Gremmo & Riley, 1995). Since then, centers have sprung up in locations in the United States, throughout Europe, Asia, and all over the globe. The idea behind these self-access centers is to promote and facilitate autonomous learning. The center may contain books, audio/visual equipment and tutors. The purpose of these centers is to complement teacher instruction. Students can go to these places to do activities which range from class homework to fully autonomous learning of language concepts.

However, for many institutions, autonomous learning is not defined as independent learning. In many more situations a center is in place, but nothing is done to promote autonomy. The center quickly becomes a computer lab or library, but maintains the name claiming that it is a self-access center. In short, we know that there are many self-access centers, but the information we have with regards to their efficacy and functionality is relatively limited.

Cotterall and Reinders (2001) did a study to explore how the self-access center at the University of Victoria in Wellington (VUW) was being used. They also wanted to learn about the students' perceptions of the center. Students at the VUW reported in a survey that 70% of the work they did was work they wanted to do. In addition, they reported one learner felt "that her class work (i.e., work directed by the teacher) 'interrupted my learning cycle in the [center]'" (Cotterall & Reinders, 2001, p. 29). They suggest that the classroom and self-access center should not compete for the attention of learners. The study raises some questions. Although the students do activities that they want to do, are these items chosen by the students or by the teachers?

As mentioned previously, Thanasoulas (2000) suggests that motivation and attitude are also important factors in the development of autonomy. Cotterall and Reinders (2001) found that the attitudes of students at the University of Victoria at

Wellington towards their self-access center were positive. A survey issued to the students showed that 90% of the students found the self-access center to be important to their learning experience. From a standpoint of autonomy, 88% of those that participated said that the center helped them to learn by themselves. Overall, 93% said that “learning to learn English by yourself” is an important objective. Correlation tests and statistics from the survey suggest that those who chose to use the center and had a positive attitude towards the center were the learners at lower levels of proficiency. The numbers also suggest that learners who considered autonomous learning important used the center more often (Cotterall & Reinders, 2001).

The survey also showed an important relationship between the proficiency of the learners and the use of other resources. Some higher proficiency students indicated that they used materials outside of the center while others of high proficiency used the center rather exclusively (Cotterall & Reinders, 2001). The materials used outside of the center were not specifically mentioned.

One problem that these centers encounter is the rather one-sided use of homework and teacher-led autonomous exercises. Effective though these centers may be, full autonomy is usually not promoted in these types of centers. Potentially, the gradual process of becoming fully autonomous is stunted and students usually don't go beyond teacher-fronted work.

The study done at VUW revealed some problems. Approximately 60% of the students reported that it was difficult to find the right materials. Helping students access the materials available may be helpful in promoting worthwhile use of these centers. They also found that the students who received and understood the orientation had little

problem finding appropriate materials, suggesting that learner training in self-access centers would definitely benefit learners.

Recent studies on autonomy have dealt much with self-access centers. Researchers want to determine how and if these centers are indeed promoting autonomy. In many other studies, researchers have tried to determine what makes a person a good language learner. They then try to find a way to transfer these techniques and integrate them into language programs (Gremmo & Riley, 1995). Gremmo and Riley also noticed that in self-directed learning there is a link between language learning and learning-to-learn. They suggest that research should be done with regards to counseling and development of learning-to-learn programs. Metacognition seems to be a clear factor for producing learner autonomy.

Self-Access

Although the definitions of the many facets of autonomy often overlap, self-access is best defined as the materials and resources that learners can use. These materials can be used in autonomous learning environments from full autonomy to homework. self-access centers can be effective in promoting both self-directed and teacher-directed autonomy. Of all the studies done regarding self-access centers, one central theme seems to be prevalent, that of learner training. Cotterall and Reinders (2001) agree with Gremmo and Riley's claim (1995): "The major lesson which has been learnt from resource centres is that if they are to be successful, they must provide some sort of learner training" (p. 157).

There is a tremendous need for more research regarding self-access centers. Cotterall and Reinders (2001) suggest four areas that can help improve the effectiveness of these centers.

1. self-access center administrators should explore learners' beliefs.
2. Students need an effective initial orientation to the self-access center.
3. Administrators should provide on-going support to students.
4. There should be more links between the self-access center and the classroom

To the researcher's knowledge, no research in these areas has been done. Future research should involve learner training programs and their effectiveness in promoting autonomy and overall activity in self-access centers.

In order for self-access centers to be effective in the promotion of autonomy, these centers must be organized in such a way that they provide more than word processing and casual use. The study done by Troy Cox (personal communication, May, 1, 2004), and the more extensive study conducted by Tanner, McMurry, and Allen (2004) have shown that the majority of students who use BYU's SASC are primarily participating in activities such as word processing and general computer use.

Basically, we know that the self-access center in the English Language Center at BYU is not promoting autonomy the way it was intended to do so. We know that many other institutes have paid little or no attention to self-access centers. We need to learn and research what is happening in the SASC and find ways to promote autonomy.

As mentioned earlier, Cotterall and Reinders (2001) suggest that exploring learners' beliefs, orienting them to the available resources, providing on-going support to the students and strengthening the link between the classroom and these centers may help increase the use of the center as a harbor for autonomous students as opposed to a computer lab. Findings regarding the implementation of these suggestions have not been published. If self-access centers are to succeed, studies should be done to verify the

effectiveness of these suggestions. The results will lead to more research and the strengthening of self-access centers and their ability to provide what their name implies.

The current project addresses two of Cotteral and Reinders' (2003) points. First, in an effort to provide on-going support for students and teachers, a Web site and database have been created to provide users with information regarding materials available in the SASC at BYU's English Language Center. Due to the extensive amount of materials in the SASC and the small number of lab attendants, I felt that focusing on this aspect may have the greatest affect on the students. Second, SASC orientations for students and teachers at the ELC were implemented in September of 2004. They took place in the SASC and gave students and teachers a brief explanation about how to use the SASC effectively. The final part of the project involved an evaluation of the Web site and the orientation to determine students' attitudes towards the orientation and the usefulness of the web site. The remaining two suggestions given by Cotteral and Reinders (2003) are interesting to explore, but they are outside the scope of this project could also have been useful in the research.

Section 3: Rationale for the Project

In studies, such as the one done by Cotterall and Reinders (2001) at the University of Wellington, data show that self-access centers are effective but not as effective as they could be. In their study, they found, that teachers and students who use these centers focus more on getting homework done rather than increasing autonomous language learning opportunities for students. Similarly, in an unpublished study done in 1997, Troy Cox found that the SASC at Brigham Young University's (BYU) English Language Center (ELC) was being used primarily as a library and a quiet place to do homework. More recently, Dr. Mark Tanner is conducting research in BYU's SASC as well. As his T.A., I assisted him in this study. Results from an initial survey (Tanner, McMurry & Allen, 2004) showed that the majority of activities that took place in BYU's SASC were homework, word processing and leisure computer use.

Although these activities are acceptable and even encouraged, work needs to be done to encourage students to be more autonomous learners and to not simply use the SASC as a place to complete homework assignments. Cotterall and Reinders (2001) give four recommendations for self-access center managers and language teachers that would help meet these aims: 1) explore the learners' beliefs about self-access language learning (SALL); 2) design a good initial orientation; 3) provide on-going support; and 4) enhance the links between SALL and class activity. My project focuses on two of these areas – providing an initial orientation and on-going support.

In an effort to provide on-going support, I designed a Web page and database to help students find materials that are appropriate for their proficiency level and the language skills they wish to practice. There are also other helpful links to useful Web sites and help sites in case a lab attendant is unavailable.

I developed an orientation to the SASC for students and teachers explained how to use the SASC and provided a brief overview of the materials available. This orientation was first given at the beginning of the Fall semester of 2004. For students, this orientation was part of the orientation given the week before classes began. The students came to the SASC in groups and had a tour and instruction regarding its use. Students learned how to use the Web site and locate materials in the center. The instruction also included directions on how to login and use the computer's basic functions, such as launching applications and logging out.

The teacher orientation occurred during an open-house at the beginning of the semester. In this orientation the teachers received brief basic training on computer use, such as logging on and off, launching applications, and the use of hardware like the CD-Burner and scanner. Teachers also learned to use the Web site to locate materials on the database. The orientation also included a tour to help teachers know where materials were located. No data was collected from the teachers. The object of the orientation was to help them become more familiar with the SASC. The purpose of this project and research was to determine how student orientation and a web database would affect the autonomous activities of the students.

Focusing on these two areas, student orientation and teacher orientation, resulted in students having better opportunities for autonomous language learning rather than just completing homework in the SASC.

Section 4: Project Design

In preparation for the development and evaluation of the project, approval was sought and obtained from BYU's International Review Board (IRB) prior to issuing the survey (See Appendix A).

Database/Web site

The bulk of the project was the development of a web database that teachers and students could use to locate materials in the SASC. After talking with teachers at the ELC, I decided to link all the data to the level and skill area objectives rather than the items themselves. A web interface allowed users to search the database by objective, level, skill area, media and other categories. The web site can be found at <http://www.elc.byu.edu/sasc>.

After discussing the project with a Computers and Humanities (Chum) professor, I also decided to make the database and Web site in such a manner that future Web site administrators and teachers could maintain it with little or no knowledge of web design. This process will help ensure that the database remains current into the indefinite future. Skill area coordinators can edit the objectives on the database and materials can be added to each objective. The database consists of two tables:

Objectives - The objectives for each skill area are listed in this table. These objectives were written by the skill area coordinators and are freely distributed at the ELC. The table includes information about each objective with regard to the level and skill area. (For a list of the objectives at the ELC please refer to Appendix B.) The table also has an additional field with key words that can be used in the search. The last field is comprised of groups of numbers. These numbers refer to ID numbers of materials listed in the materials database.

Materials – This table contains four fields. The first field lists the names of the materials. The next field identifies what type of material it is (i.e., CD-ROM, book, Web site, etc.). The third field indicates the location of the material. The fourth field contains a list of key words that can be used for database queries.

After the database was completed, the next task was to build a search tool that would be accessible via the web. PHP is a general-purpose scripting language that can be embedded in HTML. PHP is especially suited for web development projects. It is an abbreviation for Preprocessing hypertext. It was used to write the code that enables users to effectively search the database. This portal accesses the database which is managed on a MySQL server. MySQL is an open-source database application that runs as a service on a web server. The search tool was ready for users before fall semester 2004 classes began. Figure 3 is a screenshot of the main page of the SASC web site. The column on the left contains the search tool. Users can enter text in the text box in the top left in order to find a material or resource based on key words. Figure 4 shows the results of searching for the key word ‘articles.’ You will notice that the search list identifies the material, its media type and its location. Figure 5 shows a typical output screen with the results of a search for Level 2 Reading objectives. The user can then choose an objective. Upon clicking the chosen objective, the page redraws to show the objective with its accompanying materials. Figure 6 then shows the materials associated with the first listed objective. Not only can the end user search for objectives for a specific level and skill area, but also for all the objectives for a particular level or skill area. Figure 7 shows all the objectives associated with Grammar at the ELC. The user can select an objective and see resources that are related to it. Figure 8 shows all the objectives for Level 3 ELC

students. Like other search results, objectives can be selected and their corresponding materials will be listed.

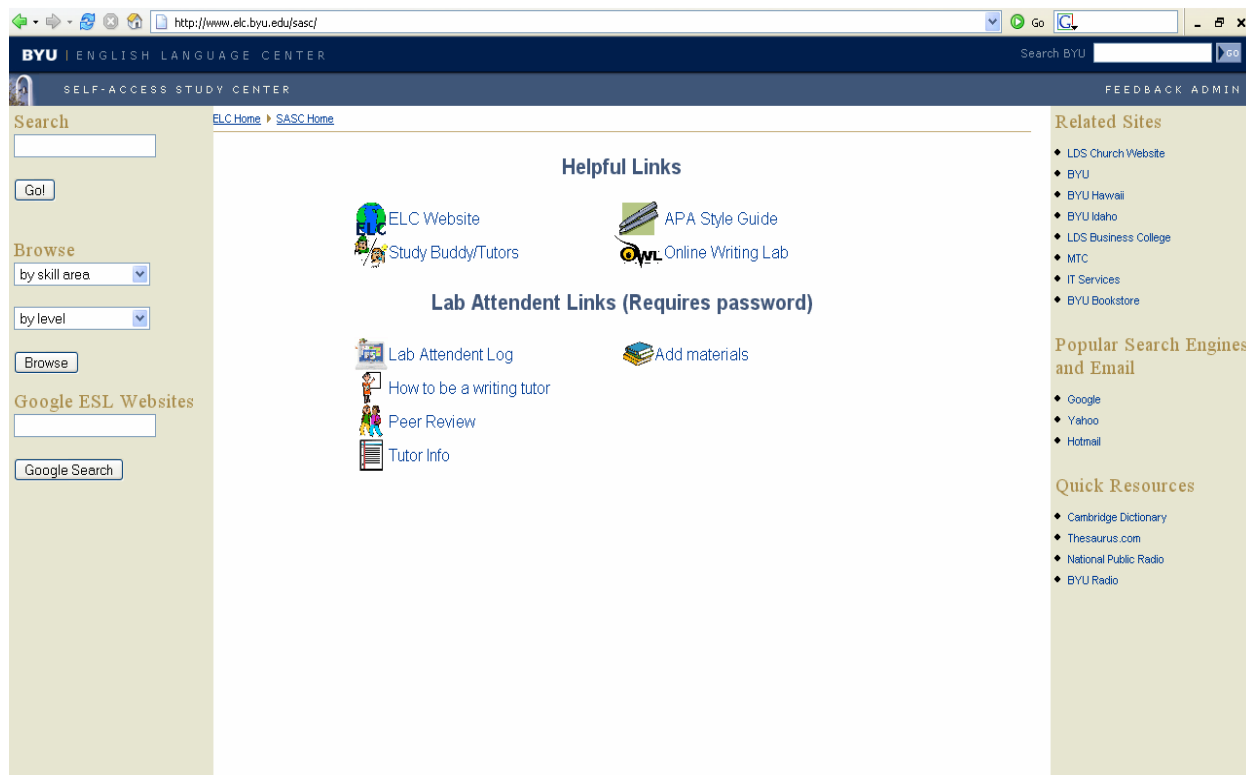


Figure 3. SASC Web Site Main Page

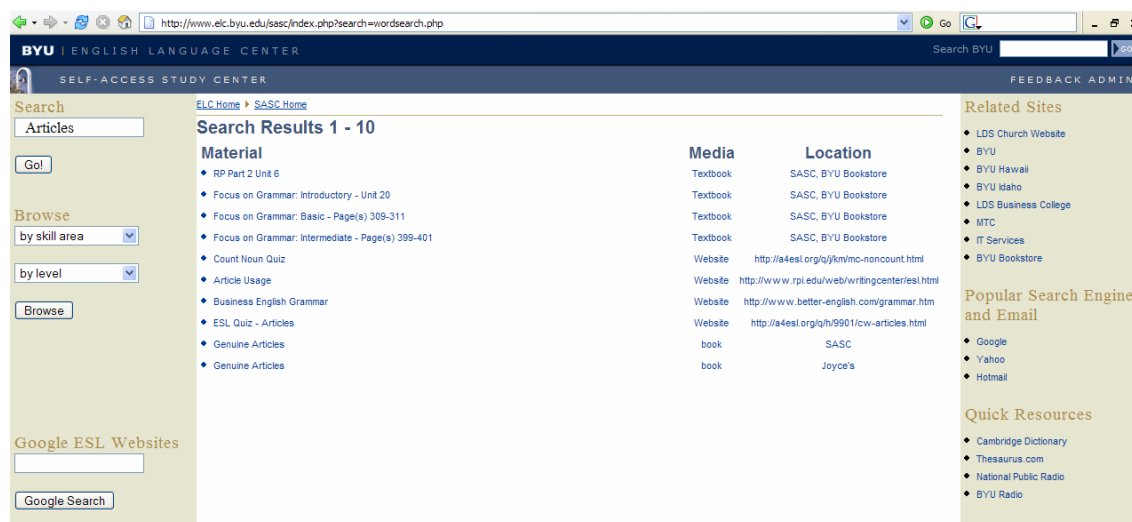


Figure 4. Search for 'Articles'

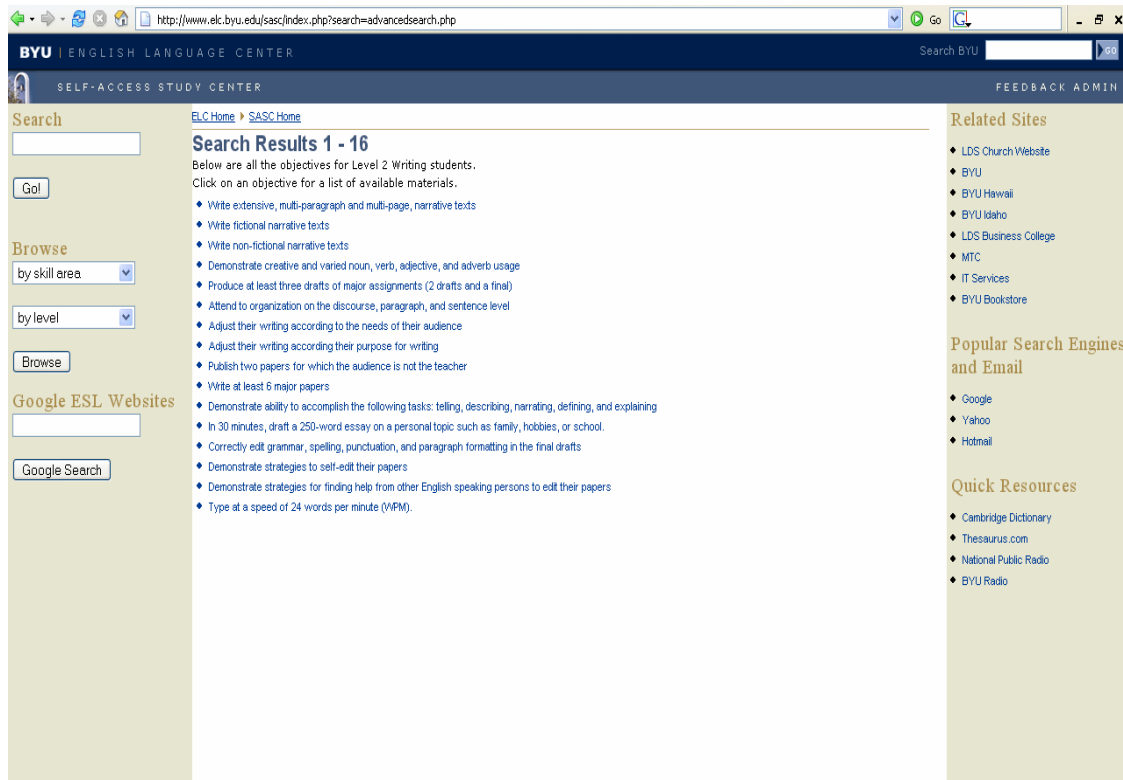


Figure 5. Search Results for Level 2 Reading Objectives

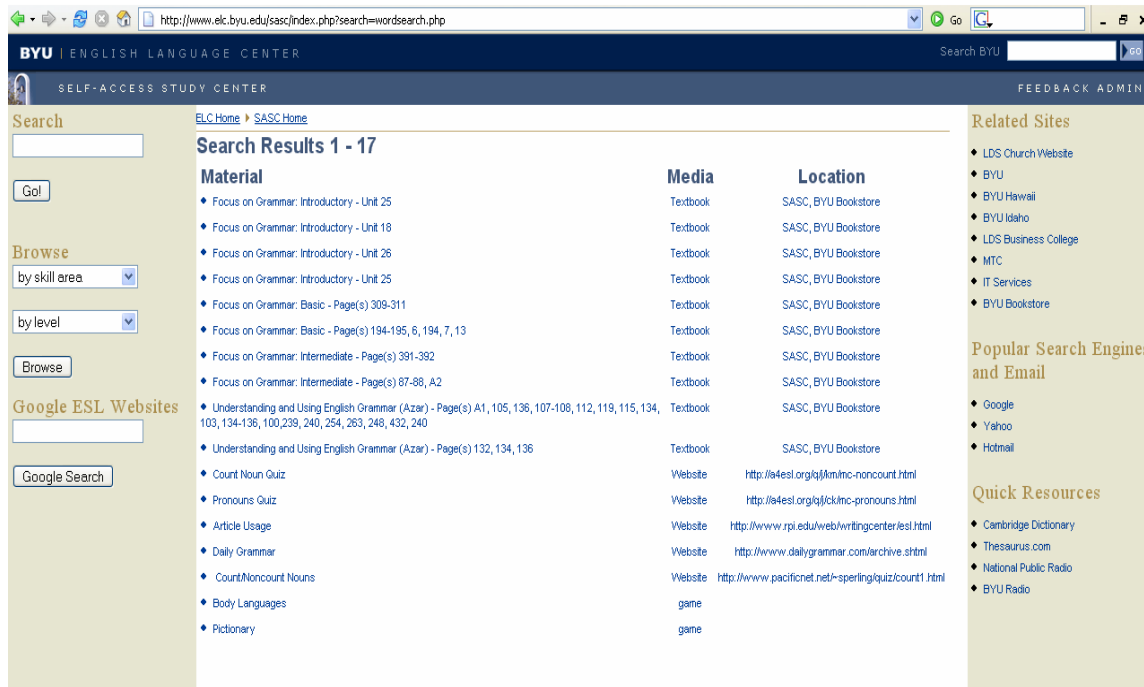


Figure 6. Materials for level 2 Reading Objective: Write narrative essays

BYU | ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER
SELF-ACCESS STUDY CENTER

Search
Go!

Browse
by skill area
by level
Browse

Google ESL Websites
Google Search

ELC Home | SASC Home

Search Results 1 - 122

Below are all the objectives for Grammar students.
Click on an objective for a list of available materials.

Objective	Level
• Imperative sentences (including negative)	1
• "To be" present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions and short answers, usage with "there"	1
• "To be" past tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions and short answers, usage with "there"	1
• Other verb- present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions and short answers	1
• Present progressive tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions and short answers	1
• Use of subjective pronouns	1
• Simple Present, simple Past, and Present Progressive tense questions starting with question words	1
• Prepositions of place: on, next to, from, at, in	1
• Prepositions of time: in, on, at	1
• Adverbs of frequency: often, sometimes, usually, always, ever	1
• Possessive nouns	1
• Introductory Count and non-count nouns	1
• Introductory quantifiers	1
• Articles: a/an, the	1
• Modal Auxiliary: can/can't	1
• This/that and These/those	1
• Descriptive Adjectives (people)	1
• Comparative and superlative adjective forms (people and things)	1
• Ordinal numbers: first to tenth	1
• Objective pronouns	1
• "To be" present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers, usage with "there"	2
• "To be" past tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers, usage with "there"	2

Related Sites
 • LDS Church Website
 • BYU
 • BYU Hawaii
 • BYU Idaho
 • LDS Business College
 • MTC
 • IT Services
 • BYU Bookstore

Popular Search Engines and Email
 • Google
 • Yahoo
 • Hotmail

Quick Resources
 • Cambridge Dictionary
 • Thesaurus.com
 • National Public Radio
 • BYU Radio

Figure 7. Search Results for Grammar Objectives

BYU | ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER
SELF-ACCESS STUDY CENTER

Search
Go!

Browse
by skill area
by level
Browse

Google ESL Websites
Google Search

ELC Home | SASC Home

Search Results 1 - 73

Below are all the objectives for Level 3 students.
Click on an objective for a list of available materials.

Objective	Skill Area
• Write extensive, multi-paragraph and multi-page, narrative texts	Writing
• Write extensive, multi-paragraph and multi-page, expository texts	Writing
• Write traditional 5 paragraph essay	Writing
• Demonstrate basic understanding about how to organize English expository texts	Writing
• Produce at least three drafts of major assignments (2 drafts and a final)	Writing
• Attend to organization on the discourse, paragraph, and sentence level	Writing
• Adjust their writing according to the needs of their audience	Writing
• Adjust their writing according their purpose for writing	Writing
• Publish two papers for which the audience is not the teacher	Writing
• Write at least 5 major papers	Writing
• Demonstrate ability to accomplish the following tasks: summarizing, interpreting, extrapolating, comparing, contrasting, and classifying	Writing
• In 30 minutes, draft a 200-word essay on a TOEFL topic.	Writing
• Correctly edit grammar, spelling, punctuation, and paragraph formatting in the final drafts	Writing
• Demonstrate strategies to self-edit their papers	Writing
• Demonstrate strategies for finding help from other English speaking persons to edit their papers	Writing
• Type at a speed of 26 words per minute (WPM).	Writing
• read the following genres: expository, including comparison and contrast, cause and effect and process, newspaper articles, poetry, folk/fairy tales etc.	Reading
• scanning	Reading
• skimming	Reading
• previewing	Reading
• predicting	Reading
• identifying main ideas	Reading

Related Sites
 • LDS Church Website
 • BYU
 • BYU Hawaii
 • BYU Idaho
 • LDS Business College
 • MTC
 • IT Services
 • BYU Bookstore

Popular Search Engines and Email
 • Google
 • Yahoo
 • Hotmail

Quick Resources
 • Cambridge Dictionary
 • Thesaurus.com
 • National Public Radio
 • BYU Radio

Figure 8. Search Results for Level 3 Objectives

Orientation

Two types of orientation were created as part of this project, a teacher orientation and a student orientation.

Teacher Orientation. At the beginning of fall semester, an open-house was conducted in the SASC. Each semester the teachers gather for a meeting on the Friday following the first week of classes. I decided that this would be an opportune time to provide this orientation. The teachers were invited to visit different areas in the SASC where they could have basic procedures explained to them. Teachers were introduced to the materials and resources and how to make use of them with their students. They were also shown where to find the materials in the SASC. While other lab attendants were doing this, I introduced teachers to the Web site. Every teacher at the ELC saw how to use the database and also received a handout with instructions regarding the use of the site. As mentioned earlier, no data was collected from the teachers because the focus of this research was on students' use of the SASC. The purpose of the teacher orientation was to make teachers aware of what was happening as well as inform them of a way to locate materials for classroom instruction. Figure 6 is a diagram of the SASC and Computer lab. It shows where the various orientations took place.

The materials were all laid out on the tables in the SASC. Lab attendants at each table helped teachers become familiar with the materials by showing them what was available and where to find it. The East side of the computer lab was used to help teachers with basic computer skills. I used the middle section in the computer lab to show the teachers how to navigate the web site. I used a projector and encouraged the teachers to follow along on another computer as I instructed them on how to use the web database.

Student Orientation. Each semester, many new students arrive at the ELC. Each year the Executive Council at the ELC orients the new students to the center the week before classes begin. After this group orientation, an orientation meeting to the SASC was added. Students learned what is available in the SASC and how to use the Web site and database. Figure 9 is a layout of the SASC and Computer Lab at the ELC. Many students are overwhelmed by all the information they are given during the first week here at the ELC. In order to make the students feel comfortable and relaxed, I talked with them very casually and kindly. I asked them questions about where they were from and how long they had been in the United States. After building this rapport, I explained the SASC to them. I reviewed the rules with them and explained the policies regarding material use. With the help of a lab attendant I then demonstrated how to interact with lab attendants to ask for help and check out materials.

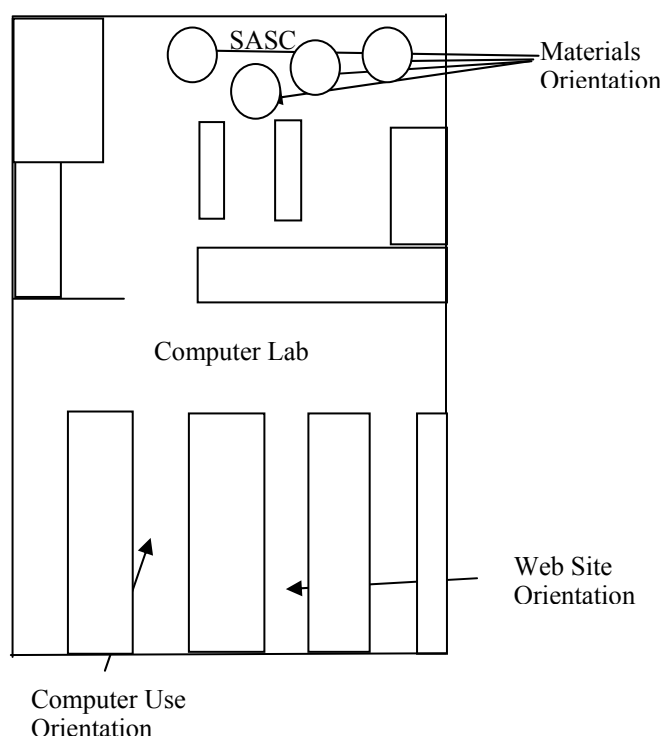


Figure 9. Diagram of SASC and Computer Lab

I later gave them scenarios similar to what they may experience during the semester. These scenarios are similar to the ones mentioned in the introduction. For example, Juan's teacher may commend him on his grammar but encourage him to work on some issues in pronunciation. I explained that Juan could come to the lab and use the Web site to search for materials that might be helpful. I then showed the Website to the students. After this, students were instructed by another lab attendant with regards to computer use. Each student then had the opportunity to log on to the computers for the first time. As each student logged on, an Internet browser automatically launched. The initial page presented to the students was the interface with the Web site. Students could then play with the search tool and experience how it might work as well as ask questions.

Evaluation

After eight weeks of instruction, an evaluation of the orientation and use of the SASC was conducted. Students completed an online survey (Appendix A) which was similar to the one used earlier by Tanner, McMurry and Allen (2004). The survey gathered information about use of the SASC. The information gathered provided evidence about how the initial orientation and database had affected the use of their SASC. These results were then compared with the survey done in November of 2003. Students also informally provided feedback after taking the survey. They expressed how they felt about the SASC and how they used it.

Section 5: Project Development

Database and Web site Construction

The first task I chose to work on was construction of the database. This was rather easy, as I already had an idea of the table design in the database. I created two tables. The first table was created to hold all of the information about the ELC's objectives. Troy Cox emailed me a list of all the ELC objectives (current as of December 2004). The table was made up of five fields. The first field was a distinct ID to aid in the manipulation of the data. The second field contained the actual objectives at the ELC. I made no changes to the objectives unless there were grammatical errors. The third and fourth fields of the table included the corresponding skill area and level of proficiency respectively. The fifth field contained a list of id numbers from the materials table creating a link between objectives and appropriate materials.

The second table contains all of the data with regards to materials available in the lab and on the web. It is made up of three fields. Once again I started the first field as an ID number. The second field contained the name of the material. The third field contained key words and notes to help users locate materials.

The second task, with regards to building the framework, required me to build an interface to the database thereby allowing users to actually use it. In order to have consistency, I downloaded the templates that BYU freely distributes. I actually found that the templates looked very nice and followed the BYU theme, but the HTML code required multiple changes for simple customizations. For example, changing the title required changing the text in more than three different places. In order to lessen the work load, I kept the visual design of the template but modified the HTML in order to make it more customizable. As I worked on creating this front end, I saw a need for creating a

SASC Web site to house the actual Web pages that would search the database and report the results. Luckily, the templates helped with this.

One of the most difficult parts of developing the front end required that I link the web to the database. Not only did the search page have to be linked, but the results page needed to access the database and dynamically display the results. Writing the PHP code to interact with the database and generate dynamic HTML pages took the most time, as I needed to learn how to do this. I had learned some of the skill in classes I had taken. The majority of what I learned I did through web tutorials that are free to the public. Equally challenging, but less time consuming, were my efforts to create yet another Web page that was connected to the database allowing authorized users to add or edit materials.

Orientation Development

Of all the project development, the creation of the orientation was probably the easiest to prepare. Much of the orientation had already been planned in previous years. I had been involved with it for a few years as an employee at the ELC. My challenge was to determine what I could do to make it better. I soon realized that I could easily implement the first half of the project, the Web page, into the orientation. In September of 2004, I introduced the Web interface to new students and provided a small handout (Appendix D) with information on how to use this Web page.

Evaluation Development and Implementation

In order to effectively collect data with regards to SASC usage in a timely manner, I felt that offering the survey online would be most beneficial. However, I found the development of an online survey was more challenging than other parts of the project. After I had formulated the questions, I proceeded to put them on a Web page. I questioned whether or not to put the questions on one page or multiple pages. I decided to

use multiple pages because I felt that it would be more visually effective and less overwhelming.

I had to write each Web page so that the information would be stored when moving to the following questions. Making separate pages and saving the data from each page was difficult, but it allowed the users to take their time and not feel as though the survey was too long. After all the data were entered in the various HTML forms, the final page recorded the data to the database. The use of multiple pages ensured that each participant had to complete the survey in order for it to be recorded in the database. Later, I exported the material to an excel spreadsheet where I could analyze the data.

In order to gather the most participants, I made handouts advertising the survey and spoke with every ELC class held at 1:30 pm. That day, students began taking the survey. I spent many hours in the SASC over the course of two weeks asking students to take the survey. Each participant received candy for completing it. After classes had ended for the semester, I noticed that I had fewer than 80 surveys. In an effort to collect more data, during the students' final exam period in the computer lab, I spent the whole day in the SASC and announced to each student that they could take the survey. At the end of the day we had a total of 124 completed surveys including the ones that were completed earlier.

Section 6: Results

The purpose of this project was to determine how self-access centers can be better organized to increase student use and promote autonomous learning. In order to determine this, I investigated how on-going support through a Web database and an effective initial orientation promote autonomy in self-access centers. The survey was conducted to collect information regarding the use of the SASC.

In November of 2003, approximately 250 students were enrolled at the ELC. Of these students, 127 participated in a survey regarding the use of the SASC. A hard copy was distributed to each student in all of the listening/speaking classes so as not to have any student complete more than one survey. In November of 2004, 124 of the approximate 306 students enrolled in the ELC participated in the second survey collecting data regarding the SASC. The November 2004 study was only made available on-line as a Web survey. Every student was given the opportunity to take the survey. Not only were the students encouraged to take the survey weeks before school ended, but as they finished their final exams they were once again offered the opportunity. These multiple opportunities to complete the survey were provided to ensure that students who rarely visited the SASC or Computer Lab would have the opportunity to participate. In the end, I was surprised that only 41% of the registered students completed the survey.

Feedback from students

After the initial orientation, I talked with students. No formal data collection was done. As students were individually using the web site after the orientation, I sat and talked with some of them in an informal conversation. Most of them seemed eager to use the Web interface to find materials that they could use. Of the few students I conversed with, none seemed negative or uninterested in the web site. While doing the survey, I also

talked with students. Once again no formal data collection occurred. I spoke with more than 20 students. Some of them expressed gratitude for the web site. Many asked what the SASC Web site was. As I told them, some remembered rather quickly, while others were completely confused. The students, in general, seemed to appreciate the SASC and those that worked there. These students had cheerful attitudes. Often, those that participated in the survey were students who spent large amounts of time in the SASC.

Surprisingly, there were many students who seemed very disinterested in taking the survey. They were even rude sometimes and asked why they would even want to take the survey.

Survey Demographics

Languages. When the first survey was done in Fall in 2003, we wanted to see if there were any connections between those who used the SASC and their native languages. Table 1 shows a break down of survey participants by their native languages.

Most of the changes in languages represented in the survey insignificant. However, the number of Japanese students who participated in the 2004 survey doubled, and the number of Chinese and Mongolian students who participated was halved. This was due in part to the change in distribution of languages spoken at the ELC. In Fall 2004, number of Japanese students enrolled greatly increased. This is important, because there may be a connection between the increase of Asian students and increase in autonomous use of the SASC.

New, Returning and Continuing Students. One important part of the data came from the students' status. Students who are new or returning from vacation were required to be at the initial orientation

Table 1

Distribution of Participants by Native Language.

Languages	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Languages	Fall 2003	Fall 2004
Arabic	1	0	Korean	31	25
Armenian	0	1	Mongolian	14	7
Bulgarian	1	1	Polish	1	1
Cantonese	0	1	Portuguese	5	4
Chinese	13	6	Russian	1	1
French	3	1	Spanish	40	46
Italian	1	2	Thai	2	1
Japanese	13	27	Total	126	124

Continuing students did not attend the orientation and therefore were not privy to the same information about the SASC and the Web site. Table 2 shows the status of the students who took the survey in 2004. These data indicate that 86 of the students who participated in this survey should have been at the orientation and therefore should also aware have been aware of the SASC Web site.

Table 2

Distribution of Participants by Student Status

Student Status	Number of Students
New students	73
Returning students	38
Continuing students	13
Total	124

Promoting Autonomy

There are so many factors that can influence student use of the SASC. Students may be more motivated and autonomous without any external influence from teachers.

This is teacher-led autonomy according to Jones (1998). Teachers may be doing

something different because of their participation in an Open-house that helped them become more familiar with what the SASC has to offer. Although it may be difficult to determine, we can get a general idea of what is happening in the SASC and compare that with past evaluations.

As part of the survey, students who used the SASC indicated why they came to the SASC. Table 3 shows what the students indicated in both the 2003 and 2004 surveys. Even more interesting than these numbers are the students' opinions of the most important reasons why they use the SASC. Because the data were collected differently regarding this item, I have categorized the response by computer usage, teacher initiated, and other initiated reasons. In 2004, 46 percent of the responses indicated that the use of word processing software or email was the most important reason why the students used the SASC. Seventeen percent of the reasons were teacher motivated and the remaining 37 percent were not directly teacher-motivated.

However, in 2003, 36 percent of the most important reasons given were computer related. Thirty-five percent were teacher-motivated reasons, and 29 percent were motivated by reasons not involving the teacher. Although computer usage went up, it is interesting to notice that teacher-motivated use of the SASC is down by 18 percent and other reasons for use are up 8 percent.

In addition to comparing students' activities in the center, the data also provided information regarding the types of materials students are using. Like the previous data, information received on both surveys is different. General computer use and word processing had the highest percentage of people reporting their frequent use. The most obvious change in the data was that more students reported using books, studying together and studying by themselves in 2004 than in 2003

Table 3

SASC activities by percentages

	Percentage -2003	Percentage -2004
Type papers	83	76
Email	68	65
Learn English	64	55
Get help with Homework	58	54
Required by teacher	54	33
Wants to study alone	46	53
Quiet place to study	32	31
Talk to friends	26	34
Required by ELC	23	16
Instant messenger	-	43

Although many other factors affect the results of the information collected, a decrease in teacher-motivated work in the SASC and an increase in self-initiated study alone and with others showed that the students appear to be more autonomous in their learning than those of the previous year.

SASC Usage

Eighty-eight percent of the students who participated in the Fall 2003 survey reported that they used the SASC. Ninety-seven percent of those who participated in the Fall 2004 survey reported that they used the SASC. Assuming that this is a representative group of students, the data show a rather dramatic increase in the use of the SASC compared to the students who participated in the survey done in November 2003. Further analysis of the students' view of the orientation and Web site may show correlations.

Orientation and Web page

The objective of the survey was to determine if students used the SASC more due to the orientation and/or the support provided by the Web site. This next part will describe students' responses to the orientation.

Orientation. Table 4 shows the opinions of students who went to the orientation regarding how helpful they thought the orientation was. It also shows whether or not students felt that the orientation encouraged them to use the SASC during the semester. Forty-three people of those present at the orientation reported it to be very helpful while only six students said it was not helpful. Seventy students said that the orientation encouraged them to use the SASC during the semester. In contrast, only 16 said it did not encourage them.

Table 4

Students opinions regarding the Web site (by number) (N=86)

	Helpful Orientation	Encouraging	Not encouraging
Very Helpful	43	38	5
Somewhat Helpful	37	30	7
Not helpful	6	2	4
Totals	86	70	16

Web Site. Unlike the orientation, all those who took the survey reported having the ability to use the Web site to find materials in the SASC. However, those who participated in the orientation received explicit training on how to use the Web site and SASC.

The data indicate that 84 of the 85 students who attended the orientation did use the Web site. In contrast, only eight students of the 38 who were not at the orientation used it. This would seem to show that the orientation played an important role in how the students used the Web site and SASC. It is also important to mention that three of the

four students who said they didn't use the SASC were not at the orientation. Table 5 shows how useful the students felt the Web site was. One interesting aspect the table does not show is that one of the students who thought that it was helpful reported that he did not use the SASC. This could indicate that he either used the Web site at home or didn't know what he was doing when he took the survey. With regard to the students' opinion of the helpfulness of the web site and database, all but one students found it to be somewhat or very helpful.

Table 5

Web site use (N=124)

	Web Site Used	Web Site Not Used	Total
Those attending orientation	85	1	86
Those not attending orientation	8	30	38
Total	93	31	124

Section 7: Conclusions, Implications and Suggestions

The purpose of this project was to determine ELC students' use of the SASC and what might be done to promote autonomy in self-access centers. This survey, along with previous ones, indicates that the SASC is not being used to promote learner autonomy or to help engage students in autonomous learning as much as it could be. However, with the addition of a database driven Web site which gives students immediate access to the center's resources and an improved student and teacher orientation, there were slight changes in the way the SASC was used. Students reported using more books from the SASC as well as spending more time studying alone and with others.

The literature clearly shows that autonomy has a role in language learning. According to Jones (1998), language learning students cannot escape autonomy as it occurs even in classroom activities. The questions that have driven this project sought to determine what could be done to make self-access centers encourage student use and promote autonomous language learning. The initial orientation effected how the students used the SASC. The database and Web page were useful, but no direct connection between them and center use could be made.

The data show that the students who attended the initial orientation before classes began were more likely to use what was discussed in that meeting. In this example, we see that those students tended to use the Web site more than those who were not in attendance. Students who were well oriented were more frequent visitors to the SASC as well.

Important information from this project can be used by self-access center managers. We now know that an orientation appears to have a strong influence on how the students use the SASC. As mentioned in the results section, students who were

present at the initial orientation reported being more likely to use the Web database and search for resources to aid their language learning. Since one of the fundamental purposes of the orientation was to introduce the Web database, it seems apparent that orientation did heighten students' awareness of resources in the center thereby allowing them the opportunity to make greater use of these materials.

This information is important for those administrating self-access centers. It appears that in order for students to make better use of the SASC a few key procedures should be put in place.

- 1) Students should be provided with easy access to a database to help them locate materials for language learning.
- 2) Students should be oriented at the beginning of each semester so that they are aware of what is available, how to find it and where it is located in the center.
- 3) Teachers should be made aware of the materials available for students to use outside of class.
- 4) A teacher orientation meeting should be conducted to help motivate them to encourage students to use the SASC to better their English on their own time. As Cotterall and Reinders (2003) mentioned, links between the class room and the center may increase the promotion of autonomy.
- 5) Ongoing support should be provided for both teachers and students through interaction with lab attendants, administrators and tutors.

Limitations

The project was not completed without some difficulties. The design of the database is a bit more ideal than practical. Updating materials to correspond with the always changing ELC objectives each semester would be ideal, but not very practical. The work would be tremendous. In order to keep the database and website up-to-date, ELC administrators would have to make important decisions. These might involve the hiring of an individual trained in ESL and web development. Although most people today can construct a web site, finding a person who is familiar with ESL methods and materials and able to maintain a website with complex programming may be difficult. Financial issues with regards to hiring additional people may need to be considered. Other options may include a division of labor amongst those who already work at the ELC. Skill area coordinators would be instructed to keep an up-to-date list of objectives and materials. This may also prove difficult as these full-time employees have much to do.

The orientation went very smoothly. It was nice to talk with students and try to see things from their perspective. In the future however, more formal data needs to be collected from students and teachers about their experiences involving the orientation.

A third limitation is that the data collected did not answer all of the questions asked in the study. Although we see that the focus of the SASC has begun to shift from teacher-motivated activities, there are too many intervening variables to determine what actually caused this change.

Fourth, I found some issues arise with regards to gathering the survey data. For example, I had neglected to put Russian as one of the language options. This problem was easily fixed and did not prove to be a harmful mistake in the data gathering. My

biggest challenge was getting students to participate. They were lured with candy, but many students did not wish to participate. By the time final exams had begun, only a few surveys had been completed. I decided to use one of their test days to collect more data. As they finished their grammar tests, I asked the students if they would please complete the survey. By this, all students were offered the opportunity to participate. Nonetheless, only 124 students did complete the survey out of the 300 enrolled during the Fall semester, 2004.

While issuing the survey, several students asked what Web site the survey referred to. Some remembered quickly, and others had no idea what I was referring to. I think that other students answered without knowing what they were saying. This may have affected the results.

Directions for Future Research

There are many areas that are still in need of research. Researchers could look at self-access center management and staff behavior to see how these things affect students' use of a SAC. Certainly research regarding the effects of metacognition in learning would give us more information on how to improve self-access centers. Strategy training with respect to using strategies best suited for an autonomous environment may prove to be one of the more affective ways of promoting autonomy and the use of the SASC. Researchers should also explore other forms of on-going support and observe how this support affects the use of self-access centers.

While considering research options, Cotterall and Reinders' (2003) work may be a good starting point.

1. Self-access center administrators should explore learners' beliefs about language learning

2. Students need an effective initial orientation to the self-access center.
3. Administrators should provide on-going support to students.
4. There should be more links between the self-access center and the classroom

With regard to their four suggestions for enhancing self-access centers, this project only addressed items two and three. The two remaining areas are available for investigation. Exploring the beliefs of students who consider themselves very autonomous learners and comparing them to other students may provide additional data that speaks to how SACs can be enhanced.

Researchers can also focus on how links between self-access centers and the classroom affect the use of these centers. How do students of teachers who are familiar with the SASC use it as compared to students of teachers who do not feel comfortable with the SASC? Researchers can investigate how the orientation of teachers affects the students' use of the center. Introducing institutional policies that require teachers to link the classroom to the SASC may also prove interesting. The orientation of teachers which occurred may also provide researchers with interesting options. The affects of teachers on autonomy in student learning may be quite significant indicating that links between self-access centers and the classroom are pivotal to helping students become more autonomous.

Educational practices can be evaluated and adapted to an autonomous environment. Do certain methodologies lend themselves to an increase in learner autonomy? Researchers may also choose to see how material use in the classroom affects SASC use outside of the classroom. Multiple intelligences as well as learner personality would provide interesting insights to the factors that affect autonomous students. What qualities do students who teachers see as autonomous have that make them more

autonomous language learners? All these question and more make self-access centers an area where a great deal of future research remains.

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Appendix A

SASC Survey November 2004

(copied from Internet Survey)

Consent to be a research subject

General Information

The purpose of this study is to gather information from ESL students about their use of the Self Access Study Center (SASC) located at the English Language Center (ELC) on the BYU campus. The research is being done by Ben McMurry, a graduate student in the Linguistics and English Language Department at Brigham Young University.

What you should know

- There are no known risks for participating in the study
- Your participation will help ELC staff improve the materials and resources in the lab.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Strict confidentiality will be maintained.

Questions

If you have questions, you may contact Ben McMurry by phone at (801) 422-3754 or you can send him an email at benmcmurry@byu.edu.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research project, you may contact Nancy A. Davis, IRB Administrator, A-285 ASB, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602; Phone (801) 422-3841. By clicking OK, you agree to participate in this research.

Demographic Information

Please select your native language:

Please enter your country of origin:

Gender:

Male Female

Marital Status:

Married Single

Date of birth (yyyy-mm-dd):

How long have you been in the United States?

 Years

Months

How long have you studied English?

 Years

Months

Are you enrolled in the ESL classes taught at 4:15pm?

Yes No

Is this your first semester at the ELC?

Yes No

Are you a returning ELC student who took a vacation during the summer?

Yes No

Why are you studying English?

How often do you speak English outside of the classroom?

Most of the time Sometimes Rarely

Do you use the SASC or Computer Lab?

Yes No

Continue

Reasons for not using the SASC

What are the reasons why you do not use the SASC or Computer Lab?

Check all that apply.

- I have no free time.
 - The lab is too noisy.
 - The materials are not interesting.
 - The materials are too difficult to use.
 - The materials are too easy to me.
 - I don't like working by myself.
 - No one is available to help me.
 - Attendance is not required by my teacher.
 - I don't know how to get started.
 - Other Reasons
- Please explain your other reasons.

For the reasons you identified above, what is the biggest reason why you DO NOT use the SASC?

Which activities would help you make better use of the SASC and Computer Lab?

Check all that apply.

- Spend time with my class in the SASC
- Have the teacher require me to do practice activities in the SASC
- Receive regular help from tutors
- Provide short workshops on how to use the reading, listening, pronunciation, computer activities available in the SASC.
- Have learning activities that go along with the videos and audio tapes available in the SASC.
- Provide good Internet sites with grammar, listening, reading and exercises that I can practice on my own.
- Have an orientation at the beginning of each term that shows the new materials in the SASC
- Other Reasons

SASC Use**Check the times that you most often use the SASC or Computer Lab.**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:00am-8:05am	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10:35am-12:05pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2:35pm-4:00pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4:00pm-6:00pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6:00pm-8:00pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why do you use the SASC?

(check all that apply)

- I am required by my teacher
- I want to study by myself
- I am required by the ELC
- I come to talk to friends
- I want a quiet place to work
- I come to learn/study English
- I use the computers to type papers or letters
- I use the computers to check
- I come to get help with my homework
- email
- Other
- Other

Which of the above is the biggest reason you use the SASC?**How often do you use the following materials?**

Material	Very Often	Sometimes	Rarely
Books on Tape/CD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audio tapes or CDs for listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Movies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dictionaries / Thesaurus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy readers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English textbooks (e.g. Azar grammar)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Test preparation materials (e.g. TOEFL, GRE, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pronunciation Pairs (with CDs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pronunciation Matters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listening and Speaking Books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Novels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Word processing (.e.g Microsoft Word, Wordperfect, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sending and receiving email/ chat sites (e.g. MSN Messenger)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet language practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TALL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Softread	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quick English (CD-ROM)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Live action English (CD-ROM)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Typing practice ("All the Right Type")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Expeditions into English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Card games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Study with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Study alone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Of all the materials and resources listed above, which ONE item have you found to be most helpful in improving your English?

Orientation and Website

How helpful was the orientation to the SASC at the beginning of the semester?

- Very Helpful
 Somewhat Helpful
 Not very Helpful

Did it encourage you to use the SASC during the semester?

- Yes No

Have you used the website this semester?

- Yes No

How helpful was the website?

- Very Helpful
 Somewhat Helpful
 Not very Helpful

Continue

Appendix B

ELC Objectives by level and skill area

Writing Objectives - Level 1

- Write multi-paragraph narrative texts
- Write fictional narrative texts
- Write non-fictional narrative texts
- Demonstrate creative and varied noun, verb, adjective, and adverb usage
- Produce at least three drafts of major assignments (2 drafts and a final)
- Attend to organization on the discourse, paragraph, and sentence level
- Adjust their writing according to the needs of their audience
- Adjust their writing according their purpose for writing
- Publish two papers for which the audience is not the teacher
- Write at least 6 major papers
- Demonstrate ability to accomplish the following tasks: telling, describing, and narrating
- In 30 minutes, draft a 200-word essay a personal topic such as family, hobbies, or school
- Correctly edit grammar, spelling, punctuation, and paragraph formatting in the final drafts
- Demonstrate strategies to self-edit their papers
- Demonstrate strategies for finding help from other English speaking persons to edit their papers
- Type at a speed of 22 words per minute (WPM).

Writing Objectives - Level 2

- Write extensive, multi-paragraph and multi-page, narrative texts
- Write fictional narrative texts
- Write non-fictional narrative texts
- Demonstrate creative and varied noun, verb, adjective, and adverb usage
- Produce at least three drafts of major assignments (2 drafts and a final)
- Attend to organization on the discourse, paragraph, and sentence level
- Adjust their writing according to the needs of their audience
- Adjust their writing according their purpose for writing
- Publish two papers for which the audience is not the teacher
- Write at least 6 major papers
- Demonstrate ability to accomplish the following tasks: telling, describing, narrating, defining, and explaining
- In 30 minutes, draft a 250-word essay on a personal topic such as family, hobbies, or school.
- Correctly edit grammar, spelling, punctuation, and paragraph formatting in the final drafts

- Demonstrate strategies to self-edit their papers
- Demonstrate strategies for finding help from other English speaking persons to edit their papers
- Type at a speed of 24 words per minute (WPM).

Writing Objectives - Level 3

- Write extensive, multi-paragraph and multi-page, narrative texts
- Write extensive, multi-paragraph and multi-page, expository texts
- Write traditional 5 paragraph essay
- Demonstrate basic understanding about how to organize English expository texts
- Produce at least three drafts of major assignments (2 drafts and a final)
- Attend to organization on the discourse, paragraph, and sentence level
- Adjust their writing according to the needs of their audience
- Adjust their writing according their purpose for
- Publish two papers for which the audience is not the teacher
- Write at least 5 major papers
- Demonstrate ability to accomplish the following tasks: summarizing, interpreting, extrapolating, comparing, contrasting, and classifying
- In 0 minutes, draft a 200-word essay on a TOEFL topic.
- Correctly edit grammar, spelling, punctuation, and paragraph formatting in the final drafts
- Demonstrate strategies to self-edit their papers
- Demonstrate strategies for finding help from other English speaking persons to edit their papers
- Type at a speed of 26 words per minute (WPM).

Writing Objectives - Level 4

- Write traditional 5 paragraph essay
- Write extensive, multi-paragraph and multi-page, expository texts
- Demonstrate ability to incorporate concrete factual information
- Demonstrate depth and sophistication in how to organize English expository texts
- Demonstrate ability to incorporate argued opinion
- Produce at least three drafts of major assignments (2 drafts and a final)
- Attend to organization on the discourse, paragraph, and sentence level
- Adjust their writing according to the needs of their audience
- Adjust their writing according their purpose for
- Publish two papers for which the audience is not the teacher
- Demonstrate ability to accomplish the following tasks: summarizing, interpreting, applying, classifying, comparing, arguing, and drawing conclusions
- In 30 minutes, draft a 250-word essay on a TOEFL topic.

- Correctly edit grammar, spelling, punctuation, and paragraph formatting in the final drafts
- Demonstrate strategies to self-edit their papers
- Demonstrate strategies for finding help from other English speaking persons to edit their papers
- Type at a speed of 28 words per minute (WPM).

Writing Objectives - Level 5

- Write sophisticated academic texts of sustained length and depth
- Produce at least three drafts of major assignments (2 drafts and a final)
- Attend to organization on the discourse, paragraph, and sentence level
- Adjust their according to the needs of their audience
- Adjust their according their purpose for
- Publish two papers for which the audience is not the teacher
- Demonstrate ability to accomplish the following tasks: creating hypotheses, drawing conclusions from information, arguing or defending points of view, explaining, synthesizing, evaluating
- In 30 minutes, draft a 300-word essay on a TOEFL topic.
- Correctly edit grammar, spelling, punctuation, and paragraph formatting in the final drafts
- Demonstrate strategies to self-edit their papers
- Demonstrate strategies for finding help from other English speaking persons to edit their papers
- Type at a speed of 30 words per minute (WPM).

Reading Objectives - Level 1

- understand sentences
- understand paragraphs
- scan for information
- learn vocabulary in word families and other categories
- recognize parts of speech and word parts
- read between -0 pages per day at an accessible level
- understand the main idea and supporting details

Reading Objectives - Level 2

- identify topics and topic sentences in short essays
- recognize parts of speech, prefixes, suffixes, and word parts
- use an English dictionary to determine word families, synonyms, antonyms, etc.
- read between 0- pages per day at an accessible level
- read a level /6 student essay, paragraph, or story
- understand the main idea and supporting details of extensive reading

Reading Objectives - Level 3

- read the following genres: expository, including comparison and contrast, cause and effect and process, newspaper articles, poetry, folk/fairy tales etc.
- scanning
- skimming
- previewing
- predicting
- identifying main ideas
- making inferences
- vocabulary from context
- decode vocabulary by acquiring word parts
- Increase read speed
- read between -0 pages per day at an accessible level
- comprehend and recall main ideas and supporting details of extensive reading
- increase reading recognition vocabulary by a minimum of 0 words per day

Reading Objectives - Level 4

- Students will read the following genres: expository, including comparison and contrast, cause and effect, persuasion, and process
- restatement
- inference
- scanning
- skimming
- predicting
- main ideas
- vocabulary from context
- decode vocabulary by acquiring word parts
- improve reading rate
- to recognize and identify discourse markers
- read between -0 pages per day at an accessible level
- read both fiction and nonfiction materials
- identify and discuss the basic elements of literature including plot, setting, character development, etc.
- incorporate reading materials into oral presentations such as class reports, poetry recitations, choral readings, readers' theaters, etc

Reading Objectives - Level 5

- skimming
- scanning
- main ideas
- organization of ideas
- comprehension questions that include stated and unstated details
- pronoun referents

- transition questions
- vocabulary questions
- tone, purpose or course
- decode word parts and word endings
- patterns of organization
- summarizing and outlining,
- fact and opinion
- inferences
- argument.
- basic study skills for success in college (previewing texts and text chapters, noting the bolded words, summarizing, note taking, how to prepare for different kinds of exams, etc.)
- improve reading rate
- read a wide variety of authentic materials and apply different reading strategies to different types of reading tasks such as pleasure reading, critical reading, reading for information, etc
- read between -0 pages per day at an accessible level
- read both fiction and nonfiction materials
- identify and discuss the basic elements of literature including plot, setting, character development, etc.
- incorporate reading materials into oral presentations such as class reports, poetry recitations, choral readings, readers' theaters

Listening and Speaking Objectives - Level 1

- Greet and Say Goodbye
- Introduce Self and Others
- Commands
- Alphabet
- Numbers
- Time
- Dates
- Talk about Personal Information
- Common Feelings
- Body Parts
- People
- Occupations
- Basic Life Events
- Talk about Family
- House Interior
- Objects
- Clothing
- Food
- Money and Prices
- Make Purchases

- Weather and Seasons
- Hobbies and Recreation
- Daily Routines

Listening and Speaking Objectives – Level 2

- Meet Someone New
- Introduce Yourself and Others
- Meet Someone You Know
- Give and Receive Thanks
- Make Simple Phone Calls
- Tell about Routines
- Order Food
- Give Simple Directions in a Building
- Talk about Hobbies and Interests
- Describe Buildings and Rooms
- Give and Receive Compliments
- Talk about Jobs and Educational Experience
- Describe People
- Tell about Future Plans and Goals
- Tell about the Recent Past

Listening and Speaking Objectives - Level 3

- Manage a Conversation
- Make Formal Phone Calls
- Make Appointments
- Apologize
- Make Invitations
- Get People's Attention and Interrupt
- Give Directions to a Place
- Describe a Process
- Agree and Disagree
- Make Plans
- Describe a Place
- Tell About the Past
- Compare Objects and People

Listening and Speaking Objectives - Level 4

- Give Instructions
- Tell about Customs
- Make a Complaint
- Tell a Story
- Support an Opinion
- Give Advice
- Compare Places or Customs
- State Advantages or Disadvantages

Listening and Speaking Objectives - Level 5

- Describe a Complex Object
- Give a Summary
- Hypothesize
- Persuade
- Defend an Opinion
- Give a Formal Presentation

Grammar Objectives - Level 1

- Imperative sentences (including negative)
- “To be” present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions and short answers, usage with “there”
- “To be” past tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions and short answers, usage with “there”
- Other verb- present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions and short answers
- Present progressive tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions and short answers
- Use of subjective pronouns
- Simple Present, simple Past, and Present Progressive tense questions starting with question words
- Prepositions of place: on, next to, from, at, in
- Prepositions of time: in, on, at
- Adverbs of frequency: often, sometimes, usually, always, ever
- Possessive nouns
- Introductory Count and non-count nouns
- Introductory quantifiers
- Articles: a/an, the
- Modal Auxiliary: can/can't
- This/that and These/those
- Descriptive Adjectives (people)
- Comparative and superlative adjective forms (people and things)
- Ordinal numbers: first to tenth
- Objective pronouns

Grammar Objectives - Level 2

- “To be” present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers, usage with “there”
- “To be” past tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers, usage with “there”

- Other verb- present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Other verb-past tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, questions word questions and short answers
- Present Progressive tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Imperative sentences
- Count or Non-count Nouns and articles
- Use of subjective and objective pronouns
- Prepositions of place: on, next to, from, at, in, under, between, behind
- Prepositions of time: in, on, at
- Descriptive Adjectives (people)
- Comparative and Superlative adjective forms (people and things)
- Ordinal numbers beyond “tenth”
- Suggestions: Let’s..., Why don’t we..., Why don’t you....?
- Quantifiers: many, several, a lot, few
- Adverbs of frequency: never, frequently, never, every day, almost every day, rarely, once in a while, five times a month
- Direct and Indirect objects
- Stative or non-action verbs
- Introductory Gerund and Infinitive usage
- Future tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Past Progressive tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, questions word questions and short answers
- Modals of Ability and Possibility: can, could
- Modals of Polite Requests: may , can , could
- Modals of Possibility: may, might
- Modals of Desires, Invitations, Requests: would like, would you like, would you please
- Modals of Advisability: should, ought to, had better
- Modals of Necessity: have to, must
- Adverbs of Manner

Grammar Objectives - Level 3

- “To be” present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers, usage with “there”
- “To be” past tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and shorts answers, usage with “there”
- Other verb- present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Other verb-past tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, questions word questions and short answers

- Present Progressive tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Past Progressive tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Future tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Imperative sentences
- Modals of Ability: can, could, be able to
- Modals of Polite Requests: could, will, would, would you mind
- Modals of Permission: may, could, can, do you mind if....?
- Modals of Advisability: should, ought to, had better
- Suggestions: Let's, Why don't we..., Why don't you...?
- Adjectives: Comparatives and Superlatives
- Adverbs: Comparatives and Superlatives
- Nouns and Quantifiers
- Articles: Definite and Indefinite
- Reflexive and Reciprocal Pronouns
- Introductory Phrasal Verbs
- Suggestions: Could, Why not, How about?
- Present Perfect tense statements, including negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions, and short answers
- Present Perfect Progressive tense statements, including negative statements, yes/no questions, questions word questions, and short answers
- Adjectives: Equatives
- Adverbs: Equatives
- Gerunds: as subjects and objects, after prepositions
- Infinitives: after certain verbs, of purpose, with too and enough
- Modals of Preference: would prefer, would rather
- Modals of Necessity: have (got) to, don't have to, must, must not , can't
- Modals of Expectations: be supposed to
- Modals of Future Possibility: may, might, could
- Modals for Assumptions: must, have (got) to, may, might, could, can't

Grammar Objectives - Level 4

- "To be" present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers, usage with "there"
- "To be" past tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and shorts answers, usage with "there"
- Other verb- present tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Other verb-past tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, questions word questions and short answers
- Present Progressive tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers

- Past Progressive tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Present Perfect statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Past Perfect statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Past perfect Progressive statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Future tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Future Progressive tense: statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, question-word questions and short answers
- Negative and Tag questions
- Responses with so, too, neither, not either, but
- Additions with so, too, neither, not either, but
- Imperative sentences
- Phrasal verbs: Separable and Inseparable
- Gerunds and Infinitives
- Causatives: make, have, let, help, get
- Adjective Clauses

Grammar Objectives - Level 5

- Simple Present, Past, Future tenses (statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, questions-word questions and short answers)
- Present, Past and Future Progressive tenses (statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, questions-word questions and short answers)
- Present, Past and Future Perfect tenses (statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, questions-word questions and short answers)
- Perfect Progressive (statements, negative statements, yes/no questions, questions-word questions and short answers)
- Subject-Verb Agreement
- Nouns: regular, irregular, possessive, as modifiers, count and non-count, article usage with expressions of quantity
- Pronouns: personal, generic, indefinite, collective, reflexive, impersonal
- Modals of Polite Request
- Modals of Necessity and Prohibition
- Modals of Advisability
- Modals of Expectation
- Modals of Suggestion
- Modals to show Degree of Certainty
- Modals of Ability
- Modals of Preference
- Modals showing Repeated Action in the Past
- Passive voice

- Noun Clauses
- Adjective Clauses
- Adverb Clauses of Time, General, Reductions
- Gerunds and Infinitives
- Coordinating Conjunctions
- Connectives that express Cause and Effect, Contrast and Condition
- Conditional Sentences and Wishes

Appendix C

Web site Orientation Handout (Actual handouts were actually 4.25'x5.5')

Welcome to the SASC

To find materials got to <http://www.elc.byu.edu/sasc>.

You can type a word here,

or

Search for objectives and materials for a specific class

or

Use google to search selected ESL websites!

The screenshot shows the BYU English Language Center Self-Access Study Center (SASC) interface. At the top, it says "BYU | ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER" and "SELF-ACCESS STUDY CENTER". Below this is a "Search" section with a text input field and a "Go!" button. To the right of the search field are links for "ELC Home" and "SASC Home". Below the search section is a "Browse" section, which is circled in red. It contains two dropdown menus: "by skill area" and "by level", both with downward arrows. Below these is a "Browse" button. At the bottom of the screenshot is a "Google ESL Websites" section with a text input field and a "Google Search" button.

If you have questions, suggestions, or comments please send me an email!
benmcmurry@byu.edu