

Learner Autonomy (ELECT / 1 cr.)

Instructors:

Jo Mynard, joanne-m@kanda.kuis.ac.jp

Satoko Kato, kato-s@kanda.kuis.ac.jp

Hisako Yamashita, hisakoyamashita@gmail.com

Course Dates

1. Saturday 6 June 15.00 - 19.00	2. Saturday 20 June 15.00 - 19.00
3. Saturday 27 June 15.00 - 19.00	

Note: Additional online work equivalent to **4 hours** will be provided. In each session (1-3), the live class will take place from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM (Saturdays).

Live online classes:

Class 1 (Mynard) 4 hours

Class 2 (Kato) 4 hours

Class 3 (Yamashita) 4 hours

Course Overview

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, methods for researching 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, and 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.

Course Schedule

Session	Topic/Tasks/Theme/Readings
1	Instructor: Jo Mynard Class content 1. Theoretical underpinnings of learner autonomy 2. Practical applications (1): Learning management, learner training/development, learner autonomy in the curriculum 3. Researching aspects of learner autonomy: How do we know if our learners are becoming autonomous? 4. Supporting learner autonomy beyond the classroom: Self-access learning, interest-driven learning, community-based learning Pre-course readings 1. Benson (2011), Introduction 2. Chapter 1 of Benson (2011). History of learner autonomy. 3. Chapter 1 of Little (2025). Defining learner autonomy. 4. Benson & Mynard (in press). Overview of autonomy 5. Article: Cooker, L. (2010). Some self-access principles. <i>Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal</i>, 1(1), 5-9. 6. Read Mynard (2022). Reimagining the self-access centre as a place to thrive. Graded work: 1. Answer one or more of the assigned reflection questions by making a post in Google Classroom.
2	Instructor: Satoko Kato Class content 1. Teacher roles and teacher autonomy 2. Advising in language learning 3. Practical applications (2): Teacher development through reflective dialogue Supplementary activities and reading (see Google Classroom for links and details) 1. Chapter 13 (pp. 185-196) of Benson 2. Carson & Mynard (2012), Introduction (pp. 3-25) from Mynard & Carson (2012)

3. Mozzon McPherson, Chapter 3 (pp. 43-64) from Mynard & Carson (2012)
4. Kato & Mynard (2016), (pp. xv-xxii, pp. 1-19, Appendix 1.1, pp. 20-28)
5. Pre-class task: Reflecting on yourself as a teacher by drawing your picture of life

Graded work:

Conduct an advising session with a colleague (or classmate) and write a reflection.

3

Instructor: Hisako Yamashita

Class content

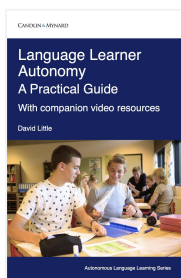
1. Affect, motivational, and social aspects
2. Practical applications (3): Supporting affect and motivational factors

Supplementary activities (see Google Classroom for links and details)

1. Read Oxford (2011) Chapter 3 (pp. 61-84)
2. Read Benson (2011) pp. 83-91
3. Read Murray (2014) Chapter 1 (pp. 3-11)
4. Read Yamashita, H. (2015). Affect and the development of learner autonomy through advising. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 6(1), 62-85.

Graded work:

Design and conduct an activity with students and write a reflection.



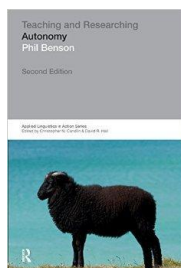
Language Learner Autonomy: A Practical Guide

(Purchase is optional. Key chapters will be made available.)

Author: David Little

Published: 2025

<https://www.candlinandmynard.com/lla.html>



Reference book (available in the MA TESOL library and online library - no need to purchase it)

Teaching and Researching Autonomy in Language Learning, 2nd ed.

Authors: Phil Benson

Published: 2011

ISBN: 1408205017 / **ISBN-13:** 978-1408205013

Assignments and assessment

- Online discussion participation in Google Classroom (15%)
- Class participation (15%)
- Assignments (30%)
- Course Final paper (40%)

Final Paper

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 readings you have done.
2. Using an academic writing style with relevant references to the literature, write a brief summary of some of the main points related to your chosen concept.
3. Relate the theory to your own professional development and/or professional practice related to the field of learner autonomy: How might you apply some new ideas to your practice?

Due: July 18, 2026

Maximum length: 1500 words

Grade Scale: Pass / Fail.

A passing paper will include a brief and relevant literature review related to a specific area of learner autonomy, an application to practice, and a professionally formatted reference list. The paper must be of high academic standard and provide evidence of a deep understanding of one element of learner autonomy (theory and practice).

Instructor Bios

Jo Mynard is a Professor, Director of the Self Access Learning Center (SALC), and Director of the Research Institute for Learner Autonomy Education (RILAE) at Kanda University of International Studies. She has an M.Phil. in Applied Linguistics from Trinity College, University of Dublin, Ireland and an Ed.D. in TEFL from the University of Exeter, UK. She has co-edited and co-authored several books on language learner autonomy, social learning spaces and advising and is one of the founding editors of *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal* and the *Journal for the Psychology of Language Learning*. She is particularly interested in research related to advising, self-directed language learning, language learning beyond the classroom / self-access language learning, and the social and affective dimensions of language learning.

Satoko Kato is an Associate Professor at the Research Institute for Learner Autonomy Education (RILAE), Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS), Japan. She has conducted over 4,000 advising sessions as a learning advisor and is currently focusing on developing and implementing advisor education programs for advisors/teachers, domestically and internationally. She holds a Ph.D. in Education from Hiroshima University and an M.A. in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. She has co-authored *Reflective Dialogue: Advising in Language Learning* (Routledge, NY, 2016) and 『リフレクティブ・ダイアログ ―学習者オートノミーを育む言語学習アドバイジング』(Osaka University Press, 2022)『英語教師のための自律学習者育成ハンドブック』(KUIS Press, 2021), and 『学習意識改革ノート』(Osaka University Press, 2024).

Hisako Yamashita is an Associate Professor at Kobe Shoin Women's University and a former president of JASAL (the Japan Association for Self-Access Learning). She has conducted over 4,400 advising sessions with EFL learners and has worked in four different SALCs in Japan. She also actively integrates learner autonomy in classroom activities. She has published in *New Ways in Teaching Speaking* 2nd edition (TESOL, 2019), *New Ways in Teaching Adults*, revised (TESOL, 2015), the English Learning Planner (KUIS Press, 2013-2015) and 『英語教師のための自律学習者育成ハンドブック』(KUIS Press, 2021) co-authored with Satoko Kato.