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Self-Access Centres in South Korea: Online Space Values

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore what three physical Self-Access Centres (SACs) in Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in Daegu, South Korea do for their online space and how online space is valued by stakeholders. Findings show that these SACs have more or less exclusively focused on their physical environment while neglecting their online potential, resulting in technologies and online spaces (Social Network Services (SNS), websites and Learning Management Systems) being under-utilized. There are differences in values placed on online spaces between staff and users with key concerns being: efficacy and effort, need, awareness-raising, reach, and selection.

Keywords: Self-Access Centres, Korean universities, online space, values, learner autonomy

Self-Access Centres (SACs) today can be seen as physical and online spaces outside of the classroom environment providing support and resources to students, promoting learner autonomy and facilitating language learning. (Murray, Fujishima, & Uzuka, 2010). In this paper, I will show that three SACs in Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in Daegu, South Korea have more or less exclusively focused on their physical environments while neglecting their online potential. This has resulted in technologies and online spaces being under-utilized; creating a gap between current SAC learner needs/wants, current SLA foci, and the focus and direction of SAC management. To do this, I will explore what the SACs currently do for online space and look at how online space is valued by staff and users.

Before turning to the case studies, I will present a summary of SAC development in relation to a South Korean context, with particular focus on reasons for implementing SACs in HEIs; linking students, pedagogy and technology. An explanation of SAC online spaces will then be given along with an argument for their importance. Limitations to the study will also be stated, with implications for future research and practice.

The Origins of Self-Access Centres

From the late 1960s, theoretical research into teaching methodologies formulated and explored humanistic notions of the self: Rogers (1969), Freire (1972), Illich (1973), Knowles, (1975) and Gomes de Matos, (1986), adopting new approaches to traditional teaching methodologies, turning away from teacher-led learning frameworks to more learner-led, learner-centred approaches to second language acquisition. This focus on the learner, on learner autonomy; “the ability to take control of one’s own learning” (Holec 1981, p. 3), has led to an abundance of theoretically based research supporting learner autonomy inside and outside the classroom. Beginning in the late 1960s, one practical way to approach learner autonomy outside the classroom was the establishment of SACs (Cotterall & Crabble, 1999; Gardner & Miller, 1999) with the first SAC being established by the CRAPEL (Centre de Recherches et d’Applications Pédagogiques en Langues) at the University of Nancy, France in 1969 (Gremmo & Riley, 1995).

The pedagogy of these SACs was grounded in the European political environment of the time and perceptions of “what education should look like” (Reinders, 2012, p. 1). These included the empowerment of learners to take control of their own learning and with appropriate pedagogical support from SACs (Morrison, 2008), learners could engage in self-reflection, enabling individual life-long learning and personal growth. This was supported further by Benson & Voller (1997) when they stated: “Self-access centres are now widely regarded as the most common way in which institutions implement the development of learner autonomy.” The work of Gardner & Miller (1999), *Establishing self-access: From theory to practice* with four SAC case studies from Malaysia, Hong Kong and the UK, has added significantly to SAC theory and development across the world, particularly in Asia.

So, within Asia, have SACs in South Korea come about the same way? Did they also arise from similar pedagogical perceptions?

How Self-Access Centres came about in South Korea

While this pedagogy (relating to SACs) was not part of the discussion in South Korea in the 1970s, there were changes and innovations happening in English education policies; policies which would lead to, in the National Curriculum of 1997; a focus on student-centredness, communicative competence, and globalized readiness: with English being the “international language of commerce and technology” (Morrison, 2008, p. 126).

The establishment of SACs in South Korean HEIs began post the International Monetary Fund crisis 1998, in 2001 with the specific intentions of creating cross-cultural communication environments, where domestic and international students could meet and to some extent increase the autonomy and globalized readiness of Koreans, realizing the foci of the 7th National Curriculum. The establishment of these SACs coincided with two governmental international student recruitment and management policies; the Quantitative Expansion Period (from 2001 to 2007) and the Qualitative Supervision Period (from 2008 to 2011). The first policy saw a large increase in international students in HEIs and the second policy focused on regulation, as universities could not cope adequately with the high numbers of international students (Bae, 2015, p. 331).

The trend in establishing SACs in HEIs was a calculated move, not only dealing with English education policies, but also with “higher education marketization” (Ghazarian & Youhne, 2015, p. 477). HEIs needed to increase revenue post the global financial crises of 1997 and 2008. So, SACs in HEIs were established to attract international students and ready Korean students for the job market, killing two birds with one stone.

Parallel to the establishment of SACs in HEIs in South Korea there has been a focus, beginning with the governmental White Paper on Adapting Education to the Information Age (Suh, 2000), and of successive South Korean governments to bridge education and Information Communication Technology (ICT). This focus has sought to create the “competent person” someone who is “creative, autonomous, open and cooperative” (Suh, 200, p. 11). The ultimate goal – to reach “Edutopia”; “an open and continuing education society based on ICT” (Suh, 2000, p. 11).

So, with this focus on attracting international students, SACs (approximately 27 exist in HEIs in South Korea today, (Schuit & Thwaites, 2015)) were established to

provide unique spaces where students (international and domestic), pedagogy and technology could come together, facilitate personal growth, empowerment and life-long learning.

However, according to Reinders (2012, p. 4) SACs worldwide in general “have missed the boat on social and web 2.0 technologies.” This point is further strengthened by Mynard’s (2012) and Rubesch & Barrs (2014) statements that SACs should be a combination of simultaneous physical and virtual spaces to support learners and that the “virtual components both complement and enhance the physical SAC while adhering to the core principles of self-access” (Rubesch & Barrs, 2014, p. 47).

So, have SACs in South Korean HEIs missed the boat too and furthermore, what are online SAC spaces and why are they important?

What are Online SAC Spaces and Why are they Important?

Through the use of technology online SAC spaces can offer “anytime, anywhere virtual and digital delivery of learning” (Dofs & Hobbs, 2016, p. 72), breaking away from the four walls of physical space, providing users with “content provision, language learning support and additional types of support” (Lázaro & Reinders, 2007, p. 3). They can be seen as spaces “allowing learners much greater freedom in when, where, what, and how they study” (Rubesch & Barrs, 2014, p. 43), spaces that can “liberate self-access learning from its physical confines by vastly opening up the volume, velocity and variety of resources available to the learner” (Rubesch & Barrs, 2014, p. 43), allowing “increased affordances for autonomous learning” (Reinders & White (2011, p. 1).

With the “general proliferation of mobile devices and social networking services being used by the students” (Rubesch & Barrs, 2014, p. 43), the need for online SAC spaces can be seen as important, in that they fit the digital practices of students, can act as bridges to physical SACs, facilitate blended learning, promote learner reflection and increase learner autonomy (Mynard, 2011; Schwienhorst, 2008; Ulitsky, 2000; Vanijdee, 2003), reflecting the true nature of self-access learning. The physical SAC space can be enhanced by online SAC spaces (with tools such as Social Network Services (SNS), websites and Learning Management Systems (LMS)) which allow “for new and creative ways to foster a self-access learner community and to promote a centre’s events, services,

resources, and facilities. Furthermore, it allows for archiving and hosting in-house learning and promotional materials” (Rubesch & Barrs, 2014, p. 47).

This literature review has direct implications for this study with results showing that in a South Korean context, SACs were established to bring people, pedagogy and technology together; that SACs should have online spaces, utilizing a number of tools and technologies to further promote learner autonomy and assist users in their second language acquisition needs. To answer if SACs in HEIs in South Korea have missed the boat, a number of questions need to be addressed.

Research Questions

This research aims to address the following questions:

- What do three HEI SACs in Daegu, South Korea do for online space?
- How is their online space valued by staff and users?

Methodology and Methods

A qualitative multiple case-study, employing descriptive observations and semi-structured open-ended interview questions within a Constructivist paradigm was used to explore three current HEIs SACs in Daegu, South Korea, with the purpose of understanding what SACs do for their online spaces and how their online spaces are valued by stakeholders.

Data Collection and Participants

Data were collected from three HEI SACs and seven stakeholders in Daegu, South Korea. Participants and SACs were all given pseudonyms to protect identities. For a full summary of SACs, participants, roles and backgrounds, adapting earlier work by Morrison (2008, p. 135), please see Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of SACs, Participants, Roles and Backgrounds

Self-Access Centre	Role	Pseudonym	Background
SAC 1	SAC Director	John (US born, Native Speaker (NS), male)	A very experienced EFL teacher and SAC director since 2006
SAC 2	SAC Staff	Mike (US born, NS, male)	An ex-coordinator of a SAC (2014) and a very experienced EFL teacher.
SAC 3	SAC Coordinator	James (Korea born, Non Native Speaker (NNS), male)	A new SAC coordinator (2015) and experienced university administration staff.
	SAC User	Bill (Korea born, NNS, male)	An undergraduate student and a regular SAC user since 2015
	SAC User	Vicky (Korea born, NNS, female)	An undergraduate student and a regular SAC user since 2012
	SAC User	Rebecca (Germany born, NNS, female)	A graduate student and a regular SAC user since 2013
	SAC User	Susan (China born, NNS, female)	An undergraduate student and a regular SAC user since 2014

Data were collected in three stages:

1. Description of SACs (Physical Observation – SAC 1 / 2 / 3)
2. Interview with three SAC staff members (Director – SAC 1 / Staff – SAC 2 / Coordinator – SAC 3)
3. Interviews with four SAC users (two Korean students and two International Students - SAC 3)

In Stage 1, physical observation of each SAC took place, with written notes and photos were taken of location, furnishings, technology, resources, and materials, etc.

In Stage 2, SAC staff was first contacted through email with an introduction/explanatory letter, a consent form and the interview questions. All three interviews took place separately in the various SACs. The semi-structured open-ended

questions for staff were previewed by two current SAC staff (in the researcher's context) and the semi-structured open-ended interview questions for users were piloted on one regular SAC user (in the researcher's context). The interviews lasted 30-40 minutes, with the same semi-structured open-ended questions asked, with room for expansion etc. The interviews were recorded using the Voice Record app for iPhone.

In Stage 3, the researcher's own context was looked at. The four participants are regular users of the SAC. Staff at the information desk in the SAC was asked to find four students interested in being interviewed, with three stipulations:

1. Two were to be Korean students, and two were to be International students
2. They should have been at the university for over one year.
3. They should have a high command of written, spoken and aural English.
(as the interview would be held in English, without translation offered, due to time constraints)

The staff found six students and they gave me their KakaoTalk IDs. (KakaoTalk is a free South Korean instant messaging application for smartphones and KakaoTalk ID is an "identification username used in place of a phone number" (Kakaotalk, 2016) for users to search and add friends.) From there I contacted the six students, and after checking their English proficiency levels, through face-to-face meetings in the SAC, four were suitable. The nationalities of the four students were Korean, German and Chinese. Following this, the four students were given consent forms and the same semi-structured open-ended interview questions to read over. The students were given a couple of days to read over everything and then contact me, if they were willing to go ahead with the interviews. I also made myself available for any questions they needed to ask in this time, through Kakaotalk or face to face. Individual interviews were set up with the students; all interviews took place in the SAC, in a private room. The interviews were recorded using the Voice Record app for iPhone.

Data Analysis

In Stage 1, (Description of SACs - physical observation), extensive descriptions were written on all three SACs adapting criteria from earlier SAC case study research by

Gardner & Miller (1999), with particular focus given to *SAC Online space*. Gardner & Miller's SAC typology (1999, pp. 59-63) was also used to delineate SAC type. In Stages 2 and 3, the interview sets, recordings were transcribed using <https://transcribe.wreally.com/>, using the dictation function. (i.e. listening to the original recording on headphones, and then repeating into a microphone with the speech being turned into text. After transcription, NVivo was used, collecting quotes, with iterative coding of common themes throughout both sets of recordings (staff and users) with findings then being analysed using a Framework Method Matrix (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid, & Redwood, 2013) and then presented.

Findings

I will present findings based on descriptive observation and interview data on three HEIs SACs in Daegu South Korea, looking at:

- SAC physical space (descriptive observation)
- SAC online space and staff values (interview data)
- SAC user online space values (interview data)

SAC Physical Space

Summary tables of SAC descriptive observations, including physical space can be found in Appendices A, B & C. The data is presented following a strict set of criteria, adapted from Gardner & Miller's (1999) SAC case study research.

1. Type of SAC
2. Physical space
3. Reasons for establishing a SAC
4. Staffing and management
5. Use of SAC
6. Counselling
7. Materials and activities
8. Assessment and evaluation

Staff: Online Space and Values

John (Director, SAC 1)

(From personal interview, March 21, 2016)

The SAC has a Facebook page, but this is rarely used (it was in the past, but now, less so – the last post was July 18, 2014) “*We have a Facebook page but it's just not that active...I think we actually have to go back to it.... that's kind of the extent of what we're doing online in terms of like a virtual space*” (John, 2016). The university’s Foreign Language Institute (FLI) homepage is where users can find information and notices about the SAC, and where to register for the English Language Clinics (ELCs). There is no specific SAC website, or online language learning materials/resources. This is partly due to previous experience with using an online program in the past with English readers, through Moodle (in the FLI) and John’s beliefs: “*everything that I've seen about creating a virtual space in terms of things like chat rooms or messages going about it doesn't merit the effort with the payoff that you get*” and “*I have to balance the reality all administrative duties and what people are doing here with the potential for that to be successful*” (John, 2016). The lack of an online space is also due to the nature of student capacity and SAC user use, “*I think we are okay, as you can see we have so many students in here, if we really try to go out and blanket to get more we would be too crowded we wouldn't be able to handle a greater influx of students*” (John, 2016). It was mentioned in relation to the possibility of using a SAC LMS like Moodle that “*I don't think it would be that successful it's possible that it would but it doesn't seem like that's the way students are using this place students*” (John, 2016).

Mike (Staff, SAC 2)

(From personal interview, March 21, 2016)

The SAC has an active Facebook page (using the FLI Facebook page, the last post was May 30, 2016), but a virtual presence that engages students would be: *heightened and more beneficial, dynamic - ours is probably largely one-way, we haven't necessarily moved to the next step of making it more dynamic*” (Mike, 2016). The University’s FLI homepage is where in the future users can find information and notices about the SAC; *an online registration system has been advocated*” (Mike, 2016). At present due to a

recent initiative, students can find information regarding the ELC through faculty using a specific (FLI made); *“PowerPoint talking to the students directly”* (Mike, 2016).

There is no specific SAC website. There is a YouTube channel with ELC videos and worksheets (created by 2 FLI teachers), helping learners with grammar, listening, reading, writing, and speaking. There are no other online language learning materials or resources; *“no [online resources] I would not say those different resources are not needed, I would say that is not the focus right now... have other priorities”* (Mike, 2016).

James (Coordinator, SAC 3)

(From personal interview, March 28, 2016)

The SAC has active Facebook and Twitter accounts (lasts posts June 3, 2016); *“promoting the programs and other things like field trip or parties and learning things based on students can easily see what's going on in the lounge”* (James, 2016). The SAC also has a SAC specific website where students can find information, enrol as SAC members, see and register for Language Clinics; *“we are still developing the website and usually we provide some information about the programs ... we are developing the e-learning system on the website and (soon) we can upload files and videos or materials all the classes, and the students can easily see and share materials”* (James, 2016), but *“the students are not familiar with our website compared to our home page (University website) or Facebook”* (James, 2016).

James does see that an online space is important, in that; *“there are also limitations like we have limited (physical) space for all the students, and if we have the virtual space like eLearning or other things we can provide some valuable materials and other things to the students like more students, not just in the university, but to other centres”* (James, 2016), and that possibly in the future an online space for the local community could be; *“effective”* (James, 2016). Also, it was suggested that the SAC should follow Social Network Service trends to attract and advertise the SAC to students: *“If we just operate our own website not using like the Facebook of the Twitters it's going to be more difficult to introduce to the students, so we may use the most popular SNS at that time, so I cannot say it should be like Facebook or Twitter. Now Instagram actually, not Facebook”* (James, 2016). It was also noted that (in relation to using technology in

the SAC) it is the; *“21st century...people just bring the smartphone or other devices, so visual things, convenient things, games...would be more kind of like popular.”* (James, 2016) The University’s homepage also has a link to the SAC website and is used for advertising. There are no specific online-language learning materials or resources.

Users: Online Space and Values

Bill (Korean, SAC 3)

(From personal interview, March 28, 2016)

Bill who came to the SAC two years ago is aware of the SAC website and Facebook page/group and he believes that the SAC Facebook is *“very useful”*, because every semester; *“every year students attend this school and if they interest in making friends, foreign friends, they have to sign Facebook and know what they do, when its closed, when its reserved”* (Bill, 2016).

Bill thinks that having an LMS such as Moodle would be useful, especially in relation to Korean and international students wanting to learn and share videos and links about their country’s culture, food or language.

Bill would like to see the SAC introducing Skype and Snapchat, focusing on an online *“chatting space”* (Bill, 2016). Bill also talked about using SAC online spaces to advertise the university to prospective international students; *“I think you have to focus on Twitters, I mean, you know and then every semester, probably every semester, we go to another country and then they come here, before the come here, they would like to know about our school”* (Bill, 2016).

Vicky (Korean, SAC 3)

(From personal interview, March 28, 2016)

Vicky is aware of the SAC’s website, unaware of the SAC’s Twitter, and does not use Facebook for privacy reasons. Vicky is an Instagram and Twitter user and would like to see the SAC having an Instagram presence; *“If there are more SNS, International Lounge SNS ID, and then I can connect easily and know more fastly, information, International Lounge has lots of festivals no, events. Facebook these days, there are too many strange people on Facebook, so Koreans or Chinese use Instagram or Twitter. I*

think the hottest SNS in Korea nowadays is Twitter” (Vicky, 2016). Vicky values the idea of an online SAC space in relation to sharing information and easy access; “information is the most important thing because the year announcement is too hard to find and also it’s hard to out announcements all over the university”(Vicky, 2016).

Vicky would like to see a SAC Moodle and for the SAC to bridge the physical Language Clinics with an online Language Clinic; *“how about connect with the ... program or other learning programs in physical space and online space?” (Vicky, 2016). Vicky would also like to see the SAC using “Hellochat” (Vicky, 2016).*

Rebecca (German, SAC 3)

(From personal interview, March 28, 2016)

Rebecca is aware that the SAC has a Facebook where students can *“be kept up to date of what will happen”* and that there is a SAC website where; *“you can apply for Language Clinic classes”* (Rebecca, 2016). Rebecca values the SAC having an online space (especially Moodle), in the future because *“sometimes you want to share some information, so it would be a good platform to share some things, some documents for example”* (Rebecca, 2016). Rebecca highly values the idea of students sharing User Created Content online through a SAC Moodle; *“ I think it would be a great idea for example for learning languages, that would be a great idea to share some content, some contacts, some exercises, those kind of stuff”* (Rebecca, 2016). Rebecca would like to see the SAC website being developed more, specifically in terms of Moodle; *“where we can share a lot of things”* and Instagram *“maybe we can share some pictures. So, you could advertise events on Instagram again”* (Rebecca, 2016). Rebecca would also like to see the SAC listing; *“learning resources online, maybe like vocabulary apps, something like this”* (Rebecca, 2016). Rebecca would also like to see the SAC having its own Youtube Channel, so that the SAC could make videos of events and activities; *“you can just make a short movie and people see it and might think that’s fun, maybe I want to go next time”* (Rebecca, 2016) instead of posters, but Rebecca is also unsure if it would be useful or popular for the lounge.

Susan (Chinese, SAC 3)

(From personal interview, SAC 3 User, Susan, March 28, 2016)

Susan is aware of the SAC Facebook and that the SAC posts a lot of information there but she would like to see posting in different languages (other than English), so that the SAC can attract other students. Susan would also like to see more detailed posting on Facebook, relating to activities and events, who can attend, what is going on; “*will have some activities but we don’t really know what will happen here, like they have some international weeks, what do they really do*”(Susan, 2016). Susan values the SAC having an online learning environment and would like to see the SAC uploading video material to the website (and linked through Facebook), with videos advertising some of the programs, professors (tutors) and SAC users; “*I think we can take a video of the professor or some people who always come here, take a video of them*”, using these videos to advertise the lounge, professors and users to other students (Susan, 2016). Susan would also like to see a SAC Snapchat so that users can post something and connect; “*like took a video of people and upload it, like I’m here, so come to the SAC. Facebook is for everyone, but Snapchat you can add people*” (Susan, 2016).

Discussion

Online space

What do three HEI SACs in Daegu, South Korea do for online space and how is their online space valued by staff and users? The use or non-use of online space in these SACs vary, and is dependent upon values placed on each environment by management and the practicalities of setting up and running these spaces. From the findings, online space can be grouped into Social Network Services (SNS): Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat; Websites: University websites and SAC specific websites; and Learning Management Systems (LMS): Moodle.

The SNS and websites used with these SACs mostly deliver information and advertising; indeed, SACs should in this day and age have websites that provide: “at the very least, basic information such as contact details, opening hours, and answers to frequently asked questions” (Rubesch & Barrs, 2014, p. 44). However, the three SACs do lack LMSs, with almost no online language learning resources and materials, with the

exception of the YouTube channel (SAC 2). SAC specific websites and Moodle can enhance physical SAC resources and materials. They can lead to extensive online resource banks, provide online interactive support, and facilitate social and linguistic communities of practice. These online spaces can act as bridges for users to engage with physical SACs, extending access and allowing learners to truly engage in self-access.

Online Space Values

A number of shared online space values came to light from the findings and are discussed below: *efficacy and effort, need, awareness-raising, reach* and *selection*.

Efficacy and effort

As mentioned earlier, the effort taken to select, set-up, run and maintain online SAC spaces (especially Moodle) is just impractical from the standpoint of some staff. The workload is too much, and the outcomes too limited. But according to the users in this study, the advantages of online spaces are highly valued; there is a need and a desire to use these spaces (Instagram, Twitter, Moodle, etc.) and that language acquisition, through the use of appropriate online tools can both improve and be more enjoyable for users, with enjoyment being the “most powerful external factor which positively effects behavioural intention through usefulness” (Vrieling, 2009, p. 25).

But, the larger problem of staffing still exists. With workloads split between two or three jobs, staff turnover and outside influences such as family or study, it is difficult to be fully committed to both the physical and online spaces of SACs. These divisions in responsibilities can lead to a dilution of quality, and the effort needed to run physical and online spaces can be jeopardized by universities trying to save money by sharing out workloads amongst staff and students. Indeed, this is echoed by Esch (1989) when she mentions that those responsible for funding need to understand not only “what it takes to set up and run a successful self-access system but also why self-access is a fundamental requirement of language learners at all levels and in all learning environments” (p. 83).

Need

What has become evident in this study is the gap between SAC staff online space values and user needs (all four users in this study see the need for such spaces, especially Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and Moodle). This gap has likely arisen from lack of dialogue and evaluation, and what was mentioned before, belief and university support. There needs to be an understanding by those running SACs that online spaces “have value for both the institutions they represent and the learners they serve” (Rubesch & Barrs, 2014, p. 47).

Awareness-raising

Some staff and users see the value and need of online spaces for raising awareness of SACs, through university websites, Facebook and Twitter. Other staff and users are, for the moment, comfortable with not raising awareness as this would cause overflow and they are quite happy to advertise through posters and their university homepage. Awareness-raising though is not just related to advertising, it should make users aware of other learners, other resources, other tools for learning and exchange. This can be done through connected technologies and shared networks, notably Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat.

Reach

An interesting finding which arose from some users and some staff was the idea of online SAC spaces (Twitter) reaching out to those further afield, providing channels of communication to incoming students from abroad, local communities and global university centres. To promote universities and to ready possible future students (orientation, culture, language, networks), Twitter could play a significant role.

Selection

The selection of what to have in an online SAC space is not easy (SNS, LMS, websites, Wikis, Quiz/Surveys, etc.), especially with ever-changing technologies, issues of access, user preferred practices, learning outcomes and varied activities (UNSW, 2015). To overcome this difficulty, constant discussion with users, collaboration with

technicians (if there are any), and evaluations of technologies are needed; one size does not fit all.

Limitations

This study has been localized and is reflective of certain practices that are currently ongoing in HEI SACs in Daegu, South Korea. Findings therefore may not reflect the true nature of online SAC space in HEI in South Korea as a whole.

Also, data were collected from users in the researcher's context (SAC 3) but there was no possible access to users in SAC 1 & SAC 2, so findings of users in SAC 3 may not be reflective of users in SACs 1 & 2.

Future Research and Practice

Today, SAC spaces are continuously changing with the times. Some have moved away from the individual focus, to more community centred spaces, where users have a say in the running of the SAC (Curry & Mynard, 2014, p. 5). Others now and in the future may decrease in physical size and increase in online space, with “a combination of online and in-person interactions that might take place in a physical space, a virtual space or a combination of the two” (Curry & Mynard, 2014, p. 5).

SAC 3 has its foundations in the physical space; a space where students (the most valued resources) meet up and share stories, ideas, and cultures. This SAC also needs online space, one which matches the needs and practices of SAC users, allowing the SAC to go beyond its physical parameters.

In a follow up paper (Clifford, forthcoming) I will present practical ideas on how to bridge physical and online spaces, addressing the differences in values found in this study. A number of suggestions and strategies will be presented concerning: *staffing, training, evaluation, technologies* and *budgeting*.

Summary

This qualitative multiple case study explored what three physical SACs in HEIs in Daegu, South Korea do for their online spaces and how online spaces are valued by stakeholders. Findings show that these SACs have more or less exclusively focused on

their physical environment while neglecting their online potential, resulting in technologies and online spaces (SNS, websites and LMS) being under-utilized, creating value mismatches between current SAC learners and SAC management. The reasons for this neglect are varied, and practical suggestions on how to bridge these spaces will be discussed in a follow-up paper.

Indeed, these SACs have, to a degree, missed Reinders' "boat" (2012, p. 4); however, it is hoped that through further research, dialogue and evaluation, these SACs can realize their online potential, match the values and needs of their users, bridge spaces, and facilitate greater learner autonomy and language learning.

Notes on the Contributor

Seanan Clifford is Director of the International Lounge (a Self-Access Centre) and an Assistant Professor with the Department of European Studies, at Keimyung University, Daegu, South Korea. He holds an MA TEFL/TESL from the University of Birmingham. He is a current PhD student with Lancaster University, studying E-Research and Technology Enhanced Learning. His interests are in self access, learner autonomy, and technology enhanced learning.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Summary Table: SAC 1 Descriptive Observations

Type of SAC:	<p><i>Boutique</i> – primarily caters for students in the Foreign Language Institute.</p> <p><i>Supermarket</i> - a variety of reading materials (mostly periodicals and readers), small in quantity, plus a whiteboard, pens, newspapers</p> <p><i>Technology shop</i> – 4 computers, a TV, a projector and screen, headphones and two or three laptops that can be borrowed by users.</p>
Physical Space	<p>3 areas: 1 large bright modern open area, with chairs and tables, a computer area (four computers and one printer), a resource area (periodicals), a multiple cell-phone charging dock, a headphone collection point, a coffee area, a stage with a projector/screen, a large widescreen TV, a notice board and an information desk and two smaller rooms, with glass walls. 2 is a study room, with a table, chairs and TV. 3 is used for an English Language Clinic (ELC), with table and chairs (with a portable whiteboard if needed).</p>
Reasons for establishing a SAC	To develop English language skills and learner autonomy.
Staffing and management:	<p>A Director of the Foreign Language Institute (FLI) in charge of the SAC.</p> <p>A Coordinator (Responsible for budgeting)</p> <p>Four part-time student staff (help SAC visitors and run the SAC)</p> <p>Seventy-six tutors (contracted FLI tutors who work at the SACs ELC)</p>
Use of SAC:	The SAC is open to all students and staff in the university. Students are encouraged to use the SAC by their teachers, especially the ELC.
Counselling:	<p>Students can receive English language help at scheduled times (around 5 students per hour) and also when teachers are free (i.e. no student is in the ELC - students can drop in if needed.) The administrative team is also on hand to help with any problems, mostly through the Korean language.</p>
Materials and activities:	<p>All periodicals being in English. Advertising and notices are in Korean and English. Materials are commercially produced, except for assignments used in the English Language Clinics. There are no daily or weekly activities scheduled in the SAC, except for the ELC. Upon occasion, there are parties to promote cross cultural interaction, such as Halloween and Christmas parties.</p>
Assessment and evaluation:	<p>Assessment and evaluation: ELC users are evaluated in terms of their overall grade, with grades given for attendance and efforts made. Other students (drop-ins) can ask for feedback from teachers in the ELCs.</p> <p>Students in the larger and study room spaces are not evaluated or assessed.</p>

Appendix: B

Summary Table: SAC 2 Descriptive Observations

Type of SAC:	<i>Boutique</i> - primarily caters for a certain group of users, those who attend the English Language Clinic (ELC) - in a smaller room within the larger space. <i>Technology shop</i> - there are TVs in the larger space and one computer in the smaller room.
Physical Space	2 areas: one, a large modern open area, with chairs and tables, a small information desk and widescreen TVs and two, a small room, used for the ELC, with a large glass window, two tables and chairs and a computer; “there is not a strong relationship between a and b” (SAC 2 Staff)
Reasons for establishing a SAC	To provide an ELC; “to do things outside of the four walls of the classroom” (SAC 2 Staff) and a space where students could meet up, chat or study.
Staffing and management:	A Director of the Foreign Language Institute (FLI) in charge of the SAC. A Coordinator (Responsible for the ELC) Part-time student staff (help SAC visitors and run the SAC) A number of tutors (contracted FLI tutors who work at the SACs ELC)
Use of SAC:	The SAC and ELC are open to all students and staff in the university. Students are encouraged to use the SAC by their teachers. The larger area of the SAC is “used by students to meet other students. It's not focused on English acquisition or anything” and according to SAC 2 Staff; “this space is underutilized.”
Counselling:	Students can receive English language help; “it's almost entirely English” (SAC 2 Staff) at scheduled times and also when teachers are free (i.e. no student is in the ELC - students can drop in if needed.) The administrative team is also on hand to help with any problems, through the Korean language.
Materials and activities:	Outside of the ELC room, there are very few language learning materials. There are about 10 commercially produced books and one poster, showing information about the ELC. Inside the ELC room, there are some language reference materials, a computer and a whiteboard. Upon occasion, “intermittently” in the larger space, parties and events are held to promote cross cultural interaction, such as Halloween, Christmas parties and speech contests; “to reinforce social and English reinforcing events.” (SAC 2 Staff) The larger space is also used for one open access seminar session on one Saturday a semester.
Assessment and evaluation:	ELC users (mostly enrolled FLI students) can be evaluated in terms of their overall grade, with grades given for participation. This is dependent upon the FLI teachers. Other students (drop-ins) can ask for feedback from teachers in the Clinics. Students in the larger and study room spaces are not evaluated or assessed. Users of both spaces are not surveyed in general.

Appendix: C

Summary Table: SAC 3 Descriptive Observations

Type of SAC:	<p><i>Supermarket</i> - provides a lot of materials for users to pick off the shelves, such as Games, Books, DVDs, Newspapers and Periodicals. All materials are labelled and some are levelled for easy access, with instructions on how to use or borrow.</p> <p><i>Technology shop</i> - provides five computers, printing, four TVs, two portable DVD machines and a large screen with a projector.</p>
Physical Space	<p>2 areas: one, a large modern open area, with an information desk, a computer zone, a multi-media zone, a resource zone, a cafe style zone, a traditional seating zone, an outside deck, a kitchen and coffee/snack zone and two, a smaller room for meetings and Language Clinic (LC).</p>
Reasons for establishing a SAC	<p>The SAC was established with the intention of providing a space where Korean and International students could meet up, chat or study; “kind of like a cross-cultural communication space.” (SAC 3 Staff)</p>
Staffing and management:	<p>A Director (Dual Role – Assistant Professor and in charge of the SAC) A Coordinator (Responsible for budgeting) 2 Full-time student staff 10 Part-time staff A number of volunteer and paid tutors (professors, students)</p>
Use of SAC:	<p>The SAC is open to all (students, professors, staff and the local community)</p>
Counselling:	<p>Students are able to receive language help at scheduled times within the Clinic hours and also from the staff at the Information Desk. The administrative team is also on hand to help with any problems, through Korean and English.</p>
Materials and activities:	<p>The SAC has a large variety of materials, mostly commercial books with some SAC made materials, covering a variety of languages and fields of study. The SAC also has board games, a lending book, a DVD library, computers, a piano and a guitar. The SAC holds several parties and events each semester, Halloween, Christmas parties, quiz nights, speed-dating, culture presentations etc. The SAC also holds Culture weeks every 2 weeks, with decorations, presentations and languages displayed in the language of the culture week. Some university Departments hold their student nights in the SAC also. The SAC also holds language and culture days for local community children every week or two weeks. There are field trips once a month, open to International and Korean students. In the smaller room, there are SAC made language materials in a variety of languages to aid the LCs.</p>
Assessment and evaluation:	<p>No users are assessed in terms of grading and feedback can be given by LC teachers when requested by users. Students in the larger space are not evaluated or assessed. Users of both spaces are surveyed twice a semester.</p>