

Teachers' Roles in Developing Learner Autonomy in the East Asian Region

Shien Sakai

Chiba University of Commerce, Japan

Man-ping Chu

Chinese Culture University, Taiwan

Akiko Takagi

Osaka Kyoiku University, Japan

Seongwon Lee

Gyeongsang National University, South Korea

This study investigated university students' perceptions of learner autonomy in English learning in the East Asian region. The study was conducted in 2006 based on the assumption that promoting learner autonomy is an appropriate pedagogical goal in EFL environments if teachers are aware of their roles, and that unique concepts of learner autonomy should be established and their applications for East Asian classrooms explored. The purposes were 1) to find out whether subjects from three different language areas could be surveyed about learner autonomy by one set of questionnaires and 2) to discover 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 questionnaires. The authors analyzed the data using factor analysis. Three common factors were identified: "class management," "study outside the class," and "past regret." These

results proved the appropriateness of the questionnaires, though some revision is needed. The data also indicated the existence of a factor that may inhibit students from developing learner autonomy. Based on the study, the authors suggest that teachers should give students more opportunities to control their own learning as well as providing them with more support for continuing their study outside of the classroom in order to develop learner autonomy in an East Asian context.

Key words: learner autonomy, communicative language teaching, self-direction, learner-centered, independence

INTRODUCTION

According to Little (1999), the basis of learner autonomy is to accept responsibility for one's own learning. That means learners should take responsibility to understand what, why, and how they are learning, and to what degree they succeed in their effort. The ultimate effect of learner autonomy is to remove the barriers imposed in the limited classroom and move to the wider learning environment in which the learners live. Ever since Holec (1979) argued that the purpose of adult education in foreign language learning should be to prepare the individual learner to participate in the democratic process, research on learner autonomy in language teaching and learning has been very popular in Western countries. The literature reflects a widely held belief that learners in Western countries are more adept at establishing course aims, charting their approach to learning, engaging the content, and undertaking self-assessment. This stands in marked contrast with their Asian counterparts. Further evident is the notion that East Asian learners tend to favor teacher-centered learning styles, with an emphasis on drill and practice in preparation for memory-oriented examinations controlled by their teachers (Littlewood, 1999; Nakata, 2004). Thus, some college or university educators in regions other than Europe and North America have claimed that learner autonomy is just one more Western cultural construct, and an inappropriate pedagogical goal in non-Western societies (Little, 1999).

Others (e.g., Kumaravadivelu, 2003) have drawn our attention to the prevalence of cultural stereotypes in the ELT literature.

However, very few studies have investigated students' perceptions of learner autonomy in the East Asian region (e.g., Chu, 2004; Spratt, Humphreys, & Chan, 2002), and fewer still have differentiated the use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in EFL and ESL contexts. The authors of these papers argue that autonomy can be seen as a valid education goal and a universal human capacity, and that promoting learner autonomy can be an appropriate pedagogical goal in EFL environments if teachers are aware of their roles. First presenting an understanding of East Asian college students' concepts of responsibilities in learning English and in self-directed learning outside of class, the authors will discuss the results of the study conducted to identify English teachers' roles in developing their students' English proficiency.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Is it really that learner autonomy cannot be exercised within the framework of East Asian cultures? To answer this question, we first need to look at the English teaching methods and approaches that have been used in East Asian classrooms. Many of these methods are developed in English as Second Language (ESL) environments. Some are not thought to be suitable in English as Foreign Language (EFL) environments such as Japan, Korea, or Taiwan. For example, Japanese EFL teachers are strongly encouraged to use CLT, the most current methodology, in classrooms, as CLT enables students to use English as a means of communication (Mochizuki & Yamada, 1996). The chief merit of CLT is that outside classrooms students can use skills taught inside classrooms. If that is the case, then, how relevant is CLT for countries such as Japan, Korea, or Taiwan, where students can rarely try their skills outside classrooms? In Japan, Ono (2006) claims that Japanese secondary school students' English proficiency has declined because CLT

has been introduced into classrooms. In Taiwan, college students' average TOEFL results also appeared to have worsened, ranking 20th among 23 Asian countries in 2001. Such results have worried Taiwan's government officials. In a bid to increase Taiwan's competitiveness, on April 30, 2002, Yu Shyi-Kun, Premier of Taiwan, promised to make English the nation's second language over a period of six years in the Legislative Yuan.

Kumaravadivelu (2003) points out that with the advent and advancement of CLT, scholarly interest in learner autonomy "received a shot in the arm" during the late 1970s and early 1980s as both seek to put the learner at the center of L2 pedagogy (p. 132). Schalkwijk,). Schalkwijk, van Esch, Elsen, & Setz (2002) also posit that the concepts of CLT coincide with the formulation of theories on developing learner autonomy as communicative teaching, learner-centeredness, and autonomy and share a focus on the learner as the key agent in the learning process. Despite the widespread adoption of CLT in East Asian regions, the following factors may contribute to college students' failure in learning English. First, the pressure that students encounter, such as entrance exams to higher education systems, has limited the English learning of Asian youngsters to mastering only a discrete-point grammar examination instead of interaction with native speakers of English. Second, the 'one textbook for all levels of students in a class' teaching materials and instructional practices in language classrooms may also discourage the development of learner autonomy. Third, most East Asian students do not challenge their teachers' pedagogy in order to maintain the self-image (or face) of the teacher. Fourth, due to the highly complex nature of language and language learning, encouraging autonomy, which seems new to both the teacher and students, often proves to be a difficult task. Fifth, students lack learner training and have few opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning process (that is, make decisions about their learning, plan, evaluate, monitor, and assess).

Healy (1999) mentions that "learner self-direction and autonomous learning are Western concepts that fit smoothly into US culture in particular" (p. 391). Nevertheless, Littlewood (1999) argues that East Asian students

have the same capacity for autonomy as other learners do, and language teachers should create environments that encourage student autonomy. Holden and Usuki (1999) point out that the students simply do not have an opportunity to develop their autonomy because they usually learn English in teacher-centered classes. The results of their study revealed that Japanese students prefer teachers who play non-traditional roles rather than teachers who simply lectures or transmits their knowledge. Their findings show that Japanese students are not less autonomous than other learners. This implies that educational and behavioral norms in Japan simply discourage their autonomy.

At the same time, Aoki and Smith (1999) report that although learner autonomy is not yet widely discussed among Japanese teachers of second languages, the concept will probably become a focus of interest in this decade, in the same way other “fashionable” Western ideas have been imported in the past. They state that (1) cultures are not necessarily co-extensive with “nations,” nor are cultures static; (2) many Japanese students respond well to group work intended to foster learner autonomy, which may be out of their “group-oriented” nature, or they may welcome the chance to express to their “individualism”; and (3) learner autonomy can be seen as a legitimate goal in Japan, as in any other society. Also in Japan, we see some examples of teachers’ successfully promoting learner autonomy in various ways. For instance, Wakui (2006) raised students’ awareness of the learning process and made them recognize the importance of autonomy for their own learning by using self-and peer-assessment in her presentation class. Stephenson (2006) used reflective journals and class newsletters in order to enhance and support learner autonomy and support autonomy in her reading and speaking classes. The journals and newsletters were beneficial not only for learners but also for teachers, and led to changes in attitudes and behavior.

In Taiwan, several successful programs designed to promote learner autonomy have challenged the view that autonomy is inimical to Asian learning cultures. Yang (1998), for example, has experimented with a program designed to promote autonomy among students at a Taiwanese university for more than four years. He suggests that teachers play a very

important role in helping students acquire learning strategies and in developing their own self-direction in learning. What they need is to “facilitate the structure, process, beliefs and strategies necessary for learner autonomy to become a reality” (p. 133).

Chan's (2001) study which investigated students' readiness, willingness and capacity to learn autonomously in a Hong Kong University also shows how educational and behavioral norms prevent learners from developing their autonomy. Based on the students' opinions, he claims that teachers should help students to be autonomous learners by raising the students' awareness and re-adjusting the learning approaches which have discouraged them from learning autonomously.

Learner autonomy has long been viewed as one of the primary factors influencing long-term language-learning success (e.g., Kumaravadivelu, 2003). However, as Hsiao stated in KOTESOL (2007), empirical research suggests that in many East Asian countries, such as Japan, South Korea, and China, learners are socialized within a culture that is often widely characterized as group-oriented, with a strong emphasis on interdependence rather than independence. This paper reports on an investigative study regarding the role teachers play in fostering greater student-learner autonomy as one of its primary pedagogical objectives.

THE STUDY

Purposes

The purposes of this study are (1) to find out whether subjects from three different language areas in the East Asian context can be surveyed by one set of questionnaires about learner autonomy, (2) to discover what kind of factors these subjects have in common concerning perceptions of responsibility toward learner autonomy and English learning activities outside the class.

Subjects

The subjects are 107 university students who study English as a foreign language in Taiwan, Korea, and Japan. Tables 1 and 2 show the background information of the students, faculty, and the course titles.

TABLE 1
Gender and School Year of the Subjects (N=107)

Area	Gender	Year
Taiwan	5 males & 21 females	25(2nd) & 1(4th)
Korea	9 males & 25 females	20(1st), 9(2nd), 3(3rd), 2(4th)
Japan 1	22 females	22(1st)
Japan 2	11 males & 13 females	24(1st)
Total	25 males & 82 females	66(1st), 34(2nd), 3(3rd, 4th)

TABLE 2
Faculty and Course Titles (N=107)

Area	Faculty	Course Title
Taiwan	Foreign Languages	English Composition (required)
Korea	Education	English Reading (required)
Japan 1	Foreign Languages	English Reading (required)
Japan 2	Regional Policy	CALL (required)

Instrument

A questionnaire was used to collect the data. It consists of two parts. Part One asks about the subjects' background information. The questions in Part Two are divided into three sections (see Appendix 1): students' perceptions of responsibilities toward learning (Section 1), responsibilities toward their learning in the past and the future (Section 2), and English learning activities outside the classroom (Section 3). Sections 1 and 2 adopted the questionnaire employed by Chu (2004); Section 3 adopted the questionnaire of Spratt et al. (2002). The Japanese authors checked the wording of the original questionnaires developed by the previous researchers and slightly modified them for the study.

Procedure

First, in August 2006, the Japanese authors created a Japanese version of the questionnaire. Then, the authors translated the Japanese version into English and sent it to the Taiwanese and Korean authors to discuss in September 2006. In the same month, using suggestions from the Taiwanese and Korean authors, the English version was revised, translated again into their own native languages, i.e., Japanese, Taiwanese, and Korean versions, and handed out by the authors to their students. The data analysis and discussions were performed in October and November 2006. As a method of data analysis, factor analysis was used in order to investigate what factors those students have in their minds about learner autonomy.

RESULTS

Reliability of the Questionnaire

In order to calculate how reliable the questionnaire items are, all the items are checked. Figures shown in the row labeled "Value" in Table 3 are values of Cronbach's alpha. As Table 3 shows, all indicate more than 0.800, which proves that the questionnaire items are reliable.

TABLE 3
Reliability of the Questionnaire in Part Two

Questionnaire	Values
#1 to #13 Responsibilities taken by the Students (13 items in Section 1)	0.880
#1 to #13 Responsibilities taken by the Teachers (13 items in Section 1)	0.837
#14 to #26 of 'Until now' (13 items in Section 2)	0.930
#14 to #26 of 'From now on' (13 items in Section 2)	0.924
#27 to #45 of 'Until now' (19 items in Section 3)	0.906
#27 to #45 of 'From now on' (19 items in Section 3)	0.923

Factor Analysis

Before conducting the factor analysis, the ceiling effect and the floor effect are checked. This questionnaire has five choices for each question, so in case the total sum of the means and the standard deviation (SD) is more than five, the item shows the ceiling effect. When the differential that the standard is subtracted from the means is less than one, the item shows the floor effect. As shown in Table 4, 2)b, 4)b, 5)b, 6)b, 7)b, 8)b, 9)b, 10)b, 11)b, 12)b, 13)b, 34)b, and 41)b have the ceiling effect, and as seen in Table 5, 27)a, 30)a, 31)a, 38)a, 43)a, and 45)a have the floor effect; these nineteen items are not used to conduct factor analysis.

TABLE 4
Items That Show the Ceiling Effect

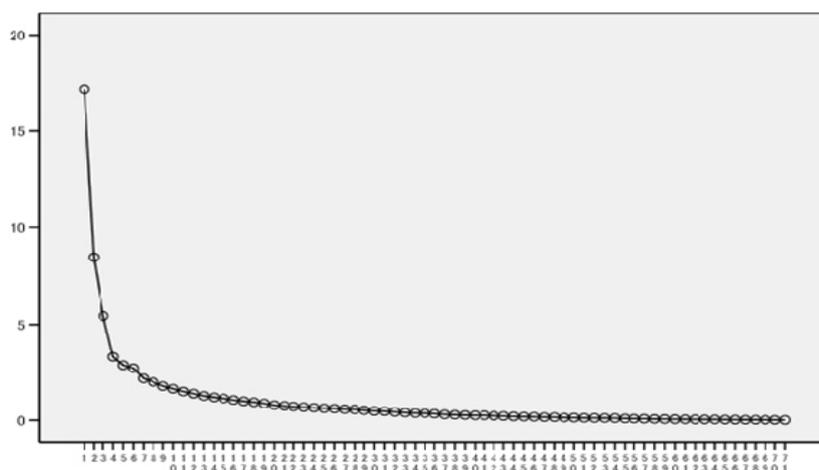
Items	Mean	SD	Total
2) To decide your class's goal of study in one semester --- b) Your teacher	4.34	0.764	5.104
4) To keep a record of your studies such as assignments, attendance and test scores --- b) Your teacher	4.11	0.984	5.094
5) To decide the textbook and materials you use in class --- b) Your teacher	4.75	0.516	5.266
6) To decide the topics and activities you learn in class --- b) Your teacher	4.56	0.647	5.207
7) To decide the pace of the lesson for one lesson --- b) Your teacher	4.55	0.676	5.226
8) To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair, and group work --- b) Your teacher	4.32	0.820	5.140
9) To decide the amount, type, and frequency of homework --- b) Your teacher	4.28	0.888	5.168
10) To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules --- b) Your teacher	3.74	1.276	5.016
11) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay, and self-evaluation --- b) Your teacher	4.31	0.817	5.127
12) To assess your study --- b) Your teacher	4.14	0.985	5.125
13) To evaluate the course --- b) Your teacher	4.25	0.912	5.162
34) To listen to English songs --- b) From now on	4.13	1.029	5.159
41) To prepare for proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and STEP --- b) From now on	4.27	0.896	5.166

TABLE 5
Items That Show the Floor Effect

Items	Mean	SD	Differential
27) To read English newspapers --- a) Until now	1.86	0.946	0.914
30) To write an e-mail in English --- a) Until now	2.09	1.103	0.987
31) To keep a diary in English --- a) Until now	1.85	1.164	0.686
38) To practice English in an English conversation school --- a) Until now	2.00	1.244	0.756
43) To learn in a self-study center at a university --- a) Until now	2.06	1.243	0.817
45) To go to see your teacher in order to discuss your work --- a) Until now	1.85	1.062	0.788

After conducting the first factor analysis, as Figure 1 shows, seventy-one factors are extracted. However, seventy-one factors are too many to interpret. Therefore, in order to reduce the number, the differential between the succeeding two numbers is focused. The differential between the first factor and the second one is 8.7. The differential between the second one and the third one is 3.0. The differential between the third factor and the fourth one is

FIGURE 1
Scree Plot of Factors



2.2. From now on, the differentials between the succeeding two numbers are less than 1. As Figure 1 shows, there are very few differences between the rest of the succeeding factors from the fourth factor on. Therefore, three major factors are fixed: Factor 1 is labeled as class management, Factor 2 is labeled as learner autonomy, and Factor 3 is labeled as past regret; they will be used for the factor analysis.

After conducting the second factor analysis with Promax Rotation, six items are found to have weak correlation (>0.35) with any of the three major factors. They are 3)a, 3)b, 4)a, 4)b, 10)a, and 34)a, as shown in Table 6, and are excluded. Now, the number of questionnaire items is sixty-five.

TABLE 6
Items That Have Weak Correlation with Any Major Factor

Items
3) To check how much progress you make --- a) You & b) Your teacher
4) To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance, and test scores --- a) You & b) Your teacher
10) To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules --- a) You
34) To listen to English songs --- a) Until now

After conducting the third factor analysis, the correlation between each item and each factor is found (see Appendix 2 for all the results). Table 7 shows the top four strongest correlations (>0.700) with Factor 1. All are concerned about class management even if the answers are divided into “Until now” and “From now on.” In this factor, there is no difference between “Until now” and “From now on” because 2-(18) has a and b, and the counterparts of 2-(19)a and 2-(20)a, 2-(19)b and 2-(20)b, are 0.652 and 0.663, respectively. They are also high enough, very close to 0.7. Therefore, this factor is labeled “class management.” As for the reliability of these four items, the coefficient of Cronbach’s alpha indicates 0.897, which proves that the questionnaire items are reliable. The numbers in the right column of Table 7, 8, and 9 show factor loadings of questionnaire items. A factor loading corresponds to a correlation coefficient of the common factor and the item.

TABLE 7
Items That Have Strong Correlation with Factor 1

Items	Factor 1
2-(18)b To decide the textbook and materials you use in class	0.736
2-(20)a To decide the pace of a lesson for one	0.728
2-(18)a To decide the textbook and materials you use in class	0.714
2-(19)a To decide topics and activities you learn in class	0.711

Table 8 reveals that four items have strong correlation (>0.444) with Factor 2. All pertain to students' willingness to study English outside the classroom in the future. In addition, thirteen items concerning students' willingness to study outside the classroom in the future follow after the four items. Therefore, this factor is labeled "learner autonomy." Studying English outside the classroom requires students to be more autonomous to achieve their learning goals. As for the reliability of these four items, the coefficient of Cronbach's alpha indicates 0.780, which proves that the questionnaire items are reliable.

TABLE 8
Items That Have Strong Correlation with Factor 2

Items	Factor 2
3-(42)b To prepare and review for classes	0.504
3-(37)b To practice speaking English with your friends	0.477
3-(27)b To read English newspapers	0.457
3-(36)b To talk to foreigners in English	0.447

Five items, as shown in Table 9, have strong correlation (>0.450) with Factor 3. All are concerned about studying students seldom did in the past and that they regretted not doing. Tables 10 through 14 show that these activities between "Until now" and "From now on" have significant differences. Therefore, this factor is labeled "past regret." As for the reliability of these five items, the coefficient of Cronbach's alpha indicates 0.776, which proves that the questionnaire items are reliable.

TABLE 9
Items That Have Strong Correlation with Factor 3

Items	Factor 3
3-(29)a To read web pages in English	0.546
3-(40)a To learn English vocabulary words	0.511
3-(32)a To watch and listen to English learning TV and radio programs	0.490
3-(41)a To prepare for proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and STEP	0.468
3-(39)a To learn English grammar	0.465

TABLE 10
The Average and the Standard Deviation Between 3-(29)a and b (N=107)

Items	Average	SD
3-(29) --- a) Until now	2.34	1.107
3-(29) --- b) From now on	3.36	0.936

Notes: The both sided Test: $t(106) = 12.171, 0.05 < p < 0.10$

TABLE 11
The Average and the Standard Deviation Between 3-(40)a and b (N=107)

Items	Average	SD
3-(40) --- a) Until now	3.07	1.118
3-(40) --- b) From now on	4.14	0.841

Notes: The both sided Test: $t(106) = 10.062, 0.05 < p < 0.10$

TABLE 12
The Average and the Standard Deviation Between 3-(32)a and b (N=107)

Items	Average	SD
3-(32) --- a) Until now	2.51	1.144
3-(32) --- b) From now on	3.44	1/109

Notes: The both sided Test: $t(106) = 9.421, 0.05 < p < 0.10$

TABLE 13
The Average and the Standard Deviation Between 3-(41)a and b (N=107)

Items	Average	SD
3-(41) --- a) Until now	2.79	1.108
3-(41) --- b) From now on	4.27	0.896

Notes: The both sided Test: $t(106) = 12.977, 0.05 < p < 0.10$

TABLE 14
The Average and the Standard Deviation Between 3-(39)a and b (N=107)

Items	Average	SD
3-(39) --- a) Until now	2.99	1.128
3-(39) --- b) From now on	4.05	0.873

Notes: The both sided Test: $t(106) = 10.282, 0.05 < p < 0.10$

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the study, we shall discuss issues regarding reliability of the questionnaire, ceiling effects, and floor effects.

First, concerning the reliability of the questionnaire, the value of Cronbach's alpha of all the questions turned out above 0.800, as Table 3 shows. Therefore, this questionnaire is proved to have reliability with all the respondents. This means that all the answers of this study are reliable. All the students from the three language areas took the questionnaires in their native languages and answered the questionnaires successfully. They were translated by the teacher from the original questionnaire in English. Therefore, one of the purposes of this study, "To find out whether the subjects from three different language areas can be surveyed by one set of questionnaire about learner autonomy," is proved.

Second, let us consider why items 2)b, 4)b, 5)b, 6)b, 7)b, 8)b, 9)b, 10)b, 11)b, 12)b, and 13)b in Table 4 have ceiling effects. These items are related to teachers' roles in the classrooms: "To decide your class's goal of study in one semester"; "To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance, and test scores"; "To decide the textbook and materials you use in class"; "To decide the topics and activities you learn in class"; "To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson"; "To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair, and group work"; "To decide the amount, type, and frequency of homework"; "To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules"; and "To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay, and self-evaluation." For these items, the students were asked to answer how much responsibility their teachers should take. Most of

the students assumed that their teachers should take responsibility. Therefore, it is natural that the results of analyzing these items show ceiling effects. In this connection, the results of items 1 and 3, which belong to Section One as well, are also near point five: 4.62 and 4.75, respectively. Therefore, most students consider these things out of their control.

34)b and 41)b in Part Two also have ceiling effects (see Table 4). The item 34)b, “To listen to English songs from now on,” may be an easy task for most students, so many of them chose 4 or 5. The fact that the item 41)b “To prepare for proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and STEP from now on” has ceiling effects may be because the students are easily motivated by taking English proficiency tests.

Now we would like to consider why items 27)a, 30)a, 31)a, 38)a, 43)a, and 45)a in Table 5 have floor effects. They are: “To read English newspapers — until now”; “To write an e-mail in English — until now”; “To keep a diary in English — until now”; “To practice English in an English conversation school — until now”; “To learn in a self-study center at a university — until now”; and “To go to see your teacher in order to discuss your work — until now.” Except for the last one, all concern the students’ experience of activities outside the classroom, and these activities require a great effort in that the students must finish them by themselves. In other words, the students need to be autonomous in order to continue the activities. Therefore, the result that these activities have floor effects means that the students from the three areas, Japan, Taiwan, and Korea, have a common tendency not to endeavor to study English outside the classroom except easy activities such as listening to English songs.

Finally, the factors identified include class management, learner autonomy, and past regret. These three factors exist at the subconscious cognitive level of the minds of the students. These three factors are different in certain ways. Nevertheless, Factor 3 is interpreted as students’ willingness to study English outside the classroom and is related to learner autonomy. Therefore, students in East Asia may have an aptitude for learner autonomy. However, Factor 1 is very big, and it prevents the students from developing learner autonomy. If

their teachers help them rid Factor 1 from their respective mindset, the students can adapt more to the condition of learner autonomy.

Conclusion

The findings in the present study include the following: 1) the questionnaire the researchers conducted can measure the students from three different language areas concerning learner autonomy, even though some items are inappropriate, and 2) the number of the factors found in their minds is three, as discussed above. Two factors (Factor 2 and 3) are related to learner autonomy, but the strongest factor (Factor 1) may inhibit students from developing their autonomy. This implies that teachers should give the students more opportunities to pick the textbook and materials, the topics and activities, and the pace of the classroom lesson. With this autonomy, the students will be made aware that they have control over their own learning. In addition, teachers should provide the students with more support so that they can continue their studies outside the classroom. Although the students hope to study outside of class, they do not seem to be motivated to do so. To resolve this problem, teachers can, for example, ask students to hand in learning journals every week, which will enable both the teacher and the students to monitor their learning progress.

Possible ideas for further research are to find out the following: 1) the reasons why students think the items labeled Factor 1 (class management) are out of their control, 2) the differences between genders, and 3) the correlation between learner autonomy and English proficiency. For research on 1), the survey will contain the following steps: first, delete the items that show ceiling effects and floor effects; second, reorganize the questionnaire (for example, leaving spaces for students to write their opinions); and then, ask about twenty students from each area to answer the questionnaire. In order to find out the results of the 2) and 3) ideas, the following are needed: a reorganized questionnaire, an English proficiency test, and more than one hundred students from each area.

THE AUTHORS

Shien Sakai is professor in the Dept. of Commerce at Chiba University of Commerce, Japan. His current research interests cover learner autonomy, and online testing. His recent publications include A Developmental Study on English Proficiency Test via the Internet with Sugimori, Kikuchi, Hisamura and Ono (2007) and English learning through e-learning and learner autonomy with Ono (2007).

Email: shiensakai@nifty.com

Man-ping Chu is associate professor in the English Dept. of Chinese Culture University in Taipei, Taiwan. Her current research interests cover English teaching and learning strategies and bilingual education. Her recent publication is College Students' and Their Teachers' Perceptions and Expectations on Learner Autonomy in EFL Conversation Classrooms in Taiwan (2004).

Email: manpingchu@yahoo.com

Akiko Takagi is associate professor in the Dept. of English Education of Osaka Kyoiku University in Japan. Her current research interests cover motivation, autonomy, and belief. Her recent publications include Motivating Japanese Students in the Language Classroom (2005) and Learner Autonomy and Motivation in a Cooperative Learning Class (2003).

Email: takagi@cc.osaka-kyoiku.ac.jp

Seongwon Lee is assistant professor in the Dept. of English Education of Gyeongsang National University in South Korea. Her current research interests cover teacher education and teaching vocabulary. Her recent publications include Analysis of selection test items for secondary English teachers with J. Oh (2007) and with A Study on Korean High School Students' Use of Vocabulary Learning Strategies M. M (2006).

Email: seongwon@gnu.ac.kr

REFERENCES

- Aoki, N., & Smith, R. (1999). Learner autonomy in cultural context: The case of Japan. In D. Crabbe & S. Cotterall (Eds.), *Learner autonomy in language learning: Defining the field and effecting change* (pp. 19-27). Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang GmbH.
- Chan, V. (2001). Readiness for learner autonomy: What do our learners tell us? *Teaching in Higher Education*, 6(4), 505-519.
- Chu, M. P. (2004). *College students' and their teachers' perceptions and expectations of learner autonomy in EFL conversation classroom in Taiwan*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Texas A&M University, 2005.
- Healy, D. (1999). Theory and research: Autonomy in language learning in J. Egbert and E. Hanson-Smith (Eds.) *CALL Environments: Research, practice and critical issues* (pp.391-402). Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
- Holden, B., & Usuki, M. (1999). Learner autonomy in language learning: A preliminary investigation. *Bulletin of Hokuriku University*, 23, 191-203.
- Holec, H. (1979). *Autonomy and foreign language learning*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Hsiao, C. H. (2007). *Gauging the divide: Learner autonomy in context*. Retrieved February 20, 2008, from The World Wide Web
http://www.kotesol.org/files/u27/Saturday_Afternoon_12_30-3PM.doc
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching*. New Haven, CT & London, UK: Yale University Press.
- Little, D. (1999). Learner autonomy is more than a Western cultural construct. In S. Cotterall & D. Crabbe (Eds.), *Learner autonomy in language learning: Defining the field and effective change* (pp. 11-18). Bayreuth Contributions to Glottodidactics, Vol 8. Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang GmbH.
- Littlewood, W. T. (1999). Defining and developing autonomy in Eastern Asian context. *Applied Linguistics* 20(1), 71-94.
- Mochizuki & Yamada (Eds.) (1996). *Watasino Eigo Jugyo*. Tokyo: Taishukan Publisher Company.
- Nakata, Y. (2004). Professional autonomy of Japanese teachers of English: Is it a democratic environment? *Bulletin of Hyogo University of Teacher Education*, 25, 47-55.
- Ono, H. (2006). Kiso-eigo-ryoku teikano genjo. *The English Teachers' Magazine*, 54(11), 63-67.

- Premier backs making English semi-official language. (2002, May 1). *Taiwan Headlines*. Retrieved July 17, 2003, from the World Wide Web <http://www.taiwanheadlines.gov.tw/20020501/20020501p4.html>.
- Schalkwijk, E., Van Esch, K., Elsen, A., & Setz, W. (2002). Learner autonomy and the education of language teachers: How to practice what is preached and preach what is practiced. In S. J. Savignon (Ed.), *Interpreting communicative language teaching* (pp. 165-190). London, UK: Yale University Press.
- Spratt, M., Humphreys, G. & Chan, V. (2002). Autonomy and motivation: Which comes first? *Language Teaching Research*, 6(3), 245-256.
- Stephenson, J. (2006). Critical reflection: Developing teacher and learner autonomy through journals and class newsletters. In E. Skier & M. Kohyama (Eds.), *Learner and Teacher Autonomy in Japan 2: More autonomy you ask!* (pp.185-200). Tokyo: The Learner Development Special Interest Group of the Japan Association for Language Teaching.
- Wakui, Y. (2006). Developed autonomy through self- and peer-assessment and reflection: Awareness and success in students' presentation skills. In E. Skier & M. Kohyama (Eds.), *Learner and teacher autonomy in Japan 2: More autonomy you ask!* (pp.63-72). Tokyo: The Learner Development Special Interest Group of the Japan Association for Language Teaching.
- Yang, N. D. (1998). Exploring a new role for teachers: Promoting learner autonomy. *System*, 26(1), 127-135.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Students

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 you take concerning the following items and how much responsibility should your teacher take? Use a. to indicate your responsibility and use b. to indicate your teacher's.

	1 Not at all	2 Hardly	3 To some extent	4 Mostly	5 Totally
1) To decide your goal of study in one semester				1) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
2) To decide your class's goal of study in one semester				2) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
3) To check how much progress you make				3) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
4) To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance and test scores				4) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
5) To decide the textbook and materials you use in class				5) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
6) To decide the topics and activities you learn in class				6) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
7) To decide the pace of the lesson for one lesson				7) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
8) To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work				8) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
9) To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework				9) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
10) To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules				10) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
11) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self-evaluation				11) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
12) To assess your study				12) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5
13) To evaluate the course				13) a. You	1 2 3 4 5
				b. Your teacher	1 2 3 4 5

Section 2 – Responsibilities toward learning in the past and the future (please choose one of the five choices): a. To what extent, have you got involved in the following items in the English classes you have taken since you entered the university? b. To what extent, would you like to get involved if you are given opportunities in the future?

	1	2	3	4	5
	Not at all	Hardly	To some extent	Mostly	Totally
14) To decide your goal of study in one semester				14) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
15) To decide your class's goal of study in one semester				15) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
16) To check how much progress you make				16) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
17) To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance and test scores				17) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
18) To decide the textbook and materials you use in class				18) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
19) To decide topics and activities you learn in class				19) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
20) To decide the pace of the lesson for one lesson				20) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work				21) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
22) To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework				22) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules				23) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
24) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self-evaluation				24) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
25) To assess your study				25) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
26) To evaluate the course				26) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
				b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5

Section 3- English learning activities outside the class (please choose one of the five choices): a. How often have you done the following English learning activities voluntarily since you entered the university? b. How often would you like to do this from now on?

Teachers' Roles in Developing Learner Autonomy in the East Asian Region

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Usually
27) To read English newspapers			27) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
28) To read magazines and books in English			28) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
29) To read web pages in English			29) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
30) To write an e-mail in English			30) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
31) To keep a diary in English			31) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
32) To watch and listen to English learning TV and radio programs			32) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
33) To watch and listen to TV and radio programs in English			33) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
34) To listen to English songs			34) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
35) To watch English movies without subtitles in your language			35) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
36) To talk to foreigners in English			36) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
37) To practice speaking English with your friends			37) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
38) To practice English in an English conversation school			38) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
39) To learn English grammar			39) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
40) To learn English vocabulary words			40) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
41) To prepare for proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and STEP			41) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
42) To prepare and review for classes			42) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
43) To learn in a self-study center at a university			43) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
44) To attend a course and seminar provided by a university			44) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5
45) To go to see your teacher in order to discuss your work			45) a. Until now	1 2 3 4 5
			b. From now on	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix 2: Results of Factor Analysis

TABLE 15
Results of Factor Analysis

Items	Factors		
	1	2	3
2-(18)b To decide the textbook and materials you use in class	0.736	-0.2	-0.365
2-(20)a To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson	0.728	-0.42	0.133
2-(18)a To decide the textbook and materials you use in class	0.714	-0.39	0.073
2-(19)a To decide topics and activities you learn in class	0.711	-0.39	0.15
2-(24)a To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self-evaluation	0.695	-0.34	0.19
2-(25)b To assess your study	0.694	0.041	-0.119
2-(22)a To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework	0.692	-0.48	0.126
2-(20)b To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson	0.663	-0.33	-0.416
2-(24)b To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self-evaluation	0.656	-0.06	-0.433
2-(19)b To decide topics and activities you learn in class	0.652	-0.28	-0.357
2-(26)b To evaluate the course	0.649	-0.1	-0.1
2-(22)b To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework	0.64	-0.31	-0.445
2-(17)a To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance and test scores	0.622	0.016	0.181
2-(23)a To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules	0.585	-0.11	0.015
2-(17)b To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance and test scores	0.581	0.206	-0.145
2-(25)a To assess your study	0.579	-0.3	0.397
2-(15)b To decide your class's goal of study in one semester	0.564	0.016	-0.321
2-(21)a To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work	0.561	-0.36	0.275
3-(30)b To write an e-mail in English	0.561	0.43	0.033
3-(33)b To watch and listen to TV and radio programs in English	0.555	0.427	-0.089
3-(28)b To read magazines and books in English	0.55	0.418	-0.088
2-(26)a To evaluate the course	0.549	-0.31	0.419
3-(31)b To keep a diary in English	0.536	0.433	-0.128
3-(36)b To talk to foreigners in English	0.535	0.447	-0.21
3-(27)b To read English newspapers	0.525	0.457	-0.017
2-(14)a To decide your goal of study in one semester	0.51	-0.16	0.122
2-(21)b To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work	0.509	-0.26	-0.202
2-(14)b To decide your goal of study in one semester	0.509	0.125	0.032
2-(23)b To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules	0.508	-0.12	-0.429

Teachers' Roles in Developing Learner Autonomy in the East Asian Region

3-(37)b To practice speaking English with your friends	0.507	0.477	-0.175
3-(34)b To listen to English songs	0.505	0.376	-0.155
3-(29)b To read web pages in English	0.501	0.331	0.145
3-(32)b To watch and listen to English learning TV and radio programs	0.493	0.432	-0.064
2-(16)b To check how much progress you make	0.492	0.043	-0.116
3-(33)a To watch and listen to TV and radio programs in English	0.482	0.252	0.376
3-(43)b To learn in a self-study center at a university	0.452	0.324	-0.278
3-(36)a To talk to foreigners in English	0.443	0.316	0.213
3-(34)a To listen to English songs	0.44	0.163	0.274
3-(45)b To go to see your teacher in order to discuss your work	0.434	0.272	-0.29
3-(28)a To read magazines and books in English	0.43	0.26	0.369
1-(1)a To decide your goal of study in one semester	0.425	-0.31	-0.111
3-(37)a To practice speaking English with your friends	0.425	0.247	0.282
3-(44)a To attend a course and seminar provided by a university	0.422	0.118	0.084
2-(14)a To decide your goal of study in one semester	0.411	-0.03	0.295
3-(38)b To practice English in an English conversation school	0.393	0.389	-0.192
3-(42)a To prepare and review for classes	0.33	0.306	0.277
1-(1)b To decide your goal of study in one semester	0.324	-0.02	-0.162
1-(6)a To decide topics and activities you learn in class	0.292	-0.63	-0.044
1-(7)a To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson	0.258	-0.56	-0.092
1-(8)a To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work	0.151	-0.52	0.015
3-(42)b To prepare and review for classes	0.441	0.504	-0.048
1-(5)a To decide the textbook and materials you use in class	0.441	-0.49	-0.142
1-(11)a To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay and self-evaluation	0.291	-0.5	-0.003
1-(13)a To evaluate the course	0.185	-0.49	0.292
1-(9)a To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework	0.331	-0.48	-0.168
1-(1)a To decide your goal of study in one semester	0.346	-0.46	0.108
3-(39)b To learn English grammar	0.308	0.437	-0.115
3-(40)b To learn English vocabulary words	0.347	0.378	-0.038
3-(29)a To read web pages in English	0.349	0.033	0.546
3-(40)a To learn English vocabulary words	0.365	0.155	0.511
3-(32)a To watch and listen to English learning TV and radio programs	0.367	0.247	0.49
3-(41)a To prepare for proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and STEP	0.213	0.304	0.468
3-(39)a To learn English grammar	0.441	0.199	0.465
2-(16)a To check how much progress you make	0.399	-0.160	0.416
3-(44)b To attend a course and seminar provided by a university	0.366	0.375	-0.407

Appendix 3: The Average and Standard Deviation

TABLE 16
The Average and the Standard Deviation between 2-(14)a and b (N=107)

Items	Average	SD
2-(14) --- a) Until now	3.20	1.032
2-(14) --- b) From now on	4.07	0.898

Notes: The both sided Test: $t(106) = 8.288, 0.05 < p < 0.10$

TABLE 17
The Average and the Standard Deviation between 2-(15)a and b (N=107)

Items	Average	SD
2-(15) --- a) Until now	3.07	1.118
2-(15) --- b) From now on	4.14	0.841

Notes: The both sided Test: $t(106) = 10.062, 0.05 < p < 0.10$