



ISSN 2185-3762

## Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal

<http://sisaljournal.org>

### Emergency Remote Support at the Self-Access Learning Center: Successes and Limitations

Tetsushi Ohara, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Oita, Japan  
Fumie Ishimura, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Oita, Japan

Corresponding author: [t-ohara@apu.ac.jp](mailto:t-ohara@apu.ac.jp)

Publication date: September, 2020.

#### To cite this article

Ohara, T., & Ishimura, F. (2020). Emergency remote support at the self-access learning center: Successes and limitations. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 11(3), 235–249. <https://doi.org/10.37237/110310>

#### To link to this article

[http://sisaljournal.org/archives/sep20/ohara\\_ishimura](http://sisaljournal.org/archives/sep20/ohara_ishimura)

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Please contact the author for permission to re-print elsewhere.

Scroll down for article.

## **Emergency Remote Support at the Self-Access Learning Center: Successes and Limitations**

Tetsushi Ohara, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Oita, Japan

Fumie Ishimura, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Oita, Japan

### Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 has influenced many aspects of tertiary educational institutions in Japan. Many Self-Access Learning Centers (SALCs) at universities are also required to change their operation and support systems. This paper introduces how the SALC at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) has supported students during the COVID-19 pandemic and discusses successful points and limitations of the online support system, which is characterized as *emergency remote support* (ERS). The research analyzes survey and interview data collected from five Japanese peer advisors (PAs) who work at the SALC. We find that ERS at the SALC can sufficiently provide students with individual support in learning and practicing languages as well as some psychological support via a videoconferencing tool. However, we also identify that ERS cannot create an environment for socialization and social learning compared to the usual SALC in which students gather and socialize with others freely while developing their language and communication abilities.

*Keywords:* Self-Access Learning Center, the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, emergency remote support, online, social learning environment

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 has influenced many aspects of tertiary educational institutions in Japan. Many Japanese universities cancelled face-to-face classes and looked for different teaching solutions such as online instruction via videoconferencing tools in real time or providing recordings of instruction in the Spring Semester of 2020. Likewise, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Japan conducted online classes using a videoconferencing tool, *Zoom*. The Self-Access Learning Center (SALC) at APU also reorganized the support system using mainly *Zoom* during the Spring Semester of 2020. This paper describes how the SALC at APU has organized the online support system during this pandemic situation and discusses successful points and limitations of the online support system using survey and interview data collected from five Japanese peer advisors (PAs) who work at the SALC. The authors who have conducted this research work at the SALC as the coordinators of Japanese language support.

### **Emergency Remote Support**

Hodges et al. (2020) describe the difference between *online education* and *emergency remote teaching* (ERT). On the one hand, effective online education is “planned from the beginning and designed to be online” (Hodges et al., 2020, para. 13). The design process includes careful and systematic consideration of different design variables, which have an impact on the quality of teaching and learning. On the other hand, Hodges et al. (2020) describe ERT as “a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode” (para. 13), which includes the use of fully-remote teaching solutions such as online instruction via videoconferencing tools in real time or providing recordings of instruction. Hodges et al. (2020) further indicate the primary objective of ERT as follows:

The primary objective in these circumstances is not to re-create a robust educational ecosystem but rather to provide temporary access to instruction and instructional supports in a manner that is quick to set up and is reliably available during an emergency or crisis. (para. 13)

From the above descriptions of online education and ERT, we can reasonably indicate that most Japanese universities have conducted ERT rather than effective online education. APU also has conducted ERT since early May 2020 to provide students with opportunities to continue their university degree programs.

SALCs<sup>1</sup> at most Japanese universities are mainly designed to provide face-to-face support to students using a variety of resources and activities. The SALC at APU is also designed to deliver face-to-face support including individual support sessions with PAs, individual consultations with learning advisors (LAs), and both academic and social events.

In April 2020, the university officially decided to conduct all classes online from May 2020 for the whole semester. The SALC had the choice of either cancelling all kinds of support because we were not able to use the facilities or creating an online support system. After discussing the dilemma among the coordinators and administrative staff members at the SALC, we decided to offer online support to students using Zoom. We did not have much time to design and plan a robust online support system, so we decided to have only individual support sessions with PAs and consultations with LAs using Zoom. In other words, we offered students *emergency remote support* (ERS) at the SALC, which is characterized as a temporary shift of the SALC support system (the use of remote/online supporting solutions) during the emergency situation to support students in learning languages. In the following sections, we will describe how we have organized ERS at the SALC.

### **The Self-Access Learning Center**

APU is an international university known for its multicultural environment and bilingual education system in which most of the undergraduate courses are held in both Japanese and English. In 2019, of the total 5830 students, 50.9% were domestic students from Japanese and 49.1% were international students from more than 91 countries and regions (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, 2019).

The SALC at APU aims to support students in learning languages as well as develop learner autonomy and multicultural understanding while offering students a variety of support sessions, events, and spaces as described in Table 1. Students have opportunities to practice English, Japanese, and Chinese with PAs who are students at APU and receive advice on language studies and university life from LAs who are academic staff members. In addition to the spaces for individual support sessions with PAs and consultations with LAs, the SALC has study and social spaces in order to provide students with a variety of resources and opportunities to learn and use languages while informally interacting with fellow students, PAs, LAs, and teachers. The SALC is a place for not only studying languages but also socializing with a variety of people in a friendly atmosphere. Through a variety of modes of interaction with diverse languages including *translanguaging*<sup>2</sup> (Canagarajah, 2011; García & Li, 2014), the SALC becomes *a social learning space* (Murray et al., 2017).

The SALC coordinators of each language area select their own PAs through some selection processes such as submission of written statements, interviews, and/or mock support sessions. At the SALC, PAs occupy very important roles to manage the daily operation of the SALC. Because both the coordinators and LAs are not full-time SALC staff members and have other duties such as classes and meetings, their time to stay in the SALC is very limited. Therefore, PAs as a team must manage not only individual support sessions and events but also the overall SALC facilities and service.

The SALC offers students individual support sessions with PAs on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday during each semester. Each student can book two support sessions a week using an online reservation system and can receive support for approximately 30 minutes each time. Students can choose what they like to do with PAs in sessions, but the popular support contents include enjoying casual conversation with PAs using languages they are learning, asking questions about homework, and practicing for tests. PAs often organize both academic and social events several times a month such as language exchange events, Japanese calligraphy workshops, guitar lessons, and movie nights. The coordinators and PAs usually have training sessions once a week (i.e., English support) or every other week (i.e.,

Japanese support) depending on languages so that PAs can share their experiences with others and improve their skills and knowledge to support students. Because of friendly professional PAs, many students repeatedly visit the SALC to use individual support sessions with PAs and join events.

In this COVID-19 pandemic, the SALC decided to operate the support online mainly using Zoom except the Chinese support, which was cancelled. We decided to mainly focus on launching individual online support sessions with PAs and individual consultations with LAs as ERS. As Table 1 indicates, we were not able to offer study and social spaces to students as ERS because the spaces were physically not available online. PAs and LAs were not sure about how they could utilize Zoom to organize events, so no events were planned and organized for one month after the semester started. Because online became the main platform for SALC support, PAs used social networking services (SNS) to promote the online support sessions and share learning resources with students. The following sections will discuss how ERS has worked at the SALC using mainly the experiences and perspectives of Japanese PAs.

**Table 1**

*A Summary of Support Sessions, Events, and Spaces at the SALC*

<b>Support Sessions /Events/Spaces</b>	<b>Normal Time</b>	<b>Emergency Remote Support</b>
Individual support sessions with PAs (English, Japanese, & Chinese)	Yes (face-to-face)	Yes (online: no Chinese sessions)
Individual consultations with LAs (English only)	Yes (face-to-face)	Yes (online)
Academic and social events (language exchange, Japanese calligraphy, etc.)	Yes (face-to-face)	Yes (online: limited numbers)
Social learning/ interacting spaces at the SALC (with TV, movies, games, a guitar, etc.)	Yes (face-to-face)	No
Study spaces at the SALC (with textbooks, workbooks, etc.)	Yes (face-to-face)	No
Social Networking Services (Facebook & Instagram)	Yes (online)	Yes (online: more usage)

## **Methodology**

### **Research Participants and Data Collection**

One of the main objectives of conducting this research is to share our initial experience and analysis of ERS at the SALC before the new semester at most Japanese universities starts in September or October. In order to investigate how ERS at the SALC worked to support students, we qualitatively analyzed five Japanese PAs' experiences and perspectives in the first half of the last semester (from early May to late June 2020). At the time of conducting this research (from late June till early July 2020), we were still in the middle of the last semester, which ended in August 2020, and were unable to collect and analyze a large amount of data from students as well as English PAs and LAs. We needed to choose which data would be sufficient as a preliminary analysis of ERS in the given timeline and chose Japanese PAs as the participants and collected survey and interview data from them.

All Japanese PAs were undergraduate students at APU, so they had experience of not only working at the SALC as PAs but also using the SALC as students learning languages. As they were also either second- or third-year students, they knew the SALC before the pandemic and were able to compare ERS with the usual SALC based on face-to-face support. Moreover, Japanese PAs met a variety of students including international students who were not able to come to Japan through PAs' individual support sessions, so they could provide some interesting perspectives from a variety of students at APU. Due to these reasons, we considered data from Japanese PAs would give us an opportunity to capture some important aspects of ERS in the given timeline.

The SALC had eight Japanese PAs. We explained the information regarding this study to all Japanese PAs, and five of them voluntarily participated in an online survey consisting of the following five open-ended questions. The survey was conducted in Japanese and translated into English by the authors:

- 1) What do you think about conducting the online support sessions in the COVID-19 pandemic?
- 2) What are the roles of the SALC during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- 3) What kind of things are you especially paying attention to when you support students?
- 4) What are the differences between the face-to-face support last semester and the online support this semester (if this is your first semester working as a PA, you

may consider your experiences as a student who has utilized face-to-face support sessions before)?

5) What kind of place is the SALC for you?

Three out of the five PAs who participated in the online survey also agreed to participate in a follow-up interview with us. After analyzing the survey responses (see *Data Analysis* below), we conducted a semi-structured interview with each of them for approximately 30 minutes using Zoom to clarify their survey responses. In each follow-up interview, we first read aloud each survey question and the PA's response in order to remind her of how she responded to each of the questions. Then, we asked the PA to explain each of her survey responses in more detail. If we needed additional clarification, we asked her further questions. All interviews were conducted in Japanese and recorded using the recording function of Zoom in order to reexamine and transcribe the interviews as well as translate the Japanese interview data into English. Table 2 indicates the details of the five PAs who participated in this study. Mari, Eriko, Natsumi, Shota, and Keigo<sup>3</sup> were all Japanese students at APU. Mari and Eriko had worked as Japanese PAs at the SALC since the Fall Semester of 2019 and Natsumi, Shota, and Keigo started working in the Spring Semester of 2020.

**Table 2**

*Research Participants*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Experience as SALC PAs</b>	<b>Participation in follow-up interview?</b>
Mari	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	2 semesters	participated
Eriko	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	2 semesters	participated
Natsumi	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	1 semester	participated
Shota	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	1 semester	not participated
Keigo	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	1 semester	not participated

**Data Analysis**

The survey responses from the five Japanese PAs were coded in order to understand ways in which the ERS was successful and also identified some of the limitations of ERS. A sample of coding can be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Example of Coding in Data Analysis*

Name	Response to Survey Question 5	Codes
Natsumi	The SALC is a place that I can also enjoy learning <sup>(1)</sup> languages.	(1) ENJOY LEARNING

To do this, one of us analyzed the survey data and generated codes for the data to find possible successful points of ERS and the other examined the survey data and generated codes to identify possible limitations of ERS. Then, we discussed and consolidated all codes to finalize significant themes for successful points and limitations of ERS. After finding significant themes, we also checked the interview data so that we could make sure that our interpretations of themes reflected the PAs’ experiences and perspectives.

### **Findings**

#### **Successful Points of Emergency Remote Support**

The SALC managed to organize the individual online support sessions using Zoom without any significant problems. Students were able to ask PAs questions regarding class materials as well as interact with PAs in Japanese in the support sessions even though some students were not in Japan. Many international students could not enter Japan because of the government policy. Thus, the SALC support sessions greatly helped those international students who were not in Japan and did not have opportunities to speak Japanese. In fact, the number of times students used the individual support sessions was almost the same as the previous semester in which we conducted face-to-face support sessions. The total number of the online support sessions was 125 times in the first month of the Spring Semester of 2020, compared with 120 times in the first half of the Fall Semester 2019 when we provided face-to-face support sessions. In addition, PAs and students utilized the *share screen* function of Zoom to share study materials and online resources so that they took advantage of using Zoom. Table 4 describes Shota and Mari’s perspectives on the online support sessions:



**Table 4**

*Coding in Survey Data Analysis of Shota and Mari’s Perspective on Online Support*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Response to Survey Question 1</b>	<b>Codes</b>
Shota	We cannot conduct face-to-face sessions and our support became online <sup>(1)</sup> , but we can sufficiently <sup>(2)</sup> support students as we can practice conversation. Thus, I think it is good <sup>(3)</sup> to have the online support sessions.	(1) ONLINE (2) SUFFICIENT (3) GOOD
Mari	The number of students who use the online support sessions is more <sup>(1)</sup> than I have expected and we are conducting the sessions without any problems <sup>(2)</sup> .	(1) MORE STUDENTS (2) NO PROBLEMS

In the follow-up interviews, Mari and Eriko described that the support sessions worked quite successfully. Mari mentioned:

At first, when I heard that we are going to have individual support sessions online, I thought that the number of users would greatly decrease because students were able to do various things at home. However, some students have visited the support sessions because they enjoy talking to us.

Eriko also indicated:

I feel that it is worthwhile having the online support sessions when students repeatedly use the sessions. I’m glad that I can support them even online as I can see they are improving their speaking ability.

Although the primary goal of the support sessions was to help students learn and practice Japanese, we found that the sessions had another function for some students as Table 5 shows. As students could not go to the university campus and/or social gatherings because of the pandemic situation, many students had limited interaction and socialization with friends. Some students used the online support sessions at the SALC as opportunities to interact with others, so they could moderate their feeling of loneliness and release psychological stress coming from less interaction with others.

**Table 5**

*Coding in Survey Data Analysis of Keigo’s Perspective on Online Support*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Response to Survey Question 2</b>	<b>Codes</b>
Keigo	The sessions offer support <sup>(1)</sup> to students who have lost opportunities to speak Japanese in their home country as well as service <sup>(2)</sup> to students who have less interaction with others and feel stress from the situation.	(1) SUPPORT TO SPEAK JAPANESE (2) SERVICE TO RELEASE STRESS

Some PAs considered that this was an important role of the SALC in this pandemic situation and tried to interact with students with a positive attitude, so that they could enjoy interacting with PAs as the interview with Eriko describes:

Especially some freshmen feel isolated [due to the lockdown of the university] and some of them [who are taking the online support sessions once a week] say that they will study hard for a week while looking forward to visiting the next support session.

In addition to the benefits to students, PAs also had some gains from their ERS experiences. As Table 6 illustrates, Natsumi, who was interested in pursuing a teaching career, thought that she developed teaching and supporting skills and acquired knowledge of online resources through her online support experiences. Moreover, the support sessions also helped some PAs release mental stress from limited socialization with people in the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 6**

*Coding in Survey Data Analysis of Natsumi’s Perspective on Online Support*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Response to Survey Question 1</b>	<b>Codes</b>
Natsumi	Because of the self-restraint request, I do not have many opportunities to talk to people <sup>(1)</sup> and can have a teaching experience <sup>(2)</sup> as well as learn how to use online resources <sup>(3)</sup> so the online support sessions are good.	(1) LESS INTERACTION (2) TEACHING EXPERIENCE (3) HOW TO USE ONLINE RESOURCES

Natsumi also indicated that continuing the SALC support sessions in the pandemic situation helped her financially as the supporting sessions were paid jobs for PAs and some PAs including her lost other part-time jobs outside the university. It was one of our main

intentions to continue the online support sessions although we had a choice of canceling all support sessions at the SALC in the last semester so that we were able to support PAs financially.

### **Limitations of Emergency Remote Support**

As described above, the individual support sessions via Zoom seemed to work as effectively as the usual face-to-face support sessions. However, we identified two limitations of ERS when we considered that the SALC had significant influence on social lives of many students at the university. First, ERS could not provide the same kind of environment and atmosphere as the usual SALC when we operated the SALC online. The SALC in normal times was a place where students gathered and socialized with others. In the support sessions with the Japanese PAs, some students told the PAs that they missed the SALC as a social space. This was evident in Mari's survey response described in Table 7.

**Table 7**

*Coding in Survey Data Analysis of Mari's Perspective on Online Support*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Response to survey Question 4</b>	<b>Codes</b>
Mari	Students who like the [social] space <sup>(1)</sup> of the SALC are disappointed <sup>(2)</sup> because there is no physical environment <sup>(3)</sup> of the SALC.	(1) SPACE (2) DISAPPOINTMENT (3) NO ENVIRONMENT

Mari and Eriko's follow-up interviews below also showed that the online sessions and events could not create a comfortable, social environment that the usual SALC had and some students missed such an environment. Mari explained:

It is different from face-to-face sessions and difficult to experience the same atmosphere online ... It is difficult to interact with some people simultaneously through Zoom, and silence can be awkward, too ... Zoom cannot create the same healing, comfortable environment as the real SALC, where I can see PAs and some students studying and the time passes slowly.

Eriko also indicated:

There are some students who like the environment of the usual SALC, and I also like it. It is not possible to visit the SALC [as a social space] during my free time. I feel that the online support is limited in this aspect. I would like to expand my activities more, but I am frustrated because I cannot do much.

The role of the SALC was not just supporting language studies. The SALC as a social space helped students explore their language learning and use as well as construct their own unique identities (Ohara & Mizukura, 2020). Although PAs planned some online events, it was difficult to organize engaging social events online due to technical difficulties. Eriko indicated this problem in the interview, “We cannot hold events smoothly. Even if we would like to teach Japanese calligraphy, students cannot prepare necessary tools and we cannot teach them directly.” Also, as Mari’s interview above mentioned, it was often difficult to carry on a smooth conversation using a videoconferencing tool because people were unable to speak simultaneously and had to wait their turns to talk to others. Most students and PAs were not familiar with how to organize social events and communicate with others online. Thus, the role of the SALC as a social space weakened when the SALC operated ERS.

The second limitation of ERS was the lack of resources. The SALC facilities on campus contained a variety of resources such as textbooks, grammar practice sheets, DVDs and games. However, PAs and students were not allowed to enter the campus so they could not use these resources as Shota’s survey response in Table 8 indicates:

**Table 8**

*Coding in Survey Data Analysis of Shota’s Perspective on Online Support*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Response to survey Question 4</b>	<b>Codes</b>
Shota	We cannot <sup>(1)</sup> provide the same ways of support online as we used to do in the face-to-face session. For example, we cannot do some language learning activities through games and cannot use some resources <sup>(2)</sup> located in the SALC.	(1) CANNOT SUPPORT (2) NO RESOURCES

In addition to material resources, the lack of human resources was salient in ERS. Usually, PAs, LAs, students and teachers were in the SALC facilities before the pandemic. Thus, for example, if PAs had a question about a grammar point, they casually asked LAs or other PAs. However, all PAs conducted the online support sessions at home using their own computers, so they could not casually ask questions to LAs and PAs. Both material and human resources decreased and the dependency on online resources was significantly

increased in ERS. It would be necessary for students and PAs to have workshops in order to discuss how to select and use online resources.

Moreover, online support needed the basic resources, *computers* and *the internet*. Without a certain computer device and a stable internet connection, it was difficult to even conduct any online support sessions and events. PAs and students participated in the online support sessions and events at home. Students in some countries and regions might not have a stable internet connection. This fact could potentially create unequal opportunities to receive SALC support. On the one hand, ERS was able to provide the individual support sessions without any significant problems. On the other hand, the limitations described here were diminishing the social role of the SALC.

### **The Self-Access Learning Center in the COVID-19 Pandemic**

As described in the above sections, ERS at the SALC has successful points and limitations. Overall, the individual support sessions with a videoconferencing tool are quite successful in terms of helping students learn and use Japanese as well as release mental stress from the pandemic situation. In addition, PAs also have benefits from their ERS experiences such as developing their teaching and supporting skills, releasing their mental stress, and earning some income to support themselves financially. However, ERS at the SALC has limitations. Ohara and Mizukura (2020) indicate that one of the important roles of SALCs is to empower students by offering them a variety of opportunities to share their perspectives with diverse people such as PAs, teachers, and fellow students so that each student may explore one's language learning and use as well as construct one's own identities and relationships with others. In order to fulfill this role, the SALC needs to be a social learning space (Murray et al., 2017).

In the current situation of ERS, we are not able to create such a space in which students, teachers, and/or the SALC staff members (i.e., PAs and LAs) can socialize with each other except the individual support sessions via Zoom. On campus, students can walk into the SALC, which has a variety of opportunities for socialization among students, PAs, LAs and/or teachers in addition to individual support sessions with PAs and consultations with LAs. As described in the previous section, some students like the SALC as a social space in which they can informally interact with a variety of people with a variety of languages including *translanguaging* (García & Li, 2014). Through interaction, students can build relationships with others while improving their language proficiency. ERS unexpectedly highlights the important social functions of the SALC. We may need to create

some sorts of online social learning and interacting space as we may have to continue to operate the SALC online in the next semester.

We are able to draw some features of ERS at the SALC using the data from the Japanese PAs as shown above. However, we will also need to collect feedback and opinions from students as well as English PAs and LAs so that we can capture a more complete picture of ERS and create ideas to improve our support system in the COVID-19 pandemic. We will also be able to integrate some online support sessions and events into the overall SALC support system after the COVID-19 pandemic ends so that we can support students with diverse needs.

### **Conclusions**

This paper has described how the SALC at APU has supported students in the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Through the qualitative analysis of the Japanese PAs' experiences, we are able to capture preliminary characteristics and limitations of ERS. ERS can sufficiently provide students with individual support in learning and practicing languages as well as some psychological support via a videoconferencing tool. However, ERS cannot create an environment for socialization and social learning compared to the usual SALC based on face-to-face interaction. It is still unknown when the COVID-19 pandemic will end. Thus, we will need to find ways to develop our support system from ERS to a more robust online support system.

### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank Dr. Paul Sevigny and Dr. Yu-Ting Hung for proofreading our paper.

### **Notes on the Contributors**

Tetsushi Ohara is a senior lecturer in Japanese and a coordinator of the Self-Access Learning Center at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Oita, Japan. His research interests include learner autonomy in language learning, roles of self-access learning centers, and active learning activities for the classroom.

Fumie Ishimura is a senior lecturer in Japanese and a coordinator of the Self-Access Learning Center at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Oita, Japan. Her research interests include sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and roles of self-access learning centers.

### References

- Canagarajah, S. (2011). Codemeshing in academic writing: Identifying teachable strategies of translanguaging. *The Modern Language Journal*, 95(3), 401–417.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01207.x>
- García, O., & Li, W. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765>
- Hodges, C., Moore, S., Lockee, B., Trust, T., & Bond, A. (2020). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning. *Educause Review*.  
<https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remote-teaching-and-online-learning>
- Murray, G., Uzuka, M., & Fujishima, N. (2017). Social language learning spaces: Globalization glocalized. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 8(3), 235-246.  
<https://doi.org/10.37237/080304>
- Ohara, T., & Mizukura, R. (2020). The role of self-access learning center in Japan: Accommodation of translingual practice amidst international educational reform. *JASAL Journal*, 1(1), 5–36. <https://jasalorg.com/journal-june20-ohara-mizukura/>
- Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. (2019). *APU data book 2019*.  
[http://www.apu.ac.jp/pageview/bg\\_APU\\_data\\_book\\_2019/html5.html](http://www.apu.ac.jp/pageview/bg_APU_data_book_2019/html5.html)

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> In this paper, we use the terms, Self-Access Learning Centers (SALCs), to describe general language learning spaces, although there are different ways to call them, such as Self-Access Centers, Social Learning Spaces, and Communication Lounges.

<sup>2</sup> Translanguaging is “the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system” (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 401). The SALC at APU supports students in exploring their translanguing identities and practice through socialization with a variety of people.

<sup>3</sup> The names are pseudonyms.