March 16, 2023

Dear CALICO Graduate Student Award Committee:

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support for Ms. Blanche Gao for the Robert A. Fischer Outstanding Graduate Student Award 2023. I have known Blanche since she took my Intro to CALL class in 2020, where she excelled. She is an active member of the CALL Club at ASU, which organizes several CALL-related events throughout the year, including the AZCALL conference. Additionally, she served as TA for my CALL Praxis class in spring 2021 and for my SLA class in fall semester 2021. Her performance as a TA in both classes was exceptional. She attended weekly class sessions and regularly led class discussions targeting student postings. She also assisted in trouble shooting technical issues during COVID and proved herself to be a knowledgeable, responsible, and caring TA.

She is a passionate researcher in the field of game-mediated second and foreign language learning and has presented her work at national and international conferences such as CALICO. Her research forwards the L2 gaming agenda as she seeks to understand the nuances in different learning contexts, for example, her primary focus seeks to explore in what ways English language learners participate in game-mediated activities and how co-participating in these activities provides opportunities for second language learning.

Her research also helps bridge the research-pedagogy gap through conducting ethnographic, classroom-based research in this domain. She has wisely reached out to CALL scholars outside of the ASU community who specialize in L2 gaming to be members of her dissertation committee.

I am sure that as Blanche continues to contribute to the global CALL community and emerge as a CALL teacher-scholar, her presence in CALICO will be especially influential and welcome! She is already involved in CALICO’s Gaming SIG and is getting more involved with Graduate Student SIG as well. She has already shown her enthusiasm and commitment at a local level with her ongoing leadership role in the CALL Club at ASU as well as her efforts is helping organize the AZCALL 2021 and 2022 conferences. She is also very involved in organizing other club activities, such as our spring research incubator and spring guest lecture.

Ms. Gao is certainly an excellent graduate student and emerging CALL scholar. I give her my highest recommendation for this award.

Sincerely yours,

Bryan Smith
Professor of Applied Linguistics
Director, CALL Graduate Certificate
Editor, CALICO Journal
# Yuchan (Blanche) Gao

Learning, Literacies, and Technologies  
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College  
Arizona State University  
Website: [ygao148@asu.edu](mailto:ygao148@asu.edu)  
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-6216-2801

## EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Program</th>
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</table>
| Ph.D.  | Arizona State University, Tempe | Tempe, Arizona | Expected: May 2023 | Learning, Literacies, and Technologies  
Committee: Elisabeth R. Gee (chair), Katie Bernstein, Jonathon Reinhardt (University of Arizona), Julie Sykes (University of Oregon) |
| M.Ed.  | The University of Virginia, Charlottesville | Charlottesville, Virginia | 2017 | Curriculum and Instruction |
| B.A.   | Southern Illinois University, Carbondale | Carbondale, Illinois | 2015 | Linguistics (concentration in TESOL) |

## Professional Certificates

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<th>Certificate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cert.</td>
<td>Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL)</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arizona State University, Tempe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cert.</td>
<td>Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Specialist</td>
<td>2019</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oxford TEFL Teacher Training</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cert.</td>
<td>Diploma Programme (DP) Language B Category 2 English Acquisition Instructor</td>
<td>2018</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Baccalaureate (IB) Program</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cert.</td>
<td>Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<td>University of Virginia, VA</td>
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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Research Assistant</td>
<td>Arizona State University, Tempe</td>
<td>2019-present</td>
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<td>Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Play in the Making Lab (<a href="http://example.com">previous work website</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principal Investigator: Elisabeth R. Gee</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Years Educators at Play (<a href="http://example.com">website</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principal Investigator: Katie Bernstein, Scott Marley</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Under)Graduate Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>Arizona State University, Tempe</td>
<td>2014-present</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of English (Mentor Professor: Bryan Smith)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIN 520: Second Language Acquisition Theories</td>
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<td>APL 558: Computer-Assisted Language Learning Praxis</td>
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<td>Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College</td>
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CV_Yuchan (Blanche) Gao

SED 567: Professional/Field Experience I Maple Leaf Schools Internship
EDT 180: Digital Technology Literacy and Problem Solving
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale 2014
Department of Linguistics

Secondary School ESL Instructor, Curriculum Director 2017-2019
Perkiomen School, PA
BISS International School, China
Harrow International School of Beijing, China

English Instructor, Department Coordinator 2018
BISS International School, China
Department of Language Acquisition

Teaching Assistant, Communication Consultant 2015-2017
The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
Center for American English Language & Culture
School of Continuing & Professional Studies
McIntire School of Business

SCHOLARSHIP

Refereed Journal Articles


Refereed Journal Articles Currently Under Review


Refereed Conference Proceedings


Regional and (inter)National Conferences


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GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND HONORS

**Awards & Honors**

*American Educational Research Association (AERA)*

Graduate Student Travel/Registration Award 2021

*Computer and Internet Applications in Education Special Interest Group*
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

Senior Class Academic Honors 2015
International Students Tuition Awards ($1,000) 2014

Arizona State University, Tempe

The Outstanding Research Award ($750) 2022

Nusbaum Trust
A Better Life Scholarship ($6,000) 2022-2023

Grants ($16,305)
The International Research Foundation for English Language Education
$4000 2022 Doctoral Dissertation Grant Fall 2022

Arizona State University, Tempe
$655 Sullivan Ed Tech Travel Award, Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College Spring 2021
$950 Graduate and Professional Students Association Travel Grants Spring 2021
$900 Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College Research Mini Grants Spring 2021
$2000 Graduate and professional Students Association Research Support Grant Spring 2022
$2700 LLT Dissertation Grant Spring 2022
$200 Dr. Zsuzsi Abrams AZCALL Travel Grant Spring 2022
$150 Graduate College Travel Award January 2022
$500 Graduate and Professional Students Association Travel Grants Spring 2021
$3750 Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College Travel Grant 2019-2021

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale
$500 Undergraduate Student-to-Student International Grant 2014

Fellowships
Arizona State University, Tempe
$80,000 Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College Fellowship 2019-present

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale
$1,000 The Augusta & Jimmy Auerbach Endowed Memorial Scholarship 2015

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

College Teaching
Instructor of Record, EDT 180: Tech Literacy Problem Solving Using Digital Technology Applications, Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, Arizona State University-Tempe, Fall 2022
Teaching Assistant, LIN 520: Second Language Acquisition Theories, Professor Bryan Smith, Arizona State University-Tempe, Fall 2021
Teaching Assistant, SED 567: Professional/Field Experience I Maple Leaf Schools Internship, Instructor Tera McDonald, Arizona State University-Tempe, Spring 2021
Teaching Assistant, APL 558: Computer-Assisted Language Learning Praxis, Professor Bryan Smith, Arizona State University-Tempe, Spring 2021
Teaching Consultant, ESL911: Classroom Communication for International Teaching Assistants, UVa, January 2016-May 2017
Writing Tutor, Center for American English Language & Culture (CAELC), UVa, August-December 2016
Head Classroom Assistant, Visiting Faculty Program, School of Continuing & Professional Studies, UVa, August 2015-May 2016
Teaching Assistant, Department of Linguistics, SIU, August-December 2014
Teaching Assistant, East Asian Studies Department, UVa, January-May 2016
Chinese Language Teacher, Chinese Language & Culture Table, SIU, August 2013-May 2014

K-12 Teaching
Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Specialist, Harrow International School of Beijing, October 2018-June 2019
MYP English Acquisition / DP English Language B Instructor, Language Acquisition Department, Beijing BISS International School, August-October 2018
Curriculum Director, English Language & American Culture Institute, Perkiomen School, Pennsylvania, February-July 2018
ESL Instructor, Perkiomen School, Pennsylvania, July 2017-June 2018
ESL Specialist, ESL@PERK Summer Camp, Perkiomen School, Pennsylvania, July-August 2017
ESL Teacher Intern, St. Anne’s-Belfield School, Virginia, January-May 2017
ESL Teacher Intern, Buford Middle School, Virginia, January 2016-December 2017
EFL Instructor, Beijing Royal School, China, May-August 2016

Tutoring
Writing Tutor, Center for American English Language & Culture (CAELC), UVa, August-December 2016
Chinese Tutor, East Asian Studies Department, UVa, January-May 2016

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
The Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) Club at ASU
   Vice President, January-December 2022
   Communication Officer, June 2020-December 2021
American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL)
   Graduate Student Council (GSC), Event Planning Subcommittee member, June 2020-May 2022
The Infinity Game Lab
   Operation Officer, Arizona State University-Tempe, Fall 2019-Fall 2022
Computer-Assisted Language Instruction Consortium (CALICO), Fall 2019-present
   Special Interest Group: Gaming; Graduate Student Council
American Educational Research Association (AERA), Fall 2019-present
   Special Interest Group: Second Language Research
International Society of the Learning Sciences (ISLS), Fall 2019-present
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Association, Fall 2017-present

SCHOLARLY SERVICE
Reviewer Experience
Ludic Language Pedagogy (LLP)
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Association 2021, 2022
American Educational Research Association (AERA) 2019-2020
Learning Sciences Graduate Student Conference (LSGSC) 2019

Conference/Event Organizing Experience
AZCALL Annual Conference, CALL Research Incubator, Spring Talk 2020, 2021, 2022
CALL Club, ASU
Graduate Student Council (GSC) Workshops, Webinars, Networking Events 2021, 2022
American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL)

Roundtable Chair/Discussant
Instruction and Language Learning Roundtable 2022
American Educational Research Association (AERA)

Interim Project Manager
Early Years Educators at Play 2022
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, ASU
Website: https://www.literacyatplay.org/

Others
Graduate Student Representative to the Programs Committee 2021-2022
Learning, Literacies, and Technologies Ph.D. Program, ASU
Grants and Awards Reviewer 2022
Graduate and Professional Association, ASU

LANGUAGES
Mandarin Chinese (native proficiency)
English (native equivalent)
Cantonese Chinese (comprehension level)
French, Spanish, Korean (foundational level)
I. To the candidates

Once you have completed this award application, please forward it and a current CV to your mentor professor for finalization and emailing to CALICO. Fill out the personal information and respond to the five questions with a maximum of 200 words for EACH question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Yuchan Gao (Blanche)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University &amp; name of degree program</td>
<td>Arizona State University-Tempe PhD in Learning, Literacies, and Technologies CALL Certificate (already completed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tentative) title of dissertation</td>
<td>Game-Mediated Second Language Learning in a Secondary Content Class: Exploring Opportunities through Social Interaction and Languaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization memberships (include dates)</td>
<td>Ludic Language Pedagogy Reviewer, Spring 2022-present American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) Graduate Student Council (GSC), Event Planning Subcommittee member, June 2020-June 2022 The Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) Club at ASU Vice President, January 2022-December 2022 Communication Officer, June 2020-December 2021 Volunteer member, December 2019-May 2020 The Infinity Game Lab 2nd Officer, Fall 2021-December 2022 4th Officer, Arizona State University-Tempe, Fall 2019-Spring 2020 Computer-Assisted Language Instruction Consortium (CALICO) Special Interest Group: Gaming, Fall 2019-present Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Association, Fall 2017-present Conference reviewer 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Provide a description of your primary research in CALL with a short justification regarding its future significance to teaching and learning.

My primary research in CALL revolves around the use of game-mediated activities in supporting second and foreign language learning and teaching, in particular for English language learners. Gaming in CALL has received growing attention in the past years and is suggested to be effective for language learning. However, games come in different types and genres, and each case might afford different opportunities for language learning and teaching. Although a growing number of studies have been conducted to further understand how to better incorporate games in language education, much still needs to be understood regarding the effectiveness and various ways of application in different educational contexts, particularly a content-language integrated context. Thus, my primary line of research, beginning with my dissertation, seeks to explore in what ways English language learners participate in game-mediated activities and how co-participating in these activities provides opportunities for second language learning.

In my dissertation project, I first propose an instructional model that integrates three existing pedagogical approaches, namely content-based instruction, task-based language teaching, and game-mediated learning. This game-mediated (content and language) dual learning model aims to provide second-language learners with diverse opportunities for language learning through social interaction and collaboration. I collaborated with an independent secondary school in the northeastern U.S. and conducted a three-month ethnographic study on the school campus. The participating class was a sheltered physics class that was specifically arranged for a group of five English language learners, as well as one instructor. During this project, participants were secret agents in training and they completed a series of missions and tasks, such as playing a laptop-based video game and working on a list of wraparound activities that were designed to practice English or physics learning targets. This study has implications for both research and field practices. For research, the findings of this study add to the scholarship of game-mediated second and foreign language education by proposing a new way to integrate some existing approaches with a focus on a content-integrated learning context. In addition, I adopted not only a text-based analytical approach but also a multimodal analysis that focused on participants’ nonverbal behaviors such as gestures, body movements, and facial expressions. For praxis, this study serves as an example for teachers to consider using game-mediated...
activities, especially the wraparound activities that are designed based and around the video game, as a way to facilitate students’ dual learning and social interaction.

2. Describe your CALL research undertaken: projects (e.g. CALL development, pedagogical modules, innovations…) completed and/or currently in progress perhaps as preparation for your dissertation or with another researcher.

My dissertation project titled Game-Mediated Second Language Learning in a Secondary Content Class: Exploring Opportunities for languaging through Social Interaction is currently under investigation. This project explores the ways that English language learners participated in game-mediated activities as a way to facilitate their content-integrated language learning in a high school physics class. More detail can be found in the previous section. Partial findings of this study were presented at the CALICO 2022 conference. One of the article manuscripts was submitted to the CALICO Journal earlier this year. The defense date is set to be early April 2023.

Another project that is currently in progress is playfixing broken games with English language learners. Playfixing broken games is a concept that my research team has been working on for the past few years (see references below). This year, we are piloting this concept with two groups of English language learners and we have collected video-recorded data of them completing the task and participating in post-session interviews. Our proposal has been accepted by the CALICO 2023 conference.

A review of current literature on games and second and foreign language learning was conducted by me and my co-author. We focused on how authors defined games and game-mediated approaches and argued for the need to define the assumptions and beliefs that support their studies clearly. This manuscript is currently under review by a related journal in the field.


3. Describe your experience in language teaching using CALL.

I strongly believe that technologies can be used as a tool to support language learning. I am also passionate about incorporating different technologies into my own teaching practices. At the level of K-12 teaching, I used a number of external websites and apps (e.g., Quizlet, Kahoot, Flipgrid, Seesaw) to enhance my students’ learning experiences on a regular basis. Moreover, I believe it is every teacher’s job to intentionally incorporate opportunities for students to learn and practice digital literacies. For instance, I designated sections of my curriculum for technology-based projects (e.g., extensive reading and book sharing using a slideshow). At the level of university teaching, I continued incorporating the use of technologies (e.g., slideshows,
storyboards, Padlet) to connect language learning to students’ daily lives in the university ESL classes. In addition, I served as a TA in the CALL Praxis class and Second Language Acquisition class for Dr. Bryan Smith. I introduced several learning technologies (e.g. Mozilla) to the class and I was in charge of grading and providing comments for students’ weekly postings on the courseware sharing assignment (i.e., each student needs to share several coursewares that have values for language learning and/or teaching throughout the semester). The CALL Praxis class was carried out online due to the Covid pandemic, and I helped manage the facilitation of the lecture and class discussion in different online software, such as Zoom and Spatial Chat.

4. Describe up to three subjects on which you have written articles for peer reviewed journals (sole or contributing author).

**Refereed Journal Articles**


**Refereed Journal Articles Currently Under Review**


5. Describe your involvement with CALICO and your anticipated participation in its future.

I have been a member of the CALICO community since 2019 and I also joined the gaming SIG and attended their regular meetings since then.

I submitted a manuscript to the CALICO journal in 2022. I submitted another manuscript to the CALICO Journal in 2023.

I attended and presented at the CALICO 2021 and 2022 conferences. I will be presenting again at the CALICO 2023 conference. In addition, I will work as a student volunteer to help organize the 2022 conference.


II. To the mentor professor
A. Please answer the following questions regarding the graduate student candidate.

1. Is the candidate in good academic standing? YES NO
2. Has the candidate begun dissertation research/data collection? YES NO
3. Is the candidate’s dissertation primarily focused on CALL? YES NO

B. Please provide a letter of recommendation focusing on the elements in section I of the application and speak to why this graduate student is deserving of the CALICO Outstanding Graduate Student Award.
Please email this application cover sheet along with the candidate’s responses, his/her CV, and your responses and letter to Esther Horn at ec06@TXSTATE.EDU. Thank you very much for your participation in this process.