

Wednesday 3 June

2:20pm - 3:00pm

Room: Block Y, Room Y306

Presentation Title: An investigation of student use of the English-only speaking area

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Theme:	Self-directed and self-access learning
Presentation Type:	Paper presentation

Abstract

This is an extensive study of freshman students' use of an English-only area designed as a drop-in center for students to practice English with language instructors. The study investigated whether students' language ability, year level and department influenced use of this facility. Data was collected through a log of student use of the area over a two-week period, and a survey given to 575 freshman students across three departments. Interviews were also carried out with all 40 language instructors and learning advisers, providing an additional perspective. The data showed no relationship between student language ability and satisfaction, comfort and use of the area. This challenged the assumption that higher-level students use the area more often and are more comfortable and confident than lower-level students. The interviews with teachers indicated that ongoing speaking tasks throughout the first semester, like those used in one of the departments, could encourage more frequent use of the English-only area, resulting in continued use of the area in later years. This study then examines the effect of the introduction of a number of "self-study" tasks into the English curriculum.

Biodata

Heath Rose is Assistant Professor at Rikkyo University in Tokyo, Japan, where he coordinates and teaches a number of Academic English courses.