TRANSFER AND ARTICULATION COMMITTEE PROJECT UPDATE	**Contractor Name:** Mirabelle Tinio	**Contract Number:** 890681
	Project Title: SCOLA (Standing Committee on Language Articulation) Learning Outcomes and Test Bank	☐ **√** **Transfer Innovation Project** **OR** ☐ **Research Project**
	Date of Update: Friday, January 31, 2020	**Project Completion Date:** December 31st, 2019

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER

OVERVIEW

SCOLA, the Standing Committee on Language Articulation, is also known as the Modern Languages Articulation Committee.

The original project timeline as outlined in the contract was modified, and steps were added. The project was completed by SCOLA's Subcommittee on Learning Outcomes. The committee members are Fanny Boulesteix, Grisel Garcia-Perez, Jia Fei, Luisa Canuto, Mirabelle Tinio and Yoriko Gillard. In addition to the Subcommittee on Learning Outcomes, two working groups for each of the languages were formed at SCOLA 2019's AGM. One group created additional questions for the placement test bank and the other piloted the placement tests.

The Japanese language group joined the project late in the process. This group decided to draft a placement test, with various instructors from different post-secondary institutions creating different parts of the test. The group plans to continue to work on developing a set of core competencies and piloting the tests.

Steps as outlined in the contract	Steps Completed by the Subcommittee
a) On or before 30th September 2018, conduct a survey of SCOLA members in the four target languages, to identify four core competencies in each language and at two levels;	In the summer of 2018, SCOLA's Subcommittee on Learning Outcomes drafted Beginner's Level I core competencies ("CCs") for Chinese, French, Italian, and Spanish, and created a survey of instructors in each of these languages to collect feedback on the content of the competencies.

At SCOLA's 2018 AGM, the Japanese language group was been invited to contribute to the project but no Japanese language lead stepped forward at the time. Only four language groups were involved in the project at this time. A Japanese language group joined the subcommittee at SCOLA's 2019 AGM.

The instructors who responded to the Beginner's Level 1 CC survey generally responded favorably to the drafted core competencies. There were 12 responses from Chinese instructors, 14 from French instructors, 7 from Italian instructors, and 16 from Spanish instructors. |

	The Subcommittee modified the initial draft of the core competencies in each language to reflect the respondents' suggestions and feedback.
b) At the end of February 2019, language leads to complete modifications to the core competencies for each language, share the updated documents, collect feedback, and revise the competencies.	In February 2019, language leads sent out a second survey to instructors on Beginner's Level II core competencies in Chinese, French, Italian, and Spanish. **Chinese**: Six instructors responded but only three left comments suggesting modifications. **Spanish**: 19 participants completed the second survey. The respondents showed support for the core competencies, but there were not many comments. The most general comment was the lack of systematic teaching of culture in Spanish classes. Others referred to specific situations in given institutions; necessary expansion of vocabulary; the usefulness of repetition in class; students' lack of ability to interact with native speakers; and the importance of class attendance. **Italian**: The respondents were very supportive of the core competencies, although there were fewer responses than the first survey. The second survey integrated feedback from the first survey. The questions assessing intercultural competency were modified. An important comment on the second survey related to the percentage mark that students should receive to qualify for each level. It was decided that the choice of this mark should rest with the institutions, as long as the required mark was clearly mentioned to prospective students. **French**: There were fewer survey responses from French instructors to the second survey than to the first survey. Those who participated expressed strong support for the proposed core competencies, mostly responding "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" to questions about whether the drafted "can-do" statements reflected what their students could do in Beginner's I and II. Instructors suggested modifications to certain questions, and an important comment involved the number of contact hours required to attain Beginner's I and II levels. A range of hours was proposed, which took into account the range of contact hours at different institutions. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, Fanny Boulesteix had to leave the subcommittee. Mirabelle Tinio continued to lead the French group.
c) Based on the identified and approved core competencies,	The language leads for each group analyzed the results from the second survey and updated the core competencies in their area.

language leads to create draft placement tests	Before SCOLA's 2019 AGM each language group created a sample placement test, based on the revised core competencies. These placement tests were printed and distributed to the membership.
d) Language leads to collect feedback on the placement tests	During the language group meetings at SCOLA's 2019 AGM, members completed the drafted placement tests as well as an online survey (the third survey) to share their feedback regarding their first impressions of the tests. The members also discussed their first impressions with their peers. In addition, the subcommittee created two working groups for each language. One group was charged with creating placement test questions, and adding more questions to the test bank, with a deadline of June. The other group was to pilot the placement tests between July and September. Results of the third survey: **Chinese:** Six Chinese instructors were present to pilot the placement test and give input. Feedback on the draft placement test was polarized. Some supported it, and some were concerned about the security of sharing placement tests online, or that questions in the test were inconsistent with their own curriculum. The language lead proposed establishing a test bank with editable items. Six members signed up to contribute additional test questions and five to pilot the placement test in the summer. **Spanish:** Twelve Spanish instructors took the placement test. Everyone gave very positive feedback except on the question on culture. As before, concerns were raised regarding the lack of development of this competency in most Spanish classes. **Italian**: No Italian representatives were at the SCOLA AGM this year apart from the language lead. However, the draft placement test was distributed to instructors during the summer. These colleagues shared feedback which was incorporated into the updates to the test. **French**: The majority of the 13 French instructors present at the AGM agreed that the placement test met most of their institution's needs, that the test offered a variety of questions, and that they would like to foster transparency and greater student mobility. Some instructors were willing to pilot the placement test the following semester. Instructors made suggestions on how to make the placement test more useful to them, e.g., by finding an automated marking system, increasing ease of editing, and improving accessibility. Some instructors were willing to contribute questions to the test bank, but a few said

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	they were too busy. One instructor suggested that the Learning Branch might be a good platform for the placement tests. About 10 instructors signed up to contribute questions to the test bank, and 7 instructors volunteered to pilot the test. **Japanese**: 12 Japanese instructors attended the 2019 AGM. Yoriko Gillard was chosen as the Japanese language lead for the project.
e) Prior to October 2019, piloting of the placement tests and collecting information on the effectiveness of the tests.	**Chinese:** One member piloted the test bank and gave very positive feedback. **Spanish:** Two instructors at the same school piloted the placement tests for Beginner Level 1 and Beginner Level 2 and gave very positive feedback. **Italian**: It is not clear how many times the test was piloted. The language lead made additional changes to the placement tests. **French:** Three French instructors piloted the placement test. They said that the test met their needs and that it was relatively easy to follow, with the right number of questions. One instructor suggested that the French subcommittee meet regularly to update placement test questions based on feedback. **Japanese**: Because this subcommittee was formed later in the project, this committee worked on developed a placement test for Beginner's Level I. They plan to continue revising it.
g) On or before mid-December 2019, final revisions to test banks and making the test banks available to SCOLA members for placing students in Winter/Spring 2020 semester; and	**Italian**: The language lead sent updated placement tests to UBC, SFU and VSB for their feedback. Tests will be uploaded to a UBC Canvas course, and the language lead will be piloting the placement test at UBC as early as Summer 2020. **French:** The French language lead is currently experimenting with creating French placement test questions on SCOLA's MOODLE site. Some of the questions have been created. The plan is to share these questions at SCOLA's May 2020 AGM.
h) At the beginning of January, 2020, submitting a brief report outlining the deliverables completed and the timeframe for each to BCCAT, and summarizing generally the feedback received on the assessments at each stage of development and/or implementation.	SCOLA's Subcommittee on Learning Outcomes plans to revisit the placement tests at SCOLA 2020. At SCOLA 2019, the Membership voted in support of finding an online platform to house SCOLA's placement tests. This will be the next phase of the project.

NEXT STEPS

- Brainstorm how to motivate the membership to contribute to the test banks in the future.
- Get more buy-in from SCOLA's membership. This has been a challenge over the last few months. Members showed a tremendous amount of support for the project, but it was sometimes difficult to collect feedback and get active participation from members.
- Create new working groups at SCOLA 2020 to continue filling the test banks with a larger variety of questions and ensuring that placement tests remain relevant and useful, if the SCOLA members want to continue this work.