Promoting Learner Autonomy: Student Perceptions of Responsibilities in a Language Classroom in East Asia

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Literature Review

With the advent of communicative language teaching in East Asia, the idea of learner autonomy has become a topic of discussion and a goal among language teachers. The idea of autonomy raises important questions that need to be further explored, particularly in terms of students' taking responsibilities for learning. Autonomy has been characterized in different ways by researchers, but Littlewood (1999, p.71) summarizes two main features of learner autonomy included in the definition proposed by previous researchers:

❖ Students should take responsibility for their own learning. This is both because all learning can in any case only be carried out by the students themselves and also because they need to develop the ability to continue learning after the end of their formal education.

❖ 'Taking responsibility' involves learners taking ownership (partial or total) of many processes which have traditionally belonged to the teacher, such as deciding on learning objectives, selecting learning methods, and evaluating process.

It is often said that the concept of learner autonomy is Western, and does not fit in the Asian context. For example, Healey (1999, p. 391) mentions that "learner self-direction and autonomous learning are Western concepts that fit smoothly in the US culture in particular." However, Littlewood (1999) claims that, with proper learner training, East Asian students have the same capacity for autonomy as their counterparts in Western countries, and language teachers should create environments that encourage learner autonomy. Holden and Usuki (1999) point out that Japanese students simply do not have adequate opportunities to develop their autonomy because they usually learn English in teacher-centered classes. The results of their study revealed that students prefer teachers who play non-traditional roles rather than teachers who simply lecture or transmit their knowledge. East Asian students are not less autonomous than other learners, yet educational and behavioral norms in Japan simply discourage their autonomy. Chan's (2001) study which investigated students' readiness, willingness, and capacity to learn autonomously at Hong Kong University also shows how educational and behavioral norms prevent learners from developing their autonomy. Based on the students' opinions, she suggests that teachers need to help students become autonomous learners by raising the students' awareness and re-adjusting the learning approaches that have discouraged them from learning autonomously.

Dam (1995) points out that a gradual move from teacher-centered teaching to a learner-centered class is required in order to enhance learner autonomy in the classroom. Cotterall (1995) adds that learners have beliefs about teachers and their roles as well as learners themselves and their roles, and these beliefs affect learners' receptiveness to ideas and activities in language classes, especially when the students have not experienced the approach before. While examining the English teaching and learning milieu in Japan and Taiwan, the researchers of this paper argue that students are unlikely to be able to realize learner autonomy if their teachers still take the whole responsibility in a teacher-centered way and/or students fail to practice their ownership of learning processes. It may not be easy for the students to adjust to their new role as autonomous learners in a learner-centered class. Thus, we first need to fully understand both students' current wishes for learner autonomy and teachers' implementing activities to correspond to their needs in order to gradually enhance their autonomy.

Gender difference was also a focus in the present study, because female students were anecdotally better performers in English language learning (Redfield *et al*., 2001). Therefore, if some elements of learner autonomy that separate good performers and bad ones are discovered, they might suggest some pedagogical implications. However, there is little research on the connections between gender

and autonomy in East Asia, although some research on learning strategy is concerned with gender difference. Goh & Foong (1997), after analyzing Chinese students' learning strategies, stated that although female students reported using all six groups of strategies more frequently than their male counterparts, the difference was significant in the means of only two categories: compensation and affective. Kato (2005) examined Japanese students and reported that female students used all six groups of strategies more frequently than males and there was a significant gender difference on affective and social strategies. Maeda (2003), examining 1584 high school students' learning strategies, stated that the factor mean (strategy use) differed remarkably: controlling for proficiency female learners use more strategies than males do.

Our Team's Previous Study

In 2006, a study was carried out to investigate university students' perceptions of learner autonomy in English learning in the East Asian region (Sakai *et al*., 2008). The purposes of the study were to find out whether subjects from three different language areas in East Asia could be surveyed about learner autonomy using one set of questionnaires, and to discover whether there were any common factors related to learner autonomy with regard to the subjects' perceptions of responsibility and English learning activities outside of class. One hundred and seven Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese students were asked to answer the questionnaire. The questionnaire items were generated from Chu (2004) and Spratt *et al*. (2002). It contained three sections: perceptions of responsibilities toward learning, responsibilities toward learning in the past and the future, and English learning activities outside the class. After analyzing the data, the authors identified three factors: "class management, study outside the class, and past regret." We also found the existence of a factor that may inhibit students from developing learner autonomy. The results of the study proved the appropriateness and reliability of the questionnaire, although the questionnaire had some room to be revised. Based on the results, we decided to investigate in more detail students' perceptions of teachers' responsibilities toward learning in classes as well as their own responsibility as to whether they would like to get involved in future classes.

Research on the promotion of East Asian students' autonomy in language classes has been conducted by practitioners; but further study should follow up on students' perceptions of autonomy. It would therefore be useful for practitioners to understand what kinds of perceptions East Asian students have before they implement activities to enhance learner autonomy in class, particularly as teachers' assumptions may be inconsistent with students' real perceptions. It is hoped that this study offers some advice to practitioners who are willing to promote learner autonomy in their classes in the East Asian context. Although these results supported the value of the questionnaires to some extent, we found that some revision of the instruments was necessary. In addition, we learned that we needed to explore the questions of students' perceptions of their role in learner autonomy more deeply. Thus, for the present study, the authors revised the questionnaires and conducted a survey with a larger number of students to improve the reliability of the questionnaire.

Objectives

There were four objectives in this study. The objectives of phase one were

- ❖ to discover whether the instrument of our research team can be used for a large number of students,

- ❖ to discover what students in Japan and Taiwan think about learner autonomy with regard to their responsibility in learning English,

- ❖ to discover what aspects would separate female students from male students in their attitudes toward English learning, and

- ❖ to discover how students would like to be involved in class management.

Phase One (Quantitative Research)
Revision of the Questionnaire

The policies for the revision of the questionnaire were to delete the items that had turned out to be unnecessary in the previous study. The previous instrument had ninety items but twenty-five of them were deleted. They were 1) the items with the ceiling and floor effects, 2) the items that asked students "how much responsibility should teachers take for class management?", and 3) the items that had a weak relation to any of the factors.

The items in the second group were deleted because, among the factors that were extracted by factor analysis

of the previous study, Factor I, "class management (by teachers)", was so strong that it may have inhibited students from developing their autonomy. In other words, most of the students seemed to think it natural that teachers were in charge of class control. We cannot discover how students should be encouraged to take responsibility for class management by quantitative research. Therefore, we deleted the part that asked students how much responsibility teachers should take for class management.

There are five scales in the Phase One questionnaire: Recognition of Responsibility for Learning (RRL), Responsibility for Past Learning (RPL), Responsibility for Future Learning (RFL), Past Learning outside Classroom (PLC), and Future Learning outside Classroom (FLC). As the subjects were students who study English as a foreign language, the questionnaire items were given in their native language in order to avoid misunderstanding them.

Subjects

Sets of the modified questionnaires (Appendix 1) were given to four hundred and fifty-three male subjects and four hundred and forty-nine female subjects in January 2007. There were seven hundred and sixty-nine students from fifteen universities in Japan and one hundred and thirty-three students from one university in Taiwan. The authors used stratified random sampling with students from various university colleges (Table 1).

Results

Reliability and Relationship Among the Scales

Table 2 shows the obtained coefficients among the scales. These levels of coefficients were satisfactory. Therefore, the reliabilities of these scales were confirmed. Table 3 shows the correlation of all the scales. The scores of all the scales correlate significantly with each other. Students who feel responsible for their own learning also feel a sense of responsibility for their own past and future learning.

The Ceiling Effect and the Floor Effect

Prior to the factor analysis, the ceiling effect and the floor effect were checked. There was no item that showed the ceiling effect. On the other hand, three items had a floor effect. They were "To read English newspapers—until now," "To practice speaking English with your friends—until now," and "To attend a course and seminar provided by a university until now." These three items were not used to conduct factor analysis.

Factor Analysis

After the first factor analysis, as Figure 1 shows, sixty-two factors emerged. To reduce the number, the differential between the two succeeding numbers was focused on. A differential between the ninth factor and the tenth was .24 but the differential between the tenth and the elevenths was less than .01. Therefore, a gap was found between the ninth factor and the tenth: nine factors were identified.

After the second factor analysis with Promax Rotation, two items were found to have a weak correlation with any of the nine major factors (>.35). The two factors were "To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance and test scores—from now on" and "To prepare and review for classes—until now." They were not used in the third factor analysis.

All the items' factor loading are attached to Appendix 2. Table 4 shows all the names, means, SD, Chronbach's coefficients and the number of the items of all the nine factors.

Regarding Gender Difference

In order to find out the differences of awareness between male students and female students in English learning, all the nine factors were t-tested. The results were Factor I, $t(900)=9.75$, $p<.01$; Factor II, $t(900)=4.45$, $p<.01$; Factor III, $t(900)=4.96$, $p<0.01$; Factor IV, $t(900)=5.17$, $p<0.01$; Factor V, $t(900)=2.56$, $p<0.05$; Factor VI, $t(900)=3.39$, $p<0.01$; Factor VII, $t(900)=5.64$, $p<0.01$; Factor VIII, $t(900)=4.46$, $p<0.01$; Factor IX, $t(900)=3.93$, $p<0.01$. As a result, female students' values had a significant difference from those of male students.

Discussion

The Instrument

This instrument used a total of 902 subjects from various colleges in a number of universities in Japan and Taiwan. As a result, Table 2 shows that the reliabilities of all the scales turned out to be satisfactory. Table 3 shows that all the scales were significantly related to each other. Therefore, this instrument can be used as a tool to measure college students' learner autonomy in Japan and Taiwan.

TABLE 1 Faculties the Subjects Belong to n(%)

Faculty	Male	Female	Total
Law	68(70.8)	28(29.2)	96(100)
Literature and Foreign Language	97(86.9)	224(69.8)	321(100)
Science and Information	53(86.9)	8(13.1)	61(100)
Commerce and Management	182(76.8)	55(23.2)	237(100)
Education	35(43.8)	45(56.3)	80(100)
Humanities and Liberal Arts	18(16.8)	89(83.2)	107(100)
Total	453(50.2)	449(49.8)	902(100)

TABLE 2 Means, SD, Chronbach's coefficient Alpha, and the Number of the Items that Composed of the Factors.

	Mean	SD	α	Scores (obtained by averaging)
RRL	30.50	6.60	.79	total of items #1 to #10.
RPL	31.48	10.14	.91	total of items with odd numbers among the items #11 to #35
RFL	39.25	10.18	.90	total of items with even numbers among the items #12 to #36
PLC	32.14	8.41	.84	total of items #37 to #49
FLC	46.87	14.79	.93	total of items #50 to #65

TABLE 3 Mean, SD (Standard Deviation), Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, and Scores of Each Scale

	RRL	RPL	RFL	PLC	FLC
RRL	—	.508**	.594**	.274**	.264**
RPL		—	.651**	.349**	.223**
RFL			—	.309**	.346**
PLC				—	.603**
FLC					—

**p<.01

TABLE 4 Correlations Between Five Scales

Factor	Label	Mean	SD	α	#
I	Future English learning	46.87	14.79	.94	16
II	Past class management	26.33	8.86	.90	11
III	Future class management	19.10	6.24	.88	7
IV	Past English learning	15.70	4.81	.73	6
V	Awareness of class management	13.51	4.19	.83	5
VI	Awareness of one's English learning	20.31	4.45	.77	6
VII	Past English learning in school	8.15	2.78	.80	3
VIII	Awareness of class evaluation	10.06	2.93	.76	3
IX	Awareness of study evaluation	46.87	14.79	.75	4

Concerning the Factor Analysis

Although there were nine factors, they were categorized into three distinct themes: "English learning," "Class management," and "Evaluation." The strongest factor, "Future English learning," belonged to the "English Learning" category, indicating that the respondents felt willing to study English more from now on.

The second category was class management. There were three factors in this category: Factors II, III, and IV. However, comparisons between Factor II (past) and III (future) can help to explain the respondents' ideas about class management. As Factor II was much stronger than Factor III, students' feelings of past regret was much stronger than their future desire to be involved in class management. Our interpretation of this result was that students did feel regretful at not being involved in class management, but they felt less willing to do so in the future. This interpretation was also supported by the fact that of the number of the items that composed both factors, Factor II was composed of four items more than Factor III. The reasons why students' past regret was stronger than their future will was not so complicated. Examining the items that were composed of both factors, most of the strong items turned out to involve complaints about teachers' teaching styles. They may have wanted to complain about them. However, in order to have responsibility for one's study in the future, one should have a strong desire to manage his or her learning. That's why students felt reluctant to be involved in class management. This result illustrated that the subjects are not ready to take responsibility for their learning. According to Little (1995), the basis of learner autonomy is to accept responsibility for one's own learning. Therefore, they were not autonomous learners yet but they had a will to be so. Therefore, teachers' help would be necessary.

The third category was evaluation, which was composed of two factors: evaluation of the course and evaluation of the students' own study in the course. Students' evaluation of the course they had taken was conducted in many universities but not all. That meant that some colleges gave the students opportunities to evaluate their course but others did not. It is natural that students wanted to have the right to assess the course. However, concerning their evaluation of their own study in these courses, students indicated that they were aware of the importance of assessing their study, but they also felt that evaluation of students' work was the teachers' job. Therefore, this factor came ninth.

Gender Differences

As we stated above, we did a t-test on gender difference. The results showed that female students were significantly more autonomous learners in every point. However, this present study has some limitation. The questionnaire was conducted in classes of teachers who offered their cooperation with this study group. Therefore, Table 1 shows that female students who major in foreign language and/or English literature outnumbered the male students. In reality, departments of English language and English literature usually have had more female students than others. This fact itself proves that female students are more willing to study English language. In our further study, we should try to investigate the differences between both genders' attitudes toward English learning under the condition of a well-balanced ratio of both genders.

Phase Two (Qualitative Research)
Towards Phase Two

A quantitative study shows the status quo of the respondents; it does not tell why they think what they do. In phase one, the factor analysis showed that the analyses on "English learning" and "evaluation" did not require a complicated interpretation. On the other hand, the analysis of "class management" needed to be explored more thoroughly. Therefore, in order to examine the interpretation and discover what efforts teachers should make to have students get involved more deeply in class management, we needed to conduct a qualitative research inquiry that would ask respondents why they had chosen class management in their responses.

Subjects

Among the respondents of phase one, seventy-three (forty-four Japanese and twenty-nine Taiwanese) university students also joined phase two. All of them studied English as a foreign language. Twenty-eight were males and forty-five were females. Forty-four were freshmen, twenty-five were sophomores, and four were junior students.

Instruments

The questionnaire was developed (Appendix 3) based on the questionnaires used by Chu (2004), Sakai, *et al*. (2008), and Spratt, *et al*. (2002). The questionnaire consisted of two parts. In Section One, there were twenty-six question items adopted from Section One of the previous research.

According to the same reason described in the instrument of phase one, items concerning teachers' responsibilities for class management were deleted. The objective of phase two, which was also different from phase one, was to discover students' perceptions of class management. Thus, all eleven items concerning class management were retained. The students were asked their perception of their responsibilities towards learning using a Likert-type five-level scale. They were also asked to write down the reasons in an open-ended format if they chose level four (Mostly) or level five (Totally). In Section Two, the students were asked to choose the five items they would like to get involved in most in English classes, if they were given opportunities. They were given a total of thirteen items to choose from, which were the same question items as the ones in Section Two of phase one. They were also asked to write down, in an open-ended format, the reasons why they had chosen them. The questionnaire was distributed to the students during class by two of the authors. It took about fifteen to twenty minutes to answer the questions.

Methods

As for the items the students chose in Section Two, the numbers of each item were counted and descriptive statistics were used to see which items the students would like to take responsibility for most in the English classes. The written comments on the reasons were content-analyzed for themes (Mayring, 2000), and each theme was labeled. Two authors checked if the theme was appropriate for triangulation. Although students were asked to write down the reasons for their choices in Section 1, few students wrote the reasons, so this section was excluded from the analysis.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 5 shows the items the students would like to get involved in most in class. Five themes were mentioned by more than 30 percent of the respondents.

Reasons Why the Students Chose Items 1, 5, 3, 8, and 9

Of the three hundred and eleven items that the students chose in total, two hundred and ninety-three comments included written explanations of why they had chosen the items. The themes that resulted from a content-analysis are shown here. We analyzed most of the themes in items in which more than 30 percent of the students indicated that they would like to get involved (Items *1, 5, 3, 8, and 9*).

Table 5 Items the Students Would Like to Get Involved in Most in English Classes (N=79)

Question Items	n (%)
1) To decide your goal of study in one semester	38(48.1)
5) To decide the textbook and materials you use in class	33(41.8)
3) To check how much progress you make	31(39.2)
8) To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work	29(36.7)
9) To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework	28(35.4)
6) To decide topics and activities you learn in class	23(29.1)
13) To evaluate the course	21(26.6)
4) To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance and test scores	15(19.0)
2) To decide your class's goal of study in one semester	15(19.0)
7) To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson	16(20.3)
12) To assess your study	16(20.3)
10) To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules	16(20.3)
11) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self-evaluation	14(17.7)

Reasons why the students chose Item 1 (To decide your goal of study in one semester)

Item 1 produced thirty-eight written comments, and six themes emerged (Table 6). The first theme is "having a clear focus." Students feel that they can have a clearer focus once they set their own goal. The second theme is "considering individual difference." The third theme is "being motivated." The fourth theme is "participating in class actively." The fifth theme is "making an effort." The sixth theme is "planning." One student said, "I think if I can decide my goal for this semester, I could have enough time and a better plan for the whole semester."

Reasons why students chose Item 5 (To decide the textbook and materials you use in class)

Item 5 produced thirty-three written comments, and two themes emerged (Table 7). The first theme, mentioned by more than 45 percent of the students, is "considering individual difference." Students wish to choose a textbook suitable for them in level, content, and purpose of their learning English. The second theme is "being motivated." Other than those two themes, various reasons were mentioned.

Reasons why students chose Item 3 (To check how much progress you make)

Item 3 generated twenty-nine written comments, and three themes emerged (Table 8). The first theme is "reflecting on learning." Checking progress gives the students an opportunity to reflect on their learning. The second theme is "making a future plan." Checking progress enabled the students to adjust their learning and help them to make a future study plan. The third theme is "being motivated."

Reasons why students chose Item 8 (To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work)

Item 8 generated twenty-nine written comments, and three themes emerged (Table 9). The first theme is "individual preference." Some students mention their own preference for specific types of activities, and indicated a preference for specific types of class activities. The second theme is "students' ability and the right to choose types of activities." Students felt that they have the ability or right to choose types of activities by themselves. The third theme is "knowing better than a teacher." Students think that they know better than a teacher which activities are suitable.

Reasons why students chose Item 9 (To decide the amount, type, and frequency of homework)

Item 9 generated twenty-eight written comments, and three themes emerged (Table 10). The first theme is "deciding suitable amount." Students would like to decide the amount of homework suitable for them. The second theme is "deciding suitable contents." Students think that if they can decide about the homework, they can choose which kind of homework they prefer. The third theme is "making a better schedule." Students think that they can make a better homework schedule if they choose by themselves.

Discussion

Setting Goals and Reflecting on Learning

The results of phase two show that students would like to get involved in various aspects of decision-making in class. All the items were chosen by more than 20 percent of the students. On the six items that over 30 percent of the

TABLE 6 Reasons Why the Students Chose Item 1 (N=38

Theme	Number of the comments
1. Having a clear focus	8
2. Considering individual difference	6
3. Being motivated	5
4. Participating in class actively	4
5. Making an effort	4
6. Planning	3
7. Others	8

TABLE 7 Reasons Why the Students Chose Item 5 (N=33)

Theme	Number of the comments
1. Considering individual difference	15
2. Being motivated	5
3. Others	13

TABLE 8 Reasons Why the Students Chose Item 3 (N=29)

Theme	Number of the comments
1. Reflecting on learning	10
2. Making a future plan	6
3. Being motivated	3
4. Others	10

TABLE 9 Reasons Why the Students Chose Item 8 (N=29)

Theme	Number of the comments
1. Individual preference	9
2. Students' ability and right to choose types	4
3. Knowing better than a teacher	2
4. Others	14

TABLE 10 Reasons Why the Students Chose Item 9 (N=28)

Theme	Number of the comments
1. Deciding suitable amount	10
2. Deciding suitable contents	6
3. Making a better schedule	6
4. Others	6

students chose, the first ranked item was "(1) To decide your goal of study in one semester" (Table 5). This item is related to the third ranked item "(3) To check how much progress you make" (Table 5). This implies that the subjects had not been given enough opportunities in the past to set their own goals and reflect on their learning.

Chan (2001) points out that autonomous learners are expected to develop their ability to take charge of every stage of their own learning. Two of the six stages that she discusses, "Setting learning goals" and "reflecting on learning,"

correspond to Items 1 and 3. Cotterall (2000) also mentions that learners should be encouraged to set personal goals, monitor and reflect on their performance, and modify their learning in class because reflection is a crucial element in the courses designated to promote learner autonomy. Thus, teachers should provide students with such opportunities. For instance, Thanasoulas (2000) suggests that activities such as diaries and evaluation sheets can be used for this purpose. Diaries offer students the opportunity to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning, and evaluation sheets allow students

to gauge whether or not their expectations of a course at the beginning are achieved at the end.

Making Choices

The other three items (Items 5, 8, and 9 in Table 5) that more than 30 percent of the students had chosen were all related to making choices. In other words, students would like to get involved in decision-making in class. Providing learners with choice is essential for getting the students actively involved in their own learning (Lee, 1998). Littlewood (1999) points out that students in East Asia are not provided with enough opportunities to make their own choices and develop individual, proactive autonomous behavior because educational tradition in East Asia has promoted a high degree of teacher authority and control. In fact, according to a study of forty-one English teachers' views on autonomous learning in Hong Kong (Chan, 2003), no teachers reported that they ever asked their students to choose their materials, activities, and learning objectives. According to her study, teachers' perceptions are that students view decision-making as the teachers' job. However, we should keep in mind that students' perceptions are not consistent with those of teachers, as the results of our study show. Thus, we conclude that teachers should give students more choice in such decisions as the selection of textbooks and materials; types of classroom activities; the amount, type, and frequency of homework; and topics and activities in class.

Being Motivated

When we look at the reasons why the students chose the items, we notice that "being motivated" is a theme that frequently arose in several items (Item 1 in Table 6, Item 3 in Table 8, Item 5 in Table 7, Item 2, Item 6, and Item 11). Dickinson (1995, p. 165), reviewing the literature on motivation, and shows that "learners' active and independent involvement in their own learning (autonomy) increases motivation to learn and consequently increase learning effectiveness." Interestingly, students in our study do seem to be aware that involvement in some aspects of learning in class increases their motivation to learn a language.

Individual Differences

Another theme that arose with some frequency is related to individual differences. "Considering individual differences" in Item 1(Table 6), "choosing a textbook suitable for the individual" in Item 5 (Table 7), and "personal preference" in Item 8 (Table 9) indicate that students hope that individual differences or preferences are taken into consideration in class. This implies that individual students would like to take responsibility of their own learning. In other words, they are ready and willing to act more autonomously. Asian students usually learn English in a teacher-centered class where students do not have enough opportunity to develop autonomy. Since individual differences tend to be less emphasized in a teacher-centered class, teachers should take them into consideration by providing opportunities for decision-making in a learner-centered class.

Pedagogical Implications

In the discussion section of phase one of the study, we stated that "the students felt reluctant to be involved in class management." In order to explore the deeper reasons this reluctance, we carried out the second study, phase two, as a follow-up study. The results of this study revealed that students wanted to be involved in class management tasks such as "setting goals and evaluating the lesson," and "making choices." However, the study also revealed that they had not been taught how to do them sufficiently well. Class management activities need experience in order to do them well. That is probably why the subjects lacked confidence in this area.

In *Language learning strategy: What every teacher should know* (1990, p. 20), Oxford identifies these actions as meta-cognitive strategies. She adds, "Though meta-cognitive strategies are extremely important, research shows that learners use these strategies sporadically and without much sense of their importance"(pp.137–138). The results of our research imply that the main reason why students feel reluctant to manage class is that they are not trained properly in using these strategies with skill. In addition, our previous study (Sakai *et al.*, 2008) showed that the students in East Asia tended to express a strong belief that their teachers should have the responsibility of class management. This also explains why subjects felt reluctance to take a role in classroom management.

For the purpose of facilitating students' awareness of the importance of meta-cognitive strategies, and in order to develop these abilities, teachers should implement

instructional activities, such as scaffolding activities, that encourage their development (Bruner, 1980). Scaffolding enables adults to maximize the growth of the child's intra-psychological functioning (Clay and Cazden, 1990). With regard to the relationship between reflection and autonomy, Mizuki (2003, p. 151) states that "by reflecting on presentations, the students are able to review their performance and be more critical of them. I believe this heightens their awareness of being independent learners and can lead to a better management and responsibility for their learning." Oxford (1990, p. 138) concludes: "Obviously, learners need to learn much more about the essential meta-cognitive strategies."

One way to use meta-cognitive strategies such as scaffolding to develop autonomy is as follows: During the first lesson of the semester, teachers discuss the goals of the class with their students and show them some textbooks that might be use in the classroom. The teacher then asks the students to select one and state their reasons. After a few lessons, once students know the pace of their teachers, let them ponder whether it is the right pace for them to improve their learning. After half of the semester, teachers might then have them check whether the textbook has helped them develop their English proficiency. At the end of the semester, have the students evaluate the textbook—has it improved their ability to reflect on their studies? At other times, teachers should encourage students to reflect on activities. Similar methods can be applied to decision making regarding the amount of homework. Cotterall (1999) has written, in support of such practical recommendations, that "Teachers need to allocate class time and attention to raising awareness of monitoring and evaluating strategies, as well as to provide learners with opportunities to practice using these meta-cognitive strategies."

Our next research project seeks to ask whether students understand the importance of meta-cognitive strategies in learning. In addition, we want to ask how students manage their classroom learning and how they use meta-cognition to improve autonomous learning.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Phase One
(In the first of the questionnaire, personal information was asked.)
II Learner Autonomy

Section 1—Perception of responsibilities toward learning
When you are taking classes, how much responsibility should you take concerning the following items?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Hardly	To some extent	Mostly	Totally

1) To decide your goal of study in one semester

2) To check how much progress you make

3) To decide the textbook and materials you use in class

4) To decide topics and activities you learn in class

5) To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson

6) To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work

7) To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework

8) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self-evaluation

9) To assess your study

10) To evaluate the course

Section 2—Responsibilities toward learning in the past and the future

(Until now) To what extent, have you got involved in the following items in the English classes you have taken since you entered the university?

(From now on) To what extent, would you like to get involved if you are given opportunities in the future? (to items with odd number, students were asked "until now", to items with even number, "from now on")

11), 12) To decide your goal of study in one semester.

13), 14) To decide your class's goal of study in one semester.

15), 16) To check how much progress you make.

17), 18) To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance and test scores.

19), 20) To decide the textbook and materials you use in class.

21), 22) To decide topics and activities you learn in class.

23), 24) To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson.

25), 26) To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work.

27), 28) To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework.

29), 30) To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules.

31), 32) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self-evaluation.

33), 34) To assess your study.

35), 36) To evaluate the course.

Section 3—English learning activities outside the class
Questions 37–49

How often have you done the following English learning activities voluntarily since you entered the university?

Questions 50–65

How often would you like to do this from now on?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Usually

37) To read English newspaper

38) To read web pages in English

39) To watch and listen to English learning TV and radio programs

40) To watch and listen to TV and radio programs in English

41) To listen to English songs

42) To watch English movies without subtitles in your language

43) To talk to foreigners in English

44) To practice speaking English with your friends

45) To learn English grammar

46) To learn English vocabulary words

47) To prepare for proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and STEP

48) To prepare and review for classes

49) To attend a course and seminar provided by a university

50) To read English newspapers

51) To read magazines and books in English

52) To write an e-mail in English

53) To keep a diary in English

54) To watch and listen to English learning TV and radio programs

55) To watch and listen to TV and radio programs in English

56) To watch English movies without subtitles in your language

57) To talk to foreigners in English

58) To practice speaking English with your friends

59) To practice English in an English conversation school

60) To learn English grammar

61) To learn English vocabulary words

62) To prepare for proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and STEP

63) To learn in a self-study center at a university

64) To attend a course and seminar provided by a university

65) To go to see your teacher in order to discuss your work

Appendix 2: Factor Loadings
Table 11
Items that Have Strong Correlation with

FACTOR I	FL*
To learn in a self-study center at a university.	.80
To attend a course and seminar provided by a university.	.79
To go to see your teacher in order to discuss your work.	.78
To practice English in an English conversation school.	.77
To learn English vocabulary words—from now on.	.74
To practice speaking English with your friends.	.71
To talk to foreigners in English.	.69
To learn English grammar.	.68
To keep a diary in English.	.66
To prepare for proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and STEP.	.64
To write an e-mail in English.	.61
To watch and listen to English learning TV and radio programs.	.60
To read magazines and books in English.	.60
To watch and listen to TV and radio programs in English.	.56
To watch English movies without subtitles in your language.	.54
To read English newspapers.	.50

(All the items are asked "from now on") *FL means factor loading

FACTOR II	FL
To decide the textbook and materials you use in class.	.83
To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson.	.79
To decide topics and activities you learn in class.	.78
To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework.	.73
To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self-evaluation.	.70
To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules.	.68
To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work.	.68
To assess your study.	.62
To decide your class's goal of study in one semester.	.56
To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance and test scores.	.55
To check how much progress you make.	.48

(All the items are asked "until now")

FACTOR III	FL
To decide topics and activities you learn in class.	.80
To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson.	.76
To decide the textbook and materials you use in class.	.65
To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work.	.65
To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework.	.59
To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules.	.49
To decide your class's goal of study in one semester.	.45

(All the items are asked "from now on")

FACTOR IV	FL
To watch and listen to TV and radio programs in English.	.68
To watch and listen to English learning TV and radio programs.	.61
To watch English movies without subtitles in your language.	.61
To read web pages in English.	.56
To talk to foreigners in English.	.49
To listen to English songs.	.44

(All the items are asked "until now")

FACTOR V	FL
To decide topics and activities you learn in class	.71
To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson	.62
To decide the textbook and materials you use in class	.61
To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework	.58
To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work	.52

FACTOR VI	FL
To decide your goal of study in one semester	.67
To decide your goal of study in one semester—from now on	.60
To check how much progress you make	.57
To check how much progress you make—from now on	.52
To decide your goal of study in one semester—until now	.49
To check how much progress you make—until now	.41

FACTOR VII	FL
To learn English grammar—until now	.81
To learn English vocabulary words—until now	.76
To prepare for proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and STEP—until now	.54

FACTOR VIII	FL
To evaluate the course—until now	.76
To evaluate the course—from now on	.66
To evaluate the course	.52

FACTOR IX	FL
To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self	.51
To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self—from now on	.50
To assess your study	.46
To assess your study—from now on	.46

Appendix 3: Questionnaire for Phase Two

(In the first of the questionnaire, personal information was asked.)

II Learner Autonomy

Section 1—Perception of responsibilities toward learning
(please choose one of the five choices): When you are taking classes,
how much responsibility should your teacher take?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Hardly	To some extent	Mostly	Totally

1) To decide your class's goal of study in one semester

2) To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance and test scores

3) To decide the textbook and materials you use in class

4) To decide topics and activities you learn in class

5) To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson

6) To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work

7) To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework

8) To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules

9) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self-evaluation

10) To assess your study

11) To evaluate the course

If you choose 4 or 5 in the above questions, please write the reasons why you think so:

Section 2—Responsibilities toward learning in the future:
To what extent would you like to get involved in the following items in the English classes
if you are given opportunities in the future? Choose the five items which you would like
to get involved in most and write down the reasons why you chose them.

(There are thirteen question items in this questionnaire sheet. All the items are the same as ones in the section 2 of Phase One.)

The five items you would like to get involved in most and reasons why you chose them

Items	Reasons

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