1. Overview of project

*eComma* (aka “The eCommentary Machine”) is a web application that enables groups of students, scholars, or general readers to build collaborative commentaries on a text and to search, display, and share those commentaries online in a more pliable form than has previously been available. Originally designed by graduate students and faculty members of the Department of English at the University of Texas at Austin, the goal of COERLL’s project is to apply *eComma* to the foreign and second language classroom. The focus of the first year was usability testing and classroom experimentation in the foreign language context. For the second year, in light of what we learned from the usability studies, we undertook a complete redesign of the application. We have significantly changed the interface and added some important features. Our goal for year three is to finish all aspects of the website, including tutorials to guide new users as well as information about how to host *eComma* as an open source module on a local server. We intend to launch *eComma* in early 2013.

2. Accomplishments and current status of the project

During this past year, Nathalie Steinfeld Childre, head programmer for *eComma*, finished a major redesign of the interface in Drupal. The major goal of our second year was to create a program that worked seamlessly with different browsers, operating systems and Drupal modules. Today, the new program has a totally new look and several new functionalities:

- A back end for administrators/researchers who can now download all user comments and tags as a text file for analysis;
- Comment data can be downloaded as XML doc or imported to a Google docs spreadsheet.
- A new set of icon buttons have been placed in the middle of the page to enhance navigation between the text’s word cloud, tag view, comment view, comment word cloud and user annotation list;
- An extensive help page now gives users important information.

Following the redesign, Dr. Blyth tested *eComma* in February in several linguistics classes at UT-Austin to assure that users liked the new functions and understood the new navigation interface. In March, the redesigned program was demonstrated to a group of German applied linguists from across the country that had gathered at UT-Austin as part of the fourth biennial German Studies Workshop. This semester, *eComma* is scheduled for installation and use in a graduate applied linguistics course at the University of Arizona (Dr. Chantelle Warner) and in Spanish Lower Division classes at the University of Utah (Dr. Joshua Thoms). The feedback from these very different users will help us to create the user tutorials that will be featured on the new website. Finally, as part of an effort to create and curate a community of practice around this new tool, Professors Blyth, Warner and Thoms will post reports of their experiences with *eComma*. We hope that their reports will help us seed this new community.