Motivational Factors in Students' Non-Use of a Conversation Practice Center

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Abstract

This study investigates the factors that influence a student's motivations for avoiding the use of a conversation practice area in the Self-Access Learning Center (SALC) at Kanda University of International Studies. Data from a survey and semi-structured interviews were analyzed, revealing complex and dynamic interrelationships of motivating and demotivating factors, including lack of awareness, mistaken beliefs and assumptions, anxiety in various forms, preferences for certain interlocutors or interactional settings, and issues of practicality or convenience. The discussion of the findings highlights the necessity of viewing each student as an individual person with agency and identity, situated in their unique contexts, as well as considering the position of the practice center within its own context. The paper concludes with a consideration of the implications for the organization and promotion of the center.

Self-Access Learning Centers (SALCs) are facilities which promote language learner autonomy and the use of the target language outside class. Learner autonomy is defined by Holec (1981, p.3) as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning", and SALCs typically provide support for learning and the development of learner autonomy, as well as a variety of facilities and resources for different types of learners and learning. A feature of many SALCs is an area in which students can practice speaking the target language in a supportive environment. This might be a structured area where students make an appointment, or a more casual space where students are free to come and go. Some are staffed by native-speakers, and others are supported by student staff or volunteers. As classroom time alone is not sufficient

for students' development of English competence (Nunan, 1989), it is particularly necessary to have such a space in monolingual EFL contexts such as Japan, where students have few opportunities to develop their speaking skills outside the classroom. Despite enthusiastic uptake by highly motivated students, self-access centers commonly struggle with the question of how to widen access to a greater number of students and increase students' motivation for using their facilities. Various studies have been published about interventions that have been tried, such as incentivization through stamp cards (Taylor, et al., 2012); integration with the curricula (Adamson, Brown, & Fujimoto-Adamson, (2012); increased marketing and effective staffing (Bibby, Jolley, & Shiobara, 2016); and structured speaking programs (Worth, Fischer, Fritz, & Moore, 2017).

Context

This study focuses on a conversation practice center at Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS), a private international studies university in Chiba, Japan. The center has been a feature of the SALC since its inauguration in its first purpose-built space in 2003, and is a space which provides an opportunity for KUIS students to practice English communication skills in a semi-structured setting. Students use an online system to reserve a 15-minute time slot, during which they can talk with a native or near-native teacher of English about a topic of their own choosing. Students can come alone or with a friend, but not in larger groups. Officially, use of the center should be an autonomous decision, and like every other area of the SALC, teachers should not oblige students to use it. However, many of the users choose to visit in order to complete 'speaking journals' or other assigned oral communication homework tasks. With the relocation of the SALC to a new building in the spring of 2017, there was a reorganization of the center, and it is now one of three services being offered under the umbrella of the Academic Support Area (ASA), the others being support for writing and presentation skills

Although the area is organizationally separate from the SALC, being run by the English Language Institute, it shares the same physical space and is generally considered to be part of the SALC by the students. The SALC also offers other alternative opportunities for L2 language practice, the most popular of which is the English Lounge, where students can engage in casual conversation with teachers, international students, and other Japanese students in a relaxed atmosphere. Students can also participate in one-to-one language exchange with international students, consultations with Learning Advisors (lecturers) or Peer Advisors (students), a lunchtime discussion group and a weekly viewing and discussion of a TED Talk, both run by Learning Advisors, as well as various student-run events and communities, such as Study Buddies and the English Speaking Society.

Previous research on the conversation practice area conducted by Moore and Thornton (2011) focused on students' and teachers' beliefs about the purpose of the center and about the respective roles played by the interlocutors in the interactions that take place there. They describe the center as occupying "a somewhat nebulous space within the university" (p. 78), being staffed by professional teachers within an educational institution, yet providing interactional constraints that allow for a level of informality and familiarity not usually found in a classroom. Furthermore, the way in which a session is conducted is not strictly proscribed, allowing flexibility to accommodate both the student's aims in using the space and the teacher's educational philosophy. However, Moore and Thornton found that both students and teachers can find the constraints and affordances of this complex space somewhat difficult to navigate, and misalignment between the assumptions and expectations of the student and the teacher can lead to miscommunication and dissatisfaction with the interaction on both sides. Nevertheless, the center remains popular among those students who learn to negotiate its complexity. It was among the highest rated areas of the SALC in the last SALC student survey before the start of

this study (News from the SALC, 2016), and many students become regular users.

However, there are large sections of the student body which do not take advantage of the opportunity offered by the center to practice the target language. This study started as an investigation of the motivations of both users and non-users of the center but has since become refined to focus on the reasons why students avoid the center, or try it out and decide not to return. The research sub-questions are as follows:

- What factors influence a student's decision not to use the practice center?
- How does a student's motivation change over their time at KUIS? What factors contribute to the change in motivation, positively and negatively?
- How is a student's motivation influenced by their attitudes towards and beliefs about the SALC and the other opportunities for speaking practice that it offers?
- What implications do the findings of this study have for how the center is promoted to students and how teachers and learning advisors can prepare students to visit the center?

Methodology

This study drew on three sources of data.

In order to understand better who was using the conversation practice center, the usage data from the online reservation system was analyzed. By compiling the reservation data it was possible to determine how many students in each year and department were using the center, how frequently students were using the center, and whether they were using it voluntarily or in order to complete assignments such as speaking journals.

The next step was the inclusion of a question asking for the reasons why non-users do not use the practice center in the annual SALC student feedback survey, thanks to an invitation by the survey task group to take part in the development of the survey. The voluntary survey was administered in July 2017 and received 303 valid responses. The benefit of including the questions in this survey is that it was sent to the whole student body and had a higher rate of response than would be expected from a stand-alone survey. The drawback was that in order to keep the time required to complete the survey as short as possible, only a limited number of items related directly to the conversation practice center could be included. The questions were written in both Japanese and English, and students had the choice of answering in Japanese or English.

After initial analysis of the survey data, a list of questions for one-to-one semi-structured interviews was compiled in order to explore the themes that had emerged from the survey data and to gain deeper insight into the motivations and contexts of individual students than could be achieved through the questionnaire alone. Invitations were sent to potential student participants who had indicated on the survey that they would be willing to take part in a follow-up interview. As far as possible, the participants were selected using purposive sampling for maximum variation in the year and department of study. Table 1 shows the year and department of study of the participants.

Table 1

Interview Participants

Student	Year of Study	Department (Major)	User or Non-User of the Conversation Practice Area
Student A	1st	English	Infrequent User
Student B	1st	Asian Languages (Indonesian)	User
Student C	2nd	Asian Languages (Chinese)	Non-user
Student D	3rd	English	Non-user
Student E	4th	English	Former user
Student F	4th	English	Non-user

Students were given the choice of speaking in English or Japanese, with five choosing mostly English, and one choosing Japanese only. The interviews were recorded, and the audio data was subsequently transcribed, with translation done where necessary. The transcriptions were then coded, and an interpretive analysis was carried out.

Findings

Usage Patterns

While it was initially assumed based on anecdotal observation that students majoring in other languages (Asian Languages Department and Ibero-American Languages Department) were using the center less than students majoring in English (English Department and International Communication (IC) Department), analysis of the reservation data shows that when calculated as a percentage of the student body, there is not a significant difference between non-English majors and English Department students (see Table 2). The rate of usage was significantly higher for the IC Department, but this is in part explained by the fact that the assignment of speaking journals, which many students choose to complete in the conversation practice area, is more common in the IC Department than other departments. 76% of all visits by IC students

were for the purpose of completing homework assignments, compared to 33% in the English Department, 45% in the Ibero-American Languages Department, and 53% in the Asian Languages Department.

Table 2

The Number of Students Who Made One or more Visits to the Conversation Practice Center in Academic Year 2017-18 as a Percentage of the Student Body

| Year of Study | Department | | | | Total |
	Asian	English	Ibero-American	IC	
1st (%)	47.8	39.5	32.0	65.9	46.0
2nd (%)	3.8	8.7	4.2	51.4	18.4
3rd (%)	0.8	3.2	0.0	9.2	4.0
4th (%)	0.6	1.0	3.6	5.0	2.3
Total (%)	15.4	12.4	12.1	31.8	17.7

There is, however, a wide variation in the number of students using the service by year of study, with a significant drop from 46% of 1st year students visiting at least once in academic year 2017-18, to only 4.0% of 3rd year students and 2.3% of 4th year students.

Overall, it can be seen that the majority of the student body (82.3% of students) chose not to use the center in 2017-18.

Survey Responses

172 students responded to the question "If you currently never (or rarely) use the Academic Support Area, can you tell us why not?" The response items were developed through a pilot study with a class of 1st year students. Respondents could select all response items that applied (see Table 3) and selected on average 2.9 responses. Of those 172 respondents, 11 students

responded to an open-ended question asking for clarification of their reasons for not using the center. Those responses were coded and analyzed, and together with the data from the interviews, various themes emerged.

Table 3

Responses to the Question "If you currently never (or rarely) use the Academic Support Area, can you tell us why not? (check all that apply)"(1st Year n=56; 2nd Year n=39; 3rd Year n=40; 4th Year n=37; Total n=172)

	Year of Study				
Reason	1st N (%)	2nd N (%)	3rd N (%)	4th N (%)	Total N (%)
I'm too busy	23 (41.1%)	20 (51.3%)	19 (47.5%)	15 (40.5%)	77 (44.8%)
I don't know how to use the ASA	22 (39.3%)	15 (38.5%)	17 (42.5%)	14 (37.8%)	68 (39.5%)
I don't need practice or advice for this skill area	2 (3.6%)	5 (12.8%)	7 (17.5%)	13 (35.1%)	27 (15.7%)
I have other people/places/ ways to practice this skill area and get advice	5 (8.9%)	11 (28.2%)	8 (20.0%)	11 (29.7%)	35 (20.3%)
I feel nervous about going there	28 (50.0%)	12 (30.8%)	11 (27.5%)	15 (40.5%)	66 (38.4%)
I'm worried that my English level is not good enough	34 (60.7%)	13 (33.3%)	12 (30.0%)	10 (27.0%)	69 (40.1%)
Making a reservation is troublesome	22 (39.3%)	15 (38.5%)	19 (47.5%)	17 (45.9%)	73 (42.2%)
I had a bad experience in the ASA	1 (1.8%)	2 (5.1%)	1 (2.5%)	5 (13.5%)	9 (5.2%)
The location is not convenient	1 (1.8%)	5 (12.8%)	8 (20.0%)	11 (29.7%)	25 (14.5%)

There is no particular reason why I don't use it	11 (19.6%)	6 (15.4%)	9 (22.5%)	10 (27.0%)	36 (20.9%)
Other (please specify)	2 (3.6%)	5 (12.8%)	3 (7.5%)	1 (2.7%)	11 (6.4%)

Awareness and perceptions of the center

Nearly 40% of the students who responded to the question replied that they did not know how to use the Academic Support Area. There was little variation across the year groups, showing that for some students, a lack of information about the center remains a problem throughout their time at the university. One student responded:

> I don't know how to use it, and I've never learned what can be done with all the different facilities in the SALC.

An orientation to the facilities in the SALC is given to all incoming students within their first few weeks at the university, and this covers what the ASA is and how to use it. It is perhaps, however, not surprising that they are unable to retain all of the information given to them in their first weeks when they are overloaded with new knowledge and are struggling to adapt to student life. All four of the non-1st year interviewees recounted similar situations of not knowing how to use the practice center, or the SALC in general, in their 1st year. The experience of Student E, however, indicates the importance of periodic refresher orientations throughout students' time at the university:

> I think there were notices posted about [the conversation practice center] when I was in first year, but I definitely heard more fully about what kind of things we could do there in second year.

After learning about the practice center in more detail in their 2nd year, Student E then began to make use of it.

The interviews also brought up evidence of mistaken perceptions of the purpose of the center and the types of interactions that can take place there. Student B suggested that it might be better to allow two students to visit together, not realising that this is already possible, and when asked what they thought the purpose of the center was, Student D replied "so ELI teachers can hear or listen to about our problems and solve the problems." While giving is advice is certainly part of what can happen in the center, the main purpose is to provide students with a chance to practice conversation in the L2. Student D perceived the teacher's role to be closer to that of a Learning Advisor, and consequently thought that visiting the practice center was unnecessary:

> I don't have to use it because I often talk to my friends about my kind of problems […] and we can solve them.

This kind of misconception of the purpose and functioning of the center is perhaps a result of the flexibility and complexity of the space, as discussed in Moore and Thornton (2011).

Students' perceptions of the people in the area can also cause them to avoid using it. When asked why they thought more of their friends did not use the center, Student B spoke of negative images of both the teachers ("Some students think the teacher is scary") and the students who use the center ("Maybe it has a serious image. It's not easy to go there. Everyone there is studying really hard.") This view was shared by one of the survey respondents:

> The people in the Academic Support Area seem more serious than the people in other

areas, so frankly speaking, it's not easy to go there.

This perception of the serious and hardworking nature of the students who use the practice center is connected to the mistaken belief that a student already needs to have a high level of English to go there. Student E reported this as creating a kind of barrier to entry:

Well, the hurdles are pretty high. There's a very strong feeling that you have to be able to speak [English] very well, so….

That this perception acts as an impediment to usage can also be seen in the survey data where 40% of respondents gave worry about not having a high enough level of English as one of their reasons for not visiting the center. Interestingly, the percentage of respondents giving this response falls sharply from the 1st year to subsequent years, suggesting that students either become more aware of the center's purpose as a place where students of any level can go in order to improve their speaking skills, or they gain in confidence in their own speaking skills through their classes and self-directed learning activities over their 1st year.

Anxiety

38.4% of respondents replied that one of the reasons they never or rarely use the practice center is because they feel nervous about going there. Comments in the survey and the interviews revealed that this anxiety can take different forms.

a) Language

Both Student A and Student E mentioned worries about not being able to communicate with the teacher, with Student E feeling nervous "about what would happen if I couldn't express myself well," and Student A stating that "when I speak English, I always feel nervous. I have

no confidence speaking English." However, it should be noted that anxiety about language was not a big enough factor to prevent these two students from making (limited) use of the practice area as the perceived potential benefits in terms of improved fluency outweighed the potential embarrassment of not being able to communicate smoothly.

b) Meeting new people

Anxiety about communication goes beyond worries about English ability, as some students are nervous about talking to people they don't know, whatever the language. Student A said "I hesitate to meet new people, new teacher. [...] Not only in English." This student mitigated their anxiety by only visiting the practice center when a teacher that they knew was on duty. However, for Student C, their aversion to talking to other people prevented them from taking advantage of both the practice center and any other opportunities for practicing the L2 in the SALC, despite showing an interest in talking to people from other countries:

> I don't like talking with anybody. I like just be myself. […] Language level is part of the problem, but the biggest reason is that I don't like speaking, […] also in Japanese.

c) Talking one-to-one

The interactional setting of talking alone with a teacher also causes anxiety for some students. One respondent to the survey replied "If I'm alone, I don't have enough courage, so it's difficult for me to go." Student F also mentioned support from other students as one of the reasons why he preferred to go to the English Lounge rather than the conversation practice center:

> When I came to this kind of [English Lounge] or speaking practice area, I get more nervous or worry about coming here when I came there alone, but maybe if I have some friends who came together, I will be more encouraged.

d) Topic

Closely connected to the issue of talking one-to-one with the teacher is anxiety about not being able to find a topic for discussion. Student A mentions this as the main reason for her preference for talking in a small group in the English Lounge rather than with a teacher at the practice center:

> When I run out of things to say half-way through, teacher always ask "Anything else?" I have no idea. […] .I want to talk with one-to-one, but the thing I'm most afraid of is running out of things to talk about. In those situations, it's helpful to have friends or other people with you. It's easiest to talk in groups of 3 or 4 people.

Student F also states a preference for group discussions rather than one-to-one with a teacher due to the difficulty of finding a topic:

> My friend says like you can talk whatever you want to talk, but maybe it's difficult for me to find some topic, or yeah, maybe so for example I come here I don't know what to talk. […] If we have several students, it will be easy to extend the conversation more or develop the idea and we can get lots of ideas.

Choice of interlocutor and interactional setting

While there may be some students who use the conversation practice area as a language practice resource without any regard for who their interlocutor is, there is evidence that for many students, social factors play a large role in their decision about when and whether to use the service, with the choice of interlocutor being of great importance. We saw in the section above on anxiety that Student A only used the practice center when they were able to make an

appointment with a teacher that they knew and avoided the center at other times. A survey respondent also commented "I didn't come because I couldn't make an appointment with the teacher that I wanted to."

For other students, who the individual interlocutor is does not hold so much importance, but the type of interlocutor and the interactional setting does. As mentioned in the introduction, the conversation practice center is just one of a wide selection of opportunities for practicing the L2 that are offered in the SALC. In the case of all the students interviewed, a decision not to visit the conversation practice center was not a decision to avoid practicing the L2. Instead it was a decision to practice with an interlocutor and in an interactional setting that are better aligned with their language learning goals and beliefs and that better suit their practical needs. Students are able to make a choice from a variety of activities that intersect along different continuum to create varied permutations of:

- native language of interlocutor (native / non-native)
- social distance of interlocutor (teacher / learning advisor / international student / junior or senior student / peer)
- level of English of interlocutor
- number of interlocutors (one-to-one / small group / large group)
- topic of discussion (academic focus / advice / casual)
- time of day (one fixed time only / reservation at any time possible / come and go as you please)
- length of interaction (fixed /free)

For example, Student E chose to use the practice center for the type of English that they could learn there:

Well, it was really because the native, the teachers whose mother tongue is English are there, so I went to hear more correct, more academic ways of speaking and writing than I could with other students or my friends.

Student D often goes to the English Lounge and stated a preference for talking with other Japanese students rather than teachers or international students:

[With students] it is easy to talk about normal things, about class [...] the teacher often speaks in a kind of difficult vocabulary, the words I don't know. It feels me kind of negative. [...] Yeah, having kind of conversation and getting together with [international students] sounds interesting, but it's kind of shy. They are international students, so they will speak a little bit difficult.

Student B uses both the practice center and the English Lounge, depending on whether they have a "serious feeling" or just want relaxed chat. Student F prefers the English Speaking Society because it is student-run and has motivated members, but has more structure than the English Lounge. Even Student C, who does not use the speaking facilities on campus, communicates regularly with a family in New Zealand that they know and feel comfortable with.

However, from talking to the interviewees about the various possibilities open to them, it became clear that they were lacking the information needed to make a fully-informed decision about which of the choices was best for them. For example, none of the participants knew about 1-1 language exchange with international students, Study Buddies, or the lunchtime discussion group, and most of them were confused about what a Peer Advisor is. The number of survey respondents who replied that they "have other people/places/ways to practice this skill area and

get advice" was particularly low among 1st year students, perhaps suggesting that it takes time for students to acquire information about the alternatives available to them.

Practicalities

Students also choose not to use the center for more structural or practical reasons. 44.8% of respondents replied that they are too busy, a common complaint among students who are struggling to balance assignments, self-directed study, club activities, part-time jobs, job-hunting in the 3rd and 4th year, and household chores in the case of those who live alone.

The online reservation system can also cause issues, and 42.2% of the survey respondents replied that making a reservation is troublesome. At first the system can be confusing, as Student A experienced: "I thought a little difficult. I didn't know how to reserve, so then I was a little confused." With guidance, students can learn to use the system, but the lack of available teachers at certain popular times of day may still deter some students, such as Student B: "I prefer to go here [the practice center], but sometimes couldn't reserve the teacher so I go to [English Lounge]."

As for the inconvenience of the location, only 1.8% of 1st year respondents gave it as a reason for not visiting the center, which is unsurprising as 1st year students have most of their classes in the same building as the center. This number rose to 29.7% for 4th year students, who have classes in other buildings and tend to spend less time on campus due to job hunting and a lower numbers of classes in their final year.

Changing needs over time

Motivation is dynamic and is subject to variability and change over time (Waninge, Dörnyei,

& De Bot, 2014), so it is to be expected that change occurs in students' motivations for using the practice center. As seen from the data on patterns of usage, the number of student users falls significantly in the 3rd and 4th year.

While only 3.6% of 1st year survey respondents replied that they did not "need practice or advice for this skill area", this percentage grew with each year of study, rising to a peak of 35.1% of 4th year students. There is some evidence that certain sections of the student body are no longer motivated to improve their spoken English ability, perhaps because they have reached a level of English that enables them to pursue their chosen career goals, or because their chosen career path does not require spoken English. Taken together with the low numbers of classes in English that 4th year students generally take, this could be a reason for low extrinsic motivation for using the practice center. One 4th year survey respondent replied:

> Now I'm in my 4th year, I'm not taking any lessons in English, and I almost never have any situations where I need to use English, so I don't have any reason to use [the practice center].

In the case of other respondents, a change in their language learning goals meant a change in their language practice habits, such as in the case of Student E. This student associated the type of language used in the conversation practice center with the language used in the classroom. When they were in the 2nd year, their language learning goal was to improve their academic English in order to participate in class, so they started attending the practice center. Later in their 2nd year, when it was decided that they would study abroad in their 3rd year, their attendance at the practice center increased in order to get used to the style of conversation used by native speakers of English. However, after they returned from study abroad, they no longer

had any classes in English, and their language learning goal changed to maintaining the casual English that they had acquired overseas, which the student decided would be better served by talking to the international students in the English Lounge.

> Before, I wanted it to be useful in my lessons, but after I came back, all my lessons that were taught in English had finished, so I would have to keep using [the English Lounge] so that, as much as possible, I wouldn't forget the English I had learned when I was studying abroad. […] When talking with the teachers, we have to use polite expressions and […] we have to be careful about that, but with the international students, I figured I could talk casually like I do with my friends every day.

Discussion and implications

This exploration of the various factors involved in students' decisions not to use the practice center underlines the complex and dynamic nature of motivation. From the survey, in which 73% of respondents selected more than one reason for not using the practice center, we can see the complex interplay of needs, beliefs and interests that influence the students' decision-making. By further focusing in on particular students through the interviews, we are able to see the individual as a person with agency and identity, situated in their unique contexts. Ushioda (2011, pp. 14-15) argues that we should be engaging with learners not as "abstract models", but as people with their own complex system of interrelated experiences, social relations, goals and motivations. As educators, when we consider how to support our students in their autonomous decision-making, we need to engage with them first as individuals, not as generalisations.

We also need to place the conversation practice center within its own context and understand

how students' motivations towards using the center are influenced by their attitudes and beliefs about the SALC as a whole and about the various opportunities for language development afforded within it. Edlin (2017) writes that the "SALC, with its large semiotic budget, allows for a wide plethora of [inter]actions to take place, which can accommodate the interests, needs, and preferences, without overtly prescribing some particular developmental path" (p. 17). As the facilities that the university invests the most resources in, the conversation practice area and the English Lounge are often held up to students as the "gold standard" of student participation in the SALC. However, there may be other opportunities for language practice that better suit the students' needs and motivations, and we, as teachers, should help them navigate the decision-making process to find the one that is best for them, without inducing any of the guilt that many of the interview participants showed about not using the practice area (Student A: "I don't use this area often, but I always think I have to try to go here").

From the findings of this study, it is clear that many students do not have a full enough awareness or knowledge of the various opportunities afforded to them in the SALC to be able to make fully informed decisions. Since the completion of the data collection portion of this study, an explanatory leaflet has been printed for the Academic Support Area, which will help to guide those students who are interested, but it must be presented to students with a clear explanation. Furthermore, information about the opportunities in the SALC should not only be provided during the hectic orientation period, but throughout the students' time at the university. In order to better familiarize the students with the options and dispel the incorrect perceptions that they hold about the areas/services, it could be recommended to show example interactions to the students. A study by Rose (2007) also shows how students' intrinsic motivation to use the areas could be increased by having them discuss the benefits and advantages of each area/service (p. 179).

In order to help the students overcome anxiety about using these areas, class teachers could assist their students in finding interlocutors who have similar interests as them and in learning something about their interloctor before the interaction so that they do not feel like such a stranger, using, for example, the self-introduction posters that each teacher makes to post on a wall in the SALC. Greater assistance with selecting and preparing suitable topics could give students confidence that they will not run out of something to say in a one-to-one interaction. For less confident learners, a scaffolded system of topic preparation such as that introduced by Worth, Fischer, Fritz, and Moore (2017) could be considered. There is also a gap in the SALC's offerings for structured, small-group discussions, a format that was requested by several interview participants. Finally, it is important to ensure availability of teachers at times that are convenient for students. To this end, opening hours of the practice center have been extended by 90 minutes on four days of the week in academic year 2018-19, and this has proved popular with students.

Limitations and future research

All the participants in this study showed high degrees of intrinsic and/or extrinsic motivation for developing their speaking abilities, and all but one were taking advantage of some form of speaking practice opportunity in the SALC. This is perhaps unavoidable as those students who have the confidence to volunteer for an interview are also more likely to have the confidence to practice the L2 in the SALC. Interviewing students who do not do any form of out-of-class speaking practice and who have low levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation would enhance the study. While we do not wish to make generalizations of any groups, a greater diversity of student voices would add to the richness of the picture of complexity. Further research could also be carried out on how students navigate the various options available to them in the SALC, and on the effectiveness of various interventions in helping them in this navigation.

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