

BOOK REVIEW

AUTONOMY IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING: MANAGING THE RESOURCES

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Springer international, isbn 978-3-31907-764-2, price usd 89.00 (Ebook), isbn 978-3-31907-763-5, price usd 119.99 (Hbk), isbn 978-3-3197-9159-3, price usd 119.99 (Pbk), b&w illustrations, 1 color illustration. Xii + 213 pages

Since the introduction of the term *autonomy*, which can be broadly defined as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” (Holec, 1981, p. 3) into the study of language learning, there has been growing interest in autonomy in the field of foreign and second language (L2) learning. Although a considerable amount of research has been published in recent years (e.g., Benson, 2007, 2013; Lou, Chaffee, Vargas Lascano, Dincer, & Noels, 2018; Oxford, 2015), new agendas for research (e.g., teacher autonomy and autonomous learning beyond the classroom) leading to new perspectives on learner autonomy remain unexplored terrains (Benson, 2013; Lai, Zhu, & Gong, 2015). Indeed, this edited book, entitled *Autonomy in Second Language Learning: Managing the Resources*, represents an example of such endeavor in that it explores the emergence of new perspectives in research with a focus on autonomy in theory and practice.

The book, edited by Mirosław Pawlak, Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak, and Jakub Bielak, deals with two connected, yet inseparable, concepts—learner autonomy and teacher autonomy—in detail. With a pluralistic approach to autonomy, this edited book shines new light on these concepts through an examination of various perspectives. The book is divided into three parts related to the concept under investigation. The first part, entitled “Developing Learner Autonomy,” brings together seven papers that broadly deal with the development of learner autonomy among various age groups through different empirical studies. The papers present readers with a variety of techniques, tasks, and resources specific to both micro and macro language skills, which can be used for developing autonomy. In the first chapter, Mirosław Pawlak explores the notion of autonomy in teaching second language (L2) grammar. Pawlak not only discusses autonomous learning and teaching practices in L2 grammar echoed in the literature, but also provides some practical tips for teachers on how to take necessary steps towards learner autonomy and practice learner autonomy. In the second chapter, Anna Klimas emphasizes the importance of goal setting as one of the initial steps in developing learner autonomy, while addressing goal-setting logbooks as an instrument to promote learner autonomy. Klimas explains how logbooks offer potential benefits in fostering learner autonomy. By providing a sample goal-setting logbook, Klimas also suggests that the logbook use in language education may lead to the development of students’ metacognitive skills and efficient learning. In the third chapter, Zdeňka Schormová explains the use of simulation as an instructional technique in L2 settings and gives readers a useful source of information about the technique in the form of sample simulation lesson plans. Later, she explains how simulation can be used to support learner autonomy at the tertiary level to develop language learners’ communicative and social skills while comparing the principles of learner autonomy and simulation. In the fourth chapter, Paweł Sobkowiak examines experiential learning through ethnographic projects in order to promote students’ intercultural competence and ability to take part in their language

learning. He summarizes a study conducted among several L2 teachers. He finds that, although ethnographic projects are powerful tools to provide a deeper understanding of target cultures in language classrooms, L2 teachers rarely make use of ethnographic projects or support language learners' autonomous learning. In the fifth chapter, Magdalena Wawrzyniak-Śliwska attempts to explain the lost connection between learner autonomy and children, particularly the features of young learner independence in L2 classrooms. She shares the results of a 4-year project concerned with teaching young learners. Her results suggest a need for much focus on autonomy among young learners and indicate that autonomy helps young learners to raise positive attitudes and intrinsic motivation towards language learning. In the sixth article, Halina Wiśniewska delves into the role of educational materials, namely L2 revision books, in supporting self-assessment. Wiśniewska claims that, although revision books are favorites among language learners for revising grammar and vocabulary, most of the books are, unfortunately, not structured according to the needs of autonomous learners. In the last chapter of this part, Aleksandra Jankowska and Michał Jankowski focus on student-generated vocabulary tests as a way of fostering autonomy. They present a vocabulary-learning instrument which offers L2 learners a self-study tool to collect the vocabulary items from their course and revise them in different ways.

The second part, entitled "Language Learning Strategies," corroborates language learner autonomy with language learning strategies. This part includes only two chapters. Despite being relatively underrepresented, the chapters provide a snapshot of the relationships between strategy use and L2 learning from the perspective of autonomy. In the first chapter, Larysa Grzegorzewska examines the relationship between intelligence level and the frequency of language learning strategies as determined by Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning. She reports on an interesting finding whereby individuals with a high IQ use fewer strategies than the ones with an average IQ. The second chapter is co-authored by Maria Pilar Agustín-Llach and Andrés Canga Alonso. The authors test the effectiveness of a vocabulary strategy training program, which aims to promote learner autonomy in vocabulary learning at tertiary level. The authors report the findings of the training program. They conclude that the program was beneficial to the learners by raising their awareness of strategy use when learning new vocabulary, as well as positively impacted on learner autonomy.

The third part of the book, entitled "Teacher Autonomy," covers three studies conducted with preservice English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers. In the first chapter, Danuta Gabryś-Barker examines the perceptions regarding teacher autonomy and the factors affecting the perceptions. Supporting the literature that teacher autonomy is a prerequisite for learner autonomy (Benson, 2013; Little, 1995), the author finds that the introduction of teacher autonomy should start at the preservice stage. She claims that the development of teacher autonomy should be a necessary part of professional development. In the second chapter, Dorota Werbińska presents the findings of a longitudinal case study triangulated by logbooks, personal narratives, and interviews. The author examines the relationship between autonomous student teacher identities and their possible selves by tracking traces of autonomy. She finds that the teachers' professional identity is shaped by the belief systems they possess at the beginning of their education, together with L2 self-motivation. In the last chapter in the book, Hadrian Lankiewicz relates to language learners' critical language awareness (CLA) as a platform for shaping autonomous language learning processes. The author prepares a practical evaluation tool for evaluating and developing university-level students' CLA. He presents a CLA checklist and a situational survey with the idea that developing autonomy in L2 learning is an important step for all students seeking to use languages in a professional manner.

Addressing two interconnected concepts, that is, learner autonomy and teacher autonomy, in the L2 learning process with a wide-range of focus on the concepts, this edited collection deepens our understanding of learner autonomy and autonomous learning in language classrooms. It examines the concepts through both theoretical and empirical perspectives with various samples from early education to tertiary

levels. It also gives some substantial advice and guidance to the language teachers with insights into the concepts in the L2 classroom. With its detailed and fruitful explanations, especially in the first part, it tests the effectiveness of some innovative ideas such as using logbooks, simulation techniques, and ethnographic projects for autonomous language learning. It also opens new research agendas such as implementing autonomy in young learners and focusing on the training for teacher autonomy. Therefore, the editors not only manage to keypoint various issues, but also succeed in engaging the attention of those who are interested in language learner autonomy. However, as readers and other audiences of this book, we are somewhat disillusioned about the weighting of the three parts in the book, particularly the limited focus on teacher autonomy as it is a promising research field. With only three contributions on the preservice level, readers are, unfortunately, deprived of any information regarding in-service L2 teachers. Giving equal importance to all parts or at least collecting more papers regarding teacher autonomy would have been much more helpful to the book's audience. In addition, with little in the way of foreign contributions, the book seems too country-specific (the context is predominantly Polish). A greater number of articles from other L2 countries would have definitely allowed for more international perspectives on autonomous language learning practices and increased the value of this book at a global level.

Overall, agreeing with the assertion of the editors "this edited collection will serve as a source of inspiration and reflection" (p. xxi), we are minded that the chapters, when considered separately, should appeal to a wide range of readers such as L2 researchers, specialists, students, and teachers who wish to explore the different facets of learner autonomy. The book is a modest but inspiring contribution, uniting and offering new insights to the expanding literature on the interaction between learner and teacher autonomy.

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