

Integrating Self-Access into Institutional Landscapes

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Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to check out Issue 5(1) of the JASAL Journal! We are confident that the articles featured in this issue will offer valuable insights into the ever-evolving world of self-access!

Self-access language centers (SALCs) are dynamic, student-centered spaces that provide learners with opportunities to practice language skills, engage in cultural exchange, and develop autonomy across their learning journeys. However, the diverse and complex roles of SALCs also necessitate ongoing research to ensure their effectiveness and adaptability to student needs. This issue of JASAL Journal brings together four articles that explore various aspects of SALCs, including student language practices, multilingual and multicultural event facilitation, tailored graduate student support, and the evolving roles of advisors. Together, these articles provide valuable insights into how SALCs can better meet the needs of both learners and educators.

We are grateful to all the reviewers and contributors who made it possible to publish this issue.

本号の出版を可能にして下さった、寄稿者や査読者、その他ジャーナル運営に関わる全ての方々に、お礼を申し上げます。

To kick off the issue, **Bethan Kushida** and **Jo Mynard** share a research paper that delves into the practical realities of promoting English usage in a SALC at a Japanese

university. Kushida and Mynard outline a large-scale project guided by self-determination theory, in which a research team comprising 20 teachers and advisors conducted 141 structured interviews to understand students' attitudes and practices concerning the center's English-only policy. While the majority of students acknowledged and approved of the policy, the team's findings revealed a discrepancy between stated attitudes and practice: many participants frequently used Japanese in English-only areas. Despite this, students expressed satisfaction with their English usage levels, suggesting a need for nuanced approaches to policy implementation. Importantly, the study highlights the benefits of fostering collaboration among educators and advisors, underscoring how interdepartmental teamwork contributes to creating more engaging and supportive environments for language practice.

The second article is a discussion of practice by **Yoko Sei, Maya Abe, and Tingyu Sun** that shifts focus to multilingual and multicultural engagement within SALCs, specifically examining the experiences of student staff who organize events in a diverse linguistic and cultural setting. Interviews with these graduate student staff highlight the challenges and learning opportunities inherent in facilitating such events. Sei, Abe, and Sun show how by collaborating with colleagues from varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the student staff developed not only event management skills but also deeper awareness of their own cultural perspectives and multilingualism. This experience enriched their understanding of multiculturalism and enhanced their teaching and research competencies. The experiences detailed in this fascinating article suggest that incorporating multilingual and multicultural dimensions into SALC activities can significantly contribute to both personal and professional growth for staff, while fostering an inclusive learning environment for all participants.

Graduate students, particularly in technical disciplines, often require specialized language support to effectively disseminate their research. **Catherine Cheetham** explores how the SALC at Tokai University addressed this need by designing supplementary resources for its mandatory Technical English course. Recognizing the limitations of traditional SALCs for graduate learners, Cheetham developed online resources, workshops, and support groups tailored to the unique requirements of engineering students. These initiatives aim to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world academic participation, enabling students to confidently present and publish their research. By sharing the process of creating and managing these resources, Cheetham provides a valuable model for institutions seeking to provide targeted support for advanced learners.

As the first ever contribution to our brand-new Reflective Article section of JASAL Journal, **Michael Andrew Kuziw** provides a reflective narrative based on his journey as a novice SALC advisor simultaneously serving as a formal classroom teacher. This dual role presented challenges, as the advising process required a personalized, student-centered approach distinct from the structured dynamics of classroom teaching. Kuziw examines the contrasts between these roles and shares how adopting advising techniques, such as purpose-driven language learning advising, helped navigate these challenges. This nuanced, personal reflection highlights the importance of adaptability and reflection in reconciling the differing demands of teaching and advising. By sharing his journey, Kuziw offers practical guidance for educators transitioning between these roles, emphasizing the potential for professional growth through such experiences.

We hope that the articles in this issue will resonate with you all as much as they did with us and we, along with the entire JASAL Journal team, wish all of our members and readers a wonderful winter break and a happy and healthy 2025!