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Scroll down for article

Contents: Volume 4, Number 3, September 2013

Edited by Jo Mynard

- **Editorial** by Jo Mynard (154-156)

Articles

- **"Beautifying the Beast": Customising Online Instruction in a Writing Course for Jamaican Tertiary-level Students** by Michelle Stewart-McKoy (157-174)
- **Enhancing Student Self-Study Attitude and Activity with Motivational Techniques** by Kent Rhoads and Jonathan deHaan (175-195)
- **Development and Use of Moodle for Online Student Support** by Moira Hobbs and Yvonne Hynson (196-207)

Regular Column

- **Needs Analysis: Investigating Students' Self-directed Learning Needs Using Multiple Data Sources** by Keiko Takahashi, Jo Mynard, Junko Noguchi, Akiyuki Sakai, Katherine Thornton and Atsumi Yamaguchi (208-218)

Reviews

- **Book review: The Applied Linguistic Individual: Sociocultural Approaches to Identity, Agency and Autonomy Edited by Phil Benson and Lucy Cooker** by Cem Balçıkanlı (219-222)
- **Book review: Autonomy in Language Learning: Stories of Practices Edited by Andy Barfield and Natanael Delgado Alvarado** by Adelia Peña Clavel (223-226)

Announcements

- **Upcoming Special Issue: Call for papers**

Special Issue on *Assessing and Accessorizing for Self-Access Language Learning (SALL)*. December, 2013 (Volume 4, Issue 4) edited by Carol J. Everhard. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: October 15th, 2013.

- **Event announcement: Directions in Self-access learning Symposium**

One day symposium to be held at Kanda University of International Studies, Japan on October 19th, 2013. Registration free. Open to administrators, educators and students. Please see the website for details:
<http://salcsymposium2013.com/>

Editorial

Jo Mynard, Kanda University of International Studies, Japan

Welcome to a general issue of *SiSAL Journal* that features contributions from colleagues based in Turkey, Jamaica, Mexico, New Zealand and Japan. In this issue, we touch on a range of themes such as online support for self-access and writing, conducting a self-directed learning needs analysis, and uncovering the effects of intentional encouragement for self-access by instructors. We are also fortunate enough to feature reviews of two recent books that have implications for the field of self-access learning.

The first article is by Michelle Stewart-McKoy who is based at the University of Technology in Jamaica. The author discusses an ongoing project where a team designed and developed a customised website for teaching academic writing at the tertiary level in Jamaica. The project draws upon a design-based research approach to and the content is designed to promote online access, and to enhance students' engagement with self-directed writing.

In the next article, by Kent Rhoads and Jonathan deHaan at the University of Shizuoka in Japan, the authors investigate ways in which an instructor motivated and encouraged learners to engage in self-access activities, and the positive impact these actions had in terms of student participation and attitude.

The third article is by Moira Hobbs and Yvonne Hynson from Unitec Institute of Technology in New Zealand. The authors examine the use of social media for learning by both students and teachers. An e-learning platform was created at the authors' institution using Moodle which was designed to provide online support for language. The authors track the development of the platform and show how it supports autonomous self-directed learning at their institution.

Our regular column (edited by Katherine Thornton) continues to document the curriculum development project at Kanda University of International Studies in Japan. In this installment, the focus is on conducting a needs analysis. Keiko Takahashi, Jo Mynard, Junko Noguchi, Akiyuki Sakai, Katherine Thornton and Atsumi Yamaguchi investigate learners' self directed learning needs from the perspective of four major stakeholders: students, teachers, learning advisors and senior management.

We are also fortunate to have two book reviews. The first is of *The Applied Linguistic Individual: Sociocultural Approaches to Identity, Agency and Autonomy*, edited by Phil Benson and Lucy Cooker and published by Equinox. The review was written by Cem Balcikanli from Gazi Universitesi, Ankara, Turkey. I wondered about the implications for our field as “self-access learning” and “autonomous learning” are sometimes (erroneously) assumed to have a focus on learners working alone. The book explores the paradox of the focus on the “self” within social theories of language learning. Phil Benson’s chapter (Chapter 6) discusses the question of how a learner can both follow an individualised plan, yet engage in the social processes deemed necessary for learning to occur.

The second book review was provided by Adelia Peña Clavel who works at the Foreign Language Teaching Center at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. The reviewer gives a brief account of a new ebook *Autonomy in Language Learning: Stories of Practices* which was edited by Andy Barfield and Natanael Delgado Alvarado and published by IATEFL. The book features an entire section on self-access which includes three chapters or “stories” followed by dialogic-style comments on the stories by several responders.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the authors for choosing *SiSAL Journal* as a venue for their work. I would also like to express my gratitude to the reviewers and the members of the editorial team for their help support with producing this issue. I would like to thank our outgoing copy editor, Nathan Johnson, for all his help over the past few years. I also extend a warm welcome to our two new editorial team members: Phoebe Lyon and Neil Curry.

About the Editor

Jo Mynard has been the managing editor of *SiSAL Journal* since it was established in 2010. She is the Director of the Self-Access Learning Centre and Assistant Director of the English Language Institute at Kanda University of International Studies in Japan. She has an M.Phil. in Applied Linguistics from Trinity College, Dublin and an Ed.D. in TEFL from the University of Exeter, UK.

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