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Innovation in Self-Access: Three Case Studies[1]

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Abstract

This article reports the findings of a study into the use of technology in three self-access centres. It is based on the results of an earlier study that applied an evaluative framework to compare the use of technology in 45 self-access centres worldwide and identified the three most intensive users of technology. This article describes the types of support offered by these centres and the technological tools to deliver that support. It also presents a case study of the centres to identify the unique characteristics of their support and to examine the effects on their wider educational context.

Keywords: Learner Autonomy; Self-access; Computer-assisted language learning; Innovation; language support

Introduction

Technology has the potential to offer language educators more flexible ways of supporting learners. Especially in the case of self-access, this is important as most learners unpredictably use the available resources, based on immediate and highly individual language learning needs. This poses challenges for support staff who struggle to connect with learners for ongoing feedback, language advice, and where desirable, assessment. In a previous study of 45 self-access centres worldwide it was found that the potential of technology to deal with these challenges was generally not realised. There were, however, a small number of centres that had developed innovative approaches to supporting self-access learning. In this study, an evaluative framework developed by the authors is applied to these centres to identify the types and range of support they offer, and their approaches are described in detail.

Literature Review

Few studies exist that investigate the use of technology in (face-to-face or distance) out-of-class settings. Self-access centres present one case where technology can potentially play an important role in supporting learners by giving access to language help in a variety of forms independent of time and location. This is particularly important in the self-access

context where learners usually access support not as part of a structured programme but rather based on a wide range of different language needs. The use of technology in such contexts has not been widely documented, however. One report by Caballero Rodriguez & Ruiz Madrid ll (2006) describes a Multimedia System of Interactive Autonomous Language Learning (SMAIL), developed by and implemented at a consortium of tertiary institutions, that promotes learner autonomy. It analyses students' learning profile through a range of tests (to determine whether a student has a preference for example for active vs. reflective, emotional vs. rational, synthetic vs. analytical, visual vs. verbal, inductive vs. deductive, cooperative vs. individualistic, or field-dependent vs. field-independent learning) and a learning styles test that mediates the students' access to the materials and activities. An important objective of the building up of a learning profile is to encourage self-reflection on the part of the students, of their preferred ways of learning. Completion of the profile helps the students access appropriate learning materials and activities that together form a pathway, relevant to the students' preferences. The computer prompts students to set learning objectives and plan their learning, encourages strategic learning, and gives opportunities for self-assessment.

Brammerts & Kleppin (2001) and Lázaro Torres (2006) report on different e-tandem projects that aim to foster autonomous learning in a self-access context. E-tandem is based on the same principles of reciprocity and autonomy as traditional tandem learning (Brammerts, 2001; Little, 2001). Technology has greatly facilitated the possibilities for tandem learning and has opened up opportunities for new ways of collaboration and exchange, not previously possible. The different projects used mainly e-mail, although chat and telephone were offered as alternative ways of communicating with the language partner. The learning process was guided by teachers and learning advisers. Although learner diaries were used in most of the projects, the use of e-portfolios or blogs was not reported. Approaches based around e-tandem have a challenge in integrating new technologies to facilitate learning; the use of blogs for example, which are often interactive, offers potential for learners to share their experiences and stories and learn from others.

Investigating the implementation of technology in the self-access context can shed light on the potential for technology to help educators provide alternative types of help. However, until recently no instrument existed to allow the systematic comparison of centres in their use of technology. For this reason, Lázaro & Reinders (2006) developed an evaluative framework that can be used for benchmarking purposes. When applied to 45 studies worldwide, it was found that most centres used technology mainly to provide language content, not to support the learning process. To further investigate this point the original framework was divided into three components to distinguish between 1) the individual centres' content provision, 2) language learning support and 3) additional types of support (see Table 1).

Table 1:
Evaluative framework: types of support provided

Content provision
Electronic catalogue
Direct (electronic) access to resources

Communication tools
Language learning materials
Language learning support
Learning activities
Computer-mediated language advice
Needs analysis tools
Learning process planning tools
Learner training
Learning process monitoring tools

The category content provision includes 1) an electronic catalogue which gives access to resources. This is a key feature in self-access as the materials form the basis of students' self-directed learning. To facilitate access to resources, many centres develop specialised catalogues that allow searching by level, language skill, and sub-skill (e.g. 'writing' or 'writing expository essays'), topic, etc. Many also give 2) direct electronic access to resources (usually through the catalogue) and 3) communication tools allow communication between language advisors and learners, and learners among themselves through synchronous and asynchronous communication tools such as e-mail, chat facilities, and discussion forums. Communication can serve both administrative and pedagogical purposes. The latter is classified in the framework under 'learning support'. 4) Language learning materials.

The category of language learning support includes any intervention in the students' learning process. The difference between content provision and learning support is crucial within this evaluative framework as it allows the classification of pedagogical uses of technology. Learning support includes the following components: 1) language learning activities, 2) computer-mediated language advice. Many SACs offer a so-called language advisory service. This type of service involves one or more meetings between an advisor and a student to help identify learning needs, plan learning, monitor progress and give advice, model strategies, and offer encouragement (cf. Mozzon-McPherson & Vismans 2001). In an increasing number of cases, this type of support is offered online or within an LMS. 3) Needs analysis tools and 4) learning process planning, including tools for determining priorities, for allocating time to each priority, for setting goals and sub-goals, etc. Normally this planning process takes place in an integrated module as part of the needs analysis process. 5) Learner training: technology is used in different ways to support or encourage students in developing their learning skills and to engage in metacognitive processes. This can be done for example through providing information about learning strategies or by analising learner styles and learning patterns within the self-access centre. 6) Learning process monitoring tools: self-access centres regularly monitor how students learn. For example, how do students select tasks and how do these relate to their learning needs? How often do they make use of the centre and what materials do they use for what purpose? The use of databases of students' learning activity can help determine when students may need additional guidance. This is now sometimes done through e-portfolios, which allow learners to reflect on their learning. 7)

Assessment: self-access centres attempt to measure both learning outcomes as well as to measure changes in how students approach the learning process.

The third category, additional support, refers to the technology used for 1) administrative purposes, and 2) evaluation processes including evaluation for research purposes as well as the recording of student use of the centre (facilities, support services, activities, and materials).

The framework records also the tools used for providing different types of support. This allows a differentiation between (practical or learning-related) functions and the tools with which they are implemented.

Table 2:
Evaluative framework: types of tools used

	code
E-mail	1
Chat	2
Discussion boards/forums	3
E-mail lists	4
Online courses	5
Internet resources	6
Electronic materials	7
Software (commercial & produced in-house)	8
Electronic tests	9
Electronic portfolio	10
Activity report	11
Student notes	12
Blogs/Vlogs	13
LMS	14
Electronic questionnaires	15
Online booking system	16

Every tool can be used to provide different types of support, for example, e-mail could be used for language advising as well as for monitoring learning progress. Most tools are self-explanatory. Online courses are types of courses normally embedded in an LMS that integrate a wide range of electronic tools (see White 2003). Electronic materials are a category of resources that do not reside on the internet. An electronic portfolio is a repository where students can record reflections on the learning process. An activity either automatically or allows students to materials used, activities completed, etc. Student's notes are a type of student record, for example for newly learned vocabulary. LMS was included as a tool because some SACs offer a custom-made learning environment designed to support student learning. Activities, materials, and help are usually provided

through this environment. An online booking system allows the booking of language learning resources and support services such as advisory sessions or workshops.

The evaluative framework was subsequently applied to 45 centres from five countries (Reinders & Lázaro, 2006). Table 3 shows a summary of the findings organised by the three components described above.

Table 3:
Types of support in self-access (n=45)

Content provision	**Learning support**	**Additional support**	**Total**
124	76	17	217
57%	35%	8%	

More than half of the types of support provided through technology comprise content provision, whereas support systems for the learning process make up only 35% of the use of technology in self-access centres. In a later paper (Reinders & Lázaro, 2007) it was found that a small number of forerunners did offer a larger range of support and used more tools (such as e-mail, chat, websites) to offer that support. At the same time, however, it was found that the range of support was still limited and that especially learning support for needs analysis, assessment, and learner training (among others) were infrequently used. Do such centres offer innovation in their support? Deciding what constitutes innovation and what does is not entirely straightforward, however. DeLano, Riley, and Crookes (1994) describe innovation as being an ill-defined concept. They consider innovation as a) change, b) development, c) improvement or d) novelty and highlight some of the problems with each. They quote Rich as saying "Although there could be no innovation without change, most changes are not innovation" (1981: p. 145). The term development also does not find favour as mostly this refers to curriculum development, which in practice largely simply relies on the incorporation of new materials without a rethinking of the tenets of the programme itself. Although the authors recognise improvement as the implicit goal of innovation, this requires a full understanding of the current situation first. Novelty or newness is unsatisfactory as a term because it depends on what is new for each person. "We would prefer to see the experience or position of the field as the benchmark against which newness should be judged." (p. 489). This is the approach taken in this study.

The Study

This study looks at three self-access centres that were found to offer substantially more types of support and use considerably more tools to do so than other self-access centres. The evaluative framework discussed above was used to compare between centres in their use of technology and for benchmarking purposes. In this paper, innovation was recognised by

1. investigating the current use of technology in a large sample of SACs using the evaluative framework
2. identifying the three most intensive users of technology

3. describing each of the centres in detail in terms of the types and range of support they offer.

As a result of 1) and 2), three centres were identified that scored the highest in terms of the range of support they offered and the number of tools they used to offer that support. Table 3 shows the percentage of content provision, learning support, and additional support they offer. As can be seen, the results are almost the inverse of those for all the 45 centres in the study: the proportion of support made up by content provision is 33% (compared with 57% for the 45 centres) and the proportion made up of learning support is 56% (compared with 35%). These three centres offer all types of support (12 out of 12), and 95% of the learning support (20 out of 21) and 66% (four out of six types) of additional support.

Table 4:
Types of support in three self-access centres

	Content provision	**Learning support**	**Additional support**	**Total**
Supports provided in SAC n=3	12	20	4	36
	33%	56%	11%	

Next, each centre will be discussed in detail. First, the evaluative framework is applied to show which types of support are offered and what tools are used. Next, a brief description is given of how the centre operates, and particular attention is given to what makes the centre different from other centres.

Case study 1 - Centro Navarro de Autoaprendizaje de Lenguas (CNAI), Pamplona, Spain

Table 5:
Types of support and tools used at CNAI

	Tools used[2]
Content provision	
Electronic catalogue	8, 14
Direct (electronic) access to resources	6, 7, 14
Communication tools	1, 2, 3, 4, 14
Language learning materials	6, 7, 8, 14
Language learning support	
Learning activities	1, 5, 12, 14
Computer-mediated language advice	1, 14
Needs analysis tools	10, 14
Learning process planning tools	10, 14
Learner training	5, 14

Learning process monitoring tools	10, 11, 14
Assessment	3, 10, 11, 14
Additional support	
Administrative support	14, 16
Evaluation processes	11, 14
TOTAL NUMBER OF SUPPORT TYPES	13
TOTAL NUMBER OF TOOLS	13

The first case study is the most intensive ICT user of the 45 SACs studied worldwide. This centre offers all types of support included in the evaluative framework, from content support to language learning and additional support. As shown below, this centre has integrated all types of support within a self-designed Learning Management System. Through this LMS the centre provides an electronic catalogue, direct electronic access to resources like internet resources and materials within the LMS, communication tools such as e-mail, chat, discussion boards, and e-mail lists. This LMS also allows access to language learning materials such as internet resources, electronic materials, both commercial and produced in-house. The different types of language learning support are also integrated into the LMS. Students can receive computer-mediated language advice through e-mail, use the needs analyses and learning process planning tools with the help of an electronic portfolio, can be trained with online courses on learning strategies, monitor their learning process using the electronic portfolio and the activity reports, and they can assess themselves through the electronic portfolio and the activity reports. Additional support such as administrative and evaluation processes can be managed within the LMS with the help of an online booking system and activity reporting tools. The number of tools used by this centre is very high (13 out of 16). As can be observed from table 5, all types of support are provided through two or more different types of tools.

A Brief Description of the Centre

CNAI provides language courses and support to adults (civil servants and the general public) and children (at primary and secondary level) in the region of Navarra in Spain for foreign languages such as English, German and French (see Rubio Navarro, 2006). This centre depends mostly on the Government of Navarra for its funding. It was set up as a complementary service to school-based language courses (primary and secondary school) and state language schools (Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas) and is also open to the public. CNAI offers not only conventional but also blended-learning and e-learning language courses. It offers conversation classes and different types of materials in both a physical and a virtual resource centre. Through an online Learning Management System, specifically designed for this centre (see below), students have access to a wide range of materials, learning activities, and online courses. The LMS also provides administrative and pedagogical services to students, teachers, and administrators.

Specific Characteristics

At this centre a custom-designed Learning Management System allows the management of all aspects of the SAC. The LMS includes features for administrative processes such as matriculation, learner monitoring, library management systems, access to a library catalogue and materials online, a booking system for materials and support services such as workshops and conversation classes, and communication tools for administrative purposes.

Under 'academic processes', there are services for teachers such as tools for designing, implementing, and managing online courses, authoring tools for materials development, learner and learning groups monitoring tools, and communication tools for learning activities. Through 'learner tools', learners have access to all administrative and academic services in a unified system. They also have a personal learning portfolio with student notes and vocabulary book, and monitoring tools for their learning process. The advantage of an LMS of this type is that it brings all applications and information sources together and makes them available to all users, whether students, teachers, or administrators.

Case study 2 - Self-Access Centre at the Language Centre, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)

Table 6:
Types of support and tools used at HKUST

	Tools used
Content provision	
Electronic catalogue	8
Direct (electronic) access to resources	6, 7
Communication tools	1
Language learning materials	6, 7, 8
Language learning support	
Learning activities	8
Computer-mediated language advice	1, 8
Needs analysis tools	8
Learning process planning tools	8
Learner training	8
Learning process monitoring tools	8
Assessment	8
Additional support	
Administrative support	
Evaluation processes	8
TOTAL NUMBER OF SUPPORT TYPES	12
TOTAL NUMBER OF TOOLS	4

The second case study is one of the most intensive technology users of the 45 SACs studied by the authors. This centre offers all types of support included in the evaluative framework, except administrative support. This centre uses technology for providing different types of support such as an electronic catalogue, direct electronic access to internet resources and electronic materials, communication through e-mail and language learning materials such as internet resources, electronic materials both commercial and produced in-house. Technology is also used for providing different types of language learning support like learning activities, computer-mediated language advice, needs analyses, learning process planning, learner training, learning process monitoring, and assessment. The number of tools used by this centre is more limited than in the first case, as only four out of the 16 tools are used for providing the different types of support.

A brief description of the centre The Self-Access Centre at Language Centre at HKUST provides language support for foreign languages as English, Putonghua, Cantonese, French, German, and other languages to students and staff of the university free of charge. Mainly students who want to improve their English for professional purposes use the centre. The SAC plays an important role by complementing language courses offered by the Language Centre and in some cases, self-access components are integrated with such (credit-bearing) courses. It is also used as a resource centre for autonomous learning, where advising support is available. Students at the SAC can use a wide range of (electronic) materials, join (class-based and online) learning activities and have access to a range of learning support (such as needs analyses, planning help, assessment, etc) (see Toogood and Pemberton, 2006).

Specific characteristics VELA (Virtual English Language Advice) is an electronic advisory service that offers students tools for designing a learning plan based on a needs analysis and recommends materials available at the SAC (some available online, some in the centre). Students go through different steps in developing their study plan. They first identify the skill (listening, reading, etc) and next to their particular interest in that skill (e.g. to read books, to understand movies, to watch the news, etc.). Next, they select from a list the main problem they have with the skill and also select a likely cause for the problem (e.g. because of a lack of vocabulary, being too slow at reading, etc). The programme then offers students a range of strategies to try out, relevant to their needs and recommends specific materials. Students then complete a learning plan based on this information by allocating time (general deadline, hours/week, days of the week), by setting their objectives, by selecting the strategies they want to try out and the materials and activities. Once the student has completed their plan, they can meet with an advisor to discuss it and get feedback. The students can log on to VELA where a record is kept of their plan and also the work they have completed.

Case study 3 - The English Language Self-Access Centre (ELSAC), University of Auckland, New Zealand.[3]

Table 7:
Types of support and tools used at ELSAC

	Tools used
Content provision	

Electronic catalogue	8, 14
Direct (electronic) access to resources	6, 7, 14
Communication tools	1, 14
Language learning materials	6, 7, 8, 14
Language learning support	
Learning activities	1, 2, 8, 14
Computer-mediated language advice	1, 14
Needs analysis tools	10, 14
Learning process planning tools	10, 14
Learner training	10, 14
Learning process monitoring tools	10, 11, 14
Assessment	
Additional support	
Administrative support	
Evaluation processes	10, 11, 14
TOTAL NUMBER OF SUPPORT TYPES	11
TOTAL NUMBER OF TOOLS	8

This case study is the third most intensive ICT user of the 45 SACs studied based on the number of support types provided through technology. Except for assessment and administrative processes, this centre offers all types of support included in the evaluative framework. All the types of support provided are integrated, as in the first case study, through a self-designed LMS. Thanks to this LMS, the users can consult an electronic catalogue, can get direct access to internet resources and electronic materials, can communicate with the help of e-mail, and can work with language learning materials such as internet resources, electronic materials. The students can find, also integrated in the LMS, different types of language learning support such as learning activities with the help of e-mail and chat, computer-mediated language advice through e-mail, needs analyses, learning process planning, and monitoring, learner training, an electronic portfolio, and activity reports. These latter two are used for evaluation processes. This centre uses 11 out of 16 types of support (68%) which is high in comparison with the average of the 45 centres studied (37%).

Brief Description of the Centre

ELSAC provides language support to students and staff at the University of Auckland for whom English is an additional language. Previous research has shown that an estimated 10,000 or more of the University's student population may have a level of English that could result in difficulties in studying through the English medium or in students receiving lower grades. The use of the centre is voluntary and students do not receive credit for their work. ELSAC offers materials, a wide range of practical language workshops, and a language advisory service, all free of charge. Most students come with

practical questions related to immediate study demands such as report and essay writing, and oral presentations. Others make a deliberate effort to use the Centre to work through a personalised learning plan with the help of ELSAC staff.

Specific Characteristics

ELSAC an Electronic Learning Environment (ELE), a computer programme that 1) provides access to language learning materials, and 2) supports students in their self-access learning. The programme is potentially available from anywhere on campus and (in a limited version) from students' homes. Materials are digitised and included in the programme. Students can search for materials by using an electronic catalogue by keyword, required level, skill (e.g. writing), and subskill (e.g. writing expository essays), and directly access all the resources on the computer.

The second main aim of the ELE is to support students in their self-directed learning by helping them to 1) determine their overall learning goals through an online needs analysis which helps students prioritise and plan their learning, 2) determine their learning goals for the current session, 3) identify appropriate resources, 4) consider learning strategies, 5) reflect on progress. The programme automatically records materials usage and compares students' work with their learning needs as identified by their needs analysis. In case a mismatch is found between the two, the computer prompts learners to reconsider their learning approach. Other monitoring processes relate to students' overall progress concerning their goals and the goal dates students set themselves, the amount of time they plan to spend on each language skill and the amount of time they spend, etc.

ELSAC's Student Monitoring System records information from different sources, including the students' needs and actual learning; the resources they access, the amount of time they spend, the workshops they attend, the number of visits to the centre and the number of appointments with language advisors working in the centre. All the information is available to centre staff who have access to a shared database. This information is drawn on to make specific recommendations about what materials to use for example. Language advisors can see whether students have followed up on such recommendations and read their own and other advisors' notes about student progress to further tailor their support. Facilitators of workshops offered through the centre can view the backgrounds and learning needs of their students and follow-up with them for ongoing support.

Discussion

This study has shown that the three most intensive users of technology provide all the types of language content support and almost all of the types of learning support (as summarized by Table 8 below). This contrasts with the level of technology use shown by other centres investigated in an earlier study, where technology is used more to provide language content support as opposed to learning support. Technology has the potential to be more than an alternative tool for providing content (which generally can be offered through more traditional means) but most centres do not seem to tap this potential. This begs the question of what the added value of technology is in current self-access practice.

Table 8:
Types of support offered and tools used, n=3

Number of types of support offered in each centre	**n= 3**	**Number of types of tools used per centre**	**n= 3**
Eleven types	1	Four tools	1
Twelve types	1	Eight tools	1
Thirteen types	1	Thirteen tools	1

As observed, SACs offer almost the same types of support with a very different range of tools, as one of the centres uses four types of tools, and the other two use eight and 13 types of tools. The three centres provide their support through software (commercial and special produced), internet resources, electronic materials, and e-mail. Two out of three centres also used chat, electronic portfolios, and activity reports. Only one of the three centres used discussion boards/forums, e-mail lists, online courses, and student notes. None of the three used electronic tests nor blogs/ vlogs. It is interesting to see that the support by these centres is offered through such a differing number of tools, from four, or below the average of 4.17 for all 45 centres, to eight and 13, or considerably above. The fact that these three centres used varying numbers of tools might suggest that innovative approaches do not necessarily depend on the range of technology. This is perhaps not surprising when looking at the 'average' self-access centre but it is meant to establish that it may also apply to leading centres. The most interesting difference, however, between the three centres and the others in the study, lies in the fact that they have developed approaches that appear innovative in the four meanings of that word as proposed by Delano, Riley, and Crookes (ibidem), as change, development, improvement, and novelty.

In terms of change, technology has helped these centres come up with new approaches to support, not only in terms of the provision of materials but also in alternative ways of providing advisory services, student monitoring and a range of other types of help. Concerning development, these centres use technology not only to offer their existing support but technology has, in turn, led to a rethinking of their programmes, the development of new types of programmes (such as e-learning and blended learning) and how the centres operate at an institutional and wider level. Although this study did not evaluate 'improvement', the general impression derived from the interviews and observations was very one much of improvement through technology over previous support. The use of technology seems to have benefited users of these centres by allowing greater ease of access to help, increased opportunities for staff to monitor and assist student learning, more personalised support, etc. Finally, innovation can be seen in the presented case studies as a novelty, because the approaches taken by these centres have not been attempted by the other centres investigated and thus offer a novel type of support.

The use of technology has affected the immediate centres in which the developments took place. For example, in the first centre described above the use of an LMS specific for language learning in an autonomy-fostering context has enabled the programme administrators to develop the curriculum in a pedagogically coherent way. Thanks to the LMS, online language courses and blended learning courses have been implemented. New types of learning activities based on e-mail, mailing lists, forums, chat,

internet and electronic activities have been designed for the different classes, to encourage students to work more independently and work more outside the classroom, and thus to encourage autonomous learning. The communication tools on the centralised platform have helped create learning communities within the centre which would have been difficult to realise otherwise in such a flexible environment. In this case, the use of technology has determined the curriculum directly, as many of the learning activities could not have taken place without the online support structure. Also, technology, in this case, facilitates learning support services such as needs analyses, planning, monitoring and assessment tools that make possible a narrow follow-up for the students. Without the administrating tools of this support system, this level of personalisation would have been challenging to implement and very time-consuming otherwise.

In the second case, the implementation of the VELA system has also had positive effects on the wider language support programme at the University. VELA reduces the advisors' workload and facilitates the teachers' work in self-access courses. Advising sessions are more time-efficient as VELA helps the students to present to the advisors more realistic learning plans to work with. VELA has had also positive effects on the students' ability to learn by themselves and acts as one of the major 'learning to learn' components of the available support. Through its integration into existing courses and students' self-study the 'advice' from VELA is contextualised and relevant to the student's needs.

As for the third centre, the online support has greatly facilitated student access to help and has also helped staff be better aware of all of a student's learning history. At a policy level, the development of the centrefs electronic learning environment (and its potential for the delivery of online support) has led to a wider debate within the university about the accessibility for students to language support, and even more importantly, to a debate around the potential for integration of the support offered by various providers (SAC, Learning Centre, Language Department, etc). The potential to monitor students' needs and progress across all support providers, and during their entire university study is now being realised and development is underway to develop an online platform (drawing on the electronic learning environment) to realise it.

Through their innovation, these centres can serve as a benchmark for the potential of technology in SACs. Since innovation is a moving benchmark new developments will push the boundaries. Other SACs can look to the centres in this study for ideas on the possible role of technology in the provision of unique types of support that are tailored to the specific needs of the self-access environment. The challenge for other centres is to draw on the potential of technology to develop their own responses to their unique learning contexts.

Notes

1. This study has been conducted in part with funding from the Consejeria de Educación de la Comunidad de Madrid, the European Social Fund, the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), and the "La Caixa" Foundation.

2. Codes for the different tools: e-mail = 1, chat = 2, discussion boards/forums = 3, e-mail lists = 4, online courses = 5, internet resources = 6, electronic materials = 7, software

(commercial and produced in-house)= 8, electronic tests = 9, electronic portfolio = 10, activity report = 11, student notes =12, blogs/ vlogs = 13, LMS = 14, electronic questionnaires = 15 and online booking system = 16.

3. Disclaimer: one of the authors of this paper is the director of this centre. The centre was included because it was one of the three centres to score the highest on the range of support offered. The information about the centre was obtained by the other author who visited the centre as part of a study into 46 self-access centres worldwide. She is not affiliated with the centre and the results were processed independently by her.

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