



University of Technology, Jamaica

Faculty of Education and Liberal Studies

Language, Technology and Research Centre



**The English Language Proficiency Test
(ELPT) Research**

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST RESEARCH

The English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) study is the first investigation into candidates' performance on the Proficiency Test in English at the University of Technology, Jamaica. It is a multi-dimensional study that begins with a comprehensive statistical analysis of the performance of a population of 2562 candidates across three years, followed by an error analysis of a sample of the candidates' writing. These two sections/components form the basis of the reading and writing profile that is developed later in the study.

The study's aims were to:

- establish patterns in students' performance in the Proficiency Test in English through the examination of test scores from June/July 2009, 2010 and 2011;
- ascertain the types and frequency of errors that candidates who sit the test make in their written work;
- develop a reading-writing profile of the typical candidate who sits the test/enters the university.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST RESEARCH

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis to probe the data and resulted in:

- A statistical analysis of students' performance on the Proficiency Test in English between 2009 and 2011;
- A detailed error analysis from a corpus of 86 scripts and 1,334 sentences;
- A reading-writing profile of the typical candidate who sits the Proficiency Test in English.

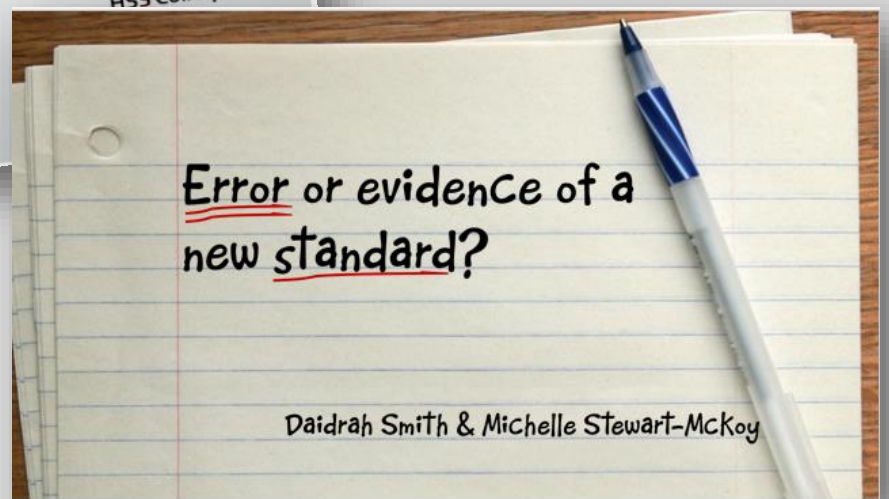
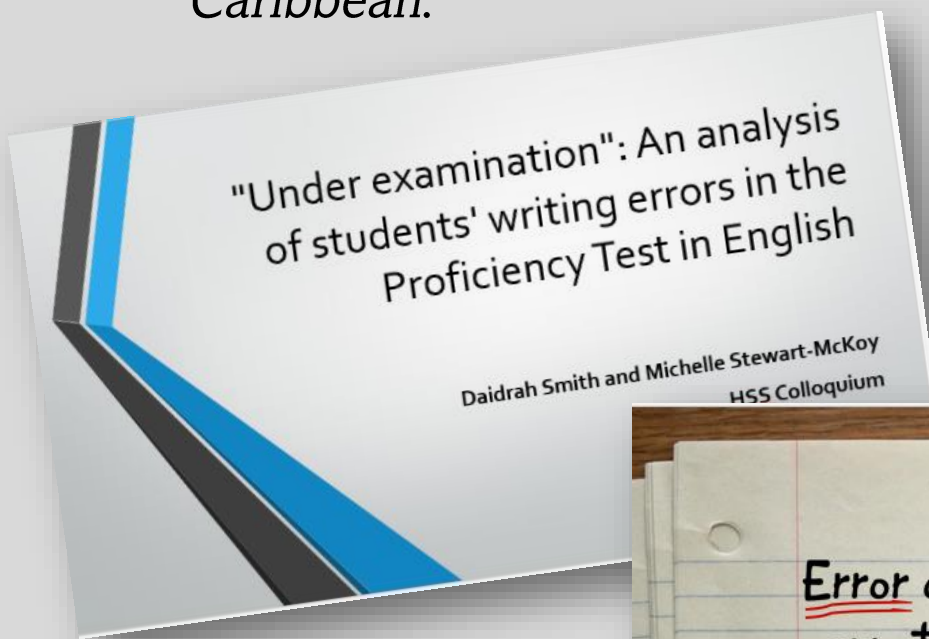
The results of this study serve as the foundation of/starting point for the understanding of students' level of competence in the English Language upon entering the university. It suggests realistic goals for the Language and Linguistics Division, and ultimately the university, in their task of improving students' English Language competence, given the constraints within which both operate.

- Among the recommendations are the development of
- a course that specifically targets the major errors,
 - a self-directed, self-paced Virtual Learning Centre.

ELPT RESEARCH PROJECT PUBLICITY

(Presentations and Reports)

- School of Humanities Colloquium - 2012 and 2013
- University Executive Management Team– 2014
- FELS Faculty Board – 2014 and 2015
- Society for Caribbean Linguists International Conference – 2016
- The President's Office – 2017
- Proposal accepted for the book *Creole Composition: Academic Writing and Rhetoric in the Anglophone Caribbean*.



ELPT RESEARCH PROJECT PUBLICITY

(Publications)



Authors: D Smith, M Stewart-McKoy
Year: 2017
Title: “Under examination”: An analysis of students’ writing errors at UTech, Ja and implications for the teaching of English.
Journal: The Journal of Arts, Science and Technology, 10, 156 – 178.



Authors: D Smith, M Stewart-McKoy, A Henry, G Hamilton.
Year : 2015
Title: Performance on the Proficiency Test in English at the University of Technology, Jamaica: A University-wide problem and implications for Teaching and Learning.
Journal: The Journal of Arts, Science and Technology, 8 (15), 60 – 80.

ELPT RESEARCH PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

Course that addresses students' major errors

Proposed Name:	Foundations for Academic Literacy Foundation English
Year Developed:	2016
Module Developer:	Clover Jones McKenzie
Module Reviewer:	Michelle Stewart-McKoy
Module Overview:	<p>This module aims to assist students who need further preparation in order to cope with the demands of the undergraduate university level writing modules. The focus is on the improvement of students' ability to affectively express their ideas, as well as understand texts written in English. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of effective self-learning strategies in order to facilitate students' control of their language skills improvement beyond this module.</p>
Status:	In progress

ELPT RESEARCH PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

Virtual Self-Access Learning Centre (VSALC)

Project Leader: Michelle Stewart-McKoy

Project Overview: The Virtual Self-Access Learning Centre (VSALC) Project is the design, development and implementation of an online, self-directed assistance tool for students experiencing language challenges.

The VSALC Project is one of the responses to students' mediocre performance in writing courses based on anecdotal and empirical evidence. The current version of the project targets undergraduate students. The VSALC Project has three (3) main phases:

Phase 1	Learner Profile Development
Phase 2	VSALC development based on Learner Profiles
Phase 3	Piloting and Modifying the VSALC

VSALC PROJECT UPDATES

Project Updates

- Proposal submitted January 2016
- Survey conducted in April 2016 targeting 400 UTech, Jamaica students doing preliminary level writing courses (Academic Writing 1, Developmental English and Writing Workshop 1)
- Preliminary VSALC prototype design done in September 2016 based on initial profile analysis
- Discussions underway regarding the development phase

VSALC PROJECT PUBLICITY

(Conference Presentations)

- School of Humanities and Social Sciences Colloquium - 2016
- FELS International Conference -2016
- Eduvision/eLearning Jamaica: ICTs in Education Conference - 2016

The VSALC Project:

Design, development and implementation of an online Self-Access Learning Centre to address students' language challenges

Daidrah Smith and Michelle Stewart-McKoy
January 7, 2016

What's your profile?

The role of eCompetence and Learner Profiles in the development of a Virtual Self-Access Learning Centre

Michelle Stewart-McKoy & Daidrah Smith

A graphic illustration featuring silhouettes of several people in various poses (standing, sitting, walking) on a colorful, multi-level platform composed of yellow, green, and blue blocks. The background is a light blue gradient.

eTailored to fit:
The design of a data-driven Virtual Self-Access Learning Centre (VSALC) as a best practice for UTech, Jamaica

Daidrah Smith & Michelle Stewart-McKoy (Oct 27, 2016)



PROJECT MEMBERS

Project Leader

Daidrah Smith

Team Members

Nicole Cameron

**Clovia Dixon*

Grace Hamilton

Audene Henry Harvey

Lois Kirton

Michelle Stewart-McKoy

**No longer a member of the team since 2013*