Learner Autonomy

Instructors: Satoko Kato, Jo Mynard, and Hisako Yamashita

Course Guide
This course introduces students to the field of language learner autonomy by exploring the key theoretical ideas, practical approaches and research agendas. It begins with the origins, definitions and theoretical underpinnings, and unpacks dimensions such as learning management, affective factors, social factors, resources and strategies. The course also has a very practical element and examines practical approaches to fostering autonomy both inside and outside the classroom. It examines resource-based approaches, learner development, curriculum-based approaches, ways to research autonomy, and the roles and development of teachers and learning advisors.

Course Objectives

At the end of the course, students should be able to:
- define learner autonomy
- provide a basic overview of some of the dimensions associated with learner autonomy (i.e. learning management, social factors, affective factors, learning strategies, reflection)
- discuss the roles of teachers in promoting learner autonomy
- explain what advising is and how it is different from teaching
- identify ways to research learner autonomy

Aims

This course will:
- Unpack the theoretical underpinnings of learner autonomy and examine definitions and dimensions
- Investigate how learner autonomy can be fostered both inside and outside the classroom
- Examine ways to research and evaluate autonomy

Outline of course and schedule

Day 1: Saturday 30th September 2017, 15.00 - 20.00 (Jo Mynard and Satoko Kato) (LINK)
- Theoretical underpinnings of learner autonomy
- Practical applications (1): Learning management, learner training/development

Day 2: Saturday 7th October 2017, 15.00 - 20.00 (Satoko Kato and Hisako Yamashita) (LINK)
- Advising in language learning: The theory
- Practical applications (2): Advising in action

Day 3: Saturday 14th October, 15.00 - 20.00 (Jo Mynard and Satoko Kato) (LINK)
- Practical applications (3): Resource and curriculum approaches

- Researching autonomy: examples and approaches

Day 4: Saturday 21st October 2017, 15.00 - 20.00 (Hisako Yamashita and Satoko Kato)
- Affect, motivational and social aspects
- Practical applications (4): Supporting affect and motivational factors

Day 5: Saturday 2nd December 2017, 15.00 - 20.00 (Satoko Kato) (LINK)
- Teacher roles and teacher autonomy
- Practical applications (5):Teacher development through reflective dialogue

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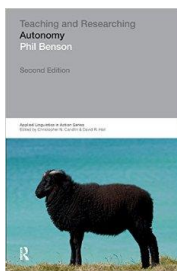
Course textbook:
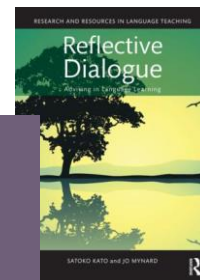**Teaching and Researching Autonomy in Language Learning, 2nd ed.**
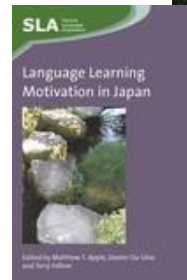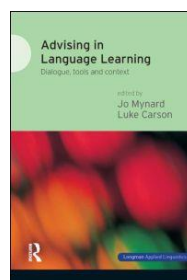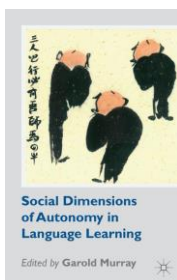**Authors:** Benson, P.
Publisher: Pearson
Published: 2011
ISBN: 1408205017 / **ISBN-13:** 978-1408205013

Other useful (but optional) textbooks:

Apple, M. T., Da Silva, D., & Fellner, T. (Eds.) (2013). *Language learning motivation in Japan.* Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Murray, G. (Ed.) (2014). *Social dimensions of autonomy in language learning.* Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mynard, J., & Carson, L. (Eds.) (2012). *Advising in language learning: Dialogue, tools and context.* Harlow, UK: Pearson.

Oxford, R. L. (2011). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies.* Harlow, UK: Pearson

Kato, S., & Mynard, J. (2015). *Reflective dialogue: Advising in language learning.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Assessment

Class participation and attendance: 20%
Activities and online participation: 50%
Final written paper: 30%

Assessments

Final paper (30%):

1. Choose one concept within the field of autonomy that particularly interests you (e.g. identity, learning management, social factors, affective factors, learning strategies, reflection, attention, advising). You may refer to lecture notes or notes from other reading you have done.
2. Write a brief summary of some of the main points related of your chosen concept.
3. Write a reflection on your own professional development related to the field of learner autonomy, for example you could answer one or more of the following:
   a. Has your thinking changed as a result of the course? Why/why not/how?
   b. How might you apply some new ideas to your practice
   c. What further work do you plan to do in this area?

Due: December 16, 2017
Maximum length: 1500 words

References