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JASAL Journal is now in its sixth year. This issue brings together a number of papers which highlight the collaboration essential for successful self-access language learning. In the research paper, Hisaka Konishi uses a questionnaire of 424 students at a university with several different language support services to investigate learner help-seeking behaviour. Her study into one of these services reveals that teachers are powerful motivators in persuading students to access support for their learning, and shows that lower proficiency students who did not consult the service that was the target of the research were nevertheless often accessing other services, such as support for communication. This finding highlights the importance of collaborating with classroom teachers in promoting extracurricular support services and emphasizes the need for researchers to get a broad picture of student actions when investigating help-seeking behaviour.

In their paper, Hooper and Namiki report on a comprehensive needs analysis conducted to inform the redevelopment of the underused REAL Room, a self-access learning center at Tokyo Kasei University. Drawing on survey data from 61 students and 7 faculty members, their study emphasizes the importance of incorporating stakeholder perspectives in SALC design. Students expressed strong interest in using the space for improving speaking and listening skills, while faculty saw its potential as both a learning hub and a promotional asset. The authors outline plans for transforming the room into a collaborative, learner-centered environment, with initiatives including student staffing, online engagement, curriculum integration, and ongoing evaluation.

Aizawa and Matsumoto explore the long-standing guided self-study English listening program at the University of the Sacred Heart, Tokyo, which has supported first-year students

since 1991. The program blends structured study requirements—such as fixed durations and pacing—with learner choice from a broad selection of listening materials. The authors describe how the program has adapted to technological change and shifting learner needs while maintaining its foundational goals. Their findings offer valuable insights into how structured guidance can coexist with learner autonomy in institutional language programs, even under resource constraints.

In their Japanese paper, Hayashi, Yamamoto and Kanduboda discuss the evolution they have witnessed in recent years in the role of SALC administrative staff, who, at their institution, are taking on more student support roles on top of the expected operation and management duties. This shift is occurring as the SALC itself is dedicating more time to promoting collaboration between members of a diverse student body and with people outside the immediate university community. They highlight the importance of this vital role in a SALC, and the need for these administrators to have the relevant knowledge of good practices to be able to perform this role effectively.

Finally, Francis, Uehara, Vye, and Thornton report on the presentations which formed the JASAL Forum at JALT2024 in Shizuoka in November 2024. They give a short overview of the presentations, which focused on learner preferences in group advising sessions, evaluation procedures of a SALC, and the potential for integration between SALC advising services and a tutoring course for English-major students.

Help-Seeking and Service Use in English Learning Support: Insights From a Questionnaire Study

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Author Biography

Hisaka Konishi is an assistant professor at Nihon University College of Science and Technology. Her research interests include motivation, satisfaction, language anxiety, and self-access language learning.

Abstract

This study investigates students' engagement with institutional language support services and examines ways to enhance awareness and utilisation of English Learning Support (ELS) at a university in Japan through the lens of academic help-seeking. ELS, known in Japanese as *Eigo Gakushu Support*, is designed to help students improve their English proficiency primarily through instruction conducted in Japanese. A survey of 424 students revealed that while 61.6% were aware of the service, actual usage remained low (7.3%), despite engagement from students across various proficiency levels. Many students preferred peer support, consultations with class teachers, online resources, or other university-provided language learning support services. The findings also indicated that students who used ELS were often encouraged by a teacher, whereas non-users with lower TOEIC scores tended to seek other institutional support services, particularly those focused on speaking skills in English or other languages. This study suggests that low engagement with a specific service does not necessarily imply a lack of help-seeking behaviour, but rather a possible redirection to other available resources. Therefore, it highlights the importance of understanding students' broader patterns of support-seeking. Enhancing alignment with student needs and encouraging teacher referrals may improve ELS participation.

本研究は、大学における言語学習支援サービスの利用実態を明らかにし、学業的援助要請（academic help-seeking）の視点から、English Learning Support（ELS、日本語名称：英語学習サポート）の認知度と利用の促進方法を検討するものである。ELS では、主に日本語による指導を通じて学生の英語力向上を支援している。424 名の学生を調査した結果、61.6%がこのサービスを認知していたものの、実際の利用率は 7.3%と低い結果であった。多くの学生は、ピアサポート、授業担当教員との相談、オンライン、あるいは他の学内言語支援サービスを好んで利用する傾向がみられた。ELS の利用者は教員からの勧めをきっかけに利用を開始しした場合が多い一方で、TOEIC スコアが乏しい非利用者の多くは、特にスピーキングを目的とした他の学内支援サービスを利用していた。この結果は、特定の支援サービスの利用率の低さが、必ずしも学生の学業的援助要請の欠如を示すものではなく、他のサービスを利用している可能性があることを示唆している。したがって、学生のサポート利用に関する全体的な傾向を理解することの重要性が強調される。サービスを学生のニーズにより適合させ、教員の関与を促進することは、ELS の利用向上につながるだろう。

Keywords: academic help-seeking, self-regulation, language learning support services

Enhancing student autonomy is essential, as successful language acquisition is closely linked to active engagement and independent learning (Henry & Sheehan, 2005). Autonomy, however, requires a supportive environment that fosters self-directed learning and provides academic assistance (Reeve, 2022). Self-access centres offer such environments by promoting learner autonomy beyond the classroom. Additionally, academic support services play a vital role in helping students overcome difficulties, maintain motivation, and sustain progress in their studies (Karabenick & Knapp, 1991; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997; Thomas & Tagler, 2019). Academic help-seeking is a well-established component of self-regulated learning (Fujita, 2010; Karabenick, 2003; Karabenick & Berger, 2013; Martín-Arbós et al., 2021; Newman, 2002; Thomas & Tagler, 2019). Numerous studies have demonstrated a strong positive correlation between help-seeking behaviours and academic achievement (Martín-Arbós et al., 2021; Thomas & Tagler, 2019). However, student engagement with institutional support services often remains limited (Payakachat et al., 2013; Reeve, 2022; Thomas & Tagler, 2019). A similar trend has been observed at University A in the Kanto region of Japan, where English Learning Support (ELS), known in Japanese as *Eigo Gakushu Support*, provides individualised assistance from English instructors. The service supports students in improving their English proficiency through explanations mainly in Japanese. Nonetheless, ELS is underutilised by students (Konishi et al., 2024). In addition to ELS, students at University A have access to other support services, including the Self-Access Learning Center (SALC), a multi-language support centre (hereafter referred to as Centre B), and an English learning support centre (hereafter referred to as Centre C). The SALC promotes learner autonomy through English-only writing and speaking sessions, advising with learning advisors, language practice with international students, and participation in learning communities. Centre B provides culturally immersive opportunities to study languages such as Chinese, Korean, Thai, or Spanish, often facilitated by instructors and international students. Centre C offers both ELS and the Peer Tutor Programme, the latter enabling students to participate in weekly, small-group English study sessions led by a student tutor in Japanese. Given this range of options, it is unclear whether students fully understand the distinct roles of these services or whether certain barriers are preventing them from using ELS. This paper presents findings from a questionnaire-based study investigating the factors contributing to students' underutilisation of academic support services, with a particular focus on

those with low English proficiency. The aim is to identify key obstacles to engagement and offer insights that may reveal strategies to enhance accessibility and increase participation in the service. As part of an ongoing research project, the findings presented here represent an interim stage rather than a definitive conclusion.

Literature Review

This section presents a review of the literature, beginning with an exploration of self-regulated learning, with particular attention to academic help-seeking behaviours. It then examines the underutilisation of institutional academic support services, focusing on both internal and external factors that influence students' engagement. This discussion provides a foundation for understanding how students engage with available resources and what barriers may inhibit their engagement.

Self-Regulated Learning and Academic Help-Seeking

Self-regulated learning is essential to academic success, encompassing cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioural processes that help learners set goals, monitor their progress, and adjust learning strategies accordingly (Karabenick, 2003). Students who consistently apply self-regulation strategies tend to achieve higher academic outcomes, such as improved exam performance, course grades, and overall GPA (Gonida et al., 2019; Payakachat et al., 2013; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997; Thomas & Tagler, 2019). Among these strategies, academic help-seeking is particularly important for overcoming academic challenges (Gonida et al., 2019; Roussel et al., 2011; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997).

Help-seeking is defined as the process of reaching out to others or using external resources to achieve academic goals, such as completing assignments or preparing for exams (Karabenick & Berger, 2013). Nelson-Le Gall (1981) distinguished between instrumental and executive help-seeking. *Instrumental help-seeking* (also called adaptive/autonomous help-seeking; Karabenick & Newman, 2009), entails seeking hints or guidance that foster independent learning. In contrast, *executive help-seeking* (also called expedient/dependent help-seeking; Karabenick & Newman, 2009) involves requesting direct answers to save time or effort, reinforcing student dependency. Effective help-seekers combine metacognitive awareness (recognising when help is needed), motivation (making the decision to seek assistance), and effective resource

management to address academic challenges (Karabenick & Berger, 2013; Karabenick & Newman, 2009).

To support student learning, universities provide diverse academic support services, including advising, tutoring, writing centres, and study skills workshops (Payakachat et al., 2013; Thomas & Tagler, 2019). Students seek assistance for various reasons, including clarifying concepts, improving examination performance, and receiving guidance on assignments (Karabenick & Berger, 2013). However, despite the availability of these resources, many students often prefer informal alternatives, such as peer assistance and online resources, over formal services, such as teachers and institutional services (Karabenick, 2003; Li et al., 2023; Thomas & Tagler, 2019; Wirtz et al., 2018).

Understanding the barriers that prevent students from using formal academic support is therefore critical. The following section explores the internal and external factors influencing this underutilisation.

Factors Affecting the Underutilisation of Academic Support Services

A range of personal and contextual factors can affect students' willingness to seek help. Notably, research suggests that students who are most in need of support often avoid seeking it (Karabenick & Knapp, 1991; Parnes et al., 2020; Payakachat et al., 2013). For instance, Karabenick (2003) found that high-performing students were more likely to seek instrumental help and displayed strong self-regulated learning characteristics, such as high motivation, mastery orientation, and lower anxiety. Although the lowest-achieving students reported similar self-efficacy, intrinsic interest, and strategy use, they perceived greater threat, which discouraged them from seeking help.

Self-perception also plays a critical role in this process. Students with a stronger sense of academic competence are generally more likely to seek support (Ryan & Pintrich, 1997). In contrast, those who view themselves as less capable often avoid help-seeking due to concerns about appearing inadequate. Payakachat et al. (2013) found that feelings of competence were positively correlated with help-seeking behaviour, whereas feelings of threat had a negative association. Similarly, Karabenick and Knapp (1991) observed that students with higher self-esteem were more likely to seek academic support, while those with lower self-esteem often required positive academic experiences to build confidence. This supports the notion that help-seeking behaviour is

shaped by students' previous learning experiences (Wirtz et al., 2018). Additionally, achievement goal theory helps explain students' help-seeking behaviours. Students with performance goals, who compare themselves to others, are more likely to avoid seeking help due to fears of appearing incompetent (Karabenick, 2004). In contrast, students with mastery goals who prioritise learning view help-seeking as a beneficial strategy. Ryan and Pintrich (1997) noted that students prioritising task mastery tended to seek help when they recognised its benefits.

External social and institutional factors also contribute significantly to students' engagement with academic support. The perceived attitudes of family members, peers, and instructors can either encourage or discourage students from seeking academic support. Payakachat et al. (2013) demonstrated that positive relationships with instructors enhance students' academic help-seeking behaviour. Similarly, Thomas and Tagler (2019) found that when students believed their family or friends expected them to seek help, or knew that successful peers had done so, they were more motivated to use support services. Moreover, students' perceptions of the benefits of academic support, such as receiving extra help with coursework, expanding knowledge, or improving academic performance, were positively linked to their intention to use these services (Thomas & Tagler, 2019).

The decision to engage with academic support services is shaped by a complex interplay of individual and contextual factors, including self-efficacy, goal orientations, past experiences, perceptions of the benefits of academic support, and the influence of others. Enhancing engagement requires institutions to improve the visibility and accessibility of services and build a culture in which seeking help is seen as a positive and proactive strategy. Increased engagement tends to reinforce help-seeking behaviour, creating a beneficial cycle that supports academic success.

Research Background

This section outlines the research background, focusing on the role of campus-based support systems at University A and previous research conducted at the institution, with particular attention to ELS.

Campus Support Services and ELS

At University A, a variety of language support services are available to enhance students' learning, autonomy, and academic success, including the SALC, Centre B, and

Centre C. Each centre is located in a different building on. Along with academic support, they offer spaces for studying, socialising, relaxing, and accessing small libraries and multimedia resources. ELS operates in a smaller setting with fewer instructors than the other centres and provides support throughout the semester. Delivered primarily in Japanese by English instructors as part of their teaching duties, ELS offers one-on-one sessions either face-to-face or online, typically from around lunchtime until 6:00 p.m., depending on instructor availability. The author oversaw the operation of ELS and also served as an instructor during the 2023–2024 academic year. Responsibilities included planning, promoting, coordinating instructors' schedules, and delivering support sessions. While efforts were made to maintain objectivity, it is acknowledged that this involvement will have informed aspects of the study. Students can either book a session in advance or drop in without a prior appointment when they require assistance. These sessions aim to support students in developing their English proficiency through direct instructional approaches, drawing on instructors' professional teaching experience. ELS also provides an accessible entry point for hesitant students, encouraging wider engagement with the university's academic support services offered in English and other languages. In contrast, the SALC provides advising sessions held primarily in English (though not exclusively) by trained learning advisors who employ more indirect advising techniques to guide students toward greater learner autonomy. While the SALC also offers 15-minute speaking and up to 30-minute writing sessions (limited to 20 minutes at the time of the survey), both conducted in English, ELS provides 40-minute sessions that cover a wide range of topics. These include exam preparation (e.g., TOEIC, TOEFL), writing, speaking practice, and general learning advice. Despite these offerings, engagement with ELS remains limited (Konishi et al., 2024). Given the variety of language support services on campus, it is possible that students may rely on alternatives to ELS.

Previous Study on ELS

A previous study was conducted to examine student usage of ELS and to explore ways to increase awareness and engagement with the service (Konishi et al., 2024). The findings revealed limited utilisation, with only 10% of 658 surveyed students having utilised ELS. While more than half (55.3%) were aware of the service, they had not engaged with it. Key issues included many students' use of other on-campus support services (32.9%), a lack of understanding of the services ELS provides (31.7%), and

general unfamiliarity with the service (24.7%). These findings suggest that many students may not have perceived the service as beneficial. Moreover, limited opportunities to visit the building where ELS is located also hinder students from using it. This supports previous research conducted at a U.S. university, which found that a lack of convenience can deter students from using academic support services (Wirtz et al., 2018). This study also demonstrated that students with low English proficiency were unlikely to use the service: As noted by other researchers (e.g., Karabenick & Knapp, 1991), students who needed the most help were often the least likely to seek it in this study.

To address these challenges, some instructors offered extra grade points as an incentive for first-year students. Although it was not possible to implement this incentive across all faculty programmes throughout the university, it was used to encourage student engagement with ELS, particularly among those with lower English proficiency, during one semester. Additionally, posters highlighting the topics covered by ELS were displayed across campus, and tours of Centre C, along with class visits, were conducted. This follow-up study aims to investigate overall student familiarity with ELS, identify barriers to its use, and examine students' reliance on alternative language support services. In particular, it focuses on the effectiveness of interventions designed to raise awareness and promote engagement. Furthermore, while the 2024 survey highlighted low levels of awareness and usage, especially among students with lower English proficiency, it did not explore their use of alternative support services or analyse help-seeking patterns specific to this group. To address this gap, the present study also investigates how students with lower English proficiency utilise on-campus language support services. The study addresses the following research questions: (1) To what extent are students aware of ELS?, 2) What factors affect students' awareness of ELS?, (3) What factors influence students' reluctance to use ELS?, (4) What alternative resources do students with lower English proficiency rely on for ELS?

Methods

Participants

The study involved a total of 424 undergraduate students aged between 18 and 21. Tables 1 and 2 present a breakdown of participants by academic year and department. Their TOEIC scores were distributed as follows: less than 410 (26.4%), 410–589 (34.9%), 590–799 (20.5%), and 800–990 (3.3%). First- and second-year

students typically had English classes at least three times a week, depending on their major, with small class sizes of around 20 to 24 students.

Table 1

Participant Distribution by Academic Year (N = 424)

Year	1	2	3	4
Number of students (%)	284 (67.0%)	114 (26.9%)	16 (3.8%)	10 (2.4%)

Table 2

Participant Distribution by Department (N = 424)

Department	English	Asian Languages	Spanish & Portuguese	International Communication
Number of students (%)	163 (38.4%)	152 (35.8%)	61 (14.4%)	48 (11.3%)

Instruments

  The questionnaire, developed using Google Forms, was designed to gather students' views and experiences with the university's learning support services. Adapted from a previous survey (Konishi et al., 2024), the revised instrument consisted of 45 items, including demographic questions and students' self-reported TOEIC or TOEFL scores. Regarding TOEIC scores, students typically took the institutional program version of the test. While the full questionnaire also included items measuring how frequently students had accessed the services since enrolment, their satisfaction with each service, and the likelihood of recommending them to peers, the present study focuses on students' awareness of ELS, their reasons for not using it, and the on-campus support services they had used. Accordingly, the eight relevant items are presented in the appendix. To improve clarity, six randomly selected students were invited to complete a pilot version of the survey and provide feedback on areas needing improvement. Based on their responses, several questions were revised to include clearer, more detailed information to ensure all students could fully understand the questions. For instance, one

commonly used service referred to informally as the "yellow sofas" was included using its student-recognised nickname in order to ensure understanding.

Procedures

The study took place between 26 June and 30 July 2024, following the university's ethics approval. The author distributed QR codes or URLs for the questionnaire through instructors who volunteered to share them with their students before or after classes, or via Google Classroom. Prior to participation, each student was required to submit an electronic consent form, which included details about the study, participant rights, confidentiality, data usage, contact information, a signature, and the date of consent.

Analysis

Data were categorised and visualised for clarity, with students being divided into two groups: those who had utilised the ELS and those who had never used it. The categorisation facilitated an exploration of students' perspectives regarding the service based on their usage. Additionally, student TOEFL IPT scores were converted into TOEIC scores using a conversion table to investigate whether there was a relationship between usage frequency and student TOEFL scores.

Results

Figure 1 shows that 61.6% of students (261 students) knew about ELS, of which 7.3% of them (31 students) had used the service. However, 54.2% of students (230 students) reported they had not used the service even though they knew of it. Additionally, 36.8% of students (156 students) responded that they were unaware of the service.

Figure 1

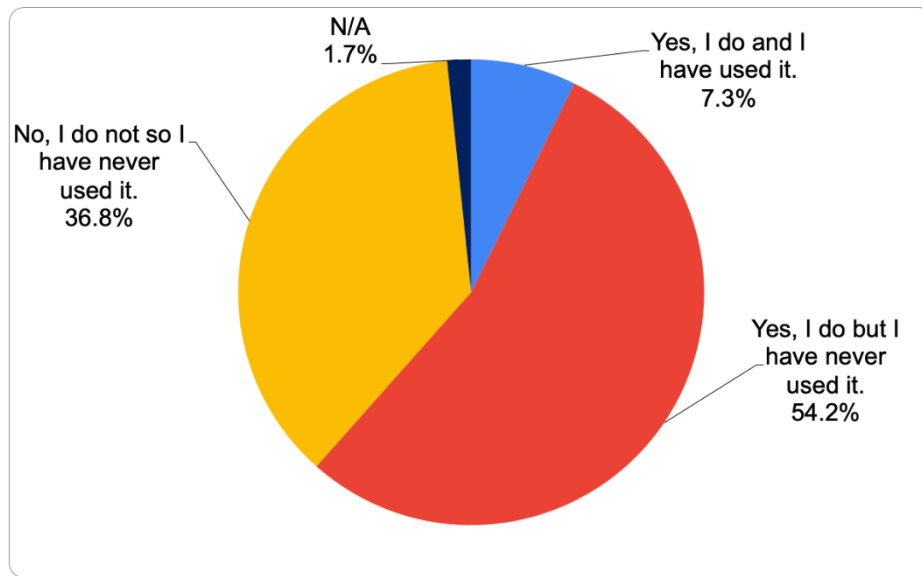*Usage and Awareness of ELS (*N = 424*)*

Figure 2 illustrates the range of TOEIC scores of students who had used the service before. The highest number of users were students with TOEIC scores in the 410–589 range (10 students, 32.3%), followed by those in the 0–409 range (eight students, 25.8%), the 590–799 range (six students, 19.4%), and the 800–990 range (two students, 6.5%).

Figure 2

*Number of Students Utilising ELS and Their TOEIC Scores (*N = 31*)*
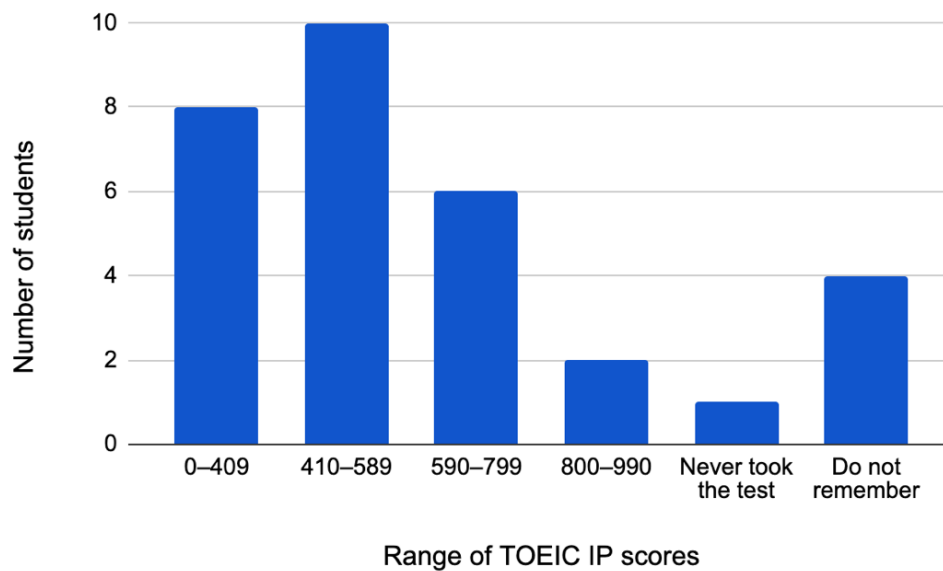
A total of 31 users and 230 non-users of the service responded to a multiple-choice question regarding how they became aware of ELS, as illustrated in Table 3. Among both groups, the three most common sources of awareness were teachers mentioning the service during class, encountering it while walking through the building, and announcements during guidance sessions or orientation events. Specifically, nearly half of the users (48.4%) learned about ELS from their teachers during class, followed by 22.6% through Google Classroom announcements, and 16.1% via direct experience or visiting the building. Among non-users, 25.7% also cited teachers as their source, 22.6% discovered the service while passing by the building, and 20.4% became aware of it during departmental or major guidance sessions. Fewer students learned about ELS through freshman orientation camps (13.9%), peers (4.8%), or friends (3.0%).

Table 3

Methods of Discovering ELS Among Users and Non-Users (Users: N = *31; Non-Users:* N = *230, Multiple Responses)*

Method of discovering the service	Number of students (%)	
	Users	Non-Users
Freshman orientation camp (Off-Campus)	0 (0.0%)	33 (13.9%)
Department/course guidance (On-Campus)	2 (6.5%)	47 (20.4%)
From posters on campus	6 (19.4%)	27 (11.7%)
Recommended by friends	2 (6.5%)	7 (3.0%)
Recommended by senior or junior students	0 (0.0%)	11 (4.8%)
Recommended by a teacher during class	15 (48.4%)	59 (25.7%)
Required as part of the English class	5 (16.1%)	3 (1.3%)
Found it while walking in the building	5 (16.1%)	52 (22.6%)
Open Campus	1 (3.2%)	28 (12.2%)
Google Classroom announcements	7 (22.6%)	6 (2.6%)
Campus website announcements	3 (9.7%)	11 (4.8%)

Digital signage	1 (3.2%)	1 (0.4%)
Social media platforms (e.g., X, Instagram)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)

Table 4 presents the results of multiple-choice questions exploring the reasons why students did not utilise ELS, despite being aware of its existence. The most cited reason was that students were too busy to make use of it (80 students, 34.8%). This was followed by not knowing what to ask (69 students, 30.0%), and lack of prior experience (50 students, 21.7%). Some students opted for alternative resources, such as asking friends (32 students, 13.9%) or conducting online searches (30 students, 13.0%). Students also used other on-campus services, such as the Peer Tutor Programme (10 students, 4.3%), sessions with a learning advisor or an instructor at the SALC, or with an instructor at Centre B (nine students, 3.9% each). Additionally, some students indicated they did not use the service because they were unfamiliar with the instructors offering support (28 students, 12.2%).

Table 4

Reasons for Not Using ELS (N = 230, Multiple Responses)

Reasons	Number of students (%)
Using other services	
I ask my friends.	32 (13.9%)
I research online, etc.	30 (13.0%)
I ask the teacher in class.	17 (7.4%)
I'm participating in the Peer Tutor Programme as a tutee.	10 (4.3%)
I use sessions with a learning advisor at the SALC.	9 (3.9%)
I use speaking sessions or other sessions with instructors at the SALC.	9 (3.9%)
I use speaking sessions with instructors at Centre B.	9 (3.9%)
I'm participating in a learning community at the SALC.	4 (1.7%)

I can speak directly with my tutor or department teacher.	4 (1.7%)

Student preference

I want to solve problems on my own rather than asking the teacher.	5 (2.2%)

Others

I do not have time to use it because I am busy.	80 (34.8%)
I am not sure what questions to ask.	69 (30.0%)
I have never used ELS, so I find it difficult to go.	50 (21.7%)
I do not know any teachers.	28 (12.2%)
I do not know what services are available through the service.	20 (8.7%)
I am embarrassed to ask the teacher questions.	6 (2.6%)

Table 5 and 6 respectively show the academic years and departments of the 46 students with TOEIC scores below 410 who had not utilised ELS despite being aware of it. The majority were first-year students from the Asian Languages and Spanish & Portuguese departments, some of whom were pursuing a double major in English and another language.

Table 5

Year Distribution of Non-Users Scoring Below 410 on the TOEIC (N = 46)

Year	1	2	3	4
Number of students (%)	39 (13.7%)	7 (4.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)

Note. Each percentage represents the proportion of students in each academic year who did not use ELS, calculated relative to the total number of respondents classified as non-users in that year.

Table 6

Departments of Non-Users Scoring Below 410 on the TOEIC (N = 46)

Department	English	Asian Languages	Spanish & Portuguese	International Communication
Number of students (%)	2 (1.2%)	27 (17.8%)	13 (21.3%)	4 (13.8%)

Note. Percentages indicate the proportion of students in each department with TOEIC scores below 410 who did not use ELS, calculated relative to the total number of non-users in that department.

Figure 3 illustrates the usage patterns of university language support facilities among the 46 students with TOEIC scores below 410 who had not used ELS. The data show that some students engaged with other language support services, with 23 students utilising more than one facility. Specifically, 18 students accessed both the SALC and Centre B, while four students used three facilities. Additionally, 12 students focused on languages other than English. Notably, eight students did not use any of the services.

Figure 3

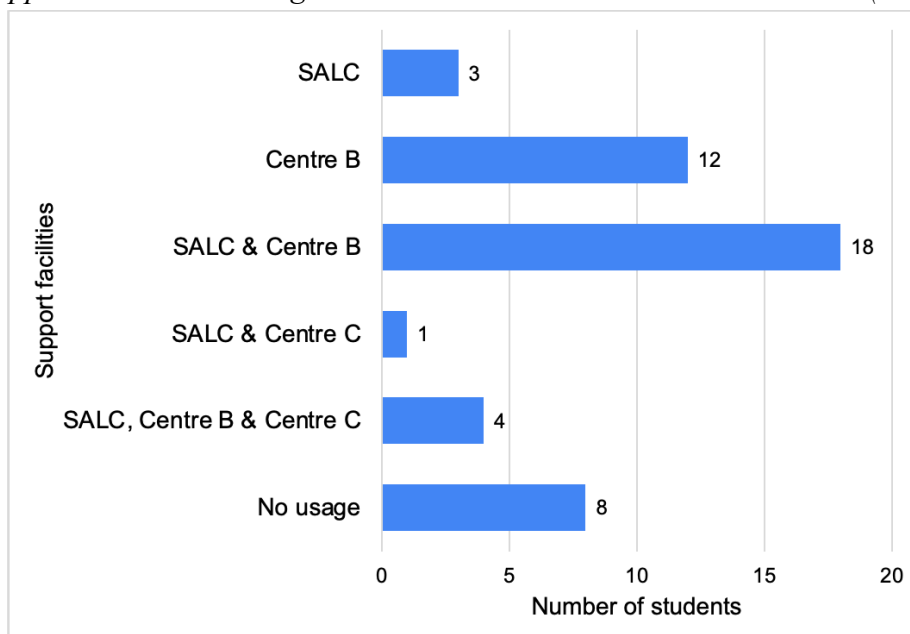*Usage of Support Facilities Among Non-Users With TOEIC Scores Below 410 (N = 46)*

Figure 4 illustrates the actual usage of services by the 46 students with TOEIC scores below 410 who had not utilised ELS. The data revealed that these students mainly engaged in speaking sessions through other on-campus support services. The

most frequently used service was one-on-one speaking sessions with an instructor at Centre B, accessed by 29 students. This was followed by speaking practice with an international student at Centre B (Chat Time, 18 students), one-on-one speaking sessions with an instructor at the SALC (14 students), and the English Lounge at the SALC, where students can practise English conversation with instructors and fellow students (11 students).

Figure 4

*Service Engagement Among Non-Users With TOEIC Scores Below 410 (*N = 46)
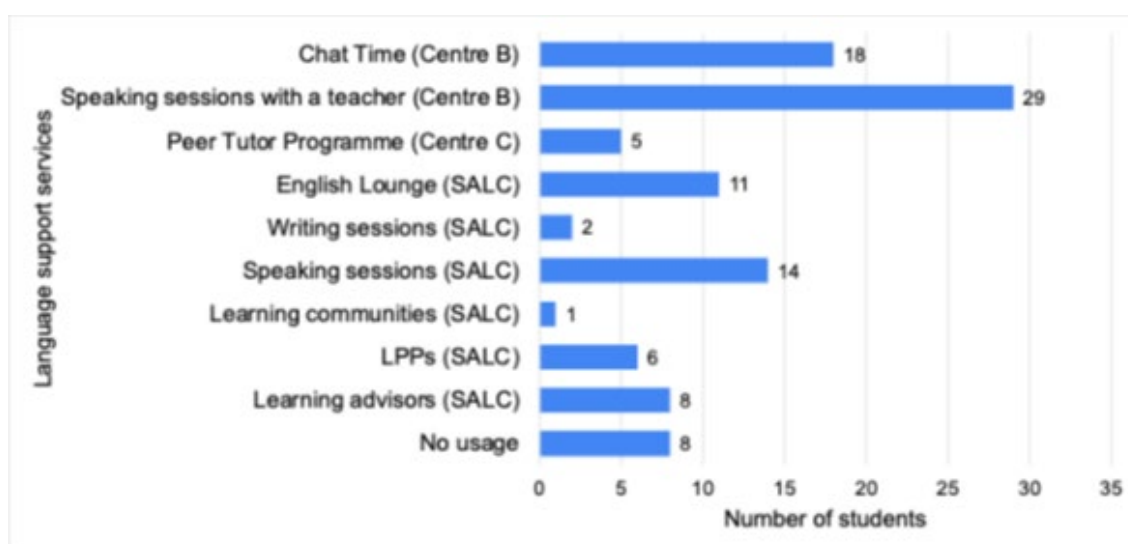
Discussion

This study explores student perceptions of and engagement with ELS, addressing four research questions: (1) To what extent are students aware of ELS?, (2) What factors affect students' awareness of ELS?, (3) What factors influence students' reluctance to use ELS?, (4) What alternative resources do students with lower English proficiency rely on for ELS?

Student Awareness of ELS

The findings reveal that 61.6% of students were aware of ELS, yet 54.2% of them had never used the service, reflecting trends observed in a previous study (Konishi et al., 2024). That 36.8% of respondents remained unaware of its existence indicates the need for more effective outreach strategies. Among the 31 students (7.3%) who reported using the service, participation varied across proficiency levels: Eight had TOEIC scores

below 410, ten scored between 410–589, six between 590–799, and two between 800–990. Although previous research (Konishi et al., 2024) suggested that students with low English proficiency were less likely to use the service, the present study found that those with TOEIC scores below 410 were the second most frequent users. This may be due to incentives, such as extra points in certain classes, as well as factors like goal orientations or an awareness of the service's benefits. Furthermore, this shift could, at least in part, reflect the effects of strategies implemented following the earlier study, such as enhanced promotion efforts including the placement of posters across campus, which should be examined in further research. These findings indicate that targeted incentives can encourage students with low proficiency to engage with the service and have positive learning experiences.

Factors Influencing Awareness

Students became aware of the service through various channels, with instructor recommendations in class being the most effective. Both users (15 students) and non-users (59 students) cited teacher recommendations in class as their primary source of awareness. However, Google Classroom announcements had little impact on non-users (six students), suggesting that raising teachers' awareness of the service's benefits could be a more effective approach. First-year on-campus orientation sessions (47 students) and off-campus freshman orientations (33 students) are also important in introducing the service and could be further leveraged to increase awareness. These findings suggest that instructor recommendations, both in class and during orientation sessions, play a vital role in informing new students about the service. While peer and instructor recommendations are known to influence students' willingness to use institutional services (Thomas & Tagler, 2019), peer referrals were relatively uncommon in this study. Moreover, although instructor recommendations increased awareness, they did not directly translate into service usage.

Barriers to Utilisation

Despite being aware of the service, several factors discouraged students from using ELS, including reliance on other resources, limited understanding of the service, and unfamiliarity with the instructors providing support. Among the 230 students who were aware of the service, several factors discouraged usage. Some preferred other formal university services, such as the Peer Tutor Programme (10 students, 4.3%), learning advisor sessions at the SALC (nine students, 3.9%), and speaking sessions with

instructors at the SALC (nine students, 3.9%) and at Centre B (nine students, 3.9%), along with teachers in-class (17 students, 7.4%). Although these services differed in purpose from ELS, time constraints might have prevented students from using multiple services. Informal sources were also frequently utilised, such as online resources (30 students, 13.0%) and friends (32 students, 13.9%). These findings highlight that while students engage with both formal and informal support services, they may rely more on informal sources, aligning with previous studies (Karabenick, 2003; Li et al., 2023; Thomas & Tagler, 2019).

Beyond reliance on other resources, additional barriers to usage included being busy (80 students, 34.8%), uncertainty about what to ask (69 students, 30.0%), hesitation due to lack of prior experience (50 students, 21.7%), unfamiliarity with support instructors (28 students, 12.2%), and unfamiliarity with the service (20 students, 8.7%). These findings indicate that awareness alone does not necessarily lead to engagement, as many students may not fully understand the purpose of the service or how it can benefit them. Additionally, hesitation due to unfamiliarity with the support instructors may create further reluctance to seek assistance.

This gap in understanding may explain why awareness raised through teacher recommendations does not always lead to utilisation. Addressing these barriers through clear communication about the service's offerings including its benefits and enhancing familiarity of the service and support instructors may foster a more approachable learning environment and autonomy. These challenges may also relate to self-perception, goal orientations, or influence of important others (Gonida et al., 2019; Karabenick, 2003; Karabenick, 2004; Karabenick & Knapp, 1991; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997). Future research should explore how such psychological and contextual factors intersect with service engagement, particularly in relation to alternative support systems.

Students with Lower English Proficiency

This study identified 46 students with TOEIC scores below 410 who were aware of ELS but had not used the service. Most of these students were double majors studying English and another language and actively using other support services, including the SALC, Centre B, and Centre C (the Peer Tutor Programme). A notable trend was their strong interest in acquiring another language at Centre B, while using the SALC primarily for English speaking practice, suggesting a preference for oral skills development, although Centre B also offers support for other skills. Contrary to prior

research suggesting that low-proficiency students are reluctant to seek academic support (Thomas & Tagler, 2019), these students were highly engaged. Their support-seeking behaviour focused on speaking improvement, indicating that limited use of ELS does not equate to an overall lack of help-seeking. Moreover, their academic goals may not align with traditional English proficiency assessments such as TOEIC or TOEFL ITP, highlighting a potential gap between students' actual needs and institutional expectations. This finding underscores the importance of understanding broader patterns of support-seeking and recognising that traditional proficiency measures may not fully capture learner needs. Further research is warranted to explore whether greater alignment between student goals and service offerings could promote more meaningful engagement.

Additionally, eight students with lower proficiency reported using no support services at all. This raises questions about possible differences in confidence, self-perception, or motivation compared to their more engaged peers. Enhancing service design to reflect diverse learner goals, while ensuring instructors respond flexibly to these needs, could foster a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. When students perceive support services as relevant and valuable, they are more likely to engage, build confidence, and develop greater learner autonomy.

Conclusion and Limitations

While ELS is widely recognised, actual usage remains limited due to factors such as uncertainty about its purpose, unfamiliarity with support staff, scheduling conflicts, and reliance on alternative resources. Instructor recommendations were found to be effective in raising awareness, though they did not consistently lead to increased utilisation. Notably, students with lower English proficiency actively engaged with alternative services, highlighting the need to adopt broader perspectives on help-seeking behaviour. Enhancing communication about the benefits of ELS, improving service visibility, and addressing student needs more directly may foster greater engagement and learner autonomy. Overcoming these barriers is essential to ensure students make meaningful use of available academic support.

This study offers useful insights into students' awareness and use of ELS but is subject to several limitations. It relies on self-reported data, lacks longitudinal tracking, and focuses on a single institution, which may affect the generalisability of the findings.

Many participants were non-English majors, which likely affected their willingness to seek help, as they may not prioritise English learning. Future research should address these limitations by investigating the psychological and cognitive factors behind students' decisions to seek or avoid support, thereby informing the development of more targeted and inclusive support initiatives.

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Appendix

Survey Questions

1. SALC で提供されている以下のサービスを利用したことがありますか？利用したことのあるサービスを教えてください。

    Have you ever used any of the following services provided at the SALC? Please select all the services you have used.

- 利用したことがない
  I have never used any services
- ラーニングアドバイザーとのアドバイジングセッション
  Advising sessions with a learning advisor
- ランチタイムに行われるワークショップ
  Workshops held during lunchtime
- イベント
  Events
- ラーニングコミュニティ
  Learning communities
- 留学生とのランゲージプラクティスパートナーズ(LPPs)
  Language Practice Partners with international students (LPPs)
- その他
  Other

    Since you enrolled, how often have you used Language Practice Partners?

2. SALC で提供されている、英語教員による以下のサービスを利用したことがありますか？利用したことのあるサービスを教えてください。

    Have you ever used any of the following services provided by English instructors at the SALC? Please select all the services you have used.

- 利用したことがない
  I have never used any services
- スピーキングセッション
  Speaking sessions
- ライティングセッション
  Writing sessions
- English Lounge（Yellow sofas）
- Maker Conversation
- Saturday Lounge
- その他
  Other

3. Centre C で提供されている、ピアチュータープログラムを知っていますか？
  Are you aware of the Peer Tutor Program offered at Centre C?
  - 知っているし、現在プログラムにとして参加している（チューター・チューティー含む）
    Yes, and I am currently participating in the programme (as a tutor or tutee)
  - 知っているし、プログラムに参加したことがある（チューター・チューティー含む）
    Yes, and I have participated in the programme before (as a tutor or tutee)
  - 知っているが、プログラムに参加したことはない

Yes, but I have never participated in the programme
- 知らないのでプログラムに参加したことがない
  No, I did not know about the programme and have never participated

4. Centre C で提供されている英語学習サポートを知っていますか？
   Are you aware of ELS offered at Centre C?
- 知っているし、利用したことがある
  Yes, and I have used the services
- 知っているが、利用したことはない
  Yes, but I have never used the services
- 知らないので利用したことがない
  No, I was not aware of the services and have never used it

5. 英語学習サポートはキャンパス内のどこにあるか知っていましたか？
   Did you know where ELS is located on campus?
- 知っていた
  Yes
- 知らなかった
  No

6. 英語学習サポートをどのように知りましたか？（複数選択可）
   How did you learn about ELS? (Select all that apply)
- 知らない
  I do not know about it
- 入学時のフレッシュマンオリエンテーションキャンプ
  Freshman orientation camp at enrolment (Off-Campus)
- （大学内）入学時の学科・専攻ごとのガイダンス
  Department or major guidance sessions at enrolment (On-Campus)
- 学内のポスター
  Posters on campus
- 友達に勧められて
  Recommended by friends
- 先輩や後輩に勧められて
  Recommended by senior or junior students
- 授業内で先生に勧められて
  Recommended by a teacher during class
- 英語の授業の一環として利用することが求められているため
  Required as part of the English class
- Centre C を歩いているときにみつけた
  Found it while walking in the building
- オープンキャンパス
  Open campus
- Google Classroom での先生からのお知らせ
  Google Classroom announcements
- Campus website のお知らせ
  Campus website announcements
- デジタルサイネージ（学内にある情報発信用の無音テレビ）
  Digital signage (silent TV screens for information on campus)
- X やインスタなどの SNS
  Social media platforms (X, Instagram, etc.)

- その他
  Other

7. 英語学習サポートを利用したことがない人にお聞きします。学習サポートデスクを利用したことがない理由はなんですか？（複数回答可）

This question is for those who have *not* used ELS. What are your reasons for not using the support desk? (Select all that apply)

- 利用したことがある
  I have used it before
- 英語学習サポートがあることを知らない
  I didn't know ELS existed
- ラーニングアドバイザーによるセッションを利用している（SALC）
  I use advising sessions with a learning advisor (SALC)
- 英語教員によるスピーキングなどのセッションを利用している（SALC）
  I use sessions with English instructors, such as speaking sessions (SALC)
- Centre B で担当教員との談話空間を利用している
  I use the conversation space with instructors at Centre B
- ピアチュータープログラムにチューティ（サポートを受ける側）として参加している
  I participate in the Peer Tutor Programme as a tutee (the one receiving support)
- SALC のラーニングコミュニティに参加している
  I participate in the SALC's learning community
- 忙しくて利用する時間がない
  I don't have time to use it because I'm busy
- 何を質問していいか分からない
  I don't know what questions to ask
- 知っている先生がいない
  I don't know any teachers
- 先生に質問するのが恥ずかしい
  I feel embarrassed to ask the teacher questions
- 先生に聞くのではなく自分の力で解決したい
  I prefer to solve problems on my own rather than asking teachers
- インターネット等で調べている
  I search online, etc.
- 友達に聞いている
  I ask my friends
- 授業を担当している先生に直接聞いている
  I ask the teacher in class
- 担任・学科の先生と直接話す機会がある
  I can speak directly with my tutor or department teacher
- 英語学習サポートで何ができるのか分からない
  I don't know what services are available through the service
- 英語学習サポートを利用したことがないので、行きづらい
  I've never used ELS, so I found it difficult to go

8. Centre B で提供されている以下のサービスを利用したことがありますか？利用したことのあるサービスを教えてください。（複数選択可）

Have you ever used any of the following services offered at Centre B? Please select the services you have used. (Select all that apply)

- 利用したことがない
  I have not used any services
- 各言語エリアの担当教員による談話空間
  Speaking sessions with instructors in each language area
- 各言語エリアの留学生とのチャットタイム
  Chat Time with international students in each language area
- 文化イベント
  Cultural events
- ワークショップ
  Workshops
- その他
  Other

Reviving the REAL Room: Integrating Stakeholder Voices in Self-Access Center Development

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Abstract

This paper presents a comprehensive needs analysis conducted to explore the perspectives of students and faculty on the redevelopment of the REAL Room, a self-access learning center (SALC) at Tokyo Kasei University in Japan. Historically underutilized, the REAL Room offered an opportunity for redesign grounded in current best practices in self-access education. Influenced by existing self-access literature emphasizing stakeholder integration, mission clarity, and student agency, the analysis employed surveys to gather data from 61 students and seven faculty members. The findings revealed a strong demand for the REAL Room as a communicative space to enhance speaking and listening skills through interactions with peers and faculty. Students also expressed interest in using the facility for academic support and consultation. Faculty feedback highlighted the potential of the space as both a learning resource and a promotional tool for the university. Based on these insights, we developed a mission statement to guide the transformation of the REAL Room into a collaborative, accessible, and learner-centered space. Future steps include establishing

student staff teams, creating an online presence, integrating the SALC with coursework, and engaging in continuous assessment and cross-departmental collaboration. This study aims to inform the creation of principled, adaptable SALCs in similar educational contexts.

本書は、日本の東京家政大学のセルフ・アクセス・ラーニング・センター（SALC）である REAL ルームの再開発について、学生と教員の視点を探るために実施された包括的なニーズ分析をまとめたものである。歴史的にあまり利用されてこなかった REAL ルームは、セルフアクセス教育における現在のベストプラクティスに基づいた再設計の機会を提供した。ステークホルダーの統合、ミッションの明確化、学生の主体性を強調するセルフアクセスに関する既存の文献に影響を受け、分析では 61 人の学生と 7 人の教員からデータを収集するためにアンケートを採用した。その結果、仲間や教員との交流を通じてスピーキングやリスニングのスキルを高めるためのコミュニケーションスペースとして、REAL ルームに対する強い要望が明らかになった。学生はまた、学業支援や相談にこの施設を利用することにも興味を示していた。教員からのフィードバックでは、このスペースが学習リソースとして、また大学の宣伝ツールとしての可能性が強調されました。これらの洞察に基づき、私たちは REAL ルームを共同的で、利用しやすく、学習者中心のスペースに変えるための指針となるミッション・ステートメントを作成しました。今後のステップとしては、学生スタッフチームの設立、オンラインプレゼンスの構築、SALC とコースワークの統合、継続的な評価と学部横断的な協力体制の構築などが挙げられる。本研究は、同様の教育状況において、原則的で適応可能な SALC を作成するための情報を提供することを目的としている。

Keywords: needs analysis, faculty integration, SALC establishment, feedback, mission statement

This report outlines a needs analysis conducted in order to gauge student and faculty member perceptions on the potential future direction of the REAL Room, a relaunched self-access space at Tokyo Kasei University in Tokyo, Japan. The REAL Room had existed in various forms over the last fifteen years in our department, but for a number of reasons discussed below had stagnated and, at the time of our needs analysis, had been completely shut due to both a lack of student attendance and for the purposes of redesigning/redecorating the space. This presented us with an opportunity to start from scratch and develop a new direction and vision for the REAL Room based on up-to-date principles and best practices from the field of self-access. Based on existing self-access literature emphasizing the importance of faculty integration (Datwani-Choy, 2016; Von Joo et al., 2020), the creation of a coherent mission statement (Mynard, 2016; Werner & Von Joo, 2018), and student involvement in self-access management (Cooker, 2010; Murray & Fujishima, 2016; Mynard et al., 2020), our team decided early on that student and faculty voices would be crucial in the redevelopment of the REAL Room.

In this report, we will first summarize relevant existing literature that guided our vision and needs analysis. From there, we will outline in detail the steps we went through in collecting and analyzing student and faculty perspectives. Finally, we will highlight some implications based on the data we received, discuss the future direction for the REAL Room, and examine ways in which we can operationalize our vision for the space. We hope that this discussion of practices may serve as a point of reference for others hoping to take the first tentative steps in designing (or redesigning) a principled self-access space within their institution.

Context

The REAL Room was originally established in 2009 within the English Communication Department at Tokyo Kasei University. It was originally known as the Room for Enjoyment for Active Language, but due to the rather unwieldiness of this original name, was eventually referred to simply as the REAL Room. This space featured an area with sofas for casual chat, audiovisual equipment such as a TV and computers, and a small library of graded readers and English magazines. Seasonal events were also periodically held for Halloween and Christmas. While the REAL Room was primarily designated as a meeting place for students wishing to practice English, it also functioned as a de facto rest space for

"native"[1] English teachers who would eat lunch or prepare for lessons there. Consequently, it was hoped that this dual purpose of the space would facilitate increased communication between students and foreign teachers.

Although there were indeed signs that the REAL Room had historically made some positive contributions to the department and had been popular at times with students (there were 2842 recorded student visits in 2014 according to internal data), it also became evident that there were also a number of persistent issues to be addressed with the redesign of the space. Firstly, the REAL Room was predominantly framed as a place that students could come and "enjoy." This meant that, although there was no official mission statement in place during this time, the role of students appeared to be largely passive, similar to consumers or audience members. Rather than being a "social-supportive SALC" with "an institutional mission to promote learner autonomy" (Mynard, 2019, p. 192), the REAL Room did not actively did not encourage students to play an active role in their learning or facilitate student management of the space. This was arguably compounded by a tendency to focus on "native speaker" teachers as the central figures in the REAL Room. Wall displays and seasonal events tended to focus on their cultural backgrounds or interests, and they alone were called upon to provide content or learning opportunities for students who visited. This dynamic further reinforced the assumption that the REAL Room was a place where the university would provide access to "native speakers" that students could then passively "consume" as they wished. A side effect of this overreliance on "native speakers" was that the perceived value of the REAL Room by faculty members or the department hinged upon the degree of enthusiasm that foreign teachers displayed towards their role there and the level of interest students had for interacting with them. In sum, this meant that this space was essentially transactional in nature, where students would be rewarded for coming to the REAL Room with opportunities to passively learn *from* "natives". This model, consequently, offered few avenues for the student agency or ownership essential to the cultivation of a successful SALC (Cooker, 2010). One final issue was that, due to the REAL Room having been established fifteen years ago, there remained an overreliance on physical learning materials such as graded readers or English magazines. Due to recent technological advancements such as smartphones, these resources had become basically obsolete (Kronenberg, 2016; Reinders, 2012) and, to reflect a movement within self-access towards SALCs as social hubs, i.e.,

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[1] The term "native speaker" is displayed in quotation marks throughout this article due its socially-constructed and contestable nature (Moussu & Llurda, 2008).

places where students can learn with and from each other (Thornton, 2021), a new direction for the REAL Room was necessary.

Literature Review

Numerous accounts of conducting needs analyses or, indeed, any type of assessment of self-access facilities and services highlight the importance of including multiple perspectives from a range of different stakeholders (Datwani-Choy, 2016; Morrison, 2003; Takahashi et al., 2013; Werner & Von Joo, 2018). Just as multiple data sources within qualitative research are used to provide rigorous and comprehensive findings, Takahashi et al. (2013) suggest that by *triangulating* perspectives from teachers, learning advisors, students, and university management, we get a fuller picture of how a SALC can meet the needs of an institution. Werner and Von Joo (2018) echo this notion as they discuss the importance of *coproduction* across multiple stakeholders during needs analysis. When establishing a new SALC at Ryutsu Keizai University, the researchers proactively sought to meet multiple stakeholders face to face in order to coproduce a facility that "[sought] out input from multiple stakeholders" and was "multi-purposed in response to said input" (p. 126). In the case of Ryutsu Keizai University, the university had a strong focus on sports and study abroad, and the feedback received allowed the SALC team to tailor its services to better reflect and serve that unique educational setting (Von Joo et al., 2020). This coproduction process was also bidirectional in that while receiving feedback from faculty and university staff, Werner and Von Joo were also able to increase the institutional visibility of the SALC and reassure faculty and teachers of its role as a complement (rather than competition) to their role.

A further key component of establishing a principled self-access center, that both facilitates and is facilitated by a coproduced needs analysis, is the development of a coherent mission statement. Conducting a needs analysis allows a SALC team to tailor its mission statement to its specific institution and population. Moreover, in the opposite direction, having a clear mission for a SALC can reduce confusion over its purpose and purview among staff, students, and faculty alike, thus making support and promotion easier to implement (Datwani-Choy, 2016). In institutional landscapes marked by rapid educational and technological shifts and evolution, the necessity for a SALC's mission to drive design (rather than the other way around) can be even more keenly felt (Kronenberg, 2016). In addition to these benefits, a clear mission statement can act as a gauge or benchmark for continuous assessment and future development of a SALC. Literature focusing on the role of language

centers in the US has asserted the importance of coherent mission statements and their role in effectively assessing whether or not centers are adequately responding to contemporary educational mandates (Lavolette, 2018). Mynard (2016) discussed how the mission statement of the SALC at Kanda University of International Studies is revisited and updated on an annual basis depending on evolving needs and "ensures that the SALC directions focus on core values and services" (p. 428). This mission statement represents yet another example of coproduction in that its content is partly based on insights from student staff members. Furthermore, evaluation of how well the SALC's practice is congruent with its mission statement can draw upon a range of perspectives, including learning advisors, teachers, students, administrative staff, or even external parties such as an expert in PR or marketing.

Influenced by this existing body of work, in the project outlined below, we endeavored to analyze the needs of a variety of stakeholders at Tokyo Kasei University in order to determine what type of SALC might serve them best. Based on these insights, we then attempted to develop a mission statement for the REAL Room that would clarify its role within our local institutional landscape and allow us to evaluate the efficacy of our center in the years to come.

Building a Roadmap for the REAL Room: Student and Faculty Feedback

To survey the perspectives of students and faculty members from the English Communication Department, in August 2024 we distributed two Google Forms (Appendix A and B) via both the university's LMS and during first- and second-year compulsory English classes. In the case of the student survey, we also included questions relating to scheduling (what days/periods they would be available to attend the REAL Room) and social media preferences (through which platforms we could disseminate promotional information). In the case of both student and faculty surveys, the main aim was to find out what activities or functions that they felt the REAL Room should include. Both surveys featured a combination of closed- (four-point Likert scale based on perceived importance/checklist items) and open-response items. All items were bilingual and respondents could complete the open-response items in either English or Japanese. In total, we received 61 student responses and seven faculty responses to the two surveys. The relatively low number of faculty responses was due to the survey only having been distributed to members of the English Communication Department as the REAL Room fell directly under their administrative umbrella. In terms of analysis, the open-response items were inductively coded using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) in order to identify any existent trends.

There were a number of limitations that should be noted regarding our surveys. Firstly, piloting the survey items with our target population could have reduced the risk of confusing or poorly worded items. Furthermore, it would have been preferable to collect more detailed qualitative responses through interviews or focus groups with former REAL Room users in order to obtain richer insights into how the space might better serve student needs. Finally, the surveys were distributed to a convenience sample of current students/faculty members and there is a chance that due to the long inactivity of the REAL Room, the degree of familiarity some respondents had with the space would have been very low, thus potentially impacting the usefulness of their responses.

Student responses

By examining the closed-response data, we could determine that many students desired the REAL Room to function primarily as a space for communicative practice or general interaction in English (Figure 1). The list of closed-response items included 14 types of SALC activities that were selected based on our experience working in and observing various SALCs throughout Japan as well as insights drawn from existing academic literature on self-access language learning. Students responding to the prompt, "I would use the REAL Room to... (私は REAL Room をこのように利用したい。)" indicated enthusiasm towards the items listed below:

- chat with friends or seniors. (友達や先輩とおしゃべりする)
- chat with teachers. (先生とおしゃべり)

Figure 1

REAL Room as a communicative space

(scale represents lowest importance (1) to highest importance (4)
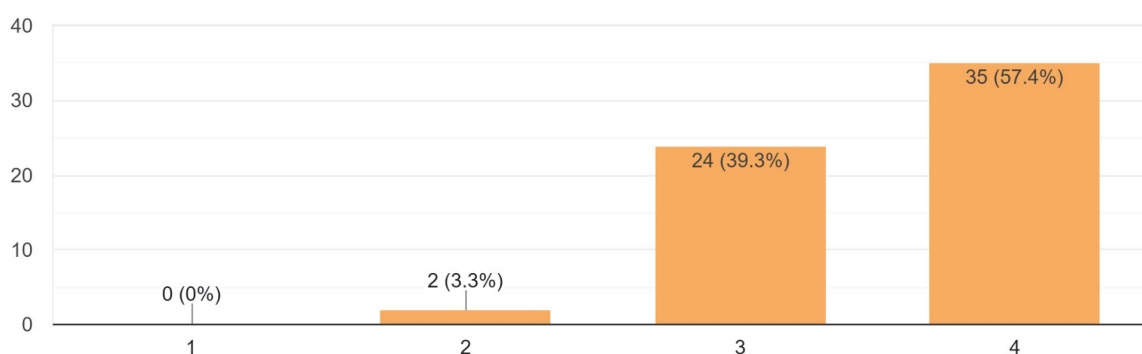
1. chat with friends or seniors. (友達や先輩とおしゃべりする)
61 responses
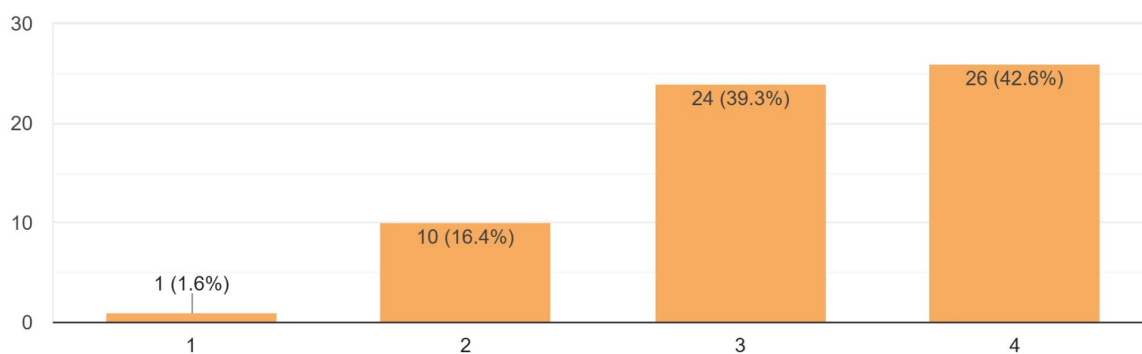
2. chat with teachers. (先生とおしゃべり)
61 responses

The open-responses to the question, "I would use the REAL Room to... (具体的には、REAL Room を使用して、次の分野で上達したいと思います。)" were congruent with the above closed-response data, with the majority of responses (n=44) being coded as "communicative/interactional". As can be observed in the following responses, students appeared to value the REAL Room first and foremost as a site to improve their speaking and listening skills through interaction with teachers or *senpai* (seniors):

- *I would use the REAL Room to study English with friend, Senpai, teacher.*

- *I want to improve my listening and speaking skills. I want to talk with teachers, senior students, and native English speakers to eliminate my resistance to speaking English and to be able to have daily conversations in English.*

- *I want to make opportunities to speak English. I would like to communicate with seniors through English.*

- *I would like to use REAL Room to improve my English speaking. I would like to go with someone who is easy to talk to, like a friend, or I would like to talk to a teacher to get used to speaking English. Sometimes I don't speak as well as I think I should, so I would like to improve that.*

A further theme was an apparent interest in the REAL Room as a site for academic and affective support. Numerous students responded positively to the idea of opportunities being provided to consult about classwork, approaches to self-study, or general academic worries (Figure 2).

Figure 2

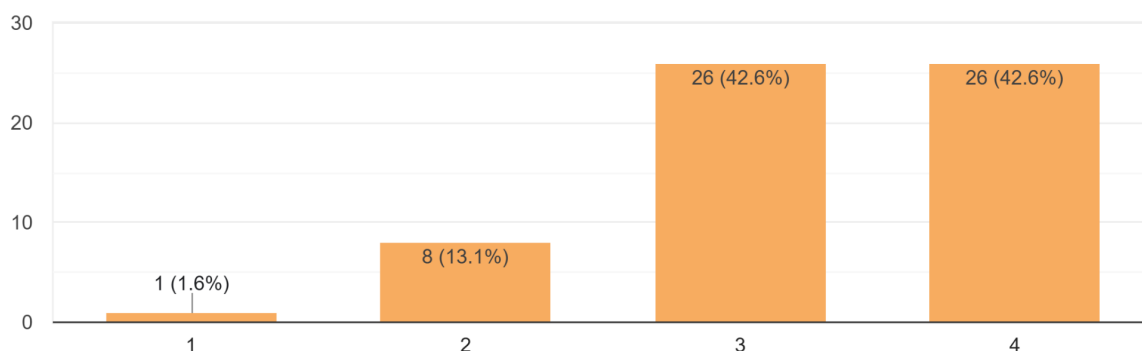*REAL Room as a venue for learner support*

4. get support for my class work. (授業のサポートを受ける)
61 responses
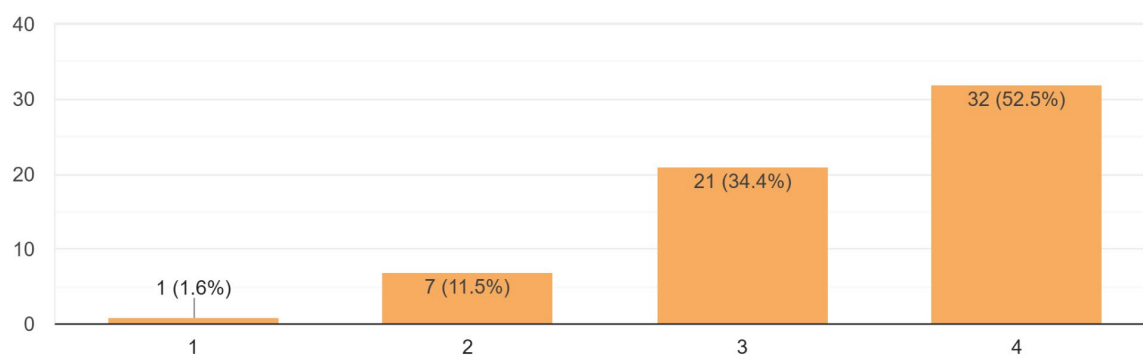
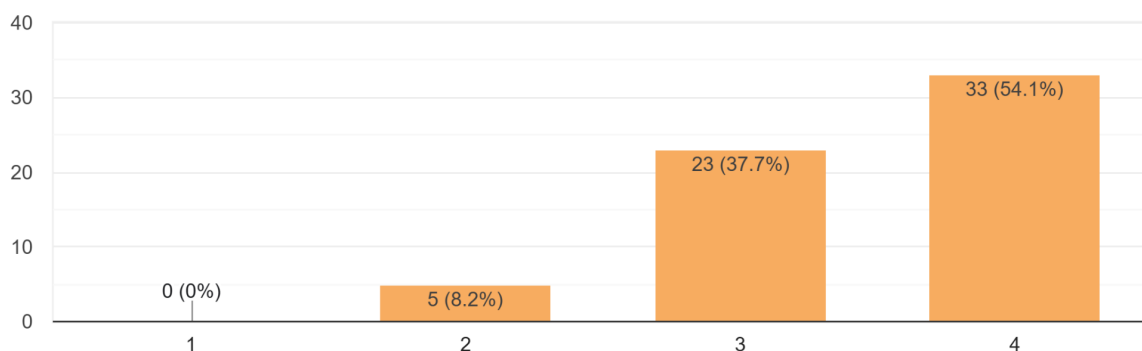9. learn how to self-study English. (英語学習を自習する方法を学ぶ)
61 responses

13. get advice about problems or worries you are having about learning English.
(英語学習で困っていること、悩んでいることについてアドバイスを受ける)
61 responses

This suggests that an advising component to the REAL Room, where students could reserve time slots throughout the week to discuss their own learning, may be a welcome addition to the space. Finally, it is noteworthy that the two least popular items on the survey were "read English books and magazines (英語の本や雑誌を読む)" and "learn about online/computer study tools. (オンライン/コンピュータの学習ツールについて学ぶ)", echoing assertions from the existing SALC literature (Reinders, 2012; Thornton, 2021) regarding a shift in self-access needs from the provision of educational materials to opportunities for social connection.

Faculty responses

In terms of the closed-response item data, it appeared that faculty also tended to view the REAL Room as a site to develop students' communicative ability through interacting with either teachers or fellow students and a place to get extra out-of-class support for any academic challenges they might be facing. Accordingly, the most popular checklist responses (respondents were each asked to make five choices) to the question, "In your opinion, what are key areas of value that you hope the REAL Room can deliver? (REAL Room が提供できる価値とは何だとお考えですか？)" were as follows:

- *A place for students to practice English conversation* (n=4)
- *A place where students can interact with their senpai* (n=5)
- *Somewhere students can get extra out-of-class guidance or conversation practice with teachers* (n=4)
- *A place students can go to consult with teachers/advisors about learning problems or worries* (n=4)

One more area which faculty members appeared to particularly value was the role of the REAL Room as a promotional tool for the department or university. This was reflected in the proportionately high number of responses (n=5) to the following option, "An attractive facility that can help to promote the department/university." Conversely, the least popular responses were "A quiet place for students to study." (n=0) and "A place that could be used for holding poster presentations or guest speaker events." (n=2). The relative lack of interest in these options may also reflect the desire from faculty members for the REAL Room to act primarily as an energetic social venue where students could develop communicative ability and build interpersonal connections. As can be observed in the following open faculty responses based on what they felt to be important points relating to the REAL Room, its social and promotional potential was something that faculty members recognized and felt should be leveraged in order to get the most out of the space. However, there were also concerns about ensuring that we maintain the accessibility of the space by perhaps reconsidering the historical "English only" policy of the REAL Room.

> *The door says "English only" on it, but some students are discouraged by the sign. I felt that the first priority should be to encourage students to enter. However, it is also important to promote the facility as an attractive place for English communication, so*

we think it is necessary to take measures to actually help students improve their motivation and communication skills in the REAL Room. Since our department has basically few vertical ties, I think it would be good to appeal to students as a place where they can interact with students from other grades. I don't know if this is feasible because it is just an idea, but I think it would be easier for students of various grades to use if the department could provide opportunities for [senior] students to serve as advisors on a regular basis and offer advice on student life, job hunting, and other topics. ...I think that providing students with an opportunity to casually experience English and to enjoy interacting with various people will have some positive effects.

If we are to make the most of the department's unique characteristics, I think it is important that it be a "place to speak English". However, if the room is too specialized for learning, students will not be able to use it easily.

Hopefully, we can make use of such situations or atmosphere where students are communicating in English a lot in REAL to promote the department at open campus [events].

By also seeking out faculty perspectives, we could deepen our understanding of the need to frame the REAL Room as an accessible out-of-class communicative space where students can also come for advice or support. Concurrently, we also became aware of the importance of contributing to our department as a promotional resource. Our department has recently put more focus on student achievement and leadership as a measure of departmental success and an area that should be at the center of any ongoing promotional activities. Therefore, the REAL Room, as a site for facilitating and showcasing achievement, can play a key role in the promotional strategy of the department as a whole. We believe that by creating a safe and attractive place where students can build both linguistic and social resources, it is possible for us to satisfy the primary student/faculty stakeholders in our institutional environment. With these factors in mind, along with Tokyo Kasei University's broader mission to empower women by developing their autonomy (https://www.tokyo-kasei.ac.jp/en/about/history.html), we developed the following mission statement for the REAL Room that will guide our development of the space in the coming year.

The mission of the REAL Room is to provide an environment where our students have out-of-class opportunities to develop their communicative English ability while also deepening social connections with peers or teachers. We aim for the REAL Room to be an empowering space offering students support and opportunities for leadership while also acting as a means of sharing our students' visions and achievements with the wider world.

Moving Forward

Based on our mission statement, our plan over the next year will incorporate a number of clearly-defined goals to move towards (Mynard, 2016). These include 1) the establishment of a team of student staff who can help maintain plurality of perspective, 2) the creation of an online presence for the REAL Room (dedicated website, social media presence), 3) scheduling weekly advising slots staffed by faculty or students, 4) conducting action research to assess and further develop the REAL Room, 5) integrating our SALC with existing courses, and 6) collecting ideas from other SALCs via face-to-face visits, online consultations, guest speakers, and discussion in organizations such as JASAL and RILAE (https://kuis.kandagaigo.ac.jp/rilae/). We also hope to follow the examples set by Takahashi et al. (2013) and Von Joo et al. (2020) and reach out beyond our department to other faculty members and university administration in order to get an even more diverse and cross-sectional view of how the REAL Room is situated within the broader institutional landscape. In this way, we believe that we can discover new possibilities for our SALC and deepen our understanding of the ways it can positively contribute to our educational ecosystem.

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Appendix A

Student Needs Analysis Survey

During your four years at Tokyo Kasei University, merely taking courses is not sufficient to make you a fluent English speaker. By having more exposure to English on a daily basis, you can increase your language proficiency.

The REAL Room is on the 3rd floor of Building 10 (the same building as the library). We want to develop it into a place where you can immerse yourself in English and chat with friends, seniors, and teachers, practice presentations, watch movies, play board games, get help and advice about study problems, and more.

Please answer the following questions to help us create a REAL Room that will be most useful for you.

東京家政大学での 4 年間は、単に授業を受けるだけでは、英語を流暢に話せるようにはなりません。日常的に英語に触れる機会を増やすことで、英語力を高めることができます。

REAL Room は 10 号館（図書館と同じ建物）の 3 階にあります。友達や先輩、先生とおしゃべりしたり、プレゼンの練習をしたり、映画を見たり、ボードゲームをしたり、勉強の悩みを相談したり、などなど、英語漬けになれる場所に育てていきたいと思っています。

あなたにとって最も役立つ REAL Room を作るために、以下の質問にお答えください。
On a scale of 1 to 4 with 4 being the highest, choose the level of importance for you. (1 から 4 のスケールで 4 が一番高い、あなたにとっての重要性のレベルを選択してください。)

I would use the REAL Room to... (私は REAL Room をこのように利用したい。)

1. chat with friends or seniors. (友達や先輩とおしゃべりする)

2. chat with teachers. (先生とおしゃべり)

3. play English board games. (英語のボードゲームを遊ぶ)

4. get support for my class work. (授業のサポートを受ける)

5. study English independently. (英語の自主学習)

6. receive free English lessons. (無料の英語レッスンを受ける)

7. read English books and magazines. (英語の本や雑誌を読む)

8. watch English movies. (英語の映画を見る)

9. learn how to self-study English. (英語学習を自習する方法を学ぶ)

10. listen to a guest speaker in English. (ゲストスピーカーの話を英語で聞く)

11. learn about online/computer study tools. (オンライン/コンピュータの学習ツールについて学ぶ)

12. talk to someone about how to be a better learner. (より良い学習者になるための方法を誰かに相談する)

13. get advice about problems or worries you are having about learning English. (英語学習で困っていること、悩んでいることについてアドバイスを受ける)

14. attend seasonal events (welcome event, Halloween, Christmas, etc.). (季節の行事に参加する (歓迎行事、ハロウィーン、クリスマスなど)

Please complete the following question by writing your own answer (in Japanese or English).
自分の答えを記入してください。　(日本語でも英語でも大丈夫です)
I would use the REAL Room to... (具体的には、REAL Room を使用して、次の分野で上達したいと思います。)

Thank you very much for completing this survey. Your answers will help us to make the REAL Room more useful and interesting for you!
アンケートにご協力いただき、ありがとうございました。皆様のご回答は、REAL Room をより便利で面白いものにするための参考にさせていただきます。

Appendix B

Faculty Needs Analysis Survey

REAL Room Project Group Idea Sharing

Hi everyone, I would like to get your perspectives on the REAL Room and what value you hope it can deliver to our department, our students, and Tokyo Kasei more broadly.

In your opinion, what are key areas of value that you hope the REAL Room can deliver? (Please check your top five choices)

- A place for students to practice English conversation
- A social hub where students can make new friends
- A place where students can interact with their senpai
- Somewhere students can get extra out-of-class guidance or conversation practice with teachers
- An attractive facility that can help to promote the department/university
- A place students can go to consult with teachers/advisors about learning problems or worries
- Somewhere offering opportunities for student leadership
- A place that could be used for holding poster presentations or guest speaker events
- A quiet place that students could come to study
- A place to hold workshops on English learning, technology use, etc.
- Other

Please give details of any other considerations that you think are important for the REAL Room adding value to our department. (Japanese or English responses are fine)

Guided Self-Study Program as a Component of a Mandatory English Course

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Abstract

This paper outlines the guided self-study English listening program at the University of the Sacred Heart, Tokyo, a program integrated in a mandatory English course for all first-year students, which has provided English listening practice to first-year students for over three decades since its inception in 1991. A distinctive feature of this program is its structured and *guided* approach to self-study, which requires students to adhere to specific study durations and pacing while choosing from a wide variety of selected listening materials. This paper highlights how the program has maintained its core objectives while adapting to technological advances and evolving student needs. The program's long-term implementation provides insights into integrating guidance and autonomy in self-study within language programs, even with limited resources.

本稿では、聖心女子大学で行われている１年次生向けの必修英語科目に付随する英語自習プログラムを紹介する。本プログラムの特徴的な点として、自己学習に対する構造化されたガイド付き（guided）アプローチが挙げられる。それにより、学生は特定の学習時間やペースに従うことを求められる一方、アドバイザーにより幅広く選定されたリスニング教材から学習内容を選択する自由が与えられている。本稿では、基本的な方針を維持しつつ、時代の流れや学生のニーズの変化に適応しながら、どのように運営されているのかを紹介する。長期に渡って実施されてきたという本プログラムの実績は、限られたリソースの中でも、語学プログラムにおけるガイド付きアプローチと自律性のバランスをとり入れた自己学習のあり方についての示唆を提供している。

Keywords: guided self-study, self-access, language learning program, language learning center

A guided self-study listening program at the University of the Sacred Heart, Tokyo (USH) has a history of 33 years, starting in 1991 with eight English learning materials (Decker, 2004). The program has been integrated into the First-Year English (FYE) program, a mandatory component for all first-year students. Since USH adopts late specialization, all first-year students belong to the Basic Program in the Faculty of the Liberal Arts and decide their major near the end of their first year from 10 choices. Every year, approximately 600 students participate in the FYE program, which is managed by the English Department and consists of two 100-minute classes per week. In addition to this, all FYE students participate in a 60-minute-per-week self-study component, known as the MCAL self-study program, which focuses on developing their English listening skills and the habit of self-studying English. This program is supported and managed by the Language Lab (LL) in the Media Center for Active Learning (MCAL). To clarify the structure and responsibilities of each component, Table 1 summarizes how the self-study program fits into the broader institutional context.

Table 1

Components of the FYE Program and the Broader LL Services

Component	Target Students	Management	Instructional Format	Purpose
FYE Classes	All first-year students	English Department	Two 100-minute classes per week, taught by instructors	General English course covering grammar, vocabulary, and four skills
MCAL Self-Study Program (part of FYE Program)	All first-year students	LL and Language Learning Advisors	One 60-minute guided self-study session per week	Develop listening skills and self-study habits
Broader LL Services	All USH students in any year	LL and Language Learning Advisors	Drop-in advising, self-study resources, ongoing support	Individualized language learning support

Self-Study Program in First-Year English Course

Goals

The MCAL program was designed with a special emphasis on listening proficiency, building on early pedagogical insights from its founding period. Decker (2004), who initiated the original program, observed that "students' scores on the listening component of a standardized test were often lower than their scores on the structure component" (para. 5), which highlighted the need to give more focused attention to listening instruction. Given her observation that students "have little chance of receiving this variety of input outside the classroom" (para. 6), the program incorporated a wide range of audio-based materials that students could select themselves. In addition, studies show that people spend more time listening than using the other three skills (reading, writing, and speaking), both in their first and second languages. For example, as previous research has shown, listening tends to carry the greatest weight in language use overall, accounting for approximately 40% in the first language (Burley-Allen, 1995) and more than 50% in the second language (Nunan, 1998). This emphasis on listening remains pedagogically significant in the current implementation of the program, particularly within FYE classes, which are designed as general English courses rather than skill-specific training modules. While students receive English input during the two 100-minute classes, this exposure alone is insufficient to develop strong listening skills. Building listening proficiency requires access to varied and sustained input, which can be more easily practiced independently. Considering these challenges and the program's limited human and financial resources, the use of curated listening materials continues to be a practical and pedagogically sound approach for supplementing classroom learning and promoting autonomous skill development with having the opportunity to use various materials.

The MCAL program also aims to develop students' responsibility for their own learning, which is often referred to in connection with autonomy. While autonomy is defined in different ways depending on the context and research, the common understanding is that it is a sense of ownership in one's learning, with the capacity to take control of it (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). As the MCAL self-study program is integrated into the curriculum, there are rules that students must follow; however, to nurture the students' sense of ownership in their learning, they are given the freedom to decide on how to proceed with their self-study. This process encompasses the essential elements of autonomous learning as proposed by Benson (2011): determining the learning content (goals and what to learn), managing learning (when, where, how to learn), and

engaging in the cognitive processes (reflection).

How Students Work

This section will explain how the MCAL program operates and how freedom is constrained in each aspect.

Setting Their Own Goals

At the start of each semester, students select their learning objectives from a list categorized into two levels: advanced and general. Recognizing that some students may find it challenging to determine their goals independently, language learning advisors (hereafter advisors) pre-select approximately 20 objectives covering a wide range of vocabulary, listening, reading, and speaking aspects. Students are required to select two or three objectives from the list of twenty. They are encouraged to consult with their course instructors or advisors as needed during the selection process.

Determining the Learning Content: Materials

Advisors select the materials available for self-study, offering students a choice between printed resources housed in LL and recommended free online websites which they can use anywhere, anytime. In selecting online materials under budget constraints, it became clear that very few truly free websites offer adequate pedagogical guidance in Japanese, particularly for lower-intermediate learners. As a result, the program continues to emphasize guided material selection, including paper-based resources. Materials are classified into five levels, corresponding to the class levels, and students are expected to select from the corresponding level. Additionally, instructions on effective self-study procedures are provided by advisors and attached to each material to facilitate students' study sessions.

LL now houses an extensive collection of over 500 curated resources categorized by topics such as travel, culture, study abroad, news and documentaries, English exams (e.g., Eiken), grammar and vocabulary, and English-subtitled dramas and movies. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the program also began recommending selected online learning resources (e.g., news, English lesson, and video streaming sites), enabling students to study remotely at their convenience. While online resources have become ubiquitous, paper-based materials still have an important role in LL. Some students prefer paper-based materials, as they reduce digital distractions and offer a more focused learning experience. Based on the advisors' observations, such resources are valuable for supporting productive and immersive study.

To enhance students' listening skills, most of the materials feature audio resources, and efforts are made to incorporate various English varieties. Research on Japanese university students' listening comprehension demonstrates significant disparities between first and second language English speakers (Tara et al., 2010), as well as among first language English speakers using different English varieties (Uchida, 2021). Therefore, resources for studying abroad and news media highlighting English varieties are provided to expose students to diverse linguistic contexts.

Managing the Learning Process: Time and Pace

Each semester, students are required to get eight points by completing eight 60-minute self-study sessions and submitting reflection forms over a 10-week period, with a limit of one session point per week to discourage last-minute cramming. If students meet the requirements, it means they have studied English outside of class for more than eight hours in 10 weeks. Two weeks are designated as spare for unforeseen circumstances such as accidents or illnesses. Students are welcome to study more than twice a week during the 10-week period (but only one point is given per week), and/or complete nine or ten sessions if they want to.

Monitoring the Learning Process: Taking Notes and Reflecting on Their Self-Study

Students are provided with a dedicated notebook for the MCAL program created by the advisors. Students take notes in the notebook; for example, they can record lesson answers and unfamiliar vocabulary and take notes on what they were unsure about. While students are encouraged to use the notebook to keep a record of their learning process, its use is not mandatory. In practice, the degree to which notebooks are reviewed varies by instructor; some may check them periodically during the semester, while others may not. To ensure a baseline of accountability and reflection, following each session, students are required to submit a weekly reflection form via Google Forms to get a point. In the form, students report the purpose of the study session, what materials they used, and what they learned during the self-study. At the end of the semester, students submit a required semester reflection form indicating how well they were able to meet their learning goals for the semester.

What Has Changed in 20 Years

Over the past two decades, the self-study program has undergone significant transformations to adapt to evolving student needs and technological advancements. While the core principles of the program have remained unchanged since the MCAL's inception in

1991, the operational framework has evolved, particularly in response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Adoption of Online Platforms

The inclusion of online resources in the self-study program had been under discussion before the COVID-19 pandemic, as part of ongoing efforts to expand learning options. At that time, however, most high-quality platforms offering structured guidance comparable to the paper-based materials were subscription-based, and financial constraints limited their adoption. The pandemic accelerated the shift, and from the 2020 academic year, 12 free websites suitable for autonomous learning were selected and introduced. These online platforms, like their paper-based counterparts, were chosen by advisors based on their suitability for autonomous learning. Emphasis was placed on clear instructional design and pedagogical value.

In recent years, while developments in AI-powered language learning tools, such as chatbots and adaptive feedback systems, are receiving increasing attention, the program has not yet incorporated these tools into the list of selected online resources. This is primarily due to concerns about students' readiness to engage with AI tools in a pedagogically meaningful way, as well as the difficulty of providing adequate guidance and oversight. The potential of such technologies is recognized, and their inclusion may be considered in the future. For now, priority is given to tools that align with the program's emphasis on clarity, learner autonomy, and consistent instructional quality.

Structured Note-Taking Instructions

Another recent development has been the introduction of structured note-taking guidelines (see Figure 1) to augment students' cognitive processes and facilitate more effective learning. These instructions underscore the importance of reflective practices, prompting students to contemplate not only the content they have encountered but also their learning methodologies and experience to encourage students to discern patterns, identify areas for improvement, and refine their study strategies accordingly. The goal is to increase students' awareness of their learning behaviors to optimize and enhance the efficiency of their English self-study.

Figure 1

Example of a Structured Note-Taking Instruction

Note. In the original notebooks given to students, the comments in the speech bubbles are written in Japanese.

Changes in Student Reflection and Record-Keeping Practices

Finally, the program has evolved its approach to students' records and reflections. When the program started, students submitted paper worksheets after every self-study session, a process that later transitioned to an on-campus intranet system. Under the current program, which has been in place since April 2020, students submit their reflections via Google Forms, offering a more accessible and streamlined platform for documentation.

Language Lab and Language Learning Advisors

Language Lab

While the MCAL program primarily serves first-year students, LL, a self-access language learning center, is open to all USH students, regardless of their year of study. Housing over 500 materials primarily for English learning, LL also offers resources for second foreign language classes (French, German, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, and Japanese). Students have the flexibility to utilize materials within LL, bring their own

resources, or access online materials through personal devices. Additionally, some materials in LL are available for borrowing.

Individualized Support by Language Learning Advisors

As many other self-access centers in Japan offer language-learning support, since 2015, LL has been staffed with advisors who play a multifaceted role. Currently, there are two advisors, and both work eight hours a week. Their duties are coordinating the MCAL self-study program for the FYE course and providing language learning assistance and support to all USH students. Students can talk to the advisors for advice on learning methodology and problems in language learning. Some examples include how to choose appropriate materials, how to get into the habit of studying languages, or more specific ways to study for particular language skills.

Institutional and Collaborative Roles

Advisors also create handouts on self-study tips for English exams (e.g., TOEIC), hold workshops on topics such as how to prepare for English exams, how to take notes in English classes or when studying on their own, and how to learn language from movies and social media. They also work collaboratively with FYE instructors and staff members from other offices such as the International Center and Career Center to provide support for different students' needs (i.e., study abroad, career development). The advisors want students to continue the habit of self-study outside of the program during the semester, so they provide students with information about interesting online resources and study tips on Google Classroom during the holidays. They also administer a Google Classroom course dedicated to language learning and open to all USH students and share information about study tips and standard language exams.

Conclusion

Since the LL's inception in 1991 with just eight materials, the MCAL self-study program has evolved significantly alongside the growth of technology and student needs for self-study. As emphasized by Decker (2004), achieving the right balance between freedom and guidance is crucial for successful self-access language learning. However, challenges persist, particularly with having the correct balance in terms of guidance. For example, it is not possible to review each student's notes and weekly reflections to make sure that they have completed an hour of self-study and provide feedback on them due to resource constraints. Furthermore, since advisors can only interact with students who voluntarily visit

LL, it is often difficult to reach those who may need help the most. Strategies to address these issues include open access to advisors during LL hours, collaboration with other offices to promote LL, instructor referrals for struggling students, and regular follow-up requests from advisors to encourage use of support services. LL also organizes events, such as note-taking workshops, to raise awareness and increase student engagement in self-directed learning. At present, no systematic collection of student performance data or post-course feedback is in place. To better understand the program's effectiveness, it may be beneficial to gather information on student perceptions, learning progress, and long-term engagement with language learning.

The MCAL guided self-study program, as an integral part of the mandatory FYE course, serves as an important gateway for students to begin developing the habits and mindset of autonomous language learners. For advisors, implementing the program provides valuable insights into student needs, learning behaviors, and the kinds of support that most effectively foster independence. These insights inform ongoing improvements to both individual advising practices and program design. Shifts in student learning behavior, influenced by the recent availability of online resources, have contributed to a decline in physical use of LL. Instead of competing with digital tools, advisors aim to make LL a hub for language learning, supporting students in becoming independent learners who can continue studying languages beyond graduation. Looking ahead, efforts are being made to incorporate online tools and AI into the support framework to better respond to the evolving needs of learners, with the aim of ensuring that the program continues to serve students effectively for the next 30 years and beyond.

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SALC 機能の拡がりを踏まえた大学職員の役割と責任のあり方

Roles and Responsibilities of University Administrative Staff in Promoting SALC

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林は、立命館大学の国際課に所属している職員として立命館大学の自律学習支援センターBBP を兼務している。京都衣笠キャンパスの勤務を経て、現在はびわこ・くさつキャンパスを中心に取り組んでいる。

山本は、立命館大学国際課に所属している職員として大学の自律学習支援センターBBP の事務側の総括を兼務しており、衣笠キャンパス、びわこ・くさつキャンパス、大阪いばらきキャンパスでの取り組みを支援している。

カンダボダは、立命館大学国際教育推進機構の准教授、学内の自律学習支援センターBBP の教員側の総括役（BBP チーフコーディネーター）を兼務しながら BBP 運営員会の議長を務める。

要旨

本稿は、大学の自律学習支援センター（SALC）における活動の拡大に伴い、職員の役割と責任がどのように変化しているのかについて、実践報告を行う。SALC の管理と運営において職員は運営管理において重要な役割を果たしてきた。しかし、近年 SALC における活動内容の拡大やニーズの多様化にともない、職員の役割と責任のあり方も変化している。一方で、SALC に関わる職員の中には、必ずしも専門職とは言えない者も多く、そのことが支援の現場における課題の一つとなっている。また、SALC に従事する大学職員の体系的な知見やノウハウの共有が十分ではない。近年の多様な属性を持つ学生や学内外のコミュニティ構成員との交流・協働を促進する場としての期待も高まっている。そこで、本稿では具体的に、立命館大学の SALC に着目して、職員が担う学生支援の実態を確認し、活動から得た成果と課題及び取り組み改善への動向について、SALC で取り組んだ実践を題材に考察を行った。結果、大学職員の SALC での役割と責任は、今までの運営管理に加えて学生支援までに大きく変動しつつあることが判明した。本実践の職員の学生支援におけるノウハウを共有することで今後の大学生における正課外活動支援のさらなる発展を目指す。

This paper reports on how the roles and responsibilities of administrative staff members have evolved in response to the expansion of activities at university Self-Access Learning Center (SALC). Traditionally, administrative staff have played an essential role in managing and operating SALC. However, in recent years, the roles and responsibilities of administrative staff have also changed with the expansion of activities at SALC and the diversification of student needs. On the other hand, one of the pressing challenges facing the support field is the need for more professional staff members who are qualified for the SALC role involved in university SALC. This is not just desirable, but a crucial aspect that cannot be overlooked. In addition, the systematic knowledge and good practices of university staff at SALC are limited, and expectations have been rising in recent years for SALC to be a place that promotes exchange and collaboration in addition to offering traditional language development support for students with diverse attributes and community members both inside and outside the university. Therefore, this paper focuses on the evolution of administrative staff roles at a large private university in the Kansai region of Japan confirming the state of student support provided by staff members and examining the results and challenges obtained from the activities and trends for improving efforts. This paper presents the authors' reflections on the changing role of administrative staff in SALC, based on the experience of working in SALC on two different campuses of a university. As a result, it was found that the roles and responsibilities of administrative staff at SALC are changing significantly from operation and management to student support involvement. By sharing the good practices of administrative staff in supporting students, we aim to further develop support for global-focused extracurricular activities for university students in the future.

Keywords: roles of administrative staff, student socialization, student autonomy, faculty and administrative staff collaboration, staff development

　世界的なコロナ禍を経て、大学生の課外活動は再び活性化の傾向にある。同時に、学生の価値観や意識は変化し、学生生活の中でこれらの活動を重視することで多様性が増している(Potter 他, 2025; Zaki, 2022)。大学の学生支援の現場でも、複数のサークルやボランティア活動、アルバイト等を同時並行的に担っている学生や複数の国際交流活動に参加する学生など、学生の活動範囲は多様化しつつある。例えば、立命館大学の場合、自律学習支援センターで活動している学生で、大学の国際寮で生活しながら留学生をサポートする Resident Mentor を兼務しながら言語学習支援を行う CALL スタッフとしても活躍しているケースもある。すなわち、学生は複数の活動への取組みを通して学びを得ている。このように多岐に渡る学生活動を円滑にするためには大学の教員と職員の役割が重要になってくる。教員の場合は、正課内授業やゼミナール、研究などの関連で学生サポートことが多く、職員に関しては、上記の活動を支障なく進めるための事務的なサポートを行い、さらに正課外での活動もサポートしている。しかし、大学職員の取り組みのあり方に関する知見が十分に共有されていない、特に取り組みから得た成果や課題について報告が限られている。

　そこで本稿では、一つの大学の大学職員が担う学生支援の取り組みを通じて得られた成果や課題を考察し、さらに今後の改善に向けた方向性について検討する。特に、大学職員が支援を行う SALC 活動に着目する。まず次のセクション「大学職員の正課外活動における動向」では大学の正課外活動と職員の働き方について述べる。次に「SALC の学習環境や概要」では関連した事例として本稿で取り上げる立命館大学の具体的な取り組みを紹介し、職員が行う教員と学生へのサポートについて述べる。考察では、職員の実践から得られた成果と課題について述べ、最後の「まとめ」では今後の発展について紹介する。

大学職員の正課外活動における動向

　大学事務職員の業務内容や役割の在り方について様々な考え方がある。一般的に大学職員の重要な基本的業務として、運営管理が挙げられるが、機関によって異なるため、状況や運営管理以外の職務への柔軟な対応も求められている。さらには、大学職員の今までの関わり方は、時代と共に変化を伴っている（文部科学省,

2017）。大学では学生の学びは大きく二側面から成っている。一側面では、正課内での学びで主に授業を中心となる。もう一つの側面では、正課外の学びで主に授業外の活動が中心となる。大学の職員は、これら二側面の活動における業務を担うことで学生に様々なサポートをしている。大学生の正課外活動は近年、多様化していることは先行研究でも報告されている（河井, 2015）。とりわけ、学生の多様性に応えるため職員の関わりにも柔軟性や多様性が求められる。

　大学の学生支援における職員の関わり方については、9 つの大項目に分類される(田中, 2010)。具体的には組織、学生相談、修学支援、正課外活動、事件・事故防止指導、施設、スチューデント・アシスタント、新たな社会ニーズに対応した学生支援プログラムなどがある。近年では、これらの項目に加えて海外への留学派遣、国内留学受け入れの支援なども重要とされている（カンダボダ他, 2021）。学生の正課外活動は、単なる遊びの場ではなく、社会的な能力や知識を育むための有能な経験を提供する機会として位置付けられている（河井, 2015; 佐藤, 2010）。

　本稿で取り上げる大学生の正課外活動とは、自律学習支援センター（SALC, Self-Access Learning Center）を中心に行うものを意味する。SALC は、大学によって外国語学習を中心に活動を行うものもあれば多文化共修を盛り込んだ活動を加えたものもある。また、学生は単に参加側になるだけでなく、教員・職員と交えて管理運営に携わっている事例もある(Kanduboda & Liu, 2021; Yarwood 他, 2019)。ここでは、SALC を正課外活動の一例として取り上げる。

　昨今の大学機関における SALC は多様化しており、グローバル化に伴い、大学生の社会的な学びを含めた「グローバル人材育成」において重要な役割を果たしている。その中、各大学の SALC 運営において大学職員の関わりは重要、不可欠な役割を担う。しかし、SALC を含む他の正課外活動に関わる大学職員の経験値やその関わり方に関する先行事例報告や調査研究の蓄積は不十分である（楢原, 2016）。そこで、本稿では関西圏にある私立大学の SALC における職員の関わり方を題材に報告を試みる。

SALC の学習環境や概要

　ここでとりあげる立命館大学における SALC は、通称 BBP（Beyond Borders Plaza）と呼ばれている。BBP の取り組みは、2018 年度より 3 キャンパス同時に活動が始まった。16 学部 21 研究科の教育研究分野を有する本学の特徴を反映して、それぞれのキャンパスの特色を発揮した BBP 運営が行われている（詳細は、Beyond Borders Plaza, 2025、https://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/bbp/ を参照）。

　例えば、理工系・自然科学系の学部が多いびわこ・くさつキャンパスでは、実験実習や研究室での活動時間が相対的に長い等の学生生活上の特徴が見られる。そのため、限られた時間の中で効率的に学びを深める必要がある学生が多く、BBP での活動においても、役割分担を明確にし、互いの責任を理解しながら協働する姿勢が自然と育まれている。 こうした背景から、活動ではリーダーが全体の進行や意思決定を担い、フォロワーが的確に補佐するなど、役割に応じた貢献を重視しながら、リーダーとフォロワーの円滑な連携を意識したスタイルが定着している。

　一方、社会科学系・人文科学系の学部が中心に集まる衣笠キャンパスでは、長期の海外留学を希望する学生が多く、日常的に国際共修への関心も高い傾向にある。そのため、BBP の活動を、自身の将来の留学や、留学後の継続的な学びと結び付けて取り組む学生が多く見られる。このキャンパスにおいても、学生同士の協働は重視されており、特に全員が対等な立場で意見を出し合いながら、時間をかけて合意形成を図っていくような協働スタイルが定着している点が特徴的である。役割分担を明確にした効率重視の連携がみられる理工系のびわこ・くさつキャンパスとは異なり、こちらでは対話を重ねながら進めるプロセスそのものが、国際共修や多様性の理解にもつながる学びの一環として重視されている。

　さらに、大阪いばらきキャンパスでは、BBP の施設そのものは、他のキャンパスと比較して小規模だが、キャンパス内に様々な場所にラーニングコモンズやオンキャンパスの国際寮などを有しており、BBP のみならずキャンパスの色々な場で国際共修の環境が整っている。このように、3 キャンパスは、BBP の施設条件も異なっている。各キャンパスで学生・教員・職員の関わり方も当然ながら多様化してきている。次に、複数キャンパスの BBP 業務に携わった職員の経験をもとに実践事例と課題を共有する。

業務内容

　本論の執筆は、当該の BBP において異なる役割を分担している。筆頭者は国際課の職員として 2022 年 10 月から 2024 年 4 月までは衣笠キャンパスの BBP を担当し、2024 年 4 月から現在まではびわこ・くさつキャンパスの BBP を担当している。第 2 筆者は、3 キャンパスでの取り組みを職員側として統括している。第 3 筆者は、3 キャンパスでの取り組みを教員側として統括し、BBP の運営委員会の議長を務めている。以下で取り上げる職員の取り組み内容は、主に筆頭者が担当した衣笠キャンパスとびわこ・くさつキャンパスの職務内容を反映したもので、これら 2 つのキャンパスでの異なる経験知について述べる。

　まず、BBP にはプロジェクトチーム（PT）メンバーとマネジメントスタッフ（MS）という 2 種類の学生スタッフが活動している。PT は、国籍や言語の違いを越えた学びの場を提供し、海外留学や語学力向上、国際交流に関心を持つ学生のニーズに応じたイベントを企画・実施する。MS は、施設利用案内を担当し、SNS やホームページの更新・管理を行い、利用者間のコミュニケーションを活性化させ、キャンパスのグローバル化を促進する（学生スタッフの詳細については、カンダボダ他, 2020; Kanduboda, 2020; Kanduboda & Liu, 2021 を参照）。

　職員としての主な業務は、BBP の運営全般と、そこで活動する学生スタッフの支援である。半年ごとにスタッフの募集・選考を行い、研修も担当している。日常的には、PT メンバーによるイベント企画への相談対応や、HP や学習支援システムを通じた広報、予算の取りまとめ、MS の勤務状況の把握などを行っている。筆者が職員として関わりにおいて大切にしているのは、信頼関係の構築と、相手の考えを尊重する姿勢である。学生が安心して率直に話せる環境を整えることで、学生自身の考えを言語化し、他者の意見に耳を傾けながら、自ら考え行動する経験につながると筆者は考えている。こうした積み重ねが、自信を持って挑戦する力を育むことにもつながる。そのため、アドバイスを一方的に伝えるのではなく、本人が気づきや解決策を見いだせるような対話を心がけている。 BBP に関わる職員の業務内容の概要を図 1 に示す。

図 1

学生スタッフ関連年間行事予定

			施設運営支援	企画実施支援	教職員打ち合わせ
前年度	12月	次年度春学期募集準備と実施			
	1月	書類審査・面接作業等			
	2月	採用確定			
	3月	事前研修準備			
当年度	4月	事前研修	↓	↓	↓
	5月	秋学期募集準備			
	6月	秋学期募集			
	7月	春学期事後研修 秋学期書類審査・面接作業			
	8月	採用確定			
	9月	事前研修準備			
	10月	秋学期事前研修			
	11月	次年度春学期募集準備			
	12月	次年度春学期募集			
	1月	秋学期事後研修 次年度春学期書類審査・面接作業	↓	↓	↓
	2月	採用確定			
	3月	春学期事前研修準備			
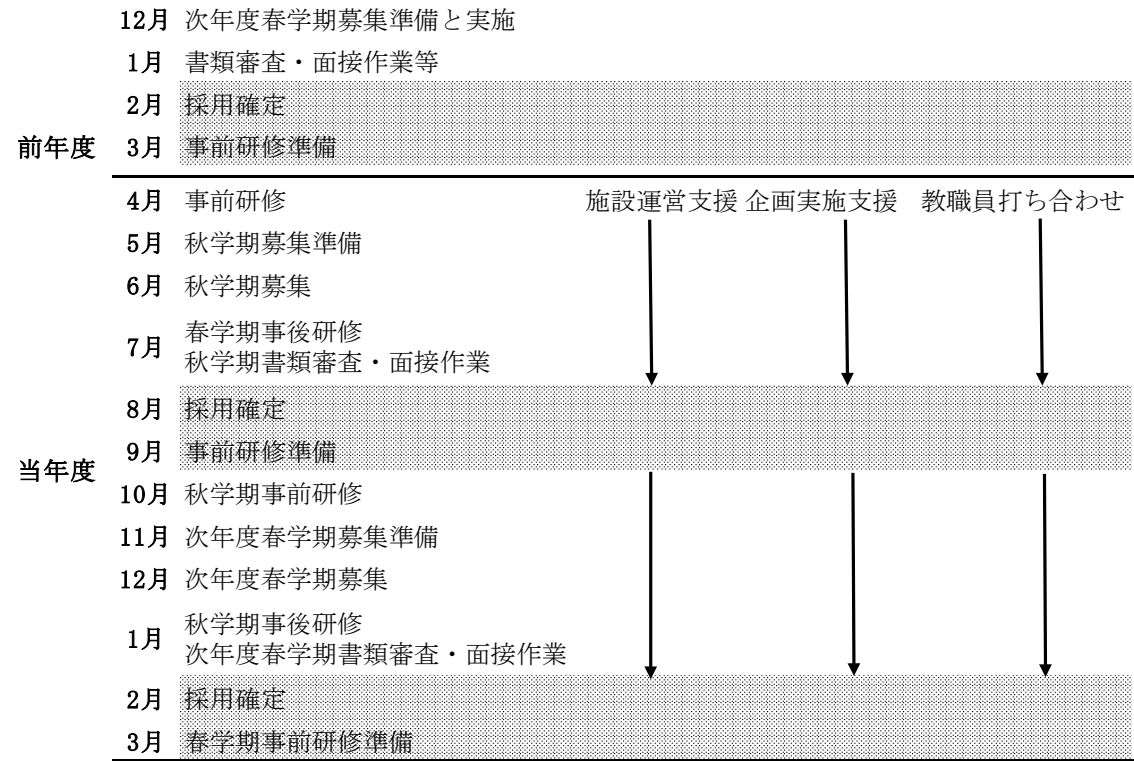
職員が行う教員と学生へのサポート

　BBP は、職員・教員と担当する学生で施設運営と管理、イベントの支援などを行うが職員・教員・学生が自らイベントを実施することもある。職員は担当業務の一環として教員のサポートと学生へのサポートも併せて行う。担当教員は、本学の国際教育推進機構の国際教育担当嘱託講師が担っており、BBP で活動する PT メンバーおよび MS のサポートを職員と協働で行っている。担当教員は、週に 5 コマ海外留学に関する相談、国際交流や異文化理解・異文化環境適応などに関する相談を受け付けるアドバイジングデスクや、教員企画イベントを実施している。

　BBP の学生スタッフは、学年・学部・国籍などの属性を超えて活動している点が、本学の他の学生スタッフ組織と異なる特徴である。 また前述の通りキャンパスによっても特徴が異なり、衣笠キャンパスの BBP では、学生スタッフ組織が対等で、時間をかけながら合議によって活動の方向性を決めていくという特徴がある。それに伴い、教員・職員と学生のミーティングが定期的に行われており、2 週間に 1

度「コミュニケーションアワー」を実施して、現状や相談事を教員・職員と学生とで共有している。

　一方、びわこ・くさつキャンパスの BBP では、学生リーダーとフォロワーの円滑な連携を重視した体制が整えられており、イベントに関する相談はまず PT メンバーとリーダーの間で行われ、その内容を踏まえて教員・職員へ共有されるという流れになっている。

　どちらのキャンパスも学生の属性や特徴に合わせて独自の BBP の運営方法が確立しつつある。さらに、日本語基準、英語基準双方の学生に配慮して、広報物は日英2言語で発信することや、日常的な活動においても日本語と英語を織り交ぜながら、教員・職員と学生スタッフ間、学生スタッフ間さらに企画に参加する学生間の円滑なコミュニケーションを図るよう工夫している。

考察

業務内容における成果と課題

　職員の取り組みで上記「職員が行う教員と学生へのサポート」で記載した業務を通じて、BBP に興味を持つ学生も徐々に増加していることが確認できる。その一つとして挙げられるのは、BBP スタッフとしてかかわりを希望する学生の増加である。例えば、びわこ・くさつキャンパスの BBP では 2024 年度秋学期の PT メンバー募集の際に 35 名程度の募集人数に対して 53 名の申請があった。これは、BBP の活動が学生にとって魅力的であることを示す指標の一つである。また、半年ごとに行われる研修では、BBP とは何か、また学生スタッフに求められる役割や姿勢について理解を深めることで、スタッフ全体としてのあるべき姿を共有し、その共通認識を土台に学生の発想を生かしたイベントが実施できている。 その一方、課題として、3 キャンパスにそれぞれ BBP が設置されているが、現在は各キャンパスで運営方法や業務内容、教員・職員の関わり方が少しずつ異なっている。学生の特徴もキャンパスごとに異なるため、すべてを統一することは現実的ではない。だからこそ、教員と職員それぞれの特性を生かしながら、互いに補い合い、役割を分担して活動していくことが重要である。このような形で 3 キャンパスが連携できれば、各キャンパスの強みを活かした、より効果的な取り組みが実現できると考える。

教員・職員と学生のかかわり方 : 成果と課題

　教員・職員と学生が関わる中で、イベント実施の流れにおいて重要となる、企画立案や広報、保険加入、報告書の提出などの実務的な手順が明確化され、より効率的な方法を日々模索しながら取り組みが進められている。 その結果、各キャンパスでは多数のイベントが行われて、参加者アンケートの結果から利用者のニーズを把握し、次のイベントに繋げるという一連の流れが確立しつつある。これら多くの活動において各キャンパスで多国籍・多言語の学生スタッフが関わっていることが BBP の最大の強みともいえる。

今後への展望:SSFD の一環として捉えた BBP 取り組み

　BBP は、単に学生のためだけのものではなく、大学全体の SSFD (Student-Staff-Faculty Development)に貢献している。つまりは、学生の支援に加えて、職員と教員の支援も併せて実施している。そのため BBP を担当する職員にとっては専門知識の有無に関わらず臨機応変に対応できる能力や学生、教員、学内のほかの職員や関係者との調整能力が求められる。例えば、先行研究の Kanduboda & Liu (2021）は、BBP で提供される学生企画には、６段階があると報告されている。これによると学生企画には、①提案＞②計画＞③準備＞④実施＞⑤報告＞⑥振り返りという６段階の段取りづくりが運営する側と参加する側において効率的かつ学びの多い取り組みができる。

　当然ながら、BBP 担当職員は、これらの各段階において多側面から教員とともに学生の支援を行っている。これらは、学生スタッフが実施する企画はもちろん、学生スタッフが支援する他の学生の企画支援も含む。また、BBP に直接かかわりのある本学の国際部と教学部（全学教育課言語教育グループ）以外の学部・研究科・機構等からの教員・職員が実施する正課内外の活動も支援する。その結果、学生には充実した学生生活の機会を提供し、教員・職員間では、ネットワーキングの構築や学内連携の促進というメリットをもたらしている。

　一方で、BBP の活動範囲が広がる中で、いくつかの課題も見えてきている。まず、BBP を担当する教員・職員の多くは他業務を兼任しており、限られた人員で増加する業務に対応するには、体制や役割分担の見直しが求められる。次に、継続的に利用者を確保するためには、利用者層の拡大が必要である。特に、現在あまり利用していない学部・研究科・機構の学生や教員・職員への積極的なアプローチが重

要となる。また、共修においては、国内学生と留学生の協働学習のレベルが一定の成果を上げているものの、さらに深めていくことが今後の課題である。そして何より重要なのが、学生スタッフや利用者の「自律性」をいかに育てていくかという点である。BBP は単なる課外活動の場ではなく、正課との連携や学生と教員・職員の協働、事務的な処理、さらには金銭のやり取りも含まれるなど、複数の側面を持つ実践の場である。経験の浅い学生にすべてを任せるのは現実的ではないが、教員・職員が適切な関わりと支援のバランスを保ちつつ、学生の主体的な関与を引き出していくことが、自律性の育成につながる。そしてその積み重ねこそが、BBP における学生の活気を生み出す原動力となる。

これらの課題を解決するためにさらに SSFD としての BBP 取り組みを活用させたい。

まとめ

ここまでは、本学の 3 キャンパスにて同時進行している BBP の国際交流活動の取り組みについて、主に職員の関わり方という側面から述べた。今後の国際教育・海外留学の派遣と受け入れにおける立命館大学の存在は重要な役割を果たす。そのためには、学内の国際化を推進に向けたさらなる取組みが重要である。様々な背景（国籍・宗教・民族・研究分野等）を持つ学生が主体的に学び交流できる環境の整備を通し、学内での国際化への大きなきっかけ作りに現行の BBP がその中心的な役割を果たしているといっても過言ではない。一方で、全ての課題に十分に対応しきれていない側面もある。例えば学生や教員の企画、授業関連、研究関連など、さらなる取り組みが求められる。これらに今後どのように対応していくかをさらに検討を進める必要がある。大学内の BBP 担当している職員や教員、学生のみならず大学全体として議論しながら進めることがより重要である。このように学生の自主的な学びや交流を促進する正課外の活動拠点が拡充する中で、大学職員の役割も変化しつつある。従来の事務的な支援に加え、学生スタッフの育成や異文化理解の促進、共修を支える教育的関わりが求められるようになっている。たとえば、学生への研修設計やリーダーシップの育成支援、また異なる文化背景を持つ学生同士が交わる機会の設計に、職員が積極的に関与する場面が増えており、大学職員の専門性や役

割の再定義が求められる。職員が単なる裏方ではなく、学びの場の共創者として運営に関わることが、学生の成長支援や学内の国際化において重要な位置づけとなるだろう。

　本稿では、BBP の運営を通して得られた知見や課題を整理し、学生の自律的な学びを支える場としての意義を再確認した。特に、教員・職員と学生が連携しながら場を育てていくプロセスや、キャンパスごとの特性を活かした柔軟な運営体制のあり方は、他大学における同様の自律学習支援スペースの設計や運営にも参考となる可能性がある。今後、他大学においても、単なる学習支援の場にとどまらず、学生の成長や自己効力感を高める「共創の場」として捉える視点が求められる。教職協働を前提とした運営体制の工夫や、学生の自律性を段階的に育成する支援の在り方など、本実践報告で得られた知見を踏まえた提言として共有したい。

　最後に、本稿の内容は、特定の大学の事例に基づいて行っており、筆者の主観的データが中心になっていることもあり、客観性に欠けている点は本実践報告の内容における限界ともいえる。今後は、実践の報告においても客観的なデータを活用することによって取り組みの成果や課題はより明確化することができる。特に、このような大学の BBP を運営する学生とその活動に参加する学生の意見を反映させることが今後の発展に大きく貢献するであろう。

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Evolutions in Self-Access Language Learning: Report on the JASAL Forum at JALT2024

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Suwako Uehara is an associate professor at the University of Electro-Communications, Japan, teaching English for academic purposes and English for specific purposes to STEM students. She runs the self-access learning center, and her research interests include CALL, Use of AI in language education, 21st-century education, and creativity.

Stacey Vye is the director of the Center for English Education and Development, a professor, and the academic writing coordinator and English Resource Center (ERC) coordinator at Saitama University. Her research interests are learner and teacher autonomy, learning environments, positive organizational change, and reflection.

Katherine Thornton is an associate professor at Otemon Gakuin University, Osaka, Japan where she works as a teacher and learning advisor. She is the director of E-CO (English Café at Otemon), the university's self-access center, and current president of the Japan Association of Self-Access Learning (JASAL). Her research focuses on multilingualism in self-access environments, and second language identities.

Abstract

In recent years, self-access language learning, whether delivered through curricula or custom-made facilities, needs to constantly evolve to stay relevant to student needs and learning preferences. This report gives an account of 2024's JASAL Forum, held at the international Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) conference, in which three self-access practitioners shared recent evolutions in their self-access practices. These included innovations to a learner autonomy curriculum, an evaluation of self-access facilities and an investigation into facilitating supportive behaviours in hybrid self-access spaces.

近年、自律学習型語学学習は、カリキュラムや用途に応じて設計された施設を通じて提供されるかを問わず、学生のニーズや学習スタイルに対応するため、継続的な発展が求められている。本稿では、全国語学教育学会（JALT）2024 年次国際大会でにおいて開催された JASAL フォーラムの様子を報告する。同フォーラムでは、3 名の実践者が、自身が運営するセルフアクセスセンターにおける最近の取り組みや発展について共有した。発表内容には、学習者オートノミー・カリキュラムの革新、自律学習施設の評価、およびハイブリッド型自律学習スペースにおける支援的行動の促進に関する調査が含まれる。

Keywords: self-access language learning, programme evaluation, advising, self-directed learning curriculum

In recent years, self-access language learning (SALL), whether delivered through curricula or custom-made facilities, needs to constantly evolve to stay relevant to student needs and learning preferences. Practitioners keep their SALL provision up-to-date by following recent research and publications, sharing best practices with colleagues across the globe, and actively examining and evaluating their own services and facilities. The JASAL Forum at JALT2024, organised by the Japan Association for Self-Access Learning, was one such opportunity. In this year's forum, three SALL practitioners shared their research and reflections. Stacey Vye described what they have learned about learner preferences about their group advising sessions at her self-access learning centre (SALC) at Saitama University through an ethnographic study using focus groups of advisors, whereas Suwako Uehara looked back on 10 years of the SALC at the University of Electro-Communications, and the different ways they have both evaluated and communicated their services to the broader university ecosystem. Finally, Agnes Maria Francis explored how advising, SALC services and a tutoring class can be integrated to better support students at Konan Women's University.

Stacey Vye: The English Resource Center (ERC) at Saitama University

The English Resource Center (ERC) at Saitama University is a one-room group advising center established in 2005. Our predecessors occupied a classroom until they could convince administrators of its usefulness for students, and a dedicated room was provided. Our hybrid program is open on three weekday afternoons with three volunteer advisors. It can facilitate about 30 students, staff, and faculty campus-wide in person and online using the 360-degree angled Meeting OWL video and audio system. Our mission changes and develops with the needs of our current learners, and in lieu of a mission statement, we introduce our hybrid center to new advisees as:

- We help you increase your knowledge of English and prepare you for studying abroad and in our classes, too.
- In addition to joining the ERC in person on campus, you now have the ERC hybrid option of joining the ERC online on Zoom so that you can participate remotely.
- Both are relaxed places to practice conversation with your peers and English advisors freely.
- You can meet international and Japanese students who are actively improving their English, including students who have already studied or lived abroad.

- We have ERC seasonal events and themed discussions to increase your English use.

- You can borrow IELTS and TOEFL test study guides to prepare for studying abroad, as well as English-language DVDs and books.

The above explanations focus on the learner, and we are developing a mission statement that aligns with our university-wide vision for the 2025 academic calendar.

The Ethnography Study: Analysing Learner Preferences Through Analysing Two Advisor Focus Group Sessions

The aim of the ongoing study is to discover relationships and statements of events that connect within our content (Maxwell, 2013). Since we are first-hand witnesses as participants of the advisor culture rather than independent researchers, the sessions focused on our experiences (Creswell, 2014). As we are advisors who work with advisees, including myself, we aimed to paint a picture (McEwan & McEwan, 2003) of salient themes that occur that inform our practices to support the advisees. Ethnography in education is classifying a scheme that emerges from the data (Meriam & Tisdell, 2016). Specifically, this ethnographic study coded and analysed student preferences on each visit in the month of October between 2018 and 2024; the first focus group coded conversation (Taylor et al., 2022) was on November 9th, 2021, and the second was on November 5th, 2024, and consisted of three volunteer advisors. The themes presented in both focus groups will be described below in numbered points for brevity.

The First Advisor Focus Group: Findings Pre-COVID and During COVID With the Online Portal

1. The online advising strategy of silence mirrored the in-person approach for learner autonomy and opened up more opportunities for the advisees to process their learning and communication.

2. Both the online and in-person platforms provided immediate and practical learning resources.

3. The movement of others in the background of the Zoom video indicated comfort with the advisees' and advisor's surroundings, where we shared artifacts, favourite things, locations, and pets, which created closer bonds.

4. There were emotional connections online through sharing experiences in comfortable environments.

5. The video communications facilitated playful and creative spaces for us to create localized cultures on all the screens.

The Second Advisor Focus Group Session Findings

1. Friendships have developed with supportive exchanges about sharing recommended resources such as websites, test preparation, and studying with YouTube, Duolingo, and ChatGPT, which were used to create AI conversation partners.

2. The advisors acknowledged although we hold doctoral degrees, we are not trained psychologists, so there seems to be more navigation with learners who need emotional support and counselling unrelated to English language learning post-COVID.

3. The hybrid technology with Zoom and the Meeting Owl camera allowed students who are studying abroad to join us remotely and act as near-peer role models.

4. The hybrid interface screen Leander Hughes developed for COVID online advising still helps us immediately know learner preferences and remember the advisees' names by having a visual database in real-time.

5. We have been using plush toys and stuffed animals on chairs previously for social distancing, but now the advisees claim to use them as soothing artifacts to calm their language learning or social anxieties, similar to what has been reported in a previous study at a different SALC (Taylor et al., 2022).

Concluding Remarks

Both sets of findings indicate how external factors and the advisees' ever-changing preferences shape the running of the ERC. Perhaps our mission statement should reflect the needs of the learners from the previous year and then be reviewed annually based on the preferences of the advisees and the external factors that make up the inter-woven fabric that holds the ERC together. The focus group study has been a valuable experience that has helped us to raise our awareness of these preferences.

Suwako Uehara: **Evaluating a SALC in a Public STEM University—Ten Years On**

For this presentation, I reviewed our self-access learning center (SALC) and shared key insights gained to advance our mission. I began by introducing our SALC's mission, history, and programs offered, followed by an evaluation of our SALC through the lenses of strategic planning, evaluation timelines, and the research cycle. I concluded by outlining our vision for the future of our SALC and sharing insights that may benefit others to assess their own SALCs or similar programs.

Our Mission

The University of Electro-Communications is a small university with 4600 students who major in science, information technology, or engineering. From 2024, it introduced an English minor, and in addition, more emphasis has been placed to improve global communication, research and various study-abroad opportunities outside Japan. The University of Electro-Communications Self-access Park (UECSAP) is a SALC that caters to these students. Our mission includes: creating and maintaining student-centered spaces, creating and maintaining digital content (such as promotional videos about the program, as well as student testimonials designed to inspire their peers to participate in study abroad and laboratory exchange opportunities), running student-led and professional teacher-led seminars, and community outreach. The goal is to provide opportunities for the students to use their language skills in practical ways.

History of UECSAP

UECSAP (実践的コミュニケーション教育推進室) was established in 2014. Since then, rooms have been renovated, a website setup and new programs introduced. Integration to the curriculum was partial because funding could not always be guaranteed and allocated on an annual basis. From 2019, survey data was gathered which fed into reports to top management, collaborating with other sectors, faculty development (FD) meetings and open house events of facilities to the stakeholders seem to be the key to stabilize funding, and future programs are being considered (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

UECSAP Development Journey
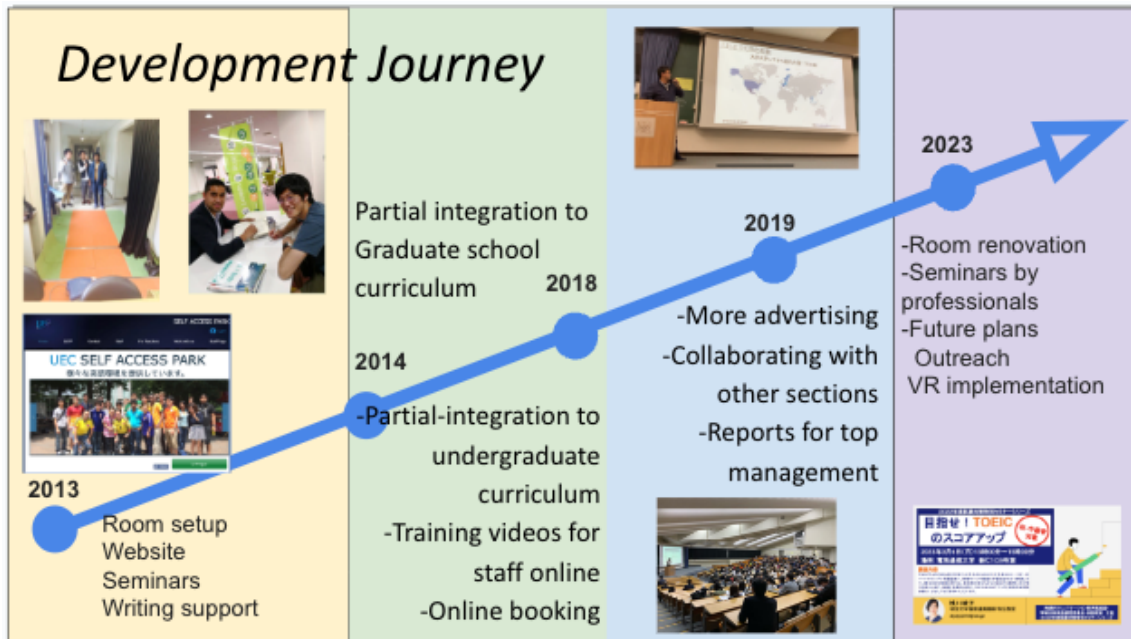
Programs in UECSAP

The 2024 programs include student-run seminars held twice weekly in a room used by the International Culture Exchange Society (ICES - 国際交流会). The club's leader, employed by UECSAP, runs the "Games and Movies," while a Mongolian member hosts the "TED Talks" seminar. To boost engagement, the active members of ICES replaced PhD students as facilitators. Since 2023, a test-taking skills specialist has been conducting TOEIC and IELTS seminars and workshops, with flexible attendance options (on-demand, Zoom, or face-to-face). The content and style receive high satisfaction ratings. An outreach program launched in 2014 sends international students to Toho Women's High School to share their cultures and research. Future plans include VR implementation and volunteer outreach programs.

Strategic Planning, Evaluation Timeline, Research Cycle

In 2016, Mynard (2016) evaluated the 15-year-old SALC at Kanda University of International Studies through strategic planning, ongoing research cycles, and timeline analysis to guide its future development. A similar approach was applied to map various projects on a matrix, categorizing activities such as surveys, reports, presentations, research, tours, open-house and FD events (see Figure 2). Findings highlight that the evolution of

offered activities and initiatives to optimize resources were critical to UECSAP's sustainability. Additionally, the strategic mapping process helped to clarify gaps and identify future directions.

Figure 2

Evaluation Timeline

Evaluation Timeline														White: project in progress (P), surveys (S), reports (R), videos (V) Blue: research paper (R), presentation (Pr), tours (t)
Year 2013~2026	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Y14
Student-Centered Spaces	P	P								P	PS	P		
Digital Content Management	P						PV	V	V	V	V			
Seminars				S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S		
Community Outreach														
Student Staff		S												
Professional Staff		P	P	P	P						PR	PR		
Collaborate across depts.							P	P	P	P	P	P		
Upper management report								R	R	R	R	R		
Research, presentations, tours (t), open-house (O), FD.		P					R	O			O FD	Pr T		

Discussion

UECSAP faces ongoing issues in fostering greater autonomous student involvement. Also, early efforts including the student-run Writing Support Desk (WSD) encountered issues with variations in staff quality and the human resources required to train new student staff each year. The cyclical retraining workload was partially alleviated by introducing training videos. To further stabilize program quality, professional staff were invited to lead test-taking seminars and workshops. Another initiative involved student participation in the SALC tour at JASAL2024's pre-conference event. Seminar student staff prepared and delivered well-received presentations to 18 participants representing 16 institutions across Japan. The positive feedback boosted student presenters' confidence and ownership of their work, demonstrating the value of their contributions beyond UECSAP. By aligning the outcomes of mapping (See Figure 2) with identified challenges, UECSAP can reallocate resources to address gaps in its programs more effectively.

Conclusion

From this evaluation, specific actions for UECSAP include encouraging greater student involvement, publishing annual reports in the university's in-house journal, fostering collaboration with other in-house sections, and implementing systematic reporting mechanisms to upper management.

Periodic evaluation is essential for the survival and growth of UECSAP. This process must account for the needs and perspectives of various stakeholders such as language educators, student staff, professional staff and upper management (Figure 3). Most importantly, for UECSAP, we prioritize the student users whom UECSAP serves. I hope this presentation fosters dialogue, encouraging other SALCs to reflect on and generate ideas for evaluating their own initiatives.

Figure 3

Stakeholders at UECSAP
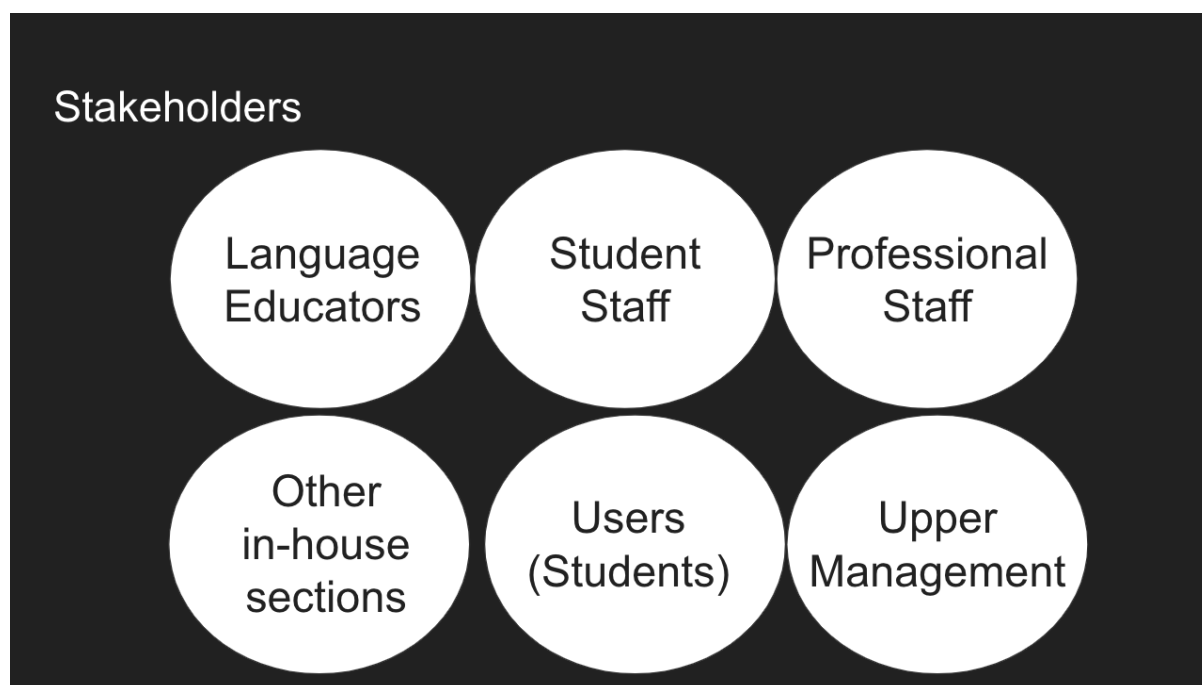
Agnes Maria Francis: Getting Started—Connecting Tutoring Course, Advising, and SALC

Background and Purpose

The idea behind this presentation came from prior advising experiences and discussions during the JASAL Forum at JALT 2023. The discussions highlighted the

importance of utilizing and adapting advising tools and effectively communicating advising purpose, which prompted a reflection on how students used the advising tools and perceived learner autonomy.

This presentation explored the integration of tutoring classes, advising, and Self-Access Learning Centers (SALC) to enhance learner autonomy in language education. Drawing insights from personal experience, literature, and collaborative discussions, the presentation outlined strategies for enhancing self-directed learning. In this presentation, learner autonomy was defined as learners' skills to take charge of their learning (Kato & Mynard, 2016; Mynard & Carson, 2012).

Structure of the Tutoring Course

The Tutoring Course at Konan Women's University spans 13 weeks per semester, with classes held biweekly. The course aims to help first-year students become successful English learners by setting and pursuing personalized learning goals. Based on existing studies (Fukuda, Sakata, & Takeuchi, 2011; Kato & Mynard, 2016; Pemberton & Mynard, 2023), the course integrates various activities and tools across two semesters:

- **Spring Semester**: This semester focuses on students' English learning history, SMART goal setting, and autonomous learning characteristics. Students use SALC resources for self-study and engage in peer and teacher advising. They are also encouraged to do self-evaluation activities and present their learning progress and achievements.

- **Fall Semester**: Emphasis shifts to practical English use by evaluating students' current English skills, exploring learning styles, and balancing input-output activities like reading-writing and listening-speaking. Students engage in self-assessment and goal reviews, refining their learner autonomy through personalized advising sessions.

Tools and Resources

To enhance learner autonomy throughout the course, several tools are used in the class:

- The Goal-Setting Pyramid and Wheel of Language Learning (Kato & Mynard, 2016), which guide students in setting and evaluating their short-term and long-term goals.

- The English Learning Passport (ELP), which facilitates reflection and tracking of student learning progress.

- SALC resources, providing opportunities for independent learning and skill development.

- Questionnaire on autonomous learner characteristics (Benson, 2007; Holec, 1981; Huan, 2011; Little, 1991; Sinclair,1999) distributed to students at the beginning and at the end of the course.

These tools are used in class and during advising sessions to facilitate reflection and discussion.

Reflection and Future Directions

Reflection questions posed in the presentation encouraged educators to improve advising practices and suggested ways to integrate advising into the course. The presentation concluded with recommendations for promoting learner autonomy and advising:

1. Giving students time to adjust to university life before requiring students to start attending advising sessions to reduce stress. This period of adjustment allows students to prepare and feel less anxious when attending advising sessions.

2. Building relationships between advisors and students outside the classroom through casual conversations as it is essential to foster trust. This, in turn, enhances the effectiveness of advising sessions and contributes to the development of a positive learning environment.

3. Optimizing the utilization of SALC resources, particularly during students' first semester, is essential for fostering a sense of belonging in SALC. Encouraging students to engage extensively with SALC allows them to explore various learning activities and resources, thereby supporting their development as autonomous learners.

Conclusion

Through these presentations and the small group discussions that followed them, forum participants were encouraged to reflect on various aspects of self-access learning. From Stacey Vye's presentation, the role of Covid and how other aspects of group advising sessions affect learner preferences was highlighted. Suwako Uehara's presentation led to discussions on evaluation methods and how to best communicate the results of these evaluations to important stakeholders, in order to ensure understanding and future funding, and helped participants identify gaps in their current evaluation and communication styles. Finally, Agnes Maria Francis's focus on connecting advising and activities of the tutoring course she teaches with SALC activities led to discussions on how to integrate aspects of

advising practice into such courses, and how these courses can best promote further engagement with extracurricular SALC activities.

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