My purpose in this chapter is to address two personal concerns. My first concern is that I want other teachers to know that developing autonomy is an effective pedagogical focus for the language-learning classroom. My other concern is describing in detail what I do in my classes to encourage my students to be more autonomous and reflective about their language studies. My classroom approach involves helping students use metacognitive strategies. Through a better understanding of how my students develop, I am also looking at my own teacher development.

本章では私が着目する二つの事項について論述する。第一に、言語学習の授業において効果的な教育をする上で自律的学習の促進が大変重要であるということを教師に認識させる。第二に、授業の中で学生の言語学習における自律性と内省を促すため、私がどのような手法を用いているかについて詳細に記述する。私は授業で学生がメタ認知的学習シラテジーを活用できるよう手助けを行う。学生たちがどのように成長していくかをより深く理解することで、自分自身の教師としての成長をも検証することが出来る。
When I began this project, I had two starting concerns. The first was to let other teachers know that autonomy is a viable pedagogical construct. My second concern was that I wanted others teaching in a similar educational environment to know how helping students become more reflective and critical language learners can be practically achieved. I strongly believe it is important that students become learner-independent rather than teacher-dependent. I also believe that the role of the teacher is to help students to become independent, reflective and critical learners. Both concerns touch on basic precepts of autonomy and are closely interrelated.

I conducted my research in my third-year speaking classes at a Japanese foreign language university. My students are English majors and have two speaking classes a week with two different ‘native-English speaking’ teachers. The majority of my students have spent some time in an English-speaking country, either traveling or studying for brief periods of time, of between one week and a couple of months. About a quarter of the class have also had some experience living and studying in an English-speaking country for an extended period of time (usually one year of high school on an exchange program). Because these students have an intermediate to upper intermediate level of speaking ability, I felt that a strong emphasis on presentation activities would further enhance their spoken English skills.

Using presentation activities to instruct the students in metacognitive strategies is particularly important. Such strategies are defined by Wenden (1998b) as “general skills, through which learners manage, direct, regulate, guide their learning, i.e. planning, monitoring and evaluating” (p. 519). When I read Wenden’s paper, I realized that the presentation guidelines and topic outlines, that I provide my students with, help them to manage, direct, and regulate their own learning when they prepare and practice their presentations. From this point of view, I believe that such teaching shows my students how to present but not what to present (cf., Dickinson, 1992).

To be more specific, over the past few years, I have been using activities such as newspaper talk, individual presentations and group presentations to promote autonomy in my third-year classes. There are several definitions of autonomy, and the one most often cited is Holec’s (1981, p. 3) definition of autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one’s learning.” This definition is especially relevant to the presentations I’m using in my classes because I want the students to be able to take responsibility for, and manage, their own learning. Autonomy has also been described by Benson and Voller (1997) as including the following characteristics:

1. situations in which learners study entirely on their own;
2. a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning;
3. the exercise of learners’ responsibility for their own learning;
4. the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning. (pp. 1-2)

In my own teaching context, the above description neatly articulates what I most want the students to aim for.

For the purposes of this chapter, the following two conditions are the most important for encouraging autonomy among my students. The first condition is giving students choices, while the second requires them to be responsible for their own learning. These two conditions are important because students in Japan are often not given the opportunity to be responsible for their own learning during their university education. Allowing the students to choose their
自己的话题来呈现讨论，这会激励他们，激发他们内在的学习动机，正如Williams和Burden (1997)所指出的：

那些具有较高内部控制的人显示出强烈的倾向去寻求信息，并在解决问题的任务中使用信息，主动和有进取心，并表现出高度的探索行为和对学习的兴奋感。（p. 102）

不仅控制，反思意识也很重要。反思被Benson (2001, p. 93)描述为“控制学习发展的关键内部机制。”当学生反思他们的表现时，我相信这会提高他们对自己的语言能力的认识，并且提供了一个重要的阶段，进一步的语言发展。

要重新总结，学习者自主可以在高等水平的口语课程中有效地结构化。我将自主学习发展为学习者能够计划、组织和评估他们的学习，以及进行个人选择，并参与批判性反思他们所做的事情。这些关键元素可以在口语课中简单地管理。在接下来的章节中，我将呈现我发展的一些自主学习活动，无论是个人还是小组工作。

**自主学习活动**

以下的自主学习活动—Newspaper Talk, Individual Presentations和How to... Presentations—涉及小组中的个人演讲。Newspaper Talk和Individual Presentations是几乎相同的活动，其根本区别在于，Newspaper Talk仅限于英语报纸、杂志或互联网上的一些新闻文章。相比之下，Individual Presentations不受任何信息来源的限制。学生可以谈论他们的爱好，令人兴奋的假期，或者重要的新闻事件。How to... Presentations旨在为学生提供解释如何做某事的方式，如如何烘焙蛋糕，如何赌博等。它们还让学生有机会练习语法形式，如顺序标志（first, second,…），等。这三个活动反映了自主学习的四个基本特征：允许学生选择他们想要学习的，鼓励学生对自己的学习负责，学生之间保持平衡的互动，以及相互依赖来达到共同的目标。

小组演讲是另一个通过培养参与者之间的协作学习技能来促进自主学习的方法。Little (1997)指出：

模式的交互最能促进学习者自主，因为成功的合作依赖于自由和依赖之间的平衡互动。（pp. 230-231）

正如Little所指出的，协作学习技能是成功小组演讲所必需的，帮助促进学习者的自主性，通过创造条件，使他们一起达到一个共同的目标。

在这样的活动中，重要的是要允许学生自由选择他们自己的话题，并对自己负责。这也是帮助学生发展他们评价自己表现的能力。因此，当他们完成演讲时，我要求他们完成同伴评价和自我评价。自我评价鼓励学生反思他们的表现，以便他们可以改进他们的演讲。

--- Autonomy You Ask! ---
In their self-evaluations, students respond with comments such as:

- I need to practice more because I had many ideas in my mind but I couldn't speak them. Before I finished my presentation, I gave my discussion question[s] to them. It was my mistake.
- I became too nervous. I spoke too fast. I must be relaxed when I speak in front [of people].
- I couldn't present the way I wanted. A lot of information was in my mind so I was confused to tell which topic I have to start.

Comments such as the above are quite typical of what the students wrote in their self-evaluations. The students' candidness is impressive, but, before we look more closely at other student comments, I will briefly present the guidelines the students are given for structuring their individual and group presentations.

**Presentation Guidelines**

**Guidelines for Individual Presentations**

For *Newspaper Talk, Individual Presentations* and *How to... Presentations*, I usually hand out the following guidelines to the students to help them understand what is expected of them for the given assignment. I also explain some learner strategies for speaking by giving students a list of characteristics of a good speaker (reproduced here, after the presentation guidelines). Each individual presentation is limited to approximately 15 to 20 minutes, so each group of four students would take 60 to 80 minutes to complete the activity. With the students needing to complete their self-evaluations or peer evaluations, an entire 90-minute class session is taken up, and time-keeping becomes particularly important. It is important to appoint a timer for each group to ensure that each group member is allowed enough time to do their presentation. Within the 15 to 20 minute time limit, the students need to present their topics, explain relevant vocabulary, and discuss the topic presented.

**Guidelines for Newspaper Talk**

Each student has to choose a short and interesting article from an English language newspaper, magazine, the Internet, etc. to present in small groups. The presenter must not read the article aloud but should summarize the article for the other members of the group. Each presentation should be limited to approximately 20 minutes.

**Guidelines for Individual Presentations**

In small groups, each person will introduce a topic that he/she has researched. The person giving the presentation should present his or her topic for discussion based on information drawn from various sources such as a personal hobby, interest, club activity, an interesting vacation, books, magazines, newspapers, or the Internet. Each presentation should be limited to approximately 20 minutes.
In small groups, each person will give presentations on how to make/do something. The person giving the presentation should present his or her topic for discussion based on information drawn from various sources such as books, magazines, newspapers, or the Internet. Each presentation should be limited to approximately 20 minutes.

I also introduce the following points for the students to consider when they prepare their presentations.

**Guidelines for How to... Presentations**

In small groups, each person will give presentations on how to make/do something. The person giving the presentation should present his or her topic for discussion based on information drawn from various sources such as books, magazines, newspapers, or the Internet. Each presentation should be limited to approximately 20 minutes.

The above guidelines and recommended steps for presenting a topic help the students to organize their presentations. It is essential to teach metacognitive strategies to the students in the form of presentation guidelines and outline forms because they need some guidance by the teacher to help them develop their learner autonomy. Such explicit teaching also helps students take control of their learning outside of the classroom—to become independent-learners, not teacher-dependent learners.

Because I feel the above activities and presentation guidelines are 'works in progress,' I plan in future classes to include more discussion about what constitutes good presentation skills. In particular, speech delivery skills need to be focused on, and allowing students to give positive criticism of each other's presentations would also help build their confidence.

Having looked at how individual presentations are structured, we will now shift our attention to the management of group presentations. Unlike the individual presentations, what is particularly important with group-based work is student-student collaboration if the presentation is to succeed.

**Managing Group Presentations**

I have my students do group presentations in a way that combines group presentations with individual presentations. (The specific organization of this form of presentation is

**Steps to Follow When Preparing Your Presentation for Discussion**

1. **State the main point of your presentation:**
   
   Remember to use sequence markers (e.g., first, second, third, etc.) when explaining your presentation (especially with “How to...” presentations).

2. **Define and explain any vocabulary necessary for understanding your presentation.**

3. **Choose one or two main points to mention.**

4. **Support each main point with evidence from your presentation.**

5. **Conclusion: End your talk with a brief summary of your presentation.**

6. **Discussion Questions: Prepare some discussion questions to stimulate the participation of your audience. Write questions that will elicit a more detailed response rather than simple yes/no questions. If you use yes/no questions, always include “why or why not” to help stimulate further discussion.**

**Autonomy You Ask!**
explained in the Guidelines for Group Presentations below.) I do group presentations this way because I wanted to integrate the audience into the discussion process in order to create a two-way dialogue between the presenters and the audience. I tried having my past classes do presentations the standard way, with one group presenting to the class on a topic they had researched, but I noticed the discussion was one-way with little audience response and participation. So I combined the two forms of presentations, individual and group, to create more interaction between the presenters and the audience. This enabled the audience to respond to the presenters, especially for those too shy to speak up in a classroom setting: Small groups are ideal for more active discussion of a group’s topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GUIDELINES FOR GROUP PRESENTATIONS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a small group of three or four you will present a topic of your choice. After your initial presentation as a group, the class will divide up into small groups with members of the presenting group each leading a small group discussion of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For example, if the group decides to choose travel as their topic then each member of the group might research a sub-topic related to traveling like backpacking favored by younger people as opposed to packaged tours favored by older people who have less time but more money. Another example could be environmental problems, with each member focusing on a specific problem like air pollution, water pollution, or global warming. Other examples might be social issues, health issues, etc. Please use your imagination. You are free to choose any topic you like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESPONSIBILITIES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each member of the group will be responsible for leading a short discussion on the topic chosen by their group. All members should equally share the work of organizing and researching the group’s topic, although one person should act as the group leader to ensure the work is accomplished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOPIC SELECTION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The topic to be presented should be decided by all members of the group. In addition, the topic should be of general interest to your classmates to stimulate active discussion among your discussion groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TIME RESTRICTIONS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each group should limit their initial presentation to the class to about 15 to 20 minutes, giving each member 3 to 5 minutes to briefly introduce their topic. The following small group discussion should take another 15 to 20 minutes. So, in total, each presentation with small group discussion included should last approximately 30 to 40 minutes. This would allow for two group presentations for each 90-minute class period.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AUDIENCE RESPONSIBILITIES

The audience should actively participate in the small group discussion and should be free to ask the group questions during the presenting group’s opening introduction. I evaluate both the group’s presentation and the audience’s participation during the presentations. The audience will also be asked to write a short evaluation of each group’s presentation and the presenting group will write a short self-evaluation of their presentations.

The six points noted above are important for the students to consider because I use them to evaluate the students’ speaking and presentation abilities. I especially check to see if they are looking up from their notes or just reading them to the other group members. I usually comment verbally and/or in writing on their presentation outlines to inform the students that I am evaluating them on such points during class.

One problem with combining group presentations with small discussion groups is that the success of the discussion is dependent on the individual discussion leaders. Another problem is the random division of the class into four groups. Students have mentioned they would like to be able to change groups and listen to what other presenters are saying. I try to have two groups present during one 90-minute class period, so sometimes there is also a problem with the first group dominating the presenting time and not leaving enough time for the second group to present.

As I mentioned earlier, I feel that the presentation activities and guidelines are “works in progress,” and I’m still refining the presentation processes. I plan to include more discussion on what constitutes good presentation skills for group presentations as well. I feel that I need to proactively teach students about how to introduce, pace and conclude their presentations. Although some students are very good at presenting, others would definitely benefit from further hints on how to do presentations.

RESEARCHING STUDENT REACTIONS TO STRUCTURED AUTONOMOUS LEARNING ACTIVITIES

In this section, we will look at some of the results from the end-of-semester anonymous questionnaires I gave to the students to gauge their responses to the presentation activities. Quantitatively, 31 out of 37 students (= 83.7%) rated Newspaper Talk and Individual Presentations as good learning activities. And 35 out of 37 (= 94.5%) of the students approved of the group presentation format, as well as felt that the way we did presentations in class was good. Student feedback about Newspaper Talk and Individual Presentations included such positive comments as the following:

- I enjoyed talking about some topics with my classmates.
- I think newspaper talk was interesting. I became to read paper often.
- I love them because I like to study myself and decide something to do. It was a trigger to study actively.
- I think these activities are effective for us.
- Good, we could have many chances to talk.

Taken as a whole, the students' responses indicated not only that they enjoyed the activities, but also that the activities made them study harder. Other responses such as “…it was very effective for my thinking skills” or “…good practice to organize ideas and state my opinion” led
me to realize the activities were stimulating their critical thinking skills. Some students also mentioned that Newspaper Talk stimulated them to read English newspapers more often.

More critical comments focused on the repetitiveness of the class format, e.g., “...felt we did these activities too many times during the semester...” or on the need for students to have more time to organize their presentations. To qualify such criticism, it is important to note that the students did two Newspaper Talk activities and two Individual Presentations during the first semester. They also did group presentations over the same period. Perhaps such feedback raises the issue of balancing the students’ workload. When students are not familiar with the individual effort intrinsic to the development of their autonomy, they may put more effort into the activity than is reasonably expected. I believe that is why some students felt the presentation activities were difficult and would like to do something new during the following semester.

Students also gave comments about the group presentations. Their responses were generally positive:

- I think it was good.
- It was a good way because I could talk to many people and we could co-operate with them.
- Good, because we could discuss a lot.

They offered the following reasons for their positive reactions to group presentations:

- It gave us the confidence in speaking in public.
- It was worth because I was able to present in relaxing way.
- It was good. It was interesting to cooperate with classmates.

Such comments about the group presentations were of particular interest to me because I wasn’t sure if the students would like my way of doing group presentations. Among the few negative comments, students commented on the difficulty of meeting other group members after class to plan their group presentation.

Interestingly, some students noticed the relationship between the class activities and the development of their self-directed learning, e.g., “I think this class raises our autonomy (sic.). I believe that is the very style for university students.” Reading this student’s response made me feel quite pleased that the student had clearly understood what I was trying to accomplish in my classes. I could also see that the activities were helping the students become more autonomous. However, one student suggested that I select the topics for the students to present on. I feel that pre-selecting the topics for the students would have contradicted my concern to give the students choices and have them take more responsibility for their learning.

Responding to the above comments, members of the Anthology group suggested that I write an open letter to the students answering their comments and giving an explanation of what we are doing in class. I certainly feel that this would improve the dialogue begun with the questionnaires. A further development would be for me to collect feedback throughout the term rather than just at the end of the semester as I am doing now. Both suggestions are excellent and will keep my teaching from growing stagnant: I also consider my teaching to be a ‘work in progress,’ and I have yet to teach my best class (cf., Walker & Symons, 1997, p. 4).

Just as I am concerned with encouraging my students towards greater critical reflection and thinking, such student feedback also pushes me towards becoming more critically reflective about my teaching. We will look at these interconnections in the next two sections as we consider the development of critical reflection and critical thinking in greater depth and detail.
Developing Critical Reflection

Critical reflection can be a catalyst for change in the learners’ learning processes. Given the opportunity to reflect on how they have done an activity or accomplished a task may help them improve on their performance. Ridley (1997) draws a connection between reflection and autonomy in the following way:

Awareness of one’s own language learning is crucial for the development of autonomy: As part of managing their own learning, and feeling responsible for it, learners need to evaluate how they measure up to certain criteria such as the demands of the particular learning programme they are following. (p. 7)

The following comments from my students’ self-evaluations similarly demonstrate an awareness of their language learning and a feeling of responsibility for it, when they state:

- I was not planning about presentation well.
- I should check more vocabularies to explain and organization is important.
- This time was better than last week preparation but I’d better to correct [collect] more information.
- When I present I became very nervous and I forget what I should say. I need more practice before the presentation.

Those students’ language learning ability should improve if they critically reflect on their learning processes.

When doing activities such as Newspaper Talk or Individual Presentations, each member of a three to four person group will evaluate the other members of the group and then write a short self-evaluation of their own presentations. These self-evaluations are essentially critical reflections of their performance. The students are often critical of their own presentations, writing comments like:

- I couldn’t speak fluently because of lack of practice.
- It was good. Maybe I should have brought a map or something that people can see, it might have helped.
- Today, I could “speak” not “read” my paper. I am glad.
- My presentation was little short. I had to prepare more information. But I think I could make eye contact better.

Such comments point to an emerging connection between the students’ reflections and their developing autonomy. By reflecting on their presentations, the students are able to review their performance and be more self-critical of them. I believe this heightens their awareness of being independent learners and can lead to better management and responsibility for their learning.

My feedback is also part of that process. When I return the presentation outlines to the students, I write comments on their presentations and I also comment on their self-evaluations. To encourage some students to be more introspective, I write comments like: “You need to write more comments about your self-evaluation.” Giving feedback on each individual presentation starts to create a reflective dialogue between the students and me.

To help the students improve, it is important to evaluate them on their presentations. I do this by walking around the classroom and quietly checking on each group while they are
engaged in the activity. This is to let them know that I am assessing their presentations, which promotes a more serious attitude among the students, without my being too intrusive. The evaluations do not need to be elaborate, but a few words of constructive criticism are helpful for the students and guide them to articulate their own reflections in the target language. Praise is also useful to help build the students’ confidence:

- You needed to look up more when presenting, don’t read your notes, present them.
- Good eye contact, poster, etc.
- Your voice was loud and clear. Good eye contact.
- Well done! Good topic choice.

Writing such brief evaluative comments on their presentation outlines helps the students learn how to improve both their language and presentation skills.

**DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING**

I considered the relationship between autonomy and critical thinking after I noticed that students had responded on the questionnaires that the activities had stimulated their thinking skills. They wrote comments such as:

- Good practice to organize ideas and state my own opinion.
- They helped us think about news more.
- Serious problematic topics triggered [sic] me to think them more carefully.

This relationship became clearer to me after reading *Developing Learners' Thinking Skills* by Jennifer Ridley (1997)—especially when she approached critical thinking as a “reflective activity.” Ridley draws a connection between autonomy and an awareness of one’s language learning. It is through this connection that I see the relationship with critical thinking skills. I believe that while the students are considering what topics to present, they are also carefully assessing, evaluating, and organizing information that helps them understand their presentation topics more effectively and allows them to come to an informed opinion concerning their topics. This constitutes a central link between critical thinking and autonomy.

Other researchers make similar connections. Bruning, Schraw, and Ronning (1995) define critical thinking as being focused so that we can understand something more thoroughly by considering and evaluating information to make an informed decision. According to Yinger (1980), the definition of critical thinking can be divided into two categories. There is a broad definition used by some educators and researchers who view critical thinking as synonymous with other general thinking processes. They associate it closely with problem solving, or, like Dewey (1933), equate critical thinking with reflective thinking. Yinger also defines critical thinking more narrowly as the correct or reasonable assessment of statements or “the evaluation of the products of thought” (1980, p. 12). Considering my autonomous learning activities, I feel critical thinking can be seen both as a reflective activity and also as an assessment and evaluation of the products of thought.

When the students use the presentation outlines and guidelines, they are learning to assess, evaluate, and organize information. Doing so helps the students develop their critical thinking skills by focusing them on a particular task of finding, organizing and presenting information in the target language to their peers. This is especially true of *Newspaper Talk*, as the above examples of student feedback have shown.
In conclusion, I believe autonomy is a viable pedagogical construct. It can be implemented in the classroom using some of the above presentation activities or other activities that emphasize choice and responsibility for learning, and that are learner centered. It is also important to provide guidance and instruction on how students should be responsible for their learning, how they can organize their learning and other metacognitive strategies.

In this chapter, I have described how to use presentations as an expression of learner autonomy. In the process of doing so, I have touched on some features of autonomy, such as critical reflection and metacognitive strategies, both of which are important for maximizing learning among my students. Basically, it is extremely important to help language learners think about their learning.

I hope that my account will help other teachers implement an autonomous learning component in their own teaching. It is also important to note that, although the activities discussed have helped my students become more autonomous, at the same time overuse of those activities can lead to a negative impression of autonomy. It would be good to combine this autonomous learning component with other activities such as using portfolios. By doing so, the students would be able to self-evaluate more easily and see their progress more closely over one semester.

When I initially began writing this chapter, my collaborative partners helped me to focus my paper by asking me questions such as:

- I want to know how these activities (Newspaper Talk, Individual Presentations and Group Presentations) are interrelated to develop learner autonomy?
- I’m curious about how you have your students reflect on their learning processes and especially what you had them focus on?

This collaborative support helped keep me focused on the project. Knowing that I was not working alone but working with others also provided a kind of passive pressure and comforting feeling of mutual interdependence. Emika, Etsuko, Mike, Andy, and others: Thank you for helping me 'bounce' ideas around outside the perimeter of my brain!
AKIKO TAKAGI

The chapter written by Peter Mizuki made me reflect on my presentation class. Although I give my own students a chance to reflect on their own learning using peer evaluation and diaries, I have not thought of the meaning of these activities for the students as thoroughly as Peter has. In addition, I plan my classes without carefully thinking how each activity influences my students’ metacognitive awareness. I was impressed that Peter thoughtfully combined three kinds of individual and group presentation activities not only to promote each student’s autonomy, but also to create more effective interaction between the presenters and the audience.

Peter states that giving students choices and requiring them to be responsible for their own learning are the two most important conditions for promoting autonomy. Many teachers will agree with these points, but it is not easy to make the students understand the significance of these conditions. If we give students total freedom and ask them to assume full responsibility, some of them may feel perplexed and frustrated. However, Peter provides clear basic presentation guidelines to help the students understand what is expected and explains learner strategies to assist them in preparing for in-class presentations. This obviously would help Japanese students, who are unaccustomed to such techniques, to be autonomous learners. We teachers tend to assume that students already know how to give presentations and think that we do not need to provide such guidelines, but that is not true. As Peter points out, teaching metacognitive strategies explicitly in the form of guidelines and outlines truly helps students to become independent learners.

We should also notice that some students find it difficult to choose topics and take responsibility for their learning even when the teacher gives clear guidelines, as one of Peter’s students attests. I assume that the main problem is that some students capture the concept of learner autonomy quickly, while others take time. I have a similar problem in my class and always consider how to adjust to individual students. Peter mentions that he is going to refine the presentation process by including more discussion so as to enhance the students’ metacognitive awareness. I look forward to learning what kind of impact his efforts will have on the students’ awareness of learner autonomy.

In addition to encouraging students to make choices and assume learner responsibility, developing critical reflection was a key issue in Peter’s class. As stated in his chapter, students’ critical thinking is closely related to learner autonomy, and self-reflection promotes students’ awareness of being independent learners. Interestingly, reflecting on students’ reflection gives teachers the opportunity to reflect on and improve their own teaching. In other words, learner autonomy and teacher autonomy are interdependent. This chapter represents a good example of learner development in both the teacher and his students.
Critical Reader Response 2

Sonthida Keyuravong

I really admire the time and effort Peter has invested in trying to make his students become autonomous learners. I think he has made a very good start by rightly taking the attitude that autonomy is a viable pedagogical construct.

Autonomy is extremely useful and timely in the modern world whose goal of education is lifelong learning. Education reform in Thailand places lifelong learning as the ultimate goal. Before learners can possess lifelong learning skills, they need to become independent learners who are equipped with skills and strategies, both cognitive and metacognitive, that they can use in both classroom instruction and outside class exposure.

I agree with Peter that teachers have a role to play in guiding learners along the path of learner autonomy that leads them to become independent, reflective and critical. This is the case in Thailand, whose traditional way of education, even today, is still spoon-feeding. Teachers decide everything for learners, whether it is the objectives of learning, selections of materials or methods of evaluation. Students are recipients of the knowledge that teachers dispense. To change students' roles is not easy so guidance and training are essential for the achievement of this goal.

Peter's presentation activities are helpful in training his students to become teacher-independent. We can see this very clearly from the things Peter asked his students to do, be they making decisions about presentation topics, peer feedback or self-evaluation. This is the transfer of responsibility to learners, which means learners having a greater role in deciding what they want to do. However, if the students are not ready, this transfer can be negotiated. One of Peter's students suggested topics be provided. At this point the teacher can help guide him/her to think of the things he/she is interested in and can take as their topic. If this does not work, it might mean he/she was not ready to make this choice, so providing him/her with a topic might be a solution. Providing topics can also be considered as giving more choices to the students. Those who are keen can choose their own topics, and those who are not ready can choose the teacher's topics.

From my own experience of teaching students to do presentations, I consider feedback to be most important. I strongly believe it is at this stage that students learn the most. So I take special care when giving feedback. Peter's feedback on the students' performance can show them how they can improve for themselves. Having students reflect on their own performance is useful, but they cannot always find an answer to their problems. This is when Peter's feedback plays an important role.

Peter has his students reflect on their performance. Reflecting on what they have done will help learners see their strengths and weaknesses so they know what they need to improve. Peter's feedback for self-evaluation has helped students to gradually build the confidence that they have the ability to evaluate themselves and to realize that evaluation is not only the teachers' responsibility. Self-evaluation can help improve their performance, and giving them feedback will help confirm their ability for doing it.

Peter's projects have helped his students tremendously to walk down the long road of autonomy. The guidance and training he gave to his students can help them to be independent, reflective and critical—essential traits for lifelong learning.