Social Spaces for Language Learning

Also by Garold Murray

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Social Spaces for Language Learning: Stories from the L-café

▶ Edited by

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SOCIAL SPACES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Contents

Notes on Contributors	vii
1 Exploring a Social Space for Language Learning <i>Garold Murray and Naomi Fujishima</i>	1
Part I Administrators' Perspectives	
2 Creating the L-café: An Administrator's Standpoint <i>Makoto Tahara</i>	14
3 Five Years at the L-café: The Secret of Its Success <i>Mariko Uzuka</i>	21
4 Management of L-café <i>Masumi Fujimoto</i>	31
Part II Teachers' Perspectives	
5 What I Learned from Working at the L-café <i>Bob Lamitie</i>	41
6 Writing Tutorials at the L-café <i>Masumi Igarashi</i>	50
7 Providing Study Abroad Advice as a Viable Use of Social Learning Spaces <i>Thomas Fast</i>	60
8 Optimizing Affordances: Developing a 'Digital Habitat' for the L-café <i>Claire Uchida</i>	69

Part III Students' Perspectives

9	The Door to the L-café, the Door to the World <i>Naoko Nakamoto</i>	80
10	My Life in the L-café from Different Angles <i>Kanako Miyake</i>	86
11	L-café: The International Home <i>Kelly Marie Ho</i>	91
12	Defining Experience through the L-café <i>Daniel Tangonan</i>	96
13	The Dark Side of L-café <i>Yosuke Hino</i>	100
14	My Critical Thoughts on the English Café and the L-café <i>Saburo Fukuba</i>	105
15	How I Got Involved with the L-café <i>Yu Miura</i>	110
16	Fulfilling Time at the L-café <i>Yuya Tanimoto</i>	114
17	L-café: The Source of My Motivation to Study English <i>Kazunori Kuwada</i>	119
18	Understanding a Social Space for Language Learning <i>Garold Murray and Naomi Fujishima</i>	124
	References	147
	Index	152

Notes on Contributors

The administrators and teachers who contributed stories to this volume, along with the editors, currently work or have worked in the Language Education Center at Okayama University, Japan. While the students were enrolled at Okayama University when they wrote their stories and would have studied English or Japanese in the Language Education Center, most of them have since graduated and joined the workforce or moved on to other educational endeavors.

Thomas Fast has taught secondary and post-secondary English and Spanish. He has been a founding faculty member of two charter high schools in the United States and Japan. His research interests include study abroad, global education, and 21st-century skills in language education. He was awarded a Best of JALT 2012 Award for his talk entitled ‘Global Issues in Language Education’ by the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT).

Masumi Fujimoto is the manager of L-café. She has accumulated two years of hands-on experience working with Japanese and international students. One of her goals is to make the L-café a popular and friendly place for all Okayama University students. She also teaches a course on Japanese pop culture and anime. Prior to managing the L-café, she worked as an academic advisor for study abroad programs for over 20 years.

Naomi Fujishima has been teaching English at universities in Japan for over 20 years. She has been at her current

position at Okayama University since 2006. She is an active member of JALT (Japan Association for Language Teaching) and has been on the JALT International Conference planning committee for the past ten years. Her research interests include learner development and student motivation. She enjoys collaborating on research projects with her colleagues, but her real love is teaching.

Saburo Fukuba graduated with a degree from the Faculty of Literature and is now working for a major Japanese manufacturing firm.

Yosuke Hino is currently a graduate student of Okayama University studying English education.

Kelly Marie Ho was an exchange student from October 2014 to February 2015 studying Japanese language. She is currently studying English Language and Linguistics at York St. John University in the United Kingdom.

Masumi Igarashi holds a PhD in Art History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Having specialized in modern art, she is a former curator at an art museum. Utilizing her experiences at graduate school, she now helps Japanese college students improve their academic writing skills in English. Her current research interests include politics in culture and language education.

Kazunori Kuwada is majoring in English literature and has studied in Australia for one year.

Bob Lamitie has taught in Japan and the United States. He has lived in Japan for 23 years and taught in many different Japanese educational niches, ranging from conversation schools to English cafes, from English clubs to informal small groups and from large medical universities to community colleges. He has enjoyed the experiences these positions have offered and relishes the chance to learn new things every day here in Japan.

Yu Miura is currently majoring in literature and will graduate in March 2016. He will work as an English teacher in Japan.

Kanako Miyake will graduate with a degree from the Faculty of Law in the spring of 2016 and will work for a consultant firm in Tokyo.

Garold Murray has taught EFL courses in undergraduate, graduate, and teacher education programs. In addition to having established two

self-access centers in Japan – one of which was open to the general public – he has served as president of the Japan Association of Self-Access Learning (2005–2010) and convener of the AILA Research Network on Learner Autonomy in Language Learning (2005–2011). His recent publications explore learner autonomy in relation to imagination and the social semiotics of place.

Naoko Nakamoto is a student in the Faculty of Literature and is currently studying in the United States.

Daniel Tangonan was an international exchange student from April 2014 to February 2015 studying Japanese Language. He is currently completing a degree in Cultural Studies and Education at the University of Guam.

Makoto Tahara holds an MS and a PhD in Plant Genetics from Oklahoma State University in the United States and has firsthand experience of what it is like to be a Japanese student living in a foreign country with only school-taught English. Therefore, he knew that setting up a place on the Okayama University campus where Japanese students could meet and speak English comfortably with international students was quite an important project.

Yuya Tanimoto graduated with a degree from the Faculty of Education and is now working at a high school in Okayama as an English teacher.

Claire Uchida is interested in collaboration and learner autonomy and has been working with Web 2.0 tools to try to better understand how interactive technologies can support differentiated teaching and learning styles, enhance personal learning environments, and foster more rewarding collaboration. She has been exploring how digitally enhanced learning, offering a great variety of modalities and media, can make learning more effective and more fun.

Mariko Uzuka's background is in management and marketing. She established and managed the English Café, which, under her direction, expanded and transformed into the L-café, a multilingual, multicultural social learning space. Currently she works in the Center for Global Partnerships and Education where she is in charge of international student advising, and maintains close ties with the L-café. In addition to the management of social learning spaces, her interests include peer teaching and global education.

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