Challenges and Opportunities of Fostering Learner Autonomy and Self-Access Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Fawzi Al Ghazali, TRENDS Research & Advisory, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Corresponding author: fawzi_alghazali@yahoo.com

To cite this article

To link to this article

http://sisaljournal.org/archives/sep20/alghazali

Scroll down for article.

Challenges and Opportunities of Fostering Learner Autonomy and Self-Access Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Fawzi Al Ghazali, TRENDS Research & Advisory, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Abstract

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has represented a substantial challenge to educators worldwide with almost no predefined plans to deal with the negative outcomes of such crises and emergencies. The closure of schools and universities has forced public and private educational institutions to look for alternative methods for students to continue learning and understanding the remaining syllabi. Since attending on-campus classes has become impossible, and congregating in public places has become limited, self-access and virtual learning have become popular teaching modes implemented through self-access platforms. This paper sheds light on the negative consequences of COVID-19 on L2 learning and the different pathways self-access and virtual learning provide to students who have been deprived of face-to-face instruction. It also outlines the opportunities and challenges of these digital learning forms and online platforms that enhance self-access learning. Moreover, this paper provides an analysis of the practical mediums that foster learner autonomy in L2 settings and the responsibilities of students, teachers, and educational authorities in facilitating self-access learning. This paper eventually proposes that disrupted classes do not necessarily mean disrupted learning when self-access learning is facilitated, appropriate training is given, and students' motivation and autonomy are enhanced.

Keywords: self-access, learner autonomy, virtual learning, COVID-19, technological

platforms

The New Normal Culture after COVID-19

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all aspects of life and has had socioeconomic, political, and pedagogic implications. A 'new normal' culture has emerged, and the lifestyle of people has changed drastically. Social gatherings, celebrations, and social events may have even become illegal in some places, and taking protective measures has become a part of the culture. The educational sector has been particularly affected, and many schools have had to close their doors as well. As reported by UNESCO (2020), around 1.5 billion learners (91% of total enrolled students in schools) were affected and were unable to benefit from face-to-face teaching following the restrictions implemented by countries to contain the virus. The outbreak of COVID-19 is not the only pandemic to have invaded the world in recent decades; similar pandemics and natural disasters have taken place globally like SARS in 2002 and the H_1N_1 Flu in 2009 (Cauchemez et al., 2014). These pandemics may

not be the last, and there is strong likelihood that situations like the COVID-19 pandemic will reoccur in the future. In reaction to such disruptions, many countries have begun to set up plans for dealing with education issues during crises and emergencies. The Chinese government, for instance, banned face-to-face teaching and launched an initiative entitled 'Disrupted Classes – Undisrupted Learning.' This initiative aimed at providing flexible learning options through Self-Access Centers (SACs), Independent-Learning Centers (ILCs), and virtual materials found online to millions of students from their homes.

This paper was inspired by the unprecedented change which has occurred in the education sector in which schools and teachers have become facilitators of learning and are no longer the sole sources of knowledge; other avenues exist. It sheds light on the features and characteristics of flexible and distance learning modes including their implementation, advantages, and disadvantages. It also suggests that learner autonomy and self-access should be approached and understood by students nowadays. In addition, the paper provides conceptual, practical, and virtual tools for promoting self-access and learner autonomy through technological platforms.

COVID-19 and Virtual Learning

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced students to miss opportunities for attending regular classes and enjoying face-to-face interaction with teachers and other learners. This disruption has forced schools and universities to offer alternative methods to their conventional teaching modes in classrooms, such as distance and blended/flexible learning forms. In the realm of discussing implications of COVID-19 on self-access learning and learner autonomy, it is necessary first to reflect on the different forms of self-access and virtual learning.

Self-Access and Virtual Language Learning Types

According to Herrera Diaz (2012, p. 54), self-access refers to the "organization of learning materials and equipment to make them available and accessible to students without necessarily having a teacher there." A SAC, in addition, refers to the "system which makes materials available to language learners so that they can choose to work as they wish, usually without a teacher or with very limited teacher support" (p. 54). However, this understanding only covers the physical side of self-access represented in provision of learning resources. Benson et al. (2016, p. 3), conversely, argue that "self-access facilities are person-centered social learning environments that actively promote language learner autonomy both within

and outside the space. Students are provided with support, resources, facilities, skills development, and opportunities for language study and use." This understanding interprets self-access as a learning engagement initiated by the individual learner and influenced by interrelated variables like learner willingness and motivation.

Distance learning, similarly, is viewed as a way of studying for a school or university degree mostly at home by receiving and submitting work by email or over the internet. As per Cambridge Online Dictionary (2020), distance learning is used synonymously with online and e-learning. It refers to the "way of studying in which students do not attend a school, college, or university, but study from where they live, usually being taught and given work to do over the internet." Online and e-learning are two forms of distance learning in which courses are delivered virtually via the Internet. Distance learning also includes "School of the Air" which is available in remote places that are disadvantaged by lack of online communications and electronic devices. Education for those students is facilitated by radio, and students are only assessed at the end of each educational cycle (Rahman, 2018).

Blended learning, likewise, is "an approach to learning that combines face-to-face and online learning experiences. Ideally, each type will complement the other by using its particular strength" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2020). This innovation aims at integrating online media with traditional teaching not only to supplement the missing gaps of traditional teaching but also to transform the overall class activities into a pedagogically valuable manner. As argued by Teachthought (2020, para. 7), "successful blended learning occurs when technology and teaching inform each other: Material becomes dynamic when it reaches students of varying learning styles … In this scenario, online education is a game-changer, not just a supplement for the status quo."

Flexible learning, moreover, adopts a broad understanding of learning by offering choices in the educational environment and customizing a given course to meet the needs of individual learners. Lee and McLoughlin (2010) define flexible learning as a "set of educational approaches and systems concerned with providing learners with increased choice, convenience, and personalization to suit their needs" (p. 61). In addition, Huang et al. (2020) view flexible pedagogy as a "learner-centered educational strategy, which provides choices from the main dimensions of study, such as time and location of learning, resources for teaching and learning, instructional approaches, and learning activities" (p. 2). The learner hereby is not passive but has insights on how to enhance assimilation of the course content.

Advantages of Self-Access and Virtual Learning Approaches

According to Mahlangu (2018), self-access and virtual learning approaches encourage features like complex communication and digital literacies by using advanced technological levels and shifting learners from using traditional textbooks to utilizing virtual learning for assimilation of a course content. This learning innovation has become crucial during the COVID-19 period since it encourages "student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, and active learning. It also gives prompt feedback, emphasizes time on task, communicates high expectations, and respects diverse talents and ways of learning" (Baldwin & Jesus, 2017, pp. 1–2). Students can review lecture content before attending a class and approach the online materials whenever and wherever they want. Moreover, self-access and virtual learning "are available 24/7, location independent, and provide effective and efficient training means for learners in geographically dispersed areas and across time zones" (Wong & Daniell, 2007, p. 46).

At times of crises and emergencies like COVID-19, the provision of online self-access materials, proper technological infrastructure, fast Internet connection, continuous power supply, and modern online platforms are necessary to facilitate virtual learning. However, these may not bring optimal outcomes unless active strategies are put in place to foster learners' autonomy to take charge of their own learning. Hence, the dissemination of technology via self-access learning can be efficient, yet it does not guarantee that actual learning will occur or that the learning process will take care of itself; learners' willingness and motivation are crucial and reinforcing them is necessary.

Nature and Characteristics of Learner Autonomy

Holec (1981) defines autonomy as the "ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3). This includes ability to "set learning goals, determine learning content and progress, choose learning techniques, monitor self-learning processes, and conduct self-assessments" (p. 3). This construct improves learning performance and promotes the cultivation of lifelong learning abilities (Zhou & Li, 2020). For Holec, the ability to take charge of learning is not innate but promoted informally via naturalistic means or formally via systematic, deliberate ways. In this sense, autonomy is not the outcome of learning but a construct reflected in the students' awareness, self-determination, and self-direction to achieve learning goals. Littlewood (1996), in addition, correlates autonomy with "capacity of thinking and acting independently that may occur in any kind of situation including, of course, a situation where

the focus is on learning" (p. 428). This stance sets autonomy within any context and any learner given that he is able to take decisions and hold responsibility for learning. Autonomy also can be underpinned or undermined according to whether the learning context is facilitating or debilitating (Woods, 2006). Moreover, enhancing learner autonomy is not limited to technical, psychological, or political support but remains open to different possible sources of insight for practice (Smith, 2003, p. 255).

Holec (1981) links autonomy with awareness of metacognitive strategies and practical modalities of decision-making. These strategies include the ability to fix objectives and adapt them to evolving difficulties, the ability to define the contents and progression of learning, the ability to choose effective methods for engaging in language activities, the ability to monitor the procedures of acquisition through self-assessment, and the ability to evaluate what has been acquired. In language learning, metacognitive strategies refer to "higher order executive skills that entail planning, monitoring, or evaluating the success of a learning activity" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 44). These metacognitive strategies are linked with cognitive strategies, and they may come before, with, and after them (Dickinson, 1996; Wenden, 1998). For Skehan (1989), cognitive strategies are techniques 'FOR' learning and metacognitive strategies are techniques 'ABOUT' learning. That is, cognitive strategies are wrapped with metacognitive or "Regulatory Strategies" (p. 237). Hence, metacognitive strategies organize the external framework of learning processes where cognitive strategies operate (Wenden, 1991). Peacock (1999) believes that awareness of metacognitive strategies is a key requisite in the practice of autonomy and effective self-directed learning.

Fostering Learner Autonomy

Fostering learner autonomy is influenced by both teachers and learners' beliefs about this construct. Language teachers should know that autonomy is an appropriate and desirable goal for all students. For Scharle and Szabó (2000), "no student is completely without a sense of responsibility and we are not likely to meet the ideal student, either. Personality traits, preferred learning styles, and cultural attitudes set limits to the development of autonomy" (p. 5). In addition, autonomy is not an 'All-or-Nothing' concept. Nunan (1997) claims that "I should like to emphasize the point that fully autonomous students are a rarity" (p. 201). Moreover, autonomy is not an abdication of the teacher's role. Thavenius (1999) argues that "developing learner autonomy involves a lot more for the teacher role than most teachers realize ... It is not a matter of changing teaching techniques; it is a matter of changing teacher

personality" (p. 159). Furthermore, language teachers should build trust between them and students and allow students to feel that a safety net exists to support them. They should respect students, understand their needs, be positive to their opinions, and help them build self-confidence and self-esteem.

Approaches to Fostering Self-Access Learning and Autonomy

Benson (1997) discussed three approaches to fostering autonomy. The first is the technical approach which relies on the provision of self-access resources and technical support in a convenient place like a SAC or an ILC. However, McDonough (2002) suggests that focusing on learning resources and learner training makes students behave in the same way as usual, and this contradicts the ideologies of autonomy which relies on helping students to take decisions based on available choices. Benson's (1997) second approach is the psychological approach which assumes that students' willingness and readiness to assume responsibility are the impetus that drives them to assume autonomy. Students' agency, motivation, and enthusiasm are key elements that determine degree of autonomy (Gao et al., 2004). This psychological perspective does not underestimate the role of SACs in language development. These places provide physical opportunities for autonomy to be displayed (Greenback, 2008). However, Reinders and Lewis (2006) point out that "efficacy of these places is increased when there is a thirsty learner who is willing to take all possible accounts for inventing learning paths" (p. 273). The third is the political approach which is driven by the belief that the educational context is influential in fostering autonomy. From this perspective, autonomy is influenced by the social milieu with its ideologies and beliefs. As argued by Winch (1999), in some Middle Eastern contexts, learner autonomy is viewed as a threat of the teacher's authority as being the main provider of information. In other contexts, social autonomy is viewed by certain regimes as threat of their existence (Phillips, 2003). However, in crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, the provision of digital resources facilitates self-access and virtual learning and promotes learner autonomy as well.

Teachers and the COVID-19 Pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic and other pandemics in which students are unable to attend classes at schools, teachers seem to have additional responsibility in enhancing students' autonomy and self-access learning. As proposed by Al Ghazali (2013), teachers should raise students' consciousness of metacognitive strategies in terms of how to set learning agenda and assess language development. Acquisition of this skill reduces dependence on teachers and increases collaboration with other cohorts. Teachers should also

be aware of students' learning agendas and linguistic needs. Students' activities are often goal-oriented and goal-driven, and their enthusiasm increases the more they realize that the given tasks achieve their learning objectives (Lantolf, 2000). Teachers, in addition, should establish SACs / ILCs and integrate them with the curricular system. These self-access centers provide students with opportunities to be more independent and take responsibility for their learning. In addition, these centers cater for their needs and learning agenda which might be difficult to achieve via face-to-face instruction. All in all, fostering autonomy needs setting the mood for autonomy, improving syllabi design, and enhancing self-access learning (Ramírez Espinosa, 2015). During the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in which teachers have less control over students, the optimal education option is to boost self-access and independent learning.

Educational Authorities and the COVID-19 Pandemic

The learning context directly impacts the practice of autonomy and self-access learning. As outlined by Al Ghazali (2013), the educational authorities should firstly adopt autonomy as a social educational aim. It cannot be promoted in contexts in which it is viewed as socially undesirable or nationally as unfavorable pursuit. Authorities should also improve the educational content and adapt the applied syllabi and assessment techniques with the limitations imposed by COVID-19 restrictions including school closure and home quarantine. In addition, they should accept teachers' autonomy and offer them flexibility to carry out the necessary modifications in the taught materials and assessment techniques. In educational settings in which the learning objectives are defined from the top, teachers' autonomy becomes limited, and their duties are confined to teaching regular classes using predefined teaching methods and assessment techniques.

Self-Access Technology and the COVID-19 Pandemic

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in closure of schools and colleges, and hence online platforms and self-access technology have been approached to facilitate remote learning. As Benson (1997) notes, the use of technology is related to the technical approach of fostering autonomy and self-access learning. Given the unprecedented development in technological applications, a number of platforms are created and can be utilized to facilitate self-access learning during closure of schools and universities. For instance, younger learners can use "Eduflip Demo Class Platform". It is user-friendly and presents learning materials in a simple, interesting way. Also, "BrainPOP" provides online self-access resources at different subjects such as languages, math, science, and social

sciences. It keeps young learners engaged in the learning activities through funny animations and pictures. This platform gives suggestions for both synchronous and asynchronous approaches to online learning. More advanced learners could use "Newsela" platform. It has an enormous archive of highly engaging articles which students can read independently online. Each article is available at multiple levels to match the different linguistic levels of L2 students. "Kahoot" is another self-access platform that provides user-generated multiple-choice quizzes for learners to review their knowledge independently. Moreover, through self-access, students can use "Fipgrid Video" platform to get more thoughtful feedback from other peers on their assignments. It is a powerful platform and allows for posing questions and getting responses from students in videos. It allows for debates and discussion of responses with the minimum time constraints.

For college and university students, self-access can facilitate group work and sharing ideas through the "Padlet" platform. The self-access resources on Padlet offer spaces for students to share and develop ideas through brainstorming, discussions, and project work. Self-access can also allow for creating video tutorials while recording the screen content through the "Screencastify" platform. It is more efficient with IT and science that require displaying objects and images in courses like medicine, engineering, botany, and technology. Through self-access, some students may use "Podcast" to share daily experiences with their fellows or reflect on achieved class project. The "Seesaw" platform is another self-access platform. It inspires students of all ages and allows for taking pictures and recording videos to capture learning in a portfolio. It enables families to monitor the achievement of their children. Furthermore, self-access can help students to create surveys online using "Google Forms". It provides different templates to compose questions and mark them. These ten self-access platforms enhance students' autonomy and represent a viable substitute of classroom teaching during periods of pandemics like the current COVID-19.

Challenges to Self-Access Learning

Self-access offers students opportunities to be more independent in mapping their study and applying the learning strategies that cope with their favorite learning styles. However, some students with a traditional mindset find it difficult to adapt themselves with self-access and virtual learning mediums due to some challenges. The first challenge facing self-access is linked with technical issues (Kumar, 2015). In less advantaged places, many students neither have computers nor Internet connection which means that self-access resources would not be available to them. The second challenge facing self-access is related

to students' digital and computer literacy. Some students might be adept at using social media applications, yet they lack the technological skill necessary to utilize self-access resources. The third challenge students encounter in self-access and virtual learning is time management. Young teenagers often have daily commitments that might distract them from following on self-access learning. The fourth challenge of self-access is related to students' self-motivation which ebbs and flows according to their knowledge of dealing with online learning applications. Students with positive online learning attitudes will be more enthusiastic to deal with self-access and virtual learning materials than who reject it. Hence, the unequal distribution of technological facilities and applications among students can create what Rigney (2010) calls the 'Matthew Effect.' This means that students in privileged learning environments will benefit further from access to a robust remote learning ecosystem, suffering few deficits in their learning. Disrupted learning for those students does not represent a problem since they can benefit from online self-access resources. On the other hand, students who live in "environments that do not have the infrastructure to cope with remote learning will be left with limited, or no, compensatory educational provision. They will be disadvantaged by a lack of learning materials and opportunities for learning gains and will suffer due to either a complete shut down or partial and inadequate measures" (Hughes, 2020, p. 6).

Overcoming Challenges of Self-Access Learning

To enhance self-access and virtual learning, Hughes (2020) provides some conditions that include ensuring digital equity among students, providing clear expectations to guide students, staff, and parents, establishing daily schedules for follow-up and assessment, choosing the right tools and platforms and sticking to them, providing robust learning in terms of teaching and feedback, designing independent learning that does not require further support from parents, and addressing the emotional side to avoid distractions and enhance students' enthusiasm.

Similarly, Huang et al. (2020) provide guidelines for self-access learning. First, educational institutions should ensure the availability of a "reliable network infrastructure which can handle millions of users simultaneously to support smooth online learning experience without interruption when providing synchronous online teaching, using interactive learning resources, and collaborating with peers via social platforms" (p. 40). Second, educational institutions should provide user-friendly tools and consistent platforms in finding and processing information. Third, self-access learning should be interesting and

engaging. This entails "providing interactive suitable digital learning resources, such as online video micro-courses, e-books, simulations, animations, quizzes, and games" (p. 40). Fourth, self-access platforms should guide learners to apply effective activities both individually and in groups. This instructional practice includes "using online communities and social networks to ensure regular human interactions and to address potential online challenges, such as learners' perceived loneliness or helplessness" (p. 40).

From a psychological perspective during the current COVID-19 pandemic, Gonzalez (2020) proposes certain techniques to be followed with self-access and virtual learning. Students should have 'WINGS' of voice and choice. They should feel free to express their views and select from a number of options what they find efficient in their learning. In addition, they should be allowed to SHARE not to SHOW the knowledge they already have. To foster self-access learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, summative exams should be replaced with project-based learning and evaluation. This requires understanding the different milestones of project achievement. Providing positive encouragement and feedback also increases students' motivation and enthusiasm to consider self-access as a trusted learning option.

Conclusion

The unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on continuity of the traditional functions of schools and university has been prominent, and many academic institutions that were not prepared to deal with natural crises and emergencies were strongly affected negatively. The above discussion in this paper could have some implications. Firstly, the philosophy of learning should be drastically modified, and self-access learning should be facilitated through online and digital resources. This learning approach should not be considered as a temporary solution during pandemics but rather a learning philosophy liable to enhance students' independence and autonomy. Secondly, necessary training should be provided to students on dealing with digital technologies and online platforms for educational purposes. Many students could not use the new media applications for learning purposes. Thirdly, it is necessary to foster students' autonomy and responsibility in language learning and increase their awareness that language development could be achieved through different pathways like self-access. Eventually, the learning context should be improved, and students' evaluation should shift from formative and summative tests to projects and case studies.

Notes on the Contributor

Al Ghazali is a professor of applied linguistics and the Dean of FASS at AHU. He worked at a number of UK and UAE Universities. His research interests include language acquisition, discourse analysis, self-access learning, and learner autonomy. He published extensively and won some Research Awards.

References

Al Ghazali, F. (2013). *Understanding aspects of autonomy in the UAE context: The pragmatic view of autonomy*. Lambert Academic Publishing.

Baldwin, S., & Jesús, T. (2017). Evaluation instruments and good practices in online education. *Online Learning*, 21(2), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v21i2.913

Benson, P. (1997). The philosophy and politics of learner autonomy. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (pp. 18–34). https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315842172-3

Benson, P., Chávez Sánchez, M., McLoughlin, D., Mynard, J., & Peña Clavel, M. (2016). New scenarios in autonomy for foreign language learning: Conference summary and reflections. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, *7*(3), 287–296. https://doi.org/10.37237/070304

Cambridge Dictionary (2020). *Cambridge advanced learner's dictionary & thesaurus*. Cambridge University Press.

Cauchemez, S., Van Kerkhove, M. D., Archer, B. N., Cetron, M., Cowling, B. J., Grove, P., Hunt, D., Kojouharova, M., & Kon, P. (2014). School closures during the 2009 influenza pandemic: national and local experiences. *BMC infectious diseases*, *14*, 207. https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2334-14-207

Dickinson, L. (1996). *Autonomy: learner training for language learning*. Authentik Language Learning Resources.

Gao, Y., Zhao, Y., Cheng, Y., & Zhou, Y. (2004). Motivation types of Chinese undergraduates. *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching*, 14, 45–64.

Gonzalez, O. (2020). Fostering learner autonomy in online learning during the COVID-19 lockdown. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1JAi.

Greenback, P. (2008). An Investigation of the factors influencing student participation in collaborative approaches to examination preparation. In E. O'Doherty (Ed.), *The fourth education in a changing environment conference book* (pp. 247–262). Informing Science Press.

Herrera Diaz, L. E. (2012). Self-access language learning: Students' perceptions of and experiences within this new mode of learning. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 1*4*(1), 113–127. https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/29061

Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and foreign language learning*. Pergamon.

Holliday, A. (2003). Social autonomy: Addressing the dangers of culturism in TESOL. In D. Palfreyman & R. Smith (Eds.), *Learner autonomy across cultures: language education perspectives* (pp. 110–128). Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230504684_7

Huang, R. H., Liu, D. J., Tlili, A., Yang, J. F., & Wang, H. H. (2020). *Handbook on facilitating flexible learning during educational disruption: The Chinese experience in maintaining undisrupted learning in COVID-19 outbreak.* Smart Learning Institute of Beijing Normal University.

Hughes, D. (2020). *Some implications of COVID-19 for remote learning and the future of schooling: Current and critical issues in curriculum, learning, and assessment*. UNESCO International Bureau of Education.

Kumar, S. (2015). 5 common problems faced by students in e-learning and how to overcome them. https://elearningindustry.com/5-common-problems-faced-by-students-in-elearning-overcome.

Lantolf, J. (2000). Introducing sociocultural theory. In J. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 1–26). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315624747-1

Lee, M. J. W., & McLoughlin, C. (2010). Beyond distance and time constraints: Applying social networking tools and Web 2.0 approaches to distance learning. In G. Veletsianos (Ed.), *Emerging technologies in distance education* (pp. 61–87). Athabasca University Press.

Littlewood, W. (1999). Defining and developing autonomy in East-Asian contexts. *Applied Linguistics*, 20(1), 71–94. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/20.1.71

Mahlangu, V. (2018). The good, the bad, and the ugly of distance learning in higher education. https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.75702

McDonough, S. (2002). *Applied linguistics in language education*. Arnold.

Nunan, D. (1997). Designing and adapting materials to encourage learner autonomy. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (pp. 192–203). Longman. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315842172-16

O'Malley, J., & Chamot, A. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524490

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2020). https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/.

Peacock, M. (1999). Beliefs about language learning and their relationship to proficiency. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9(2), 247–265. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.1999.tb00175.x

Phillips, D. (2003). Theories of teaching and learning. In C. Randall (Ed.), *A companion to the philosophy of education* (pp. 232-243). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Rahman, A. (2018). Is distance learning identical to online learning? https://www.quora.com/Is-distance-learning-identical-to-online-learning.

Ramírez Espinosa, A. (2015). Fostering autonomy through syllabus design: A step-by-step guide for success. *HOW*, 22(2), 114–134. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.22.2.137

Reinders, H., & Lewis, M. (2006). An evaluative checklist for self-access materials. *ELT Journal*, 60(3), 272-278. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccl007

Rigney, D. (2010). *The Matthew effect: How advantage begets further advantage*. Colombia University Press.

Scharle, A., & Szabó, A. (2000). *Learner autonomy: a guide to developing learner responsibility*. Cambridge University Press.

Skehan, P. (1989). *Individual differences in second language learning*. Edward Arnold.

Smith, R. (2003). Postscripts: implications for language education. In D. Palfreyman and R. Smith (Eds.), *Learner autonomy across cultures: language education perspectives* (pp. 254–260). Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230504684_15

Teachthought (2020). The definition of blended learning. https://www.teachthought.com/learning/the-definition-of-blended-learning/ .

Thavenius, C. (1999). Teacher autonomy for learner autonomy. In S. Cotterall & D. Crabbe (Eds.), *Learner autonomy in language learning: Defining the field and effecting change* (p. 159). Frankfurt am Main.

UNESCO. (2020). COVID-19 educational disruption and response. https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse.

Wenden, A. (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy*. Prentice Hall.

Wenden, A. (1998). Metacognitive knowledge and language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 19(4), 515-537. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/19.4.515

Winch, C. (1999). Autonomy as an educational aim. In R. Marples (Ed.), The aims of education (pp. 74-83). London: Routledge.

Wong, A., & Daniell, K. (2007). The importance of e-learning as a teaching and learning approach in emerging markets. *IJAC*, 10(1), 45 –54. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijac.v10i1.6471

Woods, D. (2006). The social construction of beliefs in the language classroom. In P. Kalaja & A. Barcelos (Eds.), *Beliefs about SLA: new research perspectives* (pp. 201–229). New York: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-4751-0_9

Zhou, L., & Li, C. (2020). Can student self-directed learning improve their academic performance? Experimental evidence from the instruction of protocol-guided learning in China's elementary and middle schools. *Sci-Insigt Edu Front*, 5(1), 469–480. https://doi.org/10.15354/sief.20.ar016