Inducing Maori and Asian students in the use of the Self–access Learning Laboratory at the Auckland University of Technology

Jennifer Naeem, The Learning Development Centre (Te Tari Āwhina)
Auckland University of Technology, Jennifer.Naeem@aut.ac.nz

Abstract

A great deal of interest has emerged in recent years, in language learning studies, regarding the use of self-access learning centres to promote greater autonomy and learning. A number of self-access centres have emerged in many tertiary institutions in New Zealand and globally over the last two decades. However, there is no clear link between autonomy and self-access and we need to first establish how students view such centres, what students expect from them and what we can do to actively involve them in effective language learning and teaching.

This presentation reports on a study that sought to investigate the perceptions and expectations of language learners from two different cultural groups, the Maori and Asian regarding self–access and the use of the self access learning centre at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in Auckland, New Zealand. The session will summarize the aim, results and conclusions of the study and offer methods of involving a wider group of students in utilising an innovative teaching/learning tool such as the self access learning centre. The presenter suggests that in order to maximise learning opportunities, all learners ought to be encouraged to engage in and utilise self-access centres through more culturally appropriate ways such as the provision of a more inclusive learning environment, learner training, and promotion of the centre by both individual lecturers and the institution as a whole.