# JASAL Journal

Volume 1, Issue I

**Edited by**
**Katherine Thornton and Garold Murray**


The Japan Association for Self-Access Learning
日本自律学習学会

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# Greetings from the Editorial Board

Mutsumi Kawasaki, Gifu University
Joe Tomei, Kumamoto Gakuen University
Naomi Fujishima, Okayama University

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Japan Association of *Self-Access Learning (JASAL) Journal*, for which we are honored to have Katherine Thornton and Garold Murray as guest editors. Katherine Thornton was the JASAL president from 2011–2016 and currently serves on the Executive Board as events coordinator. She is the programme director at E-CO (English Cafe at Otemon) Self-Access Center at Otemon Gakuin University, and a regular column editor of *Studies in Self-Access Learning (SiSAL) Journal*. Garold Murray founded JASAL with Lucy Cooker in 2005 and was president from 2005–2010. He has also served as convener of the AILA Research Network on Learner Autonomy in Language Learning (2005–2011). He has extensive experience of establishing, managing, and researching self-access centers in Japan, and he has edited several books in the field. Together, their extensive knowledge and expertise have helped this journal get off to the firmest and strongest possible start.

The launch of this journal is a significant event for JASAL, and we hope you are as excited as we are to see the first issue published. The editorial board would like to thank the editorial team, the authors, the reviewers, and everyone else who has helped in the various stages of the production process.

We anticipate that this journal will be a great resource for advancing the development of self-access language learning in Japan and beyond. We look forward to receiving your submissions for future issues. Thank you for joining us on this journey!

日本自律学習学会（JASAL）ジャーナルの創刊号をお届けします。この度は、Katherine Thornton と Garold Murray をゲストエディターとして迎えられたことを光栄に思います。Katherine Thornton は、2011 年から 2016 年まで本学会の会長を務め、現在はイベント・コーディネーターとして執行委員会に属しています。追手門学院大学にあるセルフ・アクセスセンター（E-CO）のブログラム・ディレクターであり、SiSAL Journal のコラムエディターでもあります。Garold Murray は 2005 年に Lucy Cooker と共に JASAL を立ち上げ、2005 年から 2010 年の間、会長を務めました。また、AILA Research Network on Learner Autonomy in Language Learning の主催者でもあります。日本のセルフ・アクセス・センターにおける幅広い知識と経験を持ちながら、この分野に関する書籍の編集もされています。この２人のゲ

ストエディターの広範な知識と深い専門性によって、ジャーナルの順調なスタートを切ることができました。

JASAL にとってジャーナルの発行は大変重要な出来事であり、皆様も同じように創刊号を楽しみにしていただければ幸いです。編集委員、著者の皆様、査読委員をはじめ、このジャーナル発行のあらゆる段階に関わったすべての方に感謝いたします。

このジャーナルが日本国内外の自律学習の更なる発展に役立ちますことを期待しております。

# JASAL Journal: The Inaugural Issue

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The publication of the inaugural issue of the Japan Association of Self-Access Learning (JASAL) Journal signals the coming-of-age of a once fledging organization. In June of 2005, Lucy Cooker, a pioneer of self-access language learning in Japan, invited colleagues from around the country to a meeting at Kanda University of International Studies in Chiba to discuss the possibility of forming an academic association. Although self-access learning was relatively new to Japan at that time, teachers at universities scattered the length of the country were starting up modest centres. There was a need for professional collaboration and support. Out of that meeting, the Japan Association of Self-Access Language Learning emerged.

Over the past fifteen years, self-access language learning has expanded exponentially across the country. Today, approximately 50 universities have registered their centres on the JASAL website. In these facilities, educators are not only fostering out-of-class learning opportunities and providing language advising services, but they are engaging in experimentation aimed at improving practice and initiating research projects focusing on broadening our understanding of the potential of self-access learning to meet learners' needs. Keeping pace with these developments, JASAL itself has also grown, and since 2015 has held its own national conference each year.

While the association has been active in providing venues for educators to report on their projects locally, there is a need for these reports to be preserved and made available to a wider, even global, audience. As a repository of knowledge and experience, and by publishing Japanese papers as well as ones written in English, the JASAL Journal has the potential to support and encourage self-access educators and administrators as they carry out research, experiment to improve practice and work daily to better meet learners' needs.

## This issue

The papers in this issue illustrate the scope of the work being carried out in self-access centres around Japan. They also highlight the concerns and priorities of practitioners as evidenced by their choice of research topics and focus on specific issues of practice. The papers collected here explore the following themes:

- *Adapting to the demands of government and university policies*. **Ohara and Mizukura** examine how the Japanese ministry of education's policies in response to globalization and their implementation at the university level has impacted learners and their participation in self-access activities, focusing particularly on the pressure it exerts on their emerging translingual identities.
- *Integrating self-access and classroom learning*. In their paper **Eto, Saunders and Itoi** explore how language learning strategy training might be incorporated into the curriculum at their institution. On a similar theme, **Hutchinson** compares two

classroom interventions designed to support the development of learner autonomy, one focused on goal-setting and out-of-class activities, the other on in-class experimentation with learning activities.

- *Providing advising services*. One of the key programmes offered by centres is language advising. **Warrington and Parsons** present a model for learning advisor autonomy and report on how they applied it in their own work.
- *Fostering language learning through social interaction*. In their Japanese paper, **Wakisaka, Hayashi, Kitagawa, Wolanski, Harada and Cai** compare experiences of a teletandem programme at two different institutions, in which students learning several languages participated in online extracurricular language exchanges. In their discussion of practices paper, **Cladis, Eades, Tachibana and Worth** look at how students might be encouraged to take advantage of a "free conversation" programme and, by so doing, become engaged in possible emergent communities. **Wongsarnpigoon and Imamura** report on the establishment of a new area within their multilingual self-access space, where students can engage in translanguaging and are supported to use English without the pressure of an English-only environment.
- *Attracting newcomers to the centre*. For social programmes to be effective, they need people. In their paper, **Von Joo, Werner and Suga** describe their outreach programme and its success in drawing in learners and meeting their specific needs.

In addition to these research papers and discussions of practice, **Suga** gives her reflections on attending the JASAL2019 National Conference as a recipient of a JASAL Newcomer Grant.

As the variety of topics addressed in this inaugural issue of the journal suggest, self-access learning faces any number of challenges. However, this collection of papers also suggests that educators are meeting these challenges head on. Moving forward, the JASAL Journal has a key role to play in supporting this important work.

The editors would like to thank the JASAL Journal editorial board and wider team for all their support in producing this inaugural issue, and all the reviewers and copyeditors whose feedback was invaluable. Finally, congratulations to all the authors – we hope you all enjoy reading their work.

# The Role of a Self-Access Learning Center in Japan: Accommodation of Translingual Practice amidst International Educational Reform

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## Author Biography

Tetsushi Ohara is a senior lecturer in Japanese at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU). His research interests include comprehending learner autonomy in language learning, designing class activities to promote active learning, and articulating the roles of Self-Access Learning Centers.

Ryo Mizukura is a senior assistant professor at the Organization for International Collaboration in Meiji University. His research interest is in translingual identity of language teachers and students, language ideology, and English as a Lingua Franca in higher education.

**Abstract**

In recent years, Japanese higher education has seen drastic reforms to accommodate the rapid changes of social structure and economic order in light of globalization. The government has promoted a policy of educating university students to become active participants in the future global society. Although the government has financially supported these university reformations, mainly neoliberal procedures have been employed; universities have been held responsible for their own reformation, while accountability has been ensured using numerical data, such as the number of international students or taught English taught courses. As for language education, universities have tended to use language test scores, such as TOEFL and IELTS to evaluate outcomes. However, the knowledge assessed in these language tests is fragmented, regulating learners' diverse language use. Thus, research in applied linguistics has recently begun to critically evaluate such neoliberal measures of reform. The present case study aimed to qualitatively assess how a Japanese university's globalization policy has influenced the development of translingual agency in two students working as peer advisors at the university's Self-Access Learning Center (SALC). The results indicated that the neoliberal reformation of language education could influence the natural language activities of translingual language learners, but that the SALC could be an important place for learners to explore their translingual identities and engage in diverse language activities.

近年グローバル化の最中、日本の高等教育は社会構造や経済秩序の急速な変化に対応するため劇的な改革を進めてきた。政府は将来グローバルに活躍できる人材を育てるため、大学生の教育に関して変化を求めてきた。しかし、政府は財政的に大学の改革を支えてきたものの、それらの多くは新自由主義的方策が採用されてきた。すなわち、大学はその改革に責任を持つと同時に、説明責任として数値的データを用いて外部に示してきた。例えば、留学生の数や英語の試験の点数といったものである。言語教育については、大学は教育成果を評価するために、TOEFL や IELTS のスコアを使用する傾向にある。しかし、これらのテストで評価される知識は断片化されたものであり、学習者の多様な言語使用を制限してきた。したがって、近年の応用言語学の領域では新自由主義的改革について批判的に評価されている。本研究は、二人のピーアアドバイザーとして大学の自律学習センターで働いていた学生に対し質的な調査を行った。調査では主に、日本の大学のグローバル化政策が、2 人の学生のトランスリンガルなエージェンシーを発揮するにあたりどのように影響を与えてきたのかを検証した。

*Keywords*: translanguaging, language learner identity, language learner agency, McDonaldization, neoliberalism

Accompanying the progression of globalization, a radical reformation of university education has begun in Japan, with the central aim of developing university students to be active participants in the new global society. Although the Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development in 2012 and the Top Global University (TGU) Project in 2014, led by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), has financially supported this reformation, with regards to actual policy-making and implementation, largely neoliberal measures have been employed. Individual universities have been expected to reform their curricula and to demonstrate outcomes by reporting numerical data, such as improved test scores and numbers of students joining study abroad programs. These neoliberal reformation procedures have been subject to scrutiny within applied linguistics (e.g., Block, 2018; Holborow, 2013; Kubota, 2014, 2016) because of the test-based evaluations of linguistic and cultural knowledge. It is widely argued that aspects of language and culture are inseparable and thus cannot be individually measured through tests such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

Although these neoliberal education reformation projects have tended to focus on fragmented knowledge, which is standardized for equal evaluation of English ability, the nature of language use in an international context is more complex. Applied linguists have explored the nature of international communication practices and labeled them as *translanguaging* (García & Li Wei, 2014). Foreign language learners who engage in translanguaging can integrate various languages into one system and choose different resources to communicate with others depending on the context. In translingualism (Canagarajah, 2013), which is an umbrella term encompassing superdiversity (Blommarert & Rampton, 2012), metorolingualism (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015), and translanguaging (García & Li Wei, 2014), it is vital to consider the contradiction between monolithic standards in

neoliberal reformation and the complex nature of international communication or language learning in translingual speakers.

Furthermore, universities in Japan have focused on improvement of language ability of students in the TGU project implementation. However, they have paid less attention to the educational efficacy of Self-Access Learning Centers (SALCs), even though SALCs enable learners to realize their own personally designed language learning through engagement with various resources, teachers, and other learners (Gardner & Miller, 1999). Thus, in order to explore how neoliberal reformation affects students' language learning experiences at a SALC, we report on a qualitative case study of two translingual students at a Japanese university. The following sections will review the relevant theoretical background, describe the methods, and summarize the results of the present study. Finally, the effects of the institution's neoliberal policies on translingual language learning and activities will be discussed.

## Literature Review

### Neoliberalism and Language Education

Neoliberalism is a politico-economic body of thought, which, according to Kubota (2014), encourages "privatizing public services, creating a flexible workforce, and increasing individual and institutional accountability for economic success" (p. 485). Due to the reduction of public services provided by the welfare system, neoliberalism can potentially generate or widen economics gaps between the upper and lower classes.

With regard to language education, neoliberalism has been found to largely influence the English language teaching (ELT) industry. Due to the nature of neoliberalism, individual accountability plays a greater role in decision-making. As quantified results are preferred to measure success, the focus on improvements in scores on tests such as TOEFL or IELTS places pressures on educators and students. This is evidenced in language school

advertisements that claim that by attending their schools, students could improve their TOEFL scores. In Japan, most students must study English as a required subject for university entrance exams, and thus are drawn to books designed specifically for entrance exam preparation and cram schools (Tsuneyoshi, 2013). It seems that this trend in language education could be influenced by the commercialization of education.

Ritzer (2011) developed the concept of McDonaldization, which refers to the phenomenon of various industries and sectors, such as education, operating in ways that resemble fast-food restaurants. It is characterized by efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control (Ritzer, 2011). Gray and Block (2012) criticized the scientific management and tailor-made system of teacher education in ELT industries, which they argue applied these four characteristics. Seargeant (2009) also warned that McDonaldized language education tended to employ widely-used standardized textbooks and teaching methods, aimed at more economical and systematic efficacy rather than promoting the diverse identities and incarnations of the language.

Furthermore, De Costa and Norton (2017) argued that these result-oriented quantitative outcomes largely resembled neoliberalism in that competent teachers focused their teaching on improving students' language test scores. In addition, in spite of the fact that language knowledge is not divisible into discrete fragments, in order to quantitatively evaluate students' learning outcomes, the language has been fragmented and teachers have become a pedagogical tool for inputting fragmented knowledge into students' brains. De Costa and Norton (2017) problematized this tendency for quantification and fragmentation of education and its outcomes, arguing that the nature of education was more dynamic and complex. While the effectiveness of standardized tests for objectively and quickly evaluating English ability should be acknowledged, the diversified and practical language use and learning achieved through SALCs cannot always be applied to language tests, posing a challenge for students who must prioritize studies that directly impact their futures.

**Translingualism and Autonomous Language Learning**

As mentioned above, neoliberal language education has focused on quantitatively measurable knowledge due to institutional accountability. Kubota (2016) argued that neoliberalism in language education tended to ignore the historical aspects of humanity, culture, and subjective experience in language learning. Throughout the continuous expansion of globalization, international communication styles have also diversified considerably. In particular, English has become a lingua franca in the global community, and international communication in English amongst non-native English speakers has spread. Thus, the nature of international communication practices has become increasingly complex.

Many scholars, such as Blommarert and Rampton (2012), have discussed how to interpret the nature of international communication in modern society. Blommarert and Rampton (2012) introduced the term *superdiversity*, which describes the dramatic increase in migrations, resulting in migrants losing sociocultural features, such as their nationality, ethnicity, language, and religion. Because of superdiversity, languages have become mixed and methods of communication have become complex. Furthermore, many scholars (e.g., Canagarajah, 2011; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García & Li Wei, 2014) have discussed these international communication practices in terms of translanguaging, or "the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system" (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 401).

In translingualism, continuous changes in languages similar to the transformations of the world due to the globalization can be observed. According to Canagarajah (2013), although certain features of English may be undeniably helpful in international communication, English cannot be an absolute norm to guarantee successful meaning-making activities in communication. Pennycook (2010) also mentioned that the language systems of each individual are always re-localized with new meanings and values depending on the situation. Thus, a new indexicality of vocabulary and syntax is continuously being generated

in the language system. In other words, the system can persistently be in the state of becoming.

In addition, the concept of learner autonomy has had political and cultural implications on Western perspectives and English. Pennycook (2014) observed that the concept of learner autonomy was founded in individualism from the European Enlightenment and that its dissemination across the world coincided with that of English as an international language. Riley (1988) further critiqued the relationship between learner autonomy and culture, arguing that the definition of learner autonomy failed to include non-Western cultural and educational backgrounds. Other researchers had also tried to investigate the applicability of autonomy in Asian educational contexts (e.g., Palfreyman, 2003; Smith, 2001). However, as Benson (2013) suggested, each individual has his or her own autonomy, and even within an individual, autonomy can be manifested differently according to specific contexts. As the paradigm of translingualism does not follow the monolingual principle of one language as one culture, observing the nature of foreign language learners and learner autonomy from a monolingual perspective would not yield valid results. Thus, it is necessary to consider political and cultural factors when investigating and analyzing how students approach their learning and use languages in the translingual environment.

## Research Methodology

The present research was conducted at a medium-sized international university in Japan, known for its multicultural environment and bilingual education system in which most of the undergraduate courses are held in both Japanese and English. The majority of the international students are from Asian countries and the university has been selected as one of the 24 TGU (Global Traction Type) by MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan, 2019). The university also emphasizes the *globalization* of Japanese students while paying special attention to improving Japanese students' English

ability. As parts of its *global learning* plan, the university promotes high achievement in recognized English tests, such as TOEFL and IELTS, and study abroad experiences.

The SALC offers a range of language learning support to students studying English, Japanese, and Chinese outside of classrooms. Peer advisors (PAs) offer students opportunities to practice English, Japanese, and Chinese and learning advisors (LAs) provide students with advice regarding their language studies and university lifestyles. In addition, the SALC organizes a range of social and cultural events, including Japanese calligraphy lessons, guitar lessons, and movie nights. It also provides a variety of language learning materials, including games and comic books. The SALC is not only a place to study languages, but also a space to socialize with friends. This context could play a significant role in realizing the aim of this research project because it can reveal how these two translingual participants use interesting features of the SALC to design their own language learning and exercise their diverse language use.

**Participants**

This case study focuses on two female Japanese university students, Hanako and Yoshiko[1], who were selected as research participants because of their extensive experiences at the SALC and their abilities to use several languages in communication. The aim was to investigate how and why students' approaches to language learning and use had changed, or not changed, due to their experiences at the SALC. Thus, Hanako and Yoshiko, both of whom were fourth-year students and who had been visiting the SALC since their first year at the university were deemed suitable for the purposes of this observation. Additionally, the two participants had similar experiences, as they both worked at the SALC as PAs, had joined an overseas program at the university, and spoke a third language other than Japanese or English (see Table 1). Both agreed to participate in the study when recruited by the researchers and, following an orientation regarding the study, signed a research participation consent form.

**Table 1**

*General Information on the Participants*

| | Participant 1 | Participant 2 |
|---|---|---|
| Name | Hanako | Yoshiko |
| Gender | Female | Female |
| Year | 4th | 4th |
| Languages | Japanese, English, and Indonesian | Japanese, English, and Korean |
| International experience | **1.** Indonesia (one-year exchange at a senior high school)<br>**2.** Indonesia (eight-month internship as a Japanese language assistant) | **1.** United Kingdom (one-year exchange at a university) |
| PA experience at the SALC | 3 years | 0.5 year |

**Data Collection Methods**

This study employed narrative inquiry to investigate the participants' diachronic experiences, particularly concerning foreign language learning and the use of translanguaging in the two participants. Their stories were collected in Japanese. To account for varying storytelling abilities and the subjective nature of the narratives, this study employed two different types of narrative (Flick, 2007, 2014). First, the participants were asked to write about their language learning history[2] (LLH; Barkhuizen et al., 2013) at the end of their third year at the university. Subsequently, they participated in semi-structured oral narrative interviews in Japanese when they were fourth year students.

In the LLH, they were asked to reflect on their past experiences at the SALC, explaining their language learning experiences and use. The interview questions aimed to extract more narrative from the participants to attain deeper insights into their LLHs. Considering the practical limitations (i.e., time and place) of each data collection method, this research followed Riemann's suggestion (as cited in Flick, 2014), primarily focusing on "how" questions, followed by "why" questions. In addition, in order to further triangulate the data, one of the language support sessions was recorded with an IC recorder. As both participants worked as PAs at the SALC to support international students, this data was expected to provide insight into how they actually interacted with students at the SALC.

**Data Analysis**

The purpose of this research was to understand the SALC's role in foreign language learning and its use by describing and analyzing two translingual students' experience at the SALC. In Strauss's (1987) thematical coding, researchers are required to generate short descriptions about cases in order to decide on the rules for coding. To do this, all of the audio data from the oral narrative interviews and support sessions were transcribed. Next, each of the researchers independently analyzed the data from the LLH and the interviews to find possible themes and generate codes for the data. These were discussed and consolidated (see Table 2 for a sample of the coding).

**Table 2**

*Example of coding in narrative data analysis*

| Time | Narrative | Codes | Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st semester | […] I explained how to cook my | 1. FAMILIAR TOPICS | LLH |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| favorite meal[1]. […] John sent me a text with a picture showing that he actually used my recipe, which we had talked about in the session when we discussed him cooking by himself[2]. After that, I went to the SALC every day and the SALC became one of the most comfortable places[3] for me. | 2.<br><br><br><br><br><br>3. | EXCHANGE MESSAGES<br><br><br><br><br><br>COMFORTABLE PLACE |

## Findings

### Hanako's Story

Hanako had initially been influenced by the image of the ideal Japanese university student, which entailed being proficient at English, going to a university in an English-speaking country as an exchange student, and becoming a successful *global* person. She felt the need to improve her TOEFL scores and pursue an exchange program because she was a student at an international university and because most of her fellow Japanese students would be held to similar expectations. She also believed that she had to speak *perfect* English in order to interact with international students. These factors restricted her language activities.

Although she struggled to improve her English, she felt comfortable at the SALC, due to the friendly support she received from the PAs and LAs. As a result, she aspired to become a Japanese PA to support international students studying Japanese at the SALC, which she was able to do beginning in her second year at university. Because she worked as a PA, the SALC changed from a place to study English to a place to work and support other students. In using English, Japanese, and Indonesian to communicate with other PAs and students, she came to realize the importance of conveying her message, rather than speaking

each language perfectly. Meanwhile, she also became interested in Southeast Asian culture and people, eventually joining a Japanese teaching assistant program in Indonesia. Her SALC experience empowered her to find unique language activities and gave her opportunities to develop her translingual identity as well as explore her own interest. Thus, the SALC became the most important place for her during her university life.

**Transition in Hanako's Approach to Language Learning and Use**

Hanako began with negative feelings towards English because she compared herself to her friends who were better at English. This motivated her to visit the SALC, which was introduced to her in an English class during her first semester. At the SALC, she focused on studying English for improving her tests results and coursework through support provided by English PAs and LAs. However, as she struggled to improve her English, her negative emotions toward English remained.

After becoming a Japanese PA, she had increased opportunities to communicate with other PAs and international students. She used English, Japanese, and Indonesian to interact with them and was able to build strong relationships. Because of her need to communicate with such a diverse group, she became less focused on speaking *perfect* English and began to mix languages to convey her meaning (see the Appendix for an example of how she interacted with students at the SALC). Her thoughts and approach to language learning and use changed into a more translingual perspective. Table 3 illustrates the change in her notion of language learning and use.

**Table 3**

*Coding in Narrative Data Analysis of Hanako's Approaches to Language Learning and Use*

| Time | Narrative | Codes | Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st semester | Four of my friends were good at English, as they were placed in the Intermediate and Advanced English classes[1]. I started to visit the SALC because I was not good at English and didn't like English[2], so I wanted to improve my English. I thought I had to work hard since I was at this university […] I mainly practiced speaking with a PA at the SALC. In particular, I intensively practiced test topics before English speaking exams[3]. | 1. COMPARISON<br>2. NEGATIVE FEELING TOWARD ENGLISH<br>3. STUDY FOR TESTS AND CLASSES | LLH |
| 3rd–4th semester | In the SALC, I became friends[1] [with international students] because I could communicate[2] with them without speaking perfect English[3]. Thus, I no longer paid attention to "language" [how fluently or perfectly I spoke each language] much. | 1. FRIENDS<br>2. COMMUNICATION<br>3. PERFECT ENGLISH | LLH |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4th–5th semester | I was shy and didn't want to talk in English [laugh], and I just didn't like [to speak English]. But the idea came to me that I could mix languages[1]. I completely become like… as long as I can convey my messages, it's OK [to talk using mixed languages][2]. […] I think this was quite a big change[3] for me. | 1. MIXED LANGUAGES<br>2. TRANSLANGUAGING<br>3. CHANGE IN LANGUAGE USE | Interview |

**Discovering an Interest in Southeast Asia**

Because the university promoted globalization based on English, many Japanese students felt the need to improve their English and participate in an exchange program to become a successful member of the global society. In her first year, Hanako had also perceived English skills to coincide with *success* and *global competence*. However, through her interactions with Southeast Asian students inside and outside of the SALC, as well as outside the university (i.e., her part-time job at a Vietnamese restaurant), she developed an interest in Southeast Asia. In addition to studying English, she also enrolled in Indonesian language classes and eventually became fluent in Indonesian. In her third year, connecting her interests in Southeast Asia and her Japanese PA experience at the SALC, she joined a Japanese teaching assistantship program in Indonesia for eight months. Table 4 describes the analysis of how her goals had changed since the first semester.

**Table 4**

*Coding in Narrative Data Analysis of Hanako's Goals*

| Time | Narrative | Codes | Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st semester | At the time [1st year], I had a goal, which was similar[1] to other Japanese students. Because I entered this international university[2], I thought I had to improve my English … and then I could become a successful [global] person[3]. | 1. COMMON GOAL<br>3. EXPECTATION (TOP-DOWN)<br>4. ENGLISH = SUCCESS AND GLOBAL | Interview |
| 4th–5th semester | I was thinking that it would be good if I could go to an English-speaking country using an exchange program at the university or joining a study abroad program at my own expense because my English would be improved a lot, but I realized that I actually liked the atmosphere of Southeast Asia[1] […] and the people there. So, my idea changed[2] to, if I had a | 1. SOUTHEAST ASIA<br>2. CHANGE IN GOAL<br>4. FINIDING OWN INTEREST (BOTTOM-UP) | Interview |

| | |
|---|---|
| | chance, wanting to challenge myself[3] in Southeast Asia without sticking to English. |

**Development of Meaning and Value at the SALC**

As described above, for Hanako, in the beginning the SALC was a place to study English. However, because of her role as a PA, the SALC was no longer only a place to study English, but also a place to work and support other students. As a result of her experiences at the SALC, Hanako was empowered to explore her translingual identity and discover her interest in Southeast Asia. In her third year, Hanako became the leader of the Japanese PAs, and her commitment to the SALC increased. She made a considerable effort to improve the SALC and her contribution was recognized by many of the other PAs, LAs, and coordinators at the SALC. Thus, the SALC became the most important place for her in her university life as Table 5 exemplifies.

**Table 5**

*Coding in Narrative Data Analysis of Hanako's Development of Meaning and Value at The SALC*

| Time | Narrative | Codes | Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7th semester | I am a fourth-year student now, but the SALC has been a very, very important place[1] for me, when I look back on my university life […] As other students have a | 1. IMPORTANT PLACE<br>2. SPENDING TIME AND | Interview |

| | |
|---|---|
| passion for their club activities and student organizations, I have spent my time and energy[2] most on the SALC. | ENERGY |

**Yoshiko's Story**

According to Yoshiko, when she entered the university, she was eager to enjoy international communication, but she struggled because she compared herself with other students and felt inferior to them, particularly in her English ability. At this time, the SALC helped relieve her stress and anxiety. She could speak openly with teachers and senior friends about her anxieties concerning her English language learning, and she could enjoy casual conversation with PAs in English. Also, she began to learn Korean and made Korean friends. Later, she became interested in studying abroad and studied intensively to raise her IELTS score, practicing the speaking portion with the PAs. When she passed the exam for the exchange program, she became a PA because she wanted to contribute to the SALC and support Japanese language learning for international students. Although her experiences were different from Hanako's, they eventually led to a similar result, with the SALC becoming the most important place for her in her university life.

**Complex relation between language and surroundings**

Based on Yoshiko's narrative, two points of contrast were evident in how she had learned and used languages at the beginning of her university life: English and Korean languages, and classroom studies and SALC. For her, English was perceived as a challenge invoking negative emotions, such as inferiority or anxiety. To cope with this, she required a comfortable place to release her negative emotions and to be reminded of her original goal of getting involved in international communication. In contrast, she had more positive views of

the Korean language and voluntarily spent time with Korean students. She did not seem to alter her behavior according to the context or environment. When she was with Korean students, she did not restrict herself solely to Korean. Rather, she chose to use the full capacity of her language resources from Japanese, English, and Korean, mixing the languages and communicating meaning using the most efficient methods possible. Table 6 contains translated excerpts from Yoshiko's written LLH and interview that illustrate her attitudes towards English and Korean.

**Table 6**

*Coding in Narrative Data Analysis of Yoshiko's Relation between Language and Surroundings*

| Time | Narrative | Codes | Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st semester | I was suddenly placed into the higher-level class. In that class, one student had studied abroad, and, well, the other students spoke very well with our teacher[1] […] I didn't have a chance to talk much in class […] So, I was very nervous[2] and I couldn't say anything. […] I used the SALC not as a place for studying, but as a place for enjoying | 1. INFERIOR FEELING<br>2. ANXIETY<br>3. ENJOY CONVERSATION IN ENGLISH | LLH |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | conversations with international students[3]. | | |
| 3rd semester | […] I don't say this in Japanese, but I can say it in Korean. They are slightly similar. I sometimes say Korean words when I'm speaking in Japanese, unintentionally[1, 2]. […] Well, sometimes, if I'm more fluent in Korean, I have difficulty accessing my English […]. | 1. MIXED LANGUAGE<br>2. TRANSLANGUAGING | Interview |

**Conflicts between Yoshiko's Motivation and the School's Policy**

Yoshiko was initially interested in studying abroad in Korea for one year because she had enjoyed learning Korean and had made lasting friendships with Korean students. However, due to the university's exchange program system, she was also forced to consider her TOEFL scores when applying for the program. Although she had initially been internally motivated to study in Korea, the TOEFL score-based criteria for study abroad brought about external pressures, particularly due to the unofficial ranking of countries that had arisen from differences in TOEFL score requirements. Her reason to choose Korea changed from an eagerness to experience the language and culture she loved to the fact that it was possible for her to apply with her current TOEFL score, which was not high.

In addition to her motivation to study abroad, her motivation to study English had also changed, and she spent more time practicing for the speaking section of the IELTS with the PAs. Although her natural interactions with the international students at SALC did not

completely disappear, they had tapered and her language use and intercultural experiences became less diverse. The following extract demonstrates Yoshiko's test-based motivations to pursue Korea for her study abroad experience.

**Table 7**

*Coding in Narrative Data Analysis of Conflicts between Yoshiko's Motivation and The School's Policy*

| Time | Narrative | Codes | Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3rd semester | If I want to go to Asian countries, I don't need a higher score in TOEFL compared with European countries[1]. Also, I heard it's not likely to be competitive[2]. | 1 LOWER LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT<br>2 LESS COMPETITIVE | Interview |
| 3rd semester | Now I have this sort of score in TOEFL and Korea can be a possible choice[3]. I didn't have many choices. | 3 POSSIBLE CHOICE | Interview |

**Entanglement of the Self, Languages, and the Environment**

By her third year at university, the borders between Yoshiko's Japanese, Korean, and English language resources had begun to fade. As a result, her rich language resources and natural ability to use translanguaging as a pedagogy enhanced her work as a PA. Not only had the borders between her language resources faded, but the borders between her and other PAs and the places for learning and international communication also began to blur.

Various aspects of her university life merged to allow her to experience more natural international exchanges and international communication. The following excerpts from her interview and written LLH illustrate this transition.

**Table 8**

*Coding in Narrative Data Analysis of Yoshiko's Notion of The Self, Languages, and The Environment*

| Time | Narrative | Codes | Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5th semester | […] for example, I changed the pronunciation of Chinese characters (*kanji*) from Japanese to Korean because it's easier for Korean students to understand[1]. If they talked to me in English, I answered in English. | 1. CHANGE LANGUAGE FLEXIBLY | Interview |
| 4th semester | The relationship between me and the PAs[1] was kind of like that of student and teacher, so I felt a borderline between us. […] But two SALC PAs invited me into the community. Then, the borderline[2] between me and the other PAs began to fade out. […] I could have nice friendships[3] not | 1. TEACHER- STUDENT RELATIONSHIP<br>2. FADING OUT BORDER<br>3. EXPANSION OF | LLH |

| | |
|---|---|
| only with English PAs, but also Japanese PAs. | FRIENDSHIP |

## Discussion

Many Japanese universities use *globalization* and *international university* as key terms to advertise and receive funding from the government in such initiatives as the TGU Project. However, due to the associations within Japanese society between such keywords and the English language, universities instinctively strive to improve students' English abilities. There is a focus on English test scores (e.g., TOEFL and IELTS), which are thought to have clear criteria to judge students' English ability, to demonstrate degrees of globalization. In addition, it is also easier for universities to use standardized test scores to gauge achievement rather than assessing each individual student's language competency when competing with other countries in the international context. Thus, universities have employed quantitative measures and a standardized *ideal global human resource* norm[3] influenced by McDonaldization instead of emphasizing individual students' agency and diversity in communication styles such as translanguaging. In other words, students and teachers have become part of a McDonaldized language education system (Gray & Block, 2012; Ritzer, 2011).

English is a *lingua franca* and it is important to learn in order to communicate with various people in international situations, even amongst non-native English speakers. Also, given the current political climate, there is clearly a need for accountability in English language education, and English tests can be important tools to show students' English proficiencies. However, imposing strict top-down policies[4] of *globalization* on university students due to business concerns can distract from the key role of the university as an educational institution.

Japanese universities emphasize English as one of the main criteria to judge the degree of the globalization of their students, despite the fact that the majority of their international students are from Asian countries[5]（Japan Student Services Organization, 2020）. In this study, Hanako studied and spoke Indonesian and Yoshiko studied and spoke Korean. As with Hanako and Yoshiko, students at international universities may benefit from opportunities to learn Asian languages to communicate with others in those languages. In fact, Hanako and Yoshiko show that learning languages outside of Japanese and English has been a significant factor in expanding their language activities and international relationships. However, the value of learning and using Asian languages as well as the concept of translanguaging are being overshadowed by the idea that English ability is a central factor in globalization. As De Costa and Norton (2017) indicated, the emphasis on result-oriented quantitative outcomes is related to a neoliberalism perspective. According to this view, the university in this study prioritized and standardized what language students should learn (i.e., English) and how the language should be learned (i.e., test-oriented studies). As a result, in spite of being in a very unique environment within Japan where they could explore diversity in language learning and use, students have often followed the norms set by the university.

The policies and systems emphasizing English and test scores can potentially limit language education, as was evidenced by Hanako and Yoshiko's cases. Both participants showed that their language learning and use were limited when they attempted to follow the norms imposed by the university. McDonaldization of education usually involves the use of standardized teaching methods and a disregard for diversity in education (Seargeant, 2009). Thus, the policies and educational practices set by the university, prominently focusing on English and test scores, have restrained the students' agency in language learning and use.

As an educational institution, the university should create an environment to support each student in finding his or her own way to learn and use languages. Hanako and Yoshiko also demonstrated that students had the ability to express their agency in language learning

and use if there was an environment that supported them. Both of them experienced a period during their university lives in which they struggled to find their aims at the university. However, while changing their roles at the SALC and cultivating relationships with PAs, LAs, and friends, they developed their own understanding of language learning and use and have led a fulfilling university life. This is in accordance with Pennycook's (2010) statement that the language system of each person is re-localized with new meanings and values depending on the situation. One of the most important roles of SALCs is empowering students by offering them a variety of resources (both material and human) so that each student may individually explore language learning and use as well as construct individualized identities and relationships with others. At the university in this study, the SALC played one of the most important roles in not only supporting the students' exploration and achievement of their goals, but also advocating the importance of diversity in language learning to the university as a whole.

Many Japanese universities have become *McUniversities* in the name of globalization (Gray & Block, 2012; Ritzer, 1996). The standardization of English language education based on numbers and statistics may be a means for universities to achieve globalization in Japan. However, such a method is accompanied by the risk of students losing their agency in language learning and use because of the focus on language (e.g., perfect English in Hanako's story) rather than communication (e.g., translanguaging among students). Universities should offer SALCs as a place for students and universities to achieve a diverse perspective on language learning beyond the traditional concepts of bi- and multilingualism. A continuous reexamination and redefinition of the role of SALCs is imperative for supporting individual students in their expressions of agency in language learning and use and their engagements in *languaging*[6] (García, 2014).

As mentioned above**,** this study succeeded in capturing the experiences of two Japanese students who had explored their translingual identities while actively engaging in

the SALC at a Japanese university by using the data from the retrospective narratives written by the students, and the follow-up interviews with them. The data also successfully captured the students' main experiences from their first year at university onward. However, further research through periodic observations of the two participants at the SALC and interviews could reveal more details about how and why their thoughts and approaches to language learning and use have changed. In addition, although it is difficult to argue how many participants are sufficient for qualitative research, a larger sample could help to uncover the diverse forms of language learning and roles the SALC plays in students' university lives. Data collection from a variety of students, teachers, and administrators could shed light on the varying interactions between university language education and the SALC.

## Conclusion

Given the current situation of higher education in Japan, universities may have no choice but to accept the idea of *globalization* proposed by the government in order to secure funds and recognition through participation in programs such as the Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development and the TGU Project. One of the main consumer *goods* in Japan's globalization is English, and English language tests, such as TOEFL and IELTS. Japanese universities give high priority to English language education to promote and advertise their globalization efforts. However, this research shows the importance of offering students opportunities to explore their identities and express their agency in language learning and use. SALCs can be one of the key places to foster diversity in language learning and use as well as to initiate individualized support for students.

## Notes

1. Participant names are pseudonyms.
2. The LLH was written in Japanese and the interview was also conducted in Japanese. All of the excerpts in this paper are English translations by the authors. A sample of our translations was validated by a person with no connection to the study to improve the validity of our translations.
3. This approach is related to a McDonaldized system consisting of efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control (Gray & Block, 2012; Ritzer, 2011). For example, English is considered to be a vital element in global human resources. As universities assume that globalization can be efficiently calculated using English test scores, the language education at the universities focuses more on increasing students' English abilities based on test scores and standardized teaching methods, allowing the university to maintain centralized control over the goal and content of teaching and learning. This allows the university to predict a certain level of performance from both students and teachers. With this rational system, the university can control its globalization, which is one of the key factors involved in government funding.
4. For example, all Japanese students achieve a certain score in recognized English tests such as TOEFL and IELTS.
5. In 2019, 92.7% of the international students in higher education institutions come from Asia (Japan Student Services Organization, 2020).
6. According to García (2014), "English is not a system of language structures; rather, languaging through what is called English is practicing a new way of being in the world" (p.5).

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## Appendix

### A Sample of the Interaction between Hanako and an Indonesian Student at the SALC

The following dialogue (Dialogue 1) is an interaction sequence between Hanako and an Indonesian student who had visited the SALC to talk to her. Hanako and the Indonesian student knew each other, as the Indonesian student had previously received Japanese learning support from Hanako at the SALC. In the dialogue, they were talking about their university lives and Hanako started to discuss the student's search for a circle (club).

**Dialogue 1**

*Interaction between Hanako and an Indonesian Student at the SALC*

H: Hanako S: Student

1) H: *うん。ほんと、よかったね。*[*Yeah. It was really good.]*

2) S: *そう。そう。そう。そう。*[*Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah*.]

3) H: *え、そうだよね。前さ、*Cari *サークルだったじゃん。*[*Oh, is that true? Before, you were looking for a circle, didn't you?*]

4) S: *ん？* Cari? [*Huh?* "Cari?"]

5) H: Cari. Cari. *探してたじゃん。*[Cari. Cari. *You were looking for, remember?*]

6) S: Cari *って?*[*What is* "Cari"?]

7) H: *インドネシア語で*「Cari」*でしょ。* [*Is it* "Cari" *in Indonesian, right?*]

8) S: ...

9) H: Mencari。

10 ) S: *あ、*Mencari。[*Oh*, "Mencari."] [Laugh]

11) H: Are you Indonesian?

12) S&H: [Laugh]

In this interaction sequence, Hanako spoke Japanese (written in italics), Indonesian (underlined), and English to interact with the student because both of them spoke the three languages. First, they were conversing in Japanese, but Hanako began to use Indonesian terms, “cari” and “mencari,” which mean “to look for.” Then, she spoke English, asking, “are you Indonesian,” to tease the student who could not understand the Indonesian terms. In the interview about the interaction sequence, Hanako indicated that she could demonstrate her communication abilities better and make friends with international students more easily by mixing languages.

# Classroom-Based Training Towards Learner Autonomy

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**Abstract**

Fostering learner autonomy is one of the ultimate goals of language education. Various researchers argue that the utilization of language learning strategies (LLS) facilitates autonomous learning. However, learners often do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their LLS utilization in language classrooms since language classes currently give little attention to learner training (LT) on LLS. To address this issue, classroom-based LT was designed and incorporated into an English course at a mid-sized private Japanese university. In this module, students were expected to learn and practice target LLS with support from their course teachers. A list of target LLS was created mainly referring to three existing LLS inventories. Five types of training tools, such as study-note samples and learning resources, were developed and employed for this LT. Since the purpose of the research was to examine the implemented LT for future improvement, two surveys were conducted with 140 students and three teachers following a one-semester-long implementation of LT. Although the survey results revealed students' overall positive perceptions towards LT, the operation of LT still had some room for improvement in terms of support for both students and teachers. This paper describes the implementation of the LT, its rationale, and the analysis of the survey results. Based on the findings, it concludes by providing practical suggestions for designing an LT incorporated English program.

学習者の自律学習能力を育成することは、言語教育の目標の一つである。多くの研究者が、言語学習ストラテジー(LLS)の使用と自律学習能力の向上の関連について論じている。しかし、現在の英語教育ではLLSに関する学習者養成(LT)に注意が向けられていないため、学習者の多くは、授業内でLLSについての理解を深める機会を充分に得ていない。そこで、授業内LTを考案し、日本の中規模私立大学の英語コースのカリキュラムに組み込んだ。このLTでは、教員支援の下、参加者が対象LLSの学習と訓練を行うことが期待された。対象LLSは、既存の3つのLLSリストを参照に作成された。学習ノートサンプルやワークシート等の5つの教材を開発し、指導に利用した。本研究の目的は、このLTの実施状況を分析し、改善のための知見を得ることであったので、一学期間のLT実施後に、サーベイを実施し、学生140名と教員3名から回答を得た。調査結果は、学生のLTに対する前向きな認識を示したが、学生・教員の支援のあり方について、改善の余地を示した。本稿では、この一連のLTの実施内容とその根拠を提示し、調査結果の分析を行う。最後に、これら分析に基づき、今後の授業内LTの実施についての提言を行う。

*Keywords:* learner autonomy, learner training, language learning strategies

The term "autonomy" is defined as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981, p. 3). To be more precise, it is "the ability of the learner to take responsibility for his or her own learning and to plan, organize, and monitor the learning process independently of the teacher" (Hedge, 2000, p. 410). One of the current goals of foreign language education is to foster autonomous learners, since once learners understand how to learn effectively, they can apply this knowledge to achieve their learning goals in the future.

In response to a common question among language practitioners, "How can learner autonomy be developed?", various experts argue that the utilization of language learning strategies (LLS) promotes learners' autonomous learning (Fewell, 2010; Oxford, 1999; Wenden, 1991). Harmer (2001), for instance, suggests that, "students need to develop their own learning strategies, so that as far as possible they become autonomous learners" (p. 335). Therefore, we designed a strategy-based learner training (LT) module and incorporated it into an English course at a Japanese university in order to develop students' autonomous learning.

## Language Learning Strategies

### Definition and Types of LLS

Although there is a lack of consensus regarding the definition and types/classification of LLS, Rubin's (1987) definition of LLS is commonly referred to by various researchers. Rubin explains LLS as the actions taken by language learners to learn and regulate their learning. In terms of types of LLS, Oxford's (1990) list, *the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning* (SILL), has been regarded as being comprehensive and includes 50 strategies under the six categories: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Although SILL has been widely used to collect data in LLS research (Mizumoto & Takeuchi, 2018), one strategy inventory alone cannot account for all the variables that enter into learners' strategy use, such as their sociocultural environments or accessibility to technology (Amerstorfer, 2018). Therefore, researchers are encouraged to make appropriate

adaptations to the SILL and have their own strategy inventories if the original statements are inappropriate for their research participants or do not reflect the research context (Hsiao & Oxford, 2002).

### Instruction of LLS

As a framework of LLS instruction, Griffiths (2015) summarizes five principal phases which are most likely to contribute to the successful learning of LLS: (a) "Raising awareness," (b) "Explicit instruction," (c) "Practice," (d) "Implicit instruction" and (e) "Evaluation" (p. 429-430). However, she also emphasizes that the utilization of all instructional phases is not a prerequisite of successful instruction (Griffiths, 2015). In order to accommodate the many variables of learners, LLS selection and utilization, as well as the contents and methods of LLS instruction, should be tailored appropriately.

### Connection Between LLS and Success of Learning

The connection between LLS and successful learning has been proven not to be straightforward (Rubin, 1975). However, a sufficient number of research results show that a connection exists between them. In the research of Green and Oxford (1995), for instance, more proficient language learners utilized LLS more frequently than the less proficient. Moreover, in Griffiths' (2008) study, the proficient learner group utilized a wider variety of LLS than the other group. Similarly, various research results indicate that learners' extensive use of LLS is one of the contributing factors to one's learning success (Fewell, 2010; Hedge, 2000; Zare, 2012).

## Learner Training

### LT and Learner Autonomy

Harris (1991) defines LT as "the systematic and explicit training of learners in learning strategies in general (metacognitive strategies) and strategies for dealing with language and communication in particular (cognitive strategies)" (p. 7). In addition, since

learner "autonomy is a matter of degree," LT is viewed as moving learners forward "to full autonomy," or pursuing "a greater degree of" control for their learning (Wenden, 1998, p. 3). In short, LT is the help that teachers give to learners so that they might explore various LLS and establish the most optimal system for themselves, which is expected to promote their autonomy.

**Needs of LT**

Teachers' support is deemed to be instrumental in learners' exploration of how they learn most effectively (O'Malley et al., 1985). However, language classes currently pay little attention to LLS or LT (Griffiths, 2015). Fewell's (2010) research on the utilization of LLS by Japanese college learners, for instance, reveals participants' limited access to LLS and identifies their teachers' common lack of awareness towards LLS as one of the contributing factors. A similar tendency is reported in many Asian countries (Fewell, 2010). The situation at the institution where this research was conducted was not an exception. Previous research results regarding learners' needs in English communication at the institution suggest clear individual differences in students' utilization of communication strategies, although it should be noted that teachers' awareness towards LLS was not examined in this research (Eto, 2019).

Researchers, such as Oxford (2008) and Meyer (2012), who studied pedagogical differences between the Eastern and Western education system, assume that the Western notion of autonomy cannot be easily integrated into Asian cultures, where teacher-centered teaching has been traditionally regarded as standard. In these contexts, it has been suggested that Asian learners tend to feel rather demotivated if they are asked to independently take control of their studies (Biggs, 1994). This tendency of Asian language learners further justifies teachers' involvement in LT in order to develop learner autonomy in language education in Asia.

Considering these perspectives, the need for classroom-based, teacher-guided learner training was recognized to help students to improve their learning.

## Implementation of LT

In order to meet learners' needs, a small-scaled LT component was incorporated as a "self-study" module into a mandatory university English course over a semester in 2019. This LT intended to help students facilitate their learning and be more effective at learning English. Since the course predominantly aimed to cultivate learners' reading skills and improve their scores on the *Test of English as a Foreign Language Institutional Testing Program* (TOEFL ITP), LLS introduced in the module were related to these learning objectives.

### Methods

For strategy instruction in LT, 12 types of LLS were selected, taking the course objectives into account, as well as the tasks and the learning environment of the learners. Among these target strategies, 10 were extracted from three different LLS inventories: SILL (Oxford, 1990), *the English Language Learning Strategy Inventory* (ELLSI) (Griffiths, 2013) and *Strategies for Language Skills Development* (LSD) (Griffiths, 2004). Subsequently, in order to add slight variety to the LLS list, two new strategies were created by the researchers, based on the nature of the students' tasks (see Table 1). For instance, "utilizing appropriate approaches according to one's learning goal" was designed because students were asked to consider different approaches to achieve their learning goals and select the best one for themselves in LT.

Five types of training tools were designed as scaffolding for learners' LLS development (see Table 1). A physical notebook was selected as a medium for teachers to monitor students' self-study. In addition, a list of learning resources, note samples, a worksheet for planning and reviewing, and workshops were provided to supplement students' self-study. Griffiths' (2015) five principal phases for LLS instruction was also taken into account. Among them, three phases, including raising awareness, explicit instruction, and practicing, were adopted, based on the assumption that students were at the early stage of their LLS learning (see Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Framework of LT*

| Tool | | Target strategy | Instructional phase | Source of LLS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Notebook | 1. | Keeping a language learning notebook | Explicit instruction, Practice | ELLSI 17 |
| | 2. | Spending time studying English | | ELLSI 27 |
| Learning resources | 3. | Finding suitable learning resources for oneself | Raising awareness | LSD Reading 3 |
| Note samples | 4. | Utilizing appropriate approaches according to one's learning goal | Raising awareness | Researchers |
| | 5. | Studying English grammar | Explicit instruction | ELLSI 15 |
| | 6. | Consciously learning new vocabulary | | ELLSI 16 |
| | 7. | Learning from mistakes | | ELLSI 26 |
| | 8. | Watching YouTube videos for learning | | Researchers |
| Worksheet & teachers' feedback | 9. | Planning one's schedule to have time to study | Explicit instruction, Practice | SILL 34 |
| | 10. | Having clear goals for improving one's English | | SILL 37 |
| | 11. | Thinking about one's progress in learning English | | SILL 38 |
| Workshop | 12. | Learning from the teacher | Raising awareness, Explicit instruction | ELLSI 2 |

**Procedure**

In the introduction workshop held at the beginning of the course, students were asked to buy a physical notebook for their self-study, which was called a "self-study notebook." After receiving some explicit instruction on LT and LLS, it was explained to students that they had to fill two notebook pages with their self-study work as their weekly assignment. The content of their self-study was of the students' choice although some self-study examples

created by researchers were shown. The notebooks were collected by teachers for grading and feedback twice a semester.

On *Manaba*, the institution's Learning Management System (LMS), a list of learning resources, such as TOEFL books and English learning websites (see Appendix A) was shared. In addition, note samples were displayed for students in order to show them different approaches to achieve their learning goals. These samples were given as PDF documents which included a photocopy of self-study notebook pages made by researchers and sample feedback on the study contents as well as dos and don'ts. The samples were provided according to the learning goals, such as improving reading/standardized test scores or English communication (see Appendix A).

An electronic worksheet in the Microsoft Excel format was provided so that students had an opportunity for setting a goal, and planning and reviewing their studies every month (see Appendix A). Teachers collected the worksheet for grading and feedback twice a semester.

Advising workshops were designed to raise students' awareness of LLS and explicitly introduce LLS. Course teachers were expected to conduct these workshops twice a semester, using default slides created by researchers. In addition, teachers commented on students' actual notebooks in the workshops.

At the end of semester, students' performance in the LT accounted for five percent of their final grade: four percent was allotted to their notebook study, and one percent to their worksheet completion. As only five percent was allocated to the self-study, it was considered to be relatively low-stakes. Most of the students' work for LT was completed outside the classroom.

## Research

Two surveys were designed to refine the future implementation of LT. They sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How did students and teachers perceive LT incorporated into an English course at a Japanese university?
2. What aspects do course designers need to keep in mind in designing LT incorporated into an English course?

**Context**

The study was conducted in a medium-sized private university in Kyushu. The university has approximately 6,000 students of which half are domestic, and the other half is international from about 90 countries. The school offers a Japanese and English bilingual education system, and students are required to complete a language program that is not in the language of instruction they chose upon enrollment. For instance, if a student chooses Japanese for their language of instruction in their major subjects, they are required to take English language courses. The English program has four mandatory courses: Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, and Upper intermediate. The present study was conducted in the Intermediate course.

After implementing LT with the students in the Intermediate English course level from the beginning of the semester, a survey was given to students and teachers at the end of the semester. The language proficiency level of the course curriculum was *A2*$^{+}$ to *B1* on the scale of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR).

**Methodology**

This section describes the two surveys that were conducted in order to analyze the needs of students and teachers and evaluate the LT.

In general, quantitative methods, such as surveys, are used to measure, rank, categorize, identify patterns and make generalizations. Cohen et al. (2007) outline the functions of surveys as to "gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determining the relationships that exist between specific

events" (p. 205). Since the purpose of the research was to collect data broadly from a large number of students and teachers in order to obtain a picture of their perception of LT, including pros and cons, surveys were adopted as the most suitable method for this research.

**Data Collection**

***Method of Collecting the Data from Students***

In terms of collecting data from the students' perspectives, an online survey was conducted via Google Forms on the last day of the 2019 spring semester. The approximately 10-minute-long anonymous survey was carried out during English class, yet students' participation in the survey was not mandatory. The students were studying in the Intermediate English course where they focused on improving their reading skills and TOEFL ITP test scores. Of the 152 respondents to the survey, 140 agreed to cooperate with the research.

The survey consisted of 14 questions given in both Japanese and English (see Appendix B). Multiple choice and short answer questions were employed. In regard to multiple-choice questions, there were three styles. The first was to answer questions on a four-point Likert scale: with "one" being "Not at all helpful" and "four", "Very helpful." Another type of question involved choosing one or more options from a list of items. The third was a simple binary option. For example, "Which do you prefer, x or y?" Regarding short answer questions, students were required to explain the reasons or opinions for their answer choices provided in the multiple-choice questions. Students' responses were then analyzed using a thematic analysis.

***Method of Collecting the Data from Teachers***

With respect to the teachers' survey, an online survey was conducted via Google Forms between August 8th and August 27th in 2019 after classes were finished for the semester. The survey asked teachers to describe their experiences with and perceptions of LT and provide suggestions for future improvement. Of the 12 Intermediate Course teachers, only six responded to the survey and only three teachers further participated in the study. The

low response rate may have been due to the spring semester having just finished. Most teachers had already left for vacation and may not have been aware that the survey was being conducted.

**Data Analysis**

Since the purpose of the research was to examine the perceptions of the implemented LT and identify improvements for the future, it focused on the following four items: students' perception of LT, their preferred medium of self-study, their use of learning resources, and teachers' feedback on the training implementation. Students' perception on LT was analyzed by examining five target survey questions: Q2, Q3, Q4, Q 9 and Q12 (see Table 2). Teachers' difficulties in guiding LT and suggestions to improve the framework were extracted by referring to their short descriptive answers in the survey (see Table 3). Descriptive statistics were used to describe and present the data (see Appendix B).

**Table 2**

*Students' Perception Examined and Survey Questions:*

| Perception examined | Target question | |
|---|---|---|
| | Question # | Question |
| Satisfaction with LT | Q2 | "To what extent, do you think your self-study at the Intermediate English course helped you improve your English skills?" |
| | Q12 | "Please write your comments/feedback on the self-study practices used at the Intermediate English course this semester." |
| Preferred medium of self-study | Q3 | "With your self-study, which do you prefer to use, a notebook or an online tool [OneNote, Manaba, etc.]?" |
| | Q4 | "Please write the reasons for your answer to Question 3 above." |
| Use of | Q9 | "Did you use learning resources [useful materials and |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| learning | | websites] introduced on Manaba for your self-study?" |
| resources | Q12 | "Please write your comments/feedback on the self-study practices used at the Intermediate English course this semester." |

**Table 3**

*Teachers' Perception Examined and Survey Questions:*

| Perception examined | Survey question |
|---|---|
| Difficulties | "Please write the difficulties that you or your students faced regarding IE self-study" |
| Suggestions | "Please write any suggestions to improve students' self-study next semester." |

## Survey Results

### Students' Survey Results

#### *Satisfaction with LT*

Students' responses to Q2 and Q12 were analyzed to examine their attitudes towards the classroom-based LT, called self-study. Approximately two-thirds of students answered that is was "Helpful" or "Very helpful," while the rest responded that it was "Not at all helpful" or "Not helpful." From this result, a large proportion of students' overall perception was that this classroom-based LT was rather helpful. Students' reasoning behind their choices were coded and classified into two general groups depending on their attitudes towards LT: positive and negative. Subsequently, within each attitude toward LT, reasons and examples were given (see Table 4).

**Table 4**

*Students' Satisfaction with LT (Q2 and 12)*

| Attitude | Answer choice frequency, n (%) | Reason | Example quote |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive | Helpful 66 (47.1%) | Study habit | "It was a good opportunity to regulate my self-study." |
| | Very helpful 26 (18.5%) | Study motivation | "I was able to study hard since self-study was counted as part of grade." |
| | | Freedom of choice | "It was nice to be able to choose what I want to study." |
| Subtotal | 92 (65.7%) | | |
| Negative | Not at all helpful 15 (10.7%) | Obligation | "It was a study just to fill out my notebook." "It required lots of work." "It should be self-study, so it should be up to me. However, I felt like it was obligation." |
| | Not helpful 33 (23.5%) | Necessity of teachers' support | "I wish there had been more workshops or feedback from my teacher." |
| Subtotal | 48 (34.2%) | | |
| Total | 140 (100%) | | |
| Mean | 2.7 | | |

***Medium Preference***

In students' responses to Q3 and Q4, compared with online tools, the use of physical notebooks was supported by nearly 60% of respondents. Students preferred using physical notebooks mainly because they believed that it was effective for memory retention and convenient to use, while students advocated online tools due to superior accessibility and their concern for the environment (see Table 5).

**Table 5**

*Preference of Medium (Q3 and 4)*

| Medium | Frequency, n (%) | Reason | Example quote |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Notebook | 83 (59.7%) | Memory retention | "I can memorize better when writing than typing." |
| | | Convenience | "I can review easier." |
| Online tool | 56 (40.2%) | Accessibility | "I can study anywhere."<br>"It covers my learning demands." |
| | | Eco-friendliness | "Saving the environment because it is paperless." |
| Total | 139 (100%) | | |

***Use of Learning Resources***

Students' responses to Q9 and Q12 were investigated in order to evaluate their use of learning resources shared on LMS. Although a third of students used the resources, the majority of students did not utilize them, mainly because they felt they already had suitable learning resources for themselves, or the resources given mismatched with their needs (see Table 6).

**Table 6**

*Use of Learning Resources (Q9 and 12)*

| Answer choice | Frequency, n (%) | Reason | Example quote |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 46 (33.3%) | Fit for TOEFL study | "I used TOEFL ITP textbooks introduced on LMS." |
| No | 92 (66.6%) | Possession of alternatives | "I used the textbook that I had used when I was a high school student." |
| | | Needs of more learning resources | "I wanted to know more textbooks or materials to study English." |
| Total | 138 (100%) | | |

**Teachers' Survey Results**

This section outlines the results of the teachers' survey. Although the number of respondents was limited, their responses provided insight on how to improve the LT module.

***Difficulties Reported by Teachers***

- The workload was heavy. It was too much work to check students' self-study notebooks. The work should be less laborious.
- The regularity of students' self-study was dubious. Lots of students just started working on it two days before the notebook checking day.
- Most students' main concern was to fill the space in the notebook as opposed to making good use of their time. They apparently had limited knowledge on LLS and faced difficulty using a notebook to improve their English.
- I'm sure it was very helpful for most of the students, but some students felt that it was an obligation and meaningless.

***Suggestions Made by Teachers***

- Teachers should check students' notebooks more frequently, at least once a month.
- Teachers should spend more class time on introducing how to study more effectively.

***Summary of the Survey Results***

According to students' survey results, the majority of students perceived this classroom-based LT as helpful, while a third found it useless mainly because of their sense of obligation and the need for more assistance from their teachers. The teachers' survey results revealed the points for improvement in the LT module, which were related to teachers' workload and engagement, frequency of the self-study notebook check, and what content to provide in order to raise students' awareness and cultivate their knowledge on LLS. These points will be discussed in the following sections to make suggestions for a refined implementation of LT.

## Discussion

This study explored the students' and teachers' perceptions towards LT of LLS incorporated into a university English course. It found that students had an overall positive experience. However, there are some implications from the study that indicate changes to the program are necessary, as the proposed framework used for LT unfortunately did not necessarily foster autonomous language learners. Therefore, some findings from the study will be discussed in this section.

First, there seems to be a need for teacher training on conducting LT in class. Anecdotal evidence gained through classroom communication with students and discussion with other teachers suggested that some teachers did not offer feedback on students' self-study notebooks or practical advice on how to access learning resources. Some of their students tended to fill the notebook in order to get points, not for their self-study. On the other hand, other teachers were able to give feedback to students about how they were conducting their self-study and recommended some useful resources to them. Compared to those that did not receive feedback, these students were given more opportunities to improve their ability as language learners. Because of this, the outcome of the LT might have differed depending on teachers' approaches. From these differences in approach, it can be argued that teachers need to form a consensus on how to proceed with LT, and individual teachers need to be trained as language coaches when conducting LT in order to foster language learners' growth.

Also, more importantly, teacher training can improve their negative perception regarding their workload since it can be a place for teachers to establish a consensus on the implementation of LT. Anecdotal evidence gained through discussion with teachers suggested that there might have been some mis-communication between researchers and course teachers about the LT implementation, including feedback. The researchers expected teachers to spot-check students' notebooks with simple feedback. However, some teachers seemed to have thought that they should give detailed feedback based on professional expertise to individual

students. Therefore, it is important for teachers to exchange opinions on how to manage LT both effectively and efficiently and search for common ground in terms of how much teachers should be involved, what kind of feedback would be helpful to students, and what is feasible with the limited time teachers and students have for LT. This can help them have a clear picture on their roles in LT and work on LT with less stress.

Next, it seems there is a need for more support for students when conducting LT in class. Students' survey responses suggested that some students were not even sure why they were required to do self-study as a part of the course, which decreased their overall motivation towards LT. In addition, some students completed their notebook study only from their sense of obligation. Furthermore, teachers' survey responses suggested that some students had limited knowledge of different LLS and faced difficulty in improving their English using a notebook. Some students apparently did not make any changes in their use of LLS throughout the semester. They used the same ones they did at the beginning, such as simply writing the same words again and again. Therefore, it is obvious that there is a need for more learner support, including support that helps students learn different ways of self-study. Such support can hopefully help them gradually become autonomous learners. Offering teachers an opportunity to learn about LLS in a teacher-training workshop could be one way that LT would improve in the sense that teachers would be more equipped with various LLS that they could share with their students.

In addition, some students complained about the workload created by their notebook study. As some survey responses suggested, this might be partially because they filled in all the pages of the assignment right before the deadline and did not work steadily by doing two pages per week as the instructions stipulated. Teachers' frequent checking of their notebook can be a help to change students' perception of their workload. Also, in the LT workshop, teachers could clearly mention how many hours of students' self-study is expected every week, for instance one hour, to resolve students' anxiety.

Lastly, the term "self-study" seemed to cause confusion among teachers and students. The researchers called the assignment "self-study" in order to convey the message that students were not obligated to study particular topics or skills, but instead they were free to choose what they would like to study. However, students' survey responses suggested that they thought teachers should not be involved at all if the assignment was truly self-study, which they felt should be a student's own independent study. Despite this being the case, their accounts also suggested more involvement of teachers is desirable for the better implementation of LT. Therefore, reconsidering how the assignment is named might benefit both teachers and students. Perhaps, the ideal terminology would be something which indicates that the assignment allows students to exercise autonomy to some extent, but would also involve some teacher guidance.

## Implications

Based on the findings of this study, some aspects need to be reconsidered when conducting LT in English courses. First, as previously discussed, if the goal of this kind of activity were to develop autonomous language learners with the help of teachers, the name of the task should be altered. Instead of simply calling it self-study, perhaps calling it guided independent study or something that indicates that teacher will be involved as well might reduce students' misunderstanding of the assignment.

In addition, some teacher training sessions or faculty development workshops offered to teachers beforehand might benefit both teachers and students. These sessions would provide opportunities for teachers to learn various LLS, gather learning resources, gain knowledge on language advising and form a consensus on their roles. With such support, teachers can offer students feedback on their independent study and guide them to improve their own studies.

Lastly, some students' accounts suggested that this LT module's use of notebooks did not accommodate different learning styles/demands. For instance, it is

difficult for students to self-study speaking and listening, when they are asked to share their learning using notebooks. They cannot share their progress in speaking fluency or pronunciation after their shadowing practice since paper notebooks cannot allow them to record their voices. This might lead to an avoidance of practicing these skills even if they want to improve them. Especially with the growing technology in educational settings, methods to incorporate different types of learning in LT should be considered. Although requiring students to fill in two pages of their written notebook has many advantages such as developing consistent study habits, this cannot accommodate some types of learning that rely more heavily on technological tools. Therefore, alternatives to using notebooks need to be discussed and considered.

## Conclusion

This study explored students' and teachers' perceptions of classroom-based learner training of LLS to develop autonomous learning. Overall, the research results reveal that student participants in this study perceived the classroom-based LT to be helpful; although it did not address a direct connection between the LT and learner autonomy or teacher participants showed less positive responses towards the LT. The results also indicate that students prefer using a physical notebook to online tools, such as OneNote, yet it was found that a notebook format does not cater to all kinds of learning styles/demands.

Nevertheless, students' and teachers' accounts suggested that learners found LT useful, and put forward practical suggestions for future LT. The terminology used for the LT module requires careful consideration and a clear consensus when being shared. In this case the term used, "self-study," misled learners, and in a worst-case scenario ended up discouraging some students. In addition, the results of the survey suggest that for such LT to work, teachers' increased support as information sources and coaches to improve students' learning is desirable. Based on the findings of the study, the following are deemed crucial: teachers' knowledge of language learning and LLS, a higher degree of teacher involvement,

teachers' training as language coaches as well as an opportunity to form a consensus about LT to avoid misunderstanding, and ongoing opportunities for both teachers and students to learn various LLS. With more assistance from teachers, it will be more likely that LT will help develop individual student's ability to take control of their studies, which will be an essential part of promoting autonomous learning. Thus, future implementation of LT needs to consider teacher training to ensure better results.

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## Appendix A

### Instructional Tools

*a. A Learning Resources Webpage*

2. Extra Practice for the TOEFL（TOEFL ITPスコア450点位～の自主学習向け）

- Listening Section
  - ENG_ExtraTOEFL_ListeningPractice_21Mar2017.pdf - 2019-03-17 12:48:50
- Grammar Section
  - ENG_ExtraTOEFL_GrammarPractice_21Mar2017.pdf - 2019-03-17 12:49:06
- Reading Section
  - ENG_ExtraTOEFL_ReadingPractice_21Mar2017.pdf - 2019-04-22 17:18:46

3. Manaba Grammar Practice

TOEFL ITPテストに必出の文法事項のオンライン学習コースです。日本語の解説付きなので、自主学習教材として利用することができます。まずは「コースの使い方」を読んでから利用してください。
https://manaba.apu.ac.jp/ct/course_479087

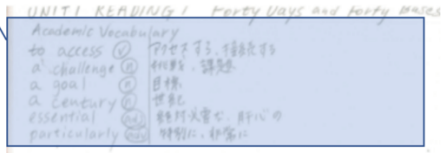
4. Useful Websites

- Hapa 英会話 https://hapaeikaiwa.com/
- Eigo with Luke https://www.eigowithluke.com/
- Lang-8 https://lang-8.com/
- BBC learning English http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/

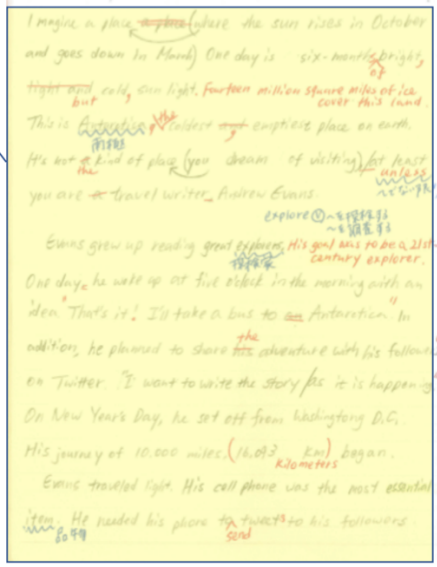
*b. A Note Sample*

**Self-study sample: Focus 1 Unit 1 Reading 1 (p.4-6)**

**Academic vocabulary:**
発音、意味、品詞を確認後、答えを隠し、覚えるまで自分でテストをする。




**Dictation:**
①Manaba のオーディオファイルを使ってディクテーションをする（音声を聞いて書きとる）。最大 5 回まで聞いて良い。
②テキストを開き答えあわせ。わからなかった所は、単語を調べ覚える、文法を考える、声に出して読んでみる。
③自分の書いた英文を読みながら、再度音声を聞く。
④最後に 10 回シャドーイング(音声の後に続いて音読)をすると、学習内容の定着に効果的。



*c. A Worksheet*

**2019SP IEB Self-study Planner**

Your name:

Goals of your self-study for this month:

## April

**Self-study Planner** (Schedule your self-study to complete at least two notebook pages every week.)

| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Class/Event | Example (記入例) | Example (記入例) | | | | | |
| Plan | Listening | Vocab | | | | | |
| Learned | TOEFL Textbook Skill 13 | Focus U1 | | | | | |
| Time (h) | 1 | 0.5 | | | | | |
| | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| Class/Event | | 1st Class Day Course Introduction | | | TOEFL Lesson | | |
| Plan | | | | | | | |
| Learned | | | | | | | |
| Time (h) | | | | | | | |
| | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| Class/Event | | TOEFL Lesson | | | TOEFL Lesson Study Plan | | |
| Plan | | | | | | | |
| Learned | | | | | | | |
| Time | | | | | | | |
| | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| Class/Event | | TOEFL Lesson | | | TOEFL Lesson Study Plan Advising | | |
| Plan | | | | | | | |
| Learned | | | | | | | |
| Time (h) | | | | | | | |
| | 29 | 30 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Class/Event | | Focus U1R1 | | | | | |
| Plan | | | | | | | |
| Learned | | | | | | | |
| Time (h) | | | | | | | |

**Self-study check**

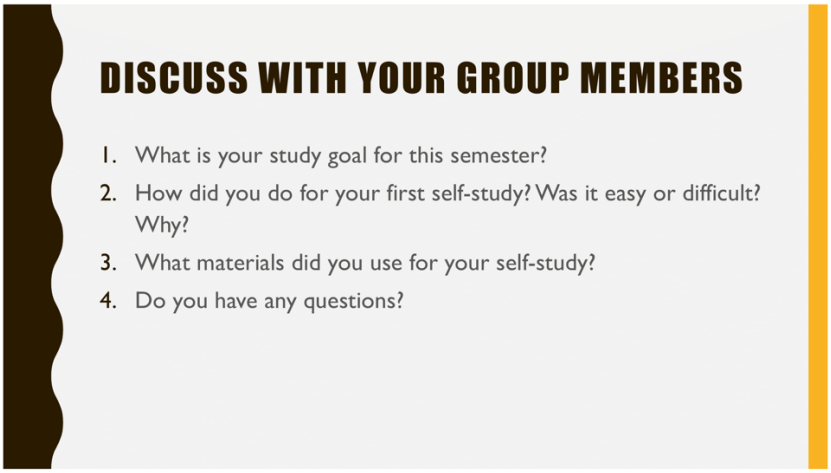
1. Time spent in April: about 0 hour(s)
2. Contents of your self-study
   a. Notebook pages you completed in this month's self-study: pages
   b. Learning resources you used (Write some comments on the materials.)

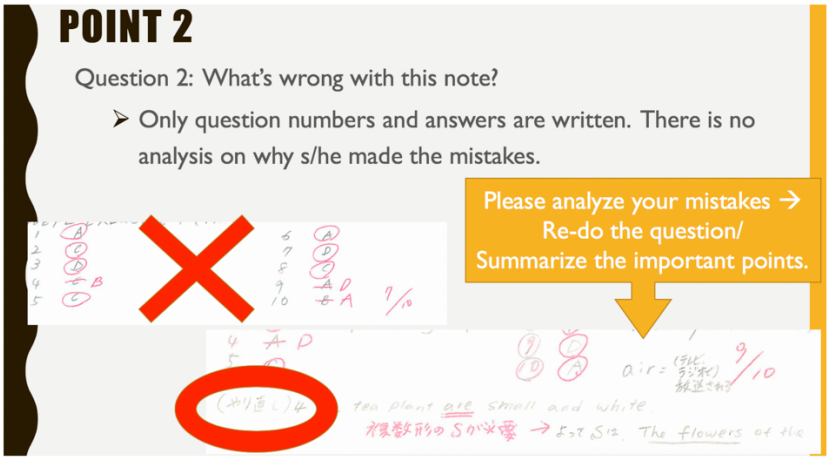
| | Name | Comments (e.g. Helpful/Not very helpful because... ) |
|---|---|---|
| Learning resources | 1) | |
| | 2) | |
| | 3) | |

c. Good things and things to be improved in your self-study this month

d. Your goal(s) for the next month

*d. Workshop Slides*



# Appendix B

## Survey (For Students)

**IE Self-Study Survey**

| | |
|---|---|
| | 今学期英語中級のコースであなたが行ったセルフスタディーについて下記の質問に回答をお願いします。<br>このアンケートの調査で得たデータは分析し、今後の授業改善のための参考にしたいと思っています。また、協力の有無や回答の内容は受講及び成績評価には一切影響いたしません。<br><br>**Please answer this survey regarding the self-study you did this semester for the Intermediate English course. Your answers will be analyzed to improve the practices for the next semester.**<br>**Your participation in this survey and your answers will not affect your status or grades in the course.**<br><br>このアンケートへの協力に同意してくださる方は、以下の質問にお進みください。同意されない方は、このサーベイを閉じてください。<br>**If you agree to answer this survey, please proceed to the questions below. If not, please close this this survey.** |
| 1 | 英語中級のコースでは、ノートを使ってのセルフスタディー（自主学習）を行ってもらいましたが、あなたの主な学習内容は何ですか。(二つ選んでください。)<br>**In the Intermediate English course, you were asked to use a notebook for your self-study. For what purposes, did you mainly use your notebook? (Select two options.)**<br>□ライティング/ Writing<br>□リスニング/ Listening<br>□リーディング/ Reading<br>□スピーキング/ Speaking<br>□TOEFL ITPテスト/ TOEFL ITP test<br>□語彙/ Vocabulary<br>□文法/ Grammar<br>□その他/ Others |
| 2 | 英語中級のコースでのセルフスタディーは、自分の英語力向上にどのくらい役に立ったと思いますか。<br>**To what extent, do you think your self-study at the Intermediate English course help you improve your English skills?**<br>1. 全く役立たなかった/ Not at all helpful<br>2. 役立たなかった/ Not helpful<br>3. 役立った/ Helpful<br>4. とても役に立った/ Very helpful |
| 3 | 自主学習を行う際に、ノートを使って行うのとオンラインツール(OneNoteやManabaなど)を使って行うのとでは、どちらが好ましいと思いますか。<br>**With your self-study, which do you prefer to use, a notebook or an online tool (OneNote, Manaba, etc.)?**<br>□ノートを使うほうが良い / I prefer using a notebook.<br>□オンラインツール(OneNoteやManabaなど)を使うほうが良い。/ I prefer using an online tool (e.g. OneNote, Manaba). |
| 4 | 上記質問3への回答の理由を書いてください。 **Please write the reasons for your answer to Question 3 above.** |
| 5 | 自主学習の計画や学習管理のために**Self-study Planner**を記入してもらいましたが、今学期のように電子媒体(Microsoft Excel, OneNote, Manabaなど)を使うのと紙媒体（紙に印刷されたワークシート）を使うのでは、どちらが好ましいと思いますか。<br>**For planning and keeping track of your self-study, which do you prefer to use, an electronic medium (Microsoft Excel, OneNote, Manaba, etc.) or a paper medium (an worksheet printed on paper)?**<br>□電子媒体(Microsoft Excel, OneNote, Manabaなど)を使うほうが良い / I prefer using an electronic medium (Microsoft Excel, OneNote, Manaba, etc.)<br>□紙媒体（紙に印刷されたワークシート）を使うほうが良い。/ I prefer using a paper medium (a worksheet printed on paper). |
| 6 | 上記質問5への回答の理由を書いてください。**Please write the reasons for your answer to Question 5 above.** |
| 7 | セルフスタディーを進める上で、**Manaba**上の**note samples** (セルフスタディーノートの作り方の紹介)はどのくらい役に立ちましたか。<br>**To what extent, did note samples shown on Manaba help you to conduct your self-study?**<br>1. 全く役立たなかった/ Not at all helpful<br>2. 役立たなかった/ Not helpful<br>3. 役立った/ Helpful<br>4. とても役に立った/ Very helpful |
| 8 | セルフスタディーを進める上で、**self-study planner** (学習計画＋振り返りシート)はどのくらい役に立ちましたか。<br>**To what extent, did self-study planner help you to conduct your self-study?**<br>1. 全く役立たなかった/ Not at all helpful<br>2. 役立たなかった/ Not helpful<br>3. 役立った/ Helpful<br>4. とても役に立った/ Very helpful |
| 9 | セルフスタディーを進める際に、**Manaba**上の**learning resources** (学習に役立つ教材、ウェブサイトの紹介)を利用しましたか。<br>**Did you use learning resources (useful materials and websites) introduced on Manaba for your self-study?**<br>□はい、利用しました。/ Yes, I did.<br>□いいえ、利用しませんでした。/ No, I did not. |
| 10 | **(上記質問9で「はい」と回答した方のみお答えください。) 下記の中で利用した教材があれば、全て選んでください。**<br>**(This question is only for those who answered, 'Yes' to Question 9 above.) Please select the resource(s) if you used it/them.**<br>□Mr. Evine 中学英文法を終了するドリル<br>□Mr. Evine の英文法ブリッジコース<br>□キクタンリーディング4000<br>□TOEFL TEST 対策完全文法<br>□聞いて覚える英単語キクタン TOEFL TEST<br>□FOREST<br>□全問正解するTOEFL ITP Test文法問題対策<br>□Manaba Grammar Practice<br>□Hapa 英会話<br>□Eigo with Luke<br>□Lang-8<br>□BBC Learning English<br>□その他<br>□なし |
| 11 | セルフスタディーを進める上で、**learning resources** (学習に役立つ教材、ウェブサイトの紹介)はどのくらい役に立ちましたか。<br>**To what extent, did the information about learning resources help you to conduct your self-study?**<br>1. 全く役立たなかった/ Not at all helpful<br>2. 役立たなかった/ Not helpful<br>3. 役立った/ Helpful<br>4. とても役に立った/ Very helpful |
| 12 | 今学期の英語中級でのセルフスタディーの取り組みについて、感想を自由に書いてください。<br>**Please write your comments/feedback on the self-study practices used at the Intermediate English course this semester.** |
| 13 | ノートを使った効果的な自主学習方法があれば、教えてください。 **If you know any effective self-study methods using a notebook, please share with us.** |
| 14 | このアンケートの結果は個人が一切特定されない形で保管されます。また、そのデータは学会発表や論文発表を通じ、立命館アジア太平洋大学の内外で共有される可能性があります。このアンケート結果の公表について同意しますか。<br>**Your answers will be kept in a form that does not allow for identifying individuals. Also, the data can be shared through academic papers and presentations at academic conferences within/outside the campus. Do you agree to release your answers?**<br><br>□同意します / I agree that my answers can be used for publication.<br>□同意しません / I DO NOT agree that my answer can be used for publication. |

# Freedom or Focus? Contrasting Approaches to Fostering Learner Autonomy in the Classroom

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**Author Biography**

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**Abstract**

This paper describes two classroom-based projects aimed at developing first-year university students' capacity to study autonomously. In the first project, students set individual learning goals and identified relevant activities with the help of the teacher, completing the study outside of the classroom. In the second, students did not set goals, and instead selected and sampled learning activities suggested by the teacher during class time. In both cases, learners completed reflections on the benefits and drawbacks of these activities.

In both projects, student reflections were collected and analysed by the teacher, and followed up with student-teacher consultations. In the second project, pre- and post-intervention questionnaires on language learning motivation were analysed and used as the basis for follow-up interviews with randomly selected students. The research aimed to establish what effect each intervention had on student motivation, metacognitive awareness, and ability to study independently.

This paper compares the two projects, considering the level of challenge for students, potential for collaborative learning, and the ability of the teacher to give appropriate support and feedback. It concludes by emphasising the need to support learners as they develop the ability to effectively set goals and engage in self-directed learning, and offers suggestions for classroom teachers and learning advisors looking to do so.

本稿では、大学 1 年生の自主学習能力向上を目指す授業ベースのプロジェクト 2 件について詳述する。第 1 プロジェクトでは学生が各自学習目標を設定し、教師の指導のもと目標達成に役立つ学習活動を特定、授業外にて学習を完了。第 2 プロジェクトでは、教師が薦める学習活動を授業内で選択し実践。どちらの事例においても、学生は実際に行った活動のメリットとデメリットについて省察した。

また両プロジェクトにおいて、学生による考察と学生の相談内容を収集し分析。第 2 プロジェクトでは、教師による介入の前後に言語学習の動機付けに関するアンケートを実施、その分析結果をもとに無作為に選ばれた学生の追跡聞き取り調査を行った。狙いは各介入が学生の意欲、メタ認知的意識、自主研究能力に及ぼした影響の特定である。

本稿では難易度、共同学習の潜在的可能性、教師のサポート力とフィードバック力を考慮しながら 2 件のプロジェクトを比較検討する。結論として、学生が自ら設定した目標に向かい自主的に学習する能力を伸ばすには、学習者をサポートする体制が不可欠であると強調し、そのようなサポートの提供を検討している授業担当教員と学習指導員向けに提案を行う。

*Keywords*: autonomy, reflection, goal setting, experiential learning

The idea that learners benefit from taking an active role in their own learning, and developing the capacity to "take charge of [their] own learning" (Holec, 1981, p. 3), has become widely accepted in language teaching. Greater student control over the content and nature of learning, and a reflective stance towards learning, is held to lead to a more personally meaningful study experience, increasing learner focus, motivation, and resilience in the face of setbacks (Little, 2002). One way of supporting the development of autonomous learners is the provision of self-access learning facilities. Kanda University of Foreign Studies has an attractive Self-Access Learning Centre (SALC) that students often cite as one of their primary reasons for choosing the university.

In spite of this, students in my first-year classes at Kanda frequently reported lacking the courage to discuss their learning needs and goals in English, or struggling to identify those needs. While learning advisors may encounter more students who already have confidence in their language skills or ability to study autonomously, classroom teachers face the question of how best to support the development of learners "who are not yet autonomous but are involved in the process of acquiring the ability to assume responsibility for their own learning" (Holec, 1981, pp. 25-26) without removing their autonomy by being overly directive.

This paper will describe two teaching interventions intended to support the development of first-year university students' learner autonomy and understanding of the learning process. The interventions spanned the first semester of the first year in consecutive years, and involved students identifying learning activities, trying them, reflecting on the experience, identifying a new activity and repeating the process. The first intervention saw students identify goals and activities before trying out activities in their own time; in the second, students chose activities from several recommended by the teacher or learning advisor, and carried them out in class. This paper will compare the two projects and offer suggestions for teachers and learning advisors seeking to support learners in the development of autonomous learning skills.

## Literature Review

Ushioda (2011, p. 223) points out that autonomy has been defined in two quite different ways: "autonomy as a psychological need to experience personal agency, and autonomy as a capacity to manage and regulate one's learning". She argues that autonomy as a capacity is unlikely to develop without motivation, which encompasses student willingness to exercise control over their learning. On the other hand, she argues, students are unlikely to

feel motivated to take ownership of their learning without the experience of making autonomous decisions about it. These three elements may thus be seen as a progression: learners first experience control over their learning, become willing to engage in metacognitive behaviour characteristic of self-regulated learning, and subsequently develop the capacity to do so.

Most learners need significant support and guidance before they develop the capacity to direct their own learning. This support is typically provided by the classroom teacher; research such as that of Dam (1995) suggests that promoting learner choice in the classroom can have a powerful motivating effect on students. For Little (2007, p. 26), "Learner autonomy is the product of an interactive process in which the teacher gradually enlarges the scope of her learners' autonomy by gradually allowing them more control of the process and content of their learning". Sheerin (1997) identifies the delicate balancing act that this can entail: teachers should not remove autonomy by insisting on their role as expert or stepping in where the student is not ready to take responsibility, but they should also avoid stepping back too much and risking student frustration or reliance on familiar resources which do not promote growth.

Among the metacognitive abilities and dispositions held to characterise autonomous learners, a number relate to setting objectives, planning, and evaluating learning (Sheerin, 1997). Student goals in second-language education are held to have a number of positive effects. According to Dornyei (1998, p. 120), "(a) they direct attention and effort towards goal-relevant activities at the expense of actions that are not relevant; (b) they regulate effort expenditure in that people adjust their effort to the difficulty level required by the task; (c) they encourage persistence until the goal is accomplished; (d) they promote the search for relevant action plans or task strategies."

Goals also act as a way to evaluate performance, and achievable proximal goals can help students maintain motivation over the long term. Specific, challenging goals are believed to lead to a higher level of task performance than easy or vague goals (Locke & Latham, 2006). Another way for students to evaluate their performance and become more aware of the learning process is through reflection, which acts as "a bridge between practical experience and theoretical conceptualisation" (Kohonen, 2007, p. 4).

## Context

The interventions described in this paper took place with two consecutive cohorts of first-year university students at Kanda University of International Studies, a specialist

languages university in Japan. They were carried out in a compulsory class called Freshman English, which meets four times a week and focuses primarily on students' spoken competence. Participating students were English majors and perceived to be highly motivated to learn and speak English. Both classes were composed of students who had placed into the lowest proficiency stream, around CEFR A2 level.

As part of the project group responsible for the Freshman English curriculum, I was in charge of updating the Independent Learning component of the course's Orientation Unit. This Unit aimed to support students' transition from high school to university by introducing the kinds of learning activities they could expect to encounter during their degree programme. This update had three main aims:

1. Promoting self-regulation, including an experience of meaningful choice in learning, and the ability and willingness to reflect on past experiences and plan for future learning;
2. Broadening student awareness of aspects of the learning process, including familiarity with the learning context, its affordances and skills needed to do well within it.
3. Socialising student participation in supportive social groups which facilitate adaptation to the university learning environment.

The previous materials had introduced the concept of self-directed learning by encouraging students to set one goal and identify three relevant learning activities. Learners tried out those activities and then reflected on their progress. Teacher responses to a survey conducted by the project group suggested that students struggled to identify meaningful goals or relevant activities during the Independent Learning component. Nonetheless, they often stated that they had enjoyed and benefitted from the process, possibly to avoid discussing setbacks. Many teachers reported that they subsequently dropped the idea of independent study due to its initial lack of success.

In order to give students time to develop the skills and willingness to engage in autonomous learning, the project group decided to expand the intervention to a semester-long project. In both interventions, students' written reflections (four study sessions plus one workshop on study apps, which is not considered here) were collected and assessed for 10% of the course grade. Although the creation of a rubric was considered, student reflection was ultimately graded holistically, with responses that were complete but superficial receiving a passing grade while more in-depth responses received a higher grade.

Both interventions used the same reflection questions, which were completed by students in English. The questions were as follows:

1. What activity did you do? How did you do it (use verbs like *read*, *listen*, *pronounce*)?
2. What was good about this way of studying?
3. What was not good about this way of studying?
4. How will you study next time?

These questions were based on the first three items of Nunan's (1997) framework for encouraging autonomy in the classroom. They aimed to demonstrate student ability to understand what they did during the activity (what Nunan calls *awareness*), evaluate the activity against their own goals (*involvement*), and modify the activity to better suit those goals (*intervention*).

## Research Methods

Research aimed to establish whether the intervention had achieved the three aims of the Orientation Unit: promoting self-regulation, broadening awareness of the learning process, and facilitating the development of supportive social groups. The first year's intervention was intended primarily as a trial of the new materials. In this intervention, all student reflections were collected and analysed, along with recordings of two student-teacher consultations with each student. I also recorded teacher observations in a field journal.

The same data were collected for the second intervention, in addition to mixed methods research on student attitudes toward learning in general, and this intervention in particular. A pre- and post-intervention questionnaire on language learning motivation was administered containing 32 statements about learning foreign languages with which participants rated their agreement on a Likert scale. The questionnaire was based on that of Williams, Burden & Lanvers (2002), and targeted attitudes toward English, perceptions of students' own ability, perceived control over the learning process, and perceptions of the role of outside influences. At the end of the semester, detailed reflective interviews were conducted with five students chosen at random from those who had completed the majority of the independent study sessions and reflections.

## Intervention 1: Individual Goal Setting

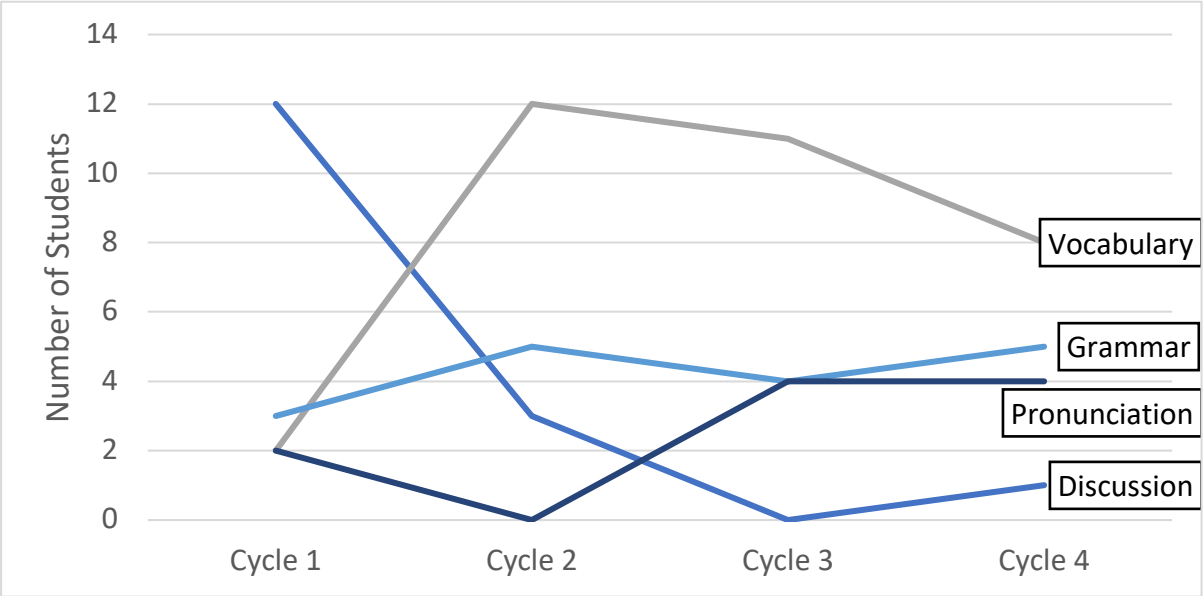
20 lower-proficiency students followed a needs analysis process focussing primarily on their spoken competence. Each student worked with a teacher or the learning advisor paired with their class to choose a goal and find an appropriate learning activity for that goal.

Students had two weeks to try the activity and reflect on their experience. This was repeated four times during the semester, with students able to change their goal from one cycle to the next. In order to guide students' decision-making, they were asked to choose from among four broad goal categories which were felt to be most relevant to class content and students' needs: discussion skills, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation., Students were further encouraged to choose a specific and achievable 'small goal' within the chosen category (Hutchinson, 2014).

The pattern of student choices is outlined in Figure 1, below.

**Figure 1**

*Study Choices in Project 1*




The majority of students initially chose discussion skills, which were defined to mean the practice of generating opinions on topics and studying formulaic language used in discussion functions. Students had already taken part in group discussions for the university placement exam, and as part of their needs analysis process, but for many this was the first time they had had a sustained discussion in English. Therefore, they were probably correct in identifying the discussion process and relevant discourse as an area for improvement. However, although many students selected this activity, it became apparent that their timetables made it difficult for them to study together outside class time. Further, as the

English resources suggested to them were aimed at more advanced learners, reflections and consultations suggested that students struggled to derive meaning from their study.

These issues may explain why many students shifted to studying vocabulary, which is easier to study individually. Students tended also to migrate away from the English resources initially suggested toward familiar Japanese language resources. This reliance on familiar resources was observed from the beginning of the study with students who initially chose to study grammar. While students rated this study highly, reviewing high-school grammar books did not fulfil the aim of socialising learners to new study practices.

Pronunciation was students' least popular choice, which was likely due to a lack of familiarity with how to study it. This supposition is supported by the fact that two students chose to shadow an entire movie without using a script. One reported during the consultation that shadowing was "boring", and that he had not reviewed his recording afterwards since the shadowing itself had taken several hours; both students reported finding the study demotivating. Such experiences reveal the extent to which students struggled to understand the study activities introduced to them, and may have influenced both students' subsequent choice of familiar Japanese-language high school study resources.

Following the first intervention, the curriculum project group conducted informal feedback sessions with teachers and learning advisors. The feedback suggested that supporting individual students to set goals constituted a heavy workload for teachers and learning advisors. It also made it difficult to give meaningful feedback on student reflections, since study was conducted in students' own time and students often struggled to articulate what they had done in English.

## Intervention 2: Classroom-based Experimentation

The second intervention was conducted in the first semester of the subsequent academic year with a new cohort. By bringing the completion of activities into the classroom, the project groups hoped to create an opportunity for experiential learning, in which students experience learning processes and become aware of them, using reflection to create "a bridge between practical experience and theoretical conceptualisation" (Kohonen, 2007, p. 4). Students would still be able to experience choice, but with tangible activities to choose between, and the support of group members and their teacher.

Four times during the semester, my class of 19 lower-proficiency students were introduced to three or four activities that they could complete in class. Students chose an activity, found group members, carried out the activity and wrote a reflection. Although they

were encouraged to choose other activities if they wished, in practice this was only observed when students requested activities from previous weeks. This time, I conducted questionnaires and interviews to determine how the process was perceived by students, and what aspects they found difficult (Hutchinson, 2019). Since one criticism of the previous intervention was that it tended to preclude collaborative work, most of the activities I suggested in the second intervention involved group work and speaking skills. The most popular activities are introduced in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Study Choices in Project 2*

| Activity name | Brief description | Number of students |
|---|---|---|
| Survival 2 | Students discuss who to save from a group of people facing danger. | 6 |
| Record a Conversation | Students prepare then record a discussion. They listen and find areas to improve. | 6 |
| Shadowing | Students speak a text aloud while listening to it and following a script. | 6 |
| Survival 1 | Students rank items, then read the expert advice to determine if they survived. | 8 |
| Taboo | Students explain words to their group without saying certain "taboo" words. | 9 |
| Word Map | Students investigate features of a word, such as definition, collocations, and example sentences. | 13 |
| I Disagree | Teams of students prepare to argue one side of an issue, rebutting the other team. | 16 |

The most popular activities were those that promoted speaking, involved cooperation and included game-like elements that reduced pressure on students. The two "Survival Games" involved ranking and negotiation to achieve the best outcome for the group, and in the first instance a clear scoring system. These games benefitted from substantial 'buzz' as students recommended them to those who were yet to try them.

The most popular activity was "I Disagree", a group discussion activity that saw students organize into opposing teams and required them to stick to one side of an argument until the final two minutes. In their reflections, students stated that they enjoyed thinking from a different viewpoint and working in teams, and were able to continue and deepen the discussion to a greater degree than usual. Even where activities were not originally intended to be social, such as Word Map, they tended to be completed cooperatively in small groups.

As in the previous intervention, certain activities proved difficult for many students. Four of the six students who chose shadowing reported that the listening texts they had chosen were at the wrong level, with only one commenting that he had changed to materials at a more appropriate level. A similar tendency was noted with the length of activities; although some students wrote in their reflection that the time was too short, they responded to suggestions that they change the time with embarrassment or by retracting the criticism. Even with the teacher present, there was little evidence that students were prepared to modify activities to meet their learning needs, a reluctance that was confirmed in student interviews.

## Comparison of Interventions

### Promoting self-regulation

The primary aim of the intervention was to promote self-regulation, including student ability to understand, choose, carry out and reflect on learning activities in English, and plan for future learning. The evidence from both interventions confirmed how challenging this process was to students, regardless of support from teacher and peers. Four of the five students interviewed after the second intervention stated that choosing activities was difficult, which matched teacher observations that students frequently took more than twenty minutes to make a choice. Four students felt that it was sometimes difficult to understand the English activity instructions. Student B elaborated by saying "I don't know what activity is doing, maybe all of these is very important but I want to brush up my skill, all, so I'm difficult to choose…" (reported in Hutchinson, 2019, p. 52). Although three students stated that they tried to match activities to skills they wanted to practice, they also said that they chose based on which activities seemed easy, fun, or their friends were choosing. This suggests that students entered into learning activities with limited understanding of what the activities had to offer, building their understanding as they went. They took a long time to choose activities because the process was difficult for them, and because they felt that choosing one meant not being able to experience others.

Students appeared to find future planning even more difficult. The parts of the reflections in both interventions discussing what students had done and the positive aspects of that activity were lengthier and more detailed than the parts identifying what an activity lacked or the students' future aims. Supporting this observation, three of the five students interviewed after the second intervention highlighted the latter questions of the reflection task as being particularly difficult (Hutchinson, 2019). It could be argued that since the last two reflection questions focus on things that students have not yet actually experienced, they are more abstract than the first two. They assume an awareness of language study as a system of possibilities and needs in which one day's study activity would suggest to students a new need to be addressed in the future. In both interventions, in cases where students did identify a future aim, it was overwhelmingly to repeat a concrete activity they had felt to be useful. Neither intervention provided substantial evidence of a growing ability to forward plan and set goals. However, it could be argued that concrete experience of experimentation and reflection may provide an accessible way to start building students' overview of the learning process.

**Student awareness of the learning process**

The second aim was to broaden student awareness of the learning process, including introducing study activities that could help them to succeed at university. In the first intervention, students were supported in choosing goals and relevant learning activities, but then left on their own to figure out how to complete the activity. Student interviews, reflections and classroom observation revealed how difficult it was for them to understand and carry out these unfamiliar learning activities in their second language. If they were unable to do so, the intervention risked leaving students with experiences of failure or fruitless effort. Further, since reflection on the activity required students to do something meaningful with it without teacher oversight, students were more likely to report success even where they had struggled, in order to fulfil the assessment criteria. Students in the first intervention tended to gravitate toward familiar activities, either from the beginning or after experiencing difficulty with their initial unfamiliar choices.

Once the choice and subsequent experimentation were transferred to the classroom, however, students benefitted from teacher and peer support, and were far more likely to experience success. They were thus able to have a range of experiences, to reflect more deeply on activities and understand the differences between them. In this environment, rather than entering an antagonistic 'policeman' role with students who seemed to be dishonestly

reporting progress, I was able to provide more detailed feedback and suggestions, having a better understanding of what students had actually been doing in class.

**Supportive collaborative study**

The third aim of the interventions was to socialise students to supportive collaborative study. Students in the first intervention reported finding it difficult to study together outside class, and as a result many dropped activities requiring collaborative study. This made it difficult to practice speaking, even though most identified their development of spoken English as a priority. The second intervention was more collaborative, with students choosing activities together, negotiating participation, and reflecting together. Students regularly recommended activities to others, and their reflections revealed the development of shared interpretations as to what constituted positive and negative study behaviours. One recurrent comment was that certain activities, in particular games such as Taboo, were "too fun"; in other words, students had become too absorbed in the game to focus on correct grammar usage, or had become excited and disturbed the study of others.

As interviews were only conducted after the second intervention, it is difficult to compare learner perceptions of the two interventions. Nevertheless, students in the second intervention did not seem to feel constrained by the lack of individualised goal setting. According to the language learning motivation questionnaire administered in this intervention, student agreement with the questionnaire item "I set myself goals when I study English" fell from 4.06 out of 5 to 3.83 (Hutchinson, 2019). When discussing this in follow-up interviews, learners suggested that they preferred to learn about activities before setting goals. One interviewee argued that stating a goal up front would narrow potential choice: "if I have a correctly goal I have to choose the activity to lead to the goal", instead preferring "doing a lot of activities and find own goal". Nor did students appear to want more choice of activities. During the independent learning sessions, I repeatedly stated that students could choose beyond the activities suggested, but this was only observed in cases where students requested activities from previous sessions.

## Discussion

**Fostering Autonomy**

As discussed in the literature review, Ushioda (2011) argues that autonomy has been defined in two quite different ways: as the experience of personal agency and choice, and as a capacity for self-directed learning. Although both of the projects described here aimed to foster this, the first intervention required students to identify goals and activities – in other

words, to demonstrate exactly that capacity for self-regulation which we are aiming to develop and have decided that students lack – and then to carry out these activities without teacher or peer support. The level of difficulty was therefore substantially higher, arguably too high for most students at this stage of their development. The second intervention focussed instead on giving students the experience of choice in the classroom, allowing them to build knowledge about the learning process, and hopefully increase their motivation to take control of their own learning in future.

There is also the danger that by insisting that students set goals and adhere to them, the first intervention deprived students of the opportunity to fully experience meaningful self-determined decision-making. As discussed above, there were instances in the first intervention where students experienced failure through poor choice of learning content or misunderstanding how to complete a learning activity. With this in mind, and hoping to encourage effective learning behaviour, I attempted to steer students in the direction of study that most closely supported successful completion of the goal. In so doing, however, there is a danger that students were steered away from following their interests. Additionally, given the mismatch between the stated freedom of choice and subsequent guidance and correction offered to students, it is possible that the first intervention may have actually hindered student understanding of the new learning context and its requirements through its lack of transparency.

**Goal Setting**

In psychological research, support for the benefits of setting goals seems unequivocal: "specific, high (hard) goals lead to a higher level of task performance than do easy goals or vague, abstract goals such as the exhortation to "do one's best"" (Locke & Latham, 2006, p. 265). Yet some in the business world have argued that goal setting harms organizations in "systematic and predictable ways" (Ordóñez, Schweitzer, Galinsky & Bazerman, 2009, p.5), and does so most seriously precisely when goals are both specific and challenging. In their 2006 paper, Locke and Latham introduce some caveats to their model: "So long as a person is committed to the goal, has the requisite ability to attain it, and does not have conflicting goals, there is a positive, linear relationship between goal difficulty and task performance" (p. 265). To what extent do these caveats hold true of the first-year students described in this paper?

It is clear that some of my students were not committed to the goals they chose in the first intervention, which was likely due to the fact that the goal setting process was externally dictated by the context and the teacher. Further, in attempting to steer students away from

unproductive study, I frequently suggested goals and activities thought to be a better fit for a student, removing an element of freedom from the student's choice. Ordóñez et al (2009) cite several studies suggesting that goal setting can harm intrinsic motivation as it increases extrinsic motivation, meaning that participants may engage in the task to satisfy a requirement or for external rewards such as the 10% of course grade assigned to the project.

Since students were required to set their goals in an English-only environment, and steered towards English-language resources, it is likely that they were 'choosing' activities which were suggestions of the teacher or learning advisor (Sheerin, 1997). Arguably, within the context of the first intervention, students did not have "the requisite ability to attain" the goals they set, or to set goals that they could attain. Ordóñez et al (2009) identify three main side effects of overly challenging goals: shifting attitudes to risk, promoting unethical behaviours, and the psychological effects of failure. Many students in the first intervention made less risky choices such as reviewing high school study, especially those who had initially tried a new activity and found it overly challenging. While this approach was not necessarily a poor use of their time, it did not fulfil the intervention's aim of socialising students to new study methods, and prevented students from broadening their base of experience.

A few students behaved unethically, reporting that they had successfully completed their study but unable to answer questions about it, leading to a change in the student-teacher role as I was forced to police student learning. Finally, and most problematically for a project aiming to create student identities as competent learners and foster effective study habits, there is evidence that challenging goals, even where they improve performance, may leave people questioning their abilities and intelligence (Mussweiler & Strack, 2000). Since self-efficacy and motivation are held to play a key role in ongoing engagement with learning (Bandura, 1977), overly challenging goals may be counterproductive for first-year university learners.

In the context of a controlled psychological experiment, it may be possible to ensure that a participant "does not have conflicting goals" (Locke & Latham, 2006, p.265), but this is unlikely to be true of complex individuals adapting to a new course of study. Indeed, interviews with selected students following the second intervention made it clear that they were keen not to limit themselves to one goal, and that making one choice was difficult precisely because it precluded choosing other activities. One student argued strongly for the benefits of experimentation over goals, preferring to first build experience which would lead to organically finding a goal. This parallels the evidence found by Ordóñez et al (2009) that

the narrow focus of initial goal setting may promote performance but inhibit learning, as specific measures encourage a narrow focus and definition of success.

## Conclusions

This paper has compared two classroom teaching interventions which aimed to foster learner autonomy, learning skills, and student participation in supportive groups. The first involved individual goal setting and reflection, and produced a more focussed and individualistic learning setup which presented challenges for the teacher in supporting students. Many students appeared unready for the level of self-direction, which sometimes resulted in ineffective study, an over-reliance on familiar resources, reduced confidence and in some cases, unethical behaviour. The second intervention was developed in response to these perceived issues, and brought the process of choosing and sampling activities into the classroom. This was a more social and supportive experience, and enabled students to take risks and build a range of new experiences that they could, through reflection, transform into greater confidence and awareness of the learning process.

For students with limited experience of directing their own learning, setting goals before identifying activities may be an overly abstract and daunting task. Conversely, moving from concrete experience of choice and experimentation in learning can be highly motivating, and reflection on action has a role to play in bridging the gap between practice and conceptual understanding. Where goals are set, it is important that students experience freedom and meaningful choice in doing so, including the freedom to fail or fall short without fear of getting poor grades, risking personal relationships, or losing confidence in their own abilities.

While learning advisors can offer more targeted, one-to-one support than a classroom teacher, they may see less of the journey that brings a student to want to take charge of their learning in the first place. Furthermore, with lower-proficiency students who may struggle to articulate more abstract concepts, it can be difficult to know how deeply they are thinking about their own learning. The present research has provided a greater insight into just how difficult students found choosing, understanding and conducting learning activities, as well as reflecting on them. However, it also revealed how engaged most students were in the process.

Where goals arise spontaneously from students, it is likely that they have seen the value of setting goals, and they should be encouraged to set goals that are personally meaningful. When students seem less ready to take responsibility for their learning, however,

it can be tempting to introduce a structure, such as goal setting, that seems likely to promote the kind of tangible results that will keep learners motivated. In so doing, however, it is important that teachers and learning advisors do not remove autonomy from the process and steer students toward activities that seem meaningful to the practitioner, at the expense of students' own meaning-making.

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## Appendix A

ENGLISH LEARNING MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE
英語学習に対するモチベーションについてのアンケート

The following questions ask about your motivation for and attitudes about learning English. Remember there are no right or wrong answers, so please just answer as accurately as possible.
これはあなたの英語学習に対する姿勢やモチベーションを問うアンケートです。これには正解も不正解もありません。あなたの率直な気持ちを答えてください。

Use the scale below to answer the questions. If you think the statement is very true of you, circle 5; if a statement is not at all true of you, circle 1. If the statement is more or less true of you, find the number between 1 and 5 that best describes you.
各質問事項に5段階で回答してください。各問があなたに当てはまっていれば「５」に丸を、全く当てはまらなければ「１」に丸をつけてください。どちらでもなければ、「１」から「５」の中で1番自分に当てはまる数字を選んでください。

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Most language learning can be done without a teacher<br>語学学習に教師は不要だ。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Doing well in English is up to me<br>自分次第で英語は上達する。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. I don't usually do well in English lessons<br>英語の授業は苦手だ。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. I think I'm good at English<br>英語は得意だと思う。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. I prefer to study English on my own, rather than in groups<br>グループワークより自分一人で英語を学ぶ方が好きだ。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. It will be important for me to know English in the future<br>英語の知識は将来自分にとって重要になる。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. I work hard at English<br>真面目に英語学習に取り組んでいる。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. I believe that anything can be achieved, if I work hard enough<br>一生懸命頑張ればどんなことでも達成できる。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. I don't mind if I'm not a fluent English speaker at the end of my degree<br>卒業時までに英語を流暢に話せるようにならなくても別に気にならない。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. I don't know which ways to study English work best for me<br>どの英語学習法が自分に一番合っているかわからない。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. I don't learn English for my own enjoyment<br>楽しんで英語を学んでいない。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. When I get good marks in English I usually know why<br>英語の成績がいいと、おおよそなぜだか理由がわかる。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. I want to learn to speak English well<br>英語をうまく話せるように学びたい。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 14. However hard I try, I'll never do well in English<br>どんなに頑張っても英語をうまく話せるようにはならない。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 15. My English is not as good as I want it to be<br>自分が望むほど英語は上手くない。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 16. I'd want to learn English even if I didn't have to<br>必須科目でなくても英語は学びたい。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 17. I enjoy English lessons<br>英語の授業は楽しい。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 18. I try to set myself goals when I study English<br>目的意識を持って英語を学習している。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 19. I'd like to meet English-speaking people<br>英語を話す人と知り合いたい。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 20. I cannot study effectively on my own<br>独学では効率よく勉強できない。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 21. My parents encourage me to study English<br>両親が英語学習を勧める。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 22. English will not be an important factor in getting a job<br>就職に英語は重要項目ではない。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 23. I don't often measure my English study progress<br>自分の英語レベルの上達の有無にはあまりこだわらない。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 24. English lessons are not interesting for me<br>英語の授業には興味がない。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 25. If I do badly at English, I usually know how to do better next time<br>英語の成績が悪い時、次はどうすればよくなるかわかる。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 26. My family are not interested in my English study<br>家族は私の英語学習に無関心だ。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 27. I have no interest in getting to know English native speakers<br>ネイティブスピーカーと知り合うことに興味がない。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 28. I am confident I can achieve my English learning goals<br>英語学習における自己目標を達成する自信がある。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 29. I could study harder if I wanted to<br>やる気さえあれば、一生懸命勉強できる。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 30. I know which things I need to study to improve my English<br>何を勉強すれば自分の英語を上達させることができるのか知っている。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 31. My teacher is helpful to me in learning English<br>教員は私の英語学習に協力的だ。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |
| 32. The students in our English class work together as a group<br>このクラスの生徒はグループワークにおいて協調性がある。 | Not at all true Very true<br>1 2 3 4 5 |

# Looking in, Looking out:
# Autoethnographically Applying a Model for Learning Advisor Autonomy

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**Abstract**

This paper reports on the application of a model for learning advisor autonomy and its implications. It first introduces a model for learning advisor autonomy grounded in three separate definitions of teacher autonomy: professional freedom (PF), continuing professional development freedom (CPDF), and the interconnectedness between teacher and learner and their mutual and simultaneous development (IMSD). These definitions were used as proposed constructs to understand our individual learning advisor autonomy in a secondary role as teachers acting as learning advisors. An autoethnography involving iterative introspection and contextual analysis was undertaken, which over time resulted in the construction of personal narratives on our respective learning advisor autonomy. The findings revealed how our individual learning advisor autonomy is affected by the affordances of our respective social contexts. Hence, these suggest the model facilitated in illuminating unacknowledged aspects of our individual learning advisor autonomy which require immediate attention. Moreover, they suggest it provides an ecological perspective on learning advisor autonomy as a result of the interplay between PF, CPDF, and IMSD. However, as the model was only used by us, it is requisite that it be applied to others also doubling as learning advisors in order to better ascertain its feasibility, credibility and ultimate trustworthiness.

本研究ではラーニングアドバイザーの自律性のモデルの応用とその及ぼした影響を報告する。まず、教師の自律性の３つの定義（プロフェッショナル・フリーダム（PF）、継続職業訓練フリーダム(CPDF)、教師と学生の相関性とその相互・同時的成長(IMSD)）を利用し、ラーニングアドバイザーの自律性のモデルを紹介する。教師である著者の、職場の中でのラーニングアドバイザーとしての自律性を理解するためこの定義を利用した。内省の反復と文脈解析によるオートエスノグラフィーの研究方法を用い、著書のラーニングアドバイザーの自律性についてのパーソナルナラティブを作成し、その分析で著者の社会的環境におけるアフォーダンスがどのように著者のラーニングアドバイザーとしての自律性に影響するかを明らかにした。したがって、このモデルを通して著者のラーニングアドバイザーとしての自律性のうち、早急に対処が必要なアスペクトについて解明することが可能になる。さらにこの研究結果から、PF、CPDF、IMSD 間の相互作用の結果としてラーニングアドバイザーの自律性に生態学的な視点を与えるということが言える。しかし、このモデルの可能性と信用性を確認するために、著者と同様の他の教師の場合の研究が必要である。

*Keywords:* learning advisor, autonomy, autoethnography

This paper reports on our personal application of a model for learning advisor autonomy and its implications. It stands to fill a void in the field of self-access by arguing for an understanding of learning advisor autonomy via the application of three specific constructs grounded in teacher autonomy. In so doing, it is hoped this inquiry will prove especially useful and insightful for those individuals working as learning advisors in a secondary role looking to understand who they are, what they do and how they do it within their specific contexts.

First, the background and theoretical framework for this topic are introduced. Thereafter, an autoethnographic approach is discussed as our choice methodology before we discuss our personal narratives as findings. The paper subsequently concludes with implications of the model for us working as learning advisors in a secondary role and for the model itself.

## Background and Theoretical Framework

There has been much discussion of learner autonomy and its meaning in self-access (Benson, 2007; Benson & Voller, 1997; Dam, 1995; Holec, 1981; Little, 1991, 1999; Sinclair, 1999). However, at the same time, there has seemingly been almost no discussion of learning advisor autonomy and its meaning (cf. Mynard, 2011; Shirakawa, 2018). There has nevertheless been much written on teacher autonomy and this body of literature may be able to provide some insight into learning advisor autonomy. Indeed, according to the literature, teacher autonomy can be understood through three particular constructs which we synthesized in a previous paper (Warrington & Parsons, 2019) for ease of understanding: 1. professional freedom or PF (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005; Vieira, 2006), 2. continuing professional development freedom or CPDF (Huang, 2005; Smith & Erdoğan, 2008) and 3. the interconnectedness between teacher and learner and mutual and simultaneous development or IMSD (Jiménez Raya et al., 2007; Little, 1995).

PF is seen as fundamental to teacher autonomy because "…teachers must have the freedom to prescribe the best treatment for their students" (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005, p.38). What is more, teachers must be able to empower themselves as teachers through reflection on where they position themselves, what they position themselves for, and commitment to change (Vieira, 2006).

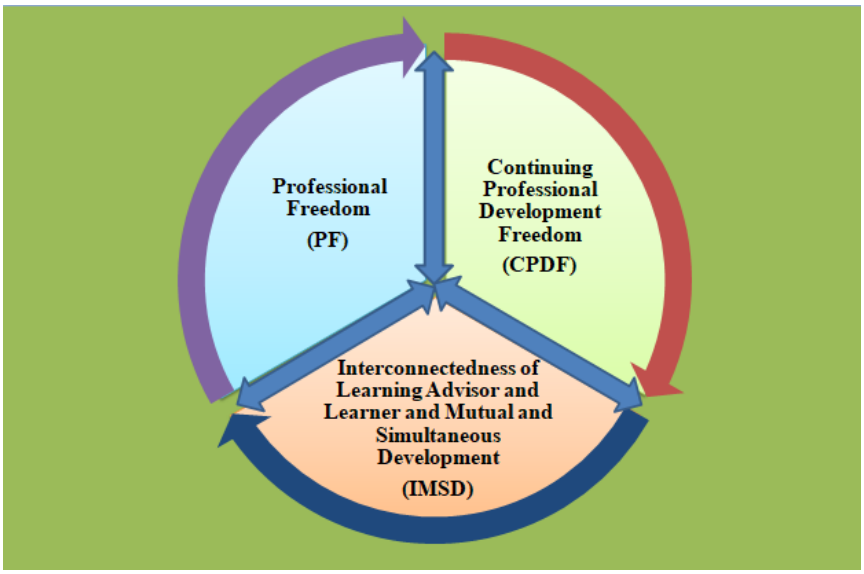
CPDF is an important aspect of teacher autonomy because it is about "the ability to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes for oneself as a teacher, in cooperation with others" (Smith & Erdoğan, 2008, p.83). This is echoed by Iida (2009) who states that "collaboration, negotiation, and interaction are the essence of teacher autonomy" (p.49).

However, as stated above, such freedom to develop professionally also relies on IMSD. Indeed, according to Smith (2000), learning is key to transitioning and continuing to be a teacher. Hence, as he contends, learner autonomy is equally important for teachers as it is for second language learners (L2ers) given teachers were once learners and perhaps still are with any additional development likely to be self-initiated and self-directed. Moreover, this very same freedom to develop relies equally on teachers' and learners' adaptability to their own unique contexts (Iida as cited in Benson, 2001).

Taken together, the three constructs above offer a way of interpreting teacher autonomy. However, as there appears to be much interplay between teacher and learner across the constructs, these interconnections raised the question of whether PF, CPDF, and IMSD could be borrowed and used to, in turn, make sense of learning advisor autonomy. To this end, a learning advisor autonomy model was constructed (Warrington & Parsons, 2019), showing the three constructs and the interplay between them (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

*A Model for Learning Advisor Autonomy*




However, to test the feasibility of this model, there was a need to apply it. As we are both teachers and volunteer as learning advisors in a secondary role within our respective self-access facilities, this led to the decision to, first and foremost, apply the model to ourselves. In so doing, we aimed to answer three questions:

1. What can this model tell us about our own learning advisor autonomy as teachers acting as learning advisors in a secondary role?
2. What are the implications of the model for teachers like us?
3. What are the implications for the model?

## Methodology

In ascertaining the applicability of our model to ourselves, it became apparent rather quickly through our conversations that there were differences in our advising contexts and advising experiences. Consequently, we both realized and agreed that we each had unique personal narratives to tell. This prompted us to seriously consider how we could study the

application of the model to ourselves. In time, we both decided to take an autoethnographic approach. Autoethnography can best be described as a kind of unconventional, personal experience approach grounded in post-modernist philosophy which allows for various, avant-garde ways of knowing as told through narratives (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2005; Stahlke Wall, 2016). As the fifth moment in the history of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), it has come to be differentiated from its origins in ethnography on the grounds that "the researcher is not trying to become an insider in the researcher setting. He or she, in fact, is the insider. The context is his or her own" (Duncan, 2004, p.3). Hence, because every personal narrative needs a set of circumstances for it to make sense, autoethnography seemed a fitting approach to us given we see our personal advising experiences as inseparable from our respective social contexts. What is more, we could only come to some kind of discovery and understanding of our learning advisor autonomy through the telling of such narratives.

However, as there is no right or wrong way of doing autoethnography (Deitering, 2017), we initially struggled with respect to how to go about telling our stories. This led to countless discussions and eventually to our mutual reading of Ellis and Bochner's (2000) and Reed-Danahay's (1997) work, where we came to understand that as autoethnographers vary greatly in the degree of importance they place on the *auto* (self), the *ethno*(culture), and *graphy* (the research process application), we ultimately had to choose a direction.

With this in mind, we reflected and discussed the matter further and thereafter elected to place emphasis on the *auto* (self) given our contextual and experiential differences and our shared desire to understand the *auto* as a phenomenon unique to each of us. However, we soon realized that, despite our regular social interactions, we hardly had any written accounts of our discussions. Instead, we had numerous random exchanges embedded within chat and text logs from our computer and mobile phone correspondence which we had to extrapolate, organize and make sense of. This made it quite difficult at the time to place ourselves on any autoethnographic continuum, which places the emotional, personal perspective of the

evocative approach at one end and the theory-driven analytic type at the other (e.g. Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Ngunjiri et al., 2010). Eventually, we opted to take an influx or moderate position (see Stahlke Wall, 2016) between the evocative (artistic) and analytical (scientific) embracing "a mix of artistic representation, scientific inquiry, self-narration and ethnography" to explore our own individual advising experiences within our own unique contexts (Ngunjiri et al., 2010, p.3). In so doing, we felt we could make better sense of our own individual learning advisor autonomy while providing a more open, honest and balanced account of each. What is more, as insiders, we felt these personal narratives would make a stronger connection with other learning advisors, helping them to reflect on their own experiences while making sense of their learning advisor autonomy via our model.

Hence, we began to organize and analyze our chat and text logs as fieldnotes and eventually used these to commence upon a mutual routine of personal writing, reflection, sharing, and subsequent rewriting of our personal narratives over a period of six months. This eventually resulted in the presentation of these stories at the JASAL2019 conference. Our personal narratives were then further refined after reflecting on, discussing, and further reflecting on that experience. It is these narratives we tell in the section that follows. Stuart initially provides his personal narrative as a result of applying the aforesaid model followed by André's account. These narratives about our respective learning advisor autonomy will each be presented differently since autonomy "can take numerous different forms" and "manifest itself in very different ways" (Little, 1991, p.4) and therefore, can arguably be presented as such. Data was analysed using the common but non-linear practice of iterative introspection and contextual analysis (Bahadir, 2004; Chang, 2008; Ellis & Bochner, 2000). This involves constantly looking inward to think about and reflect on personal experiences and constantly looking outward to think about and reflect on the context(s) associated with those experiences.

### Study Limitations

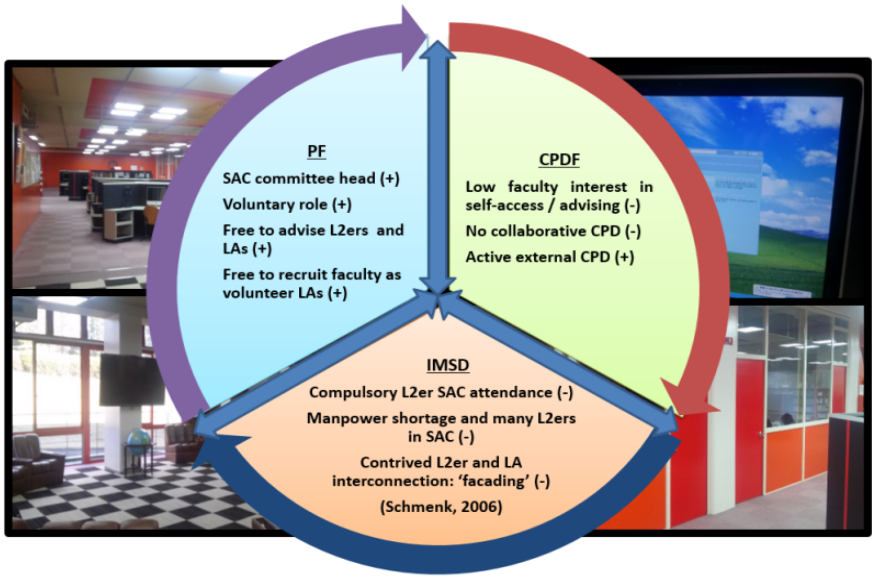
This autoethnographic study has a few limitations to acknowledge. First, we concede that in sharing our personal narratives through this study, we exposed our personal feelings and thoughts in the name of truth and a desire to self-divulge at potential risk to ourselves. Second, there is a risk our narratives may evoke negative feelings in readers based on the personal and experiential connections they make with them. Regrettably, as Bochner and Ellis (1996) mention, this is something which cannot be anticipated. Finally, there is the reality of our narratives as never really complete. Since these stories were disclosed from a "current position, one that is always partial, incomplete, and full of silences, and told at a particular time, for a particular purpose to a particular audience" (Ellis, 2009, p.13), it must be acknowledged that memories change and constructs shift as novel experiences elucidate past events.

## Personal Narratives and Discussion

### Applying the Model: Stuart

**Figure 2**

*A Visualization of Personal Narrative 1*



***Professional Freedom (PF)***

I became the head of the self-access committee at my university in 2015 and since that time I have been in charge of organizing the programme in our self-access centre (SAC). Although I am tenured faculty teaching primarily English language courses, as the SAC committee head I regularly volunteer in the SAC and work closely with staff there to help integrate the programme with a focus on helping students to become more autonomous learners. However, since its foundation, the SAC has always remained a place contradictory to the principles of self-access. For example, despite being free to decide what they want to do in the SAC, students have always been compelled by an administration policy to attend as part of their class course work and punished with failure if they do not (Warrington, 2018). Moreover, as the SAC is situated within a library, SAC staff must answer to the library head, meaning they are never free to decide anything and must seek permission from the latter (Warrington, 2018). This also includes things I suggest as the SAC committee head. Hence, knowing the SAC staff is limited in their professional freedom (PF) to make decisions is an issue I have always struggled to reconcile with my own PF.

My role as SAC committee head is a voluntary one involving advising and counseling students, training staff and recruiting other faculty to volunteer to help students in the SAC. I have always felt fortunate to have this freedom and, as a result, willingly put in the time to do it. However, knowing and witnessing the restrictions imposed on SAC staff's PF has made me keenly aware of how this too restricts my PF as SAC committee head and a learning advisor within that space.

***Continuing Professional Development Freedom (CPDF)***

With respect to the freedom to develop my learning advising skills, it has been a constant struggle to improve these, in particular due to the lack of possible collaboration with others at my university. The turnover among SAC staff has always been high and many of my colleagues who have volunteered in the SAC often have completely different research goals

and therefore unfortunately lack knowledge, insight and interest in learning advising. My frustration with this has inevitably led me to take advantage of the freedom I have to engage in professional development beyond my institution. This has proved fruitful as through the Japanese conference circuit I have been fortunate enough to present my work, and been able to further develop my knowledge and understanding of the field. What is more, I have also been able to make invaluable connections with others interested in self-access and learning advising such as the second author of this paper with whom I have weekly online meetings with to share and discuss articles and do joint research. Reflecting on this, I recognize how lucky I am to have such professional freedom to do what I want and look elsewhere to develop if necessary.

***Interconnectedness and Mutual and Simultaneous Development (IMSD)***

However, aside from professional freedom and the liberty to develop professionally, my autonomy as a learning advisor has further been restricted by the aforesaid limitations imposed on students and the impact this has had on the interconnectedness between learners and me and our ability to mutually and simultaneously develop. Most students come to the SAC because they have to and are purely driven by an extrinsic motivation to get credit and/or avoid punishment.

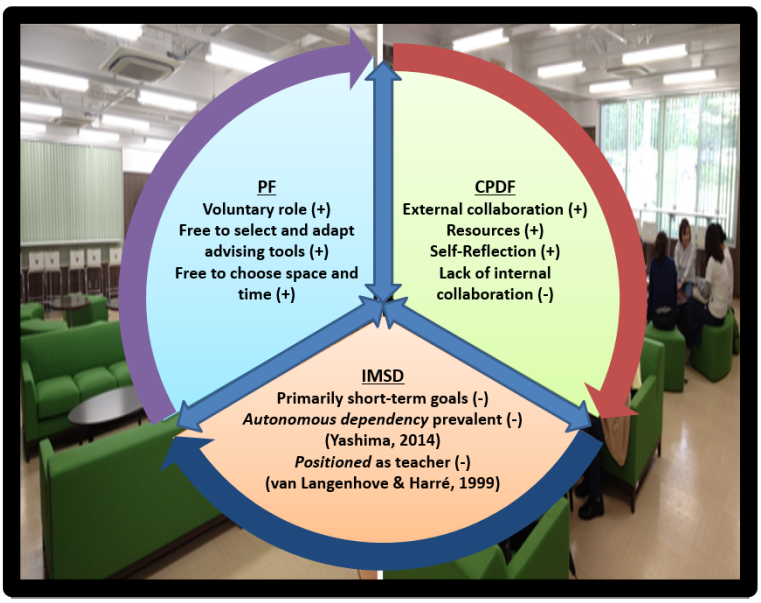
This becomes readily clear when interacting with them where I encounter the same issues of concern on a regular basis. For instance, I am commonly faced with the task of trying to talk with and advise students who simply put in the bare minimum effort in order to be evaluated positively. These students set the same learning goals week after week while ignoring my learning advice. What is more, I regularly encounter students who are so concerned with credit that they plagiarise others' self-study reports and try to pass them off as their own. Hence, I find myself regularly dealing with students with a "socially implanted self" very much conditional upon a feeling of worth grounded solely in the desire for positive evaluation (Deci & Ryan, 1995, p.33). That is, they are students rather than learners who

willingly "give up their autonomy to put on the mask of autonomous behaviour" in order to get credit by any means in a situation they have no desire to be in (Breen & Mann, 1997, p.141). This, in turn, makes me feel as though I am only an active participant in this "facading" (Schmenk, 2006, p.82) in trying to be and act like a learning advisor when a regrettable outcome is foreseeable. This also makes me feel the students and I are at a learning stalemate and not mutually and simultaneously benefitting from our interactions in any way. Instead, we are going through the motions given that control of this situation is completely out of our hands. In this regard, I feel my autonomy as a learning advisor is very much compromised. Although I do have a great degree of professional freedom and can develop professionally, I seriously question what meaning and benefit there is in these aspects of my learning advisor autonomy if my interactions with students are primarily contrived. Hence, without a change to the compulsory SAC attendance policy, it is hard to imagine things differently and very difficult to be hopeful.

**Applying the Model: André**

**Figure 3**

*A Visualization of Personal Narrative 2*



***Professional Freedom (PF)***

As a teacher, I have always had a strong belief that learning beyond the classroom is essential to improving one's language and achieving one's goals. This belief led me to the creation of our university's first self-access language learning center, which then became the self-access language learning station when we were afforded space in a larger facility. Around this time, I decided to volunteer my time to offer learners one-on-one speaking and writing support, with most students requesting support for IELTS speaking and writing. At the time, there were no classes for IELTS, and so, providing learners with such guidance would allow students the opportunity to receive the necessary practice to achieve their related goals. Over time, however, the focus of the support I offered changed from primarily tutoring to mainly advising. By doing so, I thought it would benefit learners in terms of acquiring training for taking IELTS, building the necessary skills for it, and most importantly, provide them with the tools to become more self-directed in their own learning.

The decision to first offer tutoring and then advising was, and still is, completely my own. Also, since I began such support, I have had complete freedom in deciding how many learners I take on for such support, how many sessions per week I allow for each, how long each session will be, and where the sessions will be held. As becoming a learning advisor is an addition to my primary role as tenured faculty, and chief of the self-access language learning station, it is vital that I find the right balance. Finally, I have had no external pressure regarding how I have offered advising or the tools used to facilitate advising. When I first started looking into the field of advising, I came across Kato and Mynard's (2016) *Reflective dialogue: Advising in language learning* and Mynard and Carson's (2012) *Advising in language learning: Dialogue, tools and context*. Both of these provided me with valuable knowledge into advising and its practice, but as an inexperienced advisor I found Morrison and Navarro's (2014), *The autonomy approach: Language learning in the classroom and beyond* the most beneficial, thanks to its clearly explained and more easily implemented

activities. Ultimately, however, the method and tools for my advising sessions have always been selected based on my own experience and the needs of the learners I am supporting.

***Continuing Professional Development Freedom (CPDF)***

With regards to this freedom, I have complete control as to how I go about developing my skills as a practicing advisor. In addition to the written resources mentioned above, I have the option of employing practical information from journals such as *SiSAL Journal* or especially *Relay Journal* in my CPD with the latter publication often focusing advising. I also take part in conferences and attend presentations focusing on self-directed learning. In so doing, I not only take advantage of such opportunities to gain knowledge and experience related to the field, but I am also able to meet other advisors with the hope of continuing a discussion on a topic and potentially collaborating. For example, it was through a past conference, I met and entered into a productive collaborative partnership with the co-author of this paper. Although our teaching contexts differ, we have been able to exchange stories regarding our advising practices which have led to more reflection on our practice. This external collaboration has been much appreciated since in my context I am currently the only one actively engaged in advising. Hence, this opportunity to share and develop externally has been a valuable motivator for me to continue my journey toward becoming an advisor.

In addition to this collaboration, I have been afforded the opportunity to receive training in advising through an online course offered by the *Research Institute for Learner Autonomy in Education* (RILAE). I chose to apply for the course after hearing about it at a conference last year. This course has enabled me to expand my network of learning advisors; provided the opportunity to observe how advising strategies and tools can be used in practice; let me experiment with these strategies and tools in my own context; and encouraged me to reflect more on my practice. The latter in particular has been important for my CPD as reflection was something I did shallowly prior to taking the course. The course has also made me aware of the intricate and extensive nature of advising and how far I still have to go in

becoming a learning advisor. As this is the first of five courses, I plan to move forward with this training, knowing I have the freedom to adapt any content learned to my advising context.

***Interconnectedness and Mutual and Simultaneous Development (IMSD)***

In my opinion, IMSD is by far the most complex component of this model because of the dynamic interplay involved in advising in real time which is, for the most part, absent from PF and CPDF. I believe it is also most important since without advisees, there is little chance of practicing and developing one's skills as an advisor.

When I began offering speaking and writing support, some students would come to see me weekly to get help with IELTS. This mainly involved practicing for the speaking section, checking answers for the writing section, providing feedback on their work, and advice for practicing. As one can imagine, this was not advising but rather tutoring. At the time though, I was a teacher with no training or experience in advising. Also, the students were not coming to learn how to be more self-directed, but rather to achieve a short-term goal of achieving a score to go abroad. As I am a teacher, I assume that many were expecting me to direct them in their learning, a phenomenon which Yashima (2014) calls *autonomous dependency*.

As I started to learn more about advising and began to incorporate it more in my sessions, I could still see this autonomous dependency happening with most students only coming to a couple of sessions before deciding to stop. I also noticed that another teacher, who was also offering speaking and writing support, was getting more requests for help. However, the difference, it seemed, was that he continued as a tutor whereas I was trying to become an advisor. Reflecting on this, I realized that, in order to move forward, I needed to make my new role explicit, describing the differences between an advisor and tutor so students would know upfront what support they could get when coming to see me. This is not to say I would stop offering tutoring altogether, but rather the main focus of my support would shift from directing students in their learning to helping them become more self-directed and reflective about their

own learning. However, this would require me to alter what I do and say within these sessions in order to facilitate a shift in *positioning* (van Langenhove & Harré, 1999). That is, students would need to be encouraged to position me as an advisor rather than a teacher, and I would need to ensure I position them as learners rather than students.

## Implications for Authors

### Stuart

Overall, I feel the model has prompted me to iteratively reflect upon and be reflexive about my learning advisor autonomy. More precisely, I feel I have come to better understand the importance of looking in at my advising experiences and out at my advising context as I shift reflectively and reflexively between past and present. Moreover, the model has allowed me to see what professional freedom (PF) and continuing professional development freedom (CPDF) I have and the limitations of these within my context and what I need to do to improve by looking beyond my context. At the same time, it has highlighted the key problem of the interconnectedness between the learners and me and our mutual and simultaneous development (IMSD) resulting from the current SAC policy and how detrimental this is to learner autonomy and my advising practice. Hence, echoing Palfreyman (2014) and Murray (2014), this has made me realize more than ever how powerful social context is. In addition, it made me cognizant of how unfavorable contextual variables such as the location of a SAC, administration, and compulsory SAC attendance policy have negatively impacted upon all aspects of my learning advisor autonomy to varying degrees as a result of the interplay between them. Hence, based on my application of the model, I cannot help but question the extent a learning advisor's autonomy is ultimately compromised if one's PF, CPDF or IMSD is deemed problematic. Certainly my IMSD issue has led me to ultimately suspect the value of my PF and CPDF as a result of the 'ripple effects' the former has had on these (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010, p.72). However, it has also starkly convinced me that emphasizing the

ubiquity of self-access and the variety of ecological spaces, whether generated by the learner or not (see Cook, 2007), with yet undiscovered affordances is currently the only way to transition my students into learners as a means to promote learner autonomy and the subsequent IMSD between us. If this can be accomplished and the IMSD between us established, then perhaps my faith in my PF and CPDF will ultimately be restored.

**André**

As a teacher taking on the new role of advisor, this model has provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on this emerging practice and deepen my understanding and awareness of my PF, CPDF and IMSD within my current context. It has allowed and encouraged me to look both inward and outward at past and present experiences to learn more about my advisor identity and its future within that context. As a result, social issues regarding my autonomy have come to light in relation to the lack of interdependence within my physical advising environment. This *lack of immediate social* has put me at risk of being in a permanent state of flux within the peripheral and inbound trajectories (Wenger, 1998) – someone on the periphery of the advisor community of practice (CoP) with a desire to be a full member, but conflicted by my level of commitment to it.

While I can say I have PF and CPDF, for example, I do not have a mentor or other advisors on site to share recordings of advising sessions to regularly obtain feedback (see McCarthy, 2012) and discuss advising practices (see Kodate & Foale, 2012). Then, there is the noticeable lack of IMSD arising from a conflict within the *learning culture* (Clemente, 2003) in which advising takes place. Considering the differing social and cultural contexts and social histories of advisor and learner, enacting a change in positioning is likely to prove challenging. Learners with a greater *reactive autonomy* (Littlewood, 1999) or autonomous dependency (Yashima, 2014) may not take control of their learning, and those who do may just think I know best. Furthermore, as the choice to receive support is up to the students, encouraging them to actively seek advising on a regular basis is likely to be difficult thereby limiting

opportunities for me to gain valuable practical advising experience. This lack of structure in my practice, the absence of an on-site CoP, combined with the shortage of engaged learners, and the fact my advising role is voluntary, have the potential to demotivate me and obstruct my progress towards becoming an advisor. Therefore, in applying the model, it has shown that in my context, there appears to be an ecological relationship between PF, CPDF and IMSD. More specifically, CPDF and IMSD greatly impact my PF (and potentially vice-versa) which has led me to invariably question why I am choosing to take on this additional advisor role.

This is my current advising situation which is not fully conducive to my development as an advisor. While this appears very bleak for my advising future, it is my current reality. However, with the autonomy I have, it is within my power to change it. Although some of the challenges I have mentioned will prove hard to overcome, striving to be more self-reflective and self-reflexive about my practice and finding more ways to share my advising experiences will serve me well in the long term.

## Implications for the Learning Advisor Autonomy Model

Based on our application of the model, we currently feel uncertain as to whether the model needs changing. Certainly applying it helped us to better understand our respective learning advisor practices and contexts along with their affordances and come to some conclusions about our individual learning advisor autonomy. The model prompted us to look in, through iterative self-reflection, and look out, via iterative analyses of our respective contexts, which autoethnography facilitated. This, in turn, resulted in narratives revealing a strong interplay between PF, CPDF, and IMDS with each affecting the others. This suggests the model provides an ecological perspective on learning advisor autonomy.

The model was also effective in initiating dialogic reflection on our contexts and experiences associated with it. Indeed, as we both iteratively interacted and discussed our learning advisor autonomy on numerous occasions, the model had the benefit of being a tool

we could use to share self-reflections, facilitate empathy and understanding, and heighten awareness of our respective advising contexts. Consequently, if implemented in collaboration, we feel the model has the potential to establish interconnectedness between learning advisors like us and subsequent mutual and simultaneous development in learning advising practices.

## Conclusion

This paper explored the application of a model for understanding learning advisor autonomy. As teachers doubling as learning advisors in a secondary role, the model highlighted the intricate interdependence between our experiences and social contexts. In applying professional freedom (PF), continuing professional development freedom (CPDF) and the interconnectedness between teacher and learner and mutual and simultaneous development (IMSD) as constructs of teacher autonomy to understand our learning advisor autonomy, the strong interplay between these suggests the model provides an ecological perspective on learning advisor autonomy. That is, if PF, CPDF or IMSD is affected in a negative or positive way, the other areas appear to be similarly affected. In our respective cases, this dynamic interdependence resulted in narratives highlighting a learning advisor autonomy hindered by experiences, in addition to affordances requiring immediate attention. It is a point of interest for further research whether advisors in different or more favourable positions can also benefit from the ecological perspective of the model to make sense of their autonomy and the affordances of their own social contexts.

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# 日本の大学におけるタンデム学習の意義

# The Significance of Tandem Learning in a Japanese University

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**ヴォランスキ・バルトシュ：**ポーランド出身。2017 年に九州大学比較社会文化学府博士課程を卒業。主な研究分野は（日本の）社会言語学，語用論，ジェンダーと言語の関わりなど。九州大学セルフ・アクセス・ラーニング・センターのアドバイザー。

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## 要旨

タンデム学習とは異なる母語を話す二人がペアになり，互いの言語や文化を学び合う学習形態のことである。本稿では，九州大学と大阪大学で行われたカリキュラム外活動としての対面式タンデム学習の実践から，日本の大学でタンデム学習を行う意義について考察する。学期末に実施されたアンケート調査を分析した結果，タンデム学習には先行研究で明らかにされている目標言語でのコミュニケーション能力と異文化コミュニケーション能力の向上や，友達意識の形成，言語学習動機の向上，目標言語学習・使用への肯定的態度の育成という点で効果が確認できた。さらに，日本人学生が留学生と一対一で長期的に関わることで日本語・日本文化を再発見したり，目標言語における言語行動の積極性が増したりするという効果もあることがわかった。本調査から，タンデム学習を組織することは，1）実践的に言語を学習したい／目標言語を使う機会がほしいというニーズを満たす，2）多様な背景・ニーズを持った参加者にも対応できる，3）日本人学生と留学生の個人レベルでの継続的な交流を促し，友達作りの場となる，4）個人間の対話を通して文化が学べるという点で，意義があると言える。

Tandem learning is a method of learning in which two native speakers form a pair and learn about each other's languages and cultures. In this paper, we will discuss the significance of tandem learning within the context of a Japanese university, based on the outcomes of volunteer-based face-to-face tandem programs conducted in Kyushu University and Osaka University. The results of the questionnaires distributed at the end of the study periods confirm the beneficial effects of tandem learning described in previous research. These include enhanced communication skills in the target language and a higher proficiency in intercultural communication. Tandem learning has also been found to help build friendships, boost motivation and shift towards a more positive attitude concerning the learning and use of the target language. In addition, we found that through repeated face-to-face interactions over the long term the Japanese participants were able to rediscover their own culture and became more active in their use of the target language. To conclude, we argue that the significance of implementing tandem learning can be summed up as follows: 1) Tandem meets the demand for the practical learning of the target language and for the opportunities to use it, 2) Tandem can accommodate participants who have diverse needs and who come from diverse backgrounds, 3) Tandem creates an environment for building new friendships by promoting continuous interaction between individual Japanese and international students, 4) Tandem allows participants to learn about each other's culture through their personal dialogue.


キーワード：対面式タンデム学習，E タンデム，学習者オートノミー，互恵性，学習者同士の学び

現在，日本の教育機関で学ぶ留学生数は増加の一途を辿っている。独立大学法人日本学生支援機構の調査によると，平成 30 年度の日本国内の高等教育機関および日本語教育機関における留学生数は 29 万 8980 人となっており，学部では前年度に比べ 9.4%増の 84,857 人，大学院では 8.2%の増の 50,184 人となっている（日本学生支援機構, 2019）。筆者らが所属する大学でも年々留学生数は増加しており，学内の留学生は珍しい存在ではなくなってきている。しかし，大学キャンパスにおける留学生が増えても，留学生と日本人学生との交流はあまり生まれていないのが現状ではないだろうか。大学では留学生と日本人学生の共修授業や交流会が開催されているが，そのような機会でさえ日本人同士，留学生同士でかたまっていたり，交流がその場限りのもので終わってしまうことが多い。小松（2015）は自然な状態では留学生と日本人学生の交流が生まれにくく，大学側の異文化交流促進の働きかけや環境づくりが重要であると指摘している。

そこで，筆者らは留学生と日本人学生の積極的な交流を促すことを目的の 1 つとして，カリキュラム外の活動としてタンデム学習を実践した。本稿では，タンデム学習の効果と大学でタンデム学習を組織することの意義を考察する。

## タンデム学習とは

### *タンデム学習の定義・原則*

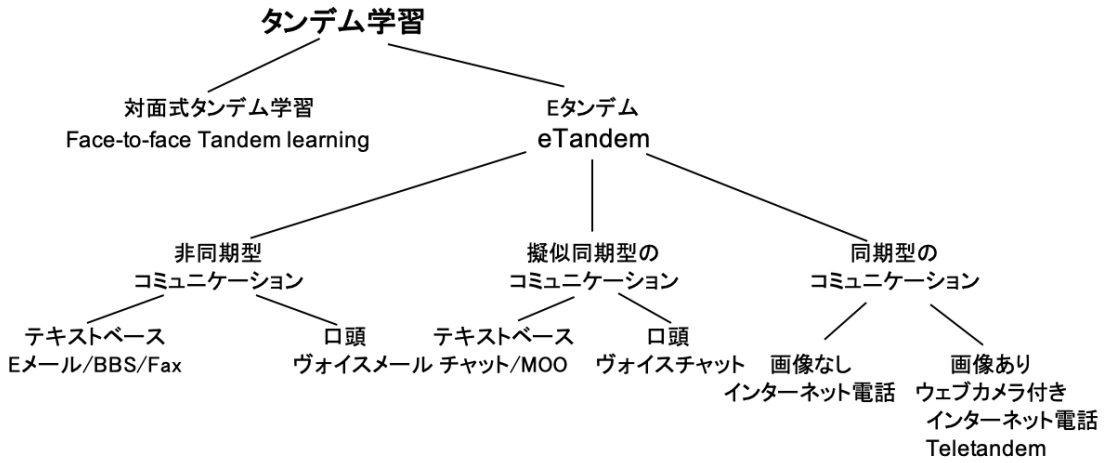
タンデム学習とは異なる母語を話す二人の学習者がペアになり，互恵性と学習者オートノミーという 2 つの原則に基づき，互いに言語と文化を学び合う学習形態のことである（Little & Brammerts, 1996）。互恵性とは「パートナーが互いにそれぞれの目標を達成し，言語学習の成果を上げるために，助け合う関係」のことである（脇坂, 2014 , p.10）。学習者オートノミーとは「学習者が自分で自分の学習の理由あるいは目的と内容，方法に関して選択を行い，その選択に基づいた計画を実行し，結果を評価できる能力である」（青木, 2005, pp.773-774）。つまり，タンデム学習では学習時間を半分に分け，それぞれの学習時間において「学習する人」と「パートナーの学習を助ける人」という役割を交替し，学習内容や方法はそれぞれの時間における「学習する人」が決め，「パートナーの学習を助ける人」はそれを尊重し協力するのである。

*タンデム学習の種類*

図 1 は，現在行われているタンデム学習の種類を分類したものである。

**図 1**

*タンデム学習の種類（脇坂, 2014）*




タンデム学習は大まかに対面式タンデム学習と E タンデムに分けられる。前者はパートナー2 人が，同じ時間に，同じ場所で学習活動を行うものである。後者は，学習者 2 人が物理的に離れた場所にいながら，インターネット電話等の情報通信技術を介して学習を行うタンデム学習である[1]。対面式タンデム学習は E タンデムと比べると， 物理的制約が少なく，学習者同士の意味交渉が起こりやすく，互いの学習のサポートも積極的に行われる（Wakisaka, 2018）。

また，タンデム学習には教育機関のカリキュラムの一環として行われるものとカリキュラム外の活動として行われるものがある。前者は語学の授業内容と連携していることが多く，学習内容やタスクを教師が決めることも多い。そうなると，タンデム学習の原則である，学習者オートノミーを発揮する余地が少なくなる（青木, 2016）。一方，後者は，教育機関のカリキュラムから独立したものであり，学習内容やタスクは参加者が決めることが多く，学習の場所や頻度も学習者に委ねられている。このことにより，学習者は学習者オートノミーを発揮しやすくなる一方，自由度が高すぎた場合にはどのように学習を進めたら良いか分からなくなる場合があ

る。したがって，コーディネーターは学習者オートノミーの発達度合いによって，自由度を調整していくことが重要である（脇坂, 2014）。

### *タンデム学習の利点*

タンデム学習には様々な利点があることが明らかにされている。

- 目標言語でのコミュニケーション能力が高まる（Kötter, 2002；Lewis, 2003；Akiyama & Saito, 2016）
- 異文化コミュニケーション能力を高める（Stickler & Lewis, 2003；Woodin, 2001）
- 学習者オートノミーを伸ばす（Little, 2003）
- 言語学習動機の維持や向上に貢献する（Ushioda, 2000；脇坂, 2013）
- 友達意識が芽生える（平中・鄭・羅, 2011；青木・脇坂・欧, 2013）
- 目標言語学習・使用への肯定的態度を育てる（目黒, 2007；Wakisaka, 2013）
- 海外留学への動機づけになる（大河内, 2011）

しかし，これらのほとんどが教育機関のカリキュラムの一環として行われた実践から明らかにされたものであり，カリキュラム外の活動として行われるタンデム学習にどのような効果があるのかはまだ十分明らかにされていない。また，タンデム学習の実践の意義はそれが組織される環境や文脈によって異なるものである。

そこで，本研究では日本国内の九州大学と大阪大学で，カリキュラム外の活動として行われた 2 つの対面式タンデム学習の実践を調査することにより，以下の 2 つのリサーチクエスチョンを明らかにすることを目的とする。

RQ1. カリキュラム外の活動として行われるタンデム学習にはどのような効果があるか。

RQ2. 日本の大学でタンデム学習を組織することにどのような意義があるか。

## 研究方法

本研究ではケーススタディーを採用する。ケーススタディーは研究者が関心を持つ，境界のある特定の事象をケースとして，様々なデータに基づいて，文脈と時間的経過を考慮しながら，そのケースの独自性や複雑性を明らかにしようとする研究方法である（メリアム, 2004）。したがって，まずはそれぞれの大学でのタンデム

学習の実践（＝ケース）を包括的に描き，その上で，両者を比較することで，リサーチクエスチョンの答えを明らかにする。

### *ケースの選定*

ケーススタディーでは研究者の関心とケースへのアクセスのしやすさからケースが選定される（ステイク, 2006）。本調査で九州大学と大阪大学をケースとして選んだのは，第 1 に，2 大学が日本国内の大学でカリキュラム外のタンデム学習を組織する数少ない大学であること，第 2 に，筆者らが 2 大学のタンデム学習の運営に関わっており，データの収集がしやすく，ケースをよりよく理解できると考えたからである。

### *データと分析方法*

本研究には，主に 3 つのデータを使用した。 1 ）申込時に参加希望者が入力した申込みフォームの内容，2）ペアリングのデータ，3）学期末に行ったアンケート調査の結果である。

アンケート調査は，オンラインのアンケートフォーム（日英併記）を参加者全員にメールで送信し，回答を募った。なお，質問項目は，参加者がタンデム学習の実践をどのように評価し，参加者にどのような学習効果があったかを理解するために，各大学の運営者が考えて作成したため，両大学で異なる項目が含まれる（稿末付録を参照）。

分析は質問項目ごとに行った。自由記述の回答は内容を意味のユニットで区切り，項目ごとにカウントした。1 つの回答から複数の項目を抽出した場合もあるため回答者数よりも合計が多いことがある。回答は英語または日本語で書かれていたが，本稿では英語の回答は日本語訳を用いる。また，記述の際，データからの直接引用は「　」で示す。

## ケース 1. 九州大学におけるタンデム学習の実践

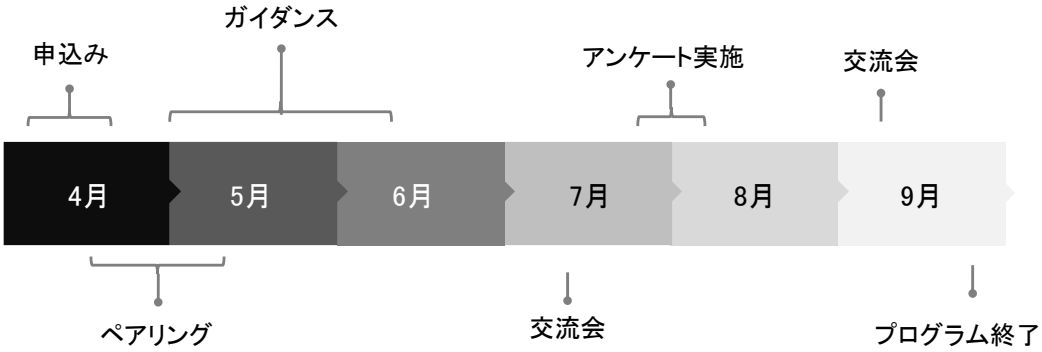
### *概要*

九州大学では全学規模で「タンデム学習プログラム」という対面式タンデム学習の実践が行われている。これは，留学生からの「困った時に頼れる日本人学生がい

ない」という声を聞いた九州大学国際化学生委員会のメンバーが，2018 年春に試験的にタンデム学習の場を作ったことに始まり，2019 年度からは同委員会の中にタンデム学習プログラムの運営委員会を立ち上げ，大学からの経済的支援と教員からの教育的サポートを得ながら学生主体で運営されるものである。

**図2**

*九州大学タンデム学習プログラムの流れ*




2019 年前期の申込みは 4 月上旬からオンラインで受付け，4 月下旬から 5 月上旬にペアリングを行った（図 2）。パートナーが見つかった参加者は 5 月中にガイダンスセッションに参加し，タンデム学習の原則や学習をうまく進めるための注意点を学び，学習計画を立てた後，ペアで個々に学習を開始する。学習は基本的にはペアで行うが，プログラム全体の活動として，参加者の親睦を深めるための交流会を 7 月中旬と 9 月上旬に実施した。

*申込者*

2019 年前期の申込者は 235 名であった。32 の国・地域の学生が申込み，そのうち日本人学生が全体の約 53%（125 名）と最も多く，次いで中国出身者が 45 名であった。身分別に見ると，日本人学生は学部生が 8 割を占める一方，留学生は大学院生が多く，全体の 57%を占めた。

申込者の学習希望言語を日本人学生と留学生に分けて見ると（表 1），日本人学生は 78%が英語を希望しており，英語学習へのニーズの高さが顕著である。一方，留学生は 80%が日本語学習を希望していた。

**表 1**

***申込者の内訳（学習希望言語別）*(N = *235)**

| 学習希望言語 | 日本人学生 | | 留学生 | | 全体 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 英語 | 98 | (78%) | 18 | (16%) | 116 | (49%) |
| 日本語 | 0 | | 88 | (80%) | 88 | (37%) |
| スペイン語 | 8 | (6%) | 0 | | 8 | (3%) |
| 中国語 | 6 | (5%) | 2 | (2%) | 8 | (3%) |
| ドイツ語 | 6 | (5%) | 0 | | 6 | (3%) |
| フランス語 | 4 | (3%) | 1 | (1%) | 5 | (2%) |
| オランダ語 | 1 | (1%) | 0 | | 1 | (0%) |
| 韓国語 | 1 | (1%) | 1 | (1%) | 2 | (1%) |
| ベンガル語,アラビア語他 10 言語 | 1 | (1%) | 0 | | 1 | (0%) |
| 計 | 125 | (100%) | 110 | (100%) | 235 | (100%) |

（丸めのため各項目の%合計は正確に 100 にならない）

参加目的別に見ると（表 2），日本人学生・留学生共に「目標言語での会話練習」が 76%（179 名）と最も多い。次に多いのは，「文化交流・友達を作るため」で，全体の 22%（51 名）を占める。とくに留学生は 27%（30 名）で，この割合が高かった。

**表 2**

***申込者の内訳（参加目的別）選択形式・複数回答可* (N = *235)**

| 参加の目的 | 日本人学生 | | 留学生 | | 全体 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 目標言語での会話練習 | 105 | (84%) | 74 | (67%) | 179 | (76%) |
| 文化交流・友達を作るため | 21 | (17%) | 30 | (27%) | 51 | (22%) |
| 目標言語での作文能力の向上 | 2 | (2%) | 8 | (7%) | 10 | (4%) |
| その他（聴解能力の向上・海外の人の価値観を知りたい） | 1 | (1%) | 3 | (3%) | 4 | (2%) |
| 計 | 125 | (100%) | 110 | (100%) | 235 | (100%) |

（各項目の%は異なり人数をもとに算出している）

*ペア*

最終的に 65 のペア（130 名）ができた（表 3）。言語の組み合わせは英語と日本語のペアが 41 組で圧倒的に多かった。ただし，需要と供給が一致していないため，英語と日本語のペアのうち 32 組は第 1 言語以外のペアである。

**表 3**

*ペアの内訳 (**N = 65**)*

| 言語の組み合わせ | ペア数 | 第一言語同士のペア | 第一言語以外のペア |
|---|---|---|---|
| 英語 - 日本語 | 41 | 9 | 32 |
| 中国語 - 日本語 | 10 | 10 | 0 |
| スペイン語 - 日本語 | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| フランス語 - 日本語 | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| 韓国語 - 日本語 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| ポルトガル語 - 日本語 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| アラビア語 - 日本語 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| オランダ語 - 日本語 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 計 | 65 | 33 | 32 |

*学期末アンケートの結果*（回答者 48 名，回収率 37%）

本調査から，参加者が概ねこのプログラムを楽しいものだと感じ（図 3），満足していた（図 4）ことがわかった。また，来学期も参加したいかという質問に，パートナーの一方が帰国する 4 名を除いた 35 名（80%）が続けたいと回答したことからも参加者にとって本プログラムが有意義なものであったことが窺える。

**図 3**

*プログラムを楽しめたか。（平均 8.9 点）*

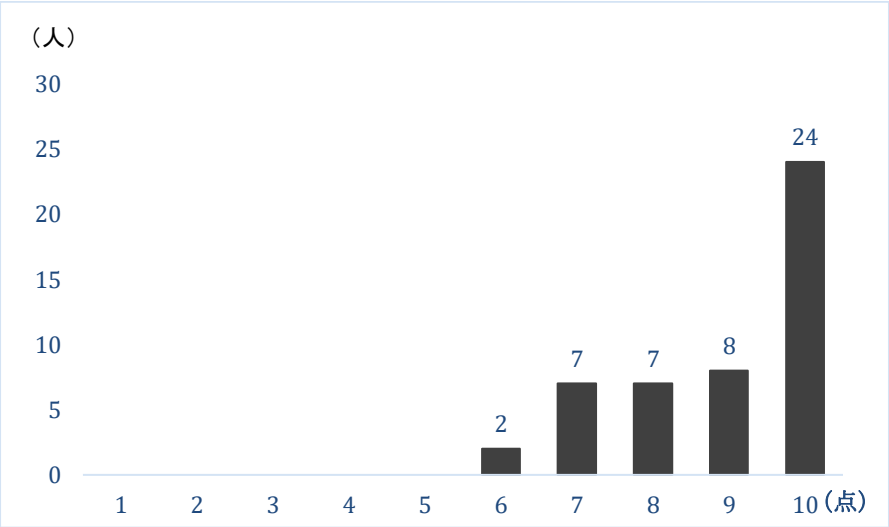
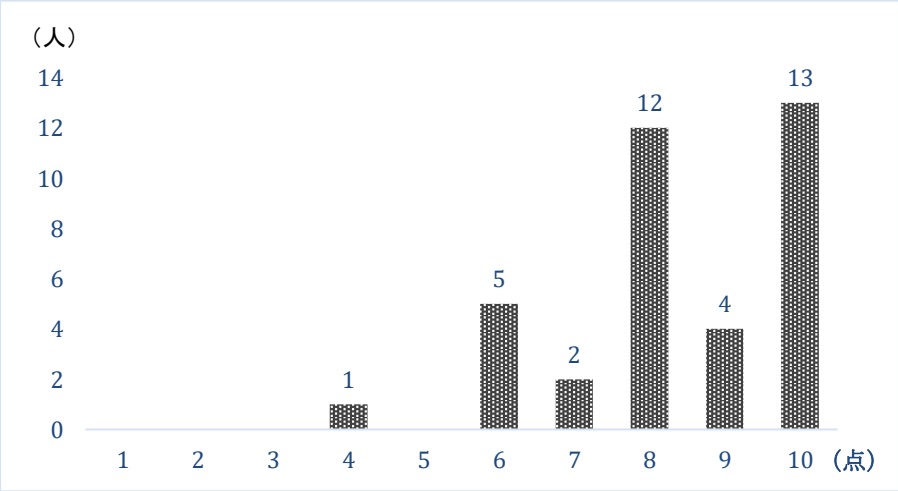



**図 4**

*プロジェクトに対する満足度（平均 8.5 点）*




満足度の高評価の要因としては，パートナーとの良好な関係（19 名）が最も多かった。とくに「このプログラムを通じて一生の友達を作ることができた」等，パートナーと友人関係を築いたという回答が多かった。次いで，目標言語が上達した（9 名），文化が学べた（7 名）が挙げられた。その他には新しい学習方法やツールが知れた（2 名），興味のある話題について話せた（2 名）等の意見もあった。さら

に，毎週パートナーに会えたことや，自由でストレスがなく，スケジュールの柔軟性が高いという枠組みに対する評価や，イベントの開催や運営スタッフの対応を評価する意見もあった。一方，マイナスの要因としては，パートナーと十分会えなかった（4名），それほど上達が感じられなかった（3名），目標言語をあまり使わなかった（2名）が挙げられた。

回答者のプログラム参加の目的は，言語学習（42名）が圧倒的に多く，日本人の友達を作りたい（8名），異文化交流（8名），海外留学や面接の準備のため（2名）という回答が続いた。学習の頻度は週に1回というペアが最も多かったが，週2〜4回というペアもあった。

学習中に行った活動は，ペアによって様々であった（表4）。使用されたリソースも，教科書や本，ウェブサイト，動画，スマホで撮った写真，自作のスライド，音楽，映画等多様であった。また，参加者は学習を効果的にするために様々なストラテジーを用いていたことがわかった。

**表4**

***どのような活動をしましたか。***（表内の数字は人数を示す）

| | |
|---|---|
| 自**由**会話・ディスカッション | 21 |
| 語学の授業に関連した学習 | 11 |
| 語学試験のための練習 | 4 |
| 映**画**やテレビ**番**組を使った学習 | 4 |
| パートナーと一緒に活動（出かける・料**理**するなど） | 4 |
| プレゼンテーションの練習 | 2 |
| 目標言語で書いた文書の添削 | 2 |
| **生**活や言語学習に役に立つ情報を共有する | 2 |
| 歌詞の翻訳 | 1 |
| フォーマルな話し方の練習 | 1 |

さらに，このプログラムを通して，全体の71%（34名）が自身の変化を感じていると回答しており，とくに，外国語学習・使用へ態度に関するものが多かった（17名）。例えば，目標言語の使用に自信がついた（8名），パートナーの国に行きた

くなった（2 名），言語学習動機が高まった（2 名）等の情意面の変化や，目標言語を使用する機会に積極的に参加するようになった（3 名），目標言語で積極的に発言や質問をするようになった（2 名）等，行動面の変化も報告された。また，相手の文化を意識して話すようになった（2 名），自国の説明や自分の意見が話せないと国際交流はできないと知った等，異文化コミュニケーションに関する意識変化もあったようである。さらに，目標言語学習の時間を確保するためにスケジュールを見直したり，パートナーに伝わる話し方を工夫するようになったという回答もあり，学習者オートノミーが発揮されていることが窺えた。また，「強制されてなくても自分で何かに取り組んで成果を出せるということを知った」のように学習者オートノミーを生かした学習の成果を感じた人もいた。さらに，日本人学生から，パートナーに刺激を受けて積極的に行動するようになった（3 名），日本語教育に興味を持った（2 名）という回答もあった。

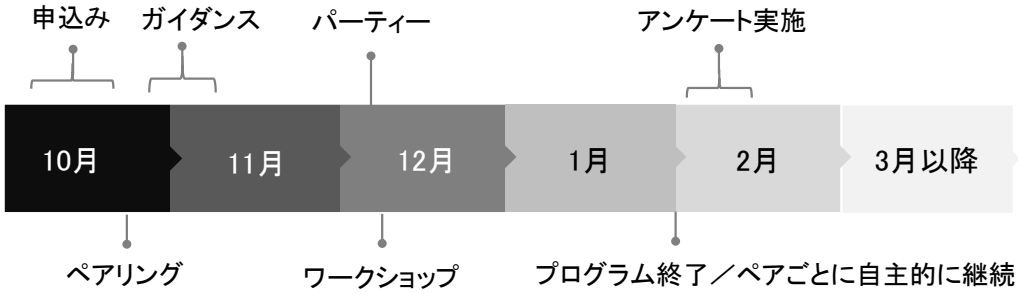
## 大阪大学におけるタンデム学習の実践

### *概要*

大阪大学における対面式タンデム学習の実践は「大阪大学タンデム学習プロジェクト」として文学研究科・文学部において 2012 年 4 月から開始された。そのきっかけには短期留学生の増大によるチューター経費の節約という大学側の財政的な面と，留学生と日本人学生の交流を促進するという 2 つの側面があった（青木・脇坂・欧, 2013）。タンデム学習プロジェクトの担当教員は，文学研究科・文学部の日本語学講座と国際連携室の教員であり，コーディネーターは日本語学講座の大学院生，学部生，修了生がリサーチアシスタントやアルバイトとして務めている。

**図5**

*大阪大学タンデム学習プロジェクトの流れ*




参加者の募集は 10 月上旬〜中旬に行い，参加希望者はオンラインで申込みを行った（図 5）。申込み締切後にペアリングを行い，パートナーが見つかった人にはペアごとに個別のガイダンスセッションを実施した。各ペアはガイダンスセッションでタンデム学習の原則や学習の注意点を学び，具体的に一学期間の学習計画を立てた後，ペアで学習を開始した。学習は基本的にペアで進めるが，質問やサポートは随時メールで受付けている。また，12 月上旬には希望者を対象にタンデム学習の経験と課題を共有するためのワークショップと親睦を目的としたパーティーを実施した。

### *申込者*

2019 年度後期の申込者は 47 名であった。大阪大学では申込時に出身地を尋ねていないため，母語をもとに申込者を分析する。参加者が「母語（一番得意な言語）」として挙げていた言語は日本語（21 名）と中国語（15 名）が多数を占めていた。身分別に見ると，日本語母語話者は学部生が 9 割（19 名）を占める一方，日本語以外を母語（一番得意な言語）とする者（以下，日本語非母語話者）は大学院生が 38%（10 名）と最も多かった。

学習希望言語（表 5）は，日本語母語話者は英語が 12 名で最も多く，次いで中国語が 6 名であった。一方，日本語非母語話者は，日本語が 19 名，英語が 6 名となっており，日本語に加え，英語学習の需要も高かった。

**表 5**

***申込者の内訳（学習希望言語別）*(N = *58*)**

| 学習希望言語 | 日本語母語話者 | | 日本語非母語話者 | | 全体 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 日本語 | 0 | | 19 | (56%) | 19 | (33%) |
| 英語 | 12 | (50%) | 6 | (18%) | 18 | (31%) |
| 中国語 | 6 | (25%) | 1 | (3%) | 7 | (12%) |
| 韓国・朝鮮語 | 3 | (13%) | 3 | (9%) | 6 | (10%) |
| フランス語 | 1 | (4%) | 3 | (9%) | 4 | (7%) |
| スウェーデン語 | 1 | (4%) | 0 | | 1 | (2%) |
| ドイツ語 | 1 | (4%) | 0 | | 1 | (2%) |
| スペイン語 | 0 | | 1 | (3%) | 1 | (2%) |
| イタリア語 | 0 | | 1 | (3%) | 1 | (2%) |
| 計 | 24 | (100%) | 34 | (100%) | 58 | (100%) |

（学習希望言語は複数回答可であったため，合計は申込数よりも多い）

参加目的別に見ると（表 6），日本人学生・留学生共に「目標言語での会話練習」が 39 名（83%）と最も多かった。また，日本語非母語話者は 5 名が「書く練習」を，3 名が「研究活動で使う言葉」と回答した。

**表 6**

***申込者の内訳（参加目的別）（自由記述式）*(N = *47*)**

| 参加の目的 | 日本語母語話者 | | 日本語非母語話者 | | 全体 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 目標言語での会話練習 | 18 | (86%) | 21 | (81%) | 39 | (83%) |
| 聞く練習 | 6 | (29%) | 8 | (31%) | 14 | (30%) |
| 書く練習 | 1 | (5%) | 5 | (19%) | 6 | (13%) |
| 読む練習 | 1 | (5%) | 4 | (15%) | 5 | (11%) |
| 試験対策 | 4 | (19%) | 1 | (4%) | 5 | (11%) |
| 研究活動で使う言葉 | 0 | | 3 | (12%) | 3 | (6%) |
| その他（敬語・アクセント・文化や生活） | 2 | (10%) | 1 | (4%) | 3 | (6%) |
| 計 | 21 | (100%) | 26 | (100%) | 47 | (100%) |

（各項目の%は異なり人数をもとに算出している）

*ペア*

最終的に 12 のペア（24 名）ができた（表 7）。言語の組み合わせは中国語と日本語のペアが最も多かった。英語と日本語の 2 組は第 1 言語以外のペアである[3]。第 2 希望でペアリングをしたのは 6 名であった。

**表 7**

***ペアの内訳 (N = 12)***

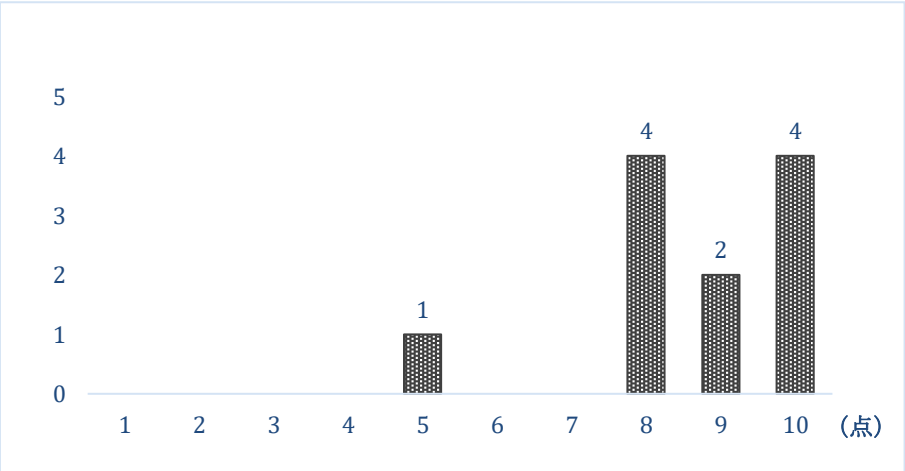
| 言語の組み合わせ | ペア数 | 第一言語同士のペア | 第一言語以外のペア |
|---|---|---|---|
| 英語 - 日本語 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| 中国語 - 日本語 | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| ドイツ語 - 日本語 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 韓国語 - 日本語 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 韓国語 - 中国語 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 計 | 12 | 10 | 2 |

*学期末アンケートの結果*（回答者 11 名，回収率 46%）

本調査でプロジェクトの満足度の平均が 8.6 であったこと（図 6），卒業する 1 名を除く 10 名のうち 8 名が，来学期も参加したいと回答したことから，参加者が概ねこのプロジェクトに満足していたことがわかった。

**図 6**

***プロジェクトに対する満足度（平均 8.6 点）***



満足度の高評価の要因としては，パートナーとの良好な関係（4名）や，「言語学習の機会を得ることができた」「気分転換ができた」「自分の文化や言語にも新たな気づきをもらえた」という意見があった。タンデム学習の利点としては，「自分のニーズに合わせてパートナーが助けてくれる」「自由で負担なく言語学習ができる」等のタンデム学習独自の形態に関する内容と，「大勢の前ではないので外国語を話すのが楽[4]」「1対1でお互いにしっかりと向き合える」といったペアでの学習の特徴に関する内容があった。また，「リアルな言語体験ができる」「試験勉強と違い，俗な表現やマナーについて詳しくなれる」等の実際の目標言語話者とのやり取りから得られる利点を挙げる人もいた。さらに，文化を深く理解できる（2名）「自分とは異なる意見が聞ける」という回答もあった。また，パーティーを評価するコメントもあった。一方，マイナスの要因としては，パートナーと十分会えなかったこと（3名）や，予習ができなかったこと（2名）が挙げられた。

回答者のプロジェクト参加の目的は，学習言語のスキルアップ（8名）が最も多く，新しい言語・前に勉強した言語の学習（5名），友達作り（4名）が続いた。さらに，大学院入試の準備のためという回答もあった。参加者らがタンデム学習を行った回数は，7回に集中しており（4名，36%），次いで8回（2名）であった。一番少ないペアで4回，最も多いペアは11回以上であった。

参加者の最も印象に残っているセッションについては，実に様々な学習活動が報告された。テーマを決めてディスカッションする（2名），院試の過去問題や語学の教科書を使って学習する（2名），自分の書いた日記やテレビ番組の翻訳を添削してもらうという意見があった。さらに，大学での専門に関連して共に美術館に行ったペアや，中華街に行き教科書では学べない文化を学んだという学生もいた。このように，参加者らは自身の学習目的に合わせて内容とやり方を選択し，タンデム学習を効果的なものにするために工夫している様子が窺えた。

さらに，このプロジェクトを通して，11名中8名が自身の変化を感じていると回答し，主に学習言語の上達に関する変化を実感していた。自信がついた・抵抗感が少なくなった（3名）や「学術的な文章の書き方がわかった」「スマホで韓国語の文字を打つ速度が速くなった」「語彙が増えた」という意見があった。他には，「日本人の友達ができた」「学習意欲が高まった」「留学生と身近に関わる経験ができ，以前より視野が広くなった」という回答もあった。

## 考察・まとめ

2つのケースを比較しながら，リサーチクエスチョンについて検討する。

まず，「タンデム学習の利点」の項で整理した先行研究と比較すると，カリキュラム外の活動として行われた2つの実践には先行研究で指摘されている以下のような効果があったことがわかった。

- 目標言語でのコミュニケーション能力が高まる
- 異文化コミュニケーション能力が高まる
- 友達意識が芽生える
- 目標言語学習・使用への肯定的態度を育てる
- 言語学習動機が高まる

一方，タンデム学習が「学習者オートノミーを伸ばす」「海外留学への動機づけになる」という点については，今回の調査では明確にはわからなかった。しかし，参加者らが学習者オートノミーを発揮し，自らの目標に合わせて学習内容と方法を選択しながら学習を行っていたこと，学習計画やコミュニケーションの方法についてメタ認知を働かせていたことは確認できた。また，やり取りを通してパートナーの国や文化への興味が増したことや，参加者の中に留学を視野に入れている学生がいたこともわかった。

また，先行研究で指摘されている以外に，日本人学生がパートナーの留学生とのやり取りを通して日本語・日本文化を再発見したり，日本語教育に興味を持ったりしていたことがわかった。さらに，タンデム学習の結果，目標言語の使用機会を自ら求めるようになったり，目標言語での会話で自ら発言するようになる等，積極性が増していたこともわかった。

では，日本の大学でタンデム学習を行う意義はどのようなものだろうか。

第一に，タンデム学習が目標言語を実践的に学習したい／目標言語を使う機会がほしいという参加者のニーズを満たすものであることが挙げられる。2大学の実践は大学内での位置づけや規模は異なるものの，共にカリキュラム外の自主参加の活動でありながら多くの申込みがあり，ほとんどのペアが定期的にパートナーとの学習を継続した。そして，参加者の多くが外国語学習・使用に対する肯定的な態度の変化と，コミュニケーション能力の向上を実感していた。タンデム学習は一対一で

互いに学び合う形式のため，目標言語を話すことに対する精神的負荷が少ない。また，カリキュラム外活動としてのタンデム学習は教室での学習とは異なり，学習頻度やスケジュール，場所の柔軟性が高い。このような理由から，大学生にとって参加・継続しやすいものであったと思われる。

第二に，タンデム学習が多様な背景を持った学習者や学習ニーズにも対応できるということである。2 大学の調査から，参加者は様々な学習目的を持ってタンデム学習に参加していることがわかった。そして，各ペアはタンデム学習で学習者オートノミーを発揮して多様な学習活動を行なっていたことも明らかになった。近年，世界的な人口移動の加速やインターネットとモバイル・テクノロジーの普及に伴い，学習者の背景の複雑化や学習目的の多様化，学習環境の拡大が起っている（青木・中田, 2011）。大学でも今後はさらに言語学習者の背景が複雑化し，学習目的も多様化していくと考えられるが，タンデム学習はこのような様々な背景・目的を持った学習者のニーズにも応えることができると思われる。

第三に，タンデム学習が留学生と日本人学生の個人レベルでの継続的な交流を促し，友達作りの場となるという点が挙げられる。今回の調査から，タンデム学習参加の目的の 1 つが文化交流や友達作りであることがわかった。とくに，九州大学に関しては申込みをした留学生の 45 名（27%）が友達作りを目的としてタンデム学習に参加しており（表 2），大学生活で日本人の友達を作るのが難しいと感じている現状が窺えた。そして，両大学のアンケート調査の結果から，タンデム学習が友人関係の構築に貢献していることがわかった。タンデム学習は互いに学び合う関係であるため精神的負荷が少なく，一対一で継続的にやり取りするためパートナーとしっかり向き合える。このことにより，パートナーを深く理解でき，親しくなれるのだと思われる。

第四に，タンデム学習では，個人間の対話を通して文化が学べるということが挙げられる。両大学の調査から，参加者らはタンデム学習を通して相手の文化を深く学び，相手国に対する見方を変えたり，自分の言語や文化に新たな気づきを得ていたことがわかった。タンデム学習では，ともすればステレオタイプ的な理解に陥る可能性がある文化の学習が，個人と個人の対話を通して経験されるものとなる。一個人としての交流を体現することにより，「c （スモールシー）文化」（Brooks,

1968）を学ぶことができるのである。それにより，価値観の違いに気づき，視野を広げたり，自文化を再発見したり問い直したりする機会になると思われる。

今後，国際交流のあり方は変化していくであろう。しかし，タンデム学習の実践は，その変化にも柔軟に適用でき，日本人学生と留学生の積極的な交流と相互理解を促し，学生一人一人に合った学びを提供する機会となると考える。

## 注

1. E タンデムには，テレビ電話を介して行われる，かなり対面式タンデム学習に近いものもある。2006 年以降それらは「Teletandem」と呼ばれるようになっている（Telles & Vassallo, 2006）。現在，インターネットを介したタンデム学習は E タンデムや Teletandem 以外にもビデオカンファレンスやテレコラボレーション等様々な用語で呼ばれている。

2. ポルトガル語と日本語のペアは当初学習希望言語を英語にしていたが，運営スタッフと相談の上，ポルトガル語を学習することになった。

3. 学習希望言語によって需要と供給が一致していないため，申込み段階で第一希望以外に学習を希望する言語とパートナーが母語話者でなくてもよいかを確認し，相談の上で，第一希望以外の言語でペアリングすることがある。

4. アンケートの原文では「大勢の前ではないので外来語を話すのが楽」と書かれていたが，文脈上，「外国語」の意味であると解釈した。

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## 付録

本研究に使用した学期末アンケートの質問項目

九州大学

1. このプログラムに参加した理由をお書きください。
2. パートナーと何回会うことができましたか？
3. このプログラムに対しどのくらい満足しましたか。（10 点満点）
4. このプログラムを楽しめましたか。（10 点満点）
5. どのような活動をしましたか。リソース（例：教科書，ウェブページ）とその使用法を含め，できるだけ具体的にお書きください。
6. プログラムに参加して日本や他国に対する視点になにか変化はありましたか。具体的にお書きください。
7. このプログラムを通してその他に自分の中で何か変化はありましたか。
8. このプログラムの活動で，なにか問題や困ったことはありましたか。可能な限り具体的にお書きください。
9. 来学期も参加したいですか。その理由もお書きください。

大阪大学

1. プロジェクトに参加しようと思った理由について教えてください。（選択式，複数回答可）
2. これまでに何回タンデムセッションを行いましたか？（選択肢式）
3. あなたにとって最も印象に残っているセッションはどんなものでしたか？どんなリソースを使いましたか？どんな使い方をしましたか？パートナーはどのようにあなたを助けてくれましたか？
4. タンデム学習で効果的だと思った勉強方法があれば教えてください。
5. タンデム学習を経験して，自分自身に何か変化はありましたか？
6. このプログラムに対しどのくらい満足しましたか。（10 点満点）
7. タンデム学習の利点は何だと思いますか？
8. 今後，運営側が改善すべきことがあったら教えてください。
9. 来学期もタンデム学習プロジェクトに参加したいと思いますか？

# From Zero to Hero: The Story of a Free Conversation Service

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Alex Worth has been based in Japan for almost 15 years working as a learning advisor and lecturer. He is currently the program director of the Language Learning Center at Osaka Institute of Technology in Japan where he teaches students how to present their research in English.

In self-access learning centers (SALCs) across Japan, some form of a 'free conversation' service is quite common. These services provide a designated space where students can comfortably practice communicating in English. and tend not to require a

reservation or registration. This sort of service can be met with varying levels of student participation . This progress report will detail the history of such a service, including changes implemented in order to improve it and the subsequent results. It is the writers' hope that other SALC teams can gain insight from the lessons learned and gather some ideas to implement in their own service. The focus will largely be placed on how the service impacted the overall goal of the SALC to build a learning community or Community of Practice (COP) (Wenger, 1998) and the role played by the physical space it inhabited. As consideration of community when planning learning spaces is critical for fostering deeper learning (Bickford & Wright, 2006), many of the decisions made involved careful thought about physical spaces and how to best utilize those spaces .

**SALC Background**

The institution discussed here is a SALC called the Language Learning Center (LLC), established in 2012, at a technology university in Japan. There is a director, two instructors, one manager and seventeen student staff. The building, located slightly off campus, has three floors; all services are currently found on the second floor, while the other two floors consist of free study space.

The LLC provides a variety of services and resources which include a library of books, comics, and DVDs. The center offers credit and elective courses, including TOEIC and study abroad support courses. In addition, students can receive specialized support to suit their individual needs during one-to-one sessions in a Consultation Room (CR). This service is offered at various times throughout the week and requires a reservation. Free Conversation (FC), the focus of this report, is a non-reservation service held daily during lunchtime. During FC, students have an opportunity to communicate in English with an instructor, a student staff member, and each other, sometimes in the form of a casual conversation, and other times in the form of a game or activity.

The FC has undergone a number of changes over the years to improve the service and increase participation. In order to maximize the potential of the service and attract higher numbers of students, the LLC team ultimately chose to distill the various functions of a SALC into the broader purpose of fostering a supportive language learning community. As language learning is a social process, providing opportunities to participate in community building activities is paramount (Curry & Mynard, 2014). While the LLC, overall, has been successful in creating this type of community, the FC service tended to have inconsistent numbers of participants and seemed to exist separately from the main community. What follows is a report of the challenges that have arisen over the years, improvements made, and

how the FC service has turned into the hero of the LLC, successfully drawing in large numbers of students and becoming one of the most popular services.

**History of the Free Conversation Service**

In 2014, two years after the LLC was established, the decision was made by the LLC team at the time to introduce a free conversation space on the underused third floor of the building (Figure 1). Initially, the LLC team decided to run the free conversation service with themed activities each day of the week. Mondays and Fridays were focused on TOEIC activities, Tuesday was for games, Wednesday featured a book club and Thursday was geared towards movies. A café was introduced in order to increase the foot traffic to the third floor. This cafe was separate to the free conversation space but users could eat and drink purchased food whilst using the service.

**Figure 1:**

*Free Conversation on the 3rd Floor*

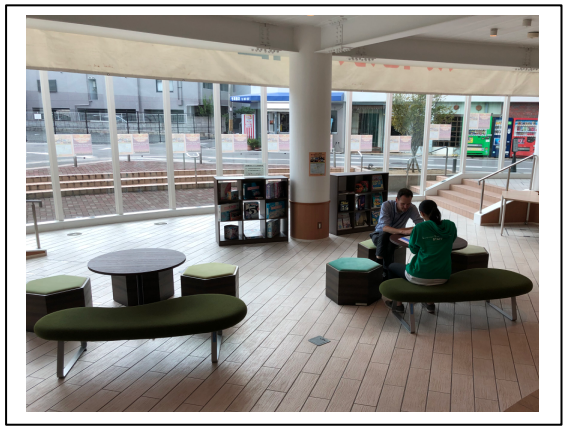
Initially, the service attracted students, but it was noted on weekly sign-up sheets that the number of users steadily decreased over the course of the semester. Possible reasons for this decrease in users included the large areas of empty space around the FC space that may have made shyer students uncomfortable. In addition, the nature of some activities required a certain degree of commitment to attend on a regular basis. For example, students would have to consider a TOEIC activity or a story they wanted to discuss prior to attending the service. The lack of natural footfall to the third floor of the building also may have affected the popularity of the service.

In 2015 the decision was made to move the FC service to the first floor of the LLC (Figure 2). Changes made included a reduction from five days to three days a week and the

structured activities were abandoned in favor of a conversation space where students could talk to an instructor without any pressure to do an 'activity'. After an initial increase in the number of students using the service there was a gradual decline over the first year. In 2016, an effort to increase participation was made by linking the use of the service with the option to get credit if students attended a certain number of times. This bolstered numbers significantly, but the quality of the interactions was reduced as students' motivation to use English was not adequately addressed. Those students who attended in order to obtain credit, rather than practice English, often continued speaking Japanese throughout the session and did not make an effort to participate in activities.

**Figure 2:**

*Free Conversation on the 1st Floor*



Overall, the reasons for the struggles of the service likely stemmed from the position of the FC space, exposed and easily visible, meaning that shy students might have felt self-conscious speaking English. The furniture was also lacking in comfort, mainly consisting of hard wooden stools. By the midway point of the 2018 academic year, the LLC staff had to make the decision to either stop the service or reinvent the service to increase the number of users. The team opted for the latter.

**Measures Taken to Improve the Service**

Probably the most drastic change to the FC service was moving it to the second floor (Figure 3). The initial rationale for moving FC to the first floor was that this would make the space more visible from the outside of the building, advertising the service to students walking by, and giving students on the way to the second floor an opportunity to join. In

reality, this did not happen, as attendance fell further. The furniture was not comfortable and the windows meant the FC group was visible to passersby, which might have inhibited participation. Further, foot traffic did not bring students directly into the FC area. Most students using other services would enter the building and turn away from the FC area to go upstairs for their CR appointments.

**Figure 3:**

*Free Conversation on the 2nd Floor*

By moving to the second floor, FC became intertwined with the rest of the LLC services, and thus enhanced the sense of community in the LLC and 'the social dimension of learning' (Shelton-Strong & Mynard, 2018, p. 59), which is of upmost importance. Students waiting for their appointments in the CR used to sit quietly, playing on their phones or doing homework, but now they could easily join FC and talk to other students while waiting. Instructors and staff could also pass by regularly and join the conversation, whereas on the first floor, the only people passing by the FC area were on their way to the restrooms and likely not eager to join the conversation. The frequency of sessions was also increased, from three times a week back to five, so students could be sure that lunchtime always meant FC was happening.

The move to the second floor allowed for use of the already-existing furniture there, which helped foster a more welcoming atmosphere. The bright sofas and padded chairs arranged around a coffee table and TV lent itself to a casual setting resembling a living room. Additionally, the TV meant a movie or series could be playing in the background. On top of

that, a Nintendo Switch was provided, along with multiplayer games such as Mario Kart and Mario Party, which necessitate communication among players.

## Challenges and their Solutions

### Challenges Encountered

Once these changes were implemented, at the start of the 2019 school year, the number of participants joining the FC service increased dramatically. Looking at the semester participation numbers as a whole compared to previous years (Figure 4), it is by far the most successful (2016 is excluded from the data because of the previously mentioned experiment offering credit to attend FC). Additionally, looking at the semester week to week (Figure 5), there is a steady participation rate throughout the term.

**Figure 4:**

*Free Conversation Users (2014-2019: Semester 1)*

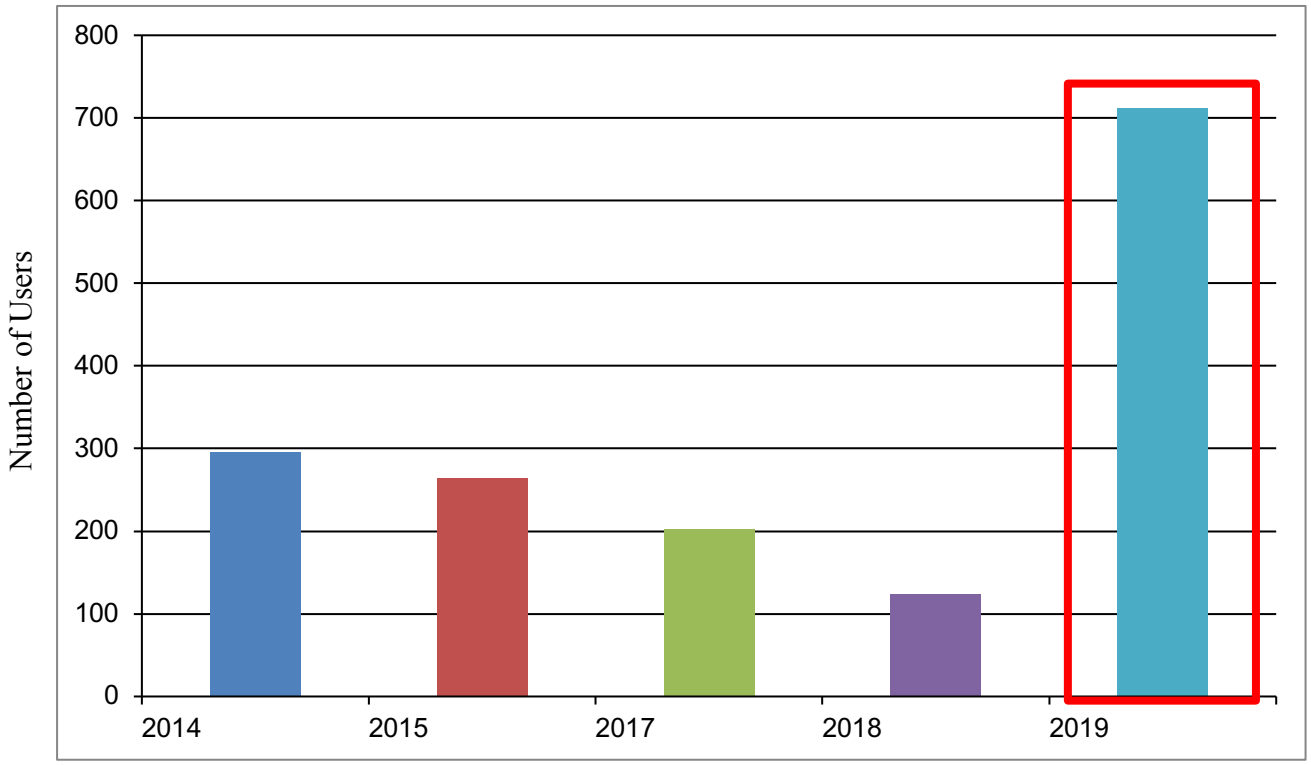
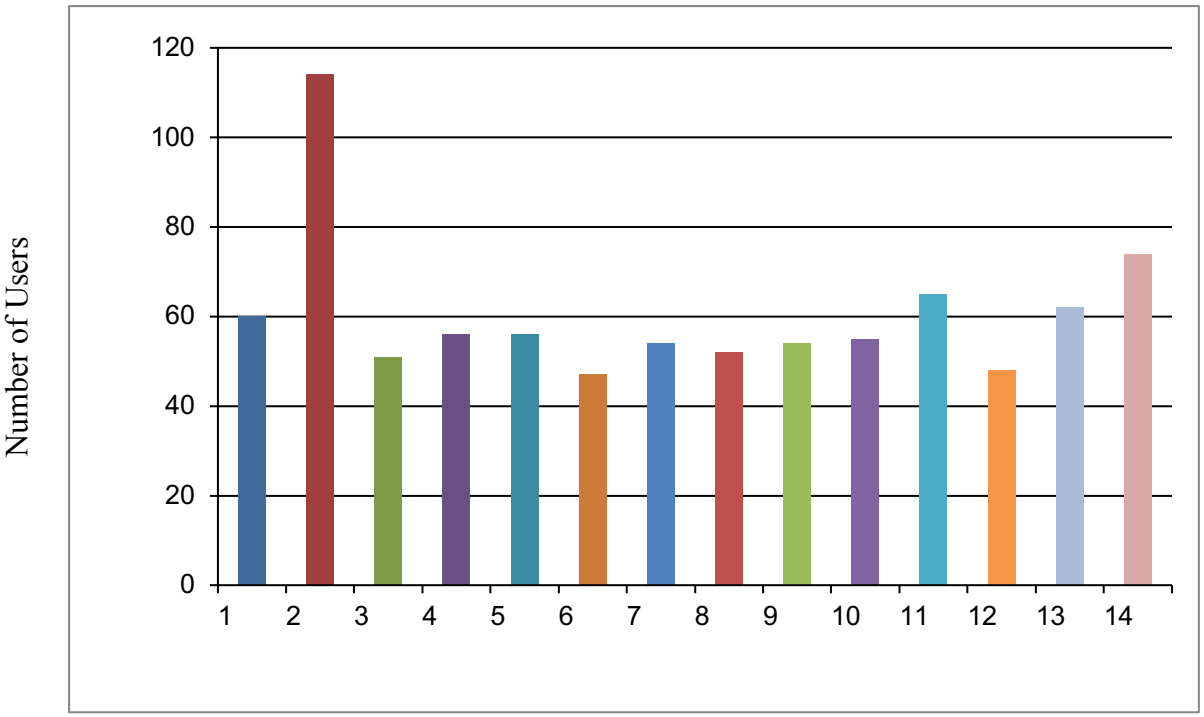



**Figure 5:**

*Free Conversation weekly users (2019-2020: Semester 1, Weeks 1-14)*




The dramatic increase in numbers was accompanied by a number of challenges. Whereas before instructors and student staff had to accommodate approximately one to five students in a session, they now had to contend with 15 to 20 attendees. First, there were the physical limitations of the space, whereby students arriving later might be relegated to an outside seat, far from the instructor and student staff. This placed them in a difficult position to participate in an activity or conversation. This made it particularly difficult to include hesitant students. Second, instructors and staff were not quite sure what to do with larger crowds. Whereas in previous years, a simple group chat or a board game might suffice, in this new landscape, these activities were not ideal, as they are better suited to smaller groups. While students could possibly form their own group and play a board game, they would be cut off from the instructor/staff member and might not feel motivated to use English.

**Solutions**

Several steps were taken in order to deal with these challenges and accommodate participants.

- Student Staff Adjustments: The first step that was taken to remedy some of these problems was adding an additional student staff member to the FC service. The presence of an instructor, plus two student staff members increased opportunities for participants to interact with a member of the SALC team.
- Simplifying Activities: The next step included activities for larger groups of people. To some degree, simplification was key, opting for activities such as Pictionary or

conversation starter question cards. With these simple activities, larger groups could easily be split and made into smaller pockets of conversation or teams.

- Inclusive Activities: In terms of activities that could easily draw more students, jigsaw puzzles were useful tools. A puzzle could be placed on the coffee table in the middle of the group and students could participate (or not) at their leisure. This saw large numbers of up to ten students crowded around a table, engaged and using English, and surprisingly, some students often stayed well after FC was over so they could continue working on the puzzle. Another very popular activity was *Kahoot*, which is an online quiz game run through a computer connected to the TV whereby students participate using their mobile phones. Students could choose from a vast collection of public quizzes and the LLC team also created their own. These quizzes were an efficient way to include large numbers of students and easily involve lower level and shy students.

## Conclusion

Through this experience, two key lessons were learned: the importance of increasing flexibility, and establishing and maintaining a nurturing language learning community. Given the added flexibility of the FC in terms of the days it was offered, the removal of structured activities, and the offering of more inclusive activities, students did not feel pressure to prepare and could rest assured that they could easily participate. When FC was moved to the middle of the LLC on the second floor, it became far more accessible, not only for students but also for instructors, and served to establish a closer community. Once established, FC became everyone's shared space for catching up and relaxing. Essentially, all of the lessons learned and changes made served to consolidate and intertwine the services of the LLC, including FC, into a more comfortable space, giving more opportunities for authentic communication among students, instructors, and staff. The changes made also contributed towards fostering a genuine sense of community and togetherness, which provides a strong foundation for all future innovations to be built upon.

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# Nurturing Use of an English Speaking Area in a Multilingual Self-Access Space

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Proponents of the traditional stance that the L1 should be avoided in language learning might perceive an L1-supportive multilingual language learning environment to be at odds with the encouragement of target language use in a self-access space. We, however, believe that there is no conflict. This paper documents our efforts, as learning advisors in a self-access learning center (SALC) at a Japanese university, to address learners' needs in both regards by developing an area devoted to English speaking within a multilingual space in the SALC. We created the area to promote learners' English use and later initialized or supported events that further facilitated their English speaking while preserving the benefits of multilingualism for language learning. The context is first introduced, including the process of developing the new area and relevant theory, followed by descriptions of and the rationale for events and projects that were held there. Finally, we briefly describe ongoing research on the area and our observations to date.

## Context

The SALC described here is located in a private university with approximately 4,400 students, all majoring in foreign languages or international communication. A new facility for the SALC opened in 2017. Whereas the previous SALC had an "English only" language policy, a new policy was implemented concurrently with the move to the new building. The first floor of the SALC is multilingual, and the second floor is "English only." We use *multilingual* here to mean that students can use any language, including Japanese. The university has another self-access facility with separate areas for each of the seven non-English language majors, but it was anticipated that the new SALC would become a major gathering point for students of all majors, considering its size and central location on campus. The reasons for the dual policies thus include reaffirming that the SALC supports all students (not just English majors) and responding to a belief commonly expressed by students that the previous SALC was intended for and dominated by students who specialized in English (Imamura, 2018). The policies were also intended to support the use of any language in service of learning all target languages. Aside from policy change, this encouragement includes bi- or multilingual promotional signage, learner communities (i.e., student-organized groups) for learning other languages through the L2 (English), advising services in multiple languages (e.g., English, Japanese, Spanish), and projects promoting explicit expression by students of their choice of language while in the SALC.

It soon became apparent, however, that students still needed additional support for using their target language in the multilingual space. Rather than taking the multilingual

policy to mean that all languages can be used, students tend to apply it as permission to use their L1, which for nearly all students is Japanese (perhaps contrasting the policy with the second floor's English-only rule). Many students thus use Japanese mainly for socializing rather than for social learning purposes. Consequently, Imamura (2018) found that when students do want to use English on the first floor, they feel anxiety about doing so due to the surrounding Japanese-dominated environment. She also reported that some students desired a structured space for their English learning on the first floor. We felt that such a space could benefit students that lacked the confidence to use the all-English second floor. The English-only area (from anecdotal experience of student opinions, even dating back to the previous, all-English SALC) tends to be perceived as the domain of highly proficient English users. Other research has revealed that although many students wanted to communicate in English, they desired more support to do so, including semi-structured spaces or events providing opportunities to use English (Yarwood et al., 2019).

Figure 1

*The ESPA in September 2019*

As one response to these needs, in June 2018, an area devoted to English speaking, dubbed the English Speaking Practice Area (ESPA), was created on the first floor. In this space, unlike on the all-English second floor, any language could be used, but it was expected that students' focus would be on speaking English. A central area in the SALC was chosen for the ESPA, as it was highly visible and thus suited to establishing a positive atmosphere for social learning. Additionally, being on a slightly raised platform, the area had an existing demarcation. In arranging the ESPA, we applied some of Edlin's (2016) principles for self-access space design (e.g., welcoming environments; design facilitating social interaction). The area originally contained seating for groups of up to four, and students tended to study quietly there. In order to create a relaxed environment more conducive to social interaction, we mostly replaced the furniture with sofas and large, comfortable chairs (some seating arrangements were left for smaller, quiet conversations; see Figure 1 or Imamura & Wongsarnpigoon, 2019, for more images). The layout has slightly changed several times in order to further encourage social learning and discourage sleeping on the sofa. This trend reflected larger, general discrepancies between our hopes for the SALC design and actual use by students, who may perceive it more as a student commons for quiet study or socialization.

## Translanguaging

While envisioning the ESPA, the concept of translanguaging was a large influence. García (2009) defines translanguaging as "multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds" (p. 45). Translanguaging portrays the whole of all available linguistic resources in multilingual worlds as a single repertoire. The notion has been key for recent researchers of multilingual education questioning the traditional bias against learners' L1 in foreign language classrooms (Cummins, 2007). Similarly, we hoped that applying translanguaging principles would help to change the prejudice that in L2 speaking, L1 use was detrimental and to be avoided. García and Li Wei (2014) also emphasize that translanguaging practices facilitate learners' development of their multilingual identities. We hoped that in the ESPA, students would benefit from combining their Japanese, English, and other linguistic resources and also be able to explore their identities as multilingual language users.

## Projects Implemented

After the ESPA opened, students began gathering there but largely continued to use the space for studying quietly or socializing in Japanese. We realized that they still needed

more structured support and scaffolding for their target language use, as seen in previous research (Yarwood et al., 2019) and student survey results (SALC, 2019). In terms of Gardner and Miller's (1999) levels of guidance in self-access centers, the SALC has existing structured (e.g., a writing center) and semi-structured (e.g., a drop-in advising desk) support systems. As an unstructured system, however, the ESPA appeared to be difficult to use as initially envisioned. As one response, in June 2019, we started holding weekly casual conversation sessions, in which we were present in the ESPA; students were welcome to join and stay as long as they liked. Initially, each session had a predetermined topic, which was advertised on posters in the SALC; however, after several weeks, we stopped deciding the topics and let conversations develop naturally. Although the number of participants in any single session was usually small (five or fewer), a few students became regular attendees. In keeping with the beliefs behind the multilingual policy, Japanese was sometimes used (by the students and by us) to scaffold English use. Interestingly, some regular participants were non-English (e.g., Indonesian) majors, and although the focus was on English, the group's conversations would sometimes involve their languages of study or one of our heritage languages (Thai).

Another element in developing the ESPA as a place for multilingual social learning was its use for learner-organized events. In particular, starting in July 2019, SALC peer advisors (student staff who have undergone training for advising fellow learners) decided to hold monthly lunchtime events in the ESPA known as "TACO (Talking Activity and Collaborate with Others) Tuesday." We assisted with logistics, promotion, and post-event reflection, but otherwise, the events were completely organized and run by students. A mixture of English and Japanese was used during these events while discussing issues and accomplishing tasks relevant to students (e.g., time management, job hunting). The organizers were pleased with the turnout for TACO Tuesdays, and several students became regular participants.

Other student groups also held events in the ESPA, including a student art exhibition, events regarding LGBTQ+ issues held by a SALC learners' community, and an event promoting awareness of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals held by students of a seminar class. In some cases, event organizers asked to use the ESPA due to its location and visibility, while we also proactively encouraged students to use the ESPA as a venue for their events, in order to promote interaction there.

In addition, the SALC learning advisors, as part of an effort to reinforce students' awareness of advising services, held casual drop-in advising sessions in the ESPA during one

week of the semester. During these times, an advisor would sit in the ESPA. Students could approach the advisor to talk about their learning in a relaxed environment without an appointment; advisors also initiated conversations with students who were in the ESPA. Besides promoting advising services, these sessions also helped to address students' professed needs for scaffolding for their target language use (Yarwood et al., 2019).

## Current Research

We are investigating the effectiveness of events for promoting English usage in the ESPA and learners' perceptions of the necessity of such events for their language learning. Another purpose of our research is to explore learners' awareness of the ESPA. Since June 2019, we have asked participants in our weekly conversation events, TACO Tuesday events, and the casual advising sessions to answer an online Google Forms survey. We have also invited survey respondents, as well as event organizers (e.g., SALC peer advisors), to participate in semi-structured interviews. It is hoped that this research will help us to provide further social learning opportunities through supporting target language use in the ESPA, as well as on the multilingual first floor in general.

## Observations to Date and Reflection

Currently, the total number of responses to the questionnaire ($N = 21$) is insufficient for meaningful quantitative analysis. Some open-ended questions, however, yielded interesting results. Regarding events in the ESPA, it seems that interacting with others led to positive perceptions, as some said that "…the participants were all kind," or "I was able to talk with people who have high motivation for English." (We translated responses from the original Japanese.) The responses also indicated a possible need to continue raising awareness of the ESPA's purpose. Students' perceptions of the ESPA prior to participating in events included responses such as merely "a place with comfortable sofas" or "an individual study space, but a place for speaking English." Finally, when asked their opinions on using their L1 to support their English speaking, responses such as "We should try to use it as little as possible," and "…We have to make the effort to communicate our ideas without using [Japanese]" revealed that while both Japanese and English were used in ESPA events, there were still an "English-only" bias and a need to further encourage translanguaging in multilingual environments. We could possibly address this need through signage, awareness-raising workshops, and demonstrating translanguaging through our own language use or that of student event leaders.

In presenting this research at the 2019 JASAL National Conference (Imamura & Wongsarnpigoon, 2019), we received helpful feedback and questions from other conference attendees. In particular, discussing questions about the identity of the learning space, how the principles of translanguaging are implemented in the ESPA, and how speaking is facilitated there inspired us to reflect on our practices as well as further directions for this research. Additionally, the process of preparing and delivering our presentation prompted us to consider the identity of the ESPA and the impact of learner-organized events on SALC users' awareness of not only the space but of potential opportunities for English learning on the multilingual first floor.

## Next Steps

In the 2020–21 academic year, we had planned to continue holding weekly casual speaking events. As at universities worldwide, however, the 2020 pandemic crisis has forced the closing of the campus and suspension of our plans. Although one of the main organizers of TACO Tuesday has graduated, the other peer advisors have expressed interest in continuing the event. We hope that whenever the SALC reopens, having these regular events occurring (in a safe fashion) from the start will help in further establishing a community and interactive environment in the ESPA; in particular, such events being visible to new first-year students could aid in emphasizing the identity of the ESPA as a social learning space. We also hope that they will be inspired to participate in events from the beginning of their campus life, when new students are still seeking out activities to join.

We will also continue encouraging the use of ESPA by university communities for events. Increased cooperation and communication with student leaders and SALC practitioners (administrative staff and learning advisors) will be crucial in further promoting the ESPA as a venue for learners' events. Additionally, our research and student survey data have highlighted the need to consider our methods of event publicity and raising awareness of the ESPA (e.g., signage or workshops), as a frequent theme is students' lack of awareness of such issues.

Our research will also continue when events can safely resume. As more quantitative data is necessary for analysis, we plan to continue administering the survey to event participants along with eliciting interviews in order to aid qualitative analysis. Increased data will provide more information that will help us understand how students perceive their language use in the ESPA as well as the space itself. This understanding, in turn, can allow us to promote and investigate in further detail the practical application of translanguaging there.

As Imamura (2018) also found that some students wanted the SALC to have spaces for practicing non-English languages, the ESPA (the "English" in its name notwithstanding) could be a suitable venue for such practice. Although we lack the space for a discussion of the university's existing self-access spaces for other languages (see articles published in "Language Acquisition and Language Use in the MULC," 2019), future larger-scale research could involve collaboration with faculty or staff to compare translanguaging practices or the various areas' identities. Finally, we are considering how, moving forward, we might apply Gee's (2005) work on *affinity spaces*, which involves greater emphasis on space than on community membership, to provide our research with new angles for our analysis.

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# Expanding a Self-Access Center's Contact: Finding Opportunities for Bridge-Building on Campus

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**Abstract**

This article discusses outreach and bridge-building between a self-access center (SAC), called the Community Learning International Plaza (CLIP), and various groups at a sports-focused university in greater Tokyo. When the SAC opened three years ago (April 2017), students and faculty did not know its purpose. Therefore, CLIP teachers and administrators (the authors of this paper) saw the need to conduct outreach to educate teachers and students about self-access language learning (SALL) and the services offered. Through orientation sessions, we were able to informally speak with subject teachers who were accompanying their students, learn if they might be interested in collaborating on future student programs, and plan accordingly. We were also approached by student clubs and teams to make workshops that fit particular needs (e.g., English for life saving and Indonesian/English communication for teaching rugby in Indonesia through JICA). Outreach and bridge-building connect the CLIP to users who otherwise may not have sought out services. In this way, the SAC acts as a bridge between language classes and real-life English opportunities (Cotterall & Reinders, 2000) through workshops that simulate real-life situations and promote self-efficacy and second language use. Outreach has been successful both in making the SAC relevant and in helping us set up English for specific purposes (ESP) programs tailored specifically to the needs of students at this campus.

本記事では、“Community Learning International Plaza”（CLIP）という自律学習センター（セルフ・アクセスセンター（SAC））と首都圏にあるスポーツ中心の大学に所属するさまざまなグループ間におけるアウトリーチや橋渡し活動について述べる。センターが 3 年前（2017 年 3 月）に大学に設立された時には、学生も教職員もその目的についてよく理解していなかった。そのため、CLIP 教員及び事務スタッフ（本記事の共著者）は、教員や学生に向け、自律語学学習（SALL）とは何か、またそれに関してセンターが提供できるサービスはどのようなものかにつき説明する必要があった。センターの新入生オリエンテーションの際には、学生を引率する教科教員に対し、将来的に学生向けのプログラムを共に企画・実施することに興味があるかを非公式に問うことが出来た。また、クラブ活動やチームからは、特定のニーズ（ライフセービング活動における英会話スキルや JICA を通したインドネシアでのラグビー普及活動におけるインドネシア語／英語でのコミュニケーションなど）に合わせたワークショップの開催についての依頼があった。アウトリーチや橋渡し活動は、CLIP と想定外の利用者とを結びつけてくれた。このように、現実の生活に沿ったワークショップの開催や自己効力感の向上、第二言語の利用促進により、SALL が語学クラスと実際に英語を話す機会とを繋ぐ（Cotterall & Reinders, 2000）ことができると分かった。アウトリーチ活動は SAC を大学とより結びつけ、この大学の学生のニーズに合わせた「特定の目的のための英語」（ESP）プログラム開催の一助となった。

*Keywords*: outreach, bridge-building, sports, English for specific purposes, self-access language learning

As the field of self-access language learning (SALL) continues to grow, we need to assess what our centers currently do for the larger communities they are housed within. It is also fair to wonder whether self-access centers (SACs) are currently being used to their fullest potential (Berman, 2020). One possible area of concern is that they often cater to those who would most likely seek out services. Research is conducted on those individuals, and centers improve their services based on the needs of these particular users. While this research has enabled SACs to come a long way and continue to advance the field of autonomy, what about learners who have not yet been reached? This attrition misses data from potential users, and this biased data may perpetuate services that do not fit these potential users. There has been little research into potential attrition in the field of education and even less in self-access. On the other hand, healthcare is a well-researched field, and like education, it often focuses on access for all as a basic need. Marcellus (2004) found that attrition in healthcare studies often led to biased data. This in turn affected the validity of research, and services developed were not representative of all participants. If the goal of a SAC is to serve the needs of everyone on campus, researchers should make an effort to avoid selective attrition. Even though the nature of services in SALL and healthcare differ, missing input from potential users would have a similar effect and result in biased data collection. One way to connect with unrepresented users is by reaching out to programs on campus they are involved with.

In this report, we will discuss outreach and bridge-building that occurred between a SAC, called the Community Learning International Plaza (CLIP), and various groups on a campus of about 2,000 students in the greater Tokyo area. Most students are sports majors, with smaller numbers studying sociology, economics, logistics, or law. English is not offered as a major; however, there are compulsory once-a-week English classes for freshmen and sophomores, with the option of continuing through electives (Werner & Von Joo, 2018). Beyond that, students can visit the SAC or study abroad for more opportunities to use English or another language. The CLIP is located in a high traffic area of campus near the entrance to the library. Since the majority of students have participated in freshman orientation sessions, most have interacted with the center. The authors of this paper are the three people who primarily run the CLIP (two teacher/advisors and one administrative staff member).

## Conducting Outreach

When the CLIP opened three years ago (April 2017), neither students nor faculty were aware of its purpose. Therefore, outreach was a necessity, and we had two general goals: (1) educate teachers about the center (so that they could direct their students to the SAC), and (2) inform students about what they could do there. Matsuo et al. (2015) discussed how teacher support is crucial for the success of a SAC. Furthermore, Mynard and Stevenson (2017) emphasized the importance of transparency when building bridges with other departments: "Gradually build trust and they are likely to support you later" (p. 179). Therefore, we aimed to gain teachers' understanding and support early on.

To address the first goal, we initially visited the English teachers, who had not been consulted when the center was planned (before we were hired). We wanted them to know that we were there to support them. After that, we went to the departments and gave a presentation to all five deans[1] (department heads) about the history and background of self-access centers, including how our SAC fits into the big picture. They were then equipped to relay the information to teachers in their departments.

Next, we were able to address the second goal by conducting freshman orientation sessions. Since seminar teachers attend the session together with their students, an unintended consequence was the opportunity to meet and interact with subject teachers from all of the departments. It was a low-pressure situation for those who might not be comfortable with English, as they were free to join their students in the treasure hunt activity, help them, do it by themselves, or simply observe. According to Horwitz (1996), speaking a second language in an instructional setting can cause anxiety for teachers. While Horwitz's discussion concerned language classes, the dynamic is similar because seminar teachers are in a leadership role. During the orientations, we were able to speak with them informally and learn which teachers had an interest in English. This knowledge became useful later when we considered who we might approach to collaborate on new student programs. For example, informal conversations led to the Basketball in English workshop (co-designed with the basketball coach), where students warmed up through a shooting game, learned terms and rules, and played an actual game, all the while trying to use only English.

## Programs with a Need

In addition to conducting outreach, we were approached by students, staff, or faculty when there was a specific need. For example, one student in the life-saving club asked us to teach practical English that members might use to ensure the safety of English-speaking beachgoers during their summer jobs as lifeguards. The resulting program included over 40

student participants. English for specific purposes (ESP) programs such as this one may be a common need for learners who are not English majors (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). CLIP materials and services are often sports-related, whereas other contexts would reflect their respective disciplines.

In another example, members of the men's and women's rugby teams have been participating in a month-long Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) program for the last three years. Each time, up to ten student-athletes teach rugby at schools across Indonesia. What started out as one-on-one English conversation practice has developed into an almost semester-long communication program to learn basic Indonesian conversation and rugby terms. The program also aimed to increase students' self-efficacy and willingness to communicate in any language. In each case, we designed a series of workshops that met weekly for approximately one to three months, depending on the needs of the program. Outreach and bridge-building connected the CLIP to users who may not have otherwise sought out services.

## The SAC as a Bridge

Cotterall and Reinders (2000) described SALL as a bridge, and also at times a fortress. In their view, the center acts as a bridge between the classroom and language experiences in the real world. The CLIP has served this purpose for many students by offering original workshops that simulate real-life situations and promote self-efficacy and second language use. However, in our case, the bridge does not necessarily start in the classroom because students do not participate in many language classes in their degree programs. Instead, the CLIP (and by extension SALL) acts as a bridge between students' past language class experiences and present real-life English settings.

In the same study, Cotterall and Reinders (2000) found that lower-level language learners rarely used resources outside the SAC. They questioned whether the center might "become so comfortable for learners that it functions more as a fortress (discouraging them from venturing out) than as a bridge to the outside world" (Cotterall & Reinders, 2000, p. 30). Because of outreach and bridge-building efforts, the walls of the CLIP are metaphorically and literally open, with a two-meter high glass partition instead of a wall. Due to the center's proximity to the library's Learning Commons, students frequently come and go between the two. A fortress supports those who are inside its walls and could keep students in, as Cotterall and Reinders discussed. However, this metaphor might be taken a step further, as those same walls can also serve as a barrier to keep others out. Berman (2020) supported this contention

by noting the possibility of individuals being regularly excluded or awkward social situations arising and becoming the norm in an informal learning space. Additional research can help us learn more about student-to-student interactions and further promote a space of inclusion.

Ideally, one would want an effective center with walls that are open to the entire campus. However, Datwani-Choy (2014) cautioned that a balance should be maintained between effectiveness of services and growth in users. Interdisciplinary activities with established groups bring new expectations and may put pressure on the center, thereby disrupting its balance. In thinking of new directions in self-access, further research might measure the initial person-environment (PE) fit between center and potential users to assist in identifying feasible adaptations (Caplan, 1987). If this were to be measured, P would represent student language needs, while E would be physical space, layout, and existing support services (for example, see Augeri & Kajita, 2017; Berman, 2020). The PE fit would not only assist with the initial assessment, but also potentially help map which approaches produce the best balance through periodic measurements.

## Conclusion

Conducting outreach dramatically affected the trajectory of the CLIP. The partnerships mentioned in this paper (and others) allowed the developing center to create services tailored to fit the needs of its environment. The CLIP now offers unique sports English services thanks to our reaching out to existing campus programs. Because the dynamic of each SAC is unique, the appropriate degree of outreach may vary from center to center. However, the fact remains that there are always potential users who would benefit from the services offered by a SAC. Additional research is necessary on the applicability of outreach and the different forms it might take. For example, there is a need for further inquiry to explore the ways in which outreach has been incorporated in the development of other SACs. This data would assist both established and developing centers. As the field of self-access learning continues to grow, so too should its breadth of inclusion.

## Note

1 The director overseeing the CLIP at the time advised us to meet with the head of each department before approaching teachers and staff. Face-to-face relations are crucial for Japanese universities (and businesses) so that all members are in the know. Informal

discussions such as this precede circulating a *ringisho* (document to 'sign' by stamping a personal seal) to employees in order to approve new policy or services (Brown, 1966).

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# Reflections on Attending My First JASAL Conference

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I am a self-access center (SAC) administrative staff member, and I was a Newcomer Grant recipient at the JASAL 2019 National Conference, held on Saturday, November 30th to Sunday, December 1st, 2019 at Otemon Gakuin University, Ibaraki City, Osaka. This is a report describing my experiences.

## My Background and Context

My role at our center is as a part-time administrator, and I also act as an advisor, but I have not had any training. I was originally hired by this school as a part-time computer instructor and help desk worker, so I was from a completely different field and had never heard of a SAC before. Our teachers, who are experts in this field, taught me the essential concepts of self-access language learning (SALL). Our university has majors in five departments: sports, economics, sociology, logistics, and law. In addition, there is no English major offered, but students take compulsory and elective English classes (Werner & Von Joo, 2018). For our center, I am in charge of general affairs including accounting, coordinating meetings, and advertising programs and events to students, faculty and staff members. I also support the study abroad orientations, school events when our campus hosts visiting American university students, and assist students with SAC-related problems or concerns. The major issues we currently face at the SAC are how to attract students' interest in English and keeping them motivated. Since many students, faculty, and staff at our school are not familiar with the SAC, constantly thinking of new ideas is a very important task for me.

After being an admin for two years, I realized that I should have more knowledge about the concept of SALL from actual experiences at other universities. I decided to attend the JASAL conference this year to get some new ideas to apply in our context. Furthermore, teachers from our SAC were planning to give a presentation at JASAL2019 about the challenges for our center to meet needs for various campus groups other than English classes or departments, such as student clubs, seminars, and official sports teams (Von Joo et al., 2020). Despite not being a teacher, I taught three sets of workshops for the school rugby teams (teaching basic Indonesian conversation and useful words). The experience was meaningful to me because I felt involved in the SAC, and I could give advice to students. It encouraged me to not only attend an official conference, which is a rare opportunity for me, but also to co-present on our programs.

I went to the conference with two main objectives. These are related to my issues mentioned above. They were to:

- get tips about how to attract students' interest in English if they have negative feelings about it
- hear stories of Japanese SAC members' experiences (administrators, advisors, and teachers who are Japanese), such as how they have learned and understand the concept of SALL (and how they apply it at Japanese universities)

Not all of my objectives were achieved, but attending the conference surely led to an increase in my knowledge. In the next section, I will explain what I learned from the conference.

## Useful Ideas from the Conference

In the two days of the conference, I listened to more than ten presentations, plus some poster sessions, and I chatted with participants from other centers during coffee breaks and the networking reception. Although the background situations of many schools differ from our university (majors, sizes, purposes, English levels, etc.), seeking tips for how to communicate better with students and be a more attractive facility appears to be a never-ending challenge among all teachers and staff members. One tip was from Alexander Worth and his co-presenters from Osaka Institute of Technology, who introduced a simple online quiz-creating service, called Kahoot. I did not know that this service existed, but I thought it might be good to use in the future. In my workshop, holding a small "Quiz Show" was very useful for students to review what they learned. Having fun playing a quiz game led them to remember what they had learned during the workshop, and they also came up with additional practical questions, such as "How about this [other] situation?" or "Can I use this word instead?"

One of the significant issues for our center is how to make our students more comfortable with trying to speak English. We want them to realize, "English is not so hard when I'm here." Noriko Kawasaki from Miyazaki University talked about the changes in attitudes of Japanese students who attend her lunchtime English conversation activity. She said that most of her students who are technology majors are shy about communicating even in Japanese, and they feel that they are not good at speaking English. However, practicing with their friends makes them feel more comfortable, and they start thinking, "If my friend can do it...." Our center has been trying to get the same result, so knowing about a successful case can help me be more confident. In an ideal situation, I want to try pair-work with setting a timer (10-15 min.) and changing pairs at my SAC. However, these activities would probably need to be adapted for lower level learners.

The following list includes some additional ideas I learned from other schools that I may be able to utilize in our center. Some ideas are from presentations, while others were from informal conversations during coffee breaks. I included the presenters' names when I could remember where the information came from:

- hold occasional fun events and create a welcoming atmosphere within the center (Kawasaki, 2019; Worth et al., 2019),
- have student staff lead conversations with easy topics and easy questions (Worth et al., 2019),
- advise Japanese students to make friends with international students and have fun going out with them (Worth et al., 2019),
- set language policy, but the interaction should be positive (do not criticize for NOT using English, but give compliments for trying),
- create good feelings of fellowship that lead to advanced activities, such as using English for academic purposes (Lavolette & Claflin, 2019),
- have students talk to each other about "Why do I need English?" (Lavolette & Claflin, 2019),
- encourage the students (student staff or regulars) to be at the center. The presence of students is the best influence on others (if he/she can do it, why can't I?),
- introduce English games (analog or digital) effectively. Playing English games is easy for Japanese students to try (they feel it is okay to make a mistake) (Andersson, 2019; Cihi, 2019).

I also attended the "SAC Administrators' Forum" and received practical and useful tips from other SAC administrative staff members. Those included:

- ask teachers to do PR about SACs in their classes (including non-English subject teachers),
- send info emails from SAC that include each student's name or names of other students who the recipient might know (*sempai*, *kohai*, friends, teachers), so they will not ignore it,
- set two kinds of student staff meetings, such as weekly (shorter lunch time) and monthly (longer evening) to make task management easier.

In fact, I realized that it was rare for administrative staff members (especially part-time workers) to attend a JASAL conference. As a part-time worker, I get very few opportunities for professional development. Even if attendees are working as admin staff, most of their backgrounds seem to be in the education field, or they are former English teachers. I felt so

grateful that someone like me, who does not have a teaching background, could attend this conference. I felt that the JASAL community welcomed me, and it was a positive atmosphere for me to learn in.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, collecting these ideas from the conference will definitely be useful for improving our center next year, and at the same time, I can set future guidelines for how to become a more skilled advisor for our students. Without realizing it, I had been too focused on learning the term "self-access learning" without thinking about real-life situations. However, meeting people from different schools and backgrounds has taught me that it is not beyond my comprehension or ability. Just like students in our center realize that they *can* speak English, I also realize that I *can* understand the concept of self-access, and I can use my knowledge to help students. From now on, this realization will be motivation for me to face every little issue that comes up in our SAC.

Lastly, I would like to thank the JASAL Executive Board for awarding me the Newcomer Grant. Being a part-time worker without any financial support from the school, the grant helped me so much in traveling to Ibaraki city, Osaka, from the other Ibaraki, in the Kanto region. I hope this is the first of many JASAL conferences for me.

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