

Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy in language education is referred to many terms, namely learner autonomy, learner independence, self-direction, autonomous learning, and independent learning (Palfreyman, 2003). Holec (1981) defines autonomy as “the ability to manage one’s own learning” (p. 7). Although his definition focuses on what autonomous learners should be able to do and does not explain clearly how to do that, it is widely cited and accepted. The ability is not innate, though it can be developed by formal learning in a systematic manner.

Dickinson (1987) defines autonomy as “the situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all of the decisions concerned with his learning and the implementation of those decisions” (p. 11). Subsequently, Benson (1997) provides three definitions of language learning autonomy as follows: autonomy as the act of learning on one’s own and the technical ability to do so; autonomy as the internal psychological capacity to self-direct one’s own learning; and autonomy as control over the content and processes of one’s own learning. Benson’s definitions reveal an attempt to derive three components of learner autonomy, that is, a technical, psychological, and political dimension with Oxford’s (2003) extension of sociocultural dimension. Dickinson (1995) supports that learners must believe that they have control over their learning success or failure to take responsibility for their own learning.

Synthesizing various definitions of autonomy, Everhard (2015) offers a working definition of autonomy in language learning as “Autonomy is a way of being or sense of self achieved through co-operatively making decisions about learning, through access to both internal and external resources. The ability to exercise autonomy depends on particular dispositions and predispositions and fluctuates according to circumstances” (p. 11). In this study, learner autonomy refers to capacity to take responsibility for and self-direct one’s own learning. It is composed of technical, psychological, political-philosophical, and sociocultural dimensions.

Reference: Swatevacharkul, R. & Boonma, N. (2021). Learner autonomy assessment of English language students in an international program in Thailand. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 10(3), 751-761. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v10i3.31764>

1. According to Holec (1981), learner autonomy in language education refers to:
 - a) The ability to manage one's own learning.
 - b) The situation in which learners are responsible for their learning decisions.
 - c) The act of learning on one's own and the technical ability to do so.
 - d) Control over the content and processes of one's own learning.

2. Benson (1997) provides three definitions of language learning autonomy, including:
 - a) The ability to exercise autonomy through co-operative decision-making.
 - b) The situation in which learners are responsible for all learning decisions.
 - c) The internal psychological capacity to self-direct one's own learning.
 - d) Control over the implementation of learning decisions.

3. Dickinson (1995) argues that learners must believe they have control over their learning success or failure in order to:
 - a) Achieve a sense of self through co-operative decision-making.
 - b) Take responsibility for and self-direct their own learning.
 - c) Access both internal and external resources for learning.
 - d) Fluctuate their capacity for autonomy according to circumstances.

4. According to Everhard (2015), learner autonomy in language learning depends on:
 - a) Making decisions about learning through access to resources.
 - b) Fluctuating dispositions and predispositions.
 - c) Achieving a sense of self through co-operative decision-making.
 - d) Taking responsibility for and self-directing one's own learning.

5. In this study, learner autonomy in language learning is defined as:
 - a) The ability to manage one's own learning.
 - b) The situation in which learners are responsible for all learning decisions.
 - c) The capacity to take responsibility for and self-direct one's own learning.
 - d) The act of learning on one's own and the technical ability to do so.

Answers:

- 1) The ability to manage one's own learning.
- 2) The internal psychological capacity to self-direct one's own learning.
- 3) Take responsibility for and self-direct their own learning.
4. Making decisions about learning through access to resources.
5. The capacity to take responsibility for and self-direct one's own learning.