ISSN 2433-5444

Relay Journal

<https://kuis.kandagaigo.ac.jp/relayjournal>

Editorial

Jo Mynard, Kanda University of International Studies, Japan

Satoko Kato, Kanda Institute of Foreign Languages, Japan

Hayo Reinders, Unitec, New Zealand

To cite this article

Mynard, J., Kato, S., & Reinders, H. (2018). Editorial. *Relay Journal*, 1(1), 1-5.

To link to this article

<https://kuis.kandagaigo.ac.jp/relayjournal/issues/jan18/editorial/>

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Please contact the authors for permission to re-print elsewhere.

Scroll down for article.

Editorial

Jo Mynard, Kanda University of International Studies, Chiba, Japan

Satoko Kato, Kanda Institute of Foreign Languages, Tokyo, Japan

Hayo Reinders, Unitec, Auckland, New Zealand

Welcome to the first issue of Relay Journal which is published by the Research Institute for Learner Autonomy Education (RILAE) at Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS), Japan. We are so pleased to be able to present this new publication to you, specifically established for the purposes of sharing best practice and new ideas in the area of learner autonomy and all related topics. We hope this will become a thriving, supportive and long-lived site for practitioners and researchers around the world. In fact, we hope it will become a community more than anything; a place where we can learn from each other and advance the field, help learners to learn better, teachers to develop new skills and researchers to gain new insights. To this end we have created Relay Journal to:

- be open to anyone interested in learner and teacher autonomy: university lecturers, early childhood teachers, full-time researchers, part-time students, everyone
- include both research and practical contributions
- be an active and supportive forum for students working in the area of autonomy
- include a wide range of articles, from full-length papers, to short ideas for sharing and everything in between (see below)
- include interviews, audio and video posts and innovative materials
- use a post-publication peer-review process so that *all* contributions are published and receive constructive, public feedback
- use a peer-mentoring system where we all work collaboratively and constructively to develop ourselves and our community, together. For this reason, reviews are NOT anonymous

We hope that the above will help to create a friendly environment that people from all backgrounds and of all levels of experience in autonomy feel comfortable participating in. We particularly hope that new and emerging teachers and researchers will use Relay Journal as a springboard to develop the confidence and skills to share their work.

We hope you will join us on this exciting journey and we look forward to seeing your contributions - of whatever type - in the Journal.

This Issue

Featured Theme: Evaluating Learner Autonomy

In November, 2017 RILAE hosted the first online event, called a ‘LAb Session’, with the theme of evaluating autonomous language learning. We were interested in exploring ways in which we might identify and evaluate autonomy in language learning, or particular aspects or dimensions of it. Recordings of all of the presentations can be accessed here [<https://kuis.kandagaigo.ac.jp/rilae/lab-sessions/16-nov-2017-lab/>] and two of the invited presenters have contributed papers to this issue. **Carol J. Everhard** has provided an extremely thorough literature review, which could act as a starting point to anyone wishing to explore the relationship between autonomy and assessment in language learning. **Maria Giovanna Tassinari** focusses on self-assessment in her thoughtful paper. She presents a dynamic tool and describes how it can be used in practice. Self-assessment is also explored in **Scott Shelton-Strong**’s thought-provoking paper, where he describes a classroom-based intervention using assessment descriptors engaging learners in reflection.

Reflective Practice Column (Edited by Kie Yamamoto)

The aims of this regular column are to promote reflective practice in the field of advising, by giving opportunities for practitioners to publish reflective narrative pieces. More details are outlined in the introduction by **Jo Mynard**, **Satoko Kato** and **Kie Yamamoto**. There are six reflective narratives in this first issue. Four of the narratives have been written from the perspective of a novice advisor at the early stages of exploring a new role. Three colleagues from Yıldırım Beyazıt University (YBU) in Ankara, Turkey - **Gamze Güven Yalçın**, **Stephanie Howard**, and **Hatice Karaaslan** reflect on their first real advising sessions, which took place as part of an advisor education programme offered by RILAE at KUIS. The authors also draw upon reflective dialogues with their colleagues. **Kie Yamamoto**, an experienced advisor, refers to a written journal exchange with her mentor in her first year and reflects on her journey to ‘becoming’ a learning advisor. **Jo Mynard** shows that experienced advisors still benefit from reflecting on their practice and analyses a series of advising sessions to examine her non-directive advising stance in more detail. Finally, **Mümin Şen** and colleagues at YBU co-authored a creative, collaborative collage which

explores their reflections on various aspects of their advisor development at the midpoint of their advisor education programme offered by RILAE.

Perspectives and Summaries

The purpose of this regular feature of Relay Journal is to give authors an opportunity to explore and disseminate engagement related to learner autonomy - at whatever stage they are at in the thinking process or project. Whereas traditional journals do not necessarily feature such pieces, we see them as an important feature. In this issue, there are nine pieces in this section, which have been divided into two parts. The first part features papers that mainly explore theoretical and reflective ideas. **Phillip A. Bennett** explores affective factors in learner autonomy. **Curtis Edlin** examines the role of MOOCs for reflection on learning and learning and their place in self-access. **Kyoko Gruendel** explores the relationship between learner autonomy and teacher autonomy. **Charlotte Lin** explores career planning tools and the role they might play in developing learner autonomy. **Ewen MacDonald** reflects on approaches for developing learner autonomy in small language schools and cram schools in Japan. Finally, **Caron Treon** reviews the literature on social interactions in online environments and explores autonomy and motivation in particular.

The second part contains papers that mainly have applications to practice. **Lorna S. Asami** describes a series of classroom activities she designed for students at Kanda Girls High School in Tokyo that help them to reflect on presentation tasks. Next, as part of their role as coordinators in the Self-Access Learning Center (SALC) at KUIS, **Curtis Edlin** and **Yuri Imamura** document activities related to resources. Their paper helps us to understand the expanding definition of 'resources' in a SALC. Finally, **Yuri Imamura** describes the challenges with implementing a language policy in a SALC and summarises some of the interventions that the SALC team are trialling at KUIS.

Research Projects

Three research projects are disseminated in this issue. Firstly, **Michael Burke** and colleagues summarize an ethnographic project in progress, which is concerned with observing a social learning space. **Allen Chen** and **Jo Mynard** report on student perceptions of a conversation lounge after a layout change emphasising the importance of involving students in decision making. Finally, **Tomoya Shirakawa** categorises findings from interviews with peer tutors and develops a model for tutor autonomy.

Innovative Practice

Innovative practice articles offer authors a chance to share new ideas and explore new areas of research and practice. Innovative practice articles could include descriptions of new materials, a new language advising approach trialled in a self-access centre, the use of a new app for out-of-class learning, or any other development or innovation. Essentially we invite authors to tell us 1) what the challenge was that prompted them to come up with an idea (lack of student engagement, too many students in class, etc), 2) what their idea was and how they came up with it, 3) how they implemented it, and 4) how it worked. Authors can also include a section where they describe what they will do next and what the implications are. This issue includes a paper by **Euan Bonner** and **Erin Frazier**, who give a summary of the development and implementation of a custom-made app designed to enhance a self-access tour. This is an excellent example of innovative practice drawing on augmented reality technology.

Information for Potential Contributors

We hope you enjoy this first issue of Relay Journal and we invite you to get involved. As we operate a post-publication peer-review policy, you are welcome to review one of the papers publicly. Please contact the editors for more details. We also invite you to submit a paper for the next issue, which will be published in September 2018. The theme of the featured papers will be Autonomy and Affect, but general papers related to learner autonomy are also welcome. The deadline for submissions is August 31st, 2018. Please see this page for more details <https://kuis.kandagaigo.ac.jp/relayjournal/for-authors/>

Acknowledgements

We are grateful for members of the editorial team and to the reviewers for engaging with the ideas and raising thoughtful questions and ideas. Heartfelt thanks go to:

Neil Curry
Huw Davies
Curtis Edlin
Carol J. Everhard
Kayoko Horai
Napat Jitpaisarnwattana
Leena Karlsson
Bethan Kushida
Phillip Bennett

Pornapit Darasawang
Elizabeth Lammons
Ewen MacDonald
Chris Maschio
Bob Morrison
Garold Murray
Scott Shelton-Strong
Hinako Takeuchi
Giovanna Tassinari
Katherine Thornton
Isra Wongsarnpigoon
Satomi Wolfenden
Kie Yamamoto