AUTONOMY IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

THEORY, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Edited by
Manuel Jiménez Raya and Flávia Vieira

Autonomy in Language Education

Autonomy in Language Education offers a holistic overview of and novel contribution to a complex and multifaceted, yet under-studied, field of inquiry that is transforming language pedagogy: It offers 14 original chapters that critically analyze the impact of Henri Holec's seminal 1979 book *Autonomy in Foreign Language Learning*; unpack theoretical, empirical, conceptual, methodological, ethical, and political developments over the last 40 years from many perspectives; explore practical implications for teaching, learning, and teacher education; and suggest future avenues and challenges for research and practice in this broad, diverse, essential field.

Manuel Jiménez Raya is Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Granada (Spain). His main research interests are pedagogy for autonomy and language teacher education. He has co-authored the books *Enhancing Autonomy in Language Education: A Case-based Approach to Teacher and Learner Development* (Mouton de Gruyter, 2015) and *Mapping Autonomy in Language Education. A Framework for Learner and Teacher Development* (Peter Lang, 2017).

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
NEW YORK AND LONDON

First published 2021
by Routledge
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an Informa business

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A catalog record for this title has been requested

ISBN: 978-0-367-20413-6 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-0-429-26133-6 (ebk)

Typeset in Sabon
by codeMantra

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Introduction

Manuel Jiménez Raya and Flávia Vieira

The 40th anniversary of the pioneer publication on autonomy by Henri Holec – *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning* – was the motto for setting up a collection of papers on present and future avenues for theory, research, and practice in the field. First produced in 1979 as a report to the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project, it was published by Pergamon Press in 1981 and has become a major reference worldwide. In this Introduction we go back to some of Holec's ideas after a brief reference to CRAPEL, where he developed his work, and to the pedagogical vision of its founder, Yves Châlon. The field has grown enormously since then, yet autonomy still occupies a marginal status in language education, particularly in schools. This issue will be addressed by considering the political nature of pedagogy for autonomy as a potentially empowering approach that runs counter to dominant values. The fact that autonomy is a complex field of inquiry that needs to be further explored and investigated is made evident throughout this volume. A brief summary of its chapters will be presented in the second part of the Introduction.

CRAPEL – *Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues* at the University of Nancy II, France – was founded by Yves Chalôn in 1969 and directed by Henri Holec from 1972 to 1988 when he retired. Its origins are described by Holec in the article *Le C.R.A.P.E.L. à travers les ages*, published in 2000 in a special issue of the Centre's journal *Mélanges Pédagogiques,* founded by Châlon in 1970 and later renamed as *Mélanges Crapel*. That issue published papers from a Colloquium held at the Centre in 1999 to celebrate its 30th anniversary and pay homage to Holec's work. According to his description, CRAPEL emerged from initiatives carried out for a decade under the leadership of Châlon, a language educator who, in 1959/1960, had been asked to take charge of the teaching of English to non-specialist students, initially in the faculty of Mining and later in the faculties of Engineering, Sciences, Medicine, and Law. Holec had been one of Châlon's former students and was one of the teachers he gathered to design the new language teaching arrangements and form the *Groupe de Recherche en Pédagogie* (GRAP). GRAP was later asked to direct the first language laboratories created at the Languages faculty in 1962 and to support other new adult language courses

offered to university and non-university students, including migrants. All these developments, along with the continued involvement of both Châlon and Holec in the Council of Europe's initiatives, led to the official establishment of CRAPEL in 1969. Among its innovations, self-direct learning is described by Holec in this article as the most influential 'pedagogic creed' and the 'specialty' of the Centre (Holec, 2000, p. 9).

To understand some of the foundational ideas of CRAPEL's work on autonomy in language pedagogy, which are still inspiring today, it is important to refer to Yves Châlon's opening article of the first issue of *Mélanges Pédagogiques*, published in 1970 and entitled *Pour une pédagogie sauvage* (For a wild pedagogy). According to the mentor of CRAPEL, a 'wild pedagogy' does not conform to conventional norms and is non-dogmatic, constructive, and self-critical. It fosters the flourishing of critical minds who question established knowledge, explore connections between knowledge and experience, and develop new ways of teaching and learning. This entails a revolutionary reshaping of pedagogical roles: "La démythification du maître s'accompagnera de la démythification de l'étudiant, et chacun, rendu à son ignorance, pourra en tâtonnant découvrir des voies nouvelles" (p. 5). According to Châlon, the teacher should become primarily a *listener*: "Enseigner le latin à John, c'est sans doute connaître le latin, mais c'est surtout connaître John, et savoir si John veut, à tel moment de son évolution, connaître le latin" (p. 3). And he challenged teachers to provide the students with "means for self-analysis" and "tools for true expression", as he suspected that conventional school discourse might indirectly favour the socially privileged and foster conformism (p. 3). In fact, the way Châlon conceptualized the role of teachers and learners opened up a space for what we would now describe as negotiated, liberating pedagogies: "Invité à l'attention, le professeur doit être essentiellement celui qui oriente. (...) Invité à l'autonomie, l'étudiant doit être celui qui ne refuse pas les implications de cette liberté accrue" (p. 4).

Châlon's vision helps us situate Holec's *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning* within a broader progressive agenda. Actually, his definition of autonomy as *the ability to take charge of one's own learning* is still quite radical today as regards its implications on the learner's role:

> *To take charge of one's learning* is to have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of the learning, i.e.:
>
> – determining the objectives;
> – defining the contents and progressions;
> – selecting methods and techniques to be used;
> – monitoring the procedure of acquisition properly speaking (rhythm, time, place, etc.);
> – evaluation what has been acquired.

> The autonomous learner is himself capable of making all these decisions concerning the learning with which he is or wishes to be involved.
>
> (Holec, 1981, p. 3)

Even though his definition was primarily referring to self-directed learning in the context of adult language education, it became an inspiration for subsequent developments in various settings, most probably as a result of its power to interrogate mainstream pedagogical practices. Holec elaborated on how the new role of the (adult) learner might "proceed from a position of dependence to one of independence" (p. 22) through a 'deconditioning' process regarding teacher-directedness and the acquisition of the know-how needed to assume responsibility for learning, that is, learning how to learn. Teaching "should no longer be looked upon as '*producing*' learning but as '*facilitating*' it" (p. 23), which means that the teacher's role should be expanded and strengthened:

> (…) in contrast to the apprehension often created by the concept of autonomy in learning, the teacher will find his role becomes more varied rather than curtailed, strengthened rather than weakened (not in terms of authority but in terms of competence) and much greater demands will be made on his creativity than on his highly developed knowledge of teaching techniques. The traditional teacher who might have been regarded as 'replaceable' (*cf* teaching machines) will give way to a teacher whose role will be irreplaceable. His status will no longer be based on the power conferred by hierarchical authority but on the quality and importance of his relationship to the learner.
>
> (Holec, 1981, p. 25)

In his conclusions, Holec raised two interrelated issues that can still be raised today regarding the implementation of autonomy. The first one relates to the 'success' of autonomy and has to do with the interdependence of self-direction in language learning, education in general, and society at large: "Can an individual 'live' in a state of partial autonomy such as would relate solely to his learning of languages in a general environment of dependence and passivity?" (p. 34). The second issue derives from the first one and has to do with how institutions may deal with autonomization as an alternative approach, by supporting and not forcing learners to assume responsibility for learning. In a later publication, Holec describes self-directed learning "as a supplementary learning approach, different from the 'traditional' approach and usable by anybody who so desires, whenever they so desire" (Holec, 1996, p. 84). This was in fact how self-directed learning was developed at CRAPEL and is still developed today in learning centres that operate outside (and often in parallel to) regular classroom-based programmes.

Over the last decades, autonomy approaches have expanded to various teaching/learning contexts, including schools, which led to multiple conceptual and practical developments (Benson, 2011). Nevertheless, pedagogy for autonomy is far from being a mainstream approach in language education. For example, it is not mentioned in Howatt and Smith's (2014) historical account of ELT from a British and European perspective, and there is no evidence to suggest that it has become a major focus in teacher education programmes. In the Council of Europe's most well-known policy publication – *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001) – which is intended to guide learning, teaching, and assessment policies and practices in Europe, the term 'autonomy' is absent from the book index. 'Ability to learn' (not ability to *manage one's learning*) is the concept adopted there to refer to one of the 'general competences' that learners can develop, and it is only briefly discussed in a somewhat limited way as regards its components: language and communication awareness, general phonic awareness and skills, study skills, and heuristic skills (Council of Europe, 2001, pp. 106–108).

There are many reasons why autonomy occupies a rather marginal status in language education, particularly in schools, one of them being that it runs counter to dominant values that still permeate most pedagogical practices and make them content-driven, teacher-directed, and assessment-oriented. Official discourses, for example, in educational policies and prescribed curricula, often promulgate the need to foster autonomy, yet the structural conditions of teaching and learning have not changed significantly, and pedagogical cultures are still too much framed by reproductive and domesticating views of curricula, pedagogy, and their connection with social life. To some extent, one might argue that self-access centres are spaces where autonomy as the ability to take charge of learning is expected to flourish 'naturally', since they are created with that purpose and all the teaching/ learning arrangements are planned so as to meet it. This is not what happens at schools, where promoting autonomy is like swimming against the tide because dominant cultures of teaching tend to foster conformity rather than empowerment. What Schostak pointed out two decades ago regarding school education still rings true today in many formal teaching settings:

> (…) millions of children leave school all over the world each day no better able to engage in democratic action and make changes in their communities to meet their needs than when they entered. Rather than a curriculum that constructs subjectivities around failure, around 'knowing one's place', around complacent disregard of the misfortunes and experiences of others, around an apathetic acceptance that 'things can't change', around a meritocracy that disowns

> its underclass, the chance always exists for education to construct curricula for challenge, for change, for the development of people and not the engineering of employees.
>
> (Schostak, 2000, p. 50)

Autonomy can be understood as an individual's competence to manage learning, but also as a collective interest in the service of a more democratic life. From this perspective, fostering autonomy in education can be seen as a struggle for a more democratic and just society, which requires surpassing what Giroux (2013) calls 'a pedagogy of repression'. He argues for a critical pedagogy that "is situated within a project that views education as central to creating students who are socially responsible and civically engaged citizens", and thus "reinforces the notion that public schools are democratic public spheres, education is the foundation for any working democracy and teachers are the most responsible agents for fostering that education" (para. 20).

In this respect, the pioneering and revolutionary work of the Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire needs to be acknowledged. His writings from the 1970s to the 1990s continue to be an inspiration for teachers who wish to develop transformative pedagogies that liberate themselves and their students not only from reproductive and domesticating forms of teaching and learning, but also from oppressive forms of 'reading the world'. Through critical dialogue and critical consciousness, education can become an experience of citizenship for the construction of a more democratic society. His last book, *Pedagogia da Autonomia – Saberes Necessários à Prática Educativa* (Pedagogy of Autonomy – Knowledges Needed in Educational Practice), published in 1996, can be seen as a pedagogical manifesto about a pedagogy that is fundamentally humanizing, dialogical, empowering, hopeful, and oriented towards social transformation – a truly 'wild pedagogy', to take Châlon's metaphor.

Not all proposals regarding education for autonomy have explicitly acknowledged its political nature. Benson (1996) writes about the 'depoliticization' of autonomy when the primary concern is with individual/psychological autonomy without questioning and changing the purposes, the content, and the structural conditions of learning, which in itself "could be interpreted as a tendency to encourage passive acceptance of dominant ideologies of language learning" (p. 31). Actually, whatever our pedagogical choices are, they are never neutral and have far-reaching implications. From a critical perspective,

> (...) pedagogy is conceived as a moral and political practice that is always implicated in power relations because it offers particular versions and visions of civic life, community, the future, and how we might construct representations of ourselves, others, and our physical and social environment. Pedagogy provides a discourse for

> agency, values, social relations, and a sense of the future. It legitimates particular ways of knowing, being in the world, and relating to others. (…) It is in this respect that any discussion of pedagogy must begin with a discussion of educational practice as a particular way in which a sense of identity, place, worth, and above all, value is informed by practices that organize knowledge and meaning.
>
> (Giroux, 2013, para. 22)

The feasibility of pedagogy for autonomy depends greatly on educators' views on teaching and learning, but also on their freedom to make decisions regarding teaching and learning arrangements. In the case of schools, that freedom is usually constrained by prevailing pedagogical regimes and an over-regulated profession. In these circumstances, it needs to be explored between *reality* and *ideals*, in an interspace for 're[ide]alistic' professional learning and 're[ide]alistic' pedagogies (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, & Vieira, 2017, p. 78). We may then see education for autonomy as an ongoing commitment on the part of both teachers and learners to become more self-directed, socially responsible, and critical.

Language education for autonomy is a complex field of inquiry that requires ongoing investigation and practical explorations. This is well documented in this volume, whose structure and content are presented below.

The Book

Overall, the book takes a critical stance towards autonomy as a complex, multifaceted construct and its implications for teaching, learning, and teacher education in diverse settings. By drawing on historical and theoretical perspectives (Part 1), as well as on more situated research and intervention accounts (Part 2), it portrays autonomy as an ongoing field of inquiry where various conceptual and methodological frameworks operate within a transformative view of language education.

Part 1. Historical and Theoretical Avenues

The first chapter in Part I focusses directly on Holec's legacy. David M. Palfreyman (Chapter 1) evaluates the contributions of Holec's *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning* to research and practice in foreign language education since its publication. He looks at how discourses about learning used in that book have spread and developed, analyzing terminology used and the significance of this; patterns of citation of the book; the uptake of terminology used in it, including changes in usage; and its interaction with other terms such as 'self-regulation'.

Self-regulated learning, language advising, and learning beyond the classroom are the topics of the three chapters that follow. Xuesong (Andy)

Gao and Jingjing Hu (Chapter 2) review studies on self-regulated language learning since the concept of self-regulatory learning capacity was promoted to replace language learning strategy as an individual difference factor. They discuss shortcomings of self-regulation research with regard to language learning strategy research, arguing that it is necessary to interpret language learners' self-regulated strategic learning from both cognitive and sociocultural perspectives. Drawing on a sociocultural view of learning, Jo Mynard (Chapter 3) looks at how language advising can have a transformative effect on learners, helping them to develop a deep level of awareness of themselves and their learning processes, and empowering them to take charge of their learning. She explains how the interplay of dialogue, tools, and context within advising sessions support language learning, looking at examples of current advising research and practice. Hayo Reinders (Chapter 4) proposes a framework for enhancing learning beyond the classroom, underlining the unique affordances for language learning offered by life beyond the traditional classroom environment. The aim of the framework is to support practitioners in identifying ways to increase learner control in a systematic manner, and to point researchers to specific areas of study.

The last two chapters in Part 1 discuss challenges to understandings and developments of autonomy in a multilingual and complex world. Phil Benson and Terry Lamb (Chapter 5) engage in a reflective dialogue on challenges to Holec's understanding of autonomy in an age in which the idea of 'learning a foreign language' is being replaced by those of 'becoming multilingual' and developing 'plurilingual multicompetence'. Drawing on their experience in the UK and in Hong Kong, they reconsider the meanings of autonomy in the context of what has been called a 'multilingual turn' in applied linguistics. Garold Murray (Chapter 6) explores how adopting complex dynamic systems theory as a theoretical orientation has influenced how he views learner autonomy and Holec's model. On the basis of studies carried out in a social space for language learning at a Japanese university, he examines learner autonomy as an emergent phenomenon in relation to such themes as control, change, space and place, and imagination. Implications are drawn for practice, further inquiry, and Holec's model.

Part 2. Research and Practical Avenues

Part 2 starts with a review of research on autonomy carried out in Brazil over the last 20 years. Vera Lucia Menezes de Oliveira e Paiva and Junia de Carvalho Fidelis Braga (Chapter 7) analyze publications from journals in Applied Linguistics in Brazil so as to understand whether research has focussed on learner or teacher autonomy, what definitions of autonomy are proposed, what main theories support autonomy research on language learning and teaching, what aspects of autonomy

are tackled, and how research findings help to inform future studies in the field.

Alice Chik and Silvia Melo-Pfeifer (Chapter 8) report on classroom-based studies where visual narratives ('language learning portraits') were explored with primary school learners in Germany and Australia. They argue that the ways young learners draw their language learning portraits can demonstrate aspects of learner autonomy, and greater research attention should be given to young learners and visual methodologies when exploring learner autonomy.

The two chapters that follow focus on self-access and self-directed learning. Leena Karlsson and Fergal Bradley (Chapter 9) reflect on the past, present and future of the Autonomous Learning Modules (ALMS) at the University of Helsinki Language Centre in Finland. In their (autoethno) biography of ALMS, the authors elucidate the power and potential of collegial pedagogy for autonomy, (collaborative) practitioner research and peer-group mentoring for developing learner/teacher autonomy and experimental academic writing as an expression of that autonomy. Katherine Thornton (Chapter 10) looks at changes in how self-access language learning has been conceptualized and implemented. By drawing on data from interviews with veteran practitioners in different contexts around the world (second language, foreign language, and official language contexts), she investigates the changing face of self-access centres (from resource centres to social learning spaces), the influence of new technologies, the integration with curricula for learner autonomy, and the growth of the field of language learning advising. Major developments in self-access language centres are discussed by Maria Giovanna Tassinari and José Javier Martos Ramos (Chapter 11). Drawing on studies undertaken over the years, they provide an overview of research and reflection on self-access practice, focussing on the roles for teachers, learners, advisors, and managers; language learning advising; learners' affective aspects in self-access language learning; criteria and methods for investigating its impact on language proficiency and autonomy, and to evaluate the overall provision of centres; space and place in self-access centres and at their role as part of multiple learning environments.

The last three chapters turn our attention to pre-service teacher education for autonomy. Borja Manzano Vázquez (Chapter 12) presents a survey study undertaken at the University of Granada in Spain to investigate pre-service language teachers' perceptions of their willingness, ability and opportunity to implement pedagogy for autonomy in their future teaching, after being introduced to the notion of learner autonomy and its practical implications. He stresses the relation between teacher development strategies and self-efficacy beliefs, and draws implications for future developments in both teacher education practices and research. Assuming that teacher education for autonomy should facilitate student teacher' construction of their professional identity, Manuel

Jiménez Raya (Chapter 13) sets to explore the way in which the notion of 'possible selves', understood as conceptions of our selves in future states, can help student teachers develop and elaborate their possible selves as learner-centred teachers. He draws on his experience as a teacher educator at the University of Granada in Spain, where student teachers write about their possible self in their course portfolio, and seek spaces for manoeuvre in the practicum so as to be guided by it in their teaching experiences. Also in the context of a pre-service teacher education programme, Flávia Vieira (Chapter 14) discusses the role of inquiry in autonomy-oriented action research projects developed by student teachers during their practicum at the University of Minho in Portugal. She analyzes a corpus of student teacher reports as regards the visions of language education that underlie teaching practice; the way pedagogic and research purposes are intertwined; the types of professional knowledge entailed in project development; and the impact of projects upon learner and teacher development.

Based on the contributions to this volume, we present a final synthesis of the authors' research stances and the implications of their work for future developments in the field, hoping to inspire others to explore them, discover new routes and let us know about them in the future.

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Part 1

Historical and Theoretical Avenues

1 The Discourse of Holec's *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*

David M. Palfreyman

Introduction

Holec (2009) discusses how the concept of learner autonomy in language learning has been applied in different educational contexts and argues for a "'more than one paradigm' descriptive option" to clarify and describe "autonomy driven pedagogical endeavours" (p. 22). He suggests two paradigms: one, "co-directed learning" (p. 23), aims to gradually increase learner participation in the teacher's decisions about learning objectives, methods, etc.; the other, "self-directed" (p. 27) approach treats the learner as the primary decision-maker and provides (gradually decreasing) support in fulfilling this role within the constraints of his/her situation. Holec states that

> (…) these two sets of principles can be seen to be at work [in educational practice] either in succession, [co-directed] giving way to [self-directed] over time in the same place, or independently, [with] both at work, usually in different places or at different times.
>
> (pp. 22–23)

In this chapter I consider such changes in paradigms or discourses of autonomy in language learning, focussing on scholarship rather than practice and using a data-driven, historical perspective on Holec's highly cited *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning* (Holec, 1981 – henceforth *AFLL*).

Historical Context

AFLL was first published in 1979 as a report by the Council of Europe and then in book form by Pergamon Press in 1981. Holec's stated aim in the book is concerned with both theory and practice:

> (…) to present a theoretical and practical description of the application of the concept of autonomy in the matter of language learning by adults by showing, in particular, what is meant by self-directed language learning, what implications such a type of learning has for the part played by the learners, teachers and teaching methods

> and what types of learning structures have been and might be devised for the purpose of introducing such a method of learning.
>
> (Holec, 1981, p. 2)

Thus, as well as *autonomy* (a quality of the learner), the book focusses also on the related concept of *self-direction* (a characteristic of learning arrangements or processes), with the relationship between them explained as follows:

> Although 'self-directed learning' implies an 'autonomous learner', the latter does not necessarily involve 'self-directed learning'. In other words, a learner may have the ability to take charge of his learning without necessarily utilizing this ability to the full when he decides to learn. Different degrees of self-direction in learning may result either from different degrees of autonomy or from different degrees of exercise of autonomy.
>
> (Holec, 1981, p. 4)

The aims outlined above are addressed in a slim volume of about 13,500 words (excluding appendices), which, despite the book's title, discusses self-directed learning (SDL) at greater length than autonomy. The author explicitly aims at a level of detail sufficient to draw out some pedagogical implications, but general enough to be applied to a variety of learning situations. Chapter 1, titled *Autonomy,* begins by defining autonomy in language learning but soon moves to considering how learning can be self-directed; Chapter 2, *Autonomy and self-directed learning*, focusses mainly on the latter, with links made to autonomy. Chapter 3, *Implications of self-directed learning*, and Chapter 4, *Experiments*, continue the focus on SDL, and Chapter 5, *General conclusions*, notes some points related to autonomy and its relation with self-direction in learning.

Like any other written work, *AFLL* was partly a product of its time and of contemporary debates. It formed part of the Council of Europe's work on adult education in the 1970s, influenced by

> (…) the development in all so-called industrially advanced Western countries of a socio-political tendency characterized by a definition of social progress […] in terms of an improvement in the 'quality of life' – an expression that did not become a slogan until some years later – based on the development of a respect for the individual in society.
>
> (Holec, 1981, p. 1)

In this dialectic between the individual and society, Holec cites earlier writers, such as Janne (1977), to justify autonomy as one element in the effort to

> develop the individual's freedom by developing those abilities which will enable him [sic] to act more responsibly in running the affairs

> of the society in which he lives (Holec, 1981, p. 1). Note that responsibility is seen as *contributing to* freedom, and this is framed in revolutionary terms, as "upsetting the structure of adult education and […] redefining the place and role in that structure of the person being educated.
>
> (p. 1)

Just as *AFLL* was influenced by and responded to preceding writing and debates, it has in turn influenced later work on learner autonomy: at the time of writing this chapter, *AFLL* has been cited by over 7,000 scholarly publications in the 40 years since its publication and is still cited hundreds of times each year (Google, 2019). These public, formal citations are underpinned by many processes of individual consumption of academic literature. For example, the physical copy of Holec (1981) which I recently consulted in a UK university library shows evidence of being borrowed many times and of readers interacting with the text by underlining and annotating passages in the book which they considered significant. It seems that Holec's book was part of a new way of talking about language learning, which continues to be immensely influential. Indeed, a general Google search for the phrase "the father of learner autonomy" offers over 2,000 page results which link this title with Holec's name (many using the same sentence copied verbatim from each other). How can this influence be investigated over time?

Intertextuality and AFLL

Citation analysis offers one way to trace the intertextual impact of a published text: the number and placement of citations of a work such as *AFLL* can be analyzed using public data. Leydesdorff, Bornmann, Comins, and Milojevic (2016) distinguish between citations of a publication within a shorter timeframe, indicating "transitory knowledge claims" (p. 7) at the leading edge of research in a particular field, and citations of a publication in the longer term, indicating "'sticky' knowledge claims [which] grow into a codified citation that can function as a concept symbol" (p. 7). In the latter case, citation of a particular source becomes 'shorthand' for a concept/position which is understood and to some degree accepted by those working in this field, without the need for explanation. Indeed, such 'sticky' knowledge claims may eventually be associated with a vestigial passing reference or even no citation at all, when the origins of a certain term/concept become 'common knowledge' within a field of study.

It should be noted that citing a work involves taking a stance towards it; a work may be cited in order to point out a lack in it which the citing author can fill. In the text of *AFLL*, Holec uses markers such as "so-called" (see quotation above from *AFLL*, p. 1) or scare quotes (e.g., "teachers who

'have the knowledge'", p. 12) to problematize informal discourses of development and education, respectively. In terms of formal citation, Little (2017) contrasts the ideas in *AFLL*, which he sees as narrowly focussed on the individual learner and the institution/teacher, with the more dialogic, peer-oriented views of autonomy espoused by Janne (1977) and Dam (1995). Little considers Holec's work (a) to have been associated with the use of individualized and isolating language laboratories – now "replaced by computer networks" (p. 148); (b) to make "no mention of the knowledge, skills and experience that any adult learner brings to the language learning process" (p. 147); (c) to have led later researchers to (unwisely) "follow [Holec] in assuming that language learning and becoming an autonomous learner are separate, or at least separable, processes" (p. 149).

AFLL does indeed focus on the individual learner, although in relation to society more broadly; it also (contradicting (b) above) includes now-topical ideas such as plurilingualism and skill transfer, for example encouraging the learner

> (…) to free himself [sic] from the notion that there is one ideal method, that teachers possess that method, that his knowledge of his mother tongue is of no use to him for learning a second language, that his experience as a learner or other subjects, other know-how, cannot be transferred even partially (…)
>
> (p. 22)

Which of these varied ideas in *AFLL* have dominated in work citing it and in research more generally in the last 50 years? Gee (1999) offers some useful concepts for analyzing how a field of study such as education or applied linguistics uses language and discourse to shape itself. One such concept is that of a *Discourse* (Gee uses a capital 'D'), which is the 'code' of a particular community of practice:

> (…) all the words, symbols, deeds, objects, clothes and tools you need to coordinate in the right way at the right time and place to "pull off" (or recognize someone as) being a cutting-edge particle physicist or a Los Angeles Latino street gang member…
>
> (p. 18)

… or, indeed, a researcher of language learning or an ESOL teacher (Yazan, 2017). These Discourses both persist and evolve over time in cultural *Conversations*: "long-running and important themes or motifs that have been the focus of a variety of different texts and interactions […] through a significant stretch of time and across an array of institutions" (p. 13).

One way to analyze such ongoing Discourses and Conversations is to take a lexicological approach, tracing the use of key terms across a range of texts. Findings by Halavais (2002) suggest that discourse (especially

in mass media) may influence people's choice of words even when not intentionally quoting nor even discussing the same topic. A lexicological approach is applied for example by Bakker, Ohlsson, Hond, Tengblad, and Turcotte (2007) to trace how corporate social responsibility (CSR) is referenced in company annual reports from 1981 to 2001. These researchers analyzed the frequency and co-occurrence of words used in their corpus, together with their background knowledge of 'buzz words' used in writing on CSR, to assess how concepts related to CSR discourse have been referenced by companies in changing ways across time.

In this chapter I will analyze how discourses about learning used in *AFLL* spread and developed before and after its publication, looking at key terms used in the book; patterns of citation of it; and the uptake of key terms used in it. The chapter will evaluate the contributions of this seminal book to research and practice in foreign language education.

Methodology

My approach to analyzing the discourse of *AFLL* consisted of the following stages:

1 Rereading the book, making qualitative observations of the overall messages of the book and how it used citations and other types of intertextuality.
2 Quantitative analysis of frequency and co-occurrence of words in *AFLL* using #LancsBox (Brezina, Timperley, & McEnery, 2018). Qualitative analysis of significance of frequently (and less frequently) used terms and their relations to each other.
3 Analysis of citations of *AFLL* since its publication; and of the use of key terms identified above over the 30 years preceding the publication of *AFLL* and the 40 years since, using Google Scholar (Google, 2019). The overall volume of scholarly publication has increased enormously over this period, and some older publications may not be indexed in Google Scholar; I controlled for this by looking at citation counts as a percentage of all publications relating to language learning indexed for each decade. Note that although Google Scholar indexes citing publications in a range of languages, the key terms searched for are in English; so the focus here is effectively on publications in English (which form a majority of the total publications citing *AFLL*).
4 Overview of keywords of titles of Google Scholar's top ten citations of *AFLL* in each decade, indicative of changing themes in the citing literature over time (Google, 2019) – with the language proviso, as in Stage 3.
5 Analysis of *AFLL*'s key terms in books published in English from 1940 to 2008, the last year indexed in Google Books Ngram Viewer (Google, 2013).

Key Terms in *AFLL*

In this section I review the discourse in *AFLL* from a lexical perspective. The first column of Table 1.1 shows *keywords* in *AFLL*: the most frequent content words in the book, counted by *lemmas* (e.g., *learn* (v.) includes *learn*, *learns*, etc., but not *learner* or *learning (n.)* because these are a different part of speech). Thus, grammatical words such as *the* (989 instances) are excluded here, as are words occurring less than 30

Table 1.1 Most Frequent Content Words in AFLL and Their Main Collocates

Keyword (lemma count)	***Main collocates (lemma count*** – threshold = 5) Derived forms of keyword discounted. ("…" indicates a more frequent direction of collocation)
Learn (v.) (174)	*Self-directed …* (54); *language …* (19); *… objectives* (17); *responsibility …* (16); *… systems* (5).
Learner (164)	*… has/have* (13); *… define* (12); *help …* (10); *… autonomous* (11); *… responsibility* (11); *… himself* (10); *… objectives* (10); *… knowledge* (9); *… may* (9); *must …* (9); *… teacher* (9); *self-directed* (8); *… assume* (8); *… relationship* (7).
Learning (n.) (107)	*Self-directed …* (35); *responsibility …* (12); *language …* (10); *take …* (10); *charge …* (9); *assume …* (7); *… learner* (7); *acceptance …* (5); *… autonomous* (5); *autonomy …* (5); *objective …* (5); *teaching …* (5).
Objective (n.) (70)	*Define* (17); *learning* (17); *contents* (12).
Self-directed (54)	*… learning* (36); *…* learner (8).
Self-direction (13)	*…* learning (11); *degrees* [*of*] *…* (6).
Teaching (n.) (51)	*… learning* (15); *teacher …* (11); *… establishment* (9); *distance/programmed …* (7); *individualization…* (6); *individualized* (5).
Teacher (51)	*Establishment* (8); *… learner* (7).
Autonomy (46)	*…* learning (12).
Autonomous (30)	*… learner*(s) (11); *… learning* (9); *… basis* (9); capable (5).
Language (45)	*… learning* (24); *self-directed …* (6); *foreign …* (5); *… adults* (5).
Content (45)	*Objectives …* (12); *define …* (11); *learning* (8); *… methods* (8); *… progressions* (8); *definition …* (7); *learner …* (6).
Responsibility (44)	*… learning* (16); *acceptance …* (14); *assume …* (12); *learner …* (8).
Methods (42)	*… techniques* (26); *… learning* (13); *contents …* (6).
Knowledge (39)	*Acquire* (8); *learner …* (6).
Define (38)	*Learner…* (12); *… objectives* (12); *… content* (11);
Definition (34)	*… learning* (6); *… progression* (5). *… objectives* (17); *… content* (7).
Education (34)	*Adult …* (13).
System (34)	*… learning* (14); *teaching* (7); *existing …* (6); *self-directed* (6).
Techniques (33)	*Methods …* (26); *learning* (8).
Acquire (31)	–

times in the book. The keywords are ranked by frequency, except that keywords from the same derivational word family (e.g., *autonomy* and *autonomous*) are placed together to highlight their collective frequency. The second column shows the content words which most frequently co-occur with each keyword in the book, within five words either side of the keyword. The number in brackets indicates the number of times the keyword is used in the book (or, for collocates, the number of co-occurrences with the keyword).

Clearly there is a focus throughout the book on the learner and learning, and the main expression used is "self-directed learning". The kind of role suggested for the learner can be inferred from the word's collocates: for example, qualities/properties (*autonomous*, *responsibility*). The verbs which collocate with "learner" are also significant, with agency inferable from the direction of collocation: learners actively *define* objectives, for example, while others *help* learners; others (e.g., teachers and planners) *must* act in a certain way, while learners *may*.

Objectives is the most commonly used term in *AFLL* after *learn/learning/learner*, reflecting the educational discourse in which the book is participating. Several other terms related to the planned curriculum are frequently used, although less than *objectives: teaching*, *teacher*, *content, knowledge, methods, education, system* and *techniques*. These figure more prominently in *AFLL* than more practice-based/cognitive terms such as *processes* (29), *skills* (3) or *strategies* (1). One of the main aims of the book is to define a new kind of relation between the individual learner and the education system, and the most frequent words in Table 1.1 reflect these two sides of the relationship. A key element of this relationship is *self-direction*, in the service of *autonomy*, and based on *responsibility*. *Definition* itself, like *define*, refers mainly to the process of (the learner) defining aspects of the curriculum, such as *objectives* or *contents*. In a few cases, though, it refers to theoretical definition of concepts related to the study of education, notably "social progress" (p. 1), "the place and role in [adult education] of the person being educated" (p. 1), "autonomy" (p. 3), and "the teacher's functions" (p. 25).

In addition to the key terms mentioned above relating to educational arrangements, *AFLL* uses other words with lower individual frequency individually, which reflect themes related to the exercise of learner autonomy in educational contexts (Table 1.2).

The most frequently evoked of the themes in Table 1.2 is Deciding; a general theme of the book is that learners should be enabled to make decisions about their own learning, rather than all such decisions being made by teachers or educating institutions. Second to this is the theme of Learner Preparation, most frequently evoked by talking about *information* for the learner, for example, "This information will increase

Table 1.2 Autonomy-Related Themes in AFLL

Theme	*Frequent lemmas (count)*	*Main collocations (count – threshold = 3)*
Deciding	*Decision* (23), *decide* (17); *choice* (17), *choose* (9); *selection* (6), *select* (4)	*Areas … decision* (4); *decision … concerning* (3); *decide … himself* (3); *make … choice* (3); *choose … materials* (3); *select … methods/techniques* (3)
Learner preparation	*Information* (18); *preparation* (5); *learn(ing) to learn* (5); *training* (2)	*Information … learning* (6); *information … processes* (3); *sources … information* (3)
Power/agency	*Charge* (14); *power* (5); *control* (3); *hierarchical* (2); *authority* (2); *dominate* (2); *authoritarian* (1)	*Take … charge* (8); *ability … charge* (6)
Society	*Society* (8); *social* (7); *socio-political* (3); *political* (1), *politics* (1)	*Individual … society (3)*
Participation	*Participation* (8); *share* (3 in relation to the learner and power)	
Freedom	*Free* (6); *freedom* (2)	

the learner's awareness of how he learns and help him make decisions" (p. 18), or *preparation*, for example, "for the techniques of describing and classifying linguistic information (composing card-indexes, glossaries etc)" (p. 24). The phrase *learn(ing) to learn* is also relevant here. The term *training* is used nine times in *AFLL*; most of these instances refer to training for teachers or vocational/language training, but two are for learner autonomy: "training in self-directed learning" (p. 30) and "training towards autonomy" (p. 33).

Another key theme is Power/agency: the word *power* itself is used several times, as well as *control*, *authority* and so on; but the most frequent term in this group is *charge* – mostly in terms of the learner being able to *take charge of* (aspects of) *learning*, but with two references to *those in charge* of educational programmes. Also related to this theme are a few instances of verbs of challenging the existing order: "upsetting the structure of adult education" (p. 1); "progressive steps which may be challenged and amended by the learner at any time"; also:

> (..) the learner/ knowledge relationship is completely upset; the learner is no longer faced with an 'independent' reality that escapes him, to which he cannot but give way, but with a reality which he

> himself constructs and dominates, even if this cannot be done in an anarchical or uncertain manner.
>
> (p. 21)

The next most frequently mentioned theme in Table 1.2 is Society. Although the educational institution/programme is the focus of most of *AFLL*, the broader social context is evoked especially in its Introduction and Conclusion chapters: for example, in relation to "social structure" (p. 1) and "the problem, so far as society is concerned, of accountability" (p. 34). There are also some references to the "social situation" (p. 11) and "psychological and social dimensions" (p. 26) of language use. Thus, although as Little (2017) says, "Holec […] defines the autonomous learner in individual terms" (p. 147) and secondarily in relation to institutions and teachers (see above) rather than in relation to other learners, *AFLL* does pay some attention to the learner's micro and macro social context. The theme of Participation (Table 1.2) is linked to the themes of Power and Society. However, *AFLL* is sceptical about the possibility of learner participation in the sense of sharing power; for example, "in the most unfavourable circumstances participation by the learner is merely apparent (and may even act as a safeguard for the maintenance of the 'traditional' situation) and the teacher retains full control over the learning" (p. 7). Indeed, Holec cites (in a footnote) "a well-known French saying meaning 'Participation is a trap for idiots'" (p. 7), in support of his viewpoint that we should "upset" the established educational order rather than buy into it.

Finally, the theme of Freedom is touched upon at some points, typically linked to choice/agency: for example, "The only freedom allowed him is that of choosing whether or not he shall direct his learning towards obtaining a certificate" (p. 16), or "the learner is […] freed from the need for […] instruction… " (p. 22).

The quantitative lexical analysis above has shown how the (head) words used in *AFLL*, and their co-occurrence in the book near other (head)words, reflect the focus and stance of the book. A consideration of repeated strings of consecutive words (ngrams) in *AFLL* supports this analysis. The book's most frequent 2-grams (strings of two words) including at least one content word are: *the learner* (107); *the learning, of learning* (39); *self-directed learning* (37); *his learning* (32); *definition of* (28); *methods and, and techniques* (27); *of teaching, the teacher* (21) and *responsibility for* (20). These underscore the focus, outlined above, on the individual learner, his (sic) cognitive processes, responsibility, and the teacher, as do the book's most frequent 3-grams: *methods and techniques* (25); *by the learner* (21); *the learner to* (15); *by reference to* (14); *definition of objectives* (13); and *acceptance of responsibility* (13). If we consider also 3-grams in the book in terms of lemmas, so as to include different forms of the verb,

for example, we see the additional phrases *help the learner* (12); *assume responsibility for* (11); and *take charge of* (10) – all key to the thesis of the book.

Interestingly, one phrase which does not appear at all in the body of the book is "learner autonomy". Instead, *AFLL* uses the word "autonomy" or phrases such as "autonomy in learning" as shorthand for "learner autonomy in foreign language learning". However, this seems to be because of Holec's way of using language rather than necessarily indicating a particular position on the concept. Other terms which we might expect nowadays to find in a work on autonomy in language learning are also absent: *agency*, (*meta*)*cognition/ive*, and *self-regulation* do not appear; *motivation* occurs only twice, and *motivate* does not occur at all; *strategy* occurs just once, in the phrase "learning strategies" (p. 18). The word *student*, in stark contrast to *learner*, occurs just four times, suggesting that Holec is embracing a discourse problematized by Holliday (1994), who writes:

> I feel it necessary to refer to the majority member of the classroom as 'student' rather than, as has become more common recently, 'learner'. This is because 'learner' carries the implication that the only purpose for being in the classroom is to learn. […] 'Student', on the other hand, implies roles and identities outside the classroom.
>
> (p. 14)

In the next section, I will turn from *AFLL* itself to the enormous body of research on autonomy and language learning of which it forms a part.

Patterns of Citation

As mentioned earlier, *AFLL* cites earlier work on autonomy in adult education from the preceding decade, notably Janne (1977) and Schwartz (1973). Indeed, the definition of autonomy on p. 3 of *AFLL*, "the ability to take charge of one's own learning", cites Schwartz's definition of autonomy in society as a basis, then Holec applies it to language learning specifically. In this section I analyze the pattern of citation of *AFLL* in the decades following its publication.

Table 1.3 shows citations of *AFLL* by decade, in comparison with the total number of academic publications for each decade mentioning the phrase *language learning*. In the first two decades of its publication, citations of *AFLL* were about 0.19% of the total number of publications on language learning. However, between 1999 and 2008 there was a jump in citations, with *AFLL* being over three times more cited (in proportion to the growing literature in the field) than in the previous decades. Most recently (2009–2018) it has again increased by a similar (slightly higher)

Table 1.3 Publications Mentioning "Language Learning" and Citations of AFLL, by Decade (Google, 2019)

Period	*AFLL cites*	*"Language learning" (LL) cites*	*AFLL/ LL (%)*	*AFLL/LL growth from previous decade*
1979–1988	31	16,500	0.19	–
1989–1998	109	61,300	0.18	0.95
1999–2008	1,430	260,000	0.55	3.09
2009–2018	5,280	298,000	1.77	3.22

factor, suggesting that it continues to be a key source. This overall pattern suggests that the ideas in it have, after a slow start, been very influential in the field of language learning research.

To give an idea of the kind of publications citing *AFLL*, the top ten Google Scholar citations of the book in the 1980s do not mention "autonomy" nor "self-direction" in their titles, and most focus on syllabus and course design and assessment. Those in the 1990s start to use the word "autonomy" in their titles, explaining it as a concept; and there is the first mention also of learning strategies. In the early 2000s (the period when citation of the book really took off), "autonomy" is still mentioned, in connection with a range of themes, including strategies, motivation, and culture. In the most recent decade (at an even higher rate of citation), the word "autonomy" almost disappears from the titles of the citing works, and focus is more on technology, intercultural experiences, and out-of-class learning. This series of snapshots, in conjunction with the figures in Table 1.3, suggests that *AFLL* was moderately influential in the short term in relation to educational planning, then was widely taken up as representative of a newly influential concept, learner autonomy, as it was being codified; it has continued to be influential, most recently for proponents of "Web 2.0" technologies and other extracurricular sites of language learning. In Leydesdorff et al.'s (2016) terms, *AFLL* made 'sticky' knowledge claims about language learning, which slowly took root and grew past the definition and exploration of the learner autonomy concept and now have the status of "a codified citation" and "a concept symbol" (p. 7) of a particular view of the learner.

Use of *AFLL* Key Terms 1949–2018

In this section I analyze the frequency of use of key terms in *AFLL* (as identified above) in publications in the decades preceding and following publication of *AFLL*, starting with scholarly publications on language learning. One might expect that any publication concerning *language learning* would mention a *learner*. Consider, however, the

first row of Table 1.4, which shows how often these terms co-occur in the text of scholarly publications from the 1960s to 2018. It seems that until the 1970s, overall less than a third of publications, including the phrase *language learning*, also included the word *learner* (although other words such as *student* may have been used). However, in the 1970s (the decade preceding the publication of *AFLL)*, *learner* rose above this proportion; and in the 1980s, following the publication of *AFLL*, the word *learner* was used in over 70% of language learning related publications. Since then, use of the term has declined, so that in the last decade it has become a minority term of reference, proportionally much lower than in the 1940s or 1950s. Thus, it seems that *AFLL* was an early example of a growing discourse about the learner, which peaked in the decade following its publication (bolding indicates the most frequent use of the key term in proportion to mention of *language learning*). The second row in Table 1.4 shows in what proportion of *language learning* publications Holec's name co-occurred with the term *learner*; this falls gradually after the decade of *AFLL*'s publication, but clearly rises in the last decade. Together with the overall decline in references to the learner in this decade, this makes Holec's work an increasingly important citation within those publications (bolding here indicates when Holec was mentioned most in proportion to the key term in question).

The other rows in Table 1.4 show occurrence of *AFLL*'s other main key terms in the language learning literature, and how much Holec's

Table 1.4 Language Learning Publications by Decade: Autonomy, Self-direction and Holec (Google, 2019)

Key term (all/LL)	*1949–1958*	*1959–1968*	*1969–1978*	*1979–1988*	*1989–1998*	*1999–2008*	*2009–2018*
Learner	24.15%	30.95%	**34.77%**	**70.91%**	29.04%	15.50%	14.23%
Holec learner	–	–	–	0.64%	0.55%	0.46%	**1.43%**
Self-direction	0.38%	0.62%	0.68%	**1.00%**	0.85%	0.66%	**1.79%**
Holec self-direction	–	–	–	0.08%	0.14%	**0.12%**	0.28%
Self-directed	0.38%	0.69%	1.34%	**2.79%**	2.54%	2.34%	**5.57%**
Holec self-directed	–	–	–	0.28%	0.28%	0.23%	**0.64%**
Autonomy	2.64%	4.11%	5.72%	**14.06%**	**12.59%**	6.88%	6.04%
Holec autonomy	–	–	–	0.48%	0.47%	0.44%	**1.47%**
Autonomous	1.32%	2.30%	3.59%	**8.97%**	7.65%	6.15%	**8.72%**
Holec autonomous	–	–	–	0.48%	0.47%	0.44%	**1.47%**
Responsibility	17.17%	17.12%	15.94%	**24.18%**	**17.62%**	8.65%	9.33%
Holec responsibility	–	–	–	0.33%	0.36%	0.29%	**0.98%**

name is associated with such occurrence. It seems that the term *self-directed* has been used in discourse related to language learning since at least the 1950s: for example,

> The adjustment of the materials of education to the varying needs of children is the responsibility of the teacher. Her [sic] … understanding of his [sic] needs will be most effective in assisting him to grow in self-directed and self-chosen ways of behavior.
>
> (Minnesota Curriculum for Elementary Schools, cited in Howard (1949), p. 19)

Howard's publication is, however, one of only four indexed in Google Scholar for the period 1949–1958 which use both the terms "self-directed" and "language learning". *Self-directed* seems to peak first in the 1980s, following the publication of *AFLL*; then it was used less in the 1990s and early 2000s. Throughout this period, reference was made to Holec's work (usually *AFLL* but also occasionally Henner-Stanchina and Holec (1977) or Holec (1985)) in roughly a tenth of these publications. In the last decade, however, *self-directed* has been used more frequently, accompanied by an even greater increase in the proportion of citations of Holec. The noun *self-direction* has a similar contour to *self-directed*, but at a lower level than the adjectival form.

The term *autonomy*, on the other hand, showed a much more dramatic increase in the 1980s, falling somewhat in the 1990s but still much more than in the decade before *AFLL*. These two decades were a boom period for talk of autonomy in language learning, and Holec's work was mentioned in connection with this – although proportionally speaking not as much as in the smaller literature on self-direction in language learning. After the 1990s, use of the term *autonomy* declined, so that in the last decade it is similar in level of use to *self-direction*. The adjective *autonomous* has had a somewhat different trajectory, also peaking (at a lower level) in the 1980s but retaining more currency since then and increasing somewhat in the last decade. Overall, the noun *autonomy* stands out from the other three terms discussed above, by its dramatic rise and fall around the turn of the century; this is perhaps indicative of the theoretical debates around the *concept* of autonomy, as opposed to more practical discussion of learning and learners using adjectival terms.

The trajectory of *responsibility* in publications on language learning is interestingly similar to that of *autonomy*, peaking dramatically in the 1980s and holding through the 1990s, but again decreasing in frequency since then. Similarly, Holec's work has been cited in these publications at a moderate level but proportionally most frequently in the last decade. It is important to note that the use of the term *responsibility* in publications on language learning does not necessarily

mean that responsibility is assigned to the learner; rather, it indicates a general discourse of discussing and assigning responsibility, which has waxed and waned historically in the scholarship around language learning. The same applies to the other terms mentioned above. Overall we can see that the publication of *AFLL* was preceded by an increasing focus on the learner and was associated with the beginning of a growth of discussion of autonomy and responsibility around language learning.

Finally, I will consider the use of *AFLL*'s key two- and three-word phrases (ngrams) in books published in English from 1940 to 2008. This shows how these phrases were used in general published discourse – not necessarily scholarly nor necessarily focussing on language learning, but in broader 'conversations' (Gee, 1999) in anglophone writing.[1] Figure 1.1 shows five of these phrases, with the *y*-axis representing the percentage of all pairs of words on every page of the books indexed (or all three-word phrases, as appropriate) which were instances of the phrase shown. The publication of *AFLL* is shown for reference, using a broad line to reflect its initial restricted publication in 1979 followed by wider publication in 1981.

In the 1940s, all the terms shown were being used at a fairly low level, but followed different trajectories thereafter. The first one to rise in relative frequency was *help the learner* (HtL), which reached a modest peak in the early 1950s before falling then rising more slowly an overall maximum in the mid-1970s; since then it has been in gradual decline or plateau for the most part. HtL was overtaken, after its initial peak, by two phrases with a common contour which reached much higher levels than the other terms in Figure 1.1: *language learner* (*LL*), which rose dramatically in the 1970s, peaking in the early 1980s, and *SDL*, which rose more slowly during the same period and so peaked later (but slightly higher) in the late 1990s. *AFLL* was published at the height of LL and SDL, showing how it brought together two key discourses of the preceding decade. In between these peaks, SDL's sudden rise coincided with LL's

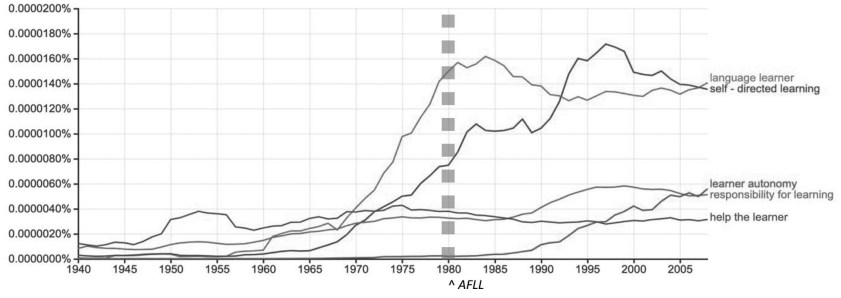

Figure 1.1 Frequency of "language learner", "self-directed learning", "learner autonomy", "responsibility for learning" and "help the learner" in books published from 1940 to 2008 (Google, 2013).

decline; while most recently a slow rise in LL brought it again slightly above SDL. *Learner autonomy* (LA) was a latecomer, only beginning to be used more frequently from the late 1980s, after *AFLL*; it continued to grow thereafter but is clearly lower than *SDL*, a more widely used term. From the late 1940s, however, the more general phrase *responsibility for learning* (*RfL*) was gradually increasing, always more frequent than LA until 2006, and surpassing HtL, for example, since the mid-1990s.

By way of comparison, Figure 1.2 juxtaposes two of the phrases from Figure 1.1 with a term that occurs only once in *AFLL* but has been strongly associated with autonomy and self-direction: *learning strategies* (LS). The y-axis is compressed to accommodate LS, which, even before the publication of *AFLL*, was twice as frequent as SDL. Both phrases became more frequent from the mid-1960s, but LS gained at twice the speed of SDL until the early 1980s, just after *AFLL* was published; from then on, LS accelerated while SDL more or less plateaued. The cognitive discourse associated with LS seems to have spread much more widely than that used in *AFLL*.

Figure 1.3 sets the above in the context of still more dominant discourses. *The learner* (tL) represents a particular discourse of broad applicability in education; although clearly more frequent than any of the phrases considered so far, it also shows considerable variability, with a first peak in the early 1950s and a higher one in the mid-1970s (the years leading up to *AFLL*), waning somewhat thereafter. *Self-regulation* (SR) starts at a higher frequency than LS and is consistently at least twice as frequent, doubtless due to its wider usage in social/legal terms, rising throughout until a plateau in the early 2000s. Finally, the theme of responsibility (R), combining the phrases *accept responsibility*, *assume responsibility* and *take responsibility*, follows a similar trajectory to SR but at a higher frequency, until it starts to decline in the late 1990s. Overall, this suggests that in various fields, in both psychological and more general usage, R and SR have been considered increasingly significant;

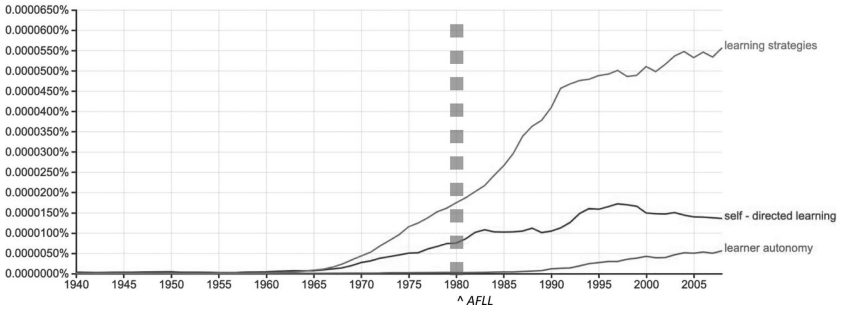

Figure 1.2 Frequency of "learning strategies", "self-directed learning" and "learner autonomy" in books published from 1940 to 2008 (Google, 2013).

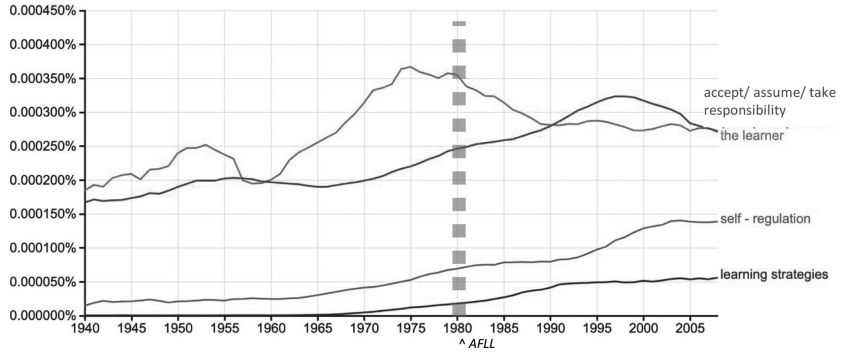

Figure 1.3 Frequency of "the learner", "accept/ assume/take responsibility", "self-regulation" and "learning strategies" in books published from 1940 to 2008 (Google, 2013).

the pattern of LS (including a recent plateau) also fits into this long-term trend, in contrast to that of tL.

Conclusion

It seems from this preliminary analysis that *AFLL* was a seminal book in terms of citations and has had a significant impact in the longer term, becoming the 'go-to' source to cite when discussing autonomy and self-direction. It continues also to be contested, for example in terms of its focus on the individual and educational institutions. On the other hand, it is also clear that rather than creating the notions of self-direction or learner-centredness, *AFLL* brought together existing discourses about the learner and learning, which had grown during the preceding decades. Themes such as responsibility have had wide and growing currency since the mid-twentieth century. The psychological aspects of self-direction in learning have been a focus of increasing interest, while its socio-political aspects have received less attention. However, in the last decade the growth of networked and mobile media, among other influences, have given further resonance to the ideas developed in *AFLL*, and increased its impact further. The book continues to influence scholarship as well as teacher education and so practice (in the broad sense of educators' goals and assumptions).

Note

1 Pechenick, Danforth, and Dodds (2015), among others, note some issues in inferring from Google Ngrams data to broad social trends: for example, that the Google Books corpus is weighted towards scientific writing. Note that

in this study Google Ngrams is used simply to provide a broader context for the citation data and the scholarly discourse around *AFLL*, rather than to draw conclusions about society in general.

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2 From Language Learning Strategy Research to a Sociocultural Understanding of Self-Regulated Learning

Xuesong (Andy) Gao and Jingjing Hu

Introduction

Language learning strategies (LLS), as "specific plans or steps, either observable… or unobservable… that L2 learners intentionally employ to improve reception, storage, retention and retrieval of information" (Oxford, 2003, p. 81), have attracted much attention as both researchers and teachers associate them with learners' language learning success (Cohen & Macaro, 2007; Oxford, 2017; Oxford & Griffiths, 2014; Rose, Briggs, Boggs, Sergio, & Ivanova-Slavianskaia, 2018). Both researchers and teachers were driven to identify the effective strategies or sets of strategies that could help underachieving language learners to overcome challenges, gain confidence and achieve the desired outcomes in the language learning process. Despite such enthusiasm, LLS research was in a conundrum as the notion was problematized in terms of theorization and is indeed problematic in actual operationalization (Gao, 2007; Rose et al., 2018; Thomas & Rose, 2019; Tseng, Dörnyei, & Schmitt, 2006).

Dörnyei (2005) found it unacceptable for the construct to be conceptualized in behavioural, affective, and cognitive terms simultaneously (also see Tseng et al., 2006). Researchers have also questioned whether LLS can be regarded as an individual difference factor explaining variations in language learners' achievements. Critics contend that popular questionnaires such as Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) may be psychometrically flawed if they are used to measure and portrait learners' strategy use as a trait (Dörnyei, 2005). For instance, a particular group of learners belonging to the same culture may prefer one or two cognitive strategies and their overall cognitive strategy score may be low, but this does not mean that they are less likely to use memory strategies. In addition, the boundaries between different strategy categories in SILL are often quite blurred, making it difficult for strategic behaviours to be classified in research (Hurd, 2007). For instance, a language learner may use a cognitive behaviour (e.g., reviewing a vocabulary list) to overcome the anxiety before a major English language examination. This particular cognitive behaviour cannot be easily classified as a cognitive or affective strategy. Finally, the so-called systematic

examination of learners' strategy use and other variables (Ellis, 2004) often neglects the fact that these variables are not static. All these require researchers to see language learners at the centre of interacting with or regulating myriad factors for gaining control of the language learning process. Therefore, Tseng et al. (2006) argue that the notion of LLS, together with other variables related to language learners' achievements, needs to be replaced by a new term, that is, self-regulatory learning capacity. The proposal to replace LLS with self-regulation has motivated researchers to explore ways to ensure that research on language learners' strategic learning generates relevant useful findings for language learning and teaching (Oxford, 2017; Rose et al., 2018; Takeuchi, 2019).

This chapter first traces the development of this turn to self-regulation in LLS research as mentioned above. After reviewing the relevant studies on self-regulated language learning, we then contend that research on self-regulated language learning has not fully addressed the concerns that researchers had about LLS research. We also argue that this turn to self-regulation benefits from methodological and theoretical diversification so that we can gain deep insights into how language learners strategically self-regulate their language learning and why they self-regulate their learning as such. To this end, we report briefly on a recent effort that we undertook to understand language learners' self-regulated strategic learning efforts from a sociocultural perspective (Hu & Gao, 2017).

The Rise of Self-Regulated Language Learning

The notion of self-regulation is regarded as a dynamic concept to capture language learners' "strategic efforts to manage their own achievement through specific beliefs and processes" (Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997, p. 105). This echoes researchers' attempt to understand language learners' autonomous language learning, reflecting how they can take control of their language learning (Benson, 2007). Thus, the turn to self-regulation in LLS research is supposed to introduce more rigorous research to gain insights into how language learners manage and regulate the dynamic language learning process. Researchers nowadays have either "embraced self-regulation theory as central to the research framework" or "utilized traditional language learner strategy constructs, while acknowledging contributions from self-regulation" unless they "moved the field into novel territory" by "developing new instruments, exploring new structures, or examining relationships between strategic learning and other theories" (Rose et al., 2018, p. 155).

In the past ten years, researchers have investigated different aspects of self-regulated learning, including learners' self-regulation experiences (Bown & White, 2010), the interactions among self-regulation and variables such as English learning motivation (Kormos & Csizér, 2014),

conceptions of English learning (Zheng, Liang, Yang, & Tsai, 2016), and autonomous learning behaviour (Kormos & Csizér, 2014) as well as the distinguished features of self-regulation among learners with different social-economic backgrounds (Kormos & Kiddle, 2013), bilingual experiences (Melzi, Schick, & Escobar, 2017), and English proficiency levels (Falout, Elwood, & Hood, 2009). In addition, efforts have been made to enhance self-regulation through pedagogy or curriculum design (Lam, 2015; Mak & Wong, 2018). However, just like the construct of LLS being problematized because of its definitional fuzziness, we found that similar critiques can be made against self-regulated language learning research.

The introduction of self-regulation in language learning research has received critical responses. For instance, Gao (2007) draws on language learner autonomy literature and argues that researchers promoting the construct 'self-regulation' need to consider other competing constructs such as metacognition, which had been advanced by Wenden (1998, 2002) in the field. Gao (2007) also contends that LLS research can "meaningfully complement the advance of self-regulation in research on learners' strategic learning" since "such research shows what constitutes a learner's self-regulatory mechanism and how it operates within the self-regulated learning framework" (p. 619). Rose (2012) further criticizes the fuzziness of the definition of 'self-regulation' by discussing the complex and unclear relationships among the categories included in the concept. In our reading of relevant studies on self-regulated language learning research, this key construct is often defined implicitly, which might lead to confusion and misinterpretation (Dinsmore, Alexander, & Loughlin, 2008; Melzi et al., 2017). For example, Lam (2015), on feedback and self-regulation, has used different words and phrases throughout the paper, such as 'regulate', 'metacognitive capacity', 'manipulate', 'self-regulatory behaviour', 'self-monitoring', and 'directing', from which readers can know only what self-regulation is associated with rather than what it is exactly. These words and phrases may help readers infer what self-regulation is about (Kormos & Kiddle, 2013; Lam, 2015), but a clear definition of self-regulation is also needed. Apart from this, readers are often expected to infer what self-regulation is through carefully reading the source texts cited as key references in studies on self-regulated language learning. For instance, Melzi et al. (2017) categorized self-regulation into cognitive and behavioural/emotional self-regulation, without defining what self-regulation, cognitive self-regulation, and behavioural/emotional self-regulation are. In the same vein, in her discussion about self-regulation as a critical factor of L2 phonology outcome, Moyer (2014) used what self-regulated L2 learners do to define the construct of self-regulation. In other words, these researchers often relied on a mixture of learning behaviours and cognitive efforts to define what self-regulation is. Behaviours are often used to infer what cognitive

processes and propensity are alike, which we think is not so different from what LLS researchers had done in research (Tseng et al., 2006).

In addition, it is necessary to clarify the connection between self-regulation and several terms with similar meanings such as 'metacognition' and 'self-regulated learning' (Gao, 2007). Probably the constructs of metacognition and self-regulation have evolved differently in the field: metacognition is thought to be cognitive oriented; self-regulation is considered to have an initial emphasis on cognition, then expands to cover emotion, social behaviour, motivation and environment, while self-regulated learning covers even more broadly both metacognition and self-regulation (Dinsmore et al., 2008; Teng & Zhang, 2016). However, applied linguists are apparently unable to reach a consensus on the distinctions among these self-regulation-associated terms, and the construct of self-regulation becomes even fuzzier when the descriptions of the concept within a single paper contradict each other. For example, Zheng et al. (2016) devote two separate paragraphs to describing what self-regulated learning and self-regulation are, which seems to indicate they are different concepts. However, they do not raise any question when citing another study in the paper, which uses a questionnaire for self-regulated learning to measure self-regulation.

It must be noted that Tseng et al. (2006) make a strong case for the shift from LLS to self-regulation because strategic and non-strategic language learners cannot be distinguished by their behaviours. They argue 'the specific learner capacity' emphasized by self-regulation makes the notion more advanced than LLS. Items in their 'Self-regulating Capacity in Vocabulary Learning Scale' (SRCVOC), therefore, help researchers infer about learners' self-evaluated capacity in vocabulary learning, starting with 'I feel satisfied with…', 'I can…', 'I know…', 'I am confident…'. However, rather than measuring the capacity per se, most items in the self-reported questionnaire (SRCVOC) can apparently assess learners' self-efficacy for self-regulation, which is referred to as learners' perceived capacity of using self-regulatory strategies (Mills, Pajares, & Herron, 2007). Moreover, other items in SRCVOC are also about the actual techniques used by learners (e.g., 'I look for a good learning environment', 'I cope with this problem immediately', and 'I try to sort out the problem'). Studies on self-regulation in language learning seldom explicitly clarify whether the construct should be regarded as behavioural or cognitive. For instance, in Kormos and Kiddle's (2013) study, one variable included in the instrument used to measure English learners' self-regulation is 'self-regulated learning behaviour', which is defined as 'students' capacity to actively seek out opportunities for learning and using the L2'. The sample items in the study actually ask about the actual technique (i.e., 'I try to find opportunities to practice speaking in English'). It is also the case with Falout et al.'s (2009) study, where items of actual techniques (e.g., 'When demotivated in English, I watched movies

in English') were used to measure self-regulation capacity. Presumably these behavioural items are used to help researchers infer about the participants' self-regulatory learning capacity. It is very likely that these researchers have been using traditional LLS constructs implicitly, although they claim explicitly that their research was informed by "contributions from self-regulation" (Rose et al., 2018, p. 155). Nevertheless, this does not seem to be innovative when LLS research has been challenged about its definitional fuzziness and inadequate measurement tools to evaluate learners' strategy use.

We have also noticed that Tseng et al. (2006) critiqued LLS measurement instruments for the inclination to "ask respondents to generalize their actions across situations rather than referencing singular and specific learning events" (p. 82). They take the most frequently used instruments, 'Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire' (MSLQ) and SILL, as examples of such instruments and therefore develop a scale specifically for vocabulary learning. They further critique LLS rating scales when they ask about the frequencies of strategy use instead of the extent, as is the case with SILL. As they note, strategic learning is not about frequency of strategy use but how the strategies are used. Moreover, the assessment of frequency may result in conceptually unrelated items being grouped into the same category. Tseng et al.'s (2006) critiques have raised some researchers' awareness of these issues. In the measurement instruments used in their study, the researchers ask about the extent of self-regulation for specific learning events in line with Tseng et al.'s (2006) suggestion, using the scales ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' (Ziegler, 2015). However, this is not always the case. Instead of asking about the extent of self-regulation for specific learning tasks, some scales still ask about general language learning (Kormos & Kiddle, 2013), and the rating scales of self-regulation do not always indicate whether frequency or extent was asked about (Csizér & Tankó, 2017; Kormos & Kiddle, 2013). As Woltering and Shi (2016) note, "there is no widely used, agreed-on, standardized and normed measure of self-regulation" (p. 1087), which self-regulation researchers can work on together. In this sense, the development of the assessment instrument for self-regulated language learning may have followed the steps of LLS research.

We must concede that Tseng et al.'s (2006) proposal to replace LLS with self-regulation has merits, as it provokes thinking about the connotation, the nature, and the measurement issue of the concept. By elaborating our concerns, we do not intend to present LLS research as less problematic. Rather, we contend that replacing the problematized concept with another concept does not necessarily solve the problems. In light of the turn towards self-regulation in LLS research, we still believe that traditional LLS research "can meaningfully complement the advance of the proposed self-regulation in research on learners'

strategic learning" (Gao, 2007, p. 615). As Gao (2007) argues, recent developments of LLS research have seen the process of shift from "describing learners' strategy use to the processes underlying them" (p. 618). We believe that LLS will be an increasingly useful construct in studies that investigate broad issues related to language learning. For example, what activities language learners engage themselves in is an important focus when examining out-of-class language learning (Lai, Zhu, & Gong, 2015). LLS researchers have already attached great importance to features like 'goal-oriented', 'situation-specific', and 'task-based' (Macaro, 2006). Moreover, increasing LLS research has been conducted from sociocultural perspectives, with the mediating role of contextual resources highlighted (Lei, 2008, 2016). We believe that self-regulated language learning research also needs to be informed by sociocultural perspectives on language learning. Instead of seeing language learning as regulated by individual selves, more research needs to explore language learning as co-regulated through interaction between individual learners and learning contexts (Gao, 2006, 2010). In particular, it is necessary to understand how language learners appropriate various resources available in a given learning context to regulate language learning. Studies have been conducted to explore language learners' self-regulated learning process in specific contexts from sociocultural perspectives (Stafford, 2013). We now proceed to present an example to illustrate how language learners strategically use resources to facilitate self-regulated learning of the subject content through the medium of English in Hong Kong.

A Sociocultural Interpretation of Language Learners' Self-Regulated Learning

Researchers endorsing sociocultural perspectives stress the importance of understanding the mediation of contextual processes on language learners' language development. They conceptualize self-regulated language learning as "a learner's socially mediated plan or action to meet a goal" in the language learning process (Oxford & Schramm, 2007, p. 48). Mediation through artefacts such as tools (e.g., computer) and signs (e.g., language) emerges as the key through which language learners engage with others and learning context when developing competence and practice in the target language (Vygotsky, 1978). The process of learner engagement and contextual mediation can be captured by an activity system developed by Engeström (1999), which consists of mediating sources, community, rules, and division of labour. As can be seen in Figure 2.1 (adapted from Engeström, 1999; Hu & Gao, 2017, p. 3), mediating sources include the aforementioned artefacts, community (a social group where language learning takes place) and rules (e.g., time constraint and academic requirements), and division of labour

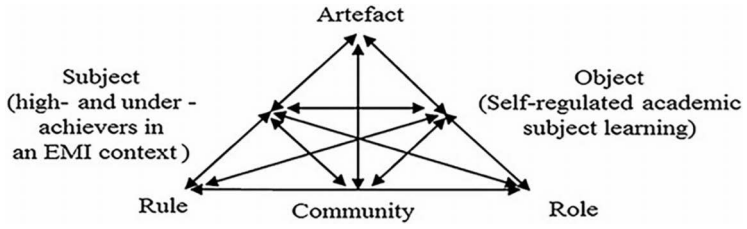

Figure 2.1 The self-regulated learning activity system (Hu & Gao, 2017, adapted from Engeström, 1999).

(e.g., roles played by different individuals that constitute the basis for power dynamics within the community). These elements interact with each other and profoundly mediate the learning processes, leading to outcomes of the self-regulated learning efforts. Such conceptualization of mediated language learning processes has helped researchers gain insights into language learners' strategy use (Lei, 2016; Liu, 2015). For instance, Lei (2016) identified that skilled student writers assume a variety of roles and engage with different social agents for help in overcoming difficulties they encounter in the writing process. In contrast, less skilled writers appear to have relied on themselves alone and undertook the writing task without asking individuals other than teachers and peers for help. Liu's (2015) inquiry on Chinese students' strategies to use resources revealed that they adopt different strategies in different contexts as mediated by peers and teachers in the language learning process. To gain insights into how different learners use contextual resources, this study explores how high- and under-achievers (in terms of their learning achievements in a given academic subject) appropriate resources for self-regulated learning of language and academic subject content in a bilingual education context in Hong Kong.

We conducted the study to appreciate the challenges that Chinese students face when learning academic subject content such as Integrated Sciences in the medium of English after they transit from primary school to secondary school in Hong Kong (Hu & Gao, 2017, 2018). Because most of them have received primary school education in the medium of Cantonese, their mother tongue, these students not only have to deal with new friends, challenging learning content, and unfamiliar school environments after the transition but also have to cope with the challenge of learning subjects such as Integrated Sciences in English during the transition. In a very short period of time, these students have to learn to read Integrated Science textbooks and learning materials, take notes, and learn from teachers' presentations of subject knowledge in the medium of English. Therefore, we are particularly interested in how some of these learners overcome these challenges easily and others find

it difficult to address them in the process. In particular, we are interested in learning about whether high achievers manage the learning process differently from underachievers.

A total of 12 students (six high achievers and six underachievers) participated in the study. In the study, we collected data on these students' self-regulated learning through interviews, stimulated recalls and lesson observation. We also collected related learning materials and written works (Hu & Gao, 2017, 2018). The activity system adapted from Engeström (1999) (Figure 2.1) was used as the conceptual framework to guide our analysis and interpretation of these data. For instance, we categorized assessment criteria, course requirements, and school regulations as the 'Rules' in the activity system. The social groups that these students socialize with inside and outside schools are referred to as 'community' in the figure. In the analysis, we were interested in finding out how these students use resources strategically in the self-regulated learning of language and science when learning the subject content in the medium of English.

Through analysis, we found that the participants adopted a variety of strategies to use resources that can be classified as 'artefact-mediated', 'rule-mediated', 'community-mediated', and 'role-mediated' strategies (Engeström, 2001; Lei, 2008, 2016; Yu & Lee, 2016). In addition, high achievers and underachievers display different patterns of strategy use in using resources for self-regulated learning. A variety of individual agents, such as peers, family members, and private tutors, mediate the participants' self-regulated strategic learning inside and outside school. Participants of different learning achievements (high achievers vs. underachievers) display different patterns of strategy preferences in using resources. For instance, the results indicate that the high achievers strategically use artefacts, such as textbooks, notes, dictionaries, L1, and symbols, more than underachievers in the self-regulated learning process, but underachievers prefer community resources in strategically overcoming learning difficulties. We also interpret why high achievers and underachievers adopt different self-regulated strategies and believe that the different roles that they assume (language learners vs. subject content learners) might have mediated the choices of strategy. The participants might have also perceived the usefulness of specific resources differently. They also had different abilities of using and accessing these resources for learning.

First of all, sociocultural perspectives on self-regulated learning draw our attention to the participants' strategic use of artefacts such as textbooks, learning notes, dictionaries, and other linguistic resources (e.g., L1 and L2) in the learning process. These artefacts, which can be further classified into (physical) tools (e.g., textbooks and dictionaries) and (symbolical) signs (e.g., L1 and L2), play an important role in mediating language learners' self-regulated strategic learning (Lei, 2016). Yet, because high achievers and underachievers perceive the importance of

these resources differently, they use these resources in different ways. For instance, high achievers in the study were found to have often resorted to textbooks or notes they took in the lessons when they had difficulties related to language and subject content in the learning process. That is how April solved the challenge in learning different words, such as 'reptile' and 'amphibian', as she recognized the meaning 'once [she checks] the textbook' (Hu & Gao, 2017, p. 6). To facilitate writing in English, these high achievers often recycle sentence patterns from the textbooks and learning notes, while underachievers use textbooks and notes much less frequently. We found that underachievers even had difficulties in identifying what is useful from the textbooks for their learning due to low English proficiency. These learners like Frankie were not even sure whether the sentences they found in the textbooks could be used as answers to the exercise questions when learning the subject in the medium of English. Consequently, he "just wrote down what was relevant to the question" after he "looked for the words" he could recognize in the textbook (Hu & Gao, 2017, p. 6). This is indicative of lack of strategic control and selection when using the textbooks to help him answer questions in English. Frankie also reported no meaningful engagement with the questions and sentences containing the words he recognized in the process. We also found that underachievers were less willing to use learning notes as they were unsure whether these notes contain accurate information, and they also found it difficult to locate the information they needed. In contrast, high achievers were apparently more strategic in using tools such as dictionaries and Internet to strategically facilitate their learning. When looking up new words in the dictionary, they did not look up every single word and they only looked up words that affect understanding in the learning process:

> (…) before this lesson was taught, I browsed it. (…) [There were] these words, such as vertebrates, invertebrates, etc…normally I just browse it. Sometimes I don't know the words. It doesn't matter. Sometimes I search for them on the internet if I really want to know [their meaning]. (Daniel, stimulated recall).
>
> (Hu & Gao, 2017, p. 6)

Unlike high achievers, the underachievers were found much more likely to be discouraged from using resources such as dictionaries because they often have too many unknown words to look up. Even when they found a particular word in the dictionary, they were confused because the word has so many different meanings listed and many of these meanings are "not related to IS (Integrated Sciences')" (Hu & Gao, 2017, p. 7). Because these learners do not feel that the dictionary can give them the meanings they need to overcome the learning difficulties, they become less willing to use tools such as dictionary.

Second, we found that the participants appropriated various rules such as evaluation criteria to regulate the learning process. It is not surprising to see that the participants attached great importance to evaluation criteria in the learning process because Chinese students have been known for examination-oriented learning. They put great efforts in learning the language and subject content to achieve good examination results. Therefore, high achievers and underachievers alike focus more on learning the language and subject content that are valued in the examination process. The high achievers knew what they were expected to do and always tried their best to fulfil these expectations in answering examination questions. To achieve this end, they were also highly selective in choosing language items (e.g., grammar and vocabulary) for memorization and memorized only those that helped improve the score in the examination:

> Much information the teacher gives orally will be covered in the examinations… sometimes he doesn't write it down, but sometimes he provides orally. If you jot it down and memorize, you will get scores. If you don't, but only memorize what is in the textbook, you won't know [what to write in the examinations].
>
> (Katty, interview) (Hu & Gao, 2017, p. 8)

This means that the high achievers' use of artefacts in the learning process is closely associated with their understanding of rules in the learning context. In contrast, the underachievers were less effective in using rules such as evaluation criteria to guide the self-regulated learning. Some of them could not even distinguish the different assessment criteria that different assessment tasks have and went straightforward to writing, using their prior experience with different tasks. They were constrained in terms of time as they had to deal with so many different issues in the learning process in comparison with high achievers. Even though they knew it was important for them to review, memorize, and re-read difficult texts when learning the subject content through English, they gave up using these strategies and responding to relevant challenges, while high achievers strategically selected particular challenges to overcome in the learning process.

Third, the data revealed that the participants' use of self-regulated learning strategies was associated with various agents' mediation in the social communities that they belonged to (Lei, 2008; Thomas & Rose, 2019; Yu & Lee, 2016). In other words, these strategies may not be purely self-regulated and could be other-mediated (Thomas & Rose, 2018). These social agents include teachers and peers who play key roles in the schools. For instance, even high achievers often resort to asking their classmates and teachers if they fail to overcome any learning problems with other strategies though they might have fewer unsolved

challenges in comparison with underachievers. Underachievers usually rely on peers more as many of them find it more straightforward and easier to get answers from classmates than relying on other strategies such as looking up a new word in a dictionary as mentioned earlier. Apart from interactions with teachers and peers, parental support was found to have mediated the participants' self-regulated learning. This finding draws attention to the different social resources that different participants can access beyond the school, which explains why some of them found it unnecessary to ask for help from their peers because "My mom understands [the questions] better. She knows more [than my classmates] … Sometimes they [my classmates] may not know [the correct one], but just give me a wrong answer. (Katty, interview)" (Hu & Gao, 2017, p. 11). If a participant has a family background with rich English support and opportunities to use the language, he or she is naturally more motivated to improve English and take these opportunities strategically. Others, who did not necessarily engage with their parents in the learning process, usually used other types of social resources, such as friends outside school or tools, including dictionaries. Underachievers used social resources in ways that were different from those of high achievers. They used these resources because they were convenient but not necessarily useful. As an example, Helen relied on her private tutor for help three times a week, while Cindy kept asking her elder sister for help, even though she often did not comply.

> [The meaning of the word found in the dictionary] did not look like a scientific term, so I asked my elder sister, but she didn't know. And then I asked my classmates. They didn't know either.
>
> (Cindy, stimulated recall) (Hu & Gao, 2017, p. 12)

It seems that Cindy did not have other choices because of her limited access to social resources when she needed to overcome challenges in the self-regulated learning process.

It must be noted that the participants' adoption of particular self-regulated learning strategies has much to do with how they view themselves and the roles they assume in the process of learning English and subject content. Some of them regarded learning the subject content in the medium of English as learning of English but others consider themselves subject content learners more than English language learners. Assuming different roles by these participants motivated them to use different strategies in the learning process. For instance, high achievers, such as Amy, Allison, and Katty, who were committed to exceling in learning subject content only, used strategies to regulate their learning of subject content for related assessment performance. In short, the study revealed the participants undertook self-regulated, strategic learning efforts in appropriating resources to facilitate their learning of subject content and language,

which add to the focus on cognitive and metacognitive processes such as planning, organizing, monitoring, and evaluating in previous research on self-regulated learning (Bråten & Strømsø, 2003). It should be also noted that the participants' strategic use of different resources interact with each other in the self-regulated learning of subject content and English language (Figure 2.1). In other words, their self-regulated strategic learning is both cognitive and social. As an example, Tracy did not take notes until she learnt from her experience that her examination result was negatively undermined by her failure to take good notes. In other words, her self-regulated learning was mediated by both her use of notes (artefact-mediated strategy) and her awareness of the role of note-taking in achieving examination success (rule-mediated strategy). Artefact-mediated and community-mediated strategies were discernible when we tried to understand Katty's efforts to translate the information she took from her peers into Chinese to help her learning. One may wonder to what extent the students' self-regulated strategic learning rests on the students' self, not various social agents such as parents, peers and teachers who enable or compel them to adopt particular strategies (Thomas & Rose, 2018).

Conclusion

It seems that the turn towards self-regulation in strategic language learning research may go through processes similar to what LLS research had gone through. Although the notion of self-regulation draws further attention to what is going on in individual learners' cognition and metacognition, it does not deflect the criticisms of LLS research. In many studies claiming the use of self-regulation, researchers conducted research in a manner similar to the LLS research. In addition, sociocultural perspectives on language learning can also help gain insights into language learners' self-regulated language learning process, revealing how language learners interact within contextual resources through strategic appropriation to enhance their learning. Irrespective of whether the notion of self-regulation will continue to dominate the landscape of LLS research, we may further explore the following questions with regard to language learners' strategic learning through the lens of sociocultural perspectives:

1 How do our students use strategies to self-regulate language learning?
2 How do our students' strategies to self-regulate language learning develop?
3 What mediates our students' adoption of strategies for self-regulated language learning?
4 How can we help our students negotiate with contextual conditions in developing appropriate strategies for self-regulated language learning?

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3 Advising for Language Learner Autonomy

Theory, Practice, and Future Directions

Jo Mynard

Overview

In this chapter, I will begin by briefly exploring the origins of advising in language learning (ALL), defining what it is, and explaining why it is so important for language learning and the development of language learner autonomy. Drawing on a sociocultural view of learning, I will build on a previous model of ALL (Mynard, 2012a) to explain how the interplay of dialogue, tools, and context within advising sessions supports language learning. I present a revised version of the model which has three main enhancements: a more specific explanation of the nature of advising dialogue, an expansion of the way we might look at advising tools, and a re-definition of context within an ecological perspective. There is much we can apply from mainstream psychology and other related fields to enhance our practice. In line with this, the second part of the chapter will examine practical implications of the expansion of the theoretical model. Finally, I will conclude with some future directions for the field.

Origins and Definition

ALL is the process of working with individual language learners on personally meaningful aspects of their learning and, through skilful use of dialogue, promoting deeper-level reflective thought processes in order to promote an awareness and control of learning (Carson & Mynard, 2012; Kato & Mynard, 2016). The key point here is that the control over learning and all the decision making lie with the learner; the advisor supports and facilitates this process, and has a crucial role to play in promoting learner autonomy.

The origins of the field of ALL can be traced back to the late 1960s and early 1970s to CRAPEL (Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues/Centre for Research and Applications in Language Teaching) at the University of Lorraine in Nancy, France (Holec, 2000). At that time, innovative work was being done to promote autonomous learning, and part of this work involved having teachers engage

with learners in different ways outside the classroom: for example in self-access centres/self-directed learning centres. The aim is generally to promote language learner autonomy by supporting individual learners in achieving personally relevant goals and this is a natural place for ALL to occur. Since the early days of self-directed learning centres, various leading institutions, including CRAPEL, have helped to develop our knowledge of ALL through research and international dissemination.

Theoretical Underpinnings

As dialogue is used as a tool to facilitate learning in advising, it has naturally been situated within a sociocultural view of learning and takes into account the social, historical and contextual factors that affect learning, and the important role of others in mediating the process. Mediation is a key concept of sociocultural theory, which accounts for the development of knowledge in conjunction with psychological tools. These psychological tools can be language, artefacts, signs, and symbols (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). Wertsch (2007) explores the Vygotskian notions of implicit and explicit mediation. Explicit mediation is often the teacher's or advisor's intentional interventions to influence the ways in which learners think and learn. Learning advisors intentionally use dialogue to encourage students to reflect deeply, make connections, challenge assumptions and increase their understanding of themselves and the learning process (Kato, 2012; Kato & Mynard, 2016; Mynard, 2012a). Implicit mediation may be subtle and occur unconsciously and gradually over time (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). Regular advising dialogues contribute to the development of the awareness of language learning processes over time and, although more evidence is needed, research in advising has demonstrated that we see shifts occurring directly because of the ongoing advising dialogue (e.g., Mynard, 2018a; Yamashita, 2015). Even though language is the most powerful tool in the case of advising, learning advisors may draw on a range of other tools in their practice in conjunction with the dialogue. The *Dialogue, Tools and Context Model* for ALL (Mynard, 2012a) (Figure 3.1) shows the relationship between the advising dialogue, the inner dialogues of the advisor and the learner, and various tools that facilitate the development of thinking, i.e. cognitive tools which stimulate thinking; theoretical tools that relate to the knowledge needed for learners and advisors to negotiate the learning process; and practical tools support the practical approaches to language learning. These processes take place in a rich and stimulating environment or 'context'.

Although this model adequately describes the advising and learning process within a sociocultural view of learning, it does not take into account important developments in thinking from the past decade, namely our deeper understanding of advising dialogue and tools; and

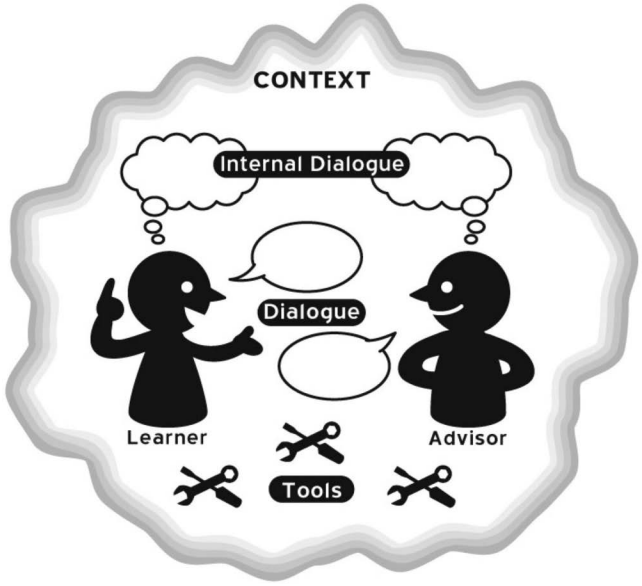

Figure 3.1 The dialogue, tools, and context model (Mynard, 2012a).

an increasing interest in an ecological perspective (van Lier, 2004). To address this limitation somewhat, in the next section I will explore these developments in more depth in order to suggest a revised version of the model.

Revising the *Dialogue, Tools, and Context* Model

In this section I will explore the development of each aspect of the model – dialogue, tools, and context – in turn, but I want to emphasize that these three have a dynamic relationship. I have attempted to capture this interaction in Figure 3.2, presented at the end of this section.

Dialogue

To develop the model, thanks to more recent deeper examinations of our practice, we can now be more specific about the kind of dialogue which facilitates the learning process in advising sessions. Advising dialogue incorporates discursive strategies that learning advisors intentionally use, the interaction between the learning advisor and the learner, and the internal dialogue that both of them have. In 2012, I wrote that the "effect that language choice within an advising session has on learning has yet to be fully explored" (Mynard, 2012a, p. 34), but since the

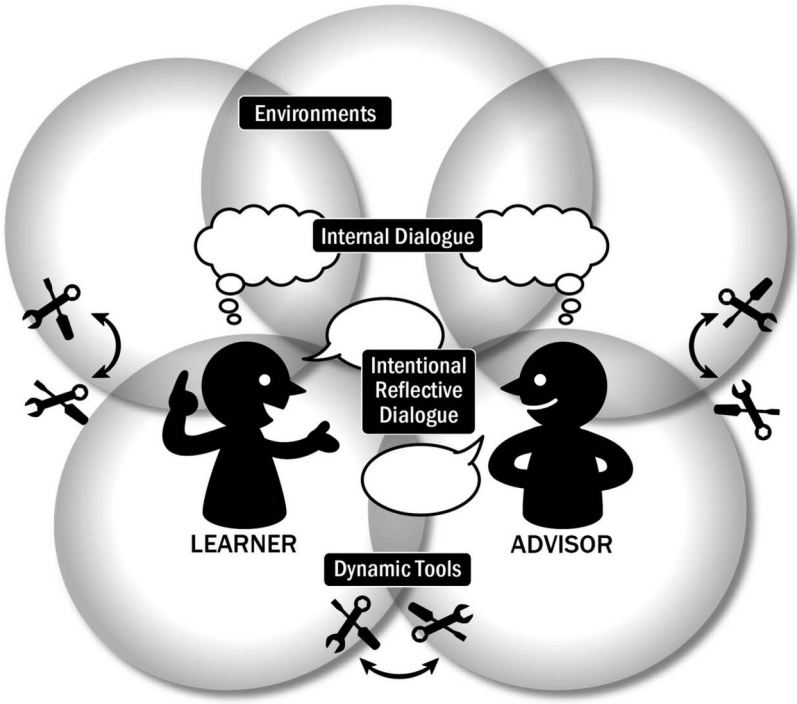

Figure 3.2 The dialogue, tools, and environments model for advising in language learning.

development of this model we have benefited from a number of studies which specifically investigate the discourse of advising. For example, Mozzon-McPherson (2012) explores advising dialogues for linguistic manifestations of empathy, respect, and genuineness. Mynard and Thornton (2012) analyze advising discourse in order to explore how directive the advising is and find that the degree of directiveness varies depending on the needs of the learner. Thornton and Mynard (2012) analyze the advising discourse of a team of learning advisors in Japan and show that the focus of the advising is equally cognitive, metacognitive, and affective, and often a combination of all three. Several studies have investigated affective factors in advising. Carette, Thiébaut, and Nassau (2015) explore tone of voice in order to notice how advisors regulate their emotions during advising sessions. Yamashita (2015) explores the role that advisors have in helping learners to regulate their affective factors and provides an example of how negative affect can be a resource for learning. Tassinari and Ciekanski (2013) investigate the role of emotions and subjectivity in language advising and analyze recordings of sessions by learning advisors at two institutions. The analysis

shows the expression of emotion as a normal part of talking about the language learning process with learners. Finally, Rutson-Griffiths and Porter (2016) use conversation analysis to uncover ways in which shared understandings are reached in advising sessions.

In 2012, Kato proposed the term Intentional Reflective Dialogue (IRD) and this concept has been strengthened since this paper was first published. In 2016, Kato and Mynard wrote that advising is "an intentional dialogue whose aim is for the learner to be able to reflect deeply, make connections, and take responsibility for his or her language learning" (p. 2). When talking about reflection, we can make distinctions between 'common sense reflecting' (Moon, 2004), 'reflective thinking' (Dewey, 1933), and 'reflective practice' (Schön, 1983). Although all of these have influenced the ways in which learning advisors facilitate IRD with learners, reflective practice has influenced our work the most. Referring to Schön (1983), we might consider two types of reflection: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action is conscious and is used while we are working on a (language learning) task in order to perform it more effectively. Reflection-on-action is the process of thinking back "on what we have done in order to discover how our knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome" (Schön, 1983, p. 26). Although it is possible to engage in reflective practice by oneself, this is greatly enhanced through dialogue and this process forms the core work of a learning advisor (Kato & Mynard, 2016). The intentional nature of the dialogue is a form of explicit mediation (Wertsch, 2007) and, as Brockbank, McGill, and Beech (2002) explain, is different from regular and naturally occurring conversation, and the intentional nature is necessary for effective reflective learning to occur. Kato and Mynard (2016) introduced the concept of transformational advising whereby IRD often results in fundamental shifts in the nature of learning. Of course, this does not usually happen immediately and can take several advising sessions. From analyzing advising sessions (McCarthy, 2010; Mynard, 2018b; Mynard & Thornton, 2012; Thornton & Mynard, 2012), it is evident that learning advisors mediate the dialogue in different ways depending on the awareness level of the learner, the advisor's and learner's prior knowledge and experience, and other individual differences of both parties. One example of the way in which advisors mediate learning through selected IRD is to examine the advising strategies used with learners at the beginning stages of self-directed learning process compared with those used with aware and autonomous learners. Learners might benefit from more directive advising in the beginning in order to get started. However, as their metacognitive awareness deepens and their relationship with the learning process becomes more autonomous, advisors use different dialogic strategies (Kato & Mynard, 2016; Mynard & Thornton, 2012). Transformational advising is not linear, and the advisor takes the lead from the learner and adapts

the dialogue accordingly. It is difficult to capture all of these complex dialogic processes in diagram form, but the new model uses the term IRD and aims to illustrate the process.

Tools

In the original model, the tools which facilitate learning (cognitive, practical, theoretical) were situated alongside the dialogue. Although this is undoubtedly still useful, there are three key developments in the revised version of the model. First, the tools are situated in multiple environments that the learner and advisor might inhabit, not just the immediate vicinity of the advising session.

Second, the nature of the tools has been developed in order to incorporate our growing knowledge of psychology and interventions associated with learning. In other words, the tools themselves have evolved in order to focus on a wider range of psychological processes. Language educators are paying more attention to individual learners and are taking more notice of important factors of 'individual differences' such as beliefs, personality, aptitude, strategies, motivations, and attributions, language anxiety, willingness to communicate, creativity, and interest (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Hurd & Murphy, 2012; Ortega, 2009). Indeed, there is an increasing development of a field being referred to as the psychology of language learning (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Although various individual differences were once considered to be separate facets of learning that were relatively stable, these facets are now widely viewed to be dynamic and interactive (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Although this knowledge is still in the beginning stages and could certainly benefit from more research, we are beginning to understand that the interplay between these individual differences could be approached using complex systems perspective. Complex dynamic systems theory (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) in the field of language education attempts to account for the various interacting factors and behaviours within a learning environment. Although many of the tools that learning advisors use focus on individual differences, for example, language anxiety, the interacting factors could be explored in advising sessions, for example, how beliefs about learning and personality affect language anxiety.

Third, tools are increasingly drawing on interventions informed by mainstream psychology and professional practice. Although advising would certainly not be described as psychological counselling (Carson & Mynard, 2012), there are some practical techniques that have been adapted from humanistic counselling (Mozzon-McPherson, 2012) and cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) (Curry, 2014; McLoughlin, 2012), and these could be considered to be useful tools for facilitating learner development in conjunction with dialogue. For example, establishing and completing small low-risk challenges that help a

learner to gradually overcome language anxiety in a particular learning scenario (Curry, 2014; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). In addition, the study of positive psychology in mainstream psychology and in language learning has resulted in tools that are quite effective. Fredrickson (2001) notes that negative emotions cause us to narrow our focus and concentrate on one thing, whereas positive emotions are said to broaden our mindsets and open us up to new possibilities. Studies in mainstream psychology show growing evidence of physiological and behavioural benefits of positive psychology interventions (PPIs). One practical intervention is to incorporate positive emotions (e.g., gratitude, hope, interest) into everyday life in order to foster well-being and build resilience (Fredrickson, 2001).

Context/Environments

In the original model, context (singular) was imagined to be the rich learning environment (physical or online) where learning and advising takes place. This environment was imagined to be sensitive to shifts as new environments were discovered. This view of context is certainly still considered to be important, but the revised version of the model takes an ecological perspective as a starting point. An ecological perspective means that we assume that learning happens in multiple environments (Benson, 2017; Steffensen & Kramsch, 2017), not just the classroom, the self-access centre, or advising room. The context in which learning takes place has shifted in recent years; whereas once a language learner had access to limited resources outside the classroom, within a relatively short space of time we now have access to any number of suitable resources and opportunities that support language learning. Taking this view, we could say that "in a world of globalization, learning emerges wherever people engage across societal, mental, and personal borders" (Steffensen & Kramsch, 2017, p. 6). The revised model attempts to capture these multiple and overlapping environments where learning may take place. The face-to-face advising dialogue may occur in just one of them, but the lasting effects of the dialogue may occur in any number of physical (e.g., self-access centres, classrooms, home, work places) and virtual (e.g., online classrooms, social media sites, chat rooms) spaces. This aspect of the model has been renamed "Environments".

Advising: Current Practices

In this section I will turn to how this new model is translated into practice by examining the structure of the intentional reflective dialogue, as well as the role of dynamic tools, multiple environments, and the implications for learning.

Structuring the Intentional Dialogue

We know that dialogue is *intentional* from our examination of the transcripts of advising sessions and interviews with learning advisors (cf. McCarthy, 2012). A skilled learning advisor will be able to adeptly use dialogue appropriate to each case, taking into consideration the awareness level of the learner, personality, emotions, previous experiences, and the issue being discussed. Although each dialogue will be unique, there are some features that can be observed which are useful to refer to when new learning advisors are undergoing training. Kato and Mynard (2016) suggest a trajectory for working with learners where the dialogue and tools that are introduced will vary depending on whether learners are (1) getting started, (2) going deeper, (3) becoming aware, or (4) reaching transformation (Figure 3.3). The trajectory traces the development of learner autonomy and the depth of reflection and metacognitive awareness.

When *getting started*, learners are largely unaware of their learning processes and language learning needs. As a result, they expect advisors to provide solutions to their problems. In addition, they have little metalanguage with which to describe the thoughts and processes they are experiencing. The role of the learning advisor at this point is likely to be building rapport, finding out more about the learner and helping them to understand what their needs are. Practical applications might be to set a goal, to take some action, and begin recording what they do. Moving on to *going deeper*, the learners are starting to become aware of their learning processes and can analyze their struggles and successes to a certain extent. They are beginning to reflect on their learning (with support) and as a result are starting to visualize where they would like to achieve. At this stage, learning advisors are likely to be focussing on promoting deeper reflection and helping learners to review their plans and continue learning. As the learners are *becoming aware*, they are now able to reflect without direct support and are becoming more confident in their language learning. They are likely to have experienced an "aha moment" (Kato & Mynard, 2016, p. xxi) which has further

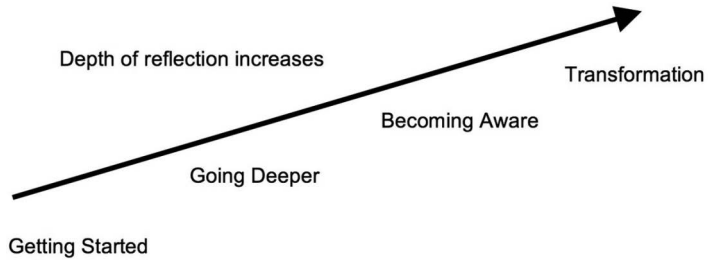

Figure 3.3 The learning trajectory (Kato & Mynard, 2016).

stimulated their thinking or challenged existing beliefs. The learning advisor may use advanced advising strategies to promote this process. Finally, students who experience *transformation* can be said to be autonomous language learners who are aware of themselves and their language learning processes. The learning advisor's role might be to help a learner to look backwards and forwards or to develop self-regulatory strategies for self-advising in order to continue language learning. The role of the learner changes as they move along the continuum from a largely passive, dependent or inexperienced learner, to someone who recognizes that they need to take a core and active role in the process. As the learner's awareness and control increases, the advisor's direction decreases. Researchers who have examined the advising discourse (Kato & Mynard, 2016; Kato & Sugawara, 2009; Kelly, 1996; McCarthy, 2010) have identified various advising strategies, which include basic discursive strategies such as repeating, mirroring, restating, and summarizing. There are also more advanced advising strategies such as giving positive feedback, empathizing, complimenting, using metaphor, using powerful questions, intuiting, challenging, and using silence. The use of these strategies varies depending on where the students are along the trajectory.

Tools

In practice, tools have several important roles to play. Although the purpose of tools in advising in general is to stimulate reflective processes and to help a learner to think more deeply, some tools might be used for other specific purposes too. Tools may take the form of questionnaires, visuals, activity sheets, games, or mobile apps and can be categorized as cognitive tools, theoretical tools, and practical tools (Mynard, 2012a).

As the name suggests, *cognitive tools* are designed to support cognitive development. This might be being able to see one's progress or goals clearly, to see a situation from another perspective, to understand one's learning processes and one's individual differences more clearly, or to set appropriate goals. Examples might include a self-diagnostic test which might be the starting point for goal setting, but also a useful document for language evaluation after a period of study. Questionnaires such as ones helping learners to understand aspects of their psychological processes are also useful for understanding, for example, motivation (Kato & Mynard, 2016), confidence (Shelton-Strong & Mynard, 2018), or language anxiety (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).

Theoretical tools serve the function of enhancing knowledge of language learning, that is, developing a knowledge of strategies or ways of learning (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Language learning strategies may

be the main kinds of theoretical tools, for example, ways of learning vocabulary, or ways of developing language skill proficiency. In addition, strategies have increasingly included affective issues and the development of knowledge about ways of managing one's motivation and emotional states (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Oxford, 2017; Shelton-Strong & Mynard, 2018). Cullen (2018) draws on Seligman's (2012) PERMA model (Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Achievement) and suggests activities that implement positive psychology in practice. These include keeping a diary of good and positive things, or listing examples of when you felt positive and interviewing others about such experiences. Shelton-Strong and Mynard (2018) describe how positive affect is a key component of a self-directed learning course facilitated by learning advisors at their university in Japan and share tools specifically designed to help learners to manage their emotions and benefit from a focus on positive events.

Finally, *practical tools* include artefacts such as plans, diaries, and record sheets. These are largely unchanged in recent years, but are increasingly likely to be in digital form – especially making use of ubiquitous mobile devices. This has the advantage of facilitating the social aspect of learning as such tools help students to share ideas with others. It also has the potential for gamification of learning, but this is currently still in the developing stages in the field of self-directed learning.

Environments

Taking the ecological approach means that we expect learning to take place in any number of locations and this has implications for learners. Although having access to resources and opportunities is generally a positive development, having the metacognitive knowledge to *make use* of these resources and opportunities is another matter. In many cases this availability of multiple and complex learning environments makes learning more challenging and overwhelming. To benefit from multiple environments, learners need to be able to develop the knowledge, discipline, and maturity necessary to make effective use of the opportunities (Curry & Mynard, 2014; Hurd & Murphy, 2012; Mynard, 2010). This kind of metacognitive development can be approached in advising sessions as the advisor can work with learners at the stage they are at with their metacognitive development (Kato & Mynard, 2016) and in environments meaningful to them. A key environment for learning is of course the classroom, and teachers have increasing freedom to be able to embed a focus on developing an awareness of learning processes and opportunities for individualization of learning and periodic reflection (ideally facilitated by dialogue) within regular classes.

Even though learning itself can take place anywhere, the self-access centre or advising centre is still a desirable environment for advising to

take place for several reasons (Kato & Mynard, 2016). First, advising is separate from a classroom activity and this separation aims to place the focus on the learner's needs rather than the outcomes of the language curriculum. Second, a self-access centre can be a location where learning tools and other people are situated in order to motivate and stimulate learning as part of a community. Third, the learner can (ideally) choose which language to use in a session. Finally, the environment is likely to be more private which allows the learner to discuss confidential issues if they choose to.

Future Directions for the Field of Advising

In this section I will comment on ways in which the field is likely to develop, approaches to evaluating our practice, and an idea for situating the field within a more mainstream view of human psychology and motivation.

Increased Role for ALL

ALL is likely to have an increasingly important role to play in language education in both instructed and self-directed learning contexts in the coming years. It is now widely accepted that in order for people to be successful, lifelong language learners, they need to be autonomous. Being an autonomous language learner entails having an awareness and control of not only the linguistic and psychological factors, but also the cognitive and metacognitive factors associated with effective learning. Practical applications involve being able to plan, monitor, evaluate, and transfer learning to different contexts (Benson, 2011; Holec, 1981; Little, 1991). To navigate this process, learners need to reflect deeply on what they are doing and why, and this will vary from person to person. This focus on the individual can be incorporated into classroom teaching, but it is best approached in a one-to-one advising session. Taking a dynamic complex systems view of learning means that the dynamic and personal learning processes at play cannot easily be attended to in a language classroom and require learners to understand themselves more deeply. This is greatly facilitated by advising dialogue.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Advising

The first point to raise in relation to evaluating the effectiveness of ALL is to question whether we actually do need this kind of evaluation at all. Educators working closely with learners in an advising role see students developing a deeper sense of awareness of themselves and their learning processes, demonstrating deeper levels of thinking, making

better learning plans, and experiencing linguistic and academic success. Although student self-reports may indicate the valuable role that advising has played in their learning, it is difficult to know how much of these outcomes are down to advising. Perhaps it is enough to make the assumption that *obviously* advising plays a role and so attempting to 'measure' it is not at all necessary. This has largely been the approach so far, but in order to develop the field further, we need to be able to provide some evidence that advising "works" (Mynard, 2018a). Learning advisors themselves already know advising has a positive and transformational effect on learners as they are able to observe shifts in thinking over time, or even see learners experiencing "aha moments" (Kato & Mynard, 2016, p. xxi) within a single session. Maybe this is enough evidence, but as researchers, we have a responsibility to investigate what aspects of our practice in particular are most helpful to learners. This evidence is necessary for developing the field, training others, and situating advising as a mainstream element in any language programme. There are several ways of showing evidence that learning that has been facilitated by advising. First, there are a growing number of longitudinal studies that investigate learners' experiences (McLoughlin & Mynard, 2018; Mynard, 2017, 2018b; Noguchi, Curry, Mynard, & Watkins, 2018). Further studies could involve interviews, the analysis of learner diaries or journals, open-response questionnaires, and learning histories. Research conducted in Europe and Japan involves analyzing the advising dialogue carefully in order to understand what is happening in the sessions from different perspectives. Interviews and questionnaires can also tell us about students' attitudes to advising (Shelton-Strong, 2018). Retrospective interviews have pinpointed specific ways in which advisors have influenced learners or directly affected shifts in thinking (Mynard, 2010, 2012b, 2018b). We need more of these kinds of studies. In a new column edited by Kie Yamamoto (Mynard, Kato, & Yamamoto, 2018), colleagues in different contexts are invited to document their reflective practice and ways in which advising is influencing student learning. Collecting many such accounts will provide an opportunity for researchers to conduct a meta-analysis of the narratives to identity themes and further add to our understanding of the power of advising.

In addition to conducting this kind of qualitative longitudinal research, we can also adapt research approaches from related fields. For example, the field of coaching has used brain imaging to look at positive effects of 'coaching for compassion', that is, focussing on positive factors in coaching sessions. Using fMRI technology and examining neuro images, researchers at Case Western Reserve University in the USA found increased brain activity in areas of the brain responsible for future visioning and positive emotions (Cesaro et al., 2010; Jack, Boyatzis, Khawaja, Passarelli, & Leckie, 2013). Boyzatis (2015) also found that

dialogue further enhances brain activity against control groups of subjects who either did not receive any coaching or instead wrote written reflections.

Acknowledging Psychological Processes: Self-Determination Theory

The final point relates to how to continue to develop our revised model of ALL in the future. The previous version of the model emerged largely from the field of language teaching/learning in order to promote language learner autonomy. In recent years, we have become more familiar with mainstream psychological theories and in particular theories of motivation which ultimately drive learning. These theories need to be acknowledged as having a central role in language teaching and learning that should involve ALL. Drawing on work by Deci and Ryan (1985), Reeve (2009), and Noels (2018), we have begun to explore how we might take a self-determination theory (SDT) perspective when framing our work as learning advisors (Mynard & Shelton-Strong, 2019; Shelton-Strong, 2018). SDT is a general theory of human motivation that has a robust research tradition that has been applied to fields ranging from sports to business. Within SDT, there are six sub-theories and one of the most influential ones for general education has been the basic psychological needs theory (BPNT) (Reeve, 2009). BPNT comprises three parts, autonomy, relatedness, and competence, and attention to these three important features provides an autonomy supportive environment (rather than an autonomy thwarting environment) where learners can thrive (Reeve, 2009). Furthermore, Noels (2018) suggests that in order to achieve the necessary conditions for learners to thrive, attention should first be paid to the nature of the dialogue and this becomes a fundamental part of SDT. Although advising is not mentioned in Noels's model, the dialogue is described as "support from significant others" and includes informative feedback, interpersonal immediacy, and autonomy support. These are all features of advising dialogue. Some initial links between SDT and language learner autonomy are currently being explored (Lamb, 2018; Lee, 2017; Lou, Chaffee, Lascano, Dincer, & Noels, 2018; Mynard, 2019), and there is some emerging agreement that the fields of language learner autonomy and SDT have complementary features that could benefit from further exploration. One initial study by Shelton-Strong (2018) takes a SDT perspective to exploring BPNT in advising sessions in a university in Japan. The results indicate that learners largely consider the advising sessions to be autonomy supportive, to consider their psychological needs, and that advisors make them feel supported and cared for. Further work is needed to explore how this affects the development of language and of learner autonomy. The links between ALL with SDT needs further theorizing, but it seems likely that advising will further draw on SDT in the coming years.

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4 A Framework for Learning Beyond the Classroom

Hayo Reinders

The Importance of Learning beyond the Classroom

The importance of Learning Beyond the Classroom (LBC) is self-evident in that few people remain formal language learners their entire lives. For most learners (and their teachers) the ideal outcome of education is to not only have developed their language skills to a desired point but also to have developed their language *learning* skills so as to enable them to continue to learn without the help of a teacher.

Less obviously, but equally importantly, even for learners in formal education, a considerable proportion of their learning (and personally I would argue that, for successful learners at least, this proportion is the majority) takes place outside the classroom, in the form of homework, independent activities such as listening to music in the target language, browsing the Internet, playing digital games, and a myriad of other activities (see Benson & Reinders, 2011; Nunan & Richards, 2015; Lai, 2017 for examples of the wide range of language learning experiences learners create for themselves).

Furthermore, a significant impetus for learning derives from experiences of using the language beyond the classroom; whether it be through a family holiday in a foreign country or a romantic encounter, the motivation to learn in most cases resides outside of formal education. Put together, there are strong reasons to assume that LBC can be important in the language learning process, both during and following classroom education, and it can be linked to learner autonomy. Yet, we know remarkably little about what goes on outside the classroom. Only since the 'social turn' (Block, 2003) has more attention been paid to learners' personal, social, and situated experiences in a holistic way and only in the last decade or so, or at least with the start of the 'affective turn' (Pavlenko, 2013), more studies have started to investigate learners' internal lives, their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and their personal lives beyond formal education, including the types of activities they engage in outside the classroom. Although still a small proportion of research output in language education research (by my estimate of perusing the content pages of the top ten ranked journals in our field over the last two

years, around 5%), we do now at least start to gain more insight into the full experience learners bring to their education and the relationship between their formal education and their LBC. What still remains less clear, however, is how practitioners can actively create links between the classroom and life beyond it. The purpose of this chapter then is to offer a framework that teachers – and researchers – can use to plan for, develop, deliver, and investigate instruction that draws on the full range of affordances in learners' language learning ecologies (for a discussion of the concept of 'ecologies', see below). I will begin by briefly reviewing current classroom practice in relation to LBC. Next, I will delve more deeply into the construct of LBC and what it encompasses, before proposing a framework for LBC, which I will describe in detail.

The Practice of LBC

In many contexts, language educators indicate that they understand and believe in the importance of learner autonomy (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012; Lin & Reinders, 2019). Teachers – generally – say they want to prepare learners for future learning and want them to take control over the learning process. Yet, in practice, most classrooms see little evidence of teacher behaviour that actively promotes or supports this. It is important to ask why this is, and it is an area of inquiry that has kept me preoccupied for nearly 20 years. As most teachers are inducted into the profession through formal education in the form of language teaching qualifications, a reasonable site of investigation is the programmes that are available and the ways in which they introduce new teachers to topics related to autonomy and LBC. A reasonable question to ask is: to what extent do language teacher education programmes actively develop in teachers the skills necessary to foster autonomy and to support LBC? To partially answer this question, in Reinders and Balcikanli (2011a), we selected the then 11 most widely used course books in initial language teacher education courses to identify if and if so, how, information about (a) autonomy and (b) ways of fostering autonomy was included. We applied the framework of self-directed learning skills (Reinders, 2010; see for a description below) and to our surprise (and disappointment) found that the resources 'included almost no information about learner autonomy at all and did not, with one or two minor exceptions, focus on the development of skills for supporting autonomous learning' (p. 97). As a follow-up, we then looked at the five most popular general English-language textbooks used in language classes worldwide and again looked for evidence of the inclusion of autonomy-related topics and skills (Reinders & Balcikanli, 2011b). We found very few examples of this and when we did, it mostly took the form of information *about* skills (e.g., reminders of the importance to 'practise by yourself often'), mostly without a clear rationale and – more worryingly – without opportunities for

practice in developing and applying the skill. Reinders and Lewis (2005) then looked for evidence of active instruction in or support for LBC in self-access resources and found very minimal examples only. Even self-access CALL resources offered little support (Reinders & Lewis, 2006), with quite a few not even including answer keys or suggestions to enable learners to work independently.

Perhaps not surprisingly given the above, teachers' classroom practices are often not particularly autonomy-supportive, even when teachers think they are. In a current longitudinal study of four teachers in Thailand, Intraboonsom, Darasawang, and Reinders (2016) found that autonomy-related instruction mainly involved mentioning certain aspects of learning autonomously, but little explanation or rationale, and even less opportunity for controlled practice.

What this shows is the need for teachers to develop greater awareness, not just of the importance of autonomy – its 'why', but also of the ways in which it can be implemented – its 'how'. Below, I will propose a framework to support practitioners, and researchers, in considering ways for developing a pathway to learner autonomy in their classes. Before we do so, however, it is necessary to briefly examine what LBC entails.

What Is Learning Beyond the Classroom?

Learning beyond the classroom (although this is not quite the same, it is also referred to as 'learning in the wild') is a catch-all phrase for types of learning (and the corollary instructional support) that fall outside of, or extend teacher-led classroom instruction. In 2017 Reinders and Benson (drawing on Benson, 2011) proposed a clarification of the term, based on four dimensions of LBC (Table 4.1). The first of these is *location*, which

Table 4.1 The Four Dimensions of Learning Beyond the Classroom (based on Reinders & Benson, 2017)

Dimensions of LBC	*Terms*
Location When and where learning takes place	Out-of-class, after-class, extra-curricular, self-access, out-of-school, distance
Formality The degree to which learning is linked to educational qualifications or structured by educational institutions	Informal, non-formal, naturalistic
Pedagogy The degree to which teaching is involved	Non-instructed, self-instructed
Control How decisions are distributed between the learner and others	Autonomous, independent, self-regulated

relates to the physical or virtual space in which learning takes place. Traditionally, learning has been viewed as occurring within the four walls of the language classroom, although correspondence education has been available for at least 3,000 years. (The largest of these programmes involved one of the state universities in China, which at its peak had over one million students.) The advent of technology has released the classroom from its physical restraints, with blended and fully online forms of distance learning becoming possible. However, many other locations are available, from the home, to the community, to study abroad, as well as intermediary spaces such as self-access or independent learning centres. The second dimension is the degree of *formality* involved in the learning, or the degree to which learning is linked to formal qualifications. Naturalistic learning is an example of language learning that involves, in its extreme form, no formal education at all (although in practice many learners do participate in some formal learning as well). The third dimension is *pedagogy*, or the degree to which teaching is involved. Language advising sessions are an example of a learning space in which no subject matter is taught (learners are supported in directing their own learning), but which are usually offered in formal contexts within schools or universities. Finally, *control* refers to who makes decisions about the learning. In traditional classrooms, this is the teacher. In naturalistic settings, the learner. But intermediate forms are possible – and common; a self-directed learner may study from a book that simply replaces the teacher's voice and provides all instruction, structure, and feedback that may be found in a regular classroom.

The four dimensions interrelate to create a unique tapestry of possible learning configurations, each of which benefits from its own form of observation and – where appropriate – measurement. For example, a MOOC (massive online open course) environment offers a virtual (but not a physical) space that may be formal, non-formal, or something in between, that involves both direct teaching and considerable self-directed learning, and in which decisions relating to content and structure are usually made by the instructor(s), although many other decisions are made by the learners (Jitpaisarnwattana & Reinders, 2018). In this case, language learning outcomes are not the only aspect of the learning process that are of interest; so is the learners' ability to manage their own learning, create (virtual) collaborations with other learners, self-motivate, and so on. Clearly, a range of approaches and instruments would be beneficial in a situation like this, the combination of which is likely to be quite different from assessment in a classroom-based course.

The terminology covered by LBC is broad and each term has its own history, which in some cases is of considerable depth and breadth. A full description of this is beyond the scope of this chapter (but see Benson, 2011 for an overview). However, the terms share some characteristics that are relevant in a discussion of measurement and evaluation.

In short, the last few decades (at least from the 1970s onwards) have seen a development towards (a) greater learner-centredness, (b) greater understanding of the sociocultural aspects of learning, (c) (more recently) greater understanding of the *learners* (including the ways in which they shape their own learning), and (d) the learning ecologies available to them. This interest has led to a greater interest in the individual experience of learning and how the unique constellation of opportunities, constraints, aspirations, and beliefs (to name a few) shapes the what, the how, and the why of learning. Research areas such as 'L2 identity' (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009) 'learners' stories' (Benson & Nunan, 2005), and 'the psychology of the language learner' (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015) are only some examples of emerging fields, all of which place great importance on the *whole* learner as a person, not just the role someone plays inside the classroom. All of these developments have considerable implications for measurement and evaluation. If the individual learner is the primary focus of our interest, then at the very least should that learner not play an active role in the evaluation, as it is only the learner who knows deeply what was aimed for, and thus what was achieved? And if we value the learner, then should we not at least attempt to document, let alone understand, all aspects of that learner's life that impinge upon their learning?

The Framework

In drawing on the above challenges, we propose an array of options based on a framework for LBC developed by the author (Reinders, 2018). The framework starts from the viewpoint of a learning ecology, comprised of (overlapping) in-class and beyond-class learning opportunities (Figure 4.1).

The teacher and learning environment's role includes a gradual process of moving learners from in-class to beyond class learning through four stages — (1) encouraging LBC through raising awareness and motivating, (2) preparing for LBC through controlled practice in class, (3) supporting LBC by providing assistance (e.g., through monitoring and feedback, guided activities, help), and (4) offering learning

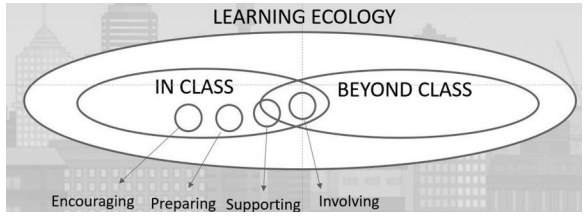

Figure 4.1 An ecology for moving from in-class to beyond-class learning.

opportunities that involve LBC with minimal assistance. This process is situated in an ecology of learning that sees learning in class and beyond it as interrelated. As Jackson (2015) describes it, "An individual's learning ecology comprises their process and set of contexts, relationships and interactions that provides opportunities and resources for learning, development and achievement' (p. 1). Clearly this includes both formal 'in class' and forms of 'beyond class' of learning. This 'ecology' has been described by Siemens (2007, p. 63) as:

- adaptive, dynamic and responsive – the ecology enables (or more specifically fosters) adaptation to the needs of the agents within the space
- chaotic – diversity generates chaos which is created in dynamic environments and systems.
- self-organizing and individually directed – organization occurs through the ongoing interactions of elements within the ecology
- live – features continual changes, newness, activity
- diverse – with multiple viewpoints and nodes (often contradictory) exist
- structured informality – structure enables ongoing diversity of openness not restricting development. Minimal control is required to function but no more
- emerging – the space itself is evolving and adaptive

This description makes it clear that the overall ecology is one that is highly complex and one that teachers can draw on to greatly extend their 'reach'. If considering data obtained in a formal classroom setting, four levels of development towards LBC are observed: from initial encouragement (usually by a teacher or language advisor) to consider opportunities beyond the classroom, to active preparation (e.g., through strategy instruction), to the provision of support during LBC (e.g., in the form of [online] guidance and feedback), and learning fully beyond the classroom (with or without links back to a classroom).

For each of these a distinction can be made between the four dimensions of LBC discussed above and evidence of learning can be considered in terms of its

> Location: In what physical and/or virtual space(s) does the learning take place?
> Formality: To what extent is the learning linked to qualifications?
> Pedagogy: To what extent is instruction involved?
> Control: How much choice do the learners exert?

Combined, the two elements of LBC (its characteristics and the four stages towards its development) provide an opportunity to plan (and monitor the implementation of) classroom practice (Figure 4.2).

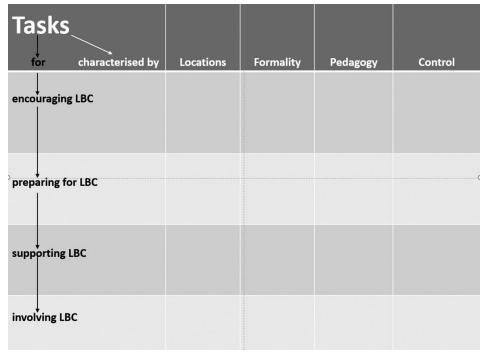

Figure 4.2 A framework for task design.

The above could be used to facilitate a fine-grained observation of the nature of the different stages in a course, or even across a curriculum, towards the adoption of LBC. Such a multi-dimensional approach may give useful insights, such as the realization that learner A, who exclusively and slavishly follows the instructions in her self-study materials outside the classroom, may be less autonomous and make fewer individual choices than learner B, who shows evidence of initiative and control within a classroom led by a teacher.

Despite its usefulness for planning and observation purposes, many practitioners may feel such a model to be too abstract, as it does not include (examples of) the types of skills that would need to be developed in learners to enable them to autonomously engage in LBC. For this we can turn to the literature on skills development for self-directed and autonomous learning. In particular the earlier work of Malcolm Knowles (1975) has been highly influential here, as it has enabled practitioners and researchers to tease out the different elements of self-directed learning, so that they could be supported in a structured and comprehensive manner.[1] In the past, I have drawn on Knowles's work to develop a framework for classroom teachers for the development of learner autonomy (Reinders, 2010), adapted for use in the field of language education. The framework and its individual components are included in Figure 4.3.

A detailed description of each of its elements falls beyond the scope of this chapter (but see the 2010 publication referred to above for full details), especially the broader instructional frames for 'reflection', 'motivation', and 'interaction', but the individual stages will be familiar to most readers. Starting from 'identifying learning needs', and in an iterative fashion working through each of the steps, learners can be supported in developing awareness of the requirements for successful self-directed learning and given instruction, feedback, and opportunities for practice both inside and outside the classroom.

Figure 4.3 The stages of the self-directed learning process.

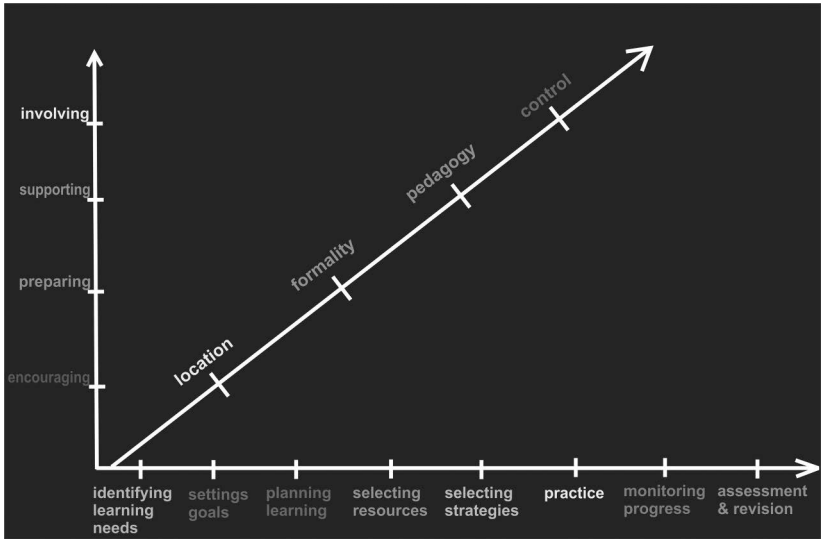

Figure 4.4 A framework for developing LBC skills.

When these self-directed learning elements are combined with the different phases in the development of skills for LBC, a potentially powerful framework emerges. Figure 4.4 shows all three aspects of instruction for LBC combined.

The vertical axis includes the four stages of 'encouraging', 'preparing', 'supporting', and 'involving', described above. Practitioners can use these as a way to plan a sequence of activities from initial awareness-raising, through controlled practice, to supported implementation, to learner-directed activity. These four phases are not merely stages towards developing learners' capabilities, they could also describe (probably over a longer period of time) a development from a primacy of teacher control towards greater learner choice and control over the learning process, that is, a gradual handing over of responsibility.

The z-axis includes the four characteristics of LBC, 'location', 'formality', 'pedagogy', and 'control'. These can be considered in order to ensure a wide range of elements of the LBC ecology is covered. Practitioners can, for example, plan their course in such a way that a balance is achieved, and appropriate levels of, say, formality and control are offered for learners at a given time and developmental level.

The horizontal axis includes the eight components of self-directed learning described in Figure 4.4 above, and these enable teachers to ensure all key elements are given attention and sufficient opportunity is made available for their development.

Combining all three aspects may enable practitioners to, for example, consider whether learners have been made aware of and given a rationale for ('encouraging') the usefulness of 'identifying your learning' needs when studying at home ('location') before expecting them to be able to carry out independent learning activities ('involving') that require them to engage in 'planning their learning' outside the context of school ('formality'). In other words, although none of the elements in the framework are rigidly prescriptive (e.g., there may be good reason to have learners experience LBC first ['supporting'] before talking about its importance ['encouraging'] and before breaking down the activity in its component parts), they do offer a reminder of the importance of the whole process as a longitudinal journey towards increased skill development and confidence-building. Such a structured and balanced approach may go a long way towards avoiding the common observation that many teachers 'do' autonomy by telling students to make their own choices or by expecting them to successfully engage in LBC, without preparation, guidance, or practice.

Researching LBC and Recommendations for Future Developments

The framework above can be used for research purposes in that it will enable the careful observation and mapping of instructional practices. For example, is there a progress from 'encouraging' to 'involving'? Do learners have an opportunity to practise in a wide range of 'locations', or are activities always limited to the physical classroom? Are learners

shown how to set goals before being asked to select appropriate resources? In what ways are classroom activities structured and balanced across all elements? Of course, such questions can be investigated comparatively too: in what ways does classroom x differ from classroom y in this regard? Which of these classrooms is more successful?

Clearly, such questions have important implications for teaching practice but they may also help to identify some of the impact that autonomy-related activities have on learners. Are learners who experience more opportunities for practice, for example, more confident and more actively engaged in LBC than learners who are less prepared? What types of instructional activities are correlated most clearly with successful outcomes?

As a field, the study of learner (and teacher) autonomy has come a very long way in the last few decades. We do have some very wide open roads ahead of us, though. What a marvellous prospect.

Note

1 As a caveat, learner autonomy is widely agreed to include important political and psychological attributes that Knowles' work does not explicitly deal with. In this sense, the suggestions that follow are more specifically about the development of learning skills. Although other aspects of learner autonomy may develop as a result, they are not the primary focus of this article

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5 Autonomy in the Age of Multilingualism

Phil Benson and Terry Lamb

The authors of this chapter entered the field of autonomy in the 1990s, more than a decade after the publication of Holec's seminal Council of Europe report. Since then, the need to revisit and redefine autonomy in the light of changes in the global landscape of language learning has been a persistent theme in our work. Most recently, we have begun to reconsider the meanings of autonomy in the context of what has been called a 'multilingual turn' in applied linguistics. Presenting our ideas in the form of a dialogue, we reflect on challenges to Holec's understanding of autonomy in an age in which the idea of 'learning a foreign language' is being replaced by those of 'becoming multilingual' and developing 'plurilingual multicompetence'.

PB: We became interested in the idea of autonomy at around the same time, in the early 1990s. Since then we have developed parallel interests in multilingualism and urban space. You have published work on multilingualism, with reference to research in Nottingham, England (Lamb, 2001) and projects in Sheffield, England (Lamb, 2015), and I have published work on aspects of multilingualism in Sydney (Benson & Hatoss, 2019). You have connected your interests in multilingualism to autonomy and space (Lamb & Vodicka, 2018), while I have been writing on space in the context of work on language learning environments (Benson, Chappell, & Yates, 2018). As we are thinking about Henri Holec's contribution to the field, it might be interesting to begin from two critiques of Holec's view of autonomy – by Eva Illés (2012), Geoffrey Sockett (2013), and Sockett & Toffoli (2012). The point about these critiques, for me, is that today's world of language learning is very different to the world of language learning in which Holec (1980) wrote his report to the Council of Europe. We need to think about how autonomy connects with the idea that learning languages is a matter of becoming multilingual in varied spatial contexts in physical and digital worlds. But we will get to that later. Should we begin by saying something about how we came into the field of autonomy and the role that Holec's report played in our work?

TL: I think that it is important to unpick our original motivations for getting involved in this field for a number of reasons. First, they are

the key to understanding the triggers that can challenge teachers' prevailing pedagogic, and indeed epistemological, beliefs, which have been acknowledged to get in the way of progressive, learner- and learning-centred approaches in formal languages education (Lamb, 2008). In other words, they provide insights into ways in which teacher autonomy can emerge, in the sense of teachers reflecting critically on their own assumptions of how things should be and avoiding replicating the ways in which they were taught. Second, reflecting on the origins of our work in relation to autonomy also provides an explicit positionality that enables others to interpret our research and our ideas, thus contributing to the trustworthiness of what we are saying. Just as learner autonomy implies that the learner (and teacher) construct their own knowledge and shape their own learning, albeit in a social context, we can also be transparent that our research and scholarship is constructed and shaped in the same way and therefore implies a level of subjectivity about which we must be open and honest.

Looking back at the origins of Holec's engagement with learner autonomy, we can acknowledge that it was influenced by his practice in CRAPEL in Nancy, France. My own initial dalliance with autonomy similarly occurred in the context of my practice, when I was teaching German and French in secondary schools in England throughout the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s. Furthermore, the twin foci of this chapter, namely autonomy and multilingualism, can be seen to have featured simultaneously in my story, yet only recently have I begun to explore the interrelationships between the two. To explain further, as a languages teacher in England, my main preoccupation was to find ways of encouraging motivation in my learners, whilst at the same time ensuring that the very diverse needs, aptitudes, interests, and challenges of my learners could be met in contexts where classes were completely heterogeneous. This diversity took many forms, including linguistic diversity, with the latter being made all the more complex by the fact that, although many of the young plurilingual students came from families who had lived in the country for generations, there were also many who were new arrivals and who, despite having a range of proficiencies in different languages, did not always have a working knowledge of English. (I'll say something more specific on this at a later point.) My early attempts to reduce teacher-centred time in the classroom, while ensuring that learners had opportunities to practise all skills (unlike the prevalent use of worksheets as a way of differentiating) and that I was freed up to support students individually or in smaller groups, meant that I incrementally developed an approach which in those days we were starting to call 'flexible learning'. The development of this approach and its successes, mainly in relation to enhanced motivation but also in terms of attainment, has been documented in some of my early work (Lamb, 1998, 2003).

It was only when I began to work full-time in higher education, however, that I realized that a field of learner autonomy existed, in which not only my colleague at the University of Nottingham, Barbara Sinclair, was involved, but also someone in Nancy called Henri Holec. It was from Holec's (1980) work that I understood not only the significance of what I had actually been doing as a teacher in schools (enabling learners to determine their own objectives, to choose the methods of attaining them, and to monitor and evaluate their own learning), but also how I might develop my research in this field.

What about you? What drew you into this field?

PB: Self-access. After several years of teaching English as a foreign language, I responded to an advertisement for a position at the University of Hong Kong that involved setting up a self-access language learning centre. The idea of self-access was new to me, but it gelled with interests in computer-assisted language learning and my own self-directed learning of foreign languages. At the time, there was quite a large group of people working on setting up self-access centres in different universities in Hong Kong. Herb Pierson from the Chinese University of Hong Kong got us together to invite, first, Leslie Dickinson and, then, Philip Riley to give workshops. It was in those workshops that I first came across Holec's work and the idea of autonomy. Holec's work helped us make sense of self-access by tying it to learner development. What was most exciting for me, however, was the philosophical aspect of learner autonomy: how the idea of autonomy linked language learning to broader personal and social goals. As we were all getting to grips with autonomy for the first time, there was a lot of discussion of fundamentals, and we would often turn to Holec's work to settle debates. Beginning with his Council of Europe Report but also in other papers that he wrote over his career, Holec has done more than anyone else in the field to develop a philosophically grounded account of autonomy in language learning.

But turning to multilingualism, I see that your interest in autonomy was linked to that from an early stage. I have to say that this is something that has come into my work more recently. Perhaps, it is worth making a distinction between the mundane sense of multilingualism as having more than one language (in that sense, language learning involves multilingualism by definition) and multilingualism as language diversity within a particular language learning situation. In Hong Kong, working mainly with Cantonese-speaking students learning English, I was mainly engaged with multilingualism in the first sense. In the 1990s and early 2000s there was little awareness that Hong Kong was a linguistically diverse society, or that such diversity might have an impact on language teaching and learning. That awareness of linguistic diversity has certainly grown in Hong Kong, as it has done across the world, but in my case, it was moving to Australia that really set me thinking about links between autonomy and multilingualism. Although I still work in

English language teaching, I am also much more aware of the diverse language backgrounds of learners and the contexts in which they learn languages, as well as the diversity of other languages that are taught and learned as community languages in Australia. This has led me, in a sense, to think about issues of autonomy in a bigger and more complex world.

TL: This bigger and more complex world was the world, which my young 11- to 18-year-old students were living every day already in the 1980s. Their school – the one where I developed flexible learning – was proud to publicize the fact that its students spoke between them 40 different languages. Some of the languages had very small numbers of speakers, but, apart from English, the most widely spoken languages in that area of London, and therefore in that school, were Greek and Turkish. When I arrived as Head of Languages, my department taught French, German, and Spanish, and Greek and Turkish lessons were available to Greek and Turkish speakers. In a radical move, we decided to introduce the idea of choice to all of the students from the moment they entered the school, when, rather than randomly allocating them a language, we gave them all tasters of French, German, Greek, and Turkish over a 4-month period in addition to a series of language awareness lessons focussing on language diversity, language families, scripts, and so on (Lamb, 2011). At the end of their language tasters, they were asked to choose which language they would continue with as their first modern language, that is, language other than English. We explained that they could pick up another language again later in the school, though we weren't very optimistic that they would because already there were fewer and fewer children in state schools, including in that school, opting to learn a second modern language. The outcome was very interesting: first of all, numbers were quite even across the four languages, when we had expected many more to choose French or German, the most commonly learnt languages in UK schools at that time; even more significantly, many monolingual English speakers chose to continue with Greek or Turkish. My department and I decided to do a small survey to find out the reasons for their choices, and it became clear that Greek and Turkish were chosen for a number of reasons related to their presence in the local area. They commented, for example, that their friends spoke them, which meant they could practise the language with them (or have secret conversations), and that they could hear and see them in their local neighbourhood spaces such as local streets and shops. They also felt that they would never use French or German, but could use Greek or Turkish immediately. What was even more surprising, however, was the fact that when they were offered in the next academic year the opportunity to take a second modern language, a significant number of these students decided that they wanted to pick up French or German again alongside their Greek/Turkish.

PB: That's interesting. You were already in 'the age of multilingualism' around the time of Holec's report! Of course, work that Holec and others were engaged in was also multilingual, but in a different sense. Self-access often meant offering a range of languages, including ones that were not taught at the institution that hosted the centre. But those languages were, in a sense, isolated from each other. The situation you are describing is a much more fluid one, involving a good deal of what we are now calling 'translanguaging'. You are also talking about a fluidity in the approach to teaching and autonomy. My interpretation of Holec's approach at that time was that autonomy would kick in at the level of responsibility or control over learning a language the students had already chosen to learn. There may be a difference here between what you can achieve in a school and what you can achieve in a university, where students do tend to come to language centres to learn particular languages. But I am especially interested in how the approach you are describing is about opening up a world of languages and language learning to the students; about working less with ideas of responsibility and control, and more with ideas of fluidity and choice.

TL: As I said earlier, my focus at this time was on motivating learning through choice, as I was working with children and children do not always bring motivation to their language lessons, particularly in Anglophone countries. In this curriculum innovation, however, choice was extended not only to learning activities within the language lessons, but also beyond, to choice of which language to learn. It was only much later (Lamb, 2015) that I started to explore the relationship between multilingualism and learner autonomy. Reflecting back on this school in London, there are a number of issues relevant to our discussion of multilingual contexts and how these can shape language learning in relation to learner autonomy. One important point is that there is no obvious first 'modern language' to be learnt in some contexts. In that school, French, German, and Spanish were taught – quite common then but less common now because the number of learners studying languages at school has reduced, thanks to first the introduction of a National Curriculum in 1989, and then changes to that curriculum that diminished the position of languages in schools. When I arrived at the school, however, children were not given a choice about which language they would learn when they started at the school at the age of 11, but were simply placed in a particular language class. The changes I made to this system, as described above, were therefore made for three reasons: first, because I had found in my previous school that enabling learners to choose their language enhanced motivation and commitment; second, because, apart from logistical issues of teacher supply in most languages other than French, there is no reason why students in an Anglophone country should not be able to choose from a range of languages, given

that there is no compelling, general case for any individual language; and third, because we believed that the introduction of community languages for all in that context made good sense as they were relevant there, and we wished to demonstrate that they were valued. (It needs to be noted that it is much harder nowadays to be able to make such localized decisions, because of successive changes in government education policy – but that is too complex to go into here.) Furthermore, we understood that, in a UK context, it was valuable to enable a wider range of languages to be learned. Indeed, there have since been strong arguments that globalization itself stimulates the need for learning a wider range of languages in order to engage with others for social, business, political, academic, etc. reasons, and that English is not enough (British Academy, 2013; King, Byrne, Djouadj, Lo Bianco, & Stoicheva, 2011). Even in non-Anglophone countries, however, it has been argued that, despite the likelihood of English persisting as a lingua franca, it is unlikely to retain its monopoly as we progress through the 21st century when it is possible that "a small number of languages will form an 'oligopoly', each with particular spheres of influence and regional bases" (Graddol, 1997, p. 58).

PB: Yes, that's the point I wanted to make about your experience in London in the early 1980s. You were working in a situation of 'superdiversity' even then, but now that situation has become much more generalized so that there is always, at some level, a question of choosing which language to learn. In Hong Kong, English was a compulsory subject in school and university and it still is. The amount of time students spend in English classes tends to squeeze out other languages. But in my later years in Hong Kong, I was aware that more and more students were choosing to learn Asian and European languages informally or in private language schools, and they were also beginning to think of English in terms of choice.

TL: 'Choice' is a fundamental aspect of learner autonomy (Lamb, 2009), so the opportunity of making an informed choice of which language to learn brings together the concepts of multilingualism and autonomy. However, the linguistic superdiversity inherent in the globalized, late modern world demands a rethinking of what we understand by 'choice', the idea of 'learning' a 'modern' 'language', and the spaces in which linguistic encounters occur. I will highlight some pertinent issues from the experience of the multilingual school above. First, the four languages that were being taught could not be simply labelled as 'modern languages', which implies not only that the languages are being taught as second languages, but also that they are 'foreign' (indeed they now unfortunately tend to be called 'modern foreign languages' in the UK), reflecting the Herderian idea that each language belongs in a particular place (a state usually) and that each place has only one language (Lamb, 2015); in all four cases, they were simultaneously being taught

to children for whom they were the first language (though there were fewer with German or French as first language), the second/third/fourth language, or the foreign language, all co-existing in the same place.

Second, reflecting Blommaert, Collins, and Slembrouck's (2005) argument that multilingualism does not imply "'full competence in different languages', despite dominant ideologies which emphasize complete facility", the plurilingual students in the school did not necessarily have full language competence across their entire language repertoire and indeed this was not essential to their lived experiences, thus questioning the aim and nature of language *learning* in a formal educational context. To quote Graddol (2004),

> we also must think differently about what it means to speak a language, or to learn and teach it. The expectation that someone should always aspire to native speaker competence when learning a foreign language is under challenge, as is the notion of 'native speaker' itself.
> (Graddol, 2004, p. 1330)

Third, there was evidence of enhanced motivation to learn languages, not only in relation to the possibility of choosing which language(s) to learn, but also because of the multilingual context, in which the students were growing up. Greek and Turkish were, for those who spoke English at home, languages that they could relate to more easily than French or German, because they were part of their everyday reality and therefore immediately meaningful to them, compared with the (for them) unimaginable possibility that they may some day use them in some far distant land (France or Germany – countries that most of the students did not even go to on holiday). What was particularly exciting, however, was that the motivation to learn Greek/Turkish then transferred to French/German – it was as if the opportunity to engage with the other languages in their environment helped them to realize what languages were for and about. This was in fact the stimulus to all of my subsequent work on the value of multilingualism for all and the significance of urban spaces (Lamb, 2015).

Fourth, the enhanced motivation and the availability of shared spaces meant that the students quite naturally took control of their learning, in that they could imagine for themselves ways of learning, practising, and using the languages, which had not only *not* been suggested by the teacher, but could also take place outside the formal educational space of the classroom; indeed, the role of the teacher was itself blurred as the students looked to their peers as a source of learning.

To summarize, the multilingualism in their environment broadened the students' linguistic horizons, not only metaphorically in the sense of opening their minds to other languages and cultures, but also spatially. Language learning was not restricted to the formal classroom, nor

indeed to the formal learning processes usually expected in classrooms, nor to a country beyond their reach, but was available to be experienced in their local, everyday spaces. The everyday multilingual encounters engendered, in other words, *interlinguality*, which "involves openness to flexible use of other languages in everyday life, as well as criticality, interculturality and multilingual 'entanglement' (Williams & Stroud, 2013) and which can challenge the monolingual habitus" (Lamb, 2015, p. 152).

PB: Bringing this back to Holec and his legacy, I wonder if we can connect what we have been saying about multilingualism to some critiques of Holec's approach that have been published in the last few years. Let me explain for readers who have not had the chance to read these critiques. One was published in *ELT Journal* and talks about the ways in which the Internet, especially, is transforming English language learning in Europe (Illés, 2012). Illés makes the point that for many English learners "lack of exposure to the target language has been replaced with the problem of plenty" (p. 506), so that autonomy may be less about taking charge of learning activities and more about making informed choices about contexts of language use. She also worries about learners making decisions about selection of materials and tasks in the classroom, saying that these pedagogical issues are the remit of the teacher. The import of what she has to say, I think, is that in these changing times we need to make a distinction between autonomy in language learning and autonomy in language use, and shift attention to the latter. I'll quote her redefinition of autonomy as "the capacity to become competent speakers of the target language who are able to exploit the linguistic and other resources at their disposal effectively and creatively" (p. 509). Sockett and Toffoli (2012, p. 139) made a similar argument and took issue with what they call Holec's "learner autonomy model" directly. For them, Holec's model is concerned with "the extent to which the learner takes charge of his or her own formal learning". It is about providing learners with language learning resources and helping them to self-direct their learning using those resources. Because there is now so much informal learning of English, they argue, this model is "out of step with the experience of many learners" and does not "consider the learner as a language user or social actor" (Sockett & Toffoli, 2012, p. 139).

I see the point that is being made. We have talked about the age of multilingualism as one in which there are much more fluid relationships between learners and the languages they learn. Perhaps we do need to adjust our viewpoint on autonomy from language study to language use. But do you think the situation they are describing is only true of English? Or is it also true of other languages as well?

TL: I think there is some relevance to any language wherever there is the possibility of being able to use it outside the classroom. It is probably the case that in many contexts this is easier with English than it is with

other languages as there can often be greater exposure to English: for example through television and films (if they aren't dubbed), through popular music, or where there is a need to find information in English on the Internet or to communicate with people from a range of language backgrounds using English as the lingua franca. In Anglophone countries, however, there has tended to be limited exposure to such opportunities to use other languages. It is only since multilingualism began to expand exponentially in the 1970s and 1980s that there exists the widespread possibility of hearing and speaking other languages on an everyday basis outside formal learning spaces.

I cannot disagree with Illés's proposal that "learner autonomy should include the ability to cope with the linguistic and schematic diversity, the fluidity, and the increased demand for negotiation that interaction in international contexts of use presents" (p. 509), though I would suggest that this should not be limited to international contexts, given that many of us are surrounded by multilingualism in our everyday lives. Nor do I deny that the "aim therefore should be to become competent language users who can successfully cope with the demands of real-life communication under their own initiative" (p. 509). However, I also do not believe that Holec's perspective was in conflict with this. Holec (1980, p. 28) in fact described the two key objectives of teaching as "firstly [...] help[ing] the learner acquire the linguistic and communicative abilities he has defined for himself" and "secondly [...] help[ing] the learner acquire autonomy for himself i.e., to learn to learn".

What I am sceptical of, however, is the perceived distinction between autonomy in language learning and autonomy in language use and the implication that the focus should be on autonomy in language use. This is because I agree that learners learn through using language, but believe that that learning is more productive if they are conscious of how this is contributing to their learning. The children in my school did imagine using Greek or Turkish outside the school and this served as a motivating factor, but I am not sure that this would have actually happened effectively if their teachers had not shown that it was valuable for them to do so and encouraged them to think of ways in which they might extend this. Indeed there isn't much evidence that links are made between what children are expected to learn in school and their out of school experiences, so this could be new for them. Holec was primarily talking about adult learners rather than children, but he still recognized that autonomy in language learning needs to be nurtured. I would argue that this already includes the need to support learners to be able to profit from opportunities to use the language, even when this is happening outside the classroom, and, as such, that it is compatible with Illés's definition of autonomy in language use, which requires users to be "able to exploit the linguistic and other resources at their disposal effectively and

creatively". It may nevertheless be useful to make explicit that Holec's approach can also relate to opportunities to use the language outside the classroom as learning 'resources' that can be planned, monitored, reflected on and evaluated.

Some children will take the opportunity to use the language with their friends and, to relate this to Sockett and Toffoli's argument, may indeed in doing so be learning it implicitly and incidentally to some extent; nevertheless many will need encouragement to make the most of such opportunities and to see their relevance to their formal education (Kashiwa & Benson, 2018). However, as a starting point, this will require teachers themselves to value the learning affordances of the multilingual spaces beyond the school.

PB: I think the point you are getting at is that we now have to think carefully about how we use classroom time. I have heard others argue more than once that now learners have more opportunities to use languages outside the classroom, we can give up on 'communicative' approaches and go back to more traditional approaches to teaching. I think neither of us would agree with that argument, but at the same time, I am not sure that we can just go on with trying to replicate conditions for out-of-class language use in the classroom. We need to look at how the classroom and the various situations in which students can use languages come together as components of a wider language learning environment (Benson, Chappell, & Yates, 2018). I have to thank Mayumi Kashiwa, a research student that I have been working with in Sydney, for setting me on this path. She emphasized the importance of the *relationship between* learning in the classroom and learning outside the classroom – both the actual relationship in terms of prevalent teaching styles and opportunities for out-of-class learning and students' subjective understanding of this relationship and the environment as a whole (Kashiwa & Benson, 2018). This brings us back to the importance of awareness. Autonomy may be less about controlling learning processes and more about being aware of learning resources in the environment and being able to use those resources productively. I am thinking here not only of out-of-class resources, but also classroom resources. It is not just a matter of how we teach a language in a world where learners have ready access to the language outside the classroom. To some extent, autonomy is a matter of learners working out how the resources of the classroom can complement the resources that are available to them outside the classroom and fitting them together in a way that benefits their learning. Pedagogy for autonomy could be about helping learners to do that.

TL: Returning to the critiques that we have been discussing, and picking up on your comments regarding the interrelationships between learning inside and outside the classroom, I think there are two ways in which my work relates to these. First, I have argued that we need

to be able to understand autonomy as a dynamic, situated construct, afforded or constrained by forces within the broader context in which learning is occurring. Second, and related to my earlier point, learner autonomy also includes the need to learn how to learn from using the language. For the first point, I would highlight the EuroPAL project, in which I worked with colleagues around Europe on the development of a framework for a European Pedagogy for Autonomous Learning (see most recently Jiménez Raya, Lamb, & Vieira, 2017). The EuroPAL definition of both learner and teacher autonomy can be described as critical autonomy: "The competence to develop as a self-determined, socially responsible and critically aware participant in (and beyond) educational environments, within a vision of education as (inter)personal empowerment and social transformation" (p. 17).

PB: Let me interrupt for a moment. I see now that the EuroPAL definition captures some of what I am now thinking. I especially like the idea of the autonomous learner as a "critically aware participant in (and beyond) educational environments". It is important to me that we see our classrooms as *part of* our students' learning environments, not the centre or whole of them. Your second point is about learning by using the language?

TL: Yes, it is. I have already suggested one example of the need to learn how to learn from using the language in multilingual contexts. Let me give you another example, however, which is in some ways different. To do so, let me return to your distinction between multilingualism as having more than one language and multilingualism as language diversity within a particular context. In my European projects related to multilingualism I tend to use the Council of Europe's distinction between individual *plurilingualism* and societal *multilingualism* (Council of Europe, 2007). In the Supporting Multilingual Classrooms training and consultancy activity that I co-convene (organized by the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe and co-financed by the European Commission), we work with teachers around Europe on first of all shifting perceptions of plurilingualism/multilingualism from a problem (as it is frequently perceived) to a resource, then on developing pedagogical approaches that enable teachers of all disciplines to support learners to draw on their plurilingual repertoires in order to learn another language (which may be the language of schooling, if they do not use this language at home, or another language). For example, we discuss how learners can learn to reflect on their own language(s) and to explain features of these languages to others. There is an excellent video resource that shows this happening in a classroom in France where the learners are comparing the grammatical concept of negation in French with the ways in which this works in Arabic and Russian. The teacher is unable to help linguistically, but can support them in becoming aware of their plurilingual repertoires as a resource. I see this as

support for learner autonomy, not in the sense of making choices from a range of teaching resources, but through opportunities to learn how to utilize their own internal plurilingual resources, through learning to reflect on, analyze, hypothesize, test, and develop competence and confidence.

PB: This is bringing us back to where we started, isn't it? The Council of Europe distinction between plurilingualism and multilingualism hasn't really caught on in my part of the world, but it does help to clarify a point in my mind. The age of multilingualism that we are talking about is one in which, as you said earlier, languages are more accessible to learners both internationally and locally. A multilingual society does not necessarily mean plurilingual individuals; it could be a space of multiple monolingualisms. But as you say, many language learners do already have plurilingual repertoires, and perhaps I should add that from my perspective a learner's plurilingual repertoire is also part of their language learning environment and the language learning environments of others. It is a resource that they can draw on themselves and also share with others. Coming back to Holec, it seems to me that the work you are describing relates to two key components of his approach: making language learning resources available through self-access and helping learners learn how to learn through counselling and self-directed learning. We are saying that many of those resources are now readily available in the local classroom and out-of-class environment, so the approach is more a matter of helping students become more aware of these local resources and helping them to use in a self-directed manner. The basic principle is the same, but the approach is more adapted to the times.

TL: I fully agree. In fact, even if we return to Holec's work in self-access, I believe there is relevance for our linguistically superdiverse times. Given the many languages to be found in our multilingual towns and cities, an inclusive language-in-education policy should be making efforts to provide educational access not only to opportunities to learn them but also to receive accreditation in them, so that all languages can be valued in the same way. I'd like to conclude with a story that illustrates the way in which Holec's legacy very nearly transformed language learning in England. In 2008 I was asked by the then UK Labour Government to lead on the development of a new languages qualification for 14- to 19-year-olds in English schools (the 14–19 Diploma in Languages and International Communication, a kind of baccalaureate including a range of interdisciplinary modules), which would engage learners by providing a cutting-edge, relevant, and high-quality languages curriculum for the 21st century. As part of this Diploma and alongside substantive modules on one or two main languages, my twin commitments to learner autonomy and multilingualism led me to propose the development of a module, in which learners would choose a language that they wished

to learn, identify manageable targets (which may or may not relate to certified accreditation), find available resources, monitor their learning, and assess and evaluate their progress. Assessment of their learning focussed on their approaches to and reflections on learning as presented in a learning portfolio. This portfolio would include a justification of their choice of language, which could be based on personal circumstances (e.g., becoming more literate in their home language), career aspirations, local business needs, or indeed the community languages prevalent in their school and neighbourhood. They would also record and reflect on the resources available, which may range from standard textbooks to online materials and community resources afforded by friends, family, local organizations, and plurilingual teachers of different disciplines across the school. In this way, the language curriculum would not only valorize a wide range of languages by providing opportunities to include them in formal education, but also, through the support provided by their teacher in compiling their language learning portfolios, enable learners to become lifelong language learners with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to tackle any language they may find themselves needing or wanting to learn in the future. Sadly, despite the enthusiastic reception by teachers, students, businesses, and universities, the Diplomas were cancelled by the incoming Government in 2010, immediately after they had been fully approved and when hundreds of schools had signed up to run them, so it was never offered.

We are, however, running out of space. I wanted to share this story as my concluding thought because I believe that it demonstrates the enduring influence of Holec's work, which clearly inspired the module described. Had it run, I am sure that he would have been delighted to see his thinking reflected in this innovative and flexible opportunity to experience language learning that is appropriate for our changing times. What are your concluding thoughts?

PB: I want to conclude with a thought that has come to me as we have been exchanging these stories and ideas. Although we have framed this discussion in terms of the relevance of Holec's ideas to changing times, his ideas were very much relevant to his own times. This is clear from the first page of Holec's Council of Europe Report, where he talks about the idea of autonomy in learning emerging from new ways of thinking about the individual and society in the 1960s and 1970s. Perhaps I shouldn't speak for Holec, but I feel that he would also be very much in favour of rethinking autonomy in the context of changing times.

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6 Learner Autonomy and Holec's Model

A Complexity Perspective

Garold Murray

Introduction

For the past 30 years, my work as a language teacher and researcher has been guided by Henri Holec's model of learner autonomy. His definition of learner autonomy, as "the capacity to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981, p. 3), shaped how I viewed my role as a language educator. Thus, an important aspect of my work was to encourage learners to take charge of their learning. This translates into practice by helping learners assume responsibility for all aspects of their learning from goal setting to assessment. His model has served as the foundation for self-directed learning courses and programmes in self-access centres that I developed over the years. However, over the past decade, my practice and research interests have shifted away from a focus on the individual learner working independently towards individual learners working collaboratively in order to learn with and from each other. Initially, I adopted a community of practice perspective (Wenger, 1998) to conceptualize the learning I saw happening through social interaction. Gradually, this frame of reference expanded to encompass ecology and complexity thinking. In this chapter I explore how adopting complex dynamic systems theory as a theoretical orientation has influenced how I view learner autonomy and Holec's model.

To illustrate what looking at learner autonomy from the perspective of complex dynamic systems theory has taught me, I draw on three studies carried out in a social learning space located on the campus of a large national university in Japan. Given the central role it played in the evolving theoretical orientation, I begin with a description of the social learning space. This is followed by an overview of the theory that informed the work. Because complex dynamic systems theory is wide in scope, I limit the synopsis to those features that were salient in the social learning space and influential in shaping my views on learner autonomy. This is followed by an outline of the research design of the studies. I then consider what can be learned about learner autonomy by examining it from a complex dynamic systems perspective. Before concluding, I reflect on the implications for practice, further inquiry, and Holec's model.

The Social Learning Space: The L-café

The term *social learning space* is used to refer to a place where learners can come together to learn with and from each other. The social learning space discussed in this chapter, the L-café, had a modest beginning in 2009 as the English Café. The initial intent was to create a place where Japanese students could practice their English language skills in a relaxed comfortable environment. To draw students to the facility and facilitate their social interaction, the English Café offered peer-taught language classes, activities, and special events, such as Hallowe'en and cherry blossom viewing parties. Gradually, the English Café became a popular place for Japanese and international students to gather. International students brought with them their language, culture, and desire to learn Japanese as well as to improve their English. The facility also drew Japanese students interested in learning languages other than English. Hence, the English Café quickly outgrew its original purpose and space. In response to its success, the university administration moved the English Café to a much larger venue and transformed it into the L-café. The L-café, like its predecessor, offers a range of materials for language learning. In addition, for a limited number of hours each week, teachers are available to offer language support, such as learning advising, writing tutorials, and discussion practice. Nevertheless, the L-café is primarily a social space in which students come together to socialize and through their interaction experience opportunities to develop their foreign language competency, expand their intercultural awareness and acquire life style as well as academic skills.

The Evolving Theoretical Orientation

In their comprehensive consideration of systems theories in relation to aspects of the human condition, Capra and Luisi (2014) make the case that social organizations can be complex dynamic systems when they are comprised of communities of practice. Their argument is of particular relevance to the L-café studies because, when we launched the exploratory ethnography, our thinking was informed by the community of practice perspective. What we were seeing at the English Café were groups of students who shared a common goal, learning a foreign language, and who deepened their knowledge and expertise as they interacted every day and participated in activities and special events (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002).

However, because the focal point of the studies was the learning environment, we turned to ecology, which at that time was trending in the field of applied linguistics (Kramsch, 2002; van Lier, 2004). Adopting an ecological approach meant looking at the English Café as an *ecosocial system* (Lemke, 2002, p. 69) comprised of the students and their

interactions. It also meant shifting attention from learning opportunities to affordances (Gibson, 1986). Affordances are possibilities that are realized as learners interact with the environment (Menezes, 2011). They rely on the individual's perceptions – learners have to be able to see the potential in the environment and to take action. Thus, the aim of the studies transformed into an investigation of the affordances for learning which emerged through the learners' interaction with the environment. As we observed, talked to students, analyzed the data, and learned more about ecology and systems, we began to draw on complex dynamic systems theory in our analysis.

By the time the transition was made from the English Café to the L-café, we were seeing it not only as an ecosocial system but more and more as a complex dynamic ecosocial system. Our understanding has been informed by work which applies complexity thinking to the social sciences (Byrne & Callaghan, 2014; Capra & Luisi, 2014; Meadows, 2008; Morin, 2008) and, more specifically, to applied linguistics and language learning (Dörnyei, MacIntyre, & Henry, 2015; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; Ortega & Han, 2017). What follows is a synopsis of those aspects of complex dynamic systems theory which guided the interpretation of the data.

There are several features which render systems dynamic and complex. First and foremost, they are composed of many elements that interact. Their interaction is a source of dynamism. A change in one element can lead to changes in other elements as they adapt to the change in the first. Another feature of complex dynamic systems that supports change is that they are comprised of different *levels of organization*. Taking the English Café as an example, on the administrative level, the university made the space available and then opened the doors to the students. Through their interaction, the students created a learning environment that the administrators had not anticipated. Reflecting on these early days, the manager noted that no one could have predicted what the English Café would become (Uzuka, 2016). The process through which elements on one level self-organize to produce something new on another level is referred to as *emergence*.

Through their research in mathematics and language arts classrooms, Davis and Sumara (2006) have identified features that can support complex emergence in educational settings. Several of these were helpful in understanding the dynamics of the social learning space and the role of learner autonomy in this context: internal diversity, internal redundancy, coherence, neighbour interactions, distributed control, and randomness (Davis & Sumara, 2006, pp. 135–136). As for *internal diversity*, the learners brought a lot of diversity to the L-café: different languages, knowledge of other cultures, a range of skills, and a variety of personality traits which contributed to the general atmosphere. In complementarity to internal diversity is *internal redundancy*, which refers to

duplications or commonalities amongst the components of a system: "In a social grouping, redundancies include a common language, similar social status of members, shared responsibilities, constancy of setting and so on" (Davis & Sumara, 2006, p. 138). Amongst the commonalities at the L-café, the learners shared two general purposes: the aspiration to improve their target language skills and the desire to make friends (Murray & Fujishima, 2013). Their common purposes contributed to the *coherence* of the L-café; in other words, they served to bring and hold together the various elements of this diverse learning community.

Coherence at the L-café was also supported by two other features that contribute to complex emergence: *neighbour interactions* and *distributed control*. The whole point of the social learning space was for students to have opportunities to interact. However, Davis and Sumara (2006) maintain that "*the neighbors that must interact* with one another are ideas, hunches, queries, and other manners of representation" (p. 142, italics in original). For instance, the participants pointed out that one of the main affordances of the L-café was the possibility to exchange ideas and learn about other cultures. Davis and Sumara (2006) also insist that in order to facilitate neighbour interactions "one must relinquish the desire to control the structure and outcomes of the collective…. [C]ontrol in a knowledge-producing collective must be understood as decentralized, arising in localized activities" (p. 144). Bluntly stated, "[O]ne must give up control if complexity is to happen" (Davis & Sumara, 2006, p. 144). In other words, autonomy is a crucial element in the process of emergence. Teachers can "occasion possibilities" for learning (Davis & Sumara, 2006, p. 144) and support the emergence of learner autonomy by distributing control.

Another key benefit of distributing control is that it opens up a space for *randomness*. Randomness refers to being flexible and open to possibilities. It implies "being oriented toward the as-yet unimagined, which can only be imagined and realized through an exploration of the current spaces of possibility" (Davis & Sumara, 2006, p. 135). In fact, complex dynamic systems are often depicted graphically as moving across a space, a *landscape of possibilities* (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008, p. 49). Examining randomness and other elements, which support emergence in complex dynamic systems – neighbour interactions, distributed control, internal diversity, internal redundancy, and coherence – in relation to the social space helped us to understand how it functioned as a learning environment and at the same time enabled me to see learner autonomy in new ways.

The Studies

The ethnography, the multiple-case study, and the narrative inquiry that my colleagues and I carried out in the L-café were not designed to examine learner autonomy from the perspective of complex dynamic systems

theory.[1] The initial aim, which guided all three inquiries, was to explore the learning opportunities within the social learning space. However, as our categorical content analysis of the interview transcripts, observation reports, and narratives progressed, we drew more and more on complex dynamic systems theory to guide our interpretation of the data.

The studies began in the early days of the English Café with an exploratory inquiry (Murray & Fujishima, 2013), which served as a pilot study for the longitudinal ethnography. In both, the participants, a mix of male and female, international and Japanese students, were interviewed at the end of each semester. Participant observation was carried out by senior students. The multiple case study, which ran alongside the ethnography, tracked the language learning trajectories of 13 Japanese students from the time they entered the university, over a four-year period. The participants wrote language learning histories, were interviewed at the end of each semester, and took the Test of English for International Communication each year over the four-year duration of the study. Shortly after the multiple-case study and the ethnography drew to a close, we launched the narrative inquiry (Murray & Fujishima, 2016). In response to an invitation to write about how they experienced the L-café, we received stories from nine Japanese and two international students, five English teachers who provided language support services in the facility, two consecutive managers and the administrator who oversaw its development. These stories, along with qualitative data from the ethnography and multiple case study, serve as the basis for the discussion of this paper's central question: what can be learned about learner autonomy by considering it from the perspective of complex dynamic systems theory?

Autonomy in a Complex Dynamic Ecosocial System

I learned three things about autonomy by examining it from the perspective of complex dynamic systems theory. First, autonomy has a crucial role to play in the process of complex emergence and is itself an emergent phenomenon, arising from the interaction of the numerous components that comprise the learning environment (Paiva, 2006). Second, I gained insight into the operation of control and its relationship with autonomy in this complex dynamic ecosocial system. Third, viewing autonomy as a complex system drew attention to several relatively unexplored elements that supported its emergence in this context: space and place, feelings and embodiment, change and imagination. Each of these points is elaborated on below.

Autonomy and Emergence

One of the first things that surfaced from the analysis of the interview data in the ethnographic inquiry was the presence of autonomy in the

environment and the role it played in the emergence of affordances. In the first round of interviews several of the participants indicated that an important feature of the English Café was that they could come and go as they pleased. When asked what the facility offered students in addition to what was on offer in the language courses they could take at the university, Lena, a graduate student from Serbia who worked as an assistant to the manager, said, "If you enter English Café, you can exit anytime…. You can do whatever you want, you can stay the whole day…. You decide – you set your own time and your rules, in a way". On one level in this context, autonomy manifested as the freedom to act. Autonomy enabled the students to act upon the affordances they perceived in ways that suited their sense of self.

However, it is also important to keep in mind that, on another level, autonomy supports the process of emergence (Davis & Sumara, 2006). For example, the possibility to make friends emerged as an affordance because the learners could exercise their autonomy. One fourth-year participant, Komako, explained that even though she deliberately chose classes in which international students would enrol, there was no occasion for her to make friends in those teacher-controlled environments. As a part of the emergence process, elements in an environment need to be able to move around and self-organize. Autonomy enabled learners to interact in the environment as they saw fit and, in doing so, actively participate in the emergence of affordances that otherwise would not have existed for them.

On the surface, autonomy appears to be playing a dual role. On the one hand, it enables learners to act on the affordances they perceive; and, on the other hand, it enables them, through their interaction in the environment, to participate in opening up new possibilities and potential for learning. Again, taking friendship as an example, acting on this affordance opened up possibilities for language practice and intercultural exchange (Murray & Fujishima, 2013). In systems theory parlance, autonomy has generated a *reinforcing feedback loop*, one which amplifies, reinforces, and self-multiplies (Meadows, 2008). As Meadows (2008) explains, "Reinforcing loops are found wherever a system element has the ability to reproduce itself or to grow" (p. 31). As a complex dynamic system emerging from the learners' interaction with the environment, autonomy had the potential to produce more autonomy.

Control in an Ecosocial System

The second major insight – or set of insights – turned around the construct of control. In the English Café and later in the L-café, the manager promoted two elements that support the emergence process, distributed control, and neighbour interactions (Davis & Sumara, 2006). First, the manager distributed control by hiring students to assist her in carrying out management-related tasks. Second, she engaged students in decision-making in regard to everyday issues as well as broader concerns.

For example, when the university made funding available to move the English Café to a much larger venue, she asked the students what they would like to see included in the new space and invited them to draw up floor plans. This activity generated much discussion and promoted neighbour interactions, a construct which also encompasses the sharing of ideas and information.

The way in which the manager instigated neighbour interactions on a daily basis also served to distribute control as well as support the emergence of autonomy and a sense of community. In one of the first interviews, when Lena was asked what the manager had done to create a sense of community, she said, "She's always trying to connect people. Like, 'You, why don't you try to talk to him about this?' Or, 'You know, actually he's really good at playing something'.... So, she's connecting people that are there... the community creates itself" The community was creating itself – assisted by the manager who was reinforcing the informal channels of communication. These conduits of information are the life-blood of communities of practice and the complex dynamic ecosocial systems they can engender (Capra & Luisi, 2014). Furthermore, the interconnections established through the sharing of information bond the elements of the ecosocial system.

In addition to reinforcing the coherence of the ecosocial system, the manager was supporting the emergence of autonomy. Information is enabling. For example, Japanese students were getting information about study abroad and receiving feedback on their spoken and written language, which made them better communicators. International students were getting assistance with banking, student services, etc., making it possible for them to function independently in their new environment. By encouraging learners to share information and help each other, the manager was ensuring they got the support they needed in the present and would be capable of acting autonomously in the future. Sharing information distributes control and makes autonomous behaviour possible. Just as other complex dynamic systems rely on the flow of information (Meadows, 2008), so does autonomy.

Elements Supporting the Emergence of Autonomy

In addition to distributed control and the sharing of information, the studies pointed to several other elements which played a role in the emergence of autonomy: space and place, feelings and embodiment, change, and imagination.

Space and Place

Approximately three years into the ethnographic inquiry, an unexpected turn of events altered the trajectory of the English Café. The university administration made funding available to move the facility to a much

larger location and transform it into the L-café. Lefebvre (1991) observed that "new social relationships call for a new space" (p. 59). In this case, the new space called for a new social organization. In the new venue students had room to spread out and form groups consisting of speakers of a foreign language and Japanese students who were interested in the language and its culture. Yu, one of the research assistants, commented, "We have like small communities in L-café, and even though we are in the same place". The L-café emerged as a complex dynamic ecosocial system composed of a network of communities of practice.

Although the emergence of several visible communities of practice was unexpected, a bigger surprise was the impact the change in space had on learners' autonomy. Commenting on the change, Shinpei, a research assistant, said, "There are like huge space, people can do more freely.… There's more freedom". His observations would come as no surprise to the leading human geographer, Tuan (1977) who noted, "Spaciousness is closely associated with the sense of being free. Freedom implies space, it means having the power and enough room in which to act" (p. 52). Space and place have a role to play in the emergence of autonomy.

Feelings and Embodiment

However, Tuan's (1977) comments suggesting the relationship between space and a sense of freedom raise interesting questions concerning the role feelings play in the emergence of autonomy as a complex dynamic system. Is it possible to feel autonomous? There is no doubt that how we feel in a space is important. When we asked Yasuka what difference the change in space made, she replied, "I think the participants can have the – how can I say – the room of their heart because there are large wide space". Yasuka appears to be translating from Japanese the expression "the room of one's heart" [心に余裕がある: kokoroni yoyuu ga aru], which refers to feeling relaxed and comfortable in a space. She equates the larger space with freedom of movement and action: "I think the big space made the participants to move around much more… in the L-Café there is a large space, so it is much easier for them to move around or talk with many people". The freedom to move around and talk to many people facilitates the formation of networks of communication, which are the basis of communities of practice (Capra & Luisi, 2014). Yasuka's comments point to the interplay of feelings associated with autonomy, freedom of movement, and physical space in the emergence of autonomy in complex dynamic ecosocial systems.

Change

In addition to being linked to feelings, for the learners in these studies, autonomy is enmeshed in hopes and dreams for the future. Arguably, learners take responsibility for their learning and enact autonomous

behaviours because of changes they wish to make in their lives. In an interview near the end of the ethnographic inquiry, I asked Mutsuo, a highly motivated, autonomous learner, how students who come to the L-café are different from other students. He replied, "I think students who come to L-café are those who are not passive, who try to change something about themselves or something about their future". Similarly, Shinpei, another highly motivated, autonomous learner attributes his motivation to the transformation he hoped to make in his life. Addressing the question of why he had been so successful as a language learner, he said:

> Just because I had a goal from when I was a freshman. I wanted to become English speaker and I wanted to speak English well. So, I had this kind of motivation when I entered university. So, I could study, I could keep studying by myself.... I was always thinking about my future, about my job.

For Mutsuo and Shinpei, taking responsibility for their English language learning stems from their image of a future self (Dörnyei, 2009; Markus & Nurius, 1986) and their understanding of the changes they needed to make in order to realize it. Change is a salient feature of complex dynamic systems and, in this case, the desire for change is a key element in the emergence of learner autonomy.

Imagination

Exploring learner autonomy from a complex dynamic systems perspective necessitates considering the role of imagination. When learners engage in the kind of hypothetical thinking that gives rise to images of future selves, they are employing the imagination (Murray, 2013). Egan (1992), who has worked extensively with imagination in the field of education, writes, "it is by imagination…that we make ourselves, seeing the directions in which we might move and the possible selves we might inhabit" (p. 33). From a complex dynamic systems perspective, imagination has a role to play in helping learners perceive the possibilities for transforming their vision into reality. The emergence of affordances for language learning relies upon the learner's imagination.

Implications for Holec's Model and Practice

Holec's (1981) model of learner autonomy has been the foundation of my practice as a language educator in both the classroom and self-access centres. Employing his model, I have helped learners plan their self-directed learning. The starting point for planning learning has to be clearly stated goals. The more precisely learners can articulate their

goals, the easier it is to select appropriate materials and to match them to effective activities and strategies.

Because of the importance that I attribute to being clear about goals, in interviews for both the multiple-case study and the ethnography, I regularly asked the question, "What are your language learning goals?" Most often the response was similar to Kazunori's, "I don't have goals". When I interviewed Kazunori 6 months later, he was on the verge of realizing his long-held dream of living abroad: he was getting ready to leave for Australia to study English literature for one year. This time, when asked about his goals, he replied,

> I don't know what my goals is – I'm doing just because I like it. I think there's no *goal* maybe in my case because even though I think I can't master English, I like going for it. Always I'm thinking I want to be like a native speaker.

Kazunori and the other learners in our studies had goals; however, they were not generally guided by pedagogical concerns. As Palfreyman (2014) noted with his learners in the United Arab Emirates, their goals may be vague, long-term, and general life goals rather than linguistic ones. Learners' goals are often on another level rather than the pedagogical level, which is the teacher's immediate concern.

For this reason, I have concluded that it would be beneficial to take a systems approach to language learning and view learners as encompassing purpose-driven learning systems which are moving across time and space. As open systems, the learners in our studies were drawing on outside resources in a variety of locations. For example, they were participating in social groups and events at the L-café, enrolling in various language courses, engaging with communities on social media, volunteering to help international students, and joining clubs on campus, such as the English Speaking Society. Motivated by their life goals, they became part of these other systems and integrated them into their own learning system.

However, viewing learners and their learning as self-organizing dynamic systems will not prevent me from encouraging them to identify goals and plan their learning. In other words, I will continue to work with Holec's model. The difference is that I now see the model itself as a dynamic system – comprised of goals, materials, activities, strategies, etc. – nested within a network of the learner's social, cognitive, and biological systems. More importantly, I have come to realize that work within Holec's system in institutional contexts constitutes one level of organization nested within learners' personal learning systems.

Helping learners conceptualize their language learning activities as comprising a complex dynamic system has a number of advantages. In the first place, adopting a personal learning system perspective can

enable students and teachers to see the bigger picture. A class activity, such as creating a concept map on which learners chart all their language learning activities, can illustrate how any number of elements can work together and self-organize into a learning system that corresponds to their needs and interests. Second, a learning system approach opens up a space of possibilities. It can draw teachers' awareness to what students are doing outside the classroom and prompt teachers to find ways to integrate these activities into classroom tasks, projects, and home assignments. On the other side of the coin, a learning system approach can help learners see how what teachers are trying to achieve in the classroom might support their out-of-class activities; thereby, potentially enhancing their appreciation of class activities and their motivation to participate in them. Ultimately, the idea of a learning system can help us move beyond the in-class/out-of-class dichotomy and see all these various elements as part of an integrated whole.

Implications for Future Research

A prime focus of research from a complexity perspective is to understand change. Contrary to the reductionist approach which seeks to identify and study the individual elements of the object being investigated, complexity researchers want to understand "how the interaction of the parts gives rise to new patterns of behaviour" (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008, p. 231). Rather than attempt to predict, dynamic systems studies are "designed to explore what would happen, if a number of driving factors unfold in a range of different ways" (Meadow, 2008, p. 46). To this end, researchers create models enabling them to "explore possible futures and ask 'what if' questions" (Meadows, 2008, p. 47).

To understand systems and their behaviour, social science researchers engage in retrodiction rather than prediction. The technique, which Dörnyei (2014) refers to as *retrodictive qualitative modelling*, requires researchers to describe the present state of a system's behaviour or outcomes and "then work backwards in a retrospective manner to uncover the developmental trajectories that led to those settled states" (Chen, Dörnyei, & Henry, 2015). Early on in our ethnography, we used retrodiction to explore the development of a community of practice in the English Café. The starting point was our observation, supported by participants' interview comments, that a community of learners had developed. From there we worked back through the data to identify the various elements and their interrelationships which led to its emergence (Murray & Fujishima, 2013; Murray, Fujishima, & Uzuka, 2014). More recently, in our analysis of the stories collected in the narrative inquiry, we worked backwards from what we saw as the complex dynamic ecosystem, which comprised the L-café, in order to identify the elements and interactions that constituted it. Drawing these components together,

we presented them as a provisional model that could serve to inform the work of educators tasked with creating social language learning spaces at their institutions (Murray & Fujishima, 2016).

Although the work of examining learner autonomy from the perspective of complex dynamic systems theory has begun (Mango e Silva, 2018; Menezes, 2011; Murray, 2017, 2018; Sade, 2011, 2014), much remains to be done (Murray & Lamb, 2018). This paper alone suggests several lines of inquiry that might be pursued from a complexity perspective. In general, there is a need for studies designed to explore learners, their learning, and learner autonomy as complex dynamic systems. In particular, learner autonomy should be examined as an emergent phenomenon arising from the interaction of cognitive, social, and environmental components (Paiva & Braga, 2008). The studies reported on in this paper suggest that the following elements might be considered in relation to learner autonomy: space and place, feelings and embodiment, affordances, change, imagination, as well as others, yet to be identified. The prospect of investigating learner autonomy from a complex dynamic systems perspective opens up any number of as-yet unimagined lines of inquiry.

Conclusion

To conclude, I would like to return to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter: what can be learned about learner autonomy by examining it from the perspective of complex dynamic systems theory? At present, there is no full answer to this question because educators have only begun to look at autonomy through this body of theory. Nonetheless, the L-café studies point to a partial and tentative answer. In the first place, they support Paiva's (2006) argument that autonomy is a complex dynamic system – an emergent phenomenon arising from the interaction of a wide variety of elements and intricately entwined in networks of social, environmental, cognitive, and biological systems. Adopting this perspective highlights the need to examine these other systems in relation to learner autonomy. A complexity approach will also mean viewing learners and their learning as self-organizing networks of complex dynamic systems. This will not require abandoning Holec's model of learner autonomy. However, educators promoting Holec's model in an institutional context will need to be mindful that it represents one system nested within the network of systems that constitute learners, their learning, and their world.

Note

1 I am deeply indebted to my colleagues and fellow researchers, Profs. Naomi Fujishima and Mariko Uzuka, for their participation, support, and invaluable contribution as we carried out these projects.

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Part 2

Research and Practical Avenues

7 Autonomy in Language Learning in Brazil

An Exploratory Review

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Introduction

In this study, we present an exploratory review of 15 studies on autonomy in language education published in Brazil between 2004 and 2017. In addition, we revisit our proposal of autonomy as a complex system. We intend to answer the following questions: which discussion is more prevalent in these studies: teacher autonomy or learner autonomy? What definitions of autonomy are adopted in these reports? What autonomy-related aspects are discussed in Brazilian research studies? How do the findings in these investigations help to inform future studies in this field?

Autonomy and language learning are key words in many book chapters, theses and dissertations in the fields of Education and Applied Linguistics in Brazil. Hundreds of research reports focussing on autonomy by Brazilian postgraduate students can be found in the Theses and Dissertations Catalog maintained online by CAPES[1] (The Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Assessment of Postgraduate Education). As it would be impossible to present a thorough review including all the works on autonomy and language learning in Brazil, we decided to investigate the four main refereed journals which usually publish research on language teaching and learning. Altogether, we have found 22 texts with the word autonomy in their titles, but only 15 focussed on language education (Table 7.1). They will be reviewed according to their main focus.

1 *Trabalhos em Linguística Aplicada* (Papers in Applied Linguistics) is the oldest journal in Brazil in the field of Applied Linguistics. In its 57-issue database, we could find five articles with the word autonomy in their titles, but only one deals with the concept of autonomy in language learning or teaching.
2 D.E.L.T.A (Documentation of Studies in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics) is the second oldest Brazilian journal on Applied Linguistics research. It was launched in 1985. In 2008, it published a special 8-article issue edited by Benson, Collins, and Sprenger (2008).

Table 7.1 Corpus of the Study

Journal	*Authors*	*Year*	*Main focus*	*Type of text*
Trabalhos em Linguística Aplicada	Menegazzo and Xavier	2004	Teacher autonomy	Theoretical
	Silva	2013	Teacher autonomy	Theoretical
D.E.L.T.A	Collins	2008	Teacher autonomy	Research
	Magno	2008	Learner autonomy	Research
	Mello, Dutra, and Jorge	2008	Teacher autonomy	Research
	Sprenger	2008	Teacher autonomy	Research
	Sprenger and Wadt	2008	Teacher autonomy	Research
	Paiva and Braga	2008	Learner autonomy	Theoretical/ Research
	Nicolaides and Fernandes	2008	Learner autonomy	Research
	Tirloni and Ramme	2015	Learner autonomy	Research
Linguagem e Ensino	Paiva	2006	Learner autonomy	Theoretical/ Research
	Moura Filho	2009	Learner autonomy	Literature review
	Ofugi and Figueiredo	2017	Learner autonomy	Research
Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada	Moreira and Alves	2004	Teacher & learner beliefs	Research
	Carvalho	2007	Learner autonomy	Research

This special issue was a hallmark in the history of autonomy research in Brazil, a result of Phil Benson's support as a visiting professor at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) and the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP). The introduction explains that the issue "originated from Phil Benson's visit to Brazil in 2007 and the discussions he conducted with two groups of Brazilian researchers at the Federal University of Minas Gerais – UFMG and the Catholic University of São Paulo – PUC-SP" (p. XI). No other research reports on autonomy and language education were found before or after this special issue.

3 *Linguagem & Ensino* (Language & Teaching) is a triannual publication with 44 issues published since 1998. Among the seven works found in its database, two are interviews on autonomy and two others mention the construct in the title only. Those four articles were therefore disregarded.

4 *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada* (Brazilian Journal of Applied Linguistics) launched its first issue in 2001. Since then, the mission of this journal has been to encourage research in Applied Linguistics. We found only two articles in its database.

The Articles

In this section we will review the articles, which were organized into three groups according to their main focus: (a) learner autonomy, (b) teacher autonomy, and (c) learner and teacher autonomy. Quotations from articles written in Portuguese were translated into English.

Learner Autonomy

This group includes eight articles on learner autonomy studies, five of which are research-based: Carvalho (2007), Magno (2008), Tirloni and Ramme (2015), Nicolaides and Fernandes (2008), and Ofugi and Figueiredo (2017). The last two report research in which participants were undergraduate students. The other three articles present theoretical discussions on the concept of learner autonomy: Paiva (2006), Paiva and Braga (2008), and Moura Filho (2009). The seminal article on autonomy as a complex system by Paiva (2006) presents a theoretical discussion based on data from language learning histories.

The first article by Carvalho (2007) associates autonomy with motivation, much like Moreira and Alves (2004). The study seeks to identify factors that characterize an autonomous learner, investigating learners of Portuguese as a foreign language through the analysis of 43 oral and written narratives of learners of Portuguese as an additional language, some of whom had experienced immersion in Brazil, albeit for a short time. Carvalho (2007) revisits Benson and Voller's (1997), Dickinson's (1987), Holec's (1981), and Paiva's (2006) definitions of autonomy and analyzes the narratives based on Dickinson's (1987) discussions on self-instruction and on Littlewood (1996), who suggests that learners can progress and achieve different levels of autonomy as they make their decisions. Her findings indicate that the learners of Portuguese are aware of their needs when they make learning-related decisions. She attributes these degrees of autonomy to the fact that they are immersed in a community where Portuguese is the native language. Other findings based on Dickinson (1987) show that a certain degree of self-direction was perceived in all the analyzed narratives, as well as a certain degree of autonomy, with the informants being classified as semi-autonomous.

The second article, Magno (2008), presents the results of an action research project which aimed to provide scaffolding to help learners improve their learning strategies and enhance autonomy. Authors such as Holec (1981) and Little's (1991) are mentioned, but Magno (2008) favours Benson's (2001) view of autonomy: "autonomy is a multidimensional capacity that will take different forms for different individuals, and even for the same individual in different contexts or at different times" (2001, p. 47). The project – The Autonomous Learning Support Base – involved English, French, German, and Spanish students, student

tutors, and teachers. Tutors (graduate or undergraduate students) scaffolded learners aiming at their gradual independence. Magno (2008, p. 480) explains:

> Upon arrival at the project, students are informed that they will not receive private language classes, but that they will explore some of their difficulties and search for alternative ways to autonomously overcome them. Through this tutoring, they become aware that they will have to take an active role in the process and that it is important to perform daily actions to improve their learning process.

Data from tutors and students lead to the conclusion that "areas like self-awareness of what learning a foreign language is and knowledge about different ways of learning a language are of fundamental importance for students' success" (p. 489).

The article by Tirloni and Ramme (2015) discusses learning autonomy in tandem learning, a learning experience which requires a great deal of autonomy to be successful. As explained by the authors in their abstract, in such a context:

> (…) responsibilities are shared among students: sometimes they are the apprentices, while at other times they are the masters. In such cases, autonomy and reciprocity make possible the meeting of students from different cultures-languages expanding the content learned in the classroom and the professional and cultural horizons according to individual goals.
>
> (p. 458)

The authors refer to the work of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1996) as the starting point to discuss autonomy, assuming that teachers must reflect upon and review their roles, in addition to fostering student participation in the teaching and learning processes. For Freire (1998, p. 98), "autonomy is the result of a process involving various and innumerable decisions". It is "a process of becoming oneself, a process of maturing, of coming to be". He claims that "a pedagogy of autonomy should be centred on experiences that stimulate decision making and responsibility, in other words, on experiences that respect freedom". Autonomy is a key aspect in the work of Tirloni and Ramme (2015) because tandem learning success depends highly on learners' taking control on their learning process: they define their goals, develop strategies to achieve their objectives, and self-assess their learning.

In addition to Freire, Tirloni and Ramme (2015) also discuss the concepts of autonomy raised by Holec (1981), Little (1991), and Dickinson (1987, 1994). Dickinson's concept of self-instruction – "situations in which a learner, with others, or alone, is working without the direct

control of a teacher" (Dickinson, 1987, p. 3) – is well suited for the context of tandem learning. So is his concept of extreme autonomy as the learner "undertakes the whole of his learning without the help of a teacher" (p. 3). Tirloni and Ramme (2015, p. 463) highlight that autonomy does not mean the absence of rules and limits, and students are required to "evaluate themselves and their peers, as they become aware that their efforts are essential if learning improvement is to take place". They claim that "being autonomous implies being critical, consciously choosing what goals to pursue and what paths to follow in order to achieve them" (p. 464). For them, such a tandem learning environment enhances autonomous learning as "the students are the protagonists of their learning and are able to develop the ability to evaluate their own progression in learning" (p. 464). They conclude that tandem learning is a powerful resource for the development of students' autonomy.

Nicolaides and Fernandes (2008) go beyond the concept of autonomy as responsibility for one's own learning to "emphasize that learner autonomy is also a matter of getting involved with the social environment in which the learner is inserted in" (p. 493). Drawing on Freire (1973), the authors maintain that "every decision and choice made, every path taken, every reaction to our partners' affliction or happiness will make a difference in our group" and add that "ideally, being an autonomous learner is not only a question of becoming independent, but of being someone who focusses his own learning also on the interest of his peers". They also assume that "autonomy is an essential human condition to the full development of the individual" and that "human beings were born to be autonomous" (p. 494). Supported by Freire (1973, 1998), they cite the Nicolaides' concept of autonomy which includes "to develop the capacity to exercise autonomy as a learner within the opportunities offered by the context in a responsible way, and, therefore, become aware of his role as a modifier of his social environment" (Nicolaides, 2003, p. 39).

Nicolaides and Fernandes (2008) discuss three of Freire's assumptions: (1) Reflection is essential to action and our actions influence society (p. 499); (2) Teaching is not simply about conveying knowledge (p. 500); (3) Learners should see educators as oppression liberators and not as authoritarian models (p. 501). They infer that: "helping students to become more autonomous is the role of a teacher who believes that his student is also a collaborator in the production of knowledge" (p. 503). Between Freire's theory and data from a single case study, they conclude that autonomy is also a matter of opportunity and that it should not be confined to the individual, but rather to the individual's relationship with the world.

Ofugi and Figueiredo (2017), inspired by Ofugi (2016), claim that autonomy can also be seen as a gradual appropriation of one's own learning process, which will, in turn, involve reflecting on, choosing, and monitoring one's own activities. For Ofugi, instructors are also active in

this process as they promote opportunities for students to be more aware of their own learning. The findings indicate that the periodical integration of the flipped classroom model helped students to make decisions that favoured their learning, such as pausing videos and watching them again whenever they saw fit. Interviews also showed that they reflected on their own learning process. Some participants stated that they sought out materials other than those provided in the classroom.

The next three articles offer theoretical discussions. Paiva (2006) presents discussions on autonomy by renowned scholars, such as Holec (1981), Little (1991), Littlewood (1996), Dickinson (1987), Pennycook (1997), and Benson (1997), and discusses the construct under chaos theory. In revisiting Littlewood (1996), Paiva (2006) reminds us that an individual can possess three types of autonomy: as a communicator (uses language creatively, relying on adequate communicative strategies), as a learner (engages in independent learning, relying on the appropriate learning strategies), and as a person (expresses personal meanings, creating personal learning contexts). Paiva adds a fourth type – autonomy of the technology user (skill to use technology, especially the Internet, as an important tool to assist the language learning process) – and further points out that the reviewed discussions tend to contemplate the second type of autonomy only. After reviewing aspects of autonomy in the literature, Paiva states that some aspects are typical of a complex or dynamic system, such as a process as opposed to a state, instability variability, and adaptability. Grounded in chaos and complexity theory, she suggests that, like language acquisition as defended by Larsen-Freeman (1997) and Paiva (2006), autonomy is a complex adaptive system:

> Autonomy is a complex socio-cognitive system, manifested in different degrees of independence and control of one's own learning process, involving capacities, abilities, attitudes, willingness, decision making, choices, planning, actions, and assessment either as a language learner or as a communicator inside or outside the classroom.
> (Paiva, 2006, pp. 88–89)

This definition has been referenced in other studies in the field, such as Paiva and Braga (2008) and Moura Filho (2009), as reviewed in this paper. For Paiva (2006), autonomy is not an intrinsic feature only. It can be innate, but it can also be encouraged or oppressed depending on internal and external conditions. To present empirical evidence that autonomy is a complex system, a corpus of 80 language learning histories collected in Brazil was examined within a project that looked at foreign language acquisition processes through the analysis of learner narratives. In reviewing the narratives, Paiva demonstrates that factors such as the learner, the teacher, the institution, social and political contexts, as well as legislation and technology, can either favour or constrain autonomy

in language learning. With that in mind, Paiva asserts that ideally autonomy should be seen as a distributed phenomenon through which learners can share their learning with their peers, and teachers can both offer students' choices regarding learning activities and let them suggest changes. Moreover, institutions should be flexible enough to let both teachers and students co-author the educational process. Lastly, the social, political, and economic system should provide good learning opportunities and teaching conditions alike.

Paiva and Braga (2008) challenge the most accepted definitions of autonomy, such as Holec's (1981) and Little's (1991), among others, by saying that they do not take into account contextual factors that interfere with the learning process. The authors underscore the importance of Benson's claim that autonomy is "a complex and multifaceted concept" (Benson, 1997, p. 29) and defend that autonomy "consists of a variety of elements which render autonomy virtually impossible to be comprehensibly described by a single definition" (Paiva & Braga, 2008, p. 443). They cite Paiva (2006) for whom autonomy is a complex phenomenon that emerges from the interaction of several elements, and raise the hypothesis that

> (...) in an educational context, the process of autonomy is constructed from a number of agents which interact amongst themselves as well as with agents from other systems, whose interactions may produce a positive or negative influence on the process of self-direction of the language learner. In addition, autonomy and the learning system are nested systems and rely on conditions such as diversity, distributed control, and interaction amongst neighbours for complex emergence.
>
> (Paiva & Braga, 2008, p. 449)

To confirm their hypothesis, they studied language learning histories and demonstrated that "the context is also complex and dynamic and continuously changes over time. Different students react differently to the context constraints and adapt themselves, constantly searching for alternatives to supply what their school has denied them" (p. 462). They concluded that "no learner is entirely free. Learners have their autonomy limited by several constraints" (p. 464), but they also showed that learners adapt, organize themselves, and find learning opportunities in different contexts.

Finally, Moura Filho (2009) covers the state-of-the-art of autonomy from its origins to the year 2009 and its implications for language learning. In addition to presenting a historic overview of autonomy, he considers that the myriad of definitions for autonomy crafted by authors such as Holec (1981), Little (1991), Dickinson (1994), and Benson (1997) stem from the complex nature of the construct and from the affective,

cognitive, metacognitive, and social aspects that it comprises. According to him, the many definitions for the same concept have led researchers to propose counter definitions to better understand the phenomenon, as was the case with Little (1991) and Dickinson (1994). Little (1991) affirms that autonomy is not synonymous with self-instruction, nor is it exclusively a matter of how learning is organized. Likewise, it is not something teachers do to their learners; or a single, easily describable phenomenon. In this line, Dickinson (1994) claims that learner autonomy is not primarily associated with the existence of a physical setting of learning like a self-access centre, for example. Although autonomous learners may work in a self-access centre, this is not a necessary condition of autonomy, especially because the teacher has an important role in helping with this process.

Based on these issues, Moura Filho (2009) draws on studies conducted by Benson (1997) and Nunan (1997) to present a robust review of the reasons to implement autonomy in the context of language learning, in addition to mapping out the academic productions on autonomy carried out in Brazil between 2000 and 2005. He also revisits Dickinson (1992), who addresses learner training by proposing that teachers must recognize that different learners benefit from different strategies, value the strategies that learners use, and train learners to monitor their progress. Moura Filho refutes Reeves-Miller (cited in Benson, 1995), who says that the training aimed at making learners more autonomous can diffuse the opinion that learning is an individualistic process. The author considers that discussions for and against the training of autonomy can incentivize new research studies on the subject. In addition, among the many definitions of autonomy, he underscores Paiva's (2006) as she adds important elements to the discussions on autonomy.

It is worth pointing out that Moura Filho notes that advancements in language learning autonomy can be seen with respect to teacher and student roles. According to him, the reviewed studies point to the need for instructors to break away from Freire's (1983) concept of "banking education"[2] and re-evaluate their role in language learning autonomy. This reflection is vital to the role of the learner in this process. In addition to delving into the teacher's changing role in this process, Moura Filho looks at autonomous learning in a perspective that underscores the need to understand learners' histories in a context that involves other elements, such as the incentive to continuous education, the use of authentic didactic materials, and the contributions of digital technologies. Autonomy can also be discussed with respect to how these issues are aligned with the institutions and with the people working in them.

The most recent article analyzed in this group is Ofugi and Figueiredo's (2017). These researchers assert that students can benefit from what Dickinson (1994, p. 5) terms "informed" autonomy, that is, "learners who are sufficiently knowledgeable about language learning to make

approximately correct decisions about their own learning". Dickinson further asserts that "it is possible to train less experienced language learners as part of the process of teaching the language". In this light, Ofugi and Figueiredo (2017) investigate how implementing a flipped classroom[3] technique in the language classroom can help learners of English as a foreign language become more autonomous. For Ofugi and Figueiredo, the fact that students can periodically manage and monitor their learning may favour the development of autonomy.

Teacher Autonomy

Six articles in our study focus on teacher autonomy, five of which are based on empirical research: Menegazzo and Xavier (2004); Collins (2008); Sprenger and Wadt (2008); Sprenger (2008); and Mello, Dutra, and Jorge (2008). The last article in this group, Silva (2013), presents reflections on teacher education for autonomy.

Menegazzo and Xavier (2004) raise the issue of teacher autonomy in a discussion about teaching methods and post-method condition, claiming that reflective thinking leads to teacher autonomy. Autonomy, in this article, is defined according to Cardoso, Peixoto, Serrano, & Moreira (1996, p. 72) as "critical awareness of one's interests and values and of knowledge of his/her own capacities and aptitudes, within principles of freedom, responsibility and solidarity". Drawing on Borges (2002), Menegazzo and Xavier add that "the autonomy of the teacher can be related to his/her attitudes, decisions and position in face of the dominant ideological values that limit the possibilities of the teaching action" (p. 123).

Collins (2008) also focusses on teachers' autonomy in an interface with Information and Communication Technology (ICT). She seconds Boulton (2006, p. 101) who says that "ICT and autonomy are each 'a good thing' insofar as they have potential to promote (language) learning". She investigates the development of autonomous behaviour of participants in an online teacher development course for Brazilian teachers of English as a foreign language (Teachers' Links). Her data come from asynchronous communication in discussion forums. She starts her discussion on autonomy with the concepts of Holec (1981) and Benson (2001), associating "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981) to the idea that learner autonomy can be developed (Benson, 2001). She explains that in online contexts, freedom is limited, and learners cannot make all the decisions about their learning. It is, for instance, the case of teaching materials that are usually prepared by teachers in advance. Collins (2008, p. 534) quotes Murphy (2007, p. 74) in this respect:

> Distance learners are often assumed to be learning autonomously because they control a number of aspects of their learning, such as

> the time, the pace, what to study and when to study, but they do not necessarily take responsibility for setting goals, planning or evaluating learning… Distance learning materials have to anticipate a range of potential language learning needs and cater for students working in isolation without immediate access to teachers or peers.

We agree with Collins (2008, p. 535) on the social nature of autonomy and that "one develops autonomous behaviour in specific areas, in relation to well defined social tasks, with specific social purposes in mind". We also agree with her and Benson (2001, pp. 6–7) that self-instruction is not a synonym for autonomy.

Collins (2008) believes that meaningful online interaction and collaborative work can help to develop autonomy. In investigating the teachers' logs and participation in the online forums of the *Teachers' Links* course, Collins (2008) brings the example of one participant that increased his presence in the forums and demonstrated that he had read his classmates' messages by referring to them in his posts, which also included references to other experiences beyond the course context. This participant's autonomy led him to position himself as a leader, urging people in his group to contribute to the forum. The author concludes that "autonomy and technology mediated activities do promote learning", but they require "a socially-oriented kind of autonomy development, as well as a human-mediated kind of online activity" (Collins, 2008, p. 548).

After the first course experience, the syllabus of *Teachers' Links* was updated "to foster the development of language teacher autonomy for course planning and materials preparation" as described by Sprenger and Wadt (2008, p. 551). They favoured the view that "autonomy is a matter of helping students to find a voice in English and confront *a range of cultural constructions as they learn English* (Pennycook, 1997)" (p. 554). To do that they assumed that "the development of teacher autonomy depends very much on listening to teacher students' stories and stimulating them to take their own identities and experiences into account when planning their courses and activities" (p. 571).

The fourth article focussing on teacher autonomy questions how we determine whether progress in teacher autonomy has been made. Sprenger (2008), echoing Little (2007), highlights that teachers need to experience autonomous learning in order to foster autonomy among their students. Based on the work of several authors, she views autonomy as the "teacher's capacity and willingness to make conscious decisions about his or her pedagogical practice" (p. 580). She explains:

> Making conscious decisions means that he or she situates the pedagogical tasks in their immediate and wider contexts, perceives and reflects critically about the different aspects involved in their design

> and implementation. It also means that the teacher is aware of his or her possibilities to change the cultural, social and political context and also of the learners' possibility to do the same.
>
> (Sprenger, 2008, p. 580)

Although the author does not answer the question on how to determine whether progress in teacher autonomy has been made, it seems that continuous reflection on one's teaching is the path to autonomy.

Reflection is also highlighted by Mello et al.'s (2008) study, which shows the relevance of action research to enhance teacher autonomy. The authors also acknowledge that autonomy studies place more importance on language learners and that it is necessary to discuss teacher autonomy. As far as the concept of teacher autonomy is concerned, they mention different aspects of freedom and cite Benson (2001) and Little (1995), among others. The context of their research was a Teacher Education Continuing Program where action research was a mandatory activity to help 50 teachers reflect, both in-action and on-action, about Applied Linguistics issues connected to classroom practices. Having been grouped according to their research interests, the teachers discussed their projects with supervisors. Not all groups were successful with their projects, but some "were able to establish more challenging goals for their learners, showing how their autonomy could be exercised with the help of this systematic inquiry which favoured reflection and focussed on practice: collaborative action research" (Mello et al., 2008, p. 525).

Silva (2013) discussed both the concept of student and teacher autonomy, drawing primarily on Benson (2006), where he finds the concepts proposed by Holec (1981) and Dickinson (1987) and includes them in his own work. His main concern is language teacher education and the conception of undergraduate curricula. He claims that curricula "should allow students to develop autonomous and independent study skills so that they would become professionals to educate towards autonomy" (Silva, 2013, p. 73).

Learner and Teacher Autonomy

Only one study, out of the 15 we have reviewed, investigates both student and teacher autonomy. Moreira and Alves (2004) investigated the beliefs of 175 teachers and 188 students of English from public schools in Belo Horizonte, in Brazil. They remind us that in the early 1970s research on foreign language learning autonomy gained strength with the introduction of training programs in language labs. The researchers share Gremmo and Riley's (1995) idea that even though these programs were not originally created for self-directed learning, students' work presenting a certain degree of autonomy should be valued. They turn to Cotterall (1995), who claims that beliefs and autonomy are intertwined and we should know the former before we develop the latter.

Moreira and Alves (2004) present considerations on the similarities and differences between students' and teachers' beliefs based on the analysis of the participants' answers to questionnaires. The findings indicate that their beliefs are somewhat similar concerning the degree of language difficulty, the notion of language-learning aptitude, and the learning strategies used in the classroom. With regard to autonomy and motivation, both groups believe that the teacher plays a central role in language learning and share the idea that constant feedback is crucial to this process, but they disagree on the student's capacity to reach course goals. For example, 76% of the students agree that they know what aspects they need to improve, whereas 82% of the teachers disagree. Self-esteem is another point of disagreement as 90% of the students state that they know how to study well for other subjects, whereas only 33.5% of the teachers share their opinions.

The authors voice their concerns regarding these findings, considering that teachers see students as "individuals unable to establish goals, take risks, and succeed in studying English" (Moreira & Alves, 2004, p. 130). They fear that these beliefs may not only impair autonomy but also lead teachers not to expect student autonomy with respect to in-class interactions. Worse yet, this may discourage teachers from allowing their students to be autonomous. The study is relevant to discussions on autonomy in that it gathers and exposes the beliefs held by public school teachers and students, in addition to pointing out the possible influences of these beliefs on the development of students' autonomy.

Conclusions

One of the goals of this review was to identify whether the articles focussed on either teacher or learner autonomy. The reviewed studies point to a balance between discussions on teacher autonomy (Collins, 2008; Mello et al., 2008; Menegazzo & Xavier, 2004; Sprenger, 2008; Sprenger & Wadt, 2008) and learner autonomy (Carvalho, 2007; Magno, 2008; Moura Filho, 2009; Nicolaides & Fernandes, 2008; Ofugi & Figueiredo, 2017; Paiva, 2006; Paiva & Braga 2008; Tirloni & Ramme, 2015). Moreira and Alves (2004) is the only study to focus on both teacher and learner autonomy. However, some studies on teacher autonomy (Magno, 2008; Silva, 2013) and on learner autonomy (Moura Filho, 2009) seem to signal a strong relationship between these elements and the development of autonomy in teaching and learning contexts.

The second goal was to find out the definitions of autonomy mentioned in the papers. Holec's (1981) idea that autonomy is "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3) is validated in most of the studies presented. This definition seems to shore up Dickinson's (1987) proposition that equates learners' autonomy with their

language learning decisions in "situations in which a learner, with others, or alone, is working without the direct control of a teacher" (p. 3). This statement contemplates the relationship between self-instruction and autonomy and is also used in most of the reviewed studies. The notions that autonomy is "a complex and multifaceted concept" in Benson (1997) and that autonomy "can be developed" in Benson (2001) underpin many of the studies. Also frequently cited is Little's (1991) notion that autonomy is not synonymous with self-instruction. It is not exclusively a matter of how learning is organized, or a single, easily described behaviour. Nor is it something teachers do to their learners. Although the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire is mentioned by only two articles, the other recurrent definitions corroborate Freire's (1973) premise that "autonomy is an essential human condition to the full development of the individual" (Nicolaides & Fernandes, 2008, p. 493).

All these concepts of autonomy served as a stepping stone for a new definition based on complex systems as proposed by Paiva (2006) and further revisited by Paiva and Braga (2008). The complexity perspective seems to be the main contribution of Brazilian research for the development of research on autonomy.

The third goal was to investigate the aspects of autonomy discussed in the Brazilian research. We found out that the studies point to a relationship between autonomy in language learning and teaching, as well as between autonomy and other constructs such as beliefs, identity, and motivation. Technology also plays an important role in the development of autonomy according to the studies of Paiva (2006), Collins (2008), Paiva and Braga (2008), and Moura Filho (2009), in addition to other elements such as the school; teaching materials; and social, political, and economic systems.

The findings reveal that the researchers often refer to well-known authors on autonomy. What changes is the nature of the data sources, such as interviews, forums, or language learning histories. It is also worth mentioning that these Brazilian studies address elements and factors that when bundled up testify to the complex nature of autonomy as defended by Paiva (2006) and Paiva and Braga (2008). As Applied Linguistics is an interdisciplinary field, it is our contention that future studies could invest in other theoretical dialogues such as the one backed by complexity theory.

Lastly, autonomy is a keyword in the Brazilian National Curriculum for Basic Education and viewed as learning-to-learn skills. It involves being proactive, making decisions, dealing with information, acting with discernment and responsibility in the contexts of digital cultures, applying knowledge to solve problems and seek solutions, etc. With that in mind, we expect that research on autonomy will be encouraged not only in language learning, but also in education in general.

Notes

1 https://catalogodeteses.capes.gov.br/catalogo-teses/#!/.
2 For Freire, education in this perspective becomes an act of depositing, in which students are the depositories, and the teacher is the depositor.
3 Ofugi and Figueiredo (2017), citing Ofugi (2016, p. 36), define the flipped classroom as a technique to present and work on content by which the student systematically carries out a task at home prior to the class using digital technologies.

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8 Seeing Language Learner Autonomy in Young Learners' Visual Narratives

Alice Chik and Sílvia Melo-Pfeifer

Introduction

Research on learner autonomy reflects an important paradigm shift in the field of language learning and teaching. It provides researchers and teachers with a new lens to reimagine the language learning process. In terms of understanding young learners in the classroom context, learner autonomy research has its roots in the work by Dam (1995) and Thomsen (2003) in Denmark. Over the years, the research on and discussion of learner autonomy has largely focussed on adult learners, and, as a result, very little research work has been conducted on primary school learners. This is despite this group emerging as the fastest growing group of language learners globally. In terms of research methodologies, researchers over the last 40 years have adopted various research methodologies to explore learner autonomy development. This includes the application of both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms (see Little, Dam, & Legenhausen, 2017 for recent accounts). However, one less-frequently used approach is the use of visual narratives (Kalaja & Melo-Pfeifer, 2019). We are especially interested in the ways young learners draw their language learning portraits to demonstrate aspects of learner autonomy.

We argue that when using a visual narrative approach, young learners first illustrate a reflexive relation with the languages in their portraits before projecting language learning in relation to their learning contexts. In many cases, young learners display agency in autonomous learning. We understand autonomous learning as the ability to self-direct the learning process through planning and choice of goals, materials, and learning and assessment strategies according to individual motivations and context affordances (Benson, 2006; Ushioda, 2011). So, autonomous learning is first a matter of "WHAT autonomous learners are able to do" and "HOW they are able to do it" (Benson, 2006, p. 23; capitalization added by the author). Following this, autonomous learning is a matter of *why* they do it and *in which circumstances* they develop autonomy, meaning the interaction between abilities and strategies and personal goals and affordances provided by the environment.

Using drawings by young learners from Germany and Australia, we claim that greater research attention should be given to young learners and visual methodologies. In this chapter, we answer the following research questions: (1) Which language learning strategies and processes do children depict in their visual narratives? (2) What learning artefacts and individuals who support language learning do children tend to draw? and (3) How do learners' representations of language learning relate to autonomy?

To answer the research questions, we start by stressing the potential of visual narratives to grasp young learners' language learning autonomy. We then present our data collection contexts (in Australia and Germany) and instruments, as well as the data analysis procedures. Following this, we present the analysis of the collected visual narratives in both contexts. This chapter closes with a discussion of the data and a reflection on the possibilities and constraints of working with visual narratives in the language classroom.

Learner Autonomy: What Do We Know about Young Learners, and How Could We Learn More?

Although some of the early research work on learner autonomy explored its development in young learners, the focus in the field shifted towards university-level learners (Little et al., 2017). Research on and with young learners is thus limited, especially research reporting learners' reflections or vocalizations of their learning (see Pinter, 2017 for further discussion). In his discussion of the use of European Language Portfolios for English learning in Irish primary schools, Little (2009) argues that a well-structured portfolio can help teachers to involve learners in making decisions for autonomous learning, and to engage them in learner reflection. Besser and Chik (2014) show that access to language resources in everyday contexts can be the key for constructing an autonomous learning environment among primary school students of different age groups in Hong Kong. Similarly, Güneş (2019) argues that providing opportunities to young learners with A1 Level English can promote autonomous decision making about their own learning. However, as Year 4 primary level students, they were less skilful in reflecting on their learning experience. Lamb's (2011) study with secondary school French and German students in the United Kingdom (UK) (aged 11–16 years) indicated that learners were sensitive to the learning environment in their perceptions of autonomous learning. A change in teacher behaviour and control in the classroom may significantly impact student perceptions of, and motivations towards, taking control of their learning. Lamb's study included many Secondary One students, thus showing that the transition from primary to secondary could be a fragile to autonomy development.

In terms of the classroom context, the understanding of young learner autonomy development has not progressed satisfactorily.

The paucity of studies including young language learners may be due to the lack of suitable methodologies to access young learner practices. We claim, however, that the use of visual narratives has the potential to exploit young language learner autonomy.

Indeed, the importance of using visual methods to grasp the complexity of human and social phenomena such as learning processes and autonomy has been acknowledged in different disciplinary fields (Banks, 2014; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; Rose, 2016; Van Leeuwen, 2005). Because of their complexities, researchers recognize that the combination of different methods, sources of information, and heuristic approaches is best placed to understand research objects such as those related to education (cf. Melo-Pfeifer & Ferreira, 2017).

To overcome what may be coined as "linguistic imperialism" in the study of phenomena that goes far beyond language and discourse itself (such as autonomy), Block (2014) suggests the Social Sciences have to overcome the current "linguistic bias" in research. This call has been responded to by the current "visual turn" in Applied Language studies (Kalaja & Pitkänen-Huhta, 2018; Kalaja & Melo-Pfeifer, 2019). Now evident is the emergence of research dealing with objects, photos, collage, drawings, and digital storytelling, to name just a few. Because young learners are generally familiar with drawing activities, the collection of purposefully collected drawings in education settings can help researchers to understand the process of becoming autonomous language learners throughout the lifespan. Moreover, it can help learners reflect on learning and raise learning awareness, and this could be very helpful for learner development.

Methodology

In this contribution, we undertake a comparative study of French and Japanese foreign language learning in Australia and Portuguese heritage language learning in Germany. After presenting the corpora, the data analysis results are presented and discussed, resorting to the research questions to structure the presentation. We focus on the differences grasped through the comparative study; namely, referring to the different language statuses to the learners (and the different relationships the students establish with those languages in both contexts). We also use the drawings to compare and discuss the spaces available for autonomous learning by young learners. It should be noted that data from the two learning contexts were collected at different times and through different procedures. However, we are focussing on the emergence of learner autonomy as shown in young learners' portraits of their language learning.

Corpora

The corpora were collected by the researchers separately in two very different educational contexts. In Sydney, Australia, the drawings were collected from foreign language students attending a mainstream primary school. In Sydney, foreign language learning is optional, and many schools do not provide language classes other than English. Students have the option to attend their heritage language classes (or community language classes in the Australian context) on weekends. In Germany, the drawings were collected from heritage language students attending classes in the afternoon. Although German students are provided with foreign language education in their regular curriculum, the first foreign language is very likely to be English. The main second foreign language education provision includes French, Latin, and Spanish. Many heritage languages courses are not necessarily provided at school.

Corpus 1: Foreign Language Classrooms in Sydney

The Australian corpus includes 37 visual narratives. They are accompanied by short oral explanations by the young learners and interactions with the researcher. The data were collected by the researcher from two Year 1 classes (French and Japanese) during the 2015 school year. The students attended a bilingual immersion school in metropolitan Sydney. The data were collected from the larger project on the whole-school approach to foreign language learning (Moloney & Chik, 2015). Different to most Australian schools, the selected primary school is a fee-charging private school with a strong focus on developing students' bi- and multilingual competence. All students are required to take a language subject from Year 1 to Year 10. The participants in this project received an average of 6.5 hours of language instruction per week starting from Year 1. This is very different to the mandatory requirement of 100-hours of language instruction for all government school students in Year 7 or 8 in Sydney. The initial interactions with the participants revealed many have family members living overseas and some had travelled overseas to visit them. The participants from both the French class (n = 17) and Japanese class (n = 20) were asked to draw pictures of themselves learning or using the language, and then to orally explain what they had drawn. The oral explanations by the young participants were audio-recorded. While the participants were drawing their pictures, the researcher also went around the classroom to chat informally with them.

For collecting the visual narratives of language learning from the participants the researcher proposed a free and blank form approach. This was meant to allow the young participants to decide on what they thought was important for them in the learning process (Kalaja et al., 2013). Both the French and the Japanese teachers were briefed before the data collection commenced. They were given identical instructions on how to ask the students to draw their language portraits. However,

the teachers reacted differently. In the French class, the students received a blank A4 paper and the teacher then asked them to 'draw a picture of yourself learning French'. In the Japanese class, the teacher gave the students a worksheet with the bilingual title, 'Japanese things I like in Japanese class'. The worksheet included a half-page blank box for drawing with a list of vocabulary in Japanese included underneath. The vocabulary pointed to classroom activities in previous weeks such as songs, Japanese games, hiragana card games, puzzles, Japanese films, and origami. Both classes had the same basic classroom stationery supply that included pencils, colour pencils, and crayons.

Corpus 2: Heritage Language Classroom in Germany

The German corpus included 24 visual narratives by primary school students across three locations: Lohmar (n = 10), Siegburg (n = 5), and Niederdollendorf (n = 9). They were accompanied by the students' written description of their drawings and the transcription of their oral presentations on their production in the classroom. The data were collected during the 2012/2013 school year by the teacher responsible for implementing Portuguese as a Heritage Language in three community schools in North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany).

The German corpus is part of a broader study to analyze approximately 1,000 drawings of Portuguese heritage language learning (Melo-Pfeifer, 2015, 2017). The drawings here presented were collected in a latter period of the study and were accompanied by written and oral narratives.

The visual and textual productions are usually bilingual, combining Portuguese (the heritage language) and German (the majority language). Because this learning context is heterogeneous, young learners have a range of competences in these languages, ranging from high proficiency in both Portuguese and German to low proficiency (in either one or the other language). In their drawings, the young learners tend to depict formal learning situations (the classroom context), where the blackboard, teacher, tables and chairs, books, and dictionaries are visible, and constitute the learning scenario (Flores & Melo-Pfeifer, 2016, p. 51). The teacher gave the following instruction: "Draw yourself drawing the languages you know".

Regarding the complementarity of the three data sources, we can say that their combination, with their individual affordances and limitations, allows for a full depiction of the young learners' narrative capital (Goodson, 2015). The next description of the nature of the three sources could be made (Melo-Pfeifer & Ferreira, 2017):

- drawings – resorting to Kalaja et al. (2013), we could call them "visual narratives", in what Barkhuizne, Benson, & Chik (2014, p. 52) called "multimodal narratives", as they combine written and visual

elements. Our drawings could also be called "multilingual multimodal narratives" as they combine the use of different languages. In terms of the situation being depicted, we could say that they represent snapshots of reality. The drawing instruction was to "draw yourself speaking the languages you know"

- written explanation – we could describe this data as a written narrative intended to make explicit the meaning of the visual narrative, after the elicitation, "in my drawing…"
- oral explanation – this oral narrative was obtained via interview with the teacher in front of classmates and should be considered a co-construction between the participants (as the teacher usually elicits information, thus guiding the explanations provided)

To sum up, the collection of different data allows for an analysis of how young learners reposition themselves and reframe the learning situation according to the affordances offered by each mode. Even if each of the narratives could be analyzed autonomously – being produced in (slightly) different times, for different purposes and with different discursive partners – they establish a relationship of "multimodal intertextuality" (Melo-Pfeifer & Ferreira, 2017). As such, they provide an accurate account of young learners' narrative capital and abilities.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data were analyzed using a multisemiotic content analysis method combining written and drawn elements in what may be called "multimodal translanguaging" (Melo-Pfeifer, 2015, 2017). First, we observed the emergence of categories fitting our research questions, identifying tendencies in young learners' visual representations. We then proceeded to the in-depth description of significant narratives.

Bearing our research questions in mind, the following categories were considered as presented in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 Categories of Analysis

Research questions	*Categories of analysis*
Which language learning strategies and processes do children depict in their visual narratives?	• Competences and content being learnt: writing, reading, vocabulary, grammar, …; • Language learning approaches: repeating, doing exercises, reflecting on linguistic phenomena, interlinguistic comparison, interacting in the classroom, …;
What learning artefacts and individuals who support language learning do children tend to draw?	• Learning artefacts: blackboard, textbooks, grammars, maps and posters, music players, authentic materials related to target languages, … • Individuals: young learners alone, teacher, other pupils, family members, fictional characters…etc.

The third research question, 'How do learners' representations of language learning relate to autonomy?' is addressed in the discussion section given the answer depends on the responses given to research questions 1 and 2.

Because the contexts and drawing instructions were quite different, we will see the differences reflected in the drawings and the learner explanations.

Presentation of the Analysis

The presentation of the analysis and of main results follows the analytical categories presented in Table 8.1. As these categories are emergent from data and data collection did not follow the same procedures, a quantitative and comparative analysis is not possible. Hence, a thematic, descriptive qualitative analysis of salient examples of both corpora will be preferred over a quantitative one.

Language Learning Approaches and Processes

In this section we present the language learning approaches and processes depicted in Australia and in Germany, focussing on how young learners represent and describe them.

Foreign Language Classrooms in Sydney

The most recent (2016) census in Australia shows that 36.7% of the population of Sydney was born overseas, and that 35.8% of the population speak a language other than English at home. The top five languages spoken are Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese, 7.6%), Arabic (4%), Vietnamese (2.1%), Greek (1.6%), and Hindi (1.3%). However, only about 8% of Year 12 students studied a language subject for their Higher School Certificate (the final public examination), with the most popular language choices being Japanese and French. Notably, the French- (0.4%) and Japanese-speaking (0.3%) populations of Sydney are much smaller than the top five language populations cited above. This means that the Year 1 participants (all six years old) in our study were less likely to come into contact with French- or Japanese-speaking people in their everyday interactions. It should also be noted that this was the first year of learning an additional language for most participants.

A small number of students started their foreign language learning in kindergarten. Another point to note regards language and heritage. Among the French students, only one was of French heritage. Several students mentioned that they had visited Paris with their families. Several students mentioned that their parents had studied French at school but did not say that they spoke French in their everyday lives. Among the Japanese

students, only two were of Japanese heritage. One student was a new transfer student who did not speak any English, and another student's mother was Japanese, but the family spoke mostly English at home. Only one non-Japanese heritage student mentioned that his father knew Japanese for work purposes, but they did not speak the language at home. None of the students had travelled to Japan. Hence, most of the students did not have access to the speech communities in their everyday communication.

It turned out that when the students first started learning a foreign language and had no access to the language in their daily lives, their concepts of language learning strategies turned to an imaginary future. This was especially true with the French class, and they imagined themselves in Paris. The 17 drawings all show the students drawing themselves in Paris, as indicated by the drawing of the Eiffel Tower in their imaginary French learning and usage context.

In Figure 8.1, we see that Linda is happily walking towards the Eiffel Tower with her little poodle (*un caniche*) while holding a *croissant* in her hand. The inclusion of the French vocabulary indicated her French speaking as she had already visited Paris twice. So, she was familiar with the idea of people speaking French in Paris, and she was doing what everyone *else* was doing in France – speaking French. Linda also labelled the items she drew in French. It was not clear if the student

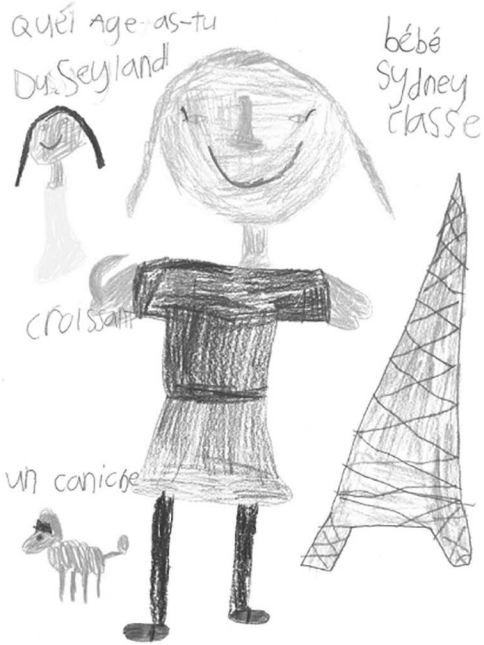

Figure 8.1 Linda's trip to Paris (French, 6 years old).

used additional language resources. Another point of imagination was that Linda was not wearing a school uniform because she *was* not in a classroom.

Like Linda's drawing, Irene's drawing (Figure 8.2) depicts her wearing 'a pretty dress' because she was not in school – she was in Paris. Thus, Irene was not alone in *not* wearing the school uniform. Only two of the 17 drawings included figures wearing a school uniform. The autonomy evidenced in these two drawings was a sense of using the language in context, autonomously. The teacher was not there in the scene. The student was taking control by speaking French and doing everything in French. There is the sense that it is a monolingual environment, as none of the students included English (or other languages) in their drawing. In their minds, the strategy for learning French was to be in France and to speak only in French. At no point did they think that they needed to translanguage or use English (or other languages) to help them to communicate with other people in Paris.

Figure 8.2 Irene's trip to Paris (French, 6 years old).

A common feature in the depiction of the heritage language process was the representation of the classroom as the locus of learning. In this particular context, the pupils visually represented the relevance given to vocabulary learning and the explicit representation of interlinguistic learning strategies. In our corpus, the comparative strategies presented the initiatives of both the teachers and the pupils. In any case, the pupils frequently drew tables comparing vocabulary in German (the majority language); Portuguese (the heritage and minority language); and, sometimes, English (the foreign language learned in the school curriculum). Latin was also drawn as being used to facilitate Portuguese language learning through comparison (Figure 8.3).

It is clear from the student demographic that school multilingualism was considered as a resource for individual use in language learning. From this perspective, being able to resort to previously learnt languages and thus being able to use previous knowledge may be regarded as strategies related to autonomy in the (heritage) language learning context.

About this drawing, the author wrote in the narrative:

Original[1]	*English translation*
Eu desenhei-me a mim na minha secretária a estudar línguas: alemão, português, latim e inglês. Desenhei os livros que eu uso para estudar e as cartas que eu uso para escrever as novas palavras em latim e em inglês.	I drew myself at my desk learning languages: German, Portuguese, Latin, and English. I drew the books I use to study and the cards that I use to write down the new words in Latin and English.

Figure 8.3 Lohmar (BA/11 years old).

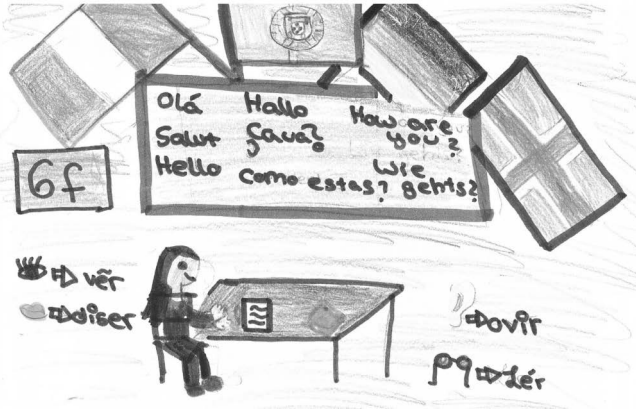

Figure 8.4 Niederdollendorf (SDF/11 years old).

Parallel to the comparison strategy and visible in the drawing, the written narrative also pinpointed other signs of autonomy: a place associated with learning, and different strategies assigned to different languages. Explicit vocabulary learning strategies were named in regard to foreign languages, but not in the case of German (the majority language) and the heritage language. This probably implies a choice of methods depending on particular needs and even on agency and investment, that is, willingness and active effort to engage in particular learning situations attached to particular languages, depending on foreseen (symbolic) rewards.

Another sign of autonomy is evident in Figure 8.4: alongside the interlinguistic comparison, the student refers to the competences addressed in the heritage language classroom.

The drawing makes it clear that it is important for the pupil to identify the competences and skills being developed at school ("ver"/see; "dizer"/speak; "ouvir"/listening; "ler"/reading). The combination of pictograms and the writing of the competences are clear signs that this student clearly values the explicitness of classroom instruction.

The written narrative accompanying the drawing states the following:

Original	*English translation*
No desenho estão as bandeiras das línguas que eu aprendo. No desenho está um quadro com palavras e eu estou a aprender a ler. No lado do desenho estão símbolos com as palavras como eu posso estudar as palavras (…).	In the drawing are the flags of the languages that I am learning. In the drawing, there is a blackboard with the words, and I am learning to read. By the side, there are symbols with the words about how I can study the new words. (…)

Again, the student focussed on vocabulary and communicative chunks' learning as a key-competence to developing proficiency in the represented languages, what suggests a rather formalized way of seeing language learning. The pluricentricity of the languages is not acknowledged, and we can grasp language ideology attached to language learning, as just the European varieties of Portuguese, English, or French are visually represented. As already mentioned in relation to the interpretation of the visual narrative, this written account again reflects the importance of knowing how to learn and which strategies may be used (in this case, to facilitate vocabulary learning).

Learning Artefacts *and Individuals Supporting Language Learning*

In this section, we compare the material and human resources being represented in both contexts as constituting affordances to language learning.

Foreign Language Classrooms in Sydney

The drawings by the six-year-old participants in Sydney all had one thing in common: happy smiling children without a teacher. The two groups of students also showed very different approaches to the depiction of learning artefacts and supporting individuals. The Japanese students were provided with a worksheet with class activities in Japanese. Some of the students picked up the vocabulary and drew accordingly. They considered which learning artefacts they enjoyed most. For instance, Annie (Figure 8.5) wrote おりがみ (origami) and drew herself folding the papers into little origami animals. We could see that Annie took up the suggestions in the worksheet, which was common among the Japanese students. It may be suggested that student autonomy is only exercised in their choices of the class-based activities with which they were already familiar. As the participants were quite young, there was not a lot of reading and writing in the target language when the teacher focussed on developing the young learners' spoken and listening competences. More importantly, the school aimed to have the students feeling comfortable and confident in language learning during the first year.

As mentioned earlier, a common feature in the young learners' drawing was the lack of people. Indeed, only a very small number of drawings included other people. As shown in Figure 8.6, two other people are depicted in Madeline's drawing: a smaller figure next to her (her best friend in class) playing a hiragana card game with her in class; and a 'mysterious' long-haired figure in the lower left-hand corner (her older sister). Madeline was not of Japanese heritage and her older sister, at the

Figure 8.5 Annie's drawing (Japanese, 6 years old).

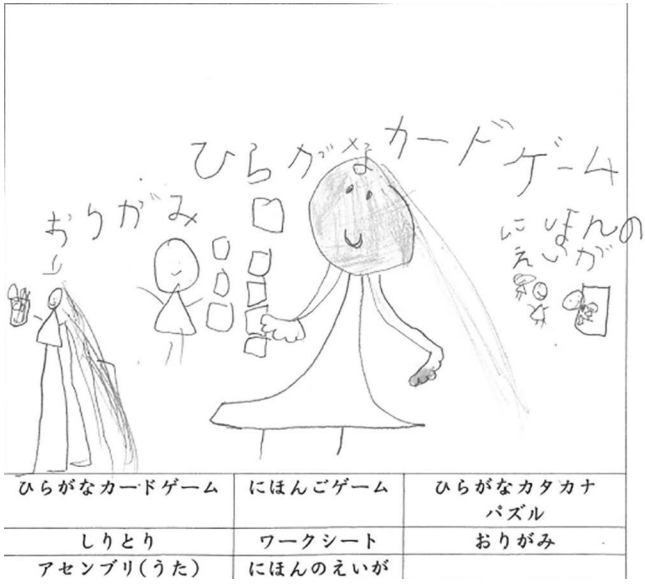

Figure 8.6 Madeline's drawing (Japanese, 6 years old).

Figure 8.7 Thomas' drawing (Japanese, 6 years old).

same school, was the only other person in her family who was learning Japanese. She explained that her sister was the only other family member who knew Japanese so she would sometimes practise her Japanese with her. Different from the French cohort, most students did have access to Japanese at home. However, a couple of students identified their older siblings as their learning partners.

In general, the students did not depict their classmates as learning partners. Somewhat unexpectedly however, some young learners nominated a cartoon character as their 'teacher'. For instance, Thomas drew Totoro, the main character from the hugely popular anime of the same title, as the teacher (Figure 8.7). He explained that it was fun to learn from the cartoon. It should be noted that Totoro, as the main character, is a non-speaking fictional creature. The anime does however include two sisters on an adventure with Totoro. Thomas was not the only student to depict Totoro in their drawing. Indeed, many of the Japanese students associated language learning with an imaginary cartoon character. In the dataset of 37 drawings, no drawing represented a classroom scenario. Occasionally a friend might be featured, but the learners were not in the same class. In addition, the Japanese students were shown doing activities that they had already done in class, only in a different environment.

Portuguese Heritage Language Education in Germany

Being autonomous does not mean being and acting alone. In fact, heritage language learners depicted a wide range of human and non-human resources that they could use to foster the learning process. Among the human resources, the teacher was assigned utmost importance, being

Figure 8.8 Niederdollendorf (LR/9 years old).

represented in leading positions and guiding the development of the learning process.

Importantly, even if the young learners drew teacher-centred classroom scenarios,[2] they also drew themselves in very active roles, if not communicating in Portuguese, at least engaged in demanding cognitive interlinguistic comparisons and plurilingual learning scenarios (Figure 8.8). In Figure 8.9, the learner at the centre was interpreted as the main subject of the narrative, with the four characters symmetrically surrounding the learner speaking four different languages (German, English, Portuguese, and French).

The young learner explained the visual narrative as follows:

Original	*English translation*
No desenho, desenhei-me a mim. Desenhei 4 professores. Com um professor aprendo português. Com um aprendo francês. Com um aprendo alemão. Com um aprendo inglês. E desenhei uma cadeira e uma mesa. E um livro.	In the drawing, I drew myself. I drew four teachers. With one teacher, I learn Portuguese. With another, I learn French. With another, I learn German. With another, I learn English. And I draw a chair and a table, and a book.

The symmetry observed in the drawing is made even more relevant by the parallel structure of the textual narrative. Each character personifies a different teacher aligned to a different language. So, different

Figure 8.9 Siebgurg (LC/12 years old).

languages – different people, in what could be the school transposition of the bilingual education strategy known as OPOL (one parent, one language).

Because the drawing activity was done in the classroom the students tended to draw a school scenario: other Portuguese pupils are represented along with the teacher, who is usually also a Portuguese citizen (and a native, we might add). In terms of resources, the young learners usually drew materials typical of the classroom. Blackboards and textbooks were the most represented elements. In most cases, these elements characterized the learning scenario and suggest the importance of being familiar with the setting for the development of learning activities.

Figure 8.10 illustrates three language learning settings (German, English, and Portuguese), displaying astonishing similarities, regarding furniture and the designed distribution of visual elements.

Differences are visible in terms of interaction patters (from what could be described as individual, tandem, and group work) and number of

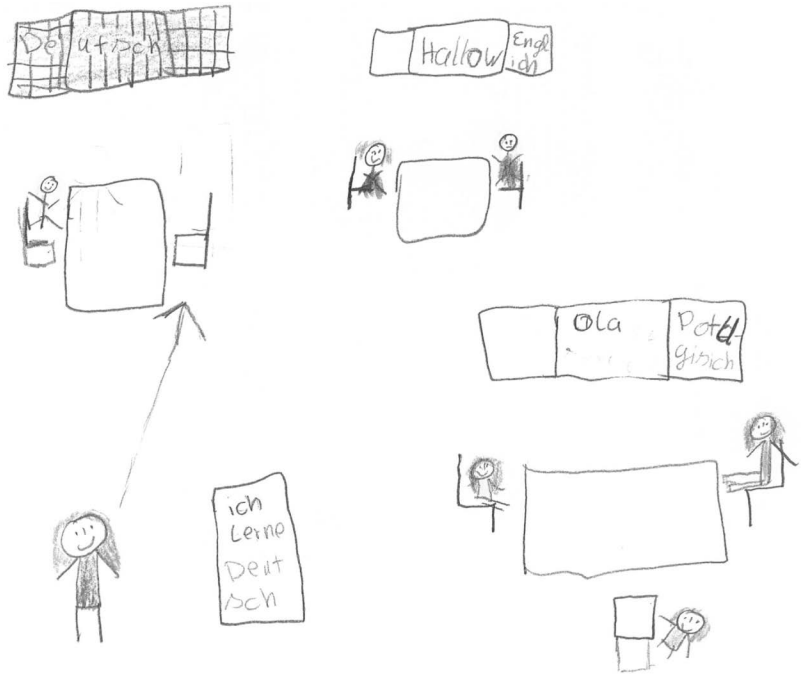

Figure 8.10 Niederdollendorf (LS/10 years old).

social actors. This is despite the different relationship the students establish with the languages and the place the school curriculum attributes to each of those languages. We could thus hypothesize that the learning scenario, as homogeneous as it may seem, may induce a learning disposition (comprising affective and cognitive engagement) necessary to develop agency and thus learning autonomy. The young learner explained the drawing as follows:

Original	*English translation*
Eu aprendi alemão na escola e em casa. Na escola aprendi alemão e inglês. Eu aprendi alemão com a minha professora e com as minhas amigas. Eu sento-me com as minhas amigas à mesa.	I have learnt German at school and at home. At the school, I learnt German and English. I have learnt German with my teacher and my friends. I sit with my friends at the table.

In the written narrative, the homogeneity is complexified by three revelations: (i) the same language (German) can be learnt in more than one space (school and home); (ii) the same space (school) can provide the

opportunity and the correspondent affordances to learn more than one language (German and English); and (iii) different actors (teacher and friends) may be involved in the learning process, thus making the interaction between formal and informal learning contexts visible.

Discussion

Throughout this chapter we analyzed the drawings of two very different groups of young learners in Australia and Germany. Notably, many insights were gained from the contrasting ways in which the learners of different year groups conceptualized autonomy in their language learning settings.

Regarding the very young group (six-year-olds) in Sydney, the drawings show the possibility of autonomous learning. This is particularly true for the French students who imagined themselves as fluent speakers in an abstract future in Paris, France. With limited access to the French-speaking communities in Sydney, the concept of autonomous use of French in Sydney is absent. For the Japanese students, autonomy in language learning appears to reside in their choices embedded in the teacher-distributed and teacher-initiated activities. It should be noted that the Japanese teacher had already provided all the activities that she thought the students could choose from. It is also quite clear that the very young learners are only beginning to develop their autonomy and have yet to develop a more concrete concept of learning itself. However, through the drawing and vocalizing process the young learners reflected on their learning experiences and their future travel plan.

In the German context, we can observe that the school context has a strong influence on the drawings produced. Indeed, the young learners tend to draw formal teaching and learning scenarios and to perceive classroom situations as having a learning potential. The young learners also appear to recognize the role of formal education in the development of literacy skills in the heritage language. In terms of both language learning strategies and processes, and of artefacts and resources, the depiction of the classroom and its environment is of paramount importance. Through the process of combining the drawings with textual narratives the learners have the opportunity to extend the meaning of their drawings. However, this is not the case as they tended to stick to the drawing elements, reinforcing the importance given to these elements.

To answer the question asked in this section, it is possible to raise awareness in the young learners of the diverse language learning strategies, scenarios, and resources in order to improve representations attached to language learning and use, and to the affordances contained in those processes. Producing and explaining the drawings in class and

the collective discussion that may follow may create collaborative situations to foster language autonomy in young learners.

Synthesis and Perspectives

The most common features among the drawings by the German young learners are the interlinguistic comparisons and the representations of other persons (pupils or teacher). Learning the heritage language is thus a learning scenario inhabited by other languages and other subjects, with both merging as resources in the language learning process. In terms of the drawing from the Australian young learners, it may be that the students are still very young and have yet to fully reflect on their language learning. They did however demonstrate a sense of what they would do outside the classroom. The French students all appeared to project an imaginary future where they are speaking fluent French in Paris; whereas, the Japanese students tended to depict their favourite classroom activities from the previous weeks. Teachers would benefit from understanding the students' learning aspirations in order to support them to become autonomous. It is also clear that the younger students would further benefit from vocalizing the language learning process as part of a reflective learning strategy.

In terms of methodology, this study demonstrated how the drawing instruction impacts the drawings produced by young learners. The young learners in the Australian context were given two different instructions and this may have influenced the elements they selected as valuable and worthy of representation. When drawing a picture of a French learning situation they chose to represent the contact with the target language and culture in "authentic" settings as situations with learning potential. When drawing the 'things' that they like in the classroom context, the young learners focussed only on the classroom setting, thus not acknowledging the other aspects contributing to Japanese learning. In the German context, the fact that the young learners were asked to draw themselves speaking the languages they know may have influenced the roles the young learners acknowledged in the interlinguistic comparison processes. In terms of research perspectives, and in order to establish how the instructions impact the production in different contexts, the same instruction could be given in different language learning scenarios (formal, non-formal, and informal), taking into account the different languages (in our case, French, Japanese, and Portuguese) and their different linguistic statuses (in our case, heritage and foreign languages). A comparative study such as this based on only one instruction would provide insights into whether the process of becoming an autonomous learner follows (or does not follow) different patterns according to the language and the different relationships the young learners establish with them.

Notes

1 Orthography corrected by the authors of the contribution to facilitate the understanding of the narratives.
2 LR didn't wrote an explanation of the drawing; instead, she made a list of the objects presented in the drawing: Blackboard, teacher, friend (Jenny), door, clock, table, chair, notebook, school bag, and window (our translation; same word order).

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9 From there to Autonomy

An Autoethnobiography of Autonomous Learning Modules

Leena Karlsson and Fergal Bradley

Prologue

In our community of autonomy, Autonomous Learning Modules (ALMS) at the University of Helsinki Language Centre, we have been telling stories from the very beginning (Karlsson, Kjisik, & Nordlund, 1997). ALMS is an English course, one of several options for students to fulfil the required foreign-language studies component of their degrees. It is also a well-established programme in higher education based on and promoting learner/teacher autonomy. In ALMS, the learner takes charge of their own learning (Holec, 1981), with the language counsellor advising, empathizing, or challenging as needed but, above all, inspiring a reflective attitude to language learning.

ALMS counsellors are a community of autonomy: a small community we formed in 1995 and committed ourselves to. These deep commitments have shaped us and provided a "template for subsequent stories" (Bruner, 2002, p. 7). Sharing stories and being attentive to the resonance of stories has been characteristic of the lives lived on our pedagogical landscape. Jerome Bruner (2002) sees the relationship between people, stories, and the groups they belong to as a crucial life-supporting force, which ALMS has been for us. In Bruner's words, "*Life* is made possible by friends and not just abstract forces. It's the small communities we join or form and the commitments we make to them that shape us" (Bruner, 2002, p. 7).

For me – Leena – this is indeed what ALMS has meant and still means: my professional and personal lives and my identity having been and still being shaped by my commitment to the community. It is indeed "the stories of who we are, where we come from and what we do" (Estefan, Caine, & Clandinin, 2016, p. 16) that sustain my practice as a counsellor and afford me a method of inquiry. This chapter arises out of the ALMS storyworld; I am part of this world and now seeking to understand and make visible its past and present. This makes me a subjective teller of the tale. I write here in the main body of this chapter in my voice, at times porous, hesitant, questioning, at others more confident. Intertwined with my tale, my colleague Fergal recounts his ALMS story

in the footnotes.[1] Together, we have termed this chapter an (autoethno) biography of ALMS, in which we elucidate the power and potential of collegial pedagogy, (collaborative) practitioner research and peer-group mentoring for developing learner/teacher autonomy, and writing *from* experience as an expression of that autonomy. We recall and recount our stories of ALMS, through our experimental academic writing, from the first published story – *From here to autonomy* (Karlsson et al., 1997) – to this chapter – 'From there to autonomy' – where ALMS is today.

A Writing-Story, Situating My Writing

In *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life*, Laurel Richardson (1997) writes "How do the specific circumstances in which we write affect what we write? How does what we write affect who we become? These are timeless and timely questions" (p. 1). These questions need to be replied to when writing is seen as inquiry (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005), when "it's all in the writing" (Bochner, 2012 p. 158). They are questions to be considered when writing research texts is done by educators, practitioner-researchers who engage in "unconventional teaching-based forms of inquiry" (Vieira, 2013, p. 257), and who write about deeply relational issues. In practice-based inquiries, methods and texts arise out of a context of practice, as if organically, not in a pre-determined order and with a pre-determined goal (Reed & Speedy, 2011). Richardson replies to these questions in and through, what she

1 I – Fergal – write here in the footnotes alongside, or more accurately below, Leena's text. We took this position for several reasons. One is to expand and complement Leena's story of ALMS, which is personal, but also a description of a course, a unit, even a movement at the University of Helsinki Language Centre. By writing a sub story in the footnotes, we want to portray some of the many voices in ALMS – those of counsellors, students and theory. Also, we wish to play with academic form, using the convention to highlight the contingency of knowledge production, as we draw attention to other stories both outside and part of the main text (Benstock, 1983). My own personal autobiography of ALMS seems to warrant a different position to that of Leena's: in the context of ALMS, it is a footnote, both a detail and an attempt to find my own voice.

Footnotes are divisive. They split the page of course, but also distinguish particular genres – the law review article, postmodern fiction – as well as dividing opinion. While Edward Gibbon and Vladimir Nabakov are said to have elevated the footnote to a work of art (Grafton, 1999; Warner, 1986), others have not been so kind. Noel Coward allegedly referred to them as "like having to go downstairs to answer the door while in the midst of lovemaking" (Grafton, 1997, p. 70), and Judge Abner J. Mikva called them an *abomination*: "If God had intended the use of footnotes to be a norm, He would have put our eyes in vertically instead of horizontally" (Mikva, 2000, p. 524). Despite the discouragement of footnotes in much of the advice to writers I encounter in my teaching and writing, we hope to harness the playful, disruptive, tangential, and multivocal (Choi, 2016) power of footnotes to widen and deepen this (autoethno)biography of ALMS.

calls, writing-stories, that is, stories of how we construct our academic texts. Behind every research text there is a writing process, a past, and a storyworld full of lived, felt and remembered stories, in the midst of which the research narrative was born and created. Koobak (2016, p. 107) points out their similarity to autoethnographic texts and quotes Richardson to explain herself:

> Similarly to autoethnographic accounts, writing stories are highly personalised and revealing texts that enable us to situate our writing in other parts of our life and to show "how contexts, social interactions, critiques, review processes, friendships, academic settings, departmental politics, embodiedness, and so on have affected the construction of the text.
>
> (Richardson, 1997, p. 191)

I, too, feel attracted to writing-stories. I believe that engaging in writing them makes the writer take a self-reflexive stand and become a critical ethnographer of the Self (Richardson, 1997). Just like autoethnographic accounts, writing-stories arise out of *self*-study; they weave the autobiographical and the cultural together. Stories, memories, and identity have their place and are made visible through the writing in both. Writing ourselves into our academic texts, however, be it autoethnography or any other 'different' experimental way of writing, is a demanding task and still a slightly contested practice. Unlearning the learned in academic writing, as Koobak points out, is not simple. Some writers, however, can become "enchanted by the simplicity of the thought that writing can in fact be an empowering methodology" (Koobak, 2016, p. 108). This has happened to me.

Here I will be looking at writing-stories as exercises in writing that, as St. Pierre points out, "one might treat [one's writing about a project] as additional data, another fold in the research process" (St. Pierre, 2002, p. 58, as cited in Koobak, 2016, p. 108). What else counts as data in this present narrative autoethnography, a small study carried out under the umbrella of (auto)biographical research? I have made use of both external data (articles and book chapters about ALMS) and personal memory data. I know from previous inquiries how personal memory data will always be partial and "shaped and reshaped according to the kind of story we seek to tell" (Choi, 2016, p. 76). When I now move to call my writing 'data' and use it in this study, I am also using my agency as a researcher to create and re-create a new text and thus, a new record of ALMS history. And to 'make' out of the data, for example, a story of collective (self-)exploration?

Documents of life (Plummer, 2001) are always troubling, disconcerting, worrying but rewarding. And what are the documents of life when we study an idea and a programme, a philosophy and an existing

community of autonomy? Who/what is ALMS? What are her documents of life? Whose story is it really? Data, indeed, are situated here and there and entangle themselves with the writer and her writing and research process. Choi (2016), using Denzin, takes up the issue of how the relationship between research products and the actual research process is crucial and how first-person narrative accounts can be useful in showing these relationships. Thus, what I have called, the turns of my research kaleidoscope are, in fact, the relationships that exist between the product, the text, and the research process. And what is this process? Writing. Choi (2016) says it clearly: "… in the kind of narrative work we are involved in, as one interrogates data, one is also creating new records of events. In autoethnography, data analysis and interpretation are interlayered, overlaid, and in many cases, happen simultaneously" (p. 69).

So, I, for my part, looked into the kaleidoscope of ALMS practice and research, and I thought through the literature, in this current time and space, as this historical being. I remembered how a pedagogy of autonomy has been collectively and individually practised and researched, and, just a bit, I imagined what could/should be explored and developed, re-created, or transformed by individuals and/or the team.[2] What did I do first? I picked up a book or two, books lost but now found again, and started (free)writing. These were texts about autonomy and experience and texts written about ALMS, texts that had mattered to me at an earlier point in time. I first picked up *Enhancing autonomy in language education* by Jiménez Raya and Vieira (2015) and re-read the foreword by Tochon. He writes about the, still missing, lingua franca of autonomy, and how we should be on the lookout, not only for a technical but moral and democratic language for autonomy. He believes we should explore more carefully what a pedagogy for autonomy could be and worry about the gap between research results and classroom

2 My introduction to the ALMS team's ecology of research and practice was the ALMS summer seminar in May, 2011. I, like the rest of the team, was assigned an article to read and report on to the group. Our reading served to open discussion on our practice as ALMS counsellors and, as I was only about to begin this, I had to consider autonomy more generally in my teaching and make connections to the relatively limited resources of research literature I was then familiar with. My article was Klaus Schwienhorst's (2009) "The art of improvisation: Learner autonomy, the learner, and (computer assisted) learning environments". The research itself was practical, immediately identifiable with: it was a story of an action research project centred on a distance-learning course. The pattern was simple – a problematic outcome in a course, followed by reflection and then a more successful second attempt. This was set within a discussion of the pedagogical principles applied and a novel analogy with jazz. The chapter blended theory and practice, as well as convention and experimentation, echoing both jazz and autonomous pedagogy. This first ALMS summer seminar set the tone of my involvement in ALMS – research engaged, reflective/reflexive, and community/practice oriented.

practices. This was the scholarly reading that made me curious about how we have been minding the gap in ALMS. We claim that ours is a culture of reflective writing and an attitude of inquiry (Larsen-Freeman, 2000); I decided to interrogate my textual data, a few published ALMS texts, on this issue.

This text, which started as (free)writing, it seems, is becoming a blend, a mixture of a writing-story, an autoethnography and a biography. I consider these emergent practices (Somerville, 2005, as cited by Davies & Gannon, 2006, p. 184); they are informed by ethical reflexivity and openness to the unknown and rely on a responsibility arising out of a commitment to a community of peers. This text looks back on more than 20 years of work, counselling practice and educational research, and individual and collective inquiries on learner/counsellor autonomy. Two pairs of biographers' eyes, myself and Fergal's, will be reading ALMS texts and evoking personal memories of the life in/of ALMS. We think of our text as a *biograph*y of ALMS and our inquiry, our writing process, might be likened to doing *collective biography*, work that brings together biographers to share memories of a shared experience and produces "a web of experiences that are at once individual, connected, collective" (Davies & Gannon, 2006, p. 18).

In her lovely essay called *Virginia Woolf's Nose*, the biographer Hermione Lee (2008, p. 28) says: "Biography is a process of making up, or making over". She talks about the difficult task biographers have of putting together a whole out of parts and "arranging it on the page". She continues: "Most biographical facts are open to interpretation … waiting to be turned into a story" (Lee, 2008, p. 28). This is what I/we hope to do.

An Afterthought to the Writing Story

I want to add one explanation to the reader about my writing. In this inquiry, I have been reading and writing *with* different scholarly texts. One writer, Hanna Ellen Guttorm, gave me the courage to keep, humbly, experimenting with a nomadic way of writing, to keep approaching my writing as inquiry and a dialogue with other texts and writers and thus coming to (partial) (not) knowing via writing. What is known in and through research is indeed shaped by the researcher (or the biographers). I became "so sure with" Guttorm (2016, p. 359) and now read, think, feel, and write with her:

> And […] I use many direct quotes that I am inspired by and at the same time show that it's not my text but a text born out of encounters with other texts. And [...] I don't, always, weave in the quote into my 'own' text. There is nothing that is only mine, and I don't need to complement what someone else wrote. I can only continue,

> move after it, go where it's possible to go. At times, I think that my reader can get lost; at other times, I take her by the hand. But I do not know if she'll take my hand…
>
> (Guttorm, 2017, p. 194, my porous translation from Finnish)

(Becoming) Papers, Articles, Book Chapters, a Biography of ALMS

I will now use my agency to restory, make over and arrange on these pages (Lee, 2008), three documents in the life of ALMS, three collectively written research texts that have emerged from the ALMS practice. I am fully aware of "biographical uncertainty" and the "relativity of biography" as well as the "investments" of my colleagues in the "biographized" (Lee, 2008, p. 28). When I think of these texts, the products of significant (narrative) inquiries, I think of the importance of the very writing of the texts, the meaning of the process for the writers, their lived experiences and identities as counsellors and practitioner-researchers. The embodied and social nature of (collective) writing is a crucial element of lived experience (Davies & Gannon, 2006). They tell the story of ALMS all in their different ways, taking different angles into our programme, focussing on the reality of tensions, concerns, challenges, and/or epiphanies in our work at the moment of their writing. Each text has had a significant effect on the actors, the characters in the ALMS story: our counsellors, students, colleagues, administration, perhaps even fellow-practitioners elsewhere. They are, in my interpretation, documents in the life of ALMS that were milestones on the road to (counsellor) autonomy for the writers: the reflective process of writing was crucial to their counsellor autonomy.[3] This interpretation, however, is "tainted" as I was one of the writers.

From Here to Autonomy (Karlsson et al., 1997) started the journey two years into working with autonomy. Seeing it on my book shelf gives me the same feeling as my old personal diaries: a text written in another life. Yet the setting described is very much my reality today: ALMS has become an established way of working with learner/counsellor autonomy in higher education. When we wrote the book, we had a naïve but a very fresh understanding of the moral, ethical, and democratic

3 Dear reader,

We were recommended in the instructions to authors for this volume to formulate questions based on our chapter to stimulate further reflection. Although we do not have a direct question, we encourage you to ethnobiographize your own relationship with autonomy. Whether this is in thought, speech, or writing, we believe it is an act of autonomy to tell and retell your own stories, confronting the *sacred* ones and realizing the *secret* ones (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Perhaps we will hear these stories someday in chapters such as these, conference presentations, conversations, or correspondence.

side of autonomy and we were looking for "a language for autonomy" (Tochon, 2015, p. xx) in writing the story. We were after a teacher's practical theory of language counselling, based on experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) and aware that we were writing *from* experience and engaged in storytelling although our narrative thinking was at a budding stage. In the book, Felicity Kjisik wrote:

> The title of this book "From Here to Autonomy" is more than just an amusing reference to a classic book. It is also intended to stand as a metaphor for the experiences of one group of teachers over several years. This could not be a book that simply described a project as if it were an off-the-cuff product, because the teachers involved felt that it was a process of personal development and historical coincidences. There were no startling revelations along the way - although there were certainly some personal moments of discovery. One of the core elements of autonomy - *reflection and self-awareness* - which we have set out to encourage in the students is also a necessary prerequisite for the teachers involved. This is why we have felt it worthwhile to tell our story from a very personal perspective as we feel sure that many teachers will recognize themselves and their experiences. Finally, it is important to add that, like with many experiential journeys, there is no end. This book simply sets out to explain where we have come from and where we are now.
>
> (Karlsson et al., 1997, p. 12)

Our research and the whole setting up the project and the ALMS programme was inspired by action-research, a form of autonomous learning that would help us develop our own (counsellor) autonomy (Benson, 2001). We were boldly telling our personal stories and recognizing the experiential and autobiographical basis of our work (Kohonen, Jaatinen, Kaikkonen, & Lehtovaara, 2001). We did not, however, recognize the general narrative quality of our work yet. It is hugely intriguing to reread this story, this collective understanding of our personal and professional narratives and see how, from the beginning, the core elements of supporting both learner/teacher autonomy were reflection and self-awareness. And that inquiry/research mattered.

The journey we started and wrote about continued: ALMS lived her life, matured, and shifted in her practices as the storyworld around it gradually changed.[4] By the time we wrote *Lifewide and lifedeep learning*

4 As my work as counsellor began, holding opening ALMS sessions and meeting students individually for counselling, so I began to integrate into the ALMS team. Regular peer group mentoring (PGM) meetings – often monthly – provided a space to discuss our practice but also to develop it through reading; discussion; and reflective,

and the autonomous learner (Karlsson & Kjisik, 2011), we had a much deeper understanding of narrative inquiry and how it can help a researcher remain ethical and self-reflexive in her work. All along, we had been taking a holistic perspective on the learners and counsellors and their autonomy; they were whole persons in their contexts and with their experiences. In our article, we wanted to show how narrative inquiry had the power to become "open-ended investigation of the ways in which learners engage with language learning in their daily lives" (Benson, 2009, p. 233). We suggested that narrative inquiry that builds a three-dimensionality into the research process (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) can give insight into the *lifelong*, *lifewide*, and *lifedeep* aspects of language learning, for us the crucial fragments in the learners' and counsellors' psychological make-up. It was also inquiry which gave us tools for exploring the reality of our students' learning *beyond* the classroom as they experienced it as embodied human beings.

In 2015 nine ALMS counsellors decided to walk in their students' reflection shoes: we wanted to make visible our positive experience of Peer Group Mentoring (Heikkinen, Jokinen, & Tynjälä, 2012) and move from our critical reflective discussions to writing and then write collectively, using our autobiographies and experiences, and our diverse voices. The resulting text *Generating visions, generating knowledge - ALMS counsellors write!* (Bradley et al., 2016) is an example of unconventional inquiry (Vieira, 2013); the reviewers felt that there were too many authors, and we were asked to think of making the experiential, reflective texts "data", not part of the main research narrative. But it was a similar experimental dialogic process that had taken place in *Stories of Practices* (Barfield & Delgado, 2013) and we defended our approach. In the conclusion, Fergal wrote:

> The experience of writing the article has been one of exploration of ourselves and our beliefs about and attitudes towards counselling and exploration of the ALMS team and PGM group's demography and personalities. While this has raised feelings of vulnerability, it has also been a positive challenge, and given us renewed insight into our practices as counsellors. Though the texts are very different in approach, these differences do not contradict or negate each other. Rather they exemplify an ecology of theme within the process, themes operating on different levels, from the personal and

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often free, writing. These were interspersed with conference reports, often with accompanying activities, many of which have found their way into our opening sessions. One example is a free writing and visualization activity where students remember experiences from their language learning pasts, reimagine those experiences, and then visualize their future English using/learning selves. There are echoes of Kramsch (2005) and Dörnyei (2009) and direct inspiration from Jessica Mackay (2015) here.

> the practical to the narrative and experiential, to the social and the psychological. Our Peer Group Mentoring Discussions have brought us closer to our work both individually and socially in the same way as ALMS students reflect in their diaries and in counselling and support groups.
>
> (Bradley et al., 2016, pp. 114–115)

In the article, we explored how we could develop a "scholarship of counselling" as a particular form of a "scholarship of pedagogy" in higher education (cf. Vieira, 2013) through our peer group mentoring discussions and collective (academic) and experimental (reflective) writing, which was true writing *from* and *with* an experience. Counsellors' professional development and research inquiry were brought together in this effort, and we felt that it became what Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014, p. 28) had called for: we created a vivid vision (of our possible future selves as counsellors), rocked the boat and spread a safety net.[5]

From T/Here to Autonomy: The Turns of (Writing Inside) the Kaleidoscope

In my doctoral thesis (Karlsson, 2008), an educational inquiry emerging out of the ALMS counselling context, I started the text with a *Dear Reader* letter, in which I warned my (academic) reader/s:

> This is a study that does not seek to be comprehensive or objective. It speaks about (E)FL as blended knowing: there are numerous theoretical, conceptual, methodological, pedagogical, genre-related

5 This publication (Bradley et al., 2016) was my first experience of writing about ALMS. It was an extension of our PGM meetings, where we wrote about counselling – our future counselling selves – but also *to* each other. Writing to each other placed our visions of counselling side by side, showing the different approaches, concerns, and frames we use to consider our work. The resulting trialogues – one counsellor wrote to two colleagues, who then wrote back, with this process then repeated, resulting in six texts – took the form of letters to each other, creating engagement and discussion throughout our group and outside the confines of PGM meetings. My role in the process also involved writing a conclusion, drawing together the three trialogues, and reading them through a more theoretical lens. It led me towards viewing ALMS through the idea of complex dynamic systems or ecologies, which helped make sense out of these multiple texts in conversation that arose from theory, practice, and our PGMs. Ideas around ecologies and complex systems have since also enhanced my understanding of autonomy itself, allowing me to see the idea of 'taking charge of one's own learning' within wider contexts: personal, institutional, and social. For me, these metaphors suggest a more nuanced vision of autonomy. Instead of a paradigm where responsibility for learning is simply passed to the student, autonomy appears more relationally, as for example "the intentional use in context of a range of interacting resources towards learning goals" (Palfreyman, 2014, p. 191).

> and metaphorical blends it touches upon. One of these blends is teaching/counselling and research. This research text is also a teaching text in the sense that it breathes both, methodologically and theoretically. It aims to produce a multi-voiced and open-ended effect without claiming to know all that much better. It uses both theoretical and practical insights, and draws on the experiences of various participants in learning encounters, but also on texts by theorists and practitioners. It uses language that is at the interface of practice and theory. It aims at understanding but not controlling and explaining away.
>
> (Karlsson, 2008, p. 1)

In the thesis, I wrote about unlearning and relearning (academic) writing, bringing it closer to the self and using it as educational inquiry. In fact, I was asking myself the same question as Guttorm (2016, p. 355) in her dissertation writing process: what happens in a research? The writing I was doing in the thesis, that is, writing *from* experience, was a way of empowering myself to "pursue and theorize autonomy" (Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015). My story of inquiry in it *was* professional development, not about it. I was taking professional development into my own hands and, simultaneously, I was developing my pedagogical research skills and narrative thinking. Writing *from* experience became an empowering process: I was not reproducing experience but exploring and recreating my commitment to my chosen community (of autonomy) and renewing my professional self/ves.[6]

I feel that my practitioner-researcher identity has been "taking turns", and each turn has been a *writing* turn, searching for a voice in and through the writing and realizing how a/the voice needs to be always

6 For me, writing and researching in ALMS has also been a process of becoming, rather than a single discovery, a process of learning how to discover. Our next joint writing project– *Parallel journeys: conceptualizing and creating learning in language counselling* (Bradley & Karlsson, 2017) – focussed on visualizing and conceptualizing learning in language counselling. Here, following Leena's lead, I found a method of inquiry that involved free writing after my counselling sessions. This process of *data collection* and *data creation* (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005) allowed me to connect my students' language learning experiences, beliefs, and practices to my own experiences, beliefs, and practices of counselling. The method forced me to reflect in writing and to document my thoughts, feelings, actions, and reactions in counselling, connecting these to theory and research. It is also a sustainable method, easily incorporated into my counselling routine.

I was left, however, with a wild, sprawling counselling diary, which I struggled to interpret. I found myself feeling around in the dark, looking to different fields of research – human geography (Bondi & Fewell, 2003) and qualitative psychology (Gilligan, 2015) – for concepts and methods to explain, or even vindicate, the work. In this, I was undergoing a similar process to many of the ALMS students, finding a way to learn and a language to talk about it.

found again. A new turn of the kaleidoscope is needed to express the autonomy as a counsellor and writer at different points in time. What is significant is the historicity of a researcher as a human being; the (life-) changing effects of events need to be accommodated in the way we work and construct our academic lives.[7] Counselling anxious learners of English has drawn me to look for ways of combining language counselling and reflective (autobiographical) writing (Karlsson, 2016) in order to support their fragile identities and autonomy as learners. They will use their written voice(s) as an expression of their autonomy when given the chance for transformative learning experiences (Bradley & Karlsson, 2017; Karlsson, 2017). This writing turn has been towards exploratory and expressive, therapeutic writing:

> …I feel more attentive than ever before to the chaos that so often follows troubling experiences, the knotted entanglements of life that can freeze our hearts, minds and bodies. Celia Hunt (2013) has used creative life writing for personal and professional development in higher education. She suggests that a dialogue, a building of a creative bridge, between reflective and experiential work through writing can lead to *transformative learning*. Transformative learning is an emotional and intellectual exercise, not only conscious reason but also a bodily-felt and emotional experience (Hunt, 2013, p. 15) and should not be thought about too narrowly.
>
> (Bradley & Karlsson, 2017)

There is no voice to be found or developed that would belong absolutely and only to oneself: identities are dialogic and relational and the best we can do is to start from our own autobiographical understandings, our lived, written, imagined, and storied lives. One thing is certain: ALMS deserves her story to be told and retold, because stories and storytelling are fundamental to her body and soul. ALMS deserves her story to be told, because we have been professionally transformed and sustained by her. Mine is an academic life in the making. As is the life of ALMS.[8]

7 In my most recent research work in ALMS, I have again reached out to other fields of study. Influenced by Leena's therapeutic turn, I used ideas from narrative-based medicine to think through my students' learning trajectories (Karlsson & Bradley, 2019). Working with language counsellors outside the ALMS programme led to me to find ideas from the sociolinguistic concept of 'new speakerness' (Bradley, 2017). These small projects have arisen from practice, from reading, from conversation, within, around and also outside of ALMS. They sustain my engagement with counselling and keep me listening to my students, each time anew.

8 In writing this text, I reached out to the field of biography. Soderqvist (1991) argues that scientific biography can be an act of resistance against objective knowledge and the power that its discourse wields. This is dependent on biography emphasizing the constructed nature of the biographical subject, being reflexive and, above all, engaging with the embodied nature of construction and reflexivity. The result, he argues,

Here I have been attempting to call her various 'selves' together. Like Virginia Woolf's Orlando, she may well have many (thousand) more.

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is ethnobiography. What we try to do here in this (autoethno)biography of ALMS is present a subjective history of a university course and some of the research that has emerged from it. Furthermore, we try to connect these to the personal stories of two ALMS practitioners, including the processes, experiences, readings, and feelings, which contribute to the whole of ALMS. This whole is of course much more than a course code on a transcript or a paper in a journal; it is part of the lives of many students and counsellors and an ecology of learner autonomy.

Writing this (autoethno)biography is too an expression of our autonomy. For us, autonomy involves resisting the idea that languages must be learned in a particular way or by focussing on particular aspects of them. We encourage our students to take decisions about their own learning and be critical of what they learn and how they learn and use the language during the course. We hope that they – like users of a lingua franca – use the knowledge they gain through experience and reflection to further communication and understanding in their own contexts using English. This is our approach to practitioner researcher in ALMS and this (autoethno)biography of it.

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10 The Changing Role of Self-Access in Fostering Learner Autonomy

Katherine Thornton

Introduction

Self-access language learning (SALL) has been an integral part of the learner autonomy movement since its inception, with early publications on autonomy making reference to the importance of providing opportunities for the individualization of language learning being facilitated through the provision of learning materials housed in a specialist centre, run by trained counsellors (Gremmo & Riley, 1995; Holec, 1981).

Since the 1970s, self-access has spread across the world from its origins in Europe, with active movements in Hong Kong, Mexico, Japan, and New Zealand, among others. Over this time, rapid changes in technologies and advances in second language acquisition research, in addition to changes in local and national educational contexts, have all influenced the evolution of self-access. This chapter takes a narrative approach to investigate this evolution and the relationship between self-access and learner autonomy at higher education institutions, tracing the ideological shifts and practical considerations which have motivated these changes, from the perspectives of three veteran SALL practitioners who have been instrumental in driving the field of SALL forward in different tertiary contexts around the world.

Literature Review

Henri Holec, Learner Autonomy and Self-Access

While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to give full details about the origins and evolution of the self- access movement (see Gremmo & Riley, 1995; Sheerin, 1991 for detailed accounts of its beginnings), a special mention must be given to the role of the CRAPEL (Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues), the research centre at Université de Nancy II (set up by Yves Chalon) of which Henri Holec was director from 1972 to 1998. The CRAPEL pioneered the concept of learner autonomy and learner-centred approaches in general, rejecting the behaviourist theories and audiolingual methods which had been

popular in the 1960s in favour of a more cognitive approach to language learning which placed the learner and their beliefs and experience at the heart of the learning process (Gremmo & Riley, 1995). If successful language learning depended on learners "determining the objectives; defining the contents and progressions; selecting methods and techniques to be used" (Holec, 1981, p. 3), among other metacognitive skills, such as monitoring and reflection, a traditional language classroom was unlikely to provide the environment for this to happen effectively. Learners needed to be able to access resources (both authentic and those designed for language learning), and in that pre-Internet time, this was done by stocking them in a resource centre, either purpose-built or often refashioned from an existing language laboratory. The learners who used the centre were supported by learning advisors (known as counsellors at the CRAPEL), whose responsibility was to "establish and manage the resource centre" (Gremmo & Riley, 1995, p. 159).

In this way, self-access was integral to the CRAPEL's view of learner autonomy (Holec, 2000, see also Gremmo & Riley, 1995), and the first clearly documented self-access centre was opened there in 1972. The CRAPEL was then involved in a number of projects which brought about an explosion in the provision of self-access in the 1990s, particularly in places such as Hong Kong and Mexico, where the construction of facilities was generously supported by government funding. At the same time, self-access and advising were also growing in the UK, with significant work being done at Cambridge University (Harding-Esch, 1982) the Bell School of Languages (Sheerin, 1989), and the University of Hull (Mozzon-McPherson, 1997).

Self-Access as a Growing Field of Professional Inquiry

Despite the existence of the CRAPEL resource centre since 1972, it was not until the late 1980s that a significant number of publications started to appear about this new field. While early articles and books defined the concept and offered advice on establishing facilities (Gardner & Miller, 1994, 1999; Gremmo & Riley, 1995; Little, 1989; 1991; Riley, 1995; Sheerin, 1989), SALL has now grown into a rigorous field of research inquiry. Several professional organizations dedicated to self-access have been established, such as the Hong Kong Association for Self-Access learning and Development (HASALD) in 1992, and somewhat later the Japan Association for Self-Access Learning (JASAL) in Japan in 2005. In 2010, an international journal dedicated to self-access learning, Studies in Self-Access Learning (SiSAL), was launched.

As centres have become more established, several researchers have undertaken surveys into SALL in their own regions, such as Gardner and Miller (1997) in Hong Kong, with a follow up 15 years later (Gardner & Miller, 2010), Anderson, Reinders and Jones-Parry in Australia and

New Zealand (2004), Dofs and Hobbs in New Zealand (2011) and Krauthaker in the UK (2017). There have also been some wide-ranging surveys which have chosen to investigate specific aspects of self-access across the world: assessment (Reinders & Lázaro, 2008), management (Gardner & Miller, 2014), SALL practitioner beliefs (Navarro, 2014), language policy (Thornton, 2018).

Learning Resources and New Technologies

So central are learning materials to the concept of self-access that early definitions, such as this one from Susan Sheerin at Bell School of Languages in Cambridge, UK, used the term to describe the resources themselves: 'Self-access' is a way of describing learning materials that is designed and organized in such a way that students can select and work on tasks on their own" (Sheerin, 1991, p. 143). The names given to centres also often reflect this emphasis. The centre at the CRAPEL was named the Sono-videothèque (Sound and Video Library) and is referred to in the literature as a "centre de ressources" (Holec, 2000, p. 7). The similar term Language Resource Centre is also widely used in a European guide to establishing SALL facilities (LRC project partners, 2003). Early literature on self-access put much emphasis on material provision and organization (Benson, 1992; Gardner & Miller, 1994; Little, 1989; Sheerin, 1991) and considerable effort went into the development of in-house materials in some contexts, although the time consuming nature of this endeavour means it is now less common, at least in Hong Kong (Gardner & Miller, 2010). Early centres would often feature audio-visual equipment such as cassette players, videos, and later satellite TV and computer software, leading Benson to comment that "because self-access centres have been enthusiastic consumers of educational technologies, self-access learning has also tended to become synonymous with technology-based learning" (2011, p. 11). Over time, many SACs have adapted to the changes that new technologies have brought, and modern centres are less likely to have a bank of computers in a room, but often offer online advising or provide access to online learning materials, either through website links or a virtual learning environment.

Perhaps ironically, it is the advances in new and particularly mobile technologies over the last 20 years, resulting in authentic texts and opportunities for interaction in any language being readily accessible to anyone with a smartphone or reliable internet connection, which have caused some to question the necessity of physical spaces for language learning (Reinders, 2012; Warrington, 2018), and have seriously threatened the existence of SACs on campuses when budgets are squeezed, notably in the UK (Krauthaker, 2017). However, SACs have never just dedicated themselves to the provision of learning resources and technology, and

should instead be recognized as much more complex learning spaces, comprising cognitive, metacognitive and social functions.

Advising

While learning resources may have been the most visible element of a self-access system, Gremmo and Riley emphasize that "the crucial element in these systems are the learner training and counselling services they offer" (1995, p. 160). Whether referred to as advising or counselling, the use of non-directive intentional reflective dialogue (Kato, 2012) and tools such as learning plans to foster autonomy in individual learners has become a defining feature of any self-access provision (Sheerin, 1991; Yamaguchi et al., 2012). For a fuller account of the evolution of advising in language learning see Mynard (this volume) and the introduction from Joan Rubin (2007) to the special issue of System dedicated to language counselling (2007). Several books have also been published which emphasize the importance of this growing field in language education (Mozzon-McPherson & Vismans, 2001; Mynard & Carson, 2012; Kato & Mynard, 2015).

Growth of Social Learning as a Focal Point of SACs

In recent years, constructivist theory and sociocultural theory have emphasized the importance of social interaction in the learning process (Vygotsky, 1978). This has led to a shift in SALL towards what have been called social learning spaces (Allhouse, 2014; Murray & Fujishima, 2013, 2016), where the emphasis is less on physical materials, but rather on the interactions which take place in a physical learning environment. Using the theory of complex dynamic systems (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) to describe such spaces, Murray (2018) emphasizes that the relationships established between different users are key affordances which in turn can give rise to further affordances leading to significant learning and personal growth. This focus on social learning has empowered some modern self-access centres to respond to criticisms that they are outdated, and brought a renewed and welcome emphasis on the importance of physical spaces for facilitating and supporting language learning.

A Narrative-based Study into Experiences of Establishing Self-Access

While accounts of best practice at individual SACs are common, less attention has been given to the personal experiences of practitioners who have championed and supported SALL over the years. One exception to this is a collection of collaborative reflections on autonomy

practices (Barfield & Alvarado, 2013) which featured three chapters on self-access, one of which I was involved in (Thornton, Nurjanova, & Tassinari, 2013). A recent longitudinal ethnographic study conducted by Garold Murray, Naomi Fujishima and colleagues at their "L-café" in Japan has also resulted in a collection of stakeholder narratives, from administrators to students, which paint a rich picture of the life of one learning space (Murray & Fujishima, 2016).

This study uses interviews and subjects them to a narrative analysis (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014) to focus on the trajectories of three self-access practitioners working in different countries around the world and through their experiences, the evolution of the SACs they have been involved in.

Three colleagues who have all been involved in self-access in tertiary education since the 1990s, agreed to be interviewed for this project: Marina Mozzon-McPherson in the UK, David Gardner in Hong Kong, and Jo Mynard in Japan. An initial review of the literature was conducted to establish the main themes to be covered in the interviews in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the self-access environment of each participant, and the following research questions were decided upon:

- How has the self-access environment changed over the years that the participants have been involved in self-access?
- To what do they attribute those changes?
- Has their understanding of learner autonomy changed over time and if so, in what ways?
- What do they consider to be the future innovations and challenges self-access will face in the coming years?

A preliminary interview schedule was written up and shared with participants in advance of the interview. Two interviews took place over Skype, and one face-to-face. On reading a first draft of this paper, all participants agreed to be named.

Data Analysis

The original interview data were subjected first to a content analysis to uncover major themes and then to a narrative developed to include the core features of each practitioner's account, and the story of the SACs and wider SALL fields with which they have been associated. These narratives were then returned to the participants for confirmation and revision, and then edited for length for inclusion in this chapter. Barkhuizen, Benson and Chik refer to this use of interview data to form a narrative account as narrative analysis (2014). While the narratives, as presented in this chapter, are necessarily quite short, the discussion which follows

uses data from the actual interviews to further elaborate on the themes detected.

I hope that these accounts will help readers involved in self-access to reflect on their own journeys and that of their SACs, and identify key themes in their own development as practitioners, while giving those not so familiar with self-access an appreciation of the complexity of the role of SALL coordinator or director, which is often underestimated (Gardner, 2017).

The Participants and Their SACs

Marina Mozzon-McPherson in the UK

Marina Mozzon-McPherson was one of the earliest learning advisors working in the UK, and has developed her career offering advising and tailored support programmes for university language learners taking on a number of management roles at the University of Hull, UK, since the early 1990s. The self-access centre at Hull catered for over 60 languages, both those taught as degree courses and others, and was considered both an extension and an expansion of the classroom and a learning space in its own right for those using it independent of courses. The centre was also open to the local community through a membership scheme. Strong links were forged between the SAC and the teaching staff in both modern languages departments and EFL (at the time, most research on learner autonomy was primarily arising from EFL practices).

When Marina joined the organization, the University of Hull was a national CALL centre and the SAC had been upgraded with new technology (language learning software on the university intranet, CD-ROMs and other materials), with the expectation that new technologies would be at the heart of the language learning process. The learning advisor position was intended to strengthen this link and promote learner-centred approaches to empower learners to develop skills and strategies for their own life-long language learning. As her pioneering work in advising at Hull gained national recognition, thanks to the results of a positive Teaching and Quality Assessment Exercise of Modern Languages, she was able to use the profile this afforded to obtain government funding for a three-year project to investigate and support the establishment and integration of advising across the UK and Northern Ireland. In part as a result of this project, the number of advisors across the region grew from two in 1993 to 35 in 2001, six of whom worked either full or part-time at Marina's institution.

As the climate in the UK became less favourable for modern foreign languages from around 2005, due to changes in school curricula, which have resulted in reduced emphasis on learning foreign languages in high school and fewer applications for modern languages degrees, through

the respect afforded by Marina's evidence-based approach Hull was able to present advising and support for language learning as its unique selling point (USP) to potential students and so continued to grow and receive support within the institution. However, further changes in the way that universities are funded, namely a huge increase in tuition fees from 2014, has resulted in a more market-driven view of students as consumers, and focussed attention on financial costs. Alongside, advances in mobile and open source technologies have also made it increasingly difficult to justify a dedicated space for language learning on campus. These challenges affected Marina's SAC amidst a process of reorganization and realignment of subject areas. As a result, in 2016 the dedicated self-access space was integrated into the library facilities, as a transitionary measure. This has forced a rethinking in how SALL can best contribute to the goals of the institution. Marina feels that advising is well-placed to move from its original focus on language learning into academic advising and well-being, which is where her own research is now focussing (Mozzon-McPherson, 2017a, 2019).

David Gardner in Hong Kong

David Gardner has been involved in SALL since he started a new position at a language centre at Hong Kong University (HKU) in the early 1990s to find a quasi-self-access centre already in place. At that time, generous government funding was being made available to universities in Hong Kong for independent learning and there was a growing interest in SACs. Over the following years a number of centres opened across the territory. Teachers and researchers in different institutions were interested in learning more about self-access and learner autonomy, and worked collaboratively, visiting and learning from each other, and from established self-access facilities in Europe such as the CRAPEL. From this collaboration emerged the first professional organization dedicated to self-access, HASALD (Hong Kong Association for Self-Access Learning and Development), of which David was a founding member. Hong Kong fast became known across East Asia for its expertise in self-access.

As they learned more about self-access from these sources and from their own experiments with it, David and colleagues, in particular Lindsay Miller at the City University of Hong Kong, began to place more emphasis on providing support for autonomy, including the introduction of an advisory service. Over several years, David was the coordinator of the self-access centre and oversaw the evolution of the space from having a focus on language practice to being a place where learners could, as Holec said "take charge of one's learning" (1981, p. 3). As centres became more established across Hong Kong, David, Lindsay, and colleagues across the institutions started focussing more rigorously on research into self-access initiatives. David welcomed this more

research-informed approach, and, despite no longer being involved in running self-access on a day-to-day basis, has continued to support this through involvement in research projects and reviewing and editing for journals. He has written and edited several books on self-access, often with Lindsay Miller.

The size and location of the self-access facilities at HKU has varied greatly over the years. These changes have been driven by a combination of factors, with the language centre staff having a significant amount of control over the process. As the university campus expanded a decision was taken to add self-access facilities to new buildings, so at one stage the institution had three different SACs. All these centres were managed by language centre staff, and eventually it was decided that it was not sustainable to keep them all. The two smaller centres were given back and the biggest and most successful centre was retained.

When the department moved into a new building, the SAC shrank to fit into the provided space. However, in David's view, largely down to an inconvenient location, this new SAC was never very successful. The then coordinator was able to collaborate effectively with the staff of the larger Learning Commons, an all-purpose facility incorporating library services, study and meeting areas, which had opened in a more central location on campus, and now the self-access facilities are housed as part of the Learning Commons. While some decision-making autonomy has been lost through integration, David feels the centre has really thrived in this more central environment.

Jo Mynard in Japan (via the United Arab Emirates)

Jo Mynard first officially encountered the fields of learner autonomy and self-access in her Master's programme at Trinity College, Dublin, in 1996–1997. Her studies there gave her the confidence that the instinctive desire she had had to provide more opportunities for students to personalize their language practice was supported by pedagogical theory. As a student she worked in the SAC at Trinity, and although the role was largely administrative, she found herself implementing the knowledge she was acquiring in her M. Phil. postgraduate qualification by advising other learners.

Her next opportunity came when she was working at a women's university in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) several years later. UAE government policy directed that Independent Learning Centres were to be established at all universities, and when the facilities on Jo's campus were built, she applied for and was appointed to the job of coordinator, which included all aspects of first establishing and then running the centre. She got involved in the professional networks available through TESOL Arabia and IATEFL, and soon made close connections with like-minded colleagues, visiting other centres and hosting events. Learner autonomy

was a key tenet of the self-access centre under the four years she managed it, before she moved to Japan in 2005.

Although initially excited to hear that there were self-access facilities at her new institution in Japan, Jo was disappointed to learn that the SAC there did not support autonomous learning, and was run by library staff with no background in autonomy or language learning pedagogy. Students were required to work on language materials far above their current level in the SAC, and, despite having a full teaching load and no official self-access responsibilities, Jo and some colleagues felt so sorry for students that they started making self-access worksheets, to make the students' time in the SAC more effective and enjoyable.

Through her learner autonomy network connections Jo became aware of the self-access facilities at Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS) in Japan, where she would eventually take the job as director when its founding director, Lucy Cooker, moved on. This SAC had started as an initiative from Lucy, who had a strong belief in learner autonomy and self-access, who wanted to provide support for learning outside the classroom. Originally housed in two classrooms, it was one of the first SACs in Japan, and its popularity in its early years led to a purpose-built centre being built in 2003. Jo took over the role of director of this SAC in 2008 and has overseen its further expansion since then. The university management has recognized the value of self-access facilities and advising and, owing to the visibility of the SAC, has been able to market it with prospective students as the institution's unique selling point. This willingness to invest in state of the art facilities has continued, and a new two-storey building has recently been designed and constructed for this purpose.

The SAC's original founder strongly championed the importance of a learning advisory service for effective autonomous learning. Since its early years, a curriculum aimed at fostering self-directed learning skills, run by advisors in the SAC, and more recently as classroom-based courses, has been in place. The SAC curriculum has also been a focal point of Jo's tenure as director, and she has always placed strong emphasis on collaborative research, leading to a much more systematic approach to curriculum development and evaluation, through multiple projects, which often bring learning advisors and teachers together. Her advocacy in this area has led to the establishment of the Research Institute for Learner Autonomy in Education (RILAE) at KUIS, of which Jo is the director.

Discussion

In the following section, a number of the key themes from the interviews will be explored, to make comparisons and draw parallels between the

experiences of the three practitioners, and highlight the changes that have taken place in the field in the last 40 years.

Technology as a Double-Edged Sword

In the early years of self-access, new learning technologies played a pivotal role in the establishment of physical self-access centres. The advisor position that Marina first took had been created to facilitate effective use of the state-of-the-art CALL facilities that the university had invested in. CALL software was provided on computers in the SAC, and satellite TV provided access to authentic audio-visual input. For many years all these things could only take place in a physical SAC, but recent advances in mobile technologies mean that anyone can access video content from all over the world and connect with speakers of the languages they are learning from their smartphones or laptops. This has led to a huge increase in virtual self-access, with most centres, including the ones featured in this chapter now offering online content, either produced in-house or via links to freely available software and websites. David states that "technology and self access always seem to go together and now virtual self access plays a larger part than ever before, […], it's outgrown the physical resources" and suggests that this has made managing SALL more difficult, as it is no longer only focussed on a physical space. However, he welcomes the shift in emphasis he has observed from simply encouraging learners to use the physical SAC to reflection and how to help them effectively exploit the vast amount of materials available to them, both physical and online. In Marina's case, while she sees huge potential in social networks and digital learning, the very technology which created the need for her position has now contributed to the decision to integrate SALL facilities into the library. However, she states that it has also led to a healthy questioning of the role of advising and how best it can play an effective role in student's personal growth of learners, and a renewed appreciation of self-access among teachers and students who have rallied together as services have been threatened.

Target Language Practice as a Starting Point for SALL

Examining the interviews and producing the narratives has focused my attention on the connections between autonomy, language practice and resources. Whereas the literature on self-access has tended to focus on the provision and exploitation of learning and authentic materials, and technologies which provide access to them, Marina states that "the technology was one part but it became a very modest part of it. It was just one element". From the narratives it is clear that language practice itself was a driving factor in the establishment of some self-access facilities. Both David and Jo spoke of their initial experiences of a form

of self-access arising from a desire to provide students with language practice opportunities, and both took initiatives to facilitate this. Prior to being involved in self-access in Hong Kong, when working in the UK, David had brought students together in a language lab to practice English, and before the SAC was established at her institution in UAE, Jo and colleagues had put together a make-shift SAC with spare materials in an empty classroom. The initial name of the SAC at HKU was the Practice Lab. While much of the literature on SALL focusses on learning resources themselves, this emphasis on the purpose of many materials, language practice, is sometimes overlooked in the literature. Little's concept of autonomy (2007, 2015) is very much linked to giving students opportunities to both interact and reflect in the target language, and this is particularly important in foreign language environments where learners have little chance to use their skills outside the classroom. In such contexts, provision of target language practice opportunities is a strong driving force for development, as can be seen in the current growth of SACs in Japan (Mynard, 2016, 2019a, 2019b) and the persistence of English-only language policies in some facilities (Thornton, 2018). However, Castillo uses the term "practice center" to refer to facilities in Mexico which take a more teaching-oriented view rather than facilitating the development of autonomy, in her collaborative reflection with fellow self-access practitioners (Castillo, Hobbs, & Athanasiou, 2013, p. 229). This indicates that while it may be the starting point that convinces institutions to invest, we must be careful that language practice does not become the sole focus of a SAC.

Murray and Fujishima (2016) see the social interaction which takes place in a SAC or a social learning space as much more than just language practice, however, and the case studies featured in their book illustrate how social interaction facilitates intercultural communication, stimulates motivation and helps people form strong relationships and new identities as language users. David is unsure, however, whether this model of self-access would work in Hong Kong, where students often seem reluctant to learn from each other, preferring the expertise of a teacher or advisor.

Advising as a Unique Selling Point (USP)

When asked what turned the initial Practice Lab into a "proper" self-access centre, David cites the introduction of "people", especially in the form of advisors, as a major turning point. Both Marina and Jo credit the presence and strong promotion of learning advisory services as their institutions' unique selling point, which, in turn, helped them to attract potential students and gain the respect and support of leadership teams, resulting in being able to expand services, even when the general climate in the country was to downsize, as in Marina's case. It is clear from these

practitioners' experiences that not only is advising crucial for fostering autonomy among self-access users, but it is also a powerful tool, when well evidenced, which can make a valuable contribution to overall university promotion and admissions.

Emphasis on Evidence-based Inquiry

Another factor which has facilitated the expansion of SACs and advising services is the deliberate emphasis on research and evidence-based practice, and strong theoretical underpinning to their SALL provision. This has been a strong feature of self-access from its inception at the CRAPEL, itself a research centre rather than an academic teaching department. Marina's large-scale externally funded research project raised the profile of advising practices in the UK, leading to a huge increase in the number of advisors. David has been involved in SALL research projects looking at practices in multiple SACs, often with Lindsay Miller, for many years. Collaborative research is a large component of the learning advisor role at Jo's current institution, but not content with supporting this culture only within her own institution, the institute Jo has established is designed to become a global hub to coordinate research into self-access learning, autonomy and advising.

Professional Networks

Connected to the emphasis on research-driven group is the importance of professional networks which all three practitioners made reference to, either having been involved in or setting up themselves, particularly in their early days. Marina and David both mention the role the CRAPEL played in informing their thinking and sharing best practice, and Jo emphasizes the role different learner autonomy groups have played for her both in setting up the UAE SAC and for keeping her involved when she was not directly working in SALL in Japan, stating that "it becomes part of your professional identity". Indeed, her IATEFL connection indirectly led to her assuming her current role. Through the government funding she received, Marina was able to build an informal network of advisors, and David was involved in establishing the HASALD organization with colleagues from all across Hong Kong.

Like-Minded Colleagues

All interviewees made reference to the importance of having like-minded colleagues across the institution, and the key role that dedicated staff have played in driving SALL initiatives, whether in a SAC or as part of classroom curricula. At Hull, language teachers were keen to collaborate with the SAC, especially those working in less popular languages which

had fewer physical materials. Teachers have also recently been supportive in helping sustain SALL activities from the new location in the library. David attributes the initial growth of self-access in Hong Kong to the presence of "a lot of like-minded people, [...] a lot of money and a lot of people just happened to be at the same place at the same time", and, more recently, the successful move into the Learning Commons to the collaborative relationship between the SALL coordinator and Learning Commons staff. Collaboration has also been a central tenet of Jo's working style: "I think I came to realise just by doing it that involving many other people [...] in the centre made sense, and now I always try to get that to happen, doing the research and materials creation".

In many cases, both SALL coordinators and the teams who work with them have had very little training provided by the organization. All practitioners referred to training which was mostly self-initiated: reading, visiting other centres and getting involved in professional networks. All three have had to balance management and administrative duties with student-focussed teaching or advising, and research. While Jo and Marina have had dedicated self-access roles as advisors, at HKU coordinators were expected to run the SAC with only a small reduction to full-time teaching duties. The development of the field has relied on dedicated and passionate individuals who often do not get the recognition they deserve. As David states, "we've all just been really lucky that the people who have got involved have been willing to work hard and learn how to do this as they go along, with very little training".

Bottom-Up Development

Maybe owing to the nature of the middle-management role that self-access directors usually find themselves in (Gardner & Miller, 2014), innovations in self-access have often been instigated by dedicated teachers and advisors, and programmes have tended to grow organically in a bottom-up style, rather than being prescribed from above.

While there was no official link between her SAC and department curricula, Marina worked hard to forge links with teachers in both EFL and modern foreign language departments at Hull, and developed tailor-made programmes to support their needs. David emphasizes that while there was reference to linking the SAC to the classroom in official policy at HKU, in practice it was often the initiative of individual teachers who determined the degree to which this happened. Over the years, the self-directed learning curriculum at KUIS has gone from being an entirely stand-alone project run by the SAC, to having a learning advisor involved with the English curriculum development board to determine how elements of the SDL learning outcomes can be delivered in mainstream classes. In Hong Kong, while large amount of government funding was available, it was the teachers themselves in different institutions

who made the successful argument for this to be channelled into self-access, and the language centre staff have been able to exercise a good deal of control over the establishment and location of SAC facilities over the years, without undue pressure from upper management. Marina emphasizes the importance of alignment between the goals of the SALL programmes and the direction of the university management, highlighting the importance of an "ambassador" to make sure "your voice is heard at all levels".

Understanding of Learner Autonomy

When asked whether their understanding of the concept of learner autonomy had changed over the years, all three practitioners stated that they thought that the fundamental philosophy was sound, and their understanding of the basic principles was the same "since Henri Holec wrote it, David Little reinforced it and Phil Benson fine-tuned it", as David said. Marina spoke of a change in emphasis, initially from individualization of learning to the importance of interdependence, and the recent interest in emotions and the influence of positive psychology but states that "the learner is always at the centre" (Mozzon-McPherson, 2017b, 2019). David refers to a greater appreciation of the complexity of autonomy, especially of the difficulty of actually facilitating it, and especially of getting teachers on board. Jo is taking a growing interest in the field on self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which she has always been aware of, but is now beginning to rethink her approach to autonomy in light of the volume of data driven research which has been done in this field. This has already resulted in some published research studies (Mynard, 2019a, 2019b, this volume; Mynard & Shelton-Strong, 2019).

The Future of Self-Access? Innovations and Challenges

When asked about potential future innovations in the field, all three practitioners mentioned new technologies, although a number of challenges that these may bring were also mentioned. Jo mentions the potential big data have for facilitating aspects of SALL such as needs analysis and evaluation, but feels daunted by the amount of data which may become available for analysis and how to approach it, given issues of privacy and data protection. David is excited by the possibilities represented by new technologies but emphasized how difficult it can be for learners to know how to effectively exploit the affordances provided by YouTube or TV streaming services with foreign language content. He highlighted the ever important role of advising and classroom-based curricula dedicated to developing autonomous learning skills.

Considering the situation in the UK, Marina sees the re-emergence of advising after a period of downsizing, but in a way which is more integrated into the curriculum. She sees the potential for advising to be utilized more broadly, not just in language learning but as a way to promote student well-being and academic skills (Mozzon-McPherson, 2019), something she sees as sorely needed in a context faced with a growing culture of dependency, as education is seen as a product students are buying and expected to be provided with: "It could make languages the hub where good practice starts".

Jo points to the great work being done by dedicated people at a number of small SACs in Japan but worries that these centres lack investment. As more centres open, she emphasizes the importance of sound pedagogical principles for their practice, concerned about institutions "opening centres without knowing what they're doing and giving us all a bad name", which could affect investment in the field as a whole.

David sees great potential in the increasing internationalization of Hong Kong campuses, providing possibilities for students to meet and use languages with people all over the world, although it can be challenging to encourage different language groups to mix. Similarly, Jo is keen to support the growing social learning communities approach to self-access in Japan.

Conclusions

This chapter has used the experiences of three SALL practitioners who have been instrumental in advancing the field of self-access to analyze the major issues which have faced the field over the years, and how the field has changed. Although the narratives focus predominantly on the institutions at which the practitioners work, they all shared knowledge of the wider context in their regions. While SALL is a growing field in Japan as more institutions are opening SACs as a way to compete for an ever-decreasing pool of students due to the declining birth-rate, financial pressures and less emphasis on modern language education means SACs in the UK increasingly have to fight for space, staff or even their very existence. Modern technologies have always played a central role in SALL, but as the computers and CALL programmes which made up a prominent part of early SACs have given way to the Internet and mobile devices, SALL managers have had to find other ways to justify the space given to their facilities. This has coincided with a greater focus on the importance of the social dimension of learner autonomy, giving rise to SACs being reconceptualized as social learning spaces, with a renewed focus on language practice between learners.

SALL still has an important role to play in the fostering of learner autonomy, particularly in the provision of learning advisory services, which

have potential to play a greater role in enhancing student experiences of higher education. While more support for SALL practitioners, especially in the form of proper training for SALL coordinators and recognition of their hard work, is still needed, the growing professionalization of the field means that newcomers to SALL are able to draw on a wide body of expertise, and, in many contexts, supportive local networks. This is in many ways thanks to the dedication that all three of the participants in this study, and many of their colleagues, have shown over the years.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to the three research participants who were very generous with their time not only in the original interviews but also in reviewing and fact-checking earlier versions of this paper.

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11 Self-Access Language Centres

Practices and Research Perspectives

Maria Giovanna Tassinari and José Javier Martos Ramos

Introduction

In the last four decades, self-access language centres (SALCs[1]) have been established as learning environments providing learners with materials and resources, learning support, and opportunities for social learning. Over the decades, their provision and their role have been evolving according to developments in technology and in language pedagogy. Although some scholars warn that self-access language learning (SALL) alone does not foster autonomy (Sheerin, 1997), SALCs are mostly dedicated to providing learners with conditions that facilitate their pathway towards (more) autonomous learning behaviours: welcoming spaces, access to a wide range of learning and authentic materials for different proficiency levels, guidance through staff, study guides, tutors and/or language learning advisors, opportunities for interactions with native speakers and for social learning.

Since their very beginnings at the CRAPEL, Université de Nancy (now Université de Lorraine), the development of SALC facilities has been tightly intertwined with research on principles and pedagogical approaches for SALCs and SALL, their impact on learners and learning gains, as well as learners' and teachers' perceptions of SALCs and SALL, just to mention some topics. Thus, the literature on SALCs and SALL is often practice-oriented, describing and reflecting on experience, and defining criteria for establishing SALCs (a milestone being Gardner and Miller's *Establishing self-access*, 1999), adapting and creating materials (Reinders & Lewis, 2006), developing forms of learner support, such as strategy training (Dickinson, 1992), language learning advising (Kato & Mynard, 2016; Kelly, 1996; Mozzon-McPherson & Vismans, 2001; Mynard & Carson, 2012), tutoring (Bleistein & Lewis, 2015), or social learning.

On the other hand, research on SALCs has been evolving following – and sometimes anticipating – trends in research on second language acquisition (SLA), integrating perspectives from other disciplines such as learning theories, psychology, sociocultural theory, or neurosciences.

In the present chapter, we attempt to give an overview of research and reflection on SALC practice. Since it is impossible to discuss the wide range of publications, books, articles, series, and reviews published in the last decades, our account will necessarily be partial, both in the choice of topics and in the geographical scope we will be designing. After a brief historical overview, we will illustrate how self-access contributed to shape new roles in language education for teachers, learners, advisors and SALC managers. We will then illustrate practice and research on language learning advising, and language learning processes focussing on learners' affective aspects in SALL. Furthermore, we will discuss criteria and methods for investigating the impact of SALC on the learners' language proficiency and autonomy, and to evaluate the SALC overall provision. Finally, we will concentrate on recent development in research and practice, focussing on space and place in SALCs and on the role of SALCs as part of multiple learning environments.

The Beginnings: CRAPEL, Self-Access Language Learning and Autonomy

As one of the first SALC in a university context in the 1970s, the CRAPEL (*Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues*) was explicitly committed both to pedagogical practice and research. Its pioneering development was accompanied by research on self-directed language learning, support of this new mode of learning, and sociocultural aspects of (adult) language learning. *Mélanges Pédagogiques* (now *Mélanges CRAPEL*), which started its publications in 1970, was the first scientific journal to address these research topics. In the 1970s and 1980s CRAPEL's lines of investigation were mainly characterized on the one hand by an interest in the potential and/or the pitfalls of language labs, audio-visual media, technology for language learning; on the other, research focussed upon the role of authentic materiañs, discourse and communication within the language learning process. Besides these topics, experimentation, reflection and research on self-directed learning and support for this learning mode were at the core of CRAPEL's publications (see, among others, Cembalo & Holec, 1973; Henner Stanchina, 1976). Seminal work was done also on design, organization of resources, and advising in SALCs (*Mélanges* 22, 1995).

From the CRAPEL and in cooperation with other pioneer institutions, such as the Language Centre of the University of Cambridge (Esch, 1994), SALCs started to develop in Europe and beyond. In Greece, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Mexico, Brasil, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, and Japan SALCs were established, either by the initiative of single scholars, or fostered by educational policies (such as in Hong-Kong or Mexico; see Fabela Cárdenas, 2014). Associations and networks were founded and still work to exchange experience and research on

self-directed learning as a central aspect of learner autonomy: among others, JASAL (Japan Association for Self-Access Learning, https://jasalorg.com/), HASALD (The Hong Kong Association for Self-Access Learning and Development, https://hasald.wordpress.com/), the Independent Learning Association (http://www.independentlearning.org), the AILA Research Network on Learner Autonomy (http://renautonomy.wordpress.com), LASIG (Learner Autonomy Special Interest Group of IATEFL, https://lasig.iatefl.org/), or RILAE (Research Institute for Learner Autonomy Education, https://kuis.kandagaigo.ac.jp/rilae/).

Exploring Roles in Self-Access: Learners, Teachers, and Managers

As Gardner (2011, p. 186), Tassinari (2014, p. 269) and Mynard and Stevenson (2017) show, in their years of existence since the late 1970s, SALCs have proved to be very dynamic institutions and have made – and continue to make – an enormous effort to adapt to the needs of society and the changing demands. From being spaces that users approached to have contact with the target language and culture, "self-contained islands of language learning tranquillity with few connections to taught courses or the outside world" (Gardner, 2017, p. 151), SALCS have become places where learners come with different purposes: to learn after class, meet peers, find a learning community, and/or find support for learning. As expected, this change logically affects all parties involved in a SALC: the resources, the link between classroom learning and SALL, the profiles and behaviour of learners, the function of SALC managers, the roles of teachers, advisors and tutors (Gardner 2011; Tassinari, 2014).

The SALC Manager

One of the roles which has become more and more complex over time is the role of the manager, a key one to a successful SALC (Gardner, 2011). If in the very beginnings the manager's task was mainly to provide appropriate materials for learners, nowadays, their task is to ensure that the SALC offers manifold opportunities for fostering autonomous learning in the SALC itself and beyond, in multiple learning environments. To reach this objective, managers need to plan, organize, and oversee not only the SALC resources, but also the learning support, ensuring that links are made between learning in the SALC and outside the SALC. This implies diverse tasks such as (i) dealing with materials, activities and equipment of the SALC; (ii) dealing with learners, offering them advice and support in any of the forms provided by the SALC; (iii) dealing with teachers and SALC staff, helping "new staff see the importance of learner control, choice and reflection", ensuring that SALC "staff are

working to common goals", "providing training for teachers of courses with a self-access component"; and (iv) dealing with senior managers, "reporting progress to senior managers" and ensuring that "positive decisions about the SAC and self-access learning are incorporated into policy" (Gardner, 2011, p. 196).

Mynard and Stevenson (2017, p. 169) emphasize further organizational and institutional tasks such as policy making, advertising or liaising with other departments within an institution. Gardner (2011, 2017) notes indeed that, beside the increased provision of materials, resources and learner support, one of the more relevant changes in SALCs has been integrating self-access into taught courses, which has led to the need of interaction between the SALC and courses, for example, negotiating with course developers to ensure that the link between classroom learning and the SALC works. This is one relevant change that affects SALCs. A second major change has been the incorporation of the internet as an educational tool. More and more, the online provision of SALCs represents a greater percentage of the resources made available to learners. Thus, SALC managers must face the evolution of societal change in order to adapt the SALC facility to changing needs.

Learners

According to Madrid and Castillo (2017), although conditions and circumstances have changed, the main reasons why a learner goes to a SALC today remain the same as in the 1970s: to learn or improve a target language, generally as a complement to formal class. Some of them learn at the SALC on a voluntary basis, for some others learning at the SALC is compulsory. Since they may have different proficiency levels, and also different degrees of autonomy, one of the major challenges for SALC staff is to identify learners' needs and to provide adequate support both for less experienced learners, who are not familiar with SALL and autonomous language learning, and for more experienced SALC users.

Supporting learners in SALCs may entail guidance for SALL, strategy training, tools for self-assessment, planning, reflection, or activities (Gardner, 2011, pp. 190–192). In addition, SALCs may help students to build learning communities, maximizing opportunities for social learning, to achieve their language learning and other goals, and to become more confident language users (Mynard & Stevenson, 2017). Thus, learner support has become increasingly complex, addressing several dimensions of autonomy – technical, cognitive, metacognitive, affective, psychological and social dimensions.

Research on learners in SALCs deals with learners' perception of SALL, learning gain, both in terms of language learning and of learning to learn, learner autonomy and agency, learning within social communities, as well as individual aspects of learning. Learners who use SALC as

an optional choice are in general intrinsically motivated, while learners who have SALL as a course component may show more reactive than proactive autonomy (Detarami & Chan, 1999; Koyalan, 2009). Experiences with credit-based, self-directed learning programmes show that learners often take advantage of learning support, such as advising, and appreciate the freedom they are given (Victori, 2007). If at the beginning their room for manoeuvre was mainly in the individual management of their learning process (Holec, 1987), the increasing focus on social forms of learning gives them the opportunity to exercise their agency in initiating and co-constructing learning communities.

Teachers

Teachers' role in SALCs also deserves some reflection. According to institutional requirements some teachers may be directly involved in SALC work as part of their tasks, providing workshops, tutoring, or assuming the role of language learning advisors. In other institutions, instead, teachers' tasks may be restricted to classroom teaching thus contributing to make teachers rather unfamiliar or even suspicious towards the SALC provision. In any case, in order to integrate a SALC into the institution, the relationship between teachers and SALC needs to be carefully considered. Gardner (2011, p. 199) identifies three kinds of teachers: (i) those who have no relationship with the SALC; (ii) those who have implemented autonomous learning practices in their classes; and (iii) those who have some relationship with the SALC. Offering a service to all groups of teachers is certainly a challenge for SALC managers. To be actively involved in using and/or working in the SALC, teachers have to understand and share its objectives.

Some SALCs explicitly aim at encouraging learner and teacher autonomy (Tassinari, 2017). Indeed, teachers may need support in organizing their students' out-of-class workload and, more generally, fostering their autonomy (Tassinari, 2017, pp. 195–196). Support for teachers can consist of training on issues related to teacher and learner autonomy, individual advice on projects, opportunities to reflect on the teaching practice, share experiences, and experiment and reflect on how to promote autonomy in language learning.

As mentioned above, teachers' attitude towards SALCs may be contradictory. In her ethnographic study Clemente (2001) investigated teachers' attitudes and perceptions of their work as advisors[2] in a self-directed learning scheme in Oaxaca. Within an already existing Language Centre with a faculty composed by senior teachers, partly founders of the Language Centre itself, the innovation represented by the SALC had a negative impact on the attitudes of the teachers involved: some of them were sceptical about the principles guiding the SALC, distrusted the students' capacity to carry out self-directed learning, and were anxious

about their competence as advisors. Although these attitudes were the consequence of specific "contextual elements and circumstances", linked to the changes introduced in the structure of the Language Centre and in the teachers' role while implementing the self-directed learning scheme, Clemente draws some overall implications for teachers and advisor training for SALC work: teachers working at a SALC "face a different situation from teachers working in a classroom" (Clemente, 2001, p. 55), and particular attention should be paid to supporting their professional development in new learning environments and functions.

Language Learning Advising

As for SALCs, research and development in the field of language learning advising (ALL) are strictly related. The first contributions in the literature focus on defining functions of ALL, highlighting the main differences between ALL and teaching (among others, Carette & Castillo, 2004; Gremmo, 1995; Kelly, 1996; Mozzon-McPherson & Vismans, 2001). Leaning on the principles of human psychology and of Carl Rogers's theory of person-centred counselling, ALL was defined as a non-directive form of learner support to the development of both language proficiency and autonomy. The professional and discourse-related competences are the cornerstone of this approach (Mozzon-McPherson, 2012; Mynard, 2012).

New insights into the advisee-advisor interaction come from discourse analysis of advising sessions. From the analysis of more than 40 sessions with various advisors and advisees, Ciekanski (2005, 2007) identifies macro-sequences in advising discourse: (i) conversational sequences, aiming at establishing a relationship and a good communication atmosphere between advisee and advisor; (ii) pedagogical sequences, in which the advisee reports and reflects on learning activities and language progress, the advisor gives feedback, and supports the advisee in needs analysis, reflection and decisions about future work; and (iii) organizational sequences, in which advisor and advisee negotiate appointments, use of resources and other concrete aspects of learning. At the core of the advising session are the pedagogical sequences, which are based on collaborative work between advisor and advisee (Ciekanski, 2007).

In line with an increasing interest in emotional, affective, and individual aspects of SALL, thus setting the focus on the 'self' (Everhard, 2012), investigations on emotions and feelings in advising sessions shed new light on both the learning process and the unique interaction between advisee and advisor. Thus, if on the one hand, advisors generally tend to restrain from expressing their own emotions and feelings in the advising session itself, on the other, they sometimes mirror, balance, and echo the advisee's emotions (Carette, Meléndez Quero, & Thiébault, 2013; Ciekanski & Tassinari, 2015; Tassinari, 2016; Yamashita & Mynard,

2015). Since the unique relationship between advisor and advisee is at the core of ALL, considering emotional, personal and interpersonal aspects is an important part of the advising process.

To develop appropriate training for advising, research suggests tools and methods to support the pedagogical dialogue and the autonomization process (Kato & Mynard, 2016), such as tools to enhance reflection on motivation, beliefs, attitudes, learning strategies, needs analysis, goal-setting, or time management strategies (Mynard & Carson, 2012). The need for professional development also gives life to peer- and/or group mentoring and to narrative and/or autoethnographic research (Bradley et al., 2016).

Whereas in some institutions advisors are ad hoc trained professionals, in others they are teachers or tutors, sometimes even student assistants work as 'advisors', which may change the approach radically. A first systematization of the various forms of advising and learning support by Spänkuch and Kleppin (2014) differentiates non-directive language learning coaching and semi-directive advising from directive language tutoring and training.

From a complex dynamic system (CDS) perspective the factors influencing the advising process are manifold and interrelated: beyond the mere interaction between advisors and advisee in the advising sessions, the learner's attitude, beliefs, personal situation, social context, relation to peers or teachers, or events occurring in the learner's life play a role in both the autonomization and the advising process. Some of these elements may trigger a dynamic evolution, or a radical change in the system (being thus 'emergences' according to the CDS theory), while some others may hinder progress and transformation ('attractors' according to the CDS theory). A further development in research on advising contextualizes the advising process considering, besides individual factors of both advisors and advisees, the influence of educational and social environments (see Magno e Silva & Borges, 2016, pp. 139–220).

Individual and Affective Factors in Self-Access Language Learning

The research on individual and affective factors in language learning offers some insights into learners' stories in SALL and self-directed language learning. In their analysis of qualitative case studies in individualized learning environments, Bown and White (2010) show that during the learning process learners experience a wide range of emotions, both positive and negative, which can enhance or hinder cognitive processes. Their research also shows that an "intelligent processing of emotions", that is, "the use of strategies to identify, process and manage emotions" allows learners to better regulate their learning process (Bown & White, 2010, p. 440). Looking at affective aspects from a different perspective,

Candas and Eneau (2010) found out that in spite of learners' difficulties in verbalizing their emotions, their decisions about the self-directed learning process are often influenced by affective strategies, such as avoiding boring tasks, looking for interesting texts or watching funny videos.

Among the individual factors which may influence the learners' behaviour and learning process, identity, personal biographies and social class also play a role. In her longitudinal study to investigate learners' identity in SALC/SALL, Castillo (2014) found out that the learners' socioeconomic reality influenced the way learners perceive themselves and their L2 ideal selves (Dörnyei, 2009) as well as the way they manage their learning in the SALC. In the four case studies she analyzed, adult learners of middle and upper economic classes were able to perceive themselves as confident speakers and users of the target language (English and French) thanks to experiences abroad and thus developed several learning strategies and a strong L2 ideal self. On the contrary, an adult learner belonging to a lower socioeconomic class who learnt Spanish as a second language and English was not able to imagine herself as a confident speaker and was less able to take advantage of the opportunities offered her at the SALC.

A strong focus on learner stories and the use of narrative and reflective writing is also Karlsson's approach to investigate learners' development towards language proficiency and autonomy, and to encourage them to find their voice as learners (Karlsson, 2013, 2015, 2017). In the Autonomous Language Learning Modules (ALMS) at the Language Centre of the University of Helsinki, storytelling is a central tool in counselling for autonomy: learners are encouraged to tell or write their stories and experiences through diaries, creative writing, free writing, or other forms of art. This helps them to reflect on their learning and experience the target language free from given structures. While reading and reflecting on the learners' unique experiences, counsellors engage themselves in writing too, thus entering in a deeper dialogue with their counselees. In this context, narrative inquiry allows for a deeper understanding of the manifold factors fostering or hindering autonomous language learning. In addition, autoethnographic, dialogic writing is also a tool for counsellors' reflection on their practice and development both as counsellors and as researchers (Karlsson & Bradley, 2018).

SALC as Places for Autonomy

SALCs are learning spaces with peculiar characteristics: in SALCs, learners are agents, and cannot only use, but also take ownership and thus contribute to (re)shaping the learning space. Part of the literature investigates the actions learners perform in SALCs, whether they learn individually or they gather in a learning or conversation group, and

how their actions transform the learning space into a "learning place" (Murray, 2014, p. 82, quoted in Edlin, 2016, p. 118). In their longitudinal study on the L-café, a social learning space at the University of Okayama, Murray and Fujishima (2016) investigated the manifold ways learners developed and exercised their autonomy while participating in the L-café: among others, using self-study materials, watching movies, listening to English music, socializing with L2 (English) speakers, participating in or organizing events. In these ways, learners made use of the potential the environment offered to them and transformed the L-Café into a dynamic learning place (Murray, 2017). One of the findings of this study is a new perspective on autonomy: in the L-café, autonomy is less about setting goals, planning and carrying out learning; it is rather what "mediates the students' interaction with the environment" (Murray, 2017, p. 123). In other words, autonomy is what enables learners to perceive the affordances of the environment according to their needs, their imagination, their sense of self (ibid.).

The ways learners turn a space into a learning place differ in various institutional contexts and confirm that autonomous learners play a proactive role in opening external and internal opportunities for learning (Balçıkanlı, 2018; Hobbs & Dofs, 2018). These studies show the potential of looking at SALC as "self-enriching, complex dynamic ecosocial systems" (Murray, 2018, p. 102).

In order for SALCs to become language learning spaces that foster autonomy, the physical environment must be designed according to relevant principles. Drawing on perspectives from various fields other than language education (among others, psychology, neurosciences, ecology, learning environment design), Edlin (2016) identifies the following principles for designing a SALC: (i) providing an environment which fosters positive emotions to improve memory, encoding, potentiation, and recall; (ii) ensuring a low-stress and safe environment, to encourage risk taking and lower inhibitions to practice, for example through learner support for reflection and formative feedback; (iii) encouraging social interaction; (iv) ensuring comfort to attract learners and reduce distraction; (v) increasing accessibility, both regarding physical spaces and materials or other resources; and (vi) ensuring flexibility to accommodate for changes and different needs of learners and staff (Edlin, 2016, pp. 125–130).

However, SALCs are not the only self-directed learning spaces. Autonomous learners are able to use and shape a variety of spaces and places for learning, both physical and virtual, and to exercise their agency in the learning arena communicating with native speakers or competent speakers (see, among others, White & Bown, 2018). This presents a challenge for SALCs as regards their role in a wider learning landscape, in which the borders between formal and informal learning become more and more blurred.

Self-Access Centres and Personal Learning Environments

The explosion of MOOC (Massive Open Online Course), apps and social networks, together with student mobility, have multiplied the places of learning, questioning the SALCs' relevance (Reinders, 2012). Since research on language acquisition shows the importance of informal learning and target language use to reach proficiency, it is crucial that learners are capable of critically reflecting on the various opportunities and make informed decisions about their learning. In this scenario SALCs can become a bridge between classroom and out-of-classroom, formal and informal learning (Tassinari, 2015), providing students with a meeting point and support for learning, thus being, "social hubs where students naturally come for social, emotional, and learning support" (Mynard, 2016a, p. 334).

Benson (2017) suggests a further step, which consists in overcoming the dichotomy between classroom and out-of-classroom learning, thus considering SALCs in a holistic perspective as part of language learning environments that students discover and modify in the course of their learning biography: class, online learning, authentic communication situations, trips and stays abroad. To relocate SALCs and SALL within this complex language learning ecology we need to look at SALCs as "one among many settings for language learning that potentially make up the language learning environments of its users", as part of a "shared environment" including classroom and "a variety of out-of-class settings such as libraries, leisure facilities", meeting points, cafés and online settings (Benson, 2017, p. 142). Further research in this direction needs to consider SALCs in a dynamic perspective, investigating learners' actions and interactions within and beyond the SALC.

Evaluating Self-Access Language Centres

Evaluation of a SALC is crucial for research, development and for accountability. However, as Morrison's "End-of-the year SAC vignette" (Morrison, 2011, pp. 242–243) lively shows, it requires squaring the circle. Joan, a SALC coordinator, must write the annual report on her SALC for the senior management. She has collected various data, such as learner questionnaires, learning journals, number of users. For herself, the report needs to focus on the SALC development, to improve learner support; for the management, the report should be judgmental, to ensure future funding. In other words, in order to evaluate a SALC, "it is first necessary to determine what is to be evaluated" (Thornton, 2016, p. 394). However, due to the nature of a SALC as a learning environment, setting a specific focus for the evaluation, for example learning gain, may provide only a partial perspective on the complex reality of SALCs. Similarly to the evaluation of learner autonomy, the evaluation

of SALCs is a puzzle, due to the complexity of its object. As Riley (1996) points out, the challenges of investigating autonomy, self-directed learning and self-access are manifold. Like "the blind man and the bubbles", researchers have to find appropriate "methodological and conceptual tools" for these research objects (Riley, 1996, p. 251).

The most complete approach to the evaluation of SALC is Morrison's "SAC mapping and evaluation framework" (Morrison, 2003, 2008, 2011). According to Morrison, previous to each evaluation, a SALC mapping is necessary in order to identify "the underlying principles" of the SALC and to develop "a coherent overview of the elements" (Morrison, 2008, p. 126), and of "the way these elements interact with the individual, independent learner and with each other" (Morrison, 2011, p. 244). The framework gives thus a central role to the context, which impacts the whole evaluation process, the key questions and all decisions and actions to be taken. Data – both qualitative and quantitative – are collected from different actors of the SALC: staff, teachers, tutors, learners, in order to take into account and triangulate various perspectives. Data are analyzed and evaluated in a recursive process based on grounded theory. The final evaluation report can be used both to communicate with the senior management and to take further action for the SALC development. Morrison's evaluation of the role of a SALC in tertiary education identifies four major functions: (i) it brings together language learning and independent learning; (ii) it provides resources; (iii) it acts as a catalyst, enabling the learner to develop independent learning skills and "encouraging experimentation" (Morrison, 2008, p. 130); and (iv) it supports learners by means of language advisors, tutors and/or peers (Morrison, 2008, p. 132). Some constraints emerged from the evaluation too, concerning the necessity to identify learners' needs, to provide materials appropriate for SALL and to relate to the institutional educational context, which may be seen, in some cases, contrary to 'self-access' (Morrison, 2008, pp. 132–134).

While Morrison's framework has been adapted by Datwani-Choy (2016) in another comprehensive study of a SALC, Mynard (2016b) suggests both retrospective and predictive approaches to evaluation. Retrospective approaches implemented at the SALC at Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS) are manifold: strategic planning, a method developed from business and management to identify goals to be reached by the facility; ongoing research cycles, to serve students' needs and improve the services and facilities; and timelines and cycles for micro-evaluation of specific aspects of the SALC, such as workshops, student staff, curriculum, and SALC mission. As an alternative or a complement to retrospective approaches, the SALC staff discusses experimental future-looking and predictive approaches such as data mining or external evaluation.

Future Developments

Similarly to practice, research on SALCs is still in development. Following the considerable evolution of SALCs' roles in the various contexts in which they operate, several questions for further development and research can be formulated:

Role of SALCs:

- How does the institutional context (institutional requirements, curriculum, audience, tasks and training of the faculty and staff) influence the SALC organization and role?
- How do teachers and learners perceive the role of SALC?

Learner and teacher autonomy:

- What are the factors which foster autonomy in a learner's biography?
- What do teachers in SALC do and what affordances do they perceive to increase their autonomy/their range of action?
- What is the role of emotions, feelings, beliefs and imagination in the development of learners' and teachers' autonomy?

Learners' action and interactions within and beyond the SALC:

- How do learners integrate the SALC in the construction of their personal learning environment?

Space and place:

- What are the affordances identified by learners in the SALC and beyond?
- How do space and place in SALC foster learners' agency?

SALCs and online learning environments:

- How can the pedagogical provision of SALC be adapted to and integrated in online learning environments?

Language learning advising:

- What factors do influence the advising process? What does enhance transformation/change, what does hinder it?
- How can research approaches such as discourse analysis, narrative inquiry, autoethnography, or group mentoring be used for advisors' professional development?

To research these and other questions from an ecology perspective and/or in the light of complexity theory, new approaches should be identified

in order to take into account the dynamic dimension of SALCs as multifaceted learning environments where individual, social and contextual elements are intertwined.

Notes

1 Usual abbreviations are SALC or SAC. In this chapter, we will use SALC, and in original quotes, we will leave SAC.
2 Although Clemente (2001) uses the term "counsellors", we prefer "advisors" for the sake of uniformity within the present chapter.

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12 A Study into Pre-Service FL Teachers' Perceptions of Their Willingness, Ability, and Opportunity to Promote Learner Autonomy

Borja Manzano Vázquez

Introduction

Learner autonomy (LA), originally defined by Holec (1981, p. 3) as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning", has become one of the most important educational goals in discussions of foreign language (FL) education (Benson, 2011, 2012; Everhard & Murphy, 2015; Jiménez Raya, Lamb, & Vieira, 2007, 2017; Manzano Vázquez, 2015; Murray, Gao, & Lamb, 2011; Ushioda, 2011). This prominence, however, is still far from being reflected in many FL classrooms where the role of the teacher is perceived as central as he/she is the ultimate authority and the arbiter of all the decisions concerned with language learning. Learners often have little voice in the learning process and play a passive role in the classroom. Previous research suggests in this respect that one of the major reasons for this absence of LA is the lack of teacher education initiatives aimed at preparing (prospective) teachers to foster autonomous learning in their teaching (Benson, 2011; Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015; Manzano Vázquez, 2016, 2018). The present study stems from the conviction that teacher education (both pre-service and in-service) is vital for the development of autonomy in foreign language teaching (FLT) as it can help equip (prospective) teachers with the professional knowledge, skills, and confidence to implement pedagogy for autonomy (PA) in their classroom as well as developing in them the disposition to work on this approach.

It has been widely argued in the literature that to promote LA teachers themselves need to develop their own autonomy (Barfield et al., 2002; Benson & Huang, 2008; Jiménez Raya et al., 2017; Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015; Lamb, 2008; Little, 2001; Thavenius, 1999), especially if we situate both concepts within a broader moral and political view of education. In the field of teacher development for autonomy, Jiménez Raya et al. (2017, pp. 71–73) identify four dimensions of professional competence towards both teacher and learner autonomy: (1) developing a critical view of (language) education, (2) centring teaching on learning, (3) managing local constraints so as to open up spaces for manoeuvre, and (4) interacting with others in the professional community. The authors relate these dimensions to a set of enabling conditions which

can be assessed in terms of three parameters: *willingness* ("Am I willing to…?"), *ability* ("Am I able to…?"), and *opportunity* ("Do I have the opportunity to…?"). The implication of this theoretical framework is that to foster autonomy in the classroom (prospective) teachers need to develop a sense of professional agency which encourages them to adopt alternative teaching practices, challenge contextual constraints on these practices, and develop the ability to support learner empowerment. In this sense, the main purpose of the present study was to investigate a group of pre-service FL teachers' perceptions of their willingness, ability, and opportunity to implement PA in their future teaching after completing a pre-service teacher education initiative which was designed to introduce the trainees to the notion of LA in FLT and show them how to promote PA in the FL classroom. In doing so, it aims to draw pedagogical implications for teacher education for autonomy.

Research on (Pre-Service) Language Teachers' Beliefs about Learner Autonomy

Few studies of pre-service language teachers' beliefs about the development of LA can be found in the specialized literature. For that reason, this review includes studies of both pre-service and in-service teachers' beliefs. The research project coordinated by Camilleri (1999) aimed to explore the attitudes towards LA of 328 teachers from six different European countries (Belarus, Estonia, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, and the Netherlands). The findings highlighted that the participants were willing to change and develop their practice towards LA. There were areas of LA which drew most support from the teachers such as taking responsibility for self-assessment, finding their learning procedures, and deciding on classroom management. In contrast, the areas of strongest resistance to LA were selecting textbooks and deciding on the time and place of the lesson. Eight years later, Camilleri Grima (2007) replicated this study with a group of 48 student teachers and practising teachers of modern languages in Malta. When comparing the results to the Malta cohort in the previous study, she observed that there was great similarity between both groups regarding the participants' positive attitude towards LA and those aspects of PA they were more and less supportive of.

Balçikanli (2010) examined the perspectives on LA of 112 student teachers of English in Turkey, focussing on investigating the areas of LA they considered most important and the constraints they perceived as obstacles to its promotion. In general, the participants were favourably disposed towards the development of LA. They supported learner involvement in selecting materials and making decisions on classroom management, learning strategies, and the methodology of the course. In line with Camilleri's (1999) findings, most of the participants were reluctant to involve their future students in deciding on the time and place

of the course and selecting the textbooks. Finally, the student teachers underlined that the major obstacle to the promotion of LA was the teacher-centred educational system in Turkey. In Japan, Nakata (2011) explored 80 high school teachers' perceptions regarding the importance of developing LA in language learning and their readiness for promoting it. The major conclusion of the study was that the participants regarded LA as a prominent educational goal, but many of them were not ready to promote it in their learners.

Less positive attitudes towards LA have been observed in the studies conducted by Martinez (2008) and Nicolaides (2008). Martinez (2008) surveyed 16 pre-service language teachers' subjective theories about LA. The results revealed that the participants had different perceptions of LA which can be summarized as follows: (1) PA is an alternative methodology which can improve the language learning process, (2) it is equated with individualization and differentiation, (3) LA seems to be a highly unachievable educational goal which cannot be realized in the school, and (4) it is associated with learning in isolation and without a teacher. Nicolaides (2008) investigated a group of Brazilian student teachers' beliefs about learners' role in the development of their language learning. The participants were of the opinion that the responsibility for the teaching-learning process rests with the teacher since he/she owns the knowledge and knows the best way to learn. Only outside the classroom can learners exercise their autonomy and be empowered to take their decisions.

Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) analyzed the beliefs about LA held by English teachers in Oman. The data indicated that the teachers regarded LA as a set of skills that learners need to develop to be able to learn independently. The vast majority of them concurred that LA has a positive effect on success as a language learner. They considered that LA "allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would" (p. 287). The authors, however, concluded that the teachers were more positive about the desirability of learner involvement in the learning process than they were about its feasibility. Similar findings were obtained by Lengkanawati (2016), Van Loi (2016), and Anderson (2015). Using an adaptation of the questionnaire employed by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012), Lengkanawati (2016) and Van Loi (2016) examined English language teachers' attitudes towards developing LA in Indonesia and Vietnam, respectively. The major conclusion of these two studies was that the teachers considered autonomy a desirable goal but they were not very confident about its feasibility, identifying several constraints to its development: the teacher-centred educational system, the limited time allotted in the curriculum, learners' lack of autonomous learning experience, their focus on passing exams, and their limited proficiency in English. Anderson (2015) explored teacher and learner perceptions of LA in Spain. On the teaching side, the participants were

15 FL teachers who taught in language academies. The development of LA was widely perceived by the teachers as having a positive effect on FL learning, helping learners to become more motivated, effective, and successful. They were favourably disposed to foster learners' independence, responsibility, and involvement in decision-making. Nevertheless, they believed that it would be difficult to accommodate these decisions to the teaching-learning process. The study also investigated the teachers' perceived obstacles to LA, which included the lack of institutional support, the pressure of time, coursebook restrictions, and learners' resistance to autonomy.

This review reveals that, apart from a significant dearth, the studies conducted on teacher cognition about LA have focussed mainly on examining prospective and experienced teachers' understanding of LA in various contexts and their attitudes and dispositions towards its adoption as an educational goal in FLT. Except for the study by Nakata (2011), they have neglected aspects such as (student) teachers' perceptions of their ability to put into practice PA. As Vieira (2017) notes, "the promotion of pedagogy for autonomy (...) rests on teachers' willingness and *ability* to understand and transform educational experience" (p. 95, emphasis added). Not only should teachers be disposed to promote autonomy, but they must also be able to teach their learners how to take charge of their own learning. With the aim of contributing to research on pre-service teachers' beliefs about the development of LA in FLT, the present study aimed to investigate the perceptions a group of student teachers had regarding their willingness, ability, and opportunity to implement PA in their teaching practice. Thus, the following research questions were formulated:

1 Are the pre-service teachers willing to implement PA in their future teaching practice?
2 Do the pre-service teachers think they are able to implement PA in their future teaching practice?
3 Do the pre-service teachers think they will have the opportunity to implement PA in their future teaching practice?

Research Methodology

Participants

The participants were 24 pre-service teachers (21 females, 3 males; mean age – 25.29, ranging from 22 to 33 years) who were enrolled on a one-year postgraduate teacher education programme at the University of Granada (Spain), whereby they earned the master's degree which is required to work as a FL teacher in compulsory and post-compulsory secondary education in Spain. While 16 participants had a degree in

English Philology, eight participants held a degree in Translation and Interpreting: Arabic (1 participant), English (4 participants), French (2 participants), and German (1 participant). Twenty-one participants had some previous teaching experience, although this experience was largely based either on teaching primary and secondary school students in private classes (aimed at supporting the learning of English and preparing students for exams) or on working in a language academy. Within the sample, only two participants had previously taught in a secondary school, where they had worked as language assistants. It must be noted that before beginning the module the participants were not familiar with the notion of LA either at a theoretical or practical level since they had been taught in a traditional way.

Research Context

The research context was the *Master's Degree in (Post-)Compulsory Secondary Education, Vocational Training and Language Teaching* implemented at the University of Granada, whose aim is to train and qualify prospective teachers for secondary education, vocational training, and language teaching in Spain. This programme comprises different modules (covering, for example, educational psychology, sociology, educational research, and teaching methodology) which are followed by a practicum of six weeks. The data for the research were collected in the module *Learning and Teaching of English as a FL* which is taught by Prof. Manuel Jiménez Raya in the first semester and before the practicum. This module includes 29 classes of two and a half hours which are held three times a week during ten weeks. It is grounded on a constructivist approach to teacher education which draws upon critically reflective teaching (Farrell, 2015; Valli, 1997), pedagogy of experience (Vieira, 2010), pedagogical inquiry, and the notion of autonomy (understanding LA and teacher autonomy as relational phenomena; Jiménez Raya et al., 2017). In this sense, this is the only module of the programme which explores the development of LA in FLT. In it, the explanation of theory (e.g., the principles for PA by Jiménez Raya et al. [2007, pp. 58–66]) is combined with the use of different tools which aim to encourage the trainees to recast their educational beliefs in line with a more learner-centred view of teaching, inquire into their own experience, assume a proactive role in their professional development, and reflect on, and promote, PA in FLT. These tools include reflective tasks (e.g., questionnaires exploring their image of FLT), practical activities (e.g., the design of an English lesson plan and activities which were autonomy-oriented and learner-centred), a learning portfolio, and the use of cases. In this respect, the trainees engage in case analysis (i.e., throughout the module they read, analyze, and discuss teaching cases[1] on the implementation of PA in FLT) and case construction (i.e., the trainees are encouraged to

promote LA during their practicum and write their own teaching case on the promotion of PA[2]). By the time of data collection, however, the participants had not begun the practicum and therefore they had not had the opportunity to implement PA in their teaching. This way, the participants' perceptions of their willingness, ability and opportunity to implement PA could be explored before they came into contact with a classroom context.

Data Collection and Analysis

A questionnaire was designed to collect the data for the research (see Appendix). This questionnaire was administered to the participants in the last class of the module and, following Gillham (2000), it included different question/answer types: selected responses (i.e., the participants had to answer yes or no), scaled responses (i.e., they answered the question by choosing one option within a five-point scale on which, for example, 1 meant 'not really willing' or 'not really sure' and 5 meant 'very willing' or 'quite sure'), and open questions (in which they could expand on their answers). With this questionnaire, the student teachers' cognition about the notion of LA and PA in FLT could be explored at the end of the module. In this sense, the participants were asked about their familiarity with the notion of LA before beginning the module; the benefits they saw in implementing PA in FLT; their degree of conviction about the need to foster LA as an educational goal; and their perception of their willingness, ability and opportunity to implement PA in their teaching practice. They were reassured that this information was only to be known by the researcher and for that reason they were urged to complete the questionnaire with total sincerity.

The questionnaire gathered both quantitative and qualitative data. While the quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 17 to calculate descriptive statistics (frequency counts), the qualitative data were analyzed and coded manually by following an inductive approach based on emergent codes (Bazeley, 2013). To this end, the participants' answers were read and analyzed twice. In the first reading, an understanding of the main ideas expressed was gained and codes began to be ascribed to the data. These codes were categorized under three headings, which addressed the research questions formulated in the study: (1) the participants' perception of their willingness to implement PA, (2) the participants' perception of their ability to implement PA, and (3) the participants' perception of their opportunity to implement PA. The second reading of the data aimed to check whether these codes needed to be refined and to add new codes if necessary. In this case, some codes were combined, for example, 'need for educational change' and 'need to replace traditional teaching methods' were unified as a unique code ('need to challenge the pedagogical *status quo*'), while others were grouped

under one code (for example, codes such as 'motivation', 'learner involvement', 'lifelong learning', or 'learner differentiation' were grouped under an overarching code: 'benefits/positive results of PA').

Results

Willingness to Implement Pedagogy for Autonomy

The quantitative data obtained in the questionnaire revealed that most of the participants were very willing (15 participants) or close to being very willing (7 participants) to promote PA in their teaching practice, while two participants were just willing to develop this approach, adopting a more neutral position. This positive attitude towards PA was also supported by the participants' conviction about the need to foster LA in FL education. Thus, most of the participants were very convinced (13 participants) or close to being very convinced (10 participants) of the need to encourage LA in FL learning. In this case, only one participant was just convinced of this need.

The participants stated different reasons why they were willing to implement PA in their future teaching practice. Most of these reasons made reference to the potential benefits and positive results of PA in terms of learning. In this sense, the participants regarded PA as a tool for improving language learning. The most important benefit which they perceived in the development of this pedagogical approach was related to motivation. They considered that PA can contribute to enhancing learners' commitment and motivation since teaching will be largely based on their learning interests and choices. Closely related to this idea, various participants noted that PA can help increase learner involvement in the learning process. By giving them autonomy and a voice in classroom decision-making, learners will show more personal initiative and will assume more responsibility for their own learning.

Other perceived benefits pointed to the development of lifelong learning skills and increased learning awareness. On the one hand, several trainees noted that our world is constantly changing and placing new professional demands on the individual, so learners will need to be able to embark upon a continuous process of retraining and to update their knowledge throughout their life. In this sense, they held that PA will help learners to acquire skills such as self-regulation and learning to learn, thus preparing them for lifelong learning. They also remarked that PA can contribute to raising learners' awareness of their own learning process. By means of reflection, learners can become more aware of their learning needs, difficulties, outcomes, and progress.

PA was viewed by some student teachers not only as an approach to improve and make the learning process more effective, but also the teaching practice. They pointed out that promoting PA will contribute to

providing for learner differentiation in the classroom. In this respect, it was acknowledged that classes are frequently given without taking into account learners' individual differences and PA can help overcome this deficiency, helping teachers to make more informed decisions about the teaching-learning process and adapt it to their learners:

> Learners are usually poorly motivated because classes are given without taking into consideration learner diversity so pedagogy for autonomy may help [tackle] this problem if it is properly implemented.[3]
>
> When we practise a learner-centred approach in the classroom, we encourage our students to reflect on their interests and the learning goals they want to achieve. This can help the teacher to guide his[/her] lessons towards the learners' interests and differentiation and improve his[/her] decision-making during the lessons.

On the other hand, there were various trainees who complained that in many classrooms FLT is still anchored in a traditional, grammar-oriented approach. For this reason, they underlined the need to change the pedagogical *status quo* and considered that PA can be the approach which helps reach this goal:

> I think that pedagogy for autonomy is the way to achieve 21st-century education. [We as] new teachers have to escape from our past. We have to try to reinvent schools by saying goodbye to the old paradigm (boring classes focused on grammar rules).

It must be noted, however, that not all the participants had such a positive attitude towards PA. A few trainees were more neutral about it. They wanted to work on PA because they would like to test it and see whether it works in the FL classroom.

Ability to Implement Pedagogy for Autonomy

The questionnaire revealed that the participants' perceptions regarding their ability to promote PA were far less homogeneous than their willingness to do it. Only four participants chose the highest figure (5-'quite sure') on the scale, showing that they had a very positive perception of their ability to foster autonomy in their teaching practice:

> I like challenges and the development of autonomy is a great challenge. In addition, I am quite keen on trying to continuously improve my teaching practice. I also like reflecting on my own practice and trying to find the way to solve potential problems that may arise in the classroom. I consider that teaching should be centred on learners and that learners' opinions, interests, preferences, and needs are to

> be taken into consideration. Consequently, I think I meet all the requirements to implement pedagogy for autonomy.

Ten participants were close to being quite sure of their ability while eight participants were more neutral about it, going for number three on the scale. Although they thought they would be able to work on PA, they reported certain doubts and concerns in this regard. These answers highlighted three factors which seemed to be crucial to the participants' perception of their ability: teaching experience, experience with PA and knowledge about PA (both theoretical and practical). These factors contribute to the participants' lack of confidence to engage in implementing PA effectively. Some trainees' doubts about their ability to promote this pedagogical approach were raised by their lack of teaching experience in a secondary school context. As noted above, most of the participants' previous teaching experience was based on teaching a few learners in private classes or in a language academy. Therefore, they were not completely sure whether they would be able to promote autonomy in a secondary school context where they would be in charge of a whole class. They needed to test themselves in that situation.

Some participants were also concerned by the fact that they had no first-hand experience with PA. As language learners, they had been taught by means of a traditional, teacher-centred approach to FLT, so the concept of PA was completely new to them. This lack of previous experience with PA made them feel unsure as to how it can be implemented in the classroom. This difficulty has been termed 'the problem of enactment' (Kennedy, 1999) (i.e., the difficulty in translating theoretical principles into classroom action):

> I still have several concerns about the implementation of autonomy in my language teaching because, so far, I only know it [at a theoretical level]. I have never experienced it before, neither as a student nor as a teacher (…) I find it difficult to visualize how a proper lesson focused on pedagogy for autonomy would work.

In this respect, various trainees noted that the module had provided them with theoretical knowledge about this pedagogical approach, but they stressed their need for getting practice in its promotion. This would help them to be more confident about their ability to foster LA since one of their major concerns was not being able to implement PA effectively or failing when trying to do so:

> I have some reservations [about PA] not because of its effectiveness (or lack of it) but because I need to know that what I am doing is correct (…) It isn't something to be taken lightly. I think I can start by implementing what I am more comfortable with and try to increase

> the amount of autonomy I encourage in the classroom (…) I hope that the more practice and experience I get, the more confident and capable I will be of implementing autonomy into my teaching.

Finally, it must be noted that two trainees were not confident about being able to promote autonomy in their teaching practice, choosing number 2 on the scale. One of them felt that she was not prepared to implement PA due to 'the problem of enactment' and her lack of confidence:

> I think I should be more informed about pedagogy for autonomy and [make sure] how it can be implemented; otherwise, the results could be chaotic. I think I should read a lot about autonomy and [begin by] implementing it gradually, in order to be more confident and not to feel lost.

For the second trainee, it was her lack of teaching experience which would initially lead her to rely on a traditional approach to FLT:

> Not really, because I am not an experienced teacher at the moment and I prefer to use traditional methods. However, it does not mean that I am not going to introduce it little by little in my professional development.

Opportunity to Implement Pedagogy for Autonomy

The data indicated that, in general, the participants were sure of having the opportunity to promote PA in their teaching practice. Seven participants were firmly convinced of the feasibility of implementing PA in the FL classroom. They considered that there is no factor which may constrain its development and highlighted teachers' freedom to work on this pedagogical approach:

> If I become a teacher, I have no doubt. I don't think [other] teachers, partners, the curriculum, or the educational system prevent it.
>
> I would like to point out that every teacher can do something and that pedagogy for autonomy can be implemented (to a greater or lesser extent) in every setting.
>
> I do not see the reason why I will not have it [i.e., the opportunity] since every teacher is more or less free to teach as they want to.

Although most of the participants thought that PA can be promoted in the FL classroom, various concerns were also raised. Some of them remarked that developing PA depends on factors such as learners (e.g., their readiness for autonomy), other teachers, and the school. In this respect, they emphasized that it is essential to receive the support and

backing necessary from the school as well as having the right materials and resources to promote this approach. Other participants referred to the influence of parents. They voiced their concern about parents' response to this pedagogical approach, pointing out that parents often expect the teaching-learning process to be controlled by the teacher. They were, however, convinced that as soon as PA produces good results, parents will agree with its development.

Apart from these potential constraints, the student teachers were aware that LA is still far from being a prominent educational goal in the practice of FLT. In this sense, several participants underlined that the implementation of PA just depends mostly on the teacher's motivation and willingness to promote it, thus acknowledging the crucial role the teacher plays in its development:

> I think that there will be some constraints to implement pedagogy for autonomy in my teaching. However, I think that the teacher is the one who decides if he[/she] wants to implement it or not. Since I am willing to implement pedagogy for autonomy in my teaching, I am quite sure that I will have the opportunity to do it.
>
> I think we will always have the opportunity to implement it in our teaching, despite constraints and difficulties. It depends on our willingness to implement it and face those difficulties and make an effort to overcome them.

In the sample, there was one student teacher who harboured more doubts as to whether she would have the opportunity to promote PA. This trainee maintained that there are many constraints in schools on the development of PA (e.g., the predominance of a traditional teaching culture [cf. Balçikanli, 2010; Van Loi, 2016]) and, in contrast to her classmates, she held that teachers often lack professional freedom to put into practice the innovative ideas they have.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study has focussed on exploring 24 pre-service FL teachers' perceptions of their willingness, ability and opportunity to implement PA in FLT (Jiménez Raya et al., 2017) in order to understand how these perceptions may influence their future attempts at promoting this approach in their teaching practice. The most potentially problematic finding yielded by this research is that the trainees' perception of limitations in their ability to foster LA may constrain them from enacting PA. Concerning the first research question, the findings revealed that the module implemented promoted the trainees' positive attitude towards PA. They were willing to promote PA in their teaching, a finding which is consistent with previous studies in the literature (Anderson, 2015; Balçikanli,

2010; Camilleri, 1999; Camilleri Grima, 2007). As observed in previous research (Anderson, 2015; Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012; Martinez, 2008), the student teachers had a positive attitude towards this pedagogical approach as they considered that it can improve FL education (in terms of learning and teaching). In relation to the third research question, the participants thought that they will have the opportunity to implement PA in their classroom. They were aware that the school, teachers, parents and learners can exert a great influence on its development, but they were convinced that it is possible to take small steps to promote PA and that the most important factor is the teacher's willingness and commitment to do so. However, concerning the second research question, the study revealed that most of the participants held low self-efficacy beliefs as regards their own capability for the development of PA. They harboured doubts about being able to foster LA, a finding which is in line with the results obtained by Nakata (2011). These doubts were raised by factors such as their lack of teaching experience, their lack of confidence (or fear of failure), the problem of enactment, and their lack of previous experience regarding the development of PA.

Although the results obtained cannot be extrapolated to a larger group of student teachers than the one studied, they have pedagogical implications for teacher education for autonomy. They emphasize that to foster LA in their teaching practice it is important that teacher education programmes help student teachers to develop the confidence to promote PA and get practice in its development. I hold that one promising approach to doing this is pedagogy of experience and, more specifically, case pedagogy. Placing the emphasis of teacher education on learning *from* and *through* educational experience (both their own experience and other teachers' experience) can provide student teachers with the opportunity to integrate theory into practice and construct their professional action towards more autonomy-oriented pedagogical practices. Thus, through case analysis and case construction, pedagogy of experience can help trainees to develop the professional skills and competences necessary to foster autonomy by actually engaging them in inquiring into and exploring the development of PA at classroom level. For teacher education to have a deeper impact on student teachers' professional development towards autonomy, cases can be combined with other strategies. On the one hand, it is essential to provide trainees with the opportunity to analyze and discuss plenty of practical examples illustrating the development of LA in FLT. Apart from cases, videotaped lessons and peer observation during the implementation of autonomy-oriented cases in the practicum can also be integrated into pre-service teacher education for autonomy. This would enable trainees to see what other teachers and colleagues do to promote autonomy, thus helping them to overcome the problem of enactment and gain more confidence in their ability to implement PA. On the other hand, teacher education for autonomy needs to include fieldwork on PA, either by giving trainees the opportunity to

promote LA during the practicum and develop their own teaching case on the enactment of PA (as in the teacher education initiative described here) or by means of simulations in which trainees enact this pedagogical approach during the module/initiative. These simulations can be based on peer-teaching situations in which student teachers themselves design short autonomy-oriented lessons to be taught to their classmates and later analyzed and discussed with their teacher educator (cf. Endo, 2011; Smith & Erdoğan, 2008). Although they would not be framed within an authentic classroom teaching situation (i.e., that which could be found in a school context), these experiences could serve to engage student teachers in exploring the practical implementation of PA.

To conclude this paper, two potential avenues for future research on teacher professional development towards autonomy are suggested. On the one hand, the findings of the study underline the importance of examining student teachers' sense of self-efficacy for developing PA and investigating how this perception can be enhanced. Concerning the present research, for example, the next step would be to explore the participants' sense of self-efficacy once they have promoted LA during the practicum. It would be important to see whether (or not) they gain more confidence in their ability to implement PA and whether their perceptions of their willingness and opportunity to foster LA are affected by their practicum experience (and, if so, in what way). Although they were beyond the scope of this research, cases and pedagogical inquiry into the development of autonomy in school settings can be powerful means for developing (student) teachers' understanding of and competence for PA (see Jiménez Raya, 2017; Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015, 2018; Manzano Vázquez, 2014, 2018; Vieira, 2010). Nevertheless, accounts of initiatives introducing and investigating the use of cases or the promotion of pedagogical inquiry in teacher education for autonomy are still scarce. For that reason, there is the need for further research on how case pedagogy and pedagogical inquiry can best contribute to (student) teachers' professional development towards autonomy.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr Manuel Jiménez Raya for his supervision during this research and the trainees who participated in the study. This work was supported by the Spanish Ministry of Education [research grant FPU12/03899]. I would also like to thank the editors of this book for their helpful insights and comments on this chapter.

Notes

1 The trainees were provided with different cases, although they analyzed and discussed in more detail the two cases reported in Jiménez Raya (2011) and Vieira (2011).

2 These cases are planned and designed by the trainees themselves during their practicum.
3 The mistakes in the participants' quotations were corrected, respecting the original sense of the quotation. Any modification or clarification is indicated in square brackets.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

1 **Before this course, were you familiar with the notion of learner autonomy in foreign language learning?**
Yes _____ No _____
What did you know about it? And how did you know about it?

2 **What benefits do you see in implementing pedagogy for autonomy in the foreign language classroom?**

3 **What is your degree of conviction about the need to help learners develop autonomy in foreign language learning?** (Choose one option from 1 [i.e., Not really convinced] to 5 [i.e., Very convinced])

Not really convinced	1	2	3	4	5	Very convinced

4 Are you willing to implement pedagogy for autonomy in your teaching?

Not really willing	1	2	3	4	5	Very willing

Why?

5 Do you think you have the ability/are able to implement pedagogy for autonomy in your teaching?

Not really sure	1	2	3	4	5	Quite Sure

Why?

6 Do you think you will have the opportunity to implement pedagogy for autonomy in your teaching?

Not really sure	1	2	3	4	5	Quite sure

Why?

7 **What difficulties, constraints, challenges, or fears do you envision you will face when trying to implement pedagogy for autonomy?**

8 **Has this course helped you reconsider or change your beliefs about teaching and learning a foreign language?**
Yes _____ No _____
If your answer is 'yes', in what sense?

13 Initial Teacher Education for Autonomy

Using Possible Selves Theory to Help Student Teachers Construct Their Professional Identity

Manuel Jiménez Raya

Introduction

Autonomy has become one of the central goals of education almost worldwide. Its relevance in education derives mostly from advances and insights into human psychology, educational, political, and moral philosophy. It is also argued that the knowledge society creates a need for self-initiated and self-managed learning as individuals will be forced to constantly learn new knowledge and skills. Morgan (1996) argued that teachers must accept the ideal of autonomy as implicit in the ideal of education, as all educated individuals must have the overall coherence in their identity. The development of autonomy implies "the development of a kind of person whose thought and action in important areas of his life are to be explained by reference to his own choices, decisions, reflections, deliberations – in short, his own activity of mind" (Dearden, 1972, p. 70).

Self-determination theory regards autonomy as a key to understanding the quality of human behavioural regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This theory is concerned with unravelling the nature and consequences of autonomy, explaining how autonomy develops, and how it can be fostered or hampered by certain biological and social conditions.

At a language teaching level, several arguments have been suggested to advocate pedagogy for autonomy. These include the active involvement of the learner in classroom activities, increased motivation, and greater responsibility for learning. Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira (2007, 2017) advocate pedagogy for autonomy in order to enhance more democratic teaching and learning practices within a vision of (language) education as a space for enacting (inter)personal empowerment and promoting social transformation.

The practice of modern language teaching in schools is generally speaking far from this ideal as pedagogy for autonomy is still rare in most classrooms. There are several reasons for this gap between theory

and practice, but in this paper I will stress the role of teacher education (TE). TE has a crucial role to play in the promotion of autonomy by emphasizing its centrality and supporting it through powerful TE strategies. Improving educational outcomes and realizing the goal of autonomy in education is a true challenge.

The paper examines the role of possible-selves theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and case pedagogy to facilitate the construction of professional identity in one of the modules in the MA for initial teacher education (ITE) at the University of Granada (UGR). The goal of this course is to encourage student teachers to sort out their teacher-self by developing a pedagogical stance that is not at odds with current language teaching theory and research. Another goal of the course is the development of teacher and learner autonomy in modern language education.

Teacher Education for Autonomy

Encouraging greater levels of autonomy in language education entails a new conception of pedagogy, placing new demands on TE. TE must take into account that learning to teach is a complex enterprise that involves several inherent challenges. First, it entails understanding teaching in different ways from those observed during our experience as students. The 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie, 1975) usually leads to the idea that teaching is easy and that 'anyone can teach'. As a consequence of the 'apprenticeship of observation' phenomenon, TE faces the daunting task of countering preconceptions and unexamined assumptions such as the belief that teaching depends mainly on personality factors, on concern for individual learners, and on teaching paradigms, with little appreciation of the role of subject matter, social context, or pedagogical knowledge (Paine, 1990). If these preconceptions are not addressed, prospective teachers will almost certainly retain these beliefs (Richardson & Placier, 2001).

A second challenge is the problem of enactment. This problem often results in complaints that TE programmes are too theoretical because they do not provide student teachers with the tools and practices that would allow them to put into action the ideas studied. According to Kennedy (1999), learning to teach requires learning to think and to act like a teacher. To enhance practice in TE curricula, a shift from a focus on teachers' knowledge and beliefs to a greater focus on what teachers do is required. I am not implying that knowledge and beliefs do not matter. They do. However, the main goal of TE is to prepare teachers to act. To do so teachers need to understand the multi-dimensional nature of the classroom and learn to cope with the problem of complexity arising from the ever-changing nature of teaching and learning in classrooms.

To this end, TE needs to stress agency, critical thinking, and challenge student teachers so as to pave the way for enactment and change (Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015; Priestley, Biesta, & Robinson, 2015). In addition, pedagogy for autonomy poses the extra challenge of having to implement a mode of teaching that student teachers in most cases have not experienced. This adds an extra challenge to teacher education. Reading about pedagogy for autonomy or memorizing autonomy-related principles do little to prepare the teacher for the complexities of teaching for learner autonomy. The challenge for TE is to mesh the disciplined theorizing that contributes to the enlargement of understanding with practical experiences of teaching that require judgement (Biesta, 2015).

TE needs to find ways to show pedagogy for autonomy in action and help student teachers forge a vision of language education that they feel confident enough to enact. A focus on the development of practical wisdom for teaching is required but a separation of theory and practice can generate a false dichotomy (Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015). However, this is how MA programme for initial teacher education is structured in Spain. Any attempt to bridge the gap would require significant attention not just to the knowledge demands of teaching but to the actual tasks and activities involved in the promotion of autonomy while simultaneously maximizing language learning opportunities. As a complex activity, teaching demands that teachers do several things simultaneously. Teaching needs to draw on several types of knowledge, social contexts, school culture, curriculum and methodology. It further requires the integration of knowledge of teaching, that is, what they know, to create engaging modern language learning tasks. The best way of training the mind to rational decision-making and the will to actually implement decisions is by involving student teachers in the real making and implementation of decisions through experimentation.

Teacher Professional Identity and Possible-Selves Theory

Possible-selves theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) refers to the 'selves' individuals believe they might become in the future that are crucial in goal setting and motivation. It is accepted as a useful framework explored by some teacher educators to actively involve student teachers in the construction of their own possible teacher self (Freese, 2006; Hamman, Gosselin, Romano, & Bunuam, 2010; Hamman, Wang, & Burley, 2013; Jiménez Raya, 2016). Possible-selves theory explains how future-oriented thought can provide identity-relevant information and motivation to pursue personally relevant goals. In the context of novice teachers' identity construction, more specifically possible-selves theory provides a useful framework for working towards the construction of future-oriented thought and the study of its contribution to language

teacher identity development. Furthermore, this framework allows for the analysis of the contextual, self-regulatory, and motivational contribution of student teachers' thoughts and teaching behaviours intended to achieve identity-relevant teacher goals. This challenge involves facilitating student teachers' construction of their professional identity, giving them the possibility of having an active role in the process. However, the articulation of a possible self does not guarantee the production of the necessary and sustained effort and behaviour change. For that to happen, possible selves have to be linked with specific strategies (Oyserman, Bybee, Terry, & Hart-Johnson, 2004). As suggested by Markus (2006, p. xiv), our futures may lie in our "shared willingness to experiment with possible selves and possible worlds, and to redesign ourselves and our worlds". Like identity, possible selves as mental representations of the self sometime in the future are not permanent. Therefore, our possible selves can change fairly easy whilst the individual acquires new knowledge and experience. The application of possible-selves theory to teacher identity gives us the possibility of capturing the relationship between identity, agency, and emotion. Possible-selves theory has discursive qualities in that new teachers will certainly articulate what they hope, expect or fear.

Student teachers often find it difficult to visualize themselves as teachers, so it can be argued that they experience difficulty in, even resist, developing their professional identity for a variety of reasons. One of the reasons for resistance is confidence in their knowing what a good teacher is and what they will be like when they start teaching. Another reason is the security they have that when they actually start teaching they can pick up a textbook to follow and reproduce the teaching they experienced as learners. Another reason is attributable to the tenacious persistence of beliefs that spring from prior learning experiences. Still another important reason is related to the uncertainty that new methodological proposals pose for them. Research has confirmed that many student teachers do not feel confident in their ability to implement pedagogy for autonomy in their teaching (Manzano Vázquez, 2017). For these reasons among others, teacher educators have to "engage in dialogue with student teachers about each of our ideological processes of becoming" (Britzman, 1994, p. 72) in order to give them the chance to explore the kind of teacher they would like to become. Davies (2000) frames agency in terms of authority as "a sense of oneself as one who can go beyond the given meaning in any one discourse and forge something new, through a combination of previously unrelated discourses…through imagining not what *is*, but what *might be*" (p. 67). In a similar vein, Jiménez Raya et al. (2007, 2017) understand pedagogy for autonomy as a space of possibility. This means that TE can become a "space for imagining and enacting change" (Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2018, p. 99). So teaching is regarded as a space of possibility where 'bridges' between what is (reality) and what should

be (ideal) are created. In language TE, case pedagogy can be a strategy for the fulfilment of this goal, that is, an interspace where student teachers imagine alternative practices.

The literature on teacher identity agrees that identity can be become agentic and details how this agency is shaped by reflection (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004). Case pedagogy can play a critical role in expanding and deepening pre-service language teachers' knowledge of teaching, prompting them to frame problems, analyze contexts, and identify the benefits and drawbacks of various alternatives.

Future Teacher Selves: A Study of Student Teachers' Narrative Accounts

Context and Methodology

For this project, I used purposive sampling by selecting a group of five students from the academic years 2017–2018 and 2018–2019 enrolled on the initial teacher education MA at UGR. The students do not usually have any prior teaching experience. These student teachers were enrolled on the compulsory module taught by the author "Aprendizaje y enseñanza - Itinerario Inglés" (Teaching and learning English as a foreign language). The module takes place before the practicum. It is organized around classes of two hours and a half, which are held three times per week over a total of ten weeks/72 hours. The topics covered are the following: (a) current methodological approaches to the teaching of English; (b) the teaching of the language skills, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation; (c) evaluation and assessment; (d) curriculum design and planning units of work; and (e) pedagogy for autonomy. I consider autonomy as the most important one because it is the methodological standpoint that permeates and informs the entire module. To this end, I use the framework for teacher and learner autonomy by Jiménez Raya et al. (2007, 2017). The framework is presented first and the rest of the topics are introduced when we discuss the principles, for instance, Task-based learning is introduced when we discuss the "Action-orientedness" principle. The principles underlying the module are based on a constructivist view of TE which draws upon pedagogical inquiry, pedagogy of experience (Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015, 2018), critical reflection (Smyth, 1989), and the notion of autonomy. It combines the explanation of theory, reflective tasks, the analysis of practice mainly through the use of cases, the enactment of ideas through case construction, a learning portfolio, and a variety of practical exercises/tasks. The aim is to help the student teachers develop practical wisdom, articulate their possible teacher selves, recast their personal beliefs, apply theoretical knowledge to practice, inquire into

their own experience and, finally, construct meaning independently. This process should enable them to develop a *vision of teaching* (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005), and finally enact this vision during the practicum.

The data collection instruments have not been specifically designed for research purposes. They are part of the module requirements. The first one is an introductory questionnaire with questions about the student's background, their reasons for wanting to become teachers of English, their views of language teaching, the problems they think that affect the teaching of English in Spain, and the kind of teachers they would like to be. The second one is an "ideal English Lesson Plan", a course task that student teachers have to do for the first class. There are no instructions or suggestions for the elaboration of this lesson plan. This together with the initial questionnaire help me and them form a clear idea of their initial views of modern language teaching and of their visions of the teacher. The course portfolio is another instrument used for this study. They are required to create the portfolio during the module to elaborate their own learning plan at the beginning of the module, to reflect on the ELT methodology issues we discuss, to reflect on their own learning to teach process, to express their various concerns, to include sample work, and to elaborate their possible teacher selves as the conclusion to the portfolio. I call the conclusion to their portfolio "My exciting vision of language education", an expression borrowed from Kincheloe (2003). This is where they are expected to describe the methodological approach they would like to follow, that is, their future teacher selves. Finally, for case construction they design and report on a small-scale intervention during the practicum. This has to be directly related with their "exciting vision". Its development has to be negotiated with their school tutor. Sometimes tutors following a traditional teacher-centred approach impose serious restrictions on what they can do. When this is the case student teachers are encouraged to accommodate to the demands of the tutor but to explore the 'space of possibility'. This manoeuvring strategy works effectively in most cases as can be checked when the student teachers' cases are presented below. The final task in the case of Álvaro, Pedro and Javier is the writing of an opinion essay. The reason for the coincidence is that their tutors asked them to focus on writing skills for an opinion essay because university entrance exams usually ask students to write one.

Sociocultural theory has been be used as a guide to collect data and to carry out the pertinent analyses. I draw on Wertsch, del Río, and Álvarez (1995), who argue that the tools used by people to mediate understandings may constrain as well as empower. To this end, I examined the sociocultural tools teachers employ to make sense of language teaching, as well as the activity networks in which they are situated. I also

examined how these tools both generate and are reshaped by images and issues of pedagogy for autonomy. Thus, looking at the tools, images, and issues that people construct and exploit in social activity and interaction, allows us to study how the mind extends beyond the skin (Wertsch et al., 1995).

For the analysis and interpretation of the visions formulated in the portfolios I will take into consideration the vision of language teaching reflected in the entry questionnaire and the one informing their "future teacher self". To this end I will use Tudor's (2000) visions of the classroom as: (a) a controlled learning environment, (b) the communicative classroom, and (c) the classroom as a school of autonomy. I will also add to this three visions another paradigm for those cases in which they have opted for an eclectic approach. To check progress towards learner and teacher autonomy I will use the principles for autonomy suggested by Jiménez Raya et al. (2007, 2017) for the analysis of their ideal language lesson plans, their future teacher self, and their final cases. The proposal is articulated in ten language teaching principles that allow for the enactment of pedagogy for autonomy in the language classroom. These are:

- Responsibility, choice, and flexible control
- Learning to learn and Self-regulation
- Integration and explicitness
- Autonomy support
- Engagement & Intrinsic motivation
- Learner differentiation
- Action-orientedness
- Conversational interaction
- Reflective inquiry
- Formative assessment, assessment for learning, and assessment for autonomy

Results and Discussion

In the following I am going to present in a table format the results of the study with my analysis and interpretation. To preserve anonymity I have used pseudonyms for participants.

Table 13.1 contains the students' answers to the question: "What kind of teacher would you like to be?" In general, answers are brief and typically include reference to the desire to be the "best teacher ever" and other emotional or affective aspects. At first sight they may give the impression that they somehow show a learner-oriented perspective view of teaching, but except for Sofía, the other students initially had a very teacher-centred view of teaching and the activities they developed were highly controlled and grammar-based.

None of the students explicitly mentions her/his stance regarding critical and controversial modern language teaching issues. This can be attributed to the lack of knowledge about language teaching methodology. Their views are typically vague, naïve, and 'unprofessional'. What is more, they cannot be used as a guide for future action.

The analysis of their 'ideal lesson plans' (Table 13.2), which were discussed with them so as to better understand the underlying rationale, shows that these initial formulations are in most cases translated into traditional grammar-based and teacher-centred language teaching proposals even in those cases where they say their lesson is communicative. The only exception is the lesson plan developed by Sofía. The activities developed by Sofía meet the basic requirements of communicative activities.

Table 13.1 Initial Ideal Selves (Initial Questionnaire)

Students	*Kind of teacher they would like to be*
Álvaro	"Even if it sounds utopic, I would like to be the best teacher ever. I want to make my students learn while they enjoy the task. But I also would like to make them love the English language and to make them see it as a useful tool for their future in all possible senses (professional, personal, cultural…). Ideally, it would be also great if my students see me as a model and a trustworthy person to whom they can resort if they need it. In this respect, not only do I want to help them learn English but also instil some good values into them".
Ana	"I want to be a motivated, dynamic and creative teacher".
Sofía	"The kind that inspires, certainly. The kind that awakens curiosity, amazement, motivation, ambition. The efficient kind. The close-to-her-students kind, the supportive kind, the funny kind".
Javier	"I think I connect very well with youngsters. I would like to be a role model for them and teach them as many values as I can. Moreover, I want to create in them a right attitude so they can get ahead in their studies, specifically in English subject. I would like to find the perfect balance of what I would have to teach them (mandatory content and preparation for real life)".
Pedro	"I want to be professional, innovative, close to my students and able to make them enjoy the language. I want to demonstrate how necessary, useful and entertaining English is. There are many doors that would open more easily if you know this language, not only professional or academic, but also for leisure and discovering this world. Of course, I am aware that once I begin to teach I will have to adapt and transform myself and my way of understanding my work, but I think that it is essential to have, at least, an idea of what you want to be or what you do not want to be".

In Table 13.3 I present a summary of the students "exciting visions of modern language education", collected from portfolios at a later stage of the module. Students are encouraged to work on this from the beginning but the final version is done once the module is over. The average extension of these narrative accounts is three pages but in some cases it is considerably longer.

The obvious conclusion after comparing their future teacher selves at the beginning and at the end of the module is that they have made remarkable progress and accepted the learner autonomy paradigm. They all managed to define a workable possible self. In fact, most of them write in their portfolios that these are new possible selves they have constructed as they learnt about the methodological alternatives for L2 teaching. "…This has been possible thanks to a process of discovery that I have undergone within this master's course and

Table 13.2 Ideal Language Lessons (Summary)

Students	*Topics/goals/activities*	*Analysis*
Álvaro	Lesson plan: 'Festivals' Goal: To develop the language skills in an integrated fashion Activities: Warming-up activity and brainstorming on topic Speaking activity in pairs Jigsaw reading Follow-up task: 'Invent a new festival'. First oral discussion and then describe in writing. Finally, present it to the class. Integration activity: In groups of three, students write questions to ask their parents, grandparents and younger people. They conduct the interviews and present the results orally to the class.	Although there is an attempt to plan a communicative lesson, this is basically a teacher-centred lesson, focussed on forms rather than on meaning. It does incorporate some timid attempts to encourage some learner initiative, though.
Ana	Lesson plan: 'The good old days' Goals: (Five goals taken from official ELT curriculum) Activities: Brainstorming on habits in the past Reading comprehension Speaking activity (in pairs) Vocabulary exercises (matching words and definitions & circle the odd one out) Motivation activity: Students write down all the vocabulary they remember from the previous day individually, then in pairs and then in groups.	Although there is an attempt to incorporate a communicative perspective, most activities are fairly traditional, reflecting a view of the classroom as a controlled learning environment. Objectives were directly taken from the official curriculum for secondary education. These are long-term general goals. Therefore Ana is not really guided by the objectives in other important decisions, namely, the planning and/or selection of activities. Concerning autonomy, no principles of pedagogy for autonomy are used to actively promote it.

Students	*Topics/goals/activities*	*Analysis*
Sofía	Lesson plan: 'Riding the metro' Goal: To develop oral skills by getting students to practice functional language in a real communicative situation Activities: Students watch a YouTube video and discuss what the lesson might be about. Vocabulary activity Pair work activity: giving directions using an underground map Telling the rest of the class how to get from one location to another	This is a communicative lesson plan. Activities meet the basic criteria of communicative activities. However, one of the basic problems is that there is not much input in the lesson. This, from my perspective, may be an obstacle for the successful completion of the activities suggested. Regarding pedagogy for autonomy, I do not see any real focus on any of the principles. The teacher holds all the responsibility.
Javier	Lesson plan: 'Good evening, Europe' Goals: Know the vocabulary about music, show, television… Use Past Simple Use the numerals Watch three music performances and know about a TV programme Read and translate comprehensively some selected Eurovision's songs Activities: Approach to teaching the four skills: • Reading: Read the review and pay attention to the adjectives and make a list with the new vocabulary. Read and translate the lyrics of a song • Speaking: Write a dialogue and perform it in front of the class.	The lesson plan is focussed on grammar and vocabulary, reflecting a view of the language as a system of rules. There is no evident attempt to foster autonomy.
Pedro	Lesson plan: 'Getting away from it all' Goals: Working on vocabulary related to travel, means of transport, directions, and idioms related to travelling. Review present and past tenses. Working on reading, listening and writing skills Activities: Video for students to watch & multiple choice questions Debate Vocabulary exercises A quiz with images to check understanding of idioms and phrasal verb. Reading comprehension & multiple choice questions Vocabulary gap-filling exercise Grammar gap-filling exercise Grammar exercise (Rewriting sentences to a different verb tense) Organize a school trip	This lesson plan apparently reflects a communicative vision of the classroom. However, its main focus is the teaching of grammatical structures (review of past and present tenses) and vocabulary. It is a teacher-centred lesson plan. The plan incorporates listening and reading comprehension activities but the activities suggested are typically 'True or False' and multiple choice comprehension questions. There is one speaking activity but its duration is about three minutes. The final activity looks like a task-based activity: 'Organize a school trip' (Duration 20 minutes). However, the students are just required to fill in a worksheet.

particularly in this module which has contributed very valuable insights about the teaching and learning of English" (Álvaro). They were systematically encouraged to reflect upon their beliefs and contrast them with the new information, which led to their change.

Table 13.3 Exciting Visions (Summary)

Students	*Overall conceptions of language teaching/learning*	*ELT principles mentioned (focus on autonomy)*
Álvaro	Teaching as a highly complex activity Language as a skill Goal of ELT: To make students communicatively competent Preferred ELT approach: TBLT	• Active learning • Action-orientedness • Learner-centredness • Responsibility • Positive classroom atmosphere • Learning to learn & self-regulation • Learner differentiation • Engagement & intrinsic motivation
Ana	Teaching as the development of lifelong learners Preferred ELT approach: TBLT & Project work	• Maximizing learning opportunities • Promoting learner autonomy • Skills integration • Responsibility, choice and flexible control • Action-orientedness • Creation of an acquisition-rich classroom • Learning to learn & self-regulation • Reflective inquiry
Sofía	Education as a human experience Teacher's role: not to teach but to create opportunities for learning to take place Teacher qualities: closeness to students, empathy, eagerness to learn, innovation Pedagogic concerns: learner motivation, autonomy, participation, authenticity, creativity, freedom, thinking and problem-solving abilities; focus on meaning, provision of real-life communicative situations Preferred ELT approach: TBLT	• Action-orientedness • Responsibility, choice, and flexible control • Engagement and intrinsic motivation • Reflective inquiry • Autonomy support • Learner differentiation

Students	*Overall conceptions of language teaching/learning*	*ELT principles mentioned (focus on autonomy)*
Javier	Classroom learning as natural as possible Language used in its full complexity Pedagogic concerns: learner motivation, creation of realistic environments and rich learning experiences that promote lifelong learning and intercultural communicative competence Preferred ELT approach: TBLT	• Development of a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and rule-based competence, taking into consideration learners' internal syllabus. • Integrated skills • Creation of opportunities for input, output and interaction • Process approach to writing • Reading: intensive and extensive • Focus on meaning, and focus on form • Learning to learn and self-regulation • Responsibility, choice, and flexible control • Engagement and intrinsic motivation • Integration and explicitness • Conversational interaction • Action-orientedness • Autonomy support • Formative assessment • Learner differentiation • Reflective inquiry
Pedro	The classroom as a place for students to thrive, learn, make discoveries about the world, themselves and others Pedagogic concerns/challenges: innovation, agency in creating positive learning atmospheres, learner motivation and engagement, learner-centredness, developing one's professional identity Preferred ELT approach: TBLT	• Engagement & intrinsic motivation • Learning to learn & self-regulation • Reflective inquiry • Learner differentiation • Autonomy support • Conversational interaction

The mixture of intuitive and reflective practice has assisted pre-service teachers in making decisions confidently rather than reverting to some long held belief. Emphasis on the development of their own possible teacher selves required the opportunity to challenge opinions, to question, and think about methodological options to position themselves. The reflection on key aspects of ELT, on others' approaches to teaching, on action, and for action (Urzúa & Vásquez, 2008) helped them create their future teacher selves. In fact, reflection, if practised systematically, will continue to shape their identity throughout their career. Prospective reflection offered them a unique opportunity to engage in active meaningful decision-making, problem definition, exploration, and evaluation, particularly the kind that allows teachers to envision the future and to imagine themselves in that future. The creation of opportunities to critically reflect on the deeper implications helps create a more solid foundation for the times in which spontaneous decision-making is required.

The exciting visions represent goals or aspirations for the future, that is, hoped-for and feared possible selves that orient their vision to the future self. By focussing on the construction of their future teacher self they had to envision themselves as teachers and think about pedagogical content knowledge. In addition, the presentation of a range of methodological approaches through cases has enabled them to form detailed images of their possible selves-as-teachers. In fact, all portfolios contain elaborate explanations of what the students would do as professional teachers in specific classroom situations. However, future teacher selves are also regarded as a challenge towards which they will have to struggle as in the case of Sofía, for instance: "I believe that education is exciting only if we perceive it as a human experience.... Being able to relate to the students, to be seen as approachable, empathetic, eager to learn are qualities that make a great teacher". In this sense, the notion of the "space of possibility" has played a crucial role in convincing them that it is worth trying even if in small steps in order to gain greater confidence and expertise. Despite constraints the five students mention that they feel highly motivated to put their future self into practice.

> I have been constructing this web of ideas that I am sure will help me in the future as a teacher ... I cannot wait to put into practice my notion of education to see what happens, to face problems that are to come, reflecting, analysing, changing and growing.
>
> (Javier)

The five student teachers whose coursework was analyzed in this study are an accurate representation of the students taking the MA. Most students at least during the programme felt seduced by autonomy as an educational ideal and Task-based language teaching is the approach

subscribed by most of them. They often mention that their coming to this conclusion is based on the knowledge they have acquired during the course about the application and benefits of TBLT. In this sense, Ana writes in her portfolio:

> It was during this course that I heard for the first time about task-based learning. [...] It seems more effective to learn a language in a natural way, as we learn our first language. Therefore, I will definitely use task-based learning with my future students…

The cases designed by the students, summarized in Table 13.4, account for their intention to articulate TBLT with the promotion of learner autonomy.

Table 13.4 Cases (Summary)

Students/cases	*Goals*	*Approach*	*Underlying autonomy principles*
Álvaro "Writing an opinion essay - A case for the implementation of pedagogy for autonomy with Bachillerato students in Spain"	• Improve writing skills • Develop alternative strategies • Foster lifelong learning and autonomy	Task-based *Final task*: Writing an opinion essay: 'In your opinion, should homework be eliminated from schools or is it a useful, essential tool for learning?'	• Responsibility, choice and flexible control • Learning to learn • Reflective inquiry • Action-orientedness • Engagement & intrinsic motivation • Autonomy support • Formative assessment
Ana "A guide for exchange students"	• Reinforce autonomy, creativity, choice and self-confidence • Develop awareness of their willingness to communicate • Develop the language skills • Develop self-evaluation	Task-based *Final task*: Podcast – Guide for exchange students	• Responsibility • Learning to learn • Reflective inquiry • Action-orientedness • Differentiation

(*Continued*)

Students/cases	*Goals*	*Approach*	*Underlying autonomy principles*
Sofía "A book of short stories"	• Foster motivation, autonomy and reflection • Develop writing skills	Task-based *Final task*: A short story Final product: Short stories book	• Responsibility, choice and flexible control • Learning to learn • Reflective inquiry • Action-orientedness • Engagement & Intrinsic motivation
Javier "Time to change the world: The Guide"	• Improve writing skills • Foster critical thinking and active participation	Task-based *Final task*: Writing an opinion essay [no topic specified]	• Learning to learn • Reflective inquiry • Action-orientedness • Engagement & intrinsic motivation • Autonomy support • Formative assessment
Pedro	• Reinforce the listening and speaking skills	Mixture of controlled and communicative activities *Final task*: Writing an opinion essay: 'Taking into account the use and purpose of Original Soundtracks, does the original soundtrack of AIVA make any sense?'	• Learning to learn • Reflective inquiry

Exercising professional autonomy and agency entails the ability to act critically because teaching is always fencing with paradoxes and dilemmas. Agency is necessary for professionals to make choices, take stances, reshape professional identity, regarding their teaching practice (Billet, 2011). The underlying assumption of possible selves theory is that teachers, by explicitly thinking about their future teacher selves, would then

be in a better position to enact them. The first conclusion after the analysis of both the participants' exciting visions (future teacher selves) and their cases is that the formulation of their future teacher selves did facilitate the implementation of pedagogy for autonomy: "…I have been able to know myself better: I have been able to measure the space that exists between where I am currently and where I want to be as a language teacher… This is not just empty rhetoric" (Álvaro).

Four out of the five students participating in this study did successfully manage to implement their exciting visions during the practicum despite all constraints. Pedro tried but his case shows that he is still struggling with the actual implementation of his future teacher self. He is aware of his difficulty because he writes in his exciting vision: "I currently feel more comfortable with communicative language teaching". However, I am optimistic in the case of Pedro too, because possible selves tend to adopt a critical function when they are used to make comparisons against the current self. The latter is judged and evaluated depending on how big the discrepancy between them is. This is how pursued selves become behavioural standards when used as a framework for the interpretation of the situation of the self in the present. This is the reason I am confident that Pedro will eventually gain expertise towards his view of the classroom: "The classroom should be a place where students can thrive, a place for learning, for discovering new aspects about the world, about ourselves and about others".

Moreover, if the possible self is a detailed image or description combined with images of the individual implementing concrete strategies to achieve it, its effectiveness in provoking a change in our attitude and behaviour will be much higher. If the strategy is well defined, and we feel confident in the fact that we can follow it, the achievement becomes more tangible.

Conclusion

Autonomy is an intrinsically valuable education goal. The challenge is to educate and support teachers in their efforts to implement it in the classroom. TE programmes, therefore, bear a large share of the responsibility for supporting student teachers carefully and thoughtfully in the process of learning to teach through powerful TE practices. TE aiming at the promotion of autonomy may want to consider ways to support explicitly identity construction through possible-selves theory by encouraging student teachers to actively think and take a stance regarding the kind of teachers they want to be, encouraging them to systematically think about crucial issues of language teaching methodology and to implement their "possible teacher self". Insights gained from experimentation help them make moral decisions based on their experience. This also fosters teacher autonomy, agency, and responsibility for the kind

of teacher they want to be, articulating their choices and rationales for teaching. Working on the exploration of possible teacher selves is central to the professionalization of novice teachers and for education systems. Interrogating as much as possible the foundations of how we position ourselves as educators can help us develop richer, more consistent, and more professionally satisfying pedagogies. Initial TE is about the agentic development of self-views that involve a future. To "improve our teacher education practices we need to change our way of being teacher educators" (Feldman, 2003, p. 27).

Future research could focus on the transition from student to teacher to explore the real impact of initial TE, analyzing whether teaching continues to be permeated by the possible self, exploring also changes and the reasons for those changes.

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14 Language Teacher Education for Autonomy

The Role of Inquiry in Practicum Experiences

Flávia Vieira

Introduction

My work as a teacher educator has been influenced by many researchers in the autonomy field, one of them being Henri Holec from CRAPEL (*Centre de Recherches et d' Applications Pédagogiques en Langues*, University of Nancy II, France). I was extremely fortunate to meet him and the CRAPEL team back in the 1990s, when I was investigating pedagogy for autonomy in the English classroom for my PhD (Vieira, 1998). I had read the book *Autonomy and Foreign Language Teaching* (Holec, 1981) and I was excited to visit a Centre where autonomy was put to into practice, at a time when autonomy-oriented teaching was, at least in my country, an unfamiliar practice. I remember the thrill of interacting with people I admired and witnessing self-directed learning at work.

In our conversations, I asked Henri Holec whether CRAPEL had any influence on language teaching at local schools, since my main concern at the time was, and still is, the possibility of promoting autonomy in a school context. I recall him saying that self-directed learning at CRAPEL was as an alternative practice to teacher-directed learning, a *learner choice* and not a method to be imposed or to replace other forms of language teaching and learning; and no, CRAPEL did not influence local schools. Seeing self-directed learning as a learner choice appeared to be coherent with the concept of autonomy, especially when working with adults as in that Centre, but I wondered if autonomy could also have a place in regular schools, not as a learner choice but primarily as *a teacher choice to empower learners*. From my position as a teacher educator, I was a bit surprised to learn that local schools were not profiting from the CRAPEL's work, but I was also aware that autonomy in language teaching at schools was still at its beginning, despite the experiences taking place in some places, namely in Denmark with Leni Dam (see Dam, 1995). A long time had to pass before autonomy would become a goal of many educational systems around the world, and also an issue to explore in teacher education programmes.

Back then, in 1995, partly as a result of my PhD work, I started to coordinate a supervision project within the practicum of pre-service

language teacher education programmes (English and German) at my university, whose goal was to promote reflective teacher development through action research for learner autonomy at schools. In 1999 I had the opportunity to go back to CRAPEL and talk about this project in the colloquium "La didactique des langues en Europe au seuil du 3º millénaire: des réponses, des questions", held to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Centre and pay homage to Henri Holec, who had been its director since 1972 after Yves Châlon. The colloquium papers were published in 2000, in a special issue of the CRAPEL' journal, *Mélanges Crapel* – issue 25, *Une Didactique Pour Demain*. I focussed on the role of supervision in the development of language pedagogy, and I argued that *instructional supervision can be a productive field of experimentation towards a coherent and purposeful articulation between reflective teacher education and learner-centred language pedagogy through action research* (Vieira, 2000, p. 37). I presented a 'practical theory of supervision' based on our project, which integrated a framework of principles for supervision, teaching, and learning: experimentation, reflection, inquiry, sense of direction, awareness, integration of theory and practice, transparency, and collaboration (p. 32).

The supervision project came to an end in 2007 with the creation of master's degrees in teaching within the Bologna Reform, which involved the design of new pre-service teacher education curricula. However, the new practicum model at my institution, which I helped to design at the time and is now common to all those master's degrees, was inspired by that project and articulates reflective teaching with learner autonomy through pedagogical research. In this paper I will focus on the potential value of autonomy-oriented inquiry in practicum settings by presenting a qualitative study of eight practicum reports of action research projects carried out by student teachers within the Master in Teaching English for Primary School, a programme that was recently created in Portugal. After presenting the rationale and characteristics of the post-Bologna practicum model at the University of Minho, I will analyze the student teachers' reports with a focus on: visions of language education; pedagogical inquiry and professional knowledge; and project impact on learners and teachers. Even though the study refers to a particular teacher education programme, it provides an example of how inquiry-based field experiences may enhance an epistemology of practice that promotes both learner and teacher autonomy.

Inquiry for Autonomy in Practicum Settings

> In the varied topography of professional practice there is a high, hard ground overlooking a swamp. On the high ground, manageable problems lend themselves to solution through the application of research-based theory and technique. In the swampy lowland,

> messy, confusing problems defy technical solution. The irony of this situation is that the problems of the high ground tend to be relatively unimportant to individuals or society at large, however great their technical interest may be, while in the swamp lie the problems of greatest human concern. The practitioner must choose. Shall he remain on the high ground where he can solve relatively unimportant problems according to prevailing standards of rigor, or shall he descend to the swamp of important problems and nonrigorous inquiry?
>
> (Schön, 1987, p. 3)

Issues of autonomy in education clearly lie in the 'swampy lowland' of professional practice and can't be handled through 'the application of research-based theory and technique'. Building on Schön's metaphor, teacher educators need to decide whether they want to 'remain on the high ground' and perpetuate a theory-into-practice rationale that disregards teachers' agency and the complexities of practice, or 'descend to the swamp' and support teacher inquiry into making education more empowering, even if such inquiry entails sacrificing methodological rigour in favour of educational relevance. Ultimately, this choice is ideological as "the determination of 'excellence' [in teacher education programmes] is always dependent on moral and ethical questions and cannot be determined by empirical research alone" (Zeichner & Conklin, 2008, p. 273).

The use of pedagogical inquiry in practicum settings is rather controversial, especially since schools often lack a culture of inquiry, and teachers are expected to follow established rules and routines. Inquiry-based teaching may be perceived as an interruption or an impediment to mainstream practices, rather than a strategy needed to challenge and improve them (Darwin & Barahona, 2018). Teacher inquiry is assumed to promote professional autonomy, but Gore (2003) poses a relevant question in this respect: "When much of the empowerment rhetoric pertains to practices which could or should take place within universities and schools, we must ask how much freedom can there be within the institutional and pedagogical exigencies of teaching?" (p. 338). Contextual variables do impose limitations on teachers' freedom of choice. However, teachers can always exercise a certain degree of power at the micro-level of practice (Contreras, 2002; Frostenson, 2015). Teacher autonomy can thus be envisaged as an on-going struggle for empowerment that takes place in the interspace between realities and ideals, where participants negotiate what can be done in particular settings so as to better education in schools (Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2018).

Supervisors can become facilitators of inquiry by fostering student teachers' critical stance towards contexts of practice and their ability to build learner-centred pedagogies. From this perspective, teacher education for autonomy entails both teacher *and* learner autonomy

as interconnected phenomena, developing simultaneously within co-constructed, dialogical pedagogies (cf. Manzano Vázquez, 2018). Even though the literature on autonomy in language education has focussed primarily on the learner, and definitions of learner and teacher autonomy usually differ (Benson, 2006, 2011), when autonomy is understood as a common interest and a democratic ideal, then teacher and learner autonomy are like two faces of the same coin and can be defined similarly as "the competence to develop as a self-determined, socially responsible and critical aware participant in (and beyond) educational environments, within a vision of education as (inter)personal empowerment and social transformation" (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, & Vieira, 2007, p. 1, 2017, p. 17).

The above assumptions inform the practicum model of post-Bologna master's degrees in teaching at the University of Minho,[1] which I helped design back in 2007. New national regulations required student teachers to write a final report to be defended publicly, and the need to incorporate some form of research into the practicum was tacitly assumed by most institutions. This was a huge challenge given that a theory-into-practice understanding of professional learning had been generally assumed, and inquiry was rarely conducted in practicum settings. At my institution, as mentioned above, there was one supervision project initiated in 1995 and coordinated by a small group of supervisors (including myself) within language teacher education programmes, in which student teachers carried out autonomy-oriented action research projects in schools (Moreira, 2009; Vieira & Moreira, 2008). This local experience inspired the design of an inquiry-based practicum model for all the teacher education programmes, represented in Figure 14.1.

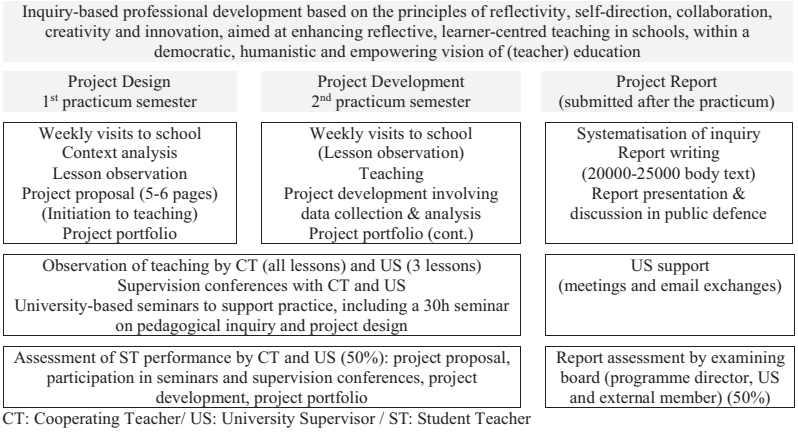

Figure 14.1 The post-Bologna practicum model.

The model assumes an empowering vision of (teacher) education and an understanding of teaching as a 'discipline' (Loughran, 2009; Martin & Russell, 2009). Practicum experiences are expected to play a transformative role as regards mainstream school practices, through the development of a learner-centred project in one of the cooperating teacher's classes. Action research is recommended as a strategy that can bridge the divide between theory and practice, enhance reflective teaching, reshape teacher identity and foster professional autonomy (Darwin & Barahona, 2018; Moreira, 2009; Price, 2001; Trent, 2010; Ulvik & Riese, 2016; Vaughan & Burnaford, 2016). The project is documented in a reflective portfolio and presented in the final report. Report writing is aimed at enhancing critical thinking and the theorization of practice through the integration of experience, theory, and practical wisdom (Lunenberg & Korthagen, 2009).

To understand the potential value of the new model, local studies have been conducted by teacher educators from different programmes, based on questionnaires, report analysis, and interviews (Flores, Vieira, Silva, & Almeida, 2016; Pereira & Vieira, 2017; Vieira, Flores, Silva, & Almeida, 2019). Overall, the results are positive but concerns are also raised, especially regarding the teaching-research nexus, the complexity of inquiry and its transformative power as regards school cultures. These studies have stressed the importance of developing a scholarship of teacher education whereby teacher educators inquire into and improve their own practice (Loughran, 2002, 2007; Lunenberg & Hamilton, 2008; Zeichner, 2007). The study reported below is an expansion of previous studies, this time focussing on a more recent programme: The Master in Teaching English for Primary School.

Language Teaching for Autonomy: A Study of Student Teachers' Reports

Context

The Master in Teaching English for Primary School has three semesters (90 credits) and was created in several institutions across the country in 2015, when English became a compulsory subject in grades 3 and 4 (usually two hours a week) after being an optional extra-curricular subject for about a decade.[2] Candidates must hold 80 credits in English and do not need prior educational training, but the programme also offers in-service English teachers an opportunity to requalify for primary education at master's level, and classes are usually heterogeneous as regards students' academic and professional experience.

The practicum syllabus is aligned with the model presented in Figure 14.1 above. Students teach a total of 24 hours and develop a small-scale action research project in nine hours. The limitation of project time is

due to the need to comply with syllabi, adopted coursebooks, and school planning. Projects are designed for a 3rd-grade class in the second semester of the programme (from mid-February to June), briefly initiated in this semester and fully implemented in the following semester when the same class is in the 4th grade (from October to end of January). Lesson plans and materials are designed in accordance with project topics and objectives, with the support of university and school supervisors. Student teachers build a project portfolio and write the final report on their project. Reports include an introduction to the topic of inquiry, a theoretical rationale, a description of the context and the action research plan, an analytical account of project development and evaluation, a conclusion, and appendices with teaching and data collection materials.

The practicum is supported by three courses on Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL), one in each semester of the programme, where students get familiar with (trans)national language policies, pedagogy for autonomy, and specific TEYL strategies and resources. They engage in practical tasks like analyzing curricula, coursebooks and autonomy-oriented teaching experiences, as well as designing teaching plans and materials.

Method

Action research reports can provide evidence of professional learning, as "action research and narrative writing can be seen as interconnected processes of learning *from* and *about* the pedagogical-research game, whereby novice teachers are expected to build their identity as proactive educators" (Pereira & Vieira, 2017, p. 137). The study involved an extensive analysis of the eight reports (six supervised by me) that were defended within the first two editions of the programme (from October 2015 to mid-February 2017, and from October 2016 to mid-February 2018). Table 14.1 presents the project topics and contexts of implementation.

Table 14.1 The Reports: Project Topics and Contexts

Rs	*Project topics*	*Contexts of implementation (English level: A1)*
R1	Expressive reading of stories	One class: 15 boys, 10 girls
R2	Self-directed learning practices	One class: 9 boys, 15 girls
R3	Learner engagement through music	One class: 15 boys, 11 girls
R4	Intercultural learning through CLIL	One class: 13 boys, 13 girls
R5	Oral skills for communication	One class: 11 boys, 10 girls
R6	Learning through arts & crafts	One class: 11 boys, 14 girls
R7	Intercultural learning through stories	One class: 8 boys, 11 girls
R8	Promoting citizenship through stories	One class: 12 boys, 16 girls

The student teachers were all female, aged from 23 to 45. Except for the two youngest ones, they were already qualified to teach English in upper grades and had some experience in teaching English in primary schools as an extra-curricular subject. None had been involved in action research and only one had some experience in autonomy-oriented teaching (R2), as she had been working in a school where learner autonomy was promoted through project work.

Report analysis was done with a grid already used for our previous studies, focussing on: visions of education, the teaching-research nexus, professional knowledge in project development, and the impact of projects upon learners and teachers. This grid integrates pre-defined items and open spaces for registering relevant information. For pre-defined items, a notation system is used regarding their presence in reports: EP – Explicitly Present; IP – Implicitly Present (i.e., aspects that can be inferred although they are not clearly stated, described, explained, or illustrated). Complementary analyses were also conducted, and a few report excerpts were translated for illustration purposes. Table 14.2 indicates the themes around which the findings were organized and the analytical procedures used.

Table 14.2 Report Analysis: Themes and Procedures

Themes	*Analytical procedures*
Visions of language education	Summary of key-elements in projects Presence of grid items in reports: visions of pedagogy, the teacher, and the learner Summary/categorization of tasks focussed on children's learning competences Illustrative excerpts from reports
Pedagogical inquiry and professional knowledge	Presence of grid items in reports: pedagogical inquiry; types and roles of knowledge in project development Illustrative excerpts from reports
Project impact on learners and teachers	Summary/categorization of project impact on learner and teacher competences Illustrative excerpts from reports

To protect the student teachers' identity, no reference is made to their names. A previous version of the chapter was sent to them to obtain permission for using report excerpts.

Findings

Visions of Language Education

The fact that action research makes teaching informed, committed and intentional (McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead, 1996) is evident in

Figure 14.2, which summarizes key-elements of the student teachers' projects: topics were selected on the basis of their contextual, theoretical and personal relevance; teaching approaches were inquiry-based and learner-centred, assigning children a pro-active, reflective role; evaluation of teaching was data-based and interpretative.

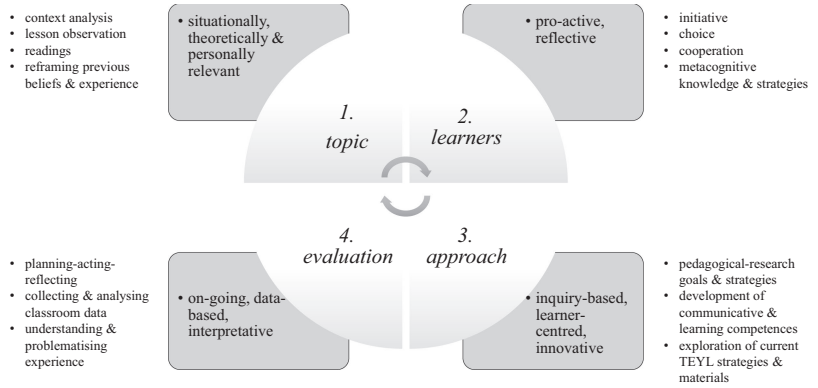

Figure 14.2 Key-elements of language education projects.

In alignment with the practicum model, all the student teachers' narratives account for a vision of themselves as reflective agents of change and of learners as active participants in learning, within a conception of pedagogy based on humanistic and democratic values (Table 14.3).

Table 14.3 Visions of Education (n = 8)

		EP	*IP*
Vision of pedagogy	Democratic, inclusive, focussed on learning	8	–
Vision of the teacher	Reflective, agent of change	8	–
Vision of the learner	Reflective, constructor of knowledge	8	–

EP – explicitly present; IP – implicitly present.

Rather than portraying project design as a linear process that starts from the identification of a clear-cut problem to be solved, reports convey a multi-dimensional notion of 'project'. In writing about their choice of topics and approaches, student teachers refer to various driving forces: personal views of teaching and learning, inspiring readings, children's needs and interests, previous teaching experiences, and particular school projects. Nevertheless, we might say that all the projects derive from a perceived mismatch between what language education *is* and *should be* according to what student teachers stand for and intend to

explore – learner-centred pedagogies based on a broad understanding of language education that enhances not only children's language abilities but also their learning and social competences:

> I tried (…) to implement an approach that reached beyond language learning and developed other aspects like children's expressiveness and creativity, but also their initiative and reflection about learning, in activities that promoted expressive oral reading and the dramatization of stories, and contributed to raise their motivation and involvement in learning.
>
> (R1, pp. 7–8)

> My main reason for developing self-direction practices with primary school students is the importance I give to pedagogy for autonomy, which in turn is related to my vision of education, according to which school assumes the role of educating with reference to the cross-disciplinary values of responsibility, participation, self-management, democracy and solidarity, so as to enhance motivation, interest, and willingness to learn (...).
>
> (R2, p. 21)

> In designing four teaching sequences, (…) I tried to plan them so as to challenge students cognitively; present relevant contents that interested students; convey multicultural values through content (…); foster sharing and collaboration in group tasks; promote cross-curricular learning in areas like mathematics, arts and social studies (…); and finally, use children stories that developed intercultural competence and universal values.
>
> (R4, p. 30)

An important aspect of student teachers' learner-centred rationales is a critical understanding of the educational potential of TEYL resources and approaches that are often used mostly for ludic purposes, for example arts & crafts and storytelling:

> In my project, the use of arts and crafts is based on a broad view of the competences to be developed in children, and it was mainly associated with language learning, creativity, and self-regulation abilities. It was not about using artistic expression just as a didactic support to language learning, or as an aesthetic and ludic resource; although these aspects are important, artistic expression was used as a way of teaching and learning that may mobilise and integrate various forms of knowledge, attitudes and values in the context of language education.
>
> (R6, p. 21)

> (...) stories appeal to our sensitivity, and through them we think and question our attitudes and options. They make our visions of the world less limited and individualistic, allowing us to 'read the world' through various lenses, and to be more open to the *Other*. Therefore, they are faithful allies in promoting competences for democratic citizenship, and valid tools for facilitating a dynamic practice in teaching foreign languages. So, stories go well beyond entertaining or amusing. (…) Apart from their linguistic and literary value, stories help children to get real notions of the word, understand cultural traditions and differences, activate creative and critical thinking, and adapt their values as individuals in their own society, also motivating them to learn the foreign language.
>
> (R8, p. 18)

Learner-centredness involved the enactment of dialogic approaches where children's voices and actions played an important role, namely through tasks that fostered initiative and choice, cooperation, and metacognitive knowledge and strategies (Table 14.4).

All the projects aimed at integrating communicative and learning competences through creative approaches that allowed children to become active language users and learners. To some extent, they illustrate what van Lier (2007) calls 'action-based teaching', that is, teaching that puts agency at the centre of the learning process and combines careful structuring with opportunities to develop autonomy and intrinsic

Table 14.4 Learner-Centred Tasks (Summary)

Learning competences	*Learning tasks*
Initiative and choice	Selecting topics, tasks, resources Building on personal ideas and experiences Working at own pace Managing pair/group tasks Using a bilingual dictionary Creating a bilingual dictionary Doing research on a topic Planning and producing outputs (e.g., poster; poem; CD cover; campaign flyer)
Cooperation	Working in pairs/groups Participating in collective tasks (e.g., class scrapbook; farm/jungle sceneries)
Metacognitive knowledge and strategies	Self/co-correcting tasks Reflecting about language use (e.g., what is expressive reading?) Evaluating learning (feelings, attitudes, strategies, difficulties, outcomes…) Evaluating teaching (motivational value, usefulness…)

motivation. The projects also document the student teachers' process of learning to teach through what Price (2001) describes as 'crafting their own pedagogies' (p. 59), which involves on-going decisions about and interpretations of teaching and learning.

Pedagogical Inquiry and Professional Knowledge

When student teachers design their projects, they are asked to build a table summarizing their intervention and clarifying the interconnectedness of teaching and research, which they usually integrate in their reports. Figure 14.3 presents an example from the project on *learning through arts and crafts* (R6, p. 28), illustrating the type of objectives and strategies student teachers define, as well as the type of information they collect and analyze.

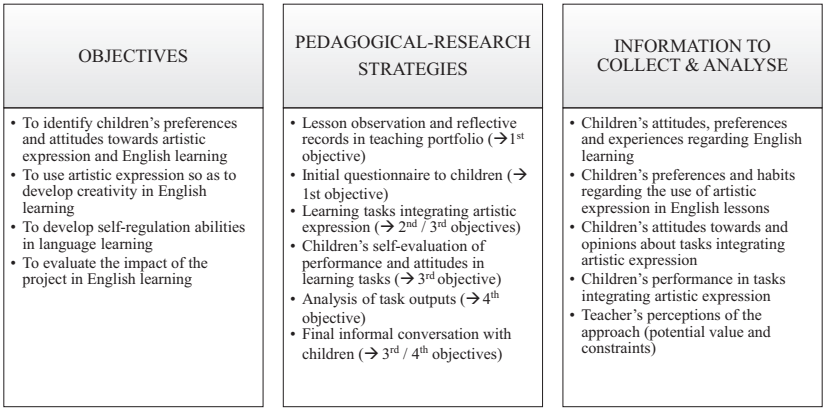

Figure 14.3 The teaching-research nexus (example).

The interconnectedness of teaching and research across projects is evident in Table 14.5. Student teachers monitor and evaluate their approaches on the basis of data collection, which deepens their practical wisdom through enhancing their sensitivity to educational situations (Lunenberg & Korthagen, 2009; Mason, 2002), and helps them become self-directed reflective professionals. However, the extent to which data collected are discussed with children and feeds back into teaching is not always clear in reports, which are written as a final 'product' after the practicum. Portfolio reflections produced in the course of teaching account better for this aspect.

Amongst the various data collection strategies used, learner self-evaluation plays a major role. Student teachers always design an anonymous self-evaluation questionnaire in the children's mother tongue to be filled in at the end of teaching sequences, usually three times during the project. Figure 14.4 presents an example from the project on *promoting*

Table 14.5 Pedagogical Inquiry (*n* = 8)

	EP	*IP*
Type of inquiry		
Action research	8	–
Purpose of inquiry		
Exploring new approaches to enhance learning	8	–
Data collection & analysis of practice		
Collecting data to analyze and improve teaching	8	–
Document analysis (syllabus, coursebook, etc.)	8	–
Lesson observation & reflective records	8	–
Dialogue with learners	8	–
Initial learner questionnaire	8	–
Learner self-evaluation at different moments	8	–
Analysis of learner outputs in tasks	3	–
Photographs of learner engagement in tasks	8	–
Final learner questionnaire	3	–
Final letter to teacher	2	–
Final informal interview to class	2	–
Reflecting with children about data collected	1	7
Ongoing change on the basis of learner data	1	7
Triangulation of methods/sources	8	–
Synthesis of results/conclusions	8	–
Reflection on the value of the project		
Impact on children and on professional self	8	–
Implications/recommendations	8	–

EP – explicitly present; IP – implicitly present.

citizenship through stories (R8). Children were asked to reflect about a teaching sequence where the picture book *One* (by Kathryn Otoshi) was the basis for exploring Bullying and promoting humanistic values. Data collected with this type of instrument allow student teachers to reflect on children's learning through and receptivity to their project, enhancing their knowledge about the context of practice so as to adjust teaching strategies.

Evidence of learning in the student teachers' reports is mostly indirect, that is, it refers to learners' perceptions and opinions rather than language performance. This reflects a focus on children's voice and a primary concern with the development of children's reflective abilities. A greater focus on analyzing children's oral and written performance would be desirable, but the short duration of projects, as well as the fact that student teachers are not responsible for assessing learning, set limitations on this possibility. Nevertheless, reports present products of

THINK...

1. What I learnt with the story ONE:

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. What I think about Bullying:

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. What I liked and didn't like in these 3 lessons:

	Liked a lot	*Liked more or less*	*Didn't like*
Reading the story ONE			
Learning vocabulary			
Using the dictionary			
Making a bookmark			
Writing a poem			
Listening to a song			
Making a poster			
Working in a group			

Figure 14.4 Self-evaluation questionnaire (example).

children's work that provide evidence of language learning. For example, the poster mentioned in the self-evaluation questionnaire in Figure 14.4 was the final outcome of a task called *Everyone Counts!*, where children worked in groups and produced anti-bullying slogans that were then written and illustrated in a class poster: for example, 'Don't be a bully. Be the one', 'Kindness is magic, bullying is tragic', 'Exclusion is bullying', 'Bullying is bad. It makes others feel sad', or 'The end of bullying begins with you. Be a hero' (Figure 14.5, R8, p. 86).

Pedagogical inquiry as presented in reports involved the use of four types of declarative professional knowledge: contextual, educational, content, and research knowledge. Table 14.6 indicates the presence of these types of knowledge in the reports and their roles in project tasks (e.g., *contextual knowledge* is explicitly used in the eight reports for *characterizing the practicum context*).

Some major conclusions can be drawn from this table. First of all, contextual knowledge, referring to variables that affect pedagogy (the curriculum, the school, the resources, the learner, the teacher, the teaching-learning processes…), appears to play a central role as a basis for and an outcome of pedagogical inquiry. Second, there is a limited use of

Figure 14.5 Sample evidence of children's language learning.

Table 14.6 Types and Roles of Knowledge in Project Development (n = 8)

Project development tasks	*Types of declarative knowledge*							
	Contextual		*Educational*		*Content*		*Research*	
	EP	*IP*	*EP*	*IP*	*EP*	*IP*	*EP*	*IP*
Characterizing the practicum context	8	–	8	–	–	–	–	–
Identifying and justifying the topic	8	–	8	–	8	–	–	–
Justifying pedagogical strategies	8	–	8	–	8	–	–	–
Justifying data collection strategies	8	–	2	–	–	8	3	5
Analyzing/evaluating the intervention	8	–	3	2	–	8	–	–
Identifying shortcomings of inquiry	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	1

EP – explicitly present; IP – implicitly present.

declarative research knowledge for justifying data collection strategies, even though all the reports account for procedural research knowledge in the development of inquiry-based teaching (see Table 14.5 above). As for educational knowledge (general and specific to TEYL), it is mostly used for justifying choice of topics and teaching strategies rather than for analyzing or evaluating interventions. Finally, shortcomings of inquiry are barely mentioned, although I often witness the challenges posed by data collection and analysis in supervising the student teachers' work. The examples below refer to using self-evaluation and observation instruments and raise issues regarding learners' willingness and ability to reflect on learning, and teachers' ability to capture learning processes:

> In using these [self-evaluation] instruments, I could see that these students are not used to reflecting about lessons and their performance. Initially, I sensed some strangeness in some students and even doubts about what to reply. Even in the final letter to the teacher, some said they did not know what to write. Along the project, I tried to have informal conversations with them, always with the purpose of making them reflect, for example asking if they enjoyed a specific task, what they thought about a specific exercise, whether it was easy/difficult and why. I tried to raise their awareness to the fact that through reflection we get to know ourselves better, perceive the difficulties we have, thus progressing in our learning.
>
> (R5, p. 18)

> It is not easy to find a way to visualize engagement. How can you measure student engagement? How can you see if a student is participating, interested and motivated, and therefore enjoying and having fun? I tried to find some criteria that could help me observe the students [in the cooperating teacher's lessons]. I came up with three that were integrated into the [observation] grid:
>
> - *Participation*: is participation organized – for example, does the student raise her/his hand to respond to the teacher's requests, does s/he take initiatives?
> - *Interest and Motivation*: is there eye contact with the teacher/peers while listening/interacting, is s/he attentive, on task?
> - *Enjoyment and Fun*: is the student smiling and relaxed?
>
> After having a data collection instrument that helped me with my observation, the next problem popped up. So many students in a classroom, how can I observe them correctly and make notes at the same time? I decided to divide students in groups, students that sat together and nearby, and observe them for some minutes. Then I would focus on another group of students and so on. The major

> problem here was that I didn't know their names yet [at beginning of the practicum] and I had prepared my grid with their names in alphabetical order. That complicated things even more. It wasn't as easy as I thought it would be. So, I decided to be more flexible and took some general notes on my notebook, following the specific criteria from the grid.
>
> (R3, pp. 18–19)

Project Impact on Learners and Teachers

Reports account for the positive impact of projects on a set of learner and teacher competences summarized in Table 14.7. Although impact

Table 14.7 Impact of Projects (Summary)

Learner development for autonomy	
Communicative competence	Expansion of language skills Expression of personal ideas
Cultural and social competence	Intercultural awareness Development of citizenship values Cross-curricular learning
Learning competence: metacognitive knowledge and strategies	Knowledge and experimentation of learning strategies Self-evaluation and evaluation of teaching Participation in decision-making processes
Learning competence: attitudes and behaviours	Development of self-awareness and pro-activeness: engagement, initiative, self-esteem, self-confidence, creativity, critical thinking, cooperation
Teacher development for autonomy	
Teaching competence	Knowledge of contexts of practice Knowledge about children and respect for diversity Concern with and ability to promote autonomy Knowledge about and ability to explore TEYL strategies Attention to affective factors and interpersonal relationships Willingness and ability to innovate teaching
Inquiry competence	Critical stance towards language education Ability to reflect about teaching and learning Openness to change Ability to carry out action research

varied according to topics and objectives, learner and teacher autonomy were developed in tandem, integrating elements of self-direction, social responsibility, and critical awareness (Jiménez Raya et al., 2007, 2017).

Student teachers expressed their satisfaction with and recommended their approach. Yet, they also realized that the impact of their projects on learning was limited due to time constraints, especially in rather complex areas like self-directed learning and intercultural competence:

> In developing my project, I tried to reverse the traditional teacher and learner roles as much as possible (…). Even if there was no time to develop a high level of autonomy, I managed to create moments of self-directed learning where students had the opportunity to make choices and decisions without having to consult me, to do something that is usually the teacher's responsibility – correcting their work –, and to work at their own pace without those waiting times that often occur in fully teacher-directed approaches, which, from my point of view, interrupt learning processes, potentially generate distraction or even misbehaviour, and reinforce students' dependence on the teacher. My role in class became that of a mediator, guide and facilitator of learning.
>
> (R2, pp. 9–10)

> Promoting intercultural awareness and citizenship competences is not an easy task, regardless of students' age, since it is actually a process that develops throughout life. Therefore, I am aware that the attitudes, behaviours and knowledge I tried to convey and promote in my students are just 'a drop in the ocean'. Nevertheless, I also believe that this drop, no matter how small it may be, is an important lesson they take with them to build their path in a conscientious and gradual way.
>
> (R7, p. 64)

All reports end with a positive note on the practicum experience and a pro-active stance towards future practice.

Final Reflections

In a review of empirical studies, Cohen, Hoz, and Kaplan (2013) identify four rationales for field experiences in pre-service teacher education: providing professional training at the workplace, reducing the gap between theory and practice, acquainting prospective teachers with diverse educational settings, and supporting the development of their identity (pp. 244–255). These rationales are not mutually exclusive and co-exist in many programmes. However, the transformative potential of the practicum will largely depend on underlying assumptions regarding teaching,

learning, and learning to teach. The study reported here indicates that when practicum models are driven by an empowering vision of (teacher) education, they may foster innovation towards learner-centred pedagogies in schools. Therefore, research into the transformative potential of practicum arrangements must necessarily take into account the relation between language teacher education principles and professional learning outcomes.

Loughran (2009) argues that

> If teaching is to be understood as something more than an array of actions or trained approaches to 'doing', then there must be a mechanism for teachers to recognize, articulate, and build upon their knowledge of practice in real and meaningful ways.
>
> (p. 200)

Student teachers' reports suggest that supervised inquiry can become such a 'mechanism' in practicum settings, fostering teaching as a disciplined activity where personal understandings and practices are (re) shaped through conceptual development and metacognition (Martin & Russell, 2009). Nevertheless, research into the processes and outcomes of inquiry needs to draw on a variety of sources, and reports are just one of them. Interviewing supervisors, student teachers and their students, as well as observing practice, would provide a more holistic account of the significance of inquiry for promoting learner and teacher autonomy in this context. On the other hand, it would be important to know more about the influence of student teachers' engagement in action research on post-programme teaching experience, not only because school contexts are often adverse to inquiry, but also because action research in the practicum may be perceived more like an institutional demand than as a professional tool to improve life in schools (Darwin & Barahona, 2018; Ulvik & Riese, 2016).

Along with the positive results of the study, some shortcomings were identified in reports: low presence of declarative research knowledge; limited use of educational knowledge for interpreting and evaluating experiences; weak explicitness of ongoing decision-making processes; little use of methods to collect direct evidence of language learning; and lack of reflection on the challenges of inquiry. These shortcomings can be partially explained by the student teachers' lack of research experience and deserve further attention in supervision processes. It is also important to note that action research undertaken in practicum settings is necessarily different from action research conducted by experienced professionals. Darwin and Barahona (2018, p. 13) signal what they see as 'potential misalignments between the core elements of action research design and how it is manifested in the initial teacher education

contexts', which may be epistemological (e.g., purpose and form of inquiry, research knowledge used and how research outcomes are used) or practical (e.g., who sponsors research and the research conditions). However, one might also argue that 'descending to the swamp' of educational practice is hardly compatible with a precise definition of what pedagogical inquiry *should* look like. Student teachers' inquiry can be seen as "an opportunity to learn about change as an integral part of the work of learning to teach and teaching" (Price, 2001, p. 67), a form of researching from the inside (Mason, 2002), whose main purpose is the creation of personal 'living theories' based on describing, explaining and validating practice in relation to one's cherished educational values (McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead, 1996). From these perspectives, inquiry represents a path to personal change and empowerment, even if it is incomplete and imperfect.

Acknowledgements

This work is funded by CIEd – Research Centre on Education, Institute of Education, University of Minho, projects UIDB/01661/2020 and UIDP/01661/2020, through national funds of FCT/MCTES-PT. I am grateful to the student teachers for allowing me to use excerpts from their reports, and I have to express my appreciation for their dedication and effort in making their teaching meaningful to children and in doing their best to cope with the demands of action research projects.

Notes

1 These master's programmes (90 or 120 credits) were created in 2007 within the Bologna reform (Decree-Law No. 43/2007). Previous four/five-year undergraduate programmes were replaced by a two-cycle process to become a teacher: a three-year undergraduate degree in a given subject (e.g., English) followed by a two-year professional master degree in teaching, which includes courses on content knowledge, education, teaching methodology, and the practicum. The practicum is about one third of the credits and usually takes place in the last two semesters.

2 English is the only compulsory foreign language in primary education in Portugal, and it is taught by specialist teachers. Until 2015 it was an optional extra-curricular subject taught by teachers with diverse academic and professional backgrounds, including those who had qualified for upper grades (grades 6 to 12). The new master is the only postgraduate programme for English teaching in primary schools. At the University of Minho, it includes courses in English language and literature (20 credits), general educational courses (15 credits), language teaching methodology courses (22,5 credits), and the practicum in the second and third semesters (7, 5, and 25 credits, respectively). In the practicum, student teachers teach a minimum of 24 hours and the project is developed in 9 hours. Since in-service teachers can also

requalify for primary education through shorter intensive courses (usually one semester long), the number of candidates for the master's programme has been relatively low across the country.

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Avenues for Autonomy
Concluding Remarks

Manuel Jiménez Raya and Flávia Vieira

As mentioned in the Introduction, the motto for this collection of papers was the 40th anniversary of Henri Holec's *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*, published in 1981 by Pergamon Press. Almost three decades after that publication, in the foreword to a collection of papers on learner and teacher autonomy, Holec stated that "the autonomy approach in language learning/teaching has fostered a powerful investigation drive that has led to the questioning and the revision of an ever increasing number of pedagogical tenets, assumptions and evidences at all levels of the learning/teaching process" (Holec, 2008, p. 3). That 'powerful investigation drive' is well documented in this book, where researchers from diverse settings around the world report on and instigate advances in the field. In accounting for multiple understandings and practices, their contributions are in tune with what Holec anticipated back then regarding future developments:

> On a more general and programmatic level, what is likely to become the driving force behind future research and development work in the autonomy approach to language learning/teaching is the fully assuming and the systematic exploration of the fundamental plurality and variability of all pedagogical endeavours. (…) At all levels of investigation into the autonomy approach care will have to be taken to avoid looking for monolithic and stable answers. Instead, conditions of plurality and parameters of variability will be sought after, then brought to play in the analyses carried out and finally accommodated in the theories and/or the practices provisionally set up.
>
> (Holec, 2008, p. 4)

In these final remarks, we will focus on plurality and variability from a rather different perspective by looking at the *research stances* adopted by the authors and general implications for research emerging from their work, hoping to highlight possible avenues for the development of the autonomy field.

We identified three stances in the volume, which we labelled metaphorically as 'archeologic', 'review', and 'experiential'. Although they

overlap in most chapters, the chapters were grouped according to the main stance they appear to illustrate.

An Archeologic Stance

Two of the contributions adopt an 'archeologic stance' so as to trace the history of autonomy and shed new light on advances that took place over the years. This is done through investigating the role of Holec's (1981) pioneering book within academic discourses (Palfreyman), and the challenges to Holec's understanding of autonomy in a multilingual world (Benson & Lamb). These contributions portray the autonomy field as *a long journey of inquiry*, underlining the need to look at educational innovations from an historical perspective that considers the sociocultural contexts of change and the factors that may account for its significance. The autonomy history is composed by a myriad of stories that can be told from various angles and provide complementary explanations of how it came to where it is.

An 'archeologic stance' requires inquiry that 'excavates' the field in order to identify its developments and build understandings about how it has been constituted through time. These purposes are pursued in these two papers through a citation and lexicological analysis of academic texts over time, and a dialogical analysis of personal histories to make sense of past and current understandings of autonomy. Implications for research might be put forward as follows:

- Understanding the history of the autonomy field can be enhanced through the analysis of how scholars build on and influence knowledge production; investigating the intertextual connections and impact of published texts may reveal hidden connections among academic discourses and provide clues on the historical weaving of the field.
- Evolutions in the field can also be understood with reference to how changes in the contexts and purposes of language education over time has impacted on scholars' thinking; in scrutinizing their own stories as language educators and researchers, scholars provide invaluable insights into how the history of the field progresses as a result of long-term inquiries and situated professional knowledge.

A Review Stance

A second stance is found in papers that look at how particular autonomy constructs, trends, and practices have evolved. The 'review stance' is adopted here to discuss advances regarding self-regulation, self-access, and language advising (Gao & Hu; Mynard; Thornton; Tassinari & Martos Ramos); the move from classroom-based learning to learning beyond the

classroom (Reinders); and research on autonomy in a particular country (Paiva & Braga). These papers deepen our conceptual understanding of autonomy and portray the field as *a kaleidoscope of knowledge* whose pieces can form diverse shapes, depending on what is looked at, who looks at it, when, where, and what for. Reviews have the power to build global images from fragmented knowledge, but they are always partial and provisional, and therefore worth pursuing to make sense of the field in its diversity.

The most obvious type of inquiry in a 'review stance' is the literature review, but the papers also illustrate other possibilities, like explaining how particular frameworks have evolved and influenced practice over time or analyzing ideological and practical shifts on the basis of interviews with veteran practitioners in different parts of the world. Inquiry is intended to highlight and confront various perspectives, arguments, and possible directions. Implications for research emerging from this second group of papers might be summed up as follows:

- Reviewing autonomy constructs, trends, and practices from various theoretical perspectives allows for the construction of multifaceted knowledge about their value and shortcomings, how they have been reshaped over time, and possibilities for further development; theoretical discussions of particular realizations of autonomy (e.g., self-regulation, self-access, advising or learning beyond the classroom) broaden our understanding of the field in its diverse components.
- Analyzing research on autonomy in a particular country over a period of time provides an overall portrait of major research concerns, methodologies, outcomes, and future directions in that country; although this is important in any context, it is especially relevant when autonomy is not a mainstream field of research or when it is rather fragmented; meta-analytical studies make the field more visible, contribute to its constitution, and allow for cross-national comparisons.

An Experiential Stance

Finally, some papers take a more 'experiential stance' by looking at local projects, studies, and approaches, providing glimpses of how education for autonomy has been enhanced and investigated in different settings. This is done through inquiry into a social learning space from a particular theoretical perspective (Murray); the way visual narratives may enhance and account for autonomy development in children (Chik & Melo-Pfeifer); the story of a particular autonomous learning programme (Karlsson & Bradley); and how specific teacher education programmes support student teachers to promote autonomy in schools

(Manzano Vázquez; Jiménez Raya; Vieira). The authors examine specific experiences from an insider perspective, presenting the field as a form of *reflective practice* whereby education for autonomy is planned, enacted, and evaluated through situated inquiry.

An 'experiential stance' is best pursued through analyses of own/other experiences and takes diverse forms here, like longitudinal ethnography, (autoethno)biography, narrative inquiry, and case study research. The researcher is usually immersed in the situation s/he studies, often from the dual position of research *and* teacher, counsellor, adviser, or teacher educator. Knowledge emerging from this type of inquiry is mostly inductive, context-sensitive, and transitional. Some major implications for research emerge from this set of papers:

- Understandings of autonomy-in-practice may be enhanced by examining specific learning settings from particular theoretical frameworks and approaches to inquiry; this means that theory, practice, and inquiry are intimately articulated to make sense of 'reality', provide unique representations of autonomy development, and uncover the variables that influence development trajectories.
- The analysis of learning and teacher education programmes is a source of knowledge on how learner and/or teacher autonomy may be instigated, supported, and evaluated; it provides evidence on the effectiveness of particular strategies, the roles played by participants, and the cultural and structural conditions that may foster or hinder autonomy development; by engaging in a form of self-study research, the promoters of autonomy-oriented programmes further highlight their role as producers of knowledge and agents of change in their own institutions.

The above synthesis suggests that the different research stances – 'archeologic', 'review', and 'experiential' – tend to represent different lines of inquiry and produce different kinds of knowledge within the landscape of autonomy. They can be pursued separately or merged into hybrid approaches, leading to an overview of the field as *a long journey of inquiry*, *a kaleidoscope of knowledge*, and *reflective practice*.

Metaphors propose images and analogies that both illuminate and constrain our understandings of the world. We hope that our metaphors may generate further reflection on how research on autonomy can broaden our horizons and, as Holec (2008) put it, avoid looking for monolithic and stable answers. It is true that educational researchers tend to take particular positions and fight for their own views. This is the ideological nature of research, which is well explained by Rubem Alves, a well-known Brazilian pedagogue: "Every thought comes out of our womb, like the thread of the web. Every theory is an accessory of biography, every science is an arm of interest" (2003, p. 35, translated).

But this also means that research is historically embedded, constrained, and provisional. As Alves (2013, p. 81) puts it, researchers are not placed outside the knowledge-building 'chessboard' – they are 'chess pieces' that are controlled by and seek to control the game, therefore they are not in a position to claim any kind of 'truth'. Holec's advice to avoid looking for monolithic and stable answers is not only a result of the complex and multifaceted nature of autonomy, but also a condition for honest, self-critical research. The autonomy field can thus be envisaged as a multi-vocal territory where each unique voice is as important as dialogue and dissent, and where multiple avenues can be explored within a vision of education worth fighting for.

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Note: Page numbers followed by "n" denote endnotes.