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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!

Investigating Language Use and Attitudes Towards Language Policy in a Self-Access Language Center: A Collaborative Interview Project

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Abstract

In this paper, we give an overview of the purpose and methods used to conduct a large-scale, collective project to investigate English usage in a university self-access language center in Japan. Guided by self-determination theory, and building on previous studies conducted between 2017 and 2020, the project aims to understand students' attitudes and practices when using the center, as well as their opinions on the center's language policy. A cross-departmental research team comprising 20 teachers and learning advisors conducted 141 short, structured interviews over two weeks. Initial analysis of the data shows that while the vast majority of the participants are aware of the language policy and approve of it in principle, a significant number of students are using Japanese for most of their conversations in English-only areas. Nevertheless, a considerable number of participants reported being very or somewhat satisfied with the amount of English they are using in the center. In addition to providing data that will help us to create a more engaging and supportive environment for English language practice, this project also fostered interdepartmental collaboration among colleagues.

本稿では、日本にある大学のセルフアクセス学習センターにおける英語使用状況を調査する大規模な集団プロジェクトを実施する目的と方法について概観する。自己決定理論(Self-determination theory)に導かれ、2017 年から 2020 年にかけて実施された先行研究を踏まえ、本プロジェクトは、学生がセンターを利用する際の態度や実践、またセンターの言語ポリシーに対する意見を理解することを目的としている。20 人の教員とラーニングアドバイザーからなる学部横断的な調査チームが、2 週間にわたって 141 件の短時間の構造化インタビューを実施した。データの初期分析によると、参加者の大多数が言語ポリシーを認識しており、基本的にそれを肯定的に捉えている一方で、かなりの数の学生が英語のみのエリアでの会話の大半を日本語で行っていることがわかった。とはいえ、参加者の大半は、センター内で使用している英語の量に非常に満足またはやや満足していると報告している。このプロジェクトで収集するデータは、学生に英語を練習する最適な環境づくりと、更に英語利用を後押しする様々な教育サービスの改善を検討する重要な材料となる。また、本プロジェクトは複数の学部をまたがる協同関係を構築した。

Keywords: self-access, language policy, English language use, cross-departmental research

Providing appropriate self-access center (SALC) support systems for language learners is an ongoing endeavor. In order to stay current and relevant, it is important to evaluate our practices and policies regularly. As part of the evaluation process, gathering–and acting upon–student input is a priority. In this paper, we describe a large-scale research project that interviewed 141 SALC users about their use of English in the SALC and their views on the current language policy. The purpose of the research is to examine our policies and services regarding English language use and explore how we could further support students' efforts to use English outside the classroom. The research took place in a large SALC in a university in Japan. Since the current iteration of the SALC opened in 2017, the language policy has been that students can use multiple languages (either their first language (L1) or target languages) on the first floor but should use English only on the second floor. Following a perceived decline in the level of English usage in the SALC since the coronavirus pandemic, this project aims to better understand the practices, opinions, and needs of current SALC users.

This paper outlines the context and rationale for the study and details the procedure for the interviews, including the coordination of a large group of co-researchers. While the full analysis of data was still in progress at the time of writing, this paper discusses initial findings regarding students' patterns of SALC usage, their levels of satisfaction with the amount of English they are using, and general opinions about the language policy. This project has provided data that will be used to inform future decisions about how to update our policies and support systems to meet student needs better while also serving as an opportunity to build cross-departmental relationships.

Context

Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS) is a four-year, private university located in Japan. All students in the university take English language classes, with just under a third of students majoring in another foreign language in addition to English. The SALC provides a variety of resources, spaces and services to foster pro-social and autonomous language learning and to empower students to take ownership of their learning. The SALC team includes 13 learning advisors, 10 full- and part-time non-teaching staff, as well as around 35 student staff. The SALC offers various structured opportunities for students to practice English, such as appointments with teachers, language exchange with international students, and a program of workshops, events and communities, as well as a lounge area for casual conversation with teachers, international students, and other students.

English language instruction at the university is provided by the 60-plus lecturers in the English Language Institute (ELI). While the SALC and the ELI are institutionally separate bodies, there exists much cooperation and collaboration between the two, both at a management level and between learning advisors and teachers. ELI lecturers do three hours of "duty" a week in the SALC, either conducting appointments for speaking practice and writing advice or chatting to students in the English lounge. Each ELI lecturer works with an assigned learning advisor who visits their classes, encourages the use of SALC services, works with the teacher to help students develop their ability to reflect on their learning, and builds relationships with students. Learning advisors and ELI lecturers also regularly work together on various small- and large-group research projects, leading to joint follow-up initiatives and classroom interventions. The project discussed in this paper is one such collaborative project, coordinated by the authors, one of whom is the director of the SALC, and the other who is a member of the ELI management team.

The SALC at KUIS is now in its third iteration, having moved to a two-floor, purpose-built building in 2017. The move to a new location provided an opportunity to revisit the language policy of the SALC, which until then had been English-only. Following consultation with students (Imamura, 2018), it was decided to keep the second floor as an English-only area, but to allow any language, including Japanese, to be spoken on the first floor, in line with its mission to be a "diverse and multilingual environment", "an international community" and to provide a more welcoming space for students studying languages other than English (Mynard et al., 2022). In the previous SALC/lounge, the English-only policy was mostly well-adhered to (Gillies, 2010; Rose & Elliott, 2010), and following the move to the new building, a community of regular lounge users continued the practice of talking to each other in English (Mynard et al., 2020). However, in the much larger space of the new second floor, the use of Japanese among students increased. Then in 2020, the coronavirus pandemic led to the closure of campus for a year. When students returned partially to campus in 2021, strict social distancing measures meant that social use of any language in the SALC was difficult. By the time all distancing measures were removed in 2023, there were few remaining students who remembered the SALC as an English-only space, and Japanese had become the main language spoken on the second floor, other than when talking to teachers or international students.

Background

The purpose of this project is to gather student input on their use of English in the SALC and their views on the current language policy. We want to use the findings to examine our policies and services regarding English language use and explore how we could further support students' efforts to use English outside the classroom.

This is not the first time we have coordinated language-use-related research in the SALC. From 2017 to 2020, we conducted several collaborative research projects to investigate language use in the SALC (Asta & Mynard, 2018; Mynard & Shelton-Strong, 2020a, 2020b; Yarwood, Lorentzen, et al., 2019). These projects resulted in a greater understanding of our students, and we were able to update some of our support systems based on the findings. However, much has changed since we conducted these studies. Generational shifts, a global pandemic, technology norms, and other factors mean that we need to examine how we are meeting the changing needs of our students once again as an ongoing process.

The present project semi-replicated a 2018 interview study. By examining interview data, along with responses from our annual student survey, we hope to glean some valuable information that will help us to examine and update our support systems for using English and our policies where needed. The results are likely to inspire some follow-up action research projects as well.

Literature Review

Definition of Self-Access

A basic definition of a self-access language center is that it is a space or facility designed to support the development of language learner autonomy and language use. Over the years, the functions of SALCs have incorporated more features. From their humble beginnings as simple resource centers to supplement classroom-based language instruction in the 1970s (Holec, 2000; Mynard, 2023), they are now considered to be complex dynamic systems (Murray, 2018; Mynard, 2023; Thornton, 2020) that support the whole person and help language learners to thrive and grow as part of an enriching community. The mission statement for the SALC stresses the importance of a supportive, inclusive and diverse environment that aims to facilitate prosocial and lifelong autonomous language learning (see Mynard et al., 2022).

Evaluating Self-Access

Evaluating a SALC requires a comprehensive approach due to its multifaceted nature. Evaluation should include both quantitative and qualitative measures, incorporating learner

feedback, usage statistics, and observational data (Thornton.2016). It is crucial to consider the specific objectives of the SALC, such as promoting learner autonomy, providing diverse resources, and supporting the use of the target language (Morrison, 2005). The evaluation should also ensure that users' needs are being met and that both efficiency—whether resources are being used optimally—and effectiveness—whether learning is taking place—are included. Additionally, the evaluation should account for the contextual factors of the SALC, including cultural and institutional influences. The present study is a vital part of the ongoing evaluation of the SALC at our institution (Mynard, 2016). In particular, it investigates whether learners' needs are being met in terms of their language development through appropriate opportunities to use English outside of class.

Theoretical framework

Self-determination theory (SDT) was chosen as the theoretical framework, like several of our previous projects (Asta & Mynard, 2018, Mynard & Shelton-Strong, 2020b). SDT was developed by Deci and Ryan (1985) and is a robust framework for the study of human motivation and wellness. An SDT framework has become a popular one for evaluating a SALC environment as it can take account of the multifaceted and dynamic nature of a SALC (Mynard, 2022). Within this broad framework, there are six mini theories. One of them is basic psychological needs (BPN) theory which enables us to investigate what factors are needed in order to engage our learners in using English in the SALC environment. There are three important components to achieving basic psychological needs, which are: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Ryan and Deci (2017) liken the basic psychological needs to "nutrients that are essential for growth, integrity, and well-being" (p. 10). *Autonomy* is self-determined decision-making and action aligning with someone's personal goals and philosophy. *Relatedness* is a sense of belonging and feeling valued, included, and cared about by others. Finally, *Competence* is a feeling of mastery or effectiveness. Complementary to basic psychological needs theory is cognitive evaluation theory, which states that a combination of elements should be present in a learning environment to promote need satisfaction and engagement (Jang et al., 2016; Oga-Baldwin & Hirosawa, 2022). These elements include a sense of ownership over one's decisions and goals (Jang et al., 2016), the presence of autonomy-supportive interactions with teachers (Reeve & Jang, 2006), the ability to form quality relationships (Furrer & Skinner, 2003), and availability of optimal structure (McEown & Oga-Baldwin, 2019). All of these elements are intentionally present in the SALC at our university through the provision of advising sessions, language consultations,

self-directed learning support, and learning communities. However, we need to investigate the degree to which students engage with such elements.

Before embarking on the present study, we discussed some tensions that we were observing in our work that we hoped the new research project could help us to illuminate. For example, we supported the notion that learners should be able to make self-endorsed autonomous decisions related to their learning, including whether to use the SALC at all, what to do in the SALC, and which languages to use. However, we know from experience and previous surveys that many users appreciate the English-only policy as they need an external motivator or reason to use the target language. In addition, as SALC use is optional (BPN support for autonomy), this, unfortunately, means that many students who could clearly benefit from using the services, attending the many community events, and using SALC resources choose not to use them, and their language development is thus disadvantaged (BPN thwarted: competence). Despite previous in-house research indicating that students valued opportunities to use English and, in theory, supported the current policy (Imamura, 2018), in practice, on the surface, relatively few students actually make sufficient efforts to use English on the second floor.

Previous research discovered that despite students expressing the desire to use more English (Imamura, 2018), there seem to be many barriers to doing so (Mynard & Shelton-Strong, 2020b), ranging from practical, psychological, social, and cultural reasons (Mynard & Shelton-Strong, 2020a). It is disappointing for staff and students that, despite the generally autonomy-supportive environment (Mynard & Shelton-Strong, 2020b), resources, and support systems, so few students appeared to use English on the second floor. We wondered if we could achieve a balance of respecting student choice of language use while also creating an expectation that students will feel motivation, agentic engagement (Reeve, 2022), and confidence to try to use English on the second floor rather than default to Japanese.

Research Aims

The purpose of the research is to understand SALC users' language practices and views of the English language policy in the SALC. We generated four research questions to allow us to focus on language policy and use.

1. How much English do participants use in the SALC?
2. How satisfied are participants with their use of English?
3. What is their awareness of the current language policy?
4. What are their views on the language policy?

In addition to shedding light on a potentially complicated SALC policy issue, we wanted to involve interested colleagues in the process of collecting this data and give them the opportunity to talk to students and gather first-hand insights. It would also mean that a large number of colleagues would have 'buy-in' and, in our experience, be motivated to get involved in follow-up intervention studies. Furthermore, junior colleagues welcomed the opportunity to collaborate on a research project, which gave them training in research methods and opportunities for career growth. Involving colleagues in collaborative projects demonstrates how the SALC supports the BPNs of teachers as well as students.

Methods

Instrument

The idea of investigating students' attitudes to language use and language policy was first mooted for inclusion in the annual SALC feedback survey, but after a discussion with colleagues, we decided that short, structured interviews would allow us to target a more representative sample of SALC users and allow their voices to be heard more clearly.

Short, structured interviews have a variety of advantages in this situation (Winwood, 2019): They allow the researchers to gather important insights without placing too much of a burden on either students or interviewers, can reduce bias, and are a chance for students to share their experiences and opinions. The use of English as the medium of the interviews provides an opportunity for students to use English for an authentic purpose, giving the students an enjoyable and motivating experience. Furthermore, the process of considering their responses prompts students to reflect more deeply on their own English language use, perhaps leading to changes in attitude or practice.

This format was used successfully in a previous research project in the SALC, which investigated the extent to which the SALC provides an autonomy-supportive learning environment that meets students' basic psychological needs regarding using English (Asta & Mynard, 2018). The previous project formed the basis of the current one as a semi-replica study. The interview questions for this project (see Appendix) were guided by the advice offered by Seidman (2013) and were adapted from those used in the 2018 project, with some changes that narrowed the focus to concentrate on students' attitudes toward language use and policy. In order to interpret the data more effectively, we included some questions related to students' demographic information, their reasons for studying English, their frequency of

SALC usage, and what they do there. This was followed by questions about their amount of English usage in the SALC and their satisfaction therewith, their understanding and opinions of the language policy, and their ideas for ways to help students use more English in the SALC. The repetition of some questions from the previous study will allow for a comparative analysis to see what, if anything, has changed over the last six years.

We compiled the questions into a Google Form for interviewers to use to record students' responses. After piloting the questions with six students, we adjusted the wording of questions and instructions and set a two-week period for interviews.

Research Team

We recruited research team members through an email invitation sent to all learning advisors and ELI lecturers, as well as a number of faculty members from other departments who have offices in the same building as the SALC. Opening the call for interest to as many researchers as possible not only increased the potential for more people to be closely involved and invested in the work of the SALC, but also meant that more students could be interviewed, and more student voices could be heard, without placing an undue time burden on each researcher.

The call for interest highlighted the opportunity for collaboration on our mutual goal of understanding and supporting our students better, as well as the potential personal benefits of having the experience of working on a research project. Colleagues were invited to be involved in as much or as little of the project as they were interested in, whether interviewing, analyzing data, presenting and publishing results, or working on follow-up initiatives and interventions. In total, eight learning advisors, 10 ELI lecturers, and two members of other departments joined the team.

While the large number of interviewers was greatly welcomed, it also increased the possibility of inconsistencies in methods. To mitigate this, we provided colleagues with an update of the 2018 guidelines document, which gave them policies, tips on conducting the interviews, and suggestions for what to say or do in certain situations. The Google Form questionnaire also contained reminders of important points for interviewers to remember.

To ensure that all participants understood the guidelines, we held lunchtime briefing sessions. The sessions covered the rationale for the project, the theoretical framework, findings from previous research, and guidelines and tips for interviewing (Seidman, 2013). To further support and encourage the team, we collected feedback from interviewers during the first week of interviewing regarding problems they encountered or additional tips they

had for interviewing and relayed these to the team in a status update bulletin, ready for the second week of interviewing.

Participants

The participants were all SALC users present during the two-week interview period. We invited interviewers to try to interview five students each, but many were able to interview more than this, with the largest number of interviews conducted by one interviewer being 29. In total, 141 interviews were conducted. To ensure improved random sampling of different types of SALC users, we asked interviewers to approach students on both the first and second floors, as well as those sitting alone and those sitting with others. The location and group size of each participant were noted on the Google Form, and these numbers were monitored during the two-week period to ensure an overall balance was being met. In a change to the 2018 study, we asked interviewers to approach international students as well as home students since the international students' understanding of and attitudes towards the language policy have a substantial influence on what languages are being spoken in the SALC. In order to ensure that participants were taking part voluntarily and to avoid any undue influence on their responses, interviewers were asked not to approach their own students or advisees. Table 1 below shows the breakdown of the participants by year of study and by department.

Table 1

Year and Department of Participants (N = 141)

Department	Year					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th+	Int'l	TOTAL
Asian Languages	7	3	1	2	0	13
English	11	21	13	8	0	53
Global Liberal Arts	3	2	0	2	0	7
International Communication	15	12	10	6	0	43
Spanish and Portuguese	7	2	2	1	0	12
International Students	0	0	0	0	11	11
Other	1	0	0	0	1	2
TOTAL	44	40	26	19	12	141

Interview Procedure

The interviews took place during a two-week period in July 2024 within the opening hours of the SALC. Interviewers approached potential participants, asked if they would be interested, and checked to make sure that they had not already been interviewed. When the students were in groups, only one student from the group was interviewed. After giving the participant a consent statement to read and agree to, the interviewer read out the questions to the participant and wrote down their answers as close to verbatim as possible. In line with the language policy of the SALC and the center's aim to provide opportunities for authentic language use, the interview was conducted in English, and when the participants struggled and used Japanese, the interviewer encouraged them to rephrase in English and helped them with accurate translation. Interviewers could either write directly into the Google Form using their iPad or laptop or take notes by hand and then transcribe the responses into the Google Form after the interview. Interviewers were advised to leave 20 minutes for each interview. The average interview time was 14 minutes, the shortest was 10 minutes, and the longest was 30 minutes.

Preliminary Findings

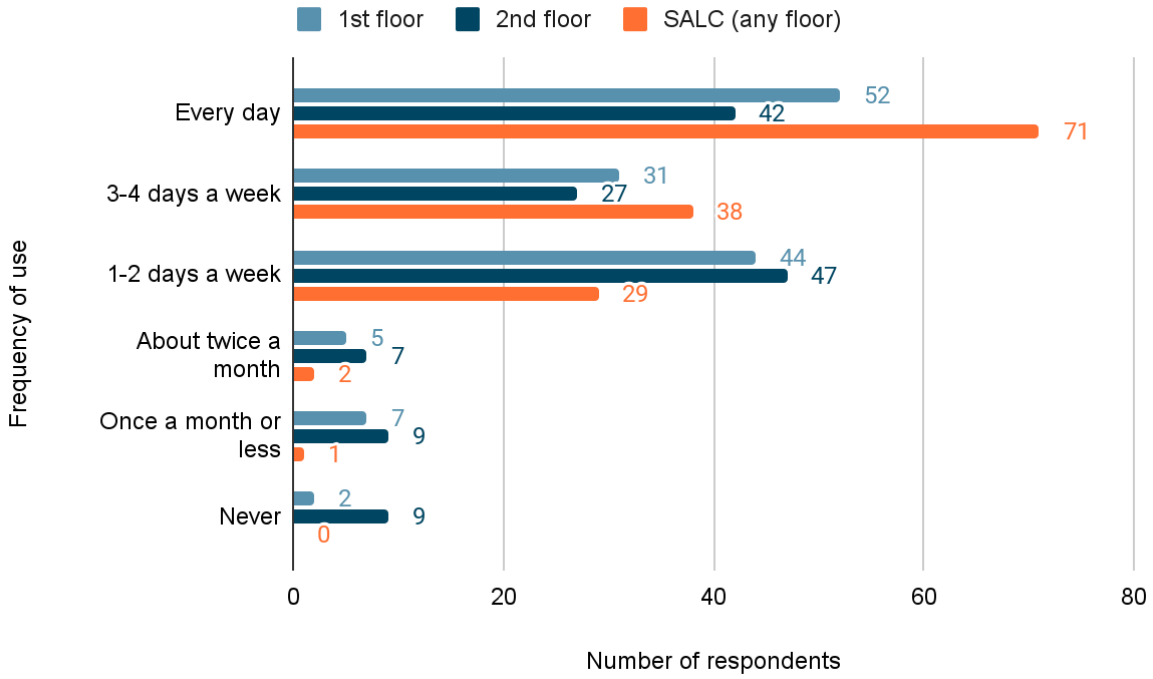
At the time of writing this progress report, a full analysis of the interview data is yet to begin, so our research questions regarding the students' attitude to language policy will be addressed more fully in future publications. However, the initial analysis of the data reveals a picture of the current situation regarding students' language use in the SALC and their satisfaction with it.

What Do Users Do in the SALC?

This project was targeted at students who were already inside the SALC, so it is unsurprising that most of the participants are reasonably regular users of the center. All but three of the 141 participants responded that they use the SALC at least once a week, and 71 students (50.4% of participants) stated that they use the SALC every day. Figure 1 below shows the frequency of the participants' use of the SALC (any floor), as well as their usage of each particular floor.

Figure 1

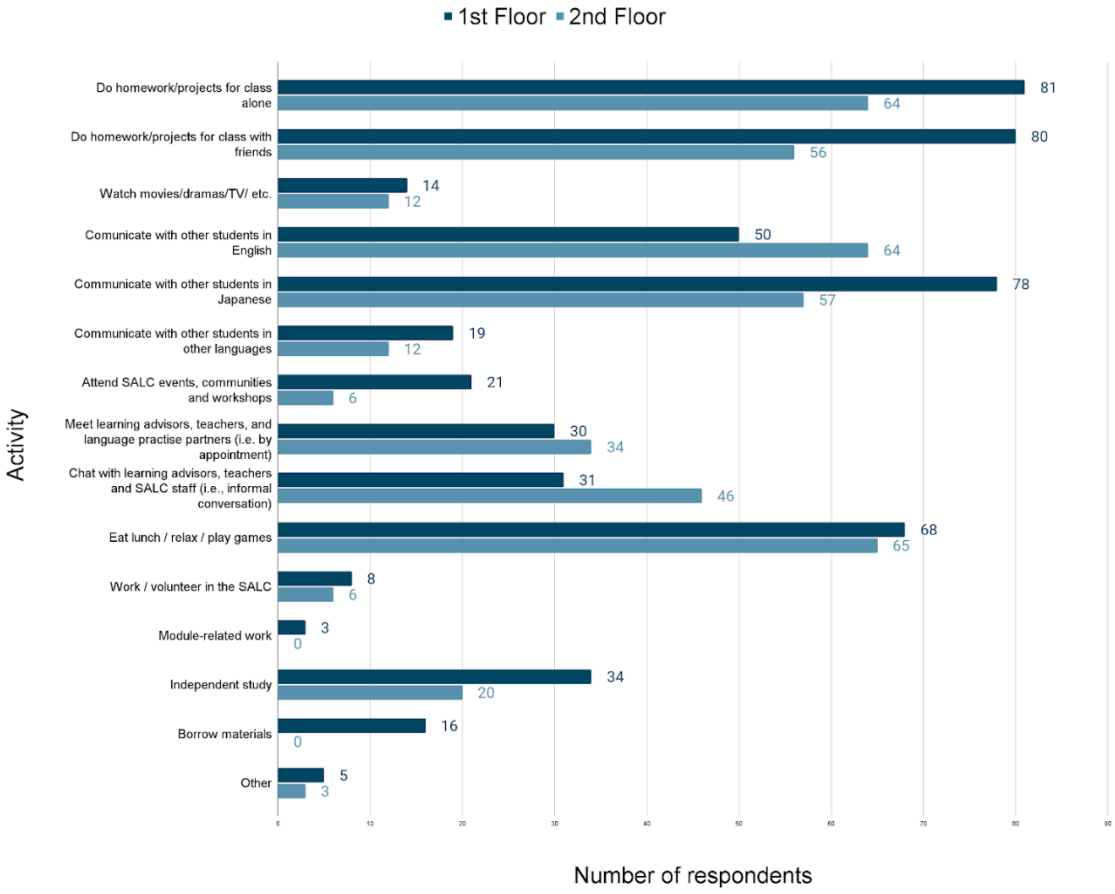
How Often Participants Currently Use the SALC (N = 141)



With regards to how the participants spend their time in the SALC, the most common activity is studying, either working on class-related tasks or studying independently (see Figure 2). This is followed by communicating with other students in Japanese, English, or other languages and eating, relaxing, and playing games. A somewhat lower number of students take advantage of the services specifically offered by the SALC, such as meeting with learning advisors, teachers, and language practice partners, attending SALC events, communities, and workshops, and borrowing materials. In total, 112 participants (79.4%) responded that they do one or more activities that involve speaking English. The remaining 29 students (20.6%) use only Japanese or other languages for all of their activities in the SALC.

Figure 2

What Participants Do in the SALC (N = 141; multiple answers allowed)

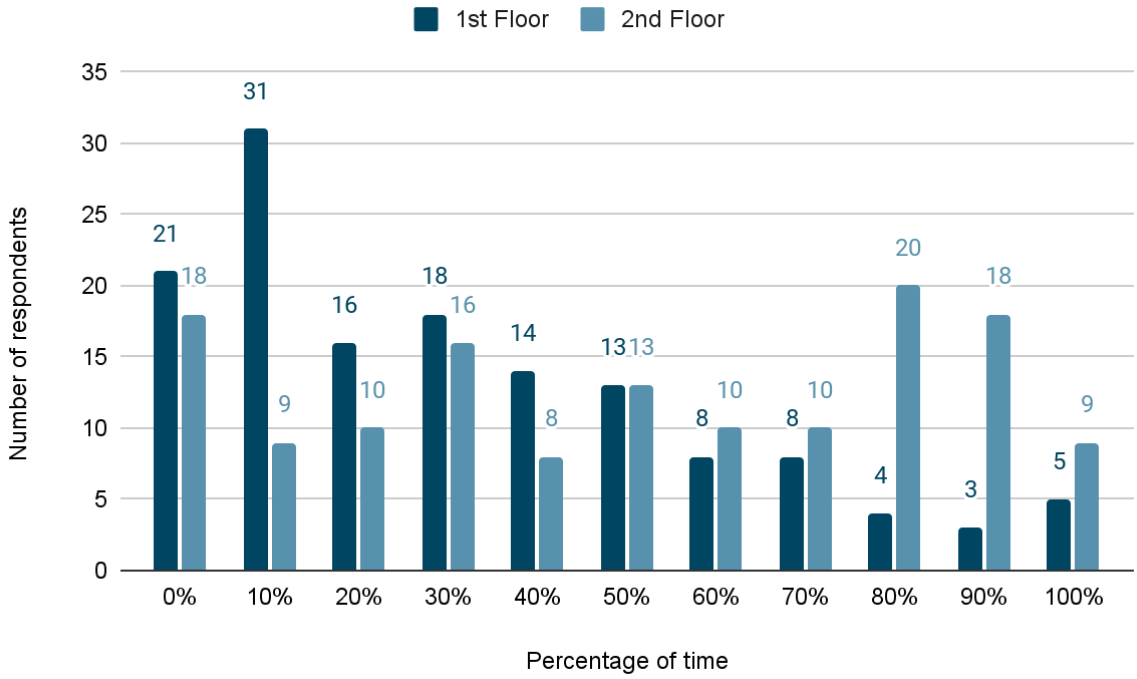


How Much English Are Students Using?

Figure 3 shows the percentage of time that participants reported using English on average when they are on each floor of the SALC. As the first floor has a multilingual policy, it is perhaps to be expected that few students use English for all or even many of their interactions. However, the data for the second floor shows that only a very small number of students are fully abiding by the English-only policy, and 61 students (43.3%) use Japanese for the majority of their conversations.

Figure 3

Percentage of Time Participants Use English in the SALC on Average (N = 141)

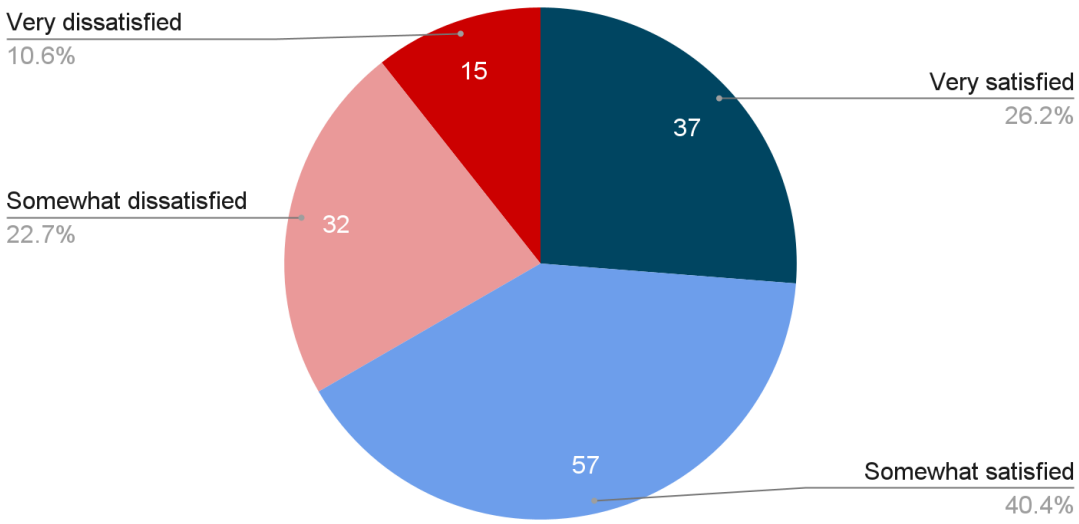


How Satisfied Are Students With Their Own English Use?

Despite the figures showing a large amount of Japanese/other language usage, approximately two-thirds of participants are somewhat or very satisfied with the amount of English they use in the SALC (see Figure 4). This data includes the responses of the 11 international students, five of whom are currently learning English, and all of whom stated that they were somewhat or very satisfied.

Figure 4

Participants' Level of Satisfaction With the Amount of English They Use in the SALC



Comparing the satisfaction data with the percentage of time students reported using English in the SALC (see Figures 5 and 6), there is a somewhat unclear trend that a higher percentage of time using English correlates with greater satisfaction with the amount of English used. Nevertheless, there are some participants who use very little English but still report a high level of satisfaction with their usage.

Figure 5

Satisfaction of English Usage According to Time Spent Using English (n=141) (First Floor)

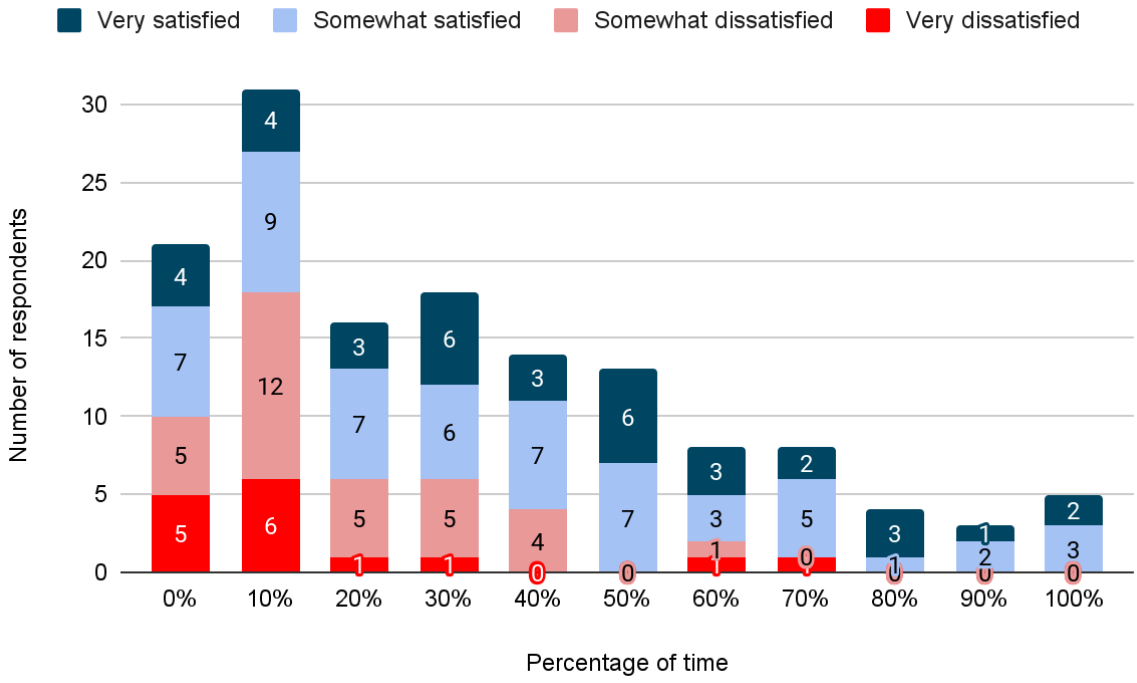
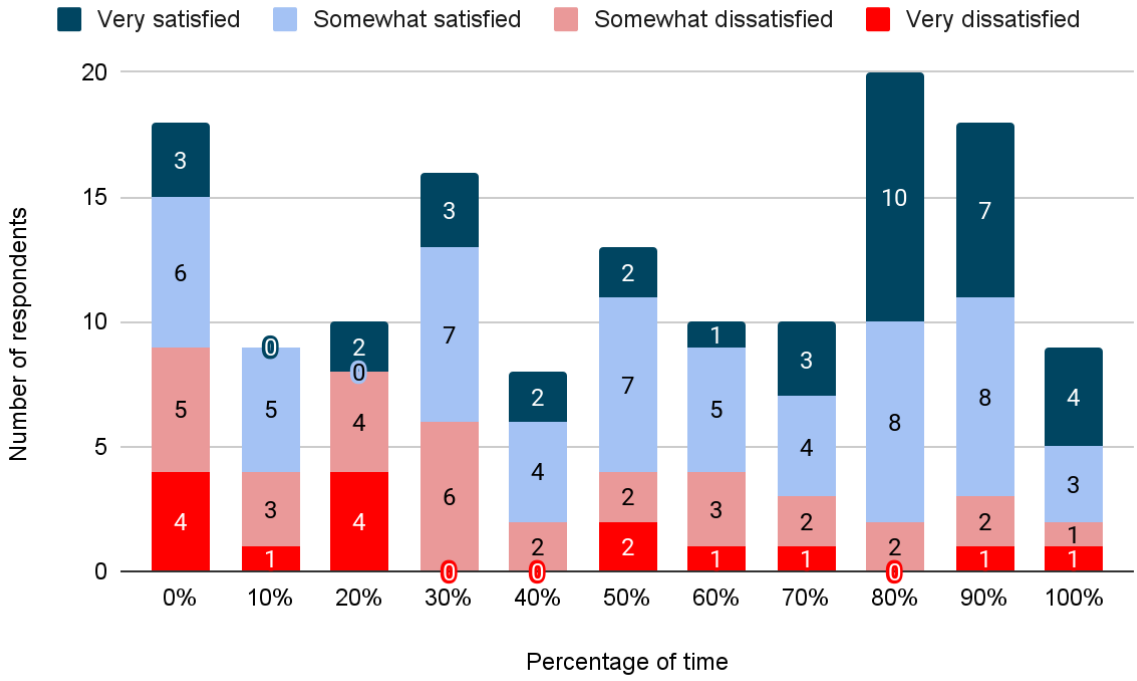


Figure 6

Satisfaction of English Usage According to Time Spent Using English (n=141) (Second Floor)



Are Students Aware of the Language Policy?

In response to the question, "Did you know that there is a language policy on the second floor", 87.9% of participants responded, "Yes, I know", and only 12.1% responded, "No, I didn't know". For the vast majority of the participants, lack of awareness of the policy is not an issue, meaning that there are other factors in play which prevent the use of English and/or encourage the use of Japanese on the second floor.

Do Students Approve of the Language Policy?

When asked for their opinions of the language policy, 126 participants (89.4%) gave responses that showed approval of a language policy, at least in theory, 13 participants (9.2%) were against having a language policy, and two participants (1.4%) were unsure or gave unclear answers, which is consistent with previous studies at our institution (Davies, 2017; Imamura, 2018). Among the students who think a language policy is a good idea, there were, however, many who commented that the policy is difficult to implement in practice. There was also a great deal of variation in participants' views on which areas of the SALC the policy should be limited to, how much and in what situations the use of Japanese or other

languages should be allowed, and how strictly the policy should be enforced. Some participants gave contradictory responses over the course of their interview, which is reflective of the complexity of this issue. The next step of this project is to analyze the responses in more depth to better understand the variety of views on the topic.

Discussion

The initial analysis of the survey results has given us a clearer understanding of SALC users' current patterns of language use. While nearly four-fifths of participants do activities in the SALC that involve speaking English, just over a fifth only take part in activities in Japanese or other languages. For a sizable number of students, the SALC is just a convenient and comfortable place to study, spend time with friends, and relax, and such students never or rarely take advantage of any of the services or facilities on offer that distinguish the SALC from any other lounge or study space.

As regards the English-only language policy on the second floor, the responses show that very few students are complying by using English for most or all of the time they spend there, even though the vast majority of students are aware of the policy and think that having a language policy is a good idea. Furthermore, despite levels of English usage being lower than expected or hoped for by staff, two-thirds of the participants are still somewhat or very satisfied with the amount of English they are using, meaning that they either gain a sense of satisfaction from being able to use any English, however small the amount, or that they do not consider English practice in the SALC to be something that is particularly necessary or desirable for them.

With this clearer understanding of our context, the next step is now to analyze the interview data in more depth to more fully understand students' reasons for using or not using English, their attitudes towards the language policy, and their suggestions for ways in which they can be better supported to use English in the SALC. A comparative analysis will also be done with the data from the 2018 project to see if and how our context is changing. Based on the findings, we expect to make decisions about any possible revisions to the language policy itself or to the way it is implemented, to make adjustments to systems, services, and the physical environment of the SALC, and to conduct interventions and follow-up projects in both the SALC and the classroom.

Looking at this from a positive point of view, it should be celebrated that so many students have chosen to enter the SALC and spend time there, even if they are not yet engaging with any of the facilities or services that could better support them in becoming

more effective, autonomous language learners. Getting students to take the first step of coming through the doors is something that many SALCs struggle with (e.g., Bibby, et al., 2016; McCrohan, et al., 2024; Taylor, et al., 2012), whereas we already have a large "captive audience" towards whom it is much easier to target any interventions. That is not to say, however, that we don't also have students who never come to the SALC for any reason, and a further stage of this project will be to go out of the SALC onto the wider campus to find such students and conduct similar short, structured interviews with them to understand their opinions and needs better.

As regards the collaboration on the research project, we can already count some successes. The show of enthusiasm from such a large number of researchers meant that we were able to interview more students than we had hoped, and by dividing up the analysis of the data, we will be able to carry it out more quickly and efficiently with less burden on each researcher. Bringing in lecturers from the ELI and other departments will hopefully lead to a greater sense of investment in the success of the SALC and support for its long-term aims. Moreover, the personal connections made within the team will hopefully result in more in-class collaboration between learning advisors and lecturers, further bridging the gap between the classroom and the SALC (Curry, 2019).

Limitations

The decision to use English only as the language for the interviews suited the aims of this project well by giving the students an opportunity for authentic language use in the SALC, and also allowing lecturers with a low level of Japanese language ability to take part as interviewers. However, some participants may have been able to express their opinions more accurately and in more depth if they had had the option of L1 use.

As mentioned above, the large size of the research team required clear guidelines and training to reduce potential inconsistencies in method. The interviews were structured with set questions asked using set wording in a set order, meaning that all participants had broadly the same interview experience. Nevertheless, there is still a possibility the responses given by participants were affected by small differences in the researchers' interview styles or their ability to help students with translation from Japanese when necessary.

The data regarding students' language use is self-reported rather than independently verified, so it is possible that participants under- or over-reported how much English they use in the SALC. For this question in particular, although for other questions as well, the power

dynamic between the participants and the researchers might have had some effect on responses. Based on the literature (e.g., Stassen & Carmack, 2017), social desirability bias, or the likelihood of participants answering in a particular way to appear socially responsible or to present themselves in a favorable manner, may be a factor to consider when analysing the data. However, the interviewers in our study created a friendly and non-judgmental atmosphere and did not interview their own students, and it is likely that social desirability bias in this study would be low, in line with other studies highlighted in a recent meta-analysis exploring social desirability (Vesely & Klöckner, 2020).

Conclusions

Although we are only just beginning the qualitative analysis of the data necessary to allow us to make the desired informed decisions about language policy, this initial exploration into the findings has highlighted several features of our SALC and our students. The initial findings have confirmed what we informally noticed: that students are not using English as much as anticipated when we were planning the current SALC (despite the ample opportunities and support services), and they are seemingly satisfied with a relatively low level of English use. Theoretically, students approve of a language policy and have a desire for the policy to be followed, creating an English language environment. However, we need to explore deeper to see how we–staff and students–can encourage an environment where more students are inclined to take opportunities to communicate in English.

With around 1,000 students per day (approximately a quarter of the student body) visiting the SALC, we manage to create an inviting environment that attracts users. However, we may need to take a more proactive approach to re-starting the English language environment that thrived in the previous building. However, care must be taken to continue to offer an autonomy-supportive environment where students' BPNs are satisfied. Drawing on lessons from research in self-determination theory, we could examine ways in which optimal structure and a sense of community can support students in taking independent action towards language use. We hope that the colleagues who participated as researchers in this study will join us in launching some intervention studies as a follow-up to this project. In the past, we have trialed initiatives such as a risk-taking passport (MacDonald & Thompson, 2019) and awareness-raising through classroom-based discussions (Yarwood, Rose-Wainstock, & Lees, 2019) with reasonable success, but efforts need to be continuous. The key to revitalizing the English language community in the SALC is certainly likely to be a large-scale, joint, multi-part, and ongoing endeavor.

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Appendix

Interview Questions

Participant Background

1. Which year are you in at KUIS?
2. Which department are you in?
3. How often do you currently use the 1st floor of KUIS 8 (excluding classes and working time)?
4. If you never or hardly ever use the 1st floor, can you tell us why not?
5. What, if anything, do you do on the 1st floor of KUIS 8?
6. How often do you currently use the 2nd floor of KUIS 8 (excluding classes and working time)?
7. If you never or hardly ever use the 2nd floor, can you tell us why not?
8. What, if anything, do you do on the 2nd floor of KUIS 8?

Language Goals

1. Are you learning English at the moment?
2. If no, are you a native-level speaker of English?
3. If yes (to the question "Are you learning English"), why are you studying English? (What are your motivations?)

English Use

1. Who, if anyone, do you enjoy speaking English with in KUIS 8?
2. On average, what percentage of the time do you use English on the 1st floor of KUIS 8 (excluding classes and working time)?
3. On average, what percentage of the time do you use English on the 2nd floor of KUIS 8 (excluding classes and working time)?
4. Are you satisfied with the amount of English you use in KUIS 8?
5. Do you face any challenges or difficulties when using English in KUIS 8? If yes, what are they?

Language Policy

1. Did you know that there is a language policy on the 2nd floor?
2. If yes - What do you understand about the policy? (Can you explain the policy to me in your own words?)

3. Interviewer: (Actually,) the policy is that students should use English only on the second floor. What is your opinion about the policy? (prompt if needed: Do you think we should change it? What should the policy be?)
4. In your opinion, how strictly should the policy be enforced? (Should we force students to use English on the 2nd floor?)
5. What, if anything, should we do to enforce it? (Should we force people to use English? How should we do that?)

Suggestions

1. What, if anything, could we do to help students use more English on the 2nd floor?
2. What, if anything, could we do to help students use more English on the 1st floor?

SALC で活動する大学院生スタッフのやりがいと学び
―多言語多文化イベントの企画運営に焦点を当てて―

Challenges and learning for graduate staff working at SALC: Focusing on their planning and management of multilingual /multicultural events

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専門は言語学（特にタンザニアのバントゥ諸語）。大学内の SALC では多言語学習アドバイザーおよびコーディネーターとしてスタッフの育成や施設運営を担当している。

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要旨

本稿は，多言語多文化学習支援を行う SALC でイベントを企画・進行する学生スタッフへのインタビューをもとに，スタッフとしてどのようにやりがいを感じ，学びを得たのかを報告するものである。まず，Center の概要と SALC の運営に学生が携わることの重要性，大学院生を雇用するティーチングアシスタント制度の課題，日本の SALC であまり多言語多文化を扱われていないことの問題を述べる。そのうえで，Center で実施している多言語多文化イベントについて説明し，運営に関わった大学院生スタッフへのインタビュー結果と考察を報告する。インタビューの結果から，多様な言語・文化的背景を持つスタッフ同士が協力することにより，イベント管理能力以外にも，自身の言語文化観への気づきや多言語多文化についての理解を深めるという新たな学びが起きていることが明らかになった。また， 多様な言語・文化的背景を持つスタッフ同士の協働でイベントを企画し進行するための工夫や，母語以外の言語でコミュニケーションをとったり発表したりする経験のように，院生としての，研究や教育の能力の向上につながる学びも得ていることが分かった。

キーワード：多言語多文化学習支援，SALC，大学院生スタッフ，TA/TF

Abstract

This paper is based on interviews with student staff who organize and facilitate events at a SALC that supports multilingual multicultural learning, and reports on how they found it challenging and learnt from their experiences as staff. First, the paper presents an overview of the Centre and the importance of student involvement in the management of SALCs, the issues of the teaching assistant system for employing graduate students, and the problems that not many Japanese SALCs deal with multilingualism and multiculturalism. Then, we report and discuss the multilingual multicultural events conducted at the Centre are described, and the results of interviews with the graduate student staff involved in the operation are reported and discussed. From the results of the interviews, it found that by cooperating with other staff members with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, in addition to event management

skills, new learning occurred in terms of awareness of one's own linguistic and cultural perspectives and a deeper understanding of multilingual multiculturalism. It was also found that the staff members with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds learned from the experience of communicating and presenting in languages other than their mother tongue, and from the ingenuity of planning and organizing events in collaboration with other staff members with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, which led to the improvement of their research and teaching skills as graduate students.

Keywords: multilingual multicultural learning support, SALC, graduate student staff, TA/TF

背景と概要

大阪大学で運営中の SALC（OU マルチリンガルプラザ：以下「プラザ」）は，2020 年 4 月より課外での自律的な多言語多文化学習を支援している。運営には，コーディネーターとして教員が中心となり携わっているが，大学院生スタッフ（ティーチングフェロー：以下 TF，ティーチングアシスタント：以下 TA，リサーチアシスタント）も主体的に運営に関わり，イベントやワークショップを企画・進行している。

SALC ではコーディネーターやアドバイザーに加えて彼らの存在も大きく，利用者立場が近いことから彼らのロールモデルになると考えられる。このような背景から，Kanduboda（2020）は，運営管理に携わる学生に焦点を当てたアクションリサーチを行い，学生らが，イベント管理，グループでの協働，コミュニケーション，広報，自律，粘り強さ，リーダーシップなどのスキルを習得したことを述べ，SALC の運営に学生スタッフが携わることの重要性を述べている。

SALC における大学院生スタッフの育成について，Hayashi and Wolanski（2021）は，TA 制度は優秀な大学院生に教員研修の機会が与えられることが期待されているにも関わらず，制度として発展せず，業務の多くが単純労働になってしまっている問題に対し，SALC で TA が主体的に運営する勉強会を企画した。その結果，TA らは対話型活動を進行し，教材を選択して準備するスキルを身につけ，SALC が大学院生スタッフに貴重な教育経験が提供できることを示唆した。

多言語多文化支援について，Thornton（2023）は，日本国内の外国語教育において英語が圧倒的優位性を有し，言語的多様性に焦点が当てられていないと指摘し，国内 27 カ所の SALC を対象に英語以外の言語の扱いについてのアンケートおよびインタビュー調査を実施した。その結果，半数以上の施設で英語以外の言語が扱えていない状況があるとし，SALC で実施可能なこととして，スタッフが話している多言語についての知識と経験を共有する機会を奨励することや，多言語を話すスタッフを積極的に採用することなどを提案している。

プラザでは，大学院生スタッフが多言語多文化イベントの企画運営に関わっている。そこで，これらの企画運営を通した大学院生スタッフの学びを知る目的でインタビューを実施した。本稿では，プラザの概要と多言語多文化イベントについて説明し，インタビュー結果と考察を報告する。

OU マルチリンガルプラザについて

大阪大学に 2020 年に開設されたプラザでは，課外での自律的な多言語多文化学習支援を行っている。大阪大学は 11 学部 10 研究科がある研究型総合大学で，学部生は約 15,000 名，大学院生は約 8,000 名，その内留学生が約 2,700 名である（大阪大学 2024）。専攻語として 25 の外国語を学ぶことができるという環境の下，プラザは国際性涵養教育の一環として，英語，日本語をはじめ多言語の自律的な学習支援を行うこと，留学生や外国人研究員と日本人学生とが多様な国際交流を図ることのできる環境を醸成することを目的に開設された。2024 年 8 月現在，豊中キャンパスと吹田キャンパスの 2 拠点で活動しており，以下のようなサービスを提供している。

・自習や勉強会を目的とした施設開放
・専攻語として学べる 25 言語に関する参考図書の配架
・ウェブサイトと SNS を通じた外国語学習に役立つ方法の発信
・言語学習ポートフォリオの発行，配布
・教員による言語学習アドバイジング
・教員による言語学習ポートフォリオワークショップ
・TA/TF の企画進行による言語学習および多文化理解に関するイベント開催
・TA/TF による会話練習パートナーとのセッション（英語・日本語・中国語・韓国語 1 セッション各 20 分）
・TA/TF による留学生等を対象とした日本語チュータリング

2024 年度の運営スタッフは，教員 2 名，大学院生スタッフ（TA/TF）19 名で，自律学習の促進と利用者が目標言語や文化への知識，理解を深めるための活動を実施している。各曜日 2 名の TA/TF が受付を担当し，曜日により，受付業務以外に，多言語多文化イベント，日本語学習のサポートを担当している。

イベントや学習サポートの担当については，スタッフの応募時の希望により割り振っている。また，TA/TF スタッフは採用時にプラザの運営理念や提供サービスなどに関するオリエンテーションを受ける。

多言語多文化イベントの運営

多言語多文化イベントは 2021 年 4 月より実施している。当初は COVID-19 の影響で，施設内での活動が制限されていたため，すべてオンラインでの開催であった。その後，対面とオンラインでのハイブリッド開催を経て，2022 年秋冬学期からは，対面で開催している。

イベントは，各学期期間中 3〜4 回実施され，教員はコーディネーターとして加わり，多言語多文化イベント担当 TA/TF が 3〜4 人で 1 つのチームとなり，企画運営を行っている。イベントは，まずミーティングで集まった TA/TF がテーマと内容を決め，その後各自が担当するスライドを準備し，告知用ポスターを作成し参加者を募り，昼休みの約 1 時間でイベントを実施する。翌週には企画者が振り返りのミーティングを行い，参加者アンケートも踏まえて次の企画を検討するという流れで行われる。表 1 が，これまでに実施したイベントである。なお「〇〇語で」と断りがあるイベント以外は，すべて日本語で進行している。

多言語多文化イベントの企画運営に従事する TA/TF は，約半数が留学生であることや，多言語学習経験，その言語圏への留学・滞在経験を持つ者が多いという背景から，学期ごとに企画チーム内で自分が得意なことや紹介したい内容を話し合い，テーマを決めている。これまでのイベントで紹介したのは，表 1 に示しているように，中国の各地域，ガーナ，ロシア，イタリアなど，特定の地域や言語に限らず，多様な文化を学ぶきっかけとなるようなものである。イベントは，昼休みに開催され，60 分〜90 分で行われた。

イベントの進行は，写真 1 のように，TA/TF がスライドで説明をした後，ディスカッションを行うものもあれば，写真 2 のように，スライドでの説明の後，対象言語の会話練習を行うものもある。また，参加者が自身の多言語多文

化経験を話し，全体で情報を共有する場合もある。いずれの場合も，担当の TA/TF 全員で話題提供や進行などを分担している。

表 1

2021 年度から 2024 年度に実施した多言語多文化イベント

実施年度	イベント名
2021 年度（全てオンラインで実施）	・オンラインで中国を満喫しよう ・諺を通して世界を見よう！ ・世界のよもやま話 ・オンラインツアーに参加してみませんか？～ライブで中国旅行 ・オンラインでタンザニア・ザンジバルのビーチを散策しよう ・あなたもマルチリンガルになろう！ ・我が家の旧正月の過ごし方
2022 年度（対面実施・一部はオンラインのみ）	・世界の音楽を聴こう！ ・話してみよう！聞いてみよう！世界の不思議な風習 ・みんなで語ろう！私の言語学習 ・世界の料理を楽しもう! ・あなたもマルチリンガルになろう！ ・世界の料理を作ろう！
2023 年度（対面実施）	・世界の屋台グルメを楽しもう！ ・アジアを旅しよう！ ・世界のお菓子大集合！ ・英語で「人生ゲーム」をしてみよう ・世界のお茶を飲んでみよう！ ・中国の食文化を知ってみよう！

	・世界のゲームで遊んでみよう！
2024 年度　春 夏学期 （対面実施）	・関西で世界の料理を食べてみよう！ ・世界の料理を知ってみよう！ ・あなたもマルチリンガルになろう！ ・世界のお菓子大集合！

写真 1　「関西で世界の料理を食べてみよう！」の様子

写真 2　「あなたもマルチリンガルになろう！」の様子

大学院生スタッフの経験

前述の通り，プラザではTA/TFが多言語多文化学習支援に関わっているが，運営スタッフはプラザの活動にどのように参加し，活動から何を学んでいるのだろうか。また，イベントを企画し運営するスタッフとしてのやりがいや難しさはどのようなものだろうか。これらを明らかにするために，オンライン会議システム（Zoom）にてTA/TF4名にインタビューを実施した。

インタビューの質問項目は以下の8項目である。

・言語の能力について教えてください。
・これまでのプラザの活動で，一番心に残っている活動は何ですか。
・活動をうまく進めるために何か工夫していたことはありますか。
・活動の中で，難しいと思ったのはどんなことですか。
・プラザの中で，何か新しくやってみたいことはありますか。
・企画を考える時に，どんな目線で考えていますか。
・活動の中で，他の学生スタッフと，どのようなやり取りがありましたか。
・「外国語学習経験を語り合おう」に自分が参加していたら，どんな話をしますか。

表2がインタビュー協力者の概要である。インタビューは，2023年8月から2024年2月までに1回ずつ実施，インタビュー時間は46分～80分であった。

表 2

インタビュー協力者概要

	できる言語（〇印は母語）	担当地域	TF・TA 従事期間
S	〇中国語，日本語，英語，広東語	中国河南省	2020年10月～ 現在

C	○中国語，日本語，英語	中国河北省	2021 年 4 月～2023 年 3 月
A	○日本語，英語，中国語，フランス語	カナダ，中国新疆ウイグル自治区	2022 年 4 月～2023 年 8 月
M	○日本語，アラビア語，英語，ハウサ語	アラビア語圏諸国，ガーナ	2022 年 4 月～現在

大学院生スタッフのやりがいと学び

インタビューの質問への回答，企画を進めるうえでの工夫や難しさ，他のスタッフとの関わり，やりがい，学びなどをまとめると，以下のようになる。

（1）多言語多文化への興味の増進
（2）SALC らしいイベントの企画の検討
（3）グループでの企画能力
（4）企画を通した他のスタッフとの交流
（5）母語以外の言語でのコミュニケーションへの不安の減少

それぞれの内容について，インタビュー時に話された概要を次に述べる。

多言語多文化への興味の増進

学部生の時に外国の文化に興味を持っていた C さんは，プラザの企画を通して中国，日本以外の国や地域の文化を他の TA/TF から聞く機会を持ったことにより，大学院生になり忘れてしまっていた学部生時代の気持ちを思い出し嬉しくなった，と話した。

多言語多文化イベントを担当した TA/TF の専攻は全員人文学系で，専門は言語学や教育制度などである。自分の研究に関わる言語・地域についての専門性は高いが，専門外の多言語多文化に触れる機会はそれほど多くはない。多言語多文化イベント企画のアイデアを出すため，他の TA/TF と様々な国の地域や文

化について話す機会は，大学院生が広い視野を持つための学びの場となっていると言える。

SALC らしいイベントの企画の検討

イベントの内容および進行に関する工夫について，企画側が一方的に話すだけはなく参加者も話せるような内容にするための工夫をしたこと，参加者の反応に備えて 2〜3 種類の計画を準備したことを S さん，C さん，M さんが話していた。

このような工夫は，TA/TF が SALC は課外で学びを促進する施設であることを理解し，イベントの企画を続けていくうちに自ら思案して行ったものである。実際に，参加者への事後アンケートの結果では，参加者が積極的に発言できたイベントでの参加者の満足度は相対的に高く，TA/TF の工夫が活かされていると言える。

グループでの企画能力

A さんと M さんにより，初対面で背景の異なるメンバー全員が担当できる内容を詰めていく過程に難しさがあり，話し合いを通してできることを探り，工夫していったことが話された。

前述の通り，各学期 3〜4 名の TA/TF チームが編成されるため，学期はじめは，所属や専門，それぞれの興味関心が異なるメンバーが集まってミーティングを行い企画のためのアイデアを出していく。そのため，多数のアイデアから大きなテーマを設定して全員がその中の一部を担当できるように接点を見つけるために話し合う。また，スケジュールに合わせて内容・時間を現実的なものに絞っていく必要がある。このような過程で，背景の異なるメンバー間で調整を行うグループ企画能力が上ったと言える。

企画を通した他のスタッフとの交流

S さんは，グループで企画をする過程で意見をもらえたこと，それを通して TA/TF 同士の関係性が深まったことが心に残っていると話した。

企画ミーティングでイベントの大きなテーマを設定した後，TA/TF は各自の担当箇所のスライドを作成するが，イベント当日までにチーム内で互いに共有し，面白いところや足りない部分についてコメントをし合う。その過程を通して連帯感が生まれたことは円滑な運営の一助となったが，それだけでなく，一人の作業では気づかなかった言語文化の伝え方や新たな視点に目を向けることができるようになったことが話された。これはイベント運営を通した教育効果であると言える。

母語以外の言語でのコミュニケーションへの不安の減少

コミュニケーション言語について，S さんは，多様な背景を持つ院生スタッフがいることにより，英語で話すことに不安がなくなったことを話している。また，C さんは自分の母語ではない日本語で自分の文化を紹介する機会を得たことで，グループ内の日本語母語話者に相談し，原稿を準備して臨んだ。その結果，日本語でのプレゼンテーション能力が向上し，自信を持てるようになったと感じたことと話した。

プラザ内では，言語ポリシーは明示されておらず，日本語・英語・中国語等，話す相手によって様々な言語が話されているため，TA/TF 同士で互いの言語文化背景がわかると，自然とコードスイッチングが起きる。また，留学生の TA/TF の場合，自分が所属する研究室以外で日本語を使って発表する場面は稀である。このような環境にあるなか，多言語多文化イベントの進行を通して，母語以外の言語を話す不安が軽減されたと言える。

多言語多文化イベントの企画運営を通した学び

本稿では，プラザで実施している多言語多文化学習に関わる支援の概要を紹介し，企画運営に関わる TA/TF へのインタビュー結果を報告した。その結果，多様な言語・文化的背景を持つスタッフ同士が協力することにより，イベント管理能力以外にも，自身の言語文化観への気づきや多言語多文化についての理解を深めるという新たな学びが起きていることが明らかになった。また， 多様な言語・文化的背景を持つスタッフ同士の協働でイベントを企画し進行するた

めの工夫や，母語以外の言語でコミュニケーションをとったり発表したりする経験のように，院生としての，研究や教育の能力の向上につながる学びも得ていることが分かった。SALC を運営する教員として，今後はイベント参加者への調査を行うとともに，多言語多文化の企画運営について検討していきたい。

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Extending Support for Graduate Students: Specialized Workshops and Resources

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Catherine Cheetham is an associate professor at Tokai University with over 20 years of teaching experience. Her varied research interests include extensive reading, materials development, and professional development. Catherine is currently researching the correlation between extensive reading and standardized testing, reading fluency, and the promotion of autonomous learning.

Abstract

Tokai University's Graduate School of Engineering requires all first-year students in the spring semester to take a Technical English language course that builds on the various skills for academic participation and research dissemination. However, the quantity of materials covered in one semester is limited in scope, and some learners request reinforcement and reassurance at various stages of their graduate studies to successfully present and publish their laboratory research outside of the classroom. Therefore, additional support is often needed months after the course has concluded. Although the university has a well-established English learning commons, a self-access learning center (SALC), it is not necessarily an ideal platform for graduate students who seek specialized assistance. This is partly because a SALC is generally perceived by learners as a place to seek remedial support (McKinley, 2011). This paper will describe the design of online resources, workshops, and a support group which were created for dual purposes: firstly, to supplement and expand upon the existing curriculum to better address graduate student needs, and secondly, to increase student academic contributions. It is hoped that by sharing how the resources were created, coordinated, and managed, that other institutions may be inspired to establish a similar support system.

東海大学大学院工学研究科では、１年生全員が春学期に必修技術英語科目を受講しなければならない。この科目では、学術参加や研究普及に必要な様々なスキルを身につける。しかし、一学期の間に取り上げられる教材の量と範囲には限りがある。また、教室外での発表や公表を成功させるために、大学院での研究の様々な段階で強化学習を必要とする学習者もいる。そのため、授業が終わった後、数カ月が経ってからも追加サポートが必要になることもある。東海大学には長年運営している自己学習型英語ラーニングコモンズがあるが、専門的なサポートを求める大学院生にとっては必ずしも理想的なプラットフォームではない。これは、ラーニングコモンズは一般的に学習者によって補習的なサポートを求める場所として認識されているためでもある（McKinley, 2011）。本稿では、一連のワークショップとオンラインリソースの内容を説明する。これは２つの目的のために作られている。一つ目は、大学院生のニーズによりよく対応するため、既存のカリキュラムを補足・拡張する。二つ目は学生の学術貢献を増やすという大学全体の願いを推進する。ワークショップやリソースがどのように開設され、調整され、管理されたかを共有することによって、他の大学でも同様のサポートシステムが開設されることが期待される。

Keywords: course materials extension and repurposing, online resources, workshops, peer-support groups

The need to cover an extensive amount of content over the course of a semester is not an uncommon predicament for most language teachers. Too often teachers need to skim over materials, cut activities, and assign an increasing number of assignments to be done outside of class. In the case of Tokai University, many courses are being reformatted to once-a-week classes, halving instructional time which could affect course objectives and potential learner achievements. One way forward is to put more emphasis on autonomous learning with the learner taking charge of their own language acquisition and the institution making essential resources accessible via a self-access learning center (SALC). Self-access learning refers to the tools, people, and other resources that learners can use independently to further their education (McMurry et al., 2010). SALC enables learners to access a variety of language support options, such as self-study materials (e.g., proficiency exam handbooks, movies, graded readers), speaking practice, group study, meetings with instructors, workshops, and events. Learning in a context beyond the traditional classroom may help motivate students and create a stronger connection between in-class and out-of-class learning (Benson, 2012; Reinders, 2012). Therefore, creating a bridge between the classroom and self-access learning that reviews, reinforces, and expands upon class content is an ideal approach to better meet the needs of the students.

This is especially true for learners of English for academic purposes, such as the Technical English course in the Graduate School of Engineering at Tokai University, which this paper centers on. This paper will explain and discuss how course materials were repurposed as online self-access resources, extended for workshops, and used to develop an online peer-support group. By tailoring self-access learning for the graduate students, we hope to better support their academic aspirations.

Literature Review

There is an underlying belief that SALCs are primarily for undergraduate students, particularly those needing remedial support (McKinley, 2011); therefore, a SALC needs to find ways to be more inclusive for all undergraduate and even graduate students. Self-access learning does not necessarily require a physical place to amalgamate and distribute self-study materials. As Kashiwa's (2021) study points out, online resources are not only more accessible but also preferable for some self-access learners. In many ways, an online self-access learning format can meet the needs of many language learners since the concept is to provide students with the freedom to select the resources and tasks that best suit their personal learning experience (McMurry et al., 2010).

Drawing learners into a SALC to take advantage of the resources provided may require a link between the classroom and self-access learning (Cotterall & Reinders, 2001). In which case, resources within a SALC require curation to complement a curriculum or targeted course, so that specific learning tasks are accomplished. Materials are a crucial component of self-access learning and deserve particular consideration, as they can serve as not only a valuable supplement but also a learning guide to the challenges of academia such as academic writing and proficiency exams (Burton et al., 2024). That said, with modifications such as proficiency-level labels, clear instructions, examples, practice materials, answer keys, or feedback, some classroom materials can be successfully adapted (Reinders & Lewis, 2006). However, some materials may not be appropriate because they lack the necessary components to encourage autonomous learning, a critical factor when the learner lacks clarity or direction for their studies or inquiry (Domínguez-Gaona et al., 2012). Many self-access resources are either authentic, such as news articles, podcasts, or videos that are not intended for language learning, or they are teaching/educational materials meant for use in the classroom (Gardner & Miller, 1999). Keeping that in mind, self-access resources are best if they are tailored to the specific needs of their users.

Context and Target Course

Tokai University's Graduate School of Engineering requires all first-year students to take a Technical English language course. This once-a-week class is held over 14 weeks with 300 Japanese and non-Japanese graduate students is divided into eight classes. The students are streamed based on their language proficiency level using a mock computer-based half TOEIC test designed by Lint Co., Ltd. specifically for Tokai University. The students' TOEIC equivalent scores are generated based on Item Response Theory (IRT), a two-parameter logistic model and Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) in accordance with the actual TOEIC testing scale. Results of the mock TOEIC ranged from 255-400 (elementary proficiency) to 785-900 (working proficiency plus).

The course objectives align with the Graduate School's overall goal to develop the learners' skills to attend and present at international conferences and to ultimately increase the number of graduate student publications in English. The first half of the semester focuses on technical language and skill-building. Students learn technical language that they are likely to encounter in their academic or professional life, such as technical descriptions and data. In addition, there is a skills element concentrating on pronunciation of technical words and academic structures. The latter half of the class is devoted to developing a poster

presentation based on their laboratory research. The research themes vary from building accessibility (Architecture), aerodynamic performance and rotary engines (Mechanical Engineering), to magnetic resonance imaging (Electrical and Electron Engineering). The task requires students to write and submit an abstract, organize and rehearse their speeches, and in adherence to specific requirements, prepare and print posters for a mock conference using the skills acquired earlier in the semester. In the final two days of class, students give a poster presentation and answer questions about their research from their classmates.

There is substantial material to cover within the semester, and time constraints can result in some material being glossed over or skipped entirely. Additionally, learning gaps arise within the class as some students take leave to attend conferences or manage laboratory duties. Furthermore, some graduate students are still in the early stages of their research and are not fully ready to present. These factors may impede learning and hinder both the institutional and student goals of disseminating in English.

Extending and Repurposing Course Materials for Self-Access Resources and Workshops

Like all undergraduate students, the university's graduate students need support throughout their studies and beyond the classroom to achieve their goals. Tokai University's learning commons provides resources and language support primarily for undergraduate students. It is not always conducive to graduate students' specific or specialized needs such as conference presentations and journal submissions. Therefore, creating separate online self-access learning resources tailored specifically for graduate students was considered a logical solution by the four language instructors, including the author, who initiated the idea and recruited the other instructors to be involved. A proposal was drafted by the author and accepted by the departments within the Graduate School to create an online format that would be readily available and easy to access, offer advisory services from both peers and instructors, and be augmented by regular in-person workshop sessions.

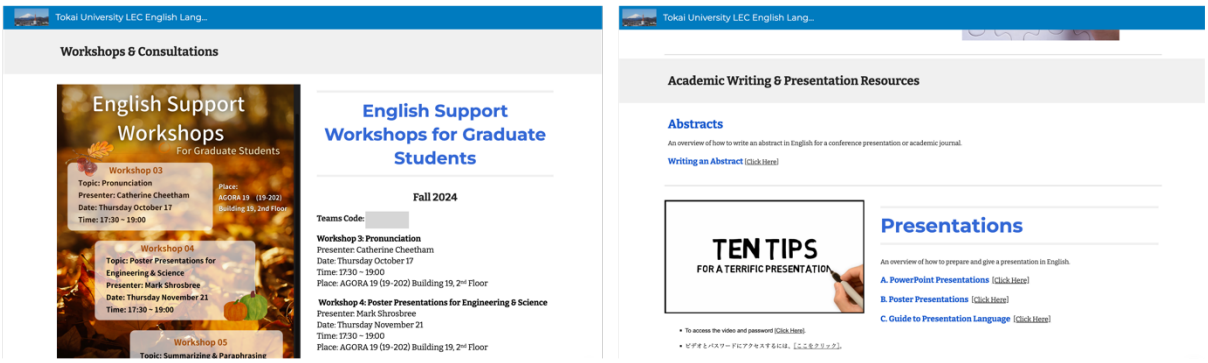
Online Resources

As the University's Language Education Center already had a website called E-Web (https://sites.google.com/view/tokai-e-web/home), complete with self-study materials to complement its learning commons, it was considered an ideal space to add specific content for the graduate students. By using the same domain, it was easy for the instructors to set up and incorporate resources. In doing so, the graduate students could access both general resources and those expressly geared toward them on the graduate webpage within E-Web.

Currently, the resource materials on the graduate webpage include guides on abstract and research-orientated writing, presentation delivery and format tips, information on referencing and citations, as well as how to label and use infographics. The guides were created by the instructors through a blending of educational, course, and online materials.

Figure 1

Graduate Webpage within Tokai University's Language Education Center's E-Web



For the Technical English classes, all course materials were created-in-house by the four instructors involved. Using simplified English has made the materials comprehensible to Japanese/non-Japanese learners. They remain an ideal source of information, and with some adaptations, instructors have repurposed the materials for the self-access site (Appendix A). For example, an in-class lesson on abstract writing was converted to self-access by rephrasing instructional language, adding a glossary of terms, providing a step-by-step writing process guide, and creating additional abstract examples. Classroom tasks that were irrelevant for self-access purposes, such as group- and pair-work activities were omitted. In addition, selected links to helpful external online sources, such as YouTube videos and learning apps related to the adapted course materials, were included to provide further support.

Workshops

Each month during the semester, one of the four language instructors takes a turn leading one workshop for graduate students. The workshops generally focus on themes covered in the Technical English course, allowing instructors to emphasize and expand upon relevant topics. Themes include posters, presentations, pronunciation, referencing and citation, and paraphrasing/summarizing. Although the classroom instructor makes announcements and the Graduate School advertises the workshops (Appendix B), attendance is entirely voluntary. Attendance numbers ideally range from 10 to 15 students per session.

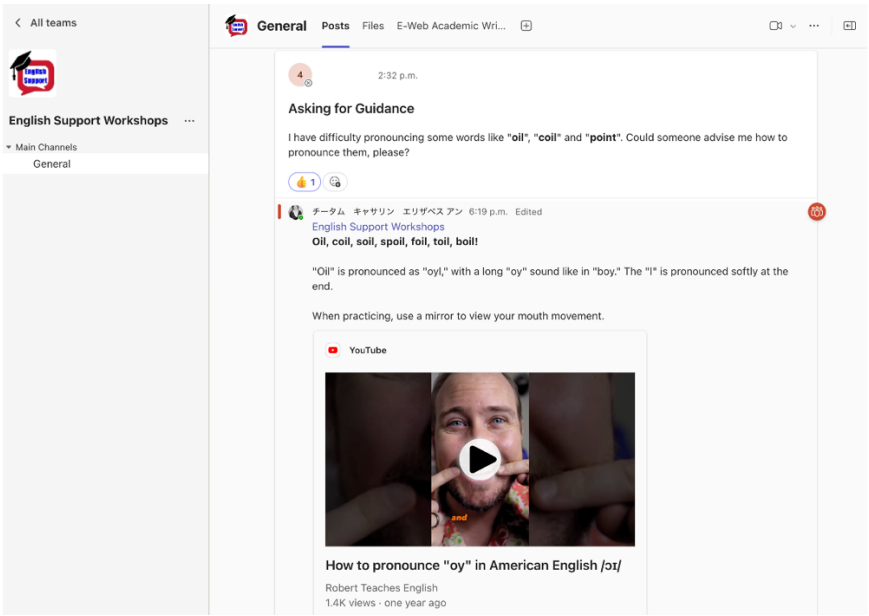
So, how do these workshops differ from classroom instruction? Although the workshops center on course themes, they are also designed to familiarize the learners with various learning resources and how to use them. For example, the author gave a workshop on presentations included information and a demonstration on using the PowerPoint speaker coach feature, which can help students practice and refine their presentation skills independently by providing feedback on items like pacing, pitch, use of filler words, and delivery.

Peer Support

As a way to maintain and create a community among the graduate students, an online English Support Group in Microsoft Teams was created by the instructors. The support group is open to all students and faculty members. Currently, the group has 28 users with four instructors as administrators. By joining this group, students gain access to current and archived workshop materials such as PowerPoint slides and handouts, that are not available on the graduate webpage. However, the main purpose of the English Support Group is for members to pose questions or seek advice from fellow graduate students and/or Engineering and English instructors in the group chat. It is also an opportunity for students of the Technical English course to stay connected after completion of the course.

Figure 2

English Support Group User Requesting Support

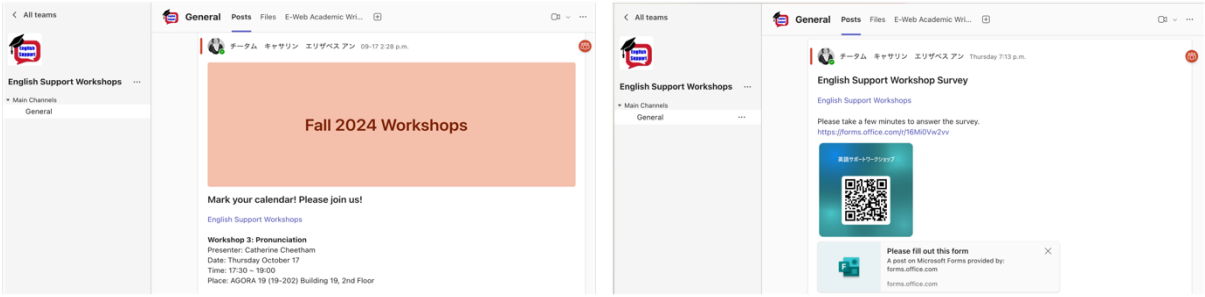


Teams also serves as an important tool for the instructors. First, it is a way to advertise and send reminders to members about upcoming workshops and new online

resources available on the graduate webpage. Second, instructors can initiate user surveys and review group chats to directly solicit and take note of desired resources and workshop themes. In doing so, instructors can improve the self-access experience.

Figure 3

Reminder of Upcoming Workshops and User Survey Request in English Support Group



Consultation

Through the website, students can request an individual consultation with an English language instructor. Since there is no physical self-access center, a centralized online consultation request form that streamlines and helps students connect with an English instructor was created. It has been the author's experience that without a centralized system in place, one faculty member may become inundated with student requests. Therefore, the request form asks students for specific information about their needs and a timeline in order to match them with an instructor who is both available and well-suited for the task. General requests include editing and proofreading, presentation practice, and feedback.

Discussion

Resources

It is important that the materials included in a self-access resource site be well curated and focus on the needs of the intended users—in this case the graduate students of the Technical English course. Navigating and selecting appropriate materials could be overwhelming to a language learner. Rather than offering numerous external links, a small quantity of resources could adequately meet learner needs.

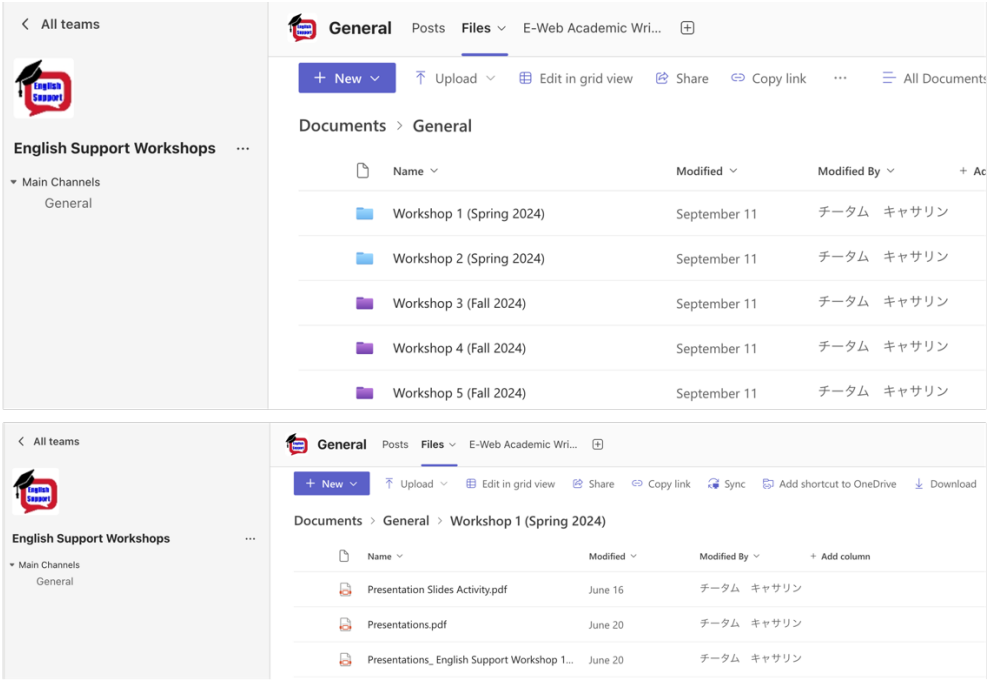
In this case, the in-house classroom materials were designed and tailored for specific learners, which made them a good candidate for adaptation for self-access usage. They also have the advantage of not requiring a physical space, as they can easily be hosted online. Furthermore, modified course materials are also cost-efficient and can be updated, unlike

expensive professionally published language learning resources which often become outdated and difficult to replace.

Another important suggestion is to group resources into two categories: self-explanatory and inexplicit. Self-explanatory resources, which need limited or no context, use simplified English and/or clear proficiency labels, and are systematically cataloged for learners to use independently. Inexplicit resources, on the other hand, such as PowerPoint slides without narration, require more context and are better understood in a classroom or workshop setting rather than on a self-access site. Instead, workshop PowerPoint slides with handouts are placed within English Support Group Teams folders. Members who are unable to attend a workshop can review and ask questions directly to organizers or attendees about the materials through the online English Support Group chat.

Figure 4

Inexplicit Resources in the English Support Group Teams Folders



Community

In the absence of a physical self-access center, it is important for users to feel that they are part of a greater learning community and that they can seek support when needed (Burton et al., 2024). Online groups, like Teams, provide students with the network and means to stay connected. More importantly, the English Support Group gives students the opportunity to raise questions and suggest workshop themes.

The workshops are an important gathering place for students to come together, learn, and socialize. It is also a chance for instructors to demonstrate the self-access resources that are available to the students. As McMurry et al. (2010) point out, students who attend such workshops or orientation sessions have a greater understanding of how to find appropriate materials. From the author's perception, those who actively took part in workshops and/or the online English Support Group had a more positive learning experience using the self-access materials.

Conclusion

Through establishing self-access learning that is tailored for a specific group of students, like those of the Technical English course, essential materials can be revisited and expanded upon at the learner's convenience. When it comes to finding supportive resources, learners can approach a task knowing that they can depend on the materials that have been curated to help them accomplish this specific assignment, such as writing an abstract or preparing for a presentation. A learning experience does not need to be restricted to the physical confines of a classroom or the temporal limits of a single semester. Instead, it can expand and take new direction through self-access resources, providing learners with the know-how to work autonomously.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix A

Repurposed Classroom Materials for the Self-access Website

Writing an Abstract

1. *What is an abstract?*

An abstract is a well-developed paragraph that gives an overview of your research (paper or presentation). An abstract should...

- describe the main idea and key points of your research.
- suggest implications or applications of your research.

2. *When must I submit an abstract?*

Abstracts are required for:

- conferences proposals
- journal articles
- research grant applications
- thesis

3. *When should I write an abstract?*

An abstract is usually written after writing a paper or creating a presentation outline.

4. *What is included in an abstract?*

Abstracts differ depending on your field of study. However, abstracts generally include all or some of the following:

Problem or Purpose

- Why is your research important? (background)
- What does your research attempt to solve?
- What is the main argument or claim of your research?

Methodology or Research Practices

- research model or design used
- evidence used in research

Results or Findings

- specific data from your research results
- general findings of your research

Implications

- How does your research add to your field of study?
- What are the practical or theoretical applications for future research?

5. *Do I need a title for my abstract?*
   You need a short, detailed title that reflects the outcome of your research.

Adapted in part from Mark Shrosbree TEfE (2024) course materials.
Tokai University
SECO and Language Education Centre

6. *What format is used when writing an abstract?*
   Always check the journal or conference for specific requirements, such as word count for titles and text. However, abstracts generally include all or some of the following:

- title (centered)
- a single paragraph
- block format (no indentations)
- single spaced
- consistent and standard font type and size (e.g. Times New Roman, 12-point font)
- word count (ranges between 150 ~250 words)

Tips: Abstracts should be...

- *Accurate:* correctly show the contents of the research; all information in the abstract must also be in the paper/presentation.
- *Complete:* if you use abbreviations, define them; e.g.: "...research into ACTS (Advanced Communications Technology Satellites) is important..."
- *Precise:* you have a limited word count, so use each word and sentence carefully.
- *Objective:* do not use subjective language, such as the word "I" or "we"; use objective language.
- *Readable:* write in clear English and avoid overly technical language.

7. *Where can I view a sample abstract?*
   - Check the journal that you are submitting to for archieved abstracts.
   - Check the conference website you intend to present at for past conference abstracts.
   - Carefully read the guidelines for submission.

Adapted in part from Mark Shrosbree TEfE (2024) course materials.
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Appendix B

Graduate School Workshop Advertisement

Navigating Diverging Beliefs of a Formal Classroom Teacher as a SALC Advisor

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Author Biography

Michael Kuziw is an instructor at Jin-ai University, Fukui (Department of Communication) and is the school's SALC advisor. He also has 12 years of experience teaching at the junior high and elementary level. His research interests include EFL in elementary schools, storytelling, teacher beliefs, and refugee education, working closely with non-Japanese students.

Abstract

Self-access learning centers (SALC) are ubiquitous at universities around Japan. These informal spaces are often staffed by individuals who take on the role of advising students for the purpose of second language learning outside the formal classroom. These advisors come from various backgrounds, some of whom have years of teaching experience in the formal classroom. This reflective article is a personal narrative which describes how I, a novice SALC advisor, navigated being a teacher in a formal classroom context while concurrently holding the position of advisor in the SALC over a three-year period. The article details how advising techniques in my role as an advisor, including the purpose-driven language learning advising (LLA) method contrasted with my beliefs related to being a formal classroom teacher. The two distinct roles of advisor and teacher can be diverging, and navigating them concurrently can pose difficulties, especially when the needs of each individual student can differ. Highlighting these challenges and showing how one can overcome them can provide a reference for others who find themselves in similar situations.

多くの高等教育機関には、自律的な英語学習を支援するセンター（SALC）が存在する。このようなインフォーマルなスペースには、多くの場合、カリキュラム上の授業科目の外で英語を学ぶことを目的に、学生に指導する役割を担う講師が常駐している。これらの講師は様々な経歴を持ち、中には授業科目における指導経験を持つ者もいる。本記事は、SALC の新任講師である筆者が、3 年間にわたってどのようにこの役割をこなしてきたかを綴った個人的な物語である。本記事では、目的主導型の言語学習アドバイス（LLA）メソッドなどの SALC で使用されている教育方法が、通常のカリキュラム内での授業での教育方針とは対照的であることを詳述している。この 2 つの異なる役割は、乖離する可能性があり、特に個々の学生のニーズが異なる場合には、それらをナビゲートすることが困難になる可能性がある。このような難題を取り上げ、筆者がどのようにこの課題を克服したかを紹介することで、同じような境遇にある教員の参考となることを期待している。

Keywords: Self-access learning centers; teacher beliefs; language learning advising; EFL

Many universities across Japan, including my institution, have established self-access learning centers (SALCs). McMurry et al. (2009) describe self-access centers as "places that promote and facilitate autonomous learning… [with the] purpose to complement[ing] teacher instruction" (p. 3). The SALC at my institution, the English Education Center (EEC), provides students with individual language advising, a service I alone have provided for three years in addition to my responsibilities as a classroom teacher. Advising takes place every day for one period (up to 90 minutes) where I meet with students, usually individually. Prior to becoming an advisor at the EEC, I had 12 years of experience teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in elementary and junior high school classrooms. Working at the EEC was my first foray into language learning advising (LLA), an area in which I lacked experience. Additionally, to date, I have not received any formal training relating to LLA or the autonomy-supportive concepts that underpin it. However, working in an LLA environment enlightened me to the contrasts and challenges experienced by classroom teachers who adopt the role of a SALC advisor. In my new role, I have often struggled to separate myself from my role as a teacher in the formal classroom. In this paper, I will explore the negotiations I created in practice and the learning that I had to take upon myself as an inexperienced SALC advisor in contrast with my teacher beliefs through a narrative experience. This personal recount is my reflection on the impact of advising at a SALC and the positive changes it had on me as a classroom teacher. It is my hope that by sharing my inner dialogue, individuals who take on both roles can be cognizant of the potential difficulties experienced within this mode of teacher-student interaction.

Literature Review

In the education system in Japan, MEXT (2015) expects, "the wide use of learning outcomes and an increase in quality learning opportunities… to enable every person to develop competencies for independence, collaboration, and creativity" in the classroom. Classroom teachers in Japan, therefore, attempt to provide students with impacting critical thinking power, problem-solving skills, and sociability, among others, which can be applied to experiential activities, familiarity with technology and learning to cope with modern and social problems (MEXT, 2015). In addition, many institutions incorporate a SALC to provide opportunities for out-of-class language learning either by classroom-trained teachers, or SALC-specific advisors. However, the skills that teachers deploy to facilitate student development in the classroom often contrast with the practical role and methods taken on by

an advisor at a SALC. Morrison and Navarro (2012) describe learning advisors as individuals whose role is, "to help learners develop effective individualised learning behavior" (p. 351) which is associated with flexible learning, learning strategies and self-directed learning. Carson and Mynard (2012) state that advisors are trained experts in language learning who work with individual learners on aspects related to their language learning, using related resources, activities and strategies. Kato and Mynard (2016) suggest that advising [in a SALC] shifts control to the learner rather than situating the advisor as an 'expert' (p. 2). This suggests the student-teacher relationship is redefined, and the learner must decide how to make use of the advisor. One type of learner support implemented at numerous SALCs is LLA. This form of language support engages with a learner's inner psychological world which includes their motivations and emotions (Kato & Mynard, 2016; Tassinari & Ciekanski, 2013) towards language learning. Taking on this new role as an advisor involves the exploration of one's inner dialogue. Thus, educator beliefs may be blurred or even change through language learning advising in the SALC. For example, Sampson (2020) states that, "[learning advising] added to [his] identity as an educator" (p. 255), leading him to see language learners from a different perspective while also encouraging student autonomy in the classroom.

Recognizing the differences between the learning environments of the SALC and the formal classroom is pivotal to understanding how beliefs are central to the practical outcomes of learning. Situational constraints, including the style of interaction, the technical culture of the school, and students' mixed abilities often prevent formal teachers from putting their true beliefs into practice (Kaymakamoglu, 2018). Furthermore, according to Borg (2018), studying teacher beliefs/practices is challenging because they differ from individual to individual. "Different beliefs will…carry different 'weight' and where tensions arise, those that are more central or core will prevail over those that are peripheral" (p. 77). Acknowledging and analyzing differences in teachers' beliefs can help us understand the reasons for effective and/or ineffective practices across contexts so that we might align beliefs and practices more effectively" (Larrivee, 2000).

Finally, Morrison and Navarro (2012) state that, "although learning advisors are often qualified teachers, the skills they apply…require a significant shift in approach regarding interaction with students" (p. 349). This shift is marked by teachers' reorientation of themselves from classroom teaching to language advising. Morrison and Navarro (2012) seem positive in their belief that teachers are capable of becoming learning advisors despite

the possible struggles that may occur initially. This process of reorientation may differ from teacher to teacher, requiring patience and learning. In the following sections, I describe my own reorientation as I moved into the new world of advising.

Observations

Beginning the Role

In the first semester of my new role as advisor, I noticed that there were certain attributes that characterized the different types of students expressively seeking LLA at the EEC. There were the studious types who had a defined purpose; for example, studying for interview examination or exposing themselves to spoken English. Other students sought assistance in language learning as a supplement to their classroom learning. However, it is without a doubt that the greatest impact on my feelings, motivations, and beliefs towards my own identity as an advisor at the EEC came from students who did not come with any specific learning targets and required assistance in finding a goal for themselves. Thus, at first, many of our interactions tended to be outside the scope of language advising, and I felt purposeful LLA was not carried out. In such cases, beyond making use of my soft skills of kindness, empathy and understanding as a teacher, it was difficult to feel the effectiveness of the advising sessions, leading me to feel unsatisfied and withdrawn.

I believed and still believe that an educator should be a person who can be fully trusted and be confident that their students are shown respect, decency, and courtesy. Sometimes teachers must work tirelessly to build trust and respect, a priority to reach students' potential for real learning. Advising, just like classroom teaching, can be purpose-driven, but there are also times when the advisee simply seeks to be heard and seen. It is the advisor who should respect the desires of the advisee. I quickly realized that building trust between myself and the advisee holds great value, similar to being a formal classroom teacher. Being friendly, personable, and attentive are the ideal characteristics that come to mind when thinking about my attitude towards building trust with a student. So, I would turn to my instincts as a teacher and intuit advising strategies, including listening attentively, being aware of my body language and giving concrete feedback at the end of each session. Despite these initiatives during the initial sessions, I continued to feel distance between myself and the advisee and a strong sense that I was not properly advising the student if I took control of the session or advised too strongly. If I couldn't gain the trust of the student, then I would conclude that my efforts were ill-informed.

Some students came to the sessions presenting learning styles that were unconventional to me, including creative performances such as video montages, dancing, singing, and so on, which were not uncommon among the students at the SALC. These methods of language expression, while present in the classroom through creative work, felt very different when experiencing them at the SALC. Students engaged in these activities at the SALC of their own volition. This sometimes placed me in the position of an audience member rather than a language advisor. Therefore, I was unprepared emotionally for these performances. However, for me as an advisor, this affected the sessions both positively and negatively. I was glad to see what creative output the student could include in the sessions; for example, singing English songs and using English to create skits through video. This added variety and complexity to what could otherwise be a basic or routine advising session. On the other hand, I felt my role as an observer was difficult to fulfill. It set a tone in which one-way communication was the norm during some language advising sessions, conflicting with my teaching beliefs. Despite these tensions, since an advisor is not formally evaluating a student in a SALC environment, I elected to keep my comments positive and be open to a variety of mediums for advising.

Self-Reflection and Future Suggestions

For much of my three years as an advisor, I have implemented a variety of strategies on a trial-and-error basis; for example, allowing the sessions to be student-led, meeting on a regular basis, offering assistance only when necessary, and being open to exploring a variety of mediums of expression (songs, performances, quizzes, puzzles, games, etc.). To achieve this, I relied on my teaching acumen, although, despite the feelings of the language learners, I felt my efforts were ineffective. I believe others, especially trained teachers may also experience a lack of purpose or *yarigai*, and may feel underused as an advisor. Like a doctor and the Hippocratic Oath, I believe there is a code that all teachers live by, which is to help students, no matter the circumstance, even in an unfamiliar role such as a SALC learning advisor. So, when students came to the center without any specific language goal, I gritted my teeth despite my apprehension, with the hope that somehow positive change was occurring. If I could offer advice to my past self, or others new to the field, it would be to become familiar with the role of an advisor, read literature regarding advising techniques, set boundaries with students, help students create achievable goals and to frequently revisit one's own goals on the off chance that the advising may have gone astray.

Looking back, what I feel I overlooked was the importance of making sure that both the student and I acknowledge and "understand what [an advisor] *is* and what it is *not*" (Kato & Mynard, 2016, p. 3). Marzin et al. (2022), state that, "advisors may experience situations where the advisees' aims… for the session do not match with the true purpose of advising, which may indicate that advisors' roles are not fully understood" (p. 39). By clarifying the role of a SALC advisor, therefore, one can proceed knowing how to prepare and execute each session. As I was negotiating my role as an advisor at the EEC, I believe my characteristics of kindness, friendliness, and being a considerate listener naturally set the tone of the sessions and allowing for trust-building. The one-on-one format of advising sessions meant that I did not have to concern myself with a large number of students. Instead, I could focus my attention on working with just one student and creating an environment that was personalized. In these sessions, I made it my goal to familiarize myself with the students. While I noticed that the interactions had a successful impact on the mutual respect between myself and the students, at the end of three years, I realized I was not satisfied with how I perceived myself as an advisor. I believe one of the major reasons for feeling uneasy was because of the lack of formal training available to newly appointed advisors at the SALC. Looking back, I would suggest to others to fully understand the complexity of the role of an advisor by requesting some type of formal training and putting aside preconceptions of what students may or may not want through the advising sessions.

According to Tassinari (2017), "experiences and doubts…enthusiasm and struggle" (p. 227) are important aspects of sharing one's experience as an advisor. To build more positive student-advisor dynamics, I recall sharing my struggles with other educators. They were compassionate and understanding, but also encouraged me to set boundaries during the sessions, to be a good listener, and to be a proactive member of the sessions. These conversations continued regularly with the steering committee at the LC, often with them inquiring about my progress. After what I viewed to be several unsuccessful advising sessions, I stopped bringing my frustrations to their attention. Instead, I tried to work alone to carve out an advising format that would work for both me and each student. In the end, I recognized a sense of obligation to aid students and address their needs regardless of my own resistance while also bearing in mind the advice of other educators. One major barrier to effective advising sessions that I noticed was the lack of clarity regarding the purpose of the EEC as a whole. In retrospect, revisiting and clarifying the purpose of the EEC could have

positively contributed to me achieving successful advising sessions. This is a goal that I hope to focus on in the near future.

Having negotiated the struggles described by Morrison and Navarro (2012) in transitioning from a teacher role to becoming an advisor, I believe after three years of experience, I have been able to develop and reorient myself when teaching and advising. While my roles of formal teacher and advisor continue to be distinct, it is without a doubt that my role as an advisor has had a positive effect on me as a classroom teacher. I remind myself of my teaching beliefs and how they have been influenced by my role as an advisor thanks to the opportunities that I have had working with a variety of students who have the willingness and drive to further enhance their English skills outside the classroom.

Conclusion

Both teachers and advisors must negotiate internal and external factors related to one's beliefs. As a teacher, this may feel instinctive; however, taking on the role as an advisor in a SALC environment may pose different challenges that are novel and can seem overwhelming. Fostering students' learning by meeting their individual needs is an asset of both a good teacher and an effective learning advisor. SALC advisors must be flexible to the needs of the student and make decisions addressing those needs. These scenarios play into the inner dialogue a teacher may experience while finding their footing as an advisor. However, SALC advisors must realize that they are not alone in this unfamiliar environment. As such, it is important to be aware of these differences and know how to navigate oneself, reflecting both alone and with others on the challenges of these experiences. I hope that future SALC advisors can learn from my experiences and reach a point where they are satisfied with their ability to navigate both their role in the formal classroom as well as in the SALC.

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