

With a rich foreign languages curriculum, a significant non-native student enrollment, and an increasing number of learners choosing foreign languages, the faculty and administration of **Bunker Hill Community College** set out to enhance student services by establishing a Multi-Media, Multi-Purpose Language Lab featuring SANAKO technology. Almost immediately, faculty and students began to see a difference in their language learning programs.

### Bunker Hill Community College

- Community College in Boston's Charlestown area
- Student population of roughly 8,000 / semester
- Students from more than 90 countries
- Languages taught: Arabic, Chinese, English, ESL, French, German, Japanese, Italian, Russian, Spanish
- Up to 54 language teachers, including part-time staff

#### Serving a Diverse Community

Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) is a multi-campus urban institution, with its main campus situated in the historic Charlestown area of Boston, Massachusetts. Founded in 1973 by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, BHCC enrolls more than **8,000** students in day, evening, weekend, web-based, and distance learning courses and programs. With students from more than 90 countries, and students of color comprising more than half of the student population, BHCC is one of the most diverse and cosmopolitan colleges in New England. The average student age is 28; nearly two-thirds are women, and the majority of all students work while attending college. BHCC's spring 2006 semester enrolment reached a record 8,136 students.

Under President Mary Fifield's leadership since 1997, the college has identified goals and objectives every three years and BHCC employees can submit action plans addressing these goals and objectives and to improve services. The Multi-Media Multi-Purpose Language Lab is the result of such an action plan.



*The Multi-Media Multi-Purpose Language Lab at Bunker Hills Community College has seen heavy traffic since opening its doors.*

### SANAKO Study Solutions

- SANAKO Study 500
- Updated to SANAKO Study 1200
- 18 student positions
- Specialized language teaching solution
- Supporting cross-curricular learning

#### A Drive to Support Language Skills

The Multi-Media Multi-Purpose Language Lab opened at BHCC in September 2005 and was started by ESL and Foreign Language faculty members, in cooperation with faculty members from the English Department and professional staff from Academic Computing, Audio Visual, and Instructional Design and Technology. It was designed to meet the needs of the many non-native English speakers who enroll every semester at BHCC - about 1,200 - the many students who study foreign languages and the many native writers who place into developmental reading and writing courses. BHCC did not have a language lab before this date.

BHCC decided to call the lab the Multi-Media Multi-Purpose Language Lab to encourage usage across departments and disciplines. The Lab not only allows faculty members to teach from the SANAKO Study 1200 Tutor Station but also allows students to learn independently with extra structured time on task and for faculty members to refer their students for extended instruction.



*Most students say they would recommend the new language learning facility to their friends.*



## Faculty reactions

- "I have seen a dramatic improvement in my student's work."
- "I think the lab will be a great benefit for a lot of students."
- "Many of my students improved with the help the lab gave them."
- "My student has improved his use of grammar and syntax dramatically."

## Path to Development

For the 2005 – 2006 academic year, the lab was coordinated by the ESL Department Chairperson and a part time-faculty member who worked 10 hours per week. Sessions in the lab were always supported by a semi-professional tutor, as well as students undergoing on-the-job training (work-study students).

33 BHCC employees (Faculty Members, Audio Visual, Instructional Design and Technology, and Academic Computing Professionals) were trained to use the Study 500 system.

Later, Lab Faculty Members and Lab Tutors identified internet sites appropriate for ESL, Foreign Languages, and developmental reading and writing students. These Internet sites are now hosted by the BHCC Library and thus accessible to all students from their homes.

In the first semester of use, approximately 400 students (including repeat visits) studied in the lab, either referred by faculty members or as independent learners. In the spring semester of 2006, 1,751 students (including repeat visits) studied in the lab independently or because of faculty referrals. Students used the web sites mentioned above, software programs that accompany English, ESL or Foreign Language textbooks, and independent software programs such as "Tell Me More" and "Focus on Grammar".

## Dramatic Improvements

Once usage of the lab had been established, staff at BHCC conducted a survey among teaching staff and students to measure satisfaction with the facilities.

In general, the survey results indicate that demand for the learning facilities provided by the lab is very high at BHCC. All faculty members felt that the lab was useful for their students, while some recommended that the facilities be expanded to accommodate more students.

## What the learners think

- "The exercises can help me to fix some of my grammar. That's great, isn't it?"
- "I found myself improve in listening and I hope to improve more."
- "There are many materials that help me."
- "I think the lab is invaluable to my studies."

Responses among the student population were similarly encouraging, with the majority of those responding to the survey saying that they find the activities useful, and that they would recommend the lab to their friends. Students indicated that they used the lab primarily for grammar exercises, followed by listening and speaking activities. The lab was also used to access foreign language software or websites, and for reading, writing, grammar focus, and use of the TeLL Me More series.

Following the positive outcome of the Fall 2005 introduction and Spring 2006 sessions, a plan was put in place so that the lab would offer workshops for faculty and students.

## Teaching staff benefited from:

- Introduction to Tell Me More – An independent and comprehensive ESL software program featuring voice recognition
- Lab Resource Workshop – All websites and software programs explained and demonstrated
- SANAKO 1200 Tutor Station Workshop – Learn how to teach from this station
- Microsoft Word/Editing Workshop – Learn paper and electronic editing

## Students were exposed to:

- Grammar Workshops
- Learn How to use Tell Me More
- Learn How to Search the Web and use E-mail
- Learn How to use MLA Format for Research Papers
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel

## SANAKO sales partner for this system:

**EBI Electronics Inc.**

800-272-4359

[www.ebisys.com](http://www.ebisys.com)

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