Policy Research Center
Research Project
Accomplishment Report

Date: 2017/2/27

	Name	Title	Affiliation
Project Leader:	Petchko, Katerina	Assoc. Prof.	GRIPS

Research Project Title:

Predicting Writing Achievement in International Graduate Students

Project duration:

6/1/2016～3/31/2017

Project Participants:

	Name	Title	Affiliation
Leader	Petchko	Assoc. Prof.	GRIPS
Participant 1			
Participant 2	O'Neill, Gavin	Asst. Prof.	Hitotsubashi University
Participant 3			

Project aims and goals:

This is a <u>three-year</u> project. Its overall purpose is to evaluate the validity of a set of variables in predicting the writing achievement of a diverse group of international graduate students. Specifically, this project attempts to answer the following research question: To what extent can the quality of student writing be predicted from a combination of students' academic preparation, English proficiency, overall academic performance, amount of support received from writing instructors, and advisor's background (i.e., academic vs. non-academic). A second purpose is to examine trends in the writing quality of students' theses/final papers that have occurred over the past 11 years. This analysis involves looking at changes that have occurred in the writing quality of student papers over time and comparing papers written by students having advisors with differing backgrounds in different programs.

The project involves <u>three phases.</u> The current grant was used for the first phase of the project. In the first phase (June 2016 – March 2016), the following tasks were completed: location and review of relevant literature in order to construct a justifiable writing scale, manual examination of each paper for file problems, file conversion, data entry and data coding, checking for data accuracy and consistency, creation of a corpus of student policy papers, and examination of the surface features of papers.

Accomplishments

Collection and Manual Examination of Papers
Papers from five GRIPS master's programs (i.e., Young Leaders; Public Policy; Public Finance; Macroeconomic Policy (formerly Transition Economy and Asian Economic Policy); and Economics, Planning, and Public Policy) covering a period from 2004 to 2015 were collected from the Student Office (N = 1,116). Each paper was examined manually; incomplete or fragmented papers were fixed and consolidated into one file. All papers were then converted into a standardized format and entered into a database.

Corpus Creation
A corpus of GRIPS students' policy papers was created. The size of the corpus is 8.15 million tokens; the corpus can be searched by program, year, methodology, topic, advisor, length of papers in pages and in words, gender of author, number of sources in references, and number of tables and/or figures. The corpus has been prepared for electronic analysis, which will be conducted in the second phase of the project. This analysis can provide insight into the language used by students and if/how this has changed over the duration of the period under study.

Dependent Variable Construction
The dependent variable in this analysis is the writing quality of student policy papers. In the first phase of the project, we conducted an extensive review of relevant literature to construct a rating scale, which can be used to measure the quality of student writing. The result of this review was the development of a holistic scale based on a theoretical framework that details the elements of writing at universities (e.g., Hale, et al., 1996; Purves, 1992; Weigle, 2011). This scale has three dimensions—overall quality (e.g., content and organization), presentation (language use), and use of sources (i.e., amount of plagiarism).

References
Hale, G., Taylor, C., Bridgeman, B., Carson, J., Kroll, B., & Kantor, R. (1996). *A study of writing tasks assigned in academic degree programs* (Educational Testing Service Research Report no. 54).
Purves, A. C. (1992). Reflections on research and assessment in written composition. *Research in Teaching and English, 26*(1), 108-122.
Weigle, S. C. (2011). *Assessing writing*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Accomplishment:
Please fill in the list of Accomplishment

Other things to report:

None

List of Accomplishment
(including forthcoming)

Article
Academic papers (including those published in general journals)
*For collaboratively authored papers, please underline your name.

				The number of referred article 0					0		0
	Author	Title	Publisher	Vol/No/ Page	Date of Publications	Start page	Finish page	Referee Report (yes=1)	International joint authorship (yes=1)	DOI	Open Access (yes=1)
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Book
*For collaboratively edited or authored books, please underline your name.
*If you are an author of a chapter in a book, please report in "Article" category.

	Author	Title	Publisher	Date of Publications	Total pages
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Verbal Report
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	Name	Title	Name of the workshop	Report Date	Venue
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