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Introduction

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Reviews edited by Hisako Yamashita

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- *The Japan Association for Self-Access Learning (JASAL), Student Conference 2019* October 19, Konan Women's University, Kobe, Japan. <https://jasalorg.com>
- *The Japan Association for Self-Access Learning (JASAL), 2019 Conference* November 30-December 1, Otomon Gakuin University, Osaka, Japan. <https://jasalorg.com>
- *The International Association for the Psychology of Language Learning (IAPLL), 4th International Conference (PLL4)* June 24-28, 2020, Cape Breton University, Sydney, Nova Scotia in Canada. <https://www.iapll.com/pll4>

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Introduction

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Welcome to the June 2019 issue of *SiSAL Journal* which contains four regular papers and three reviews. Coincidentally, three of four regular papers focus on the roles of learners within self-access centres. In addition, one of the conference reviews is by an undergraduate student (Shirakawa) who presented his research at a self-access conference in Japan. Finally, the book review (Cotterall) is for a volume edited by Murray and Lamb that (among other things) explores how learners appropriate and take ownership of spaces for learning. Our observations from conferences and recent papers, including this issue of *SiSAL Journal*, indicate that student leadership and learner ownership and empowerment are growing areas of development for self-access. We will continue to observe this aspect of our practice with interest.

Regular Papers

The first paper by **Mariana Manués Baretto** describes a study conducted at a Self-Access Center (SAC) at the Federal University of Pará in the Brazilian Amazon. The study is based on the experiences of two undergraduate students who volunteered to be student-facilitators at the SAC. The researcher collected data in the form of parallel surveys and follow-up interviews. These tools enabled the student-facilitators to reflect on the feedback they received from the audience and their own assessment of the activities. The study highlights the importance of reflection at the level of undergraduate students who volunteer to take the lead in SAC activities. The mere fact that students voluntarily take initiative to be facilitators is a strong sign of autonomy. Reflection on those activities takes autonomy to a whole new level.

In the second paper, **Stephanie Lea Howard** based at Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University, Turkey provides insights into a successful aspect of a programme designed to

train student peer advisors (PAs). The author discovered that advising sessions for the PAs that were embedded into the training led to deeper insights into the role of a PA.

The third paper, by **Pamela Sigala Villa, Adelina Ruiz-Guerrero, and Laura María Zurutuza Roaro** from the Jesuit University of Guadalajara, Jalisco, México, explores the role that a conversation club plays in proficiency development in a self-access centre. The paper reports on a community of practice comprised of the leaders of the conversation and how they developed an awareness of their practice through recording and analysing their practice.

In the fourth paper, **Shenglan Zhang** from the University of Iowa in the USA, the author describes a study which investigated self-regulated learning (SRL) in a blended/flipped learning environment with learners of Chinese as a foreign language. The study explores how the learners were able to use a WeChat environment to solve problems and develop strategies and benefit from the environment,

Reviews (Edited by Hisako Yamashita)

There are three reviews in this issue. In the first review, **Brandon Bigelow** provides a review of JASAL 2019 x SUTLF 5, the annual conference of the Japan Association for Self-Access Learning (JASAL 2018) held on December 15th 2018. This year, the JASAL annual conference was jointly hosted by JASAL and SUTLF (Sojo University Teaching and Learning Forum), the flagship event of the NanKyu Chapter of JALT (Japan Association for Language Teaching) at the recently renovated Sojo University. Brandon was awarded the Newcomer's Grant, a grant given to educators who are new to JASAL conferences. In this review, Brandon gives a thorough overview of the conference, featuring several presentations he attended, and provides his reflections on his poster-sharing experience which according to him was intense, revelatory, and exhilarating.

In the second review, **Sara Cotterall** reviews *Space, Place and Autonomy in Language Learning* (Routledge, 2017) edited by Garold Murray and Terry Lamb. According to Cotterall, in this collection, Murray and Lamb “have trained their gaze on space and place – a phenomena so very ordinary and ubiquitous that many of us may never have reflected on the role they play in learning. Each of the book’s 15 chapters explores, in very different ways, the processes by which spaces are transformed into places for language learning or teaching.” Cotterall shares how this collection inspired her and how the book offers accounts of and reflections on research, as well as suggestions for practice.

In the third review, **Tomoya Shirakawa** also shares his experiences at the JASAL 2019 x SUTLF 5 conference. Tomoya was one of the Student Grant recipients of this conference and he gives us his perspectives as a then undergraduate student participant. In his review, he touches on several presentations that interested him based on his background and experience as an active student SALC user, research assistant, and community leader. Tomoya also talks about his presentation, “Challenges and successes of study group and the role of the self-access learning center” which focused on a student-led learning community. He shares his ideas and insights into the importance of establishing connection or cooperation between SACs and other departments within institutions.

Upcoming Events

The Japan Association for Self-Access Learning (JASAL) is holding its annual Conference *JASAL 2019* on Saturday, November 30 and Sunday, December 1, 2019 at Otemon Gakuin University, Osaka, Japan. The theme of JASAL 2019 is *New Beginnings*. JASAL 2019 will bring together language teachers as well as practitioners, administrators, and students involved in the field of self-access learning across Japan to share innovative practices, to learn from each other, and to inspire each other. There will be a pre-conference tour of E-CO, Otemon Gakuin University's self-access learning center. The deadline for presentation submissions is Sunday, August 4th, 2019. The call for presentations and more information can be found on JASAL website: <https://jasalorg.com>.

If you would like your active student users, student volunteers, or student staff members to meet, share experiences, discuss ideas, and develop action plans with fellow students from other institutions, you may consider attending the JASAL Student Conference 2019 in Kobe. The JASAL Student Conference 2019 will be held on Saturday, October 19, 2019 at Konan Women's University in Kobe. The organisers have asked for expressions of interest in participating by July 31, 2019. Documents can be submitted by September 15, 2019. The call for participation and more information can be found on JASAL website: <https://jasalorg.com>

Finally, as we announced in the previous issues, the fourth Psychology of Language Learning Conference (PLL4) will take place from June 24-28, 2020 at Cape Breton University in Sydney, Nova Scotia in Canada. The imaginative and quite appropriate theme given that the event takes place on a small island is “Themes and Waves”, which is also a metaphor for the currents and waves that shape our work in exploring the nature of language

teaching and learning. The conference chair is Peter MacIntyre who is also the current president of the International Association for the Psychology of Language Learning (IAPLL). The call for papers is open until September 15th, 2019. For updates, see the website <https://www.iapll.com/pll4>.

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