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Promoting Learner Autonomy in Language Learning and Teaching

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Abstract

The article “Promoting Learner Autonomy in Language Learning and Teaching” explores the theoretical foundations, pedagogical strategies, and practical implications of fostering autonomy in language education. Learner autonomy is defined as the capacity of learners to take charge of their own learning, make informed decisions, and reflect critically on their progress. The article situates autonomy within contemporary language teaching paradigms, emphasizing its relevance for lifelong learning, motivation, and learner engagement.

The study reviews key theoretical perspectives, including cognitive, metacognitive, and sociocultural approaches, highlighting how learner autonomy develops through interaction, self-reflection, and strategic decision-making. The article underscores the role of teachers as facilitators who provide scaffolding, guidance, and feedback, while creating an environment that encourages risk-taking, exploration, and independent problem-solving. It also considers contextual factors, such as classroom culture, institutional policies, and technological resources, which can either support or constrain autonomous learning.

Practical strategies for promoting autonomy are illustrated with classroom-based examples. These include learner-centered approaches such as project work, task-based activities, reflective journals, self-assessment, collaborative learning, and the integration of digital tools for self-monitoring and progress tracking. The article highlights how these strategies can be adapted for different age groups, proficiency levels, and learning settings, ensuring flexibility and relevance across diverse contexts.

The article further addresses challenges in implementing autonomy, including learner resistance, cultural expectations, and the tension between curriculum constraints and individualized learning. Evidence-based recommendations are provided for overcoming these challenges, emphasizing the importance of teacher training, gradual scaffolding, and continuous feedback.

Overall, the article demonstrates that promoting learner autonomy is not only a pedagogical goal but

also a transformative approach that empowers learners to become reflective, motivated, and self-directed. By combining theoretical insight with practical strategies, the article offers valuable guidance for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers seeking to enhance language learning outcomes and foster lifelong learning skills.

Keywords: learner, autonomy, teaching, language, activities