What encourages and discourages students to use a self-access centre?

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ABSTRACT

This presentation will report on what encourages and discourages students to use a self-access centre (SAC), based on observations and interviews to SAC users and non users. One of the most important factors influencing their use of the SAC was likely to be mindset (Dweck 2006), learners' implicit views of where ability comes from. It was also suggested that what images they have on the SAC could play a significant role on their decision making on their use.

Literature Review

What encourages leaners to use the SAC more?

【External Stimulations】

- ✓an orientation program
- ✓ an effective layout
- ✓learning materials
- ✓Learning systems
- ✓human resources:
  - Teaching assistants, friends, other users (Shibata, 2010)
- ✓language learning advising

【Affective Factors】

- ✓Motivation
- ✓Autonomy
- ✓Familiar to the SAC
- ✓Familiar to the teachers

Extensive Reading (Shibata et al, 2011, 2013)

- 500,000 to 1 million words in a semester
- Read extensively outside classrooms autonomously

The Present Study

Data collection:

- Field notes
- Observations
- Semi-structured interviews
- Comments at advising sessions
- Through informal conversations

Data analysis:

- Go through the data
- Highlight key expressions based on the research questions:

  What encourages and discourages learners to use the SAC at our university?
- Code the highlighted key expressions
- Interpret the codes
- Construct concepts

Results and discussions
Key concepts:

① Mindsets, fixed or growth (Dweck 2006): learners' implicit views of where ability comes from

② Images(Labels) of the SAC:

How learners label the SAC, a place for high proficiency students

The fixed mindset

Beliefs

Believing that their qualities are carved in stone

Believing IQ scores told the whole story of who they were

Behaviors

An urgency to prove themselves over and over

Focusing on how they look: smart or not

Worrying they will be accepted or rejected

Hide deficiencies instead of overcoming them

Self-insight

Greatly misestimate their performance and their ability

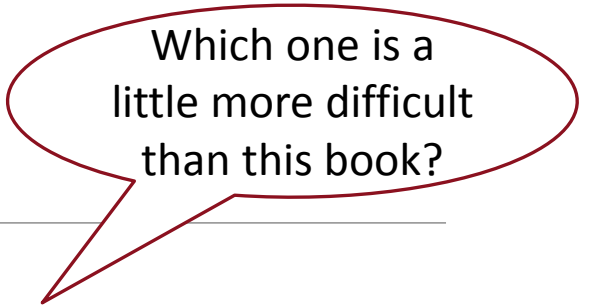
What do people think of my using the center?

I am interested in only getting high TOEIC scores

Teachers might think I am stupid if I ask such basic questions…

The SAC is for "smart" students.

The growth mindset

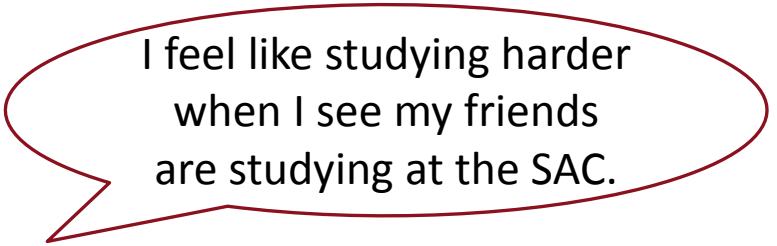


Beliefs

Their basic qualities are things they can cultivate through their efforts

It's impossible to foresee what can be accomplished with years of passion, toil, and training.

Behaviors



Concerned with improving

Developing ability through learning

Preferring challenging learning materials (not too challenging so they can achieve)

Self-insight

Estimating their performance and ability more accurately: need accurate information about your current abilities in order to learn effectively

Sternberg(2007)

…the major factor in whether people achieve expertise “is not some fixed prior ability, but purposeful engagement.”

Gardner (1997)

exceptional individuals have “a special talent for identifying their own strengths and weaknesses.”

Binet (1975)

With practice, training, and above all, method, we manage to increase our attention, our memory, our judgment and literally to become more intelligent than we were before.

FLSSC

- Since2008
- Monday-Friday 9:00～18:00
- Teachers, a staff, student teaching assistants

- Advising
- Speaking practice (appointment system)
- Extensive reading
- Support for TOEIC, TOEFL, Eiken
- Support for studying abroad programs
- Christmas, Halloween events
- Web Based Training (Alc NetAcademy 2)

Information

Web Based Training

Events

Progress board for extensive reading

Implications

For further study:

- quantitative research targeting a large number of users and non users
- action research : How can teachers help learners have the growth mindset?

For encouraging learners to use the SAC

- More understanding about self-access language learning and the SAC from other teachers
- What feedbacks to give in order to help learners have more growth mindset