

## Autonomy and responsibility: same or different?

**Kate Chanock**

### Introduction

A major principle of autonomous learning is that students should take responsibility for their own learning (Boud 1988a, Dearn 1998, Stanton 1988, Higgs 1988, Long 1990, Benson and Voller 1997, Breen and Mann 1997, Little 1997, Littlewood 1997, Sheerin 1997, Voller 1997, Champagne et al 2001, Cotterall 2003). However a common complaint is that students from Confucian-heritage cultures are particularly resistant to this idea and are overly dependent on their teachers (Samuelowicz 1987, Biggs 1990 and 1996, Ming-sheng 1998). As a language and academic skills adviser in an Arts Faculty, my experience of teaching such students has led me to question this identification of responsibility with autonomy. This paper looks more closely at the assumption that it is not responsible to be dependent and argues that depending on others can be a responsible way to learn. It also suggests that methods of autonomous learning are not in fact incompatible with depending upon teachers.

### A story

I'd like to begin by sharing with you three recent experiences that have affected the way I think about autonomous learning. The first was at a meeting of the Victorian state network of language and learning advisers last Spring. The organisers had arranged for two international students to speak about their experience of studying in Australia. First one and then the other told us that the most important thing they had learned was to take responsibility for their learning. The audience beamed approvingly. A few weeks later, I was at a conference, listening to one of the speakers deploring the fact that her international students wanted her to correct every error they made, refusing, as she said, to take responsibility for themselves. Again, colleagues all around the room nodded in recognition of a common problem.

Whenever I am surrounded by colleagues either congratulating themselves on having got their students to accept responsibility for their learning, or criticising their students for not having done so yet, my mind goes back to an earlier meeting in the middle of last year, one that I attended by mistake. This was a meeting of international postgraduate students, to which no Australians had been invited because the students wanted to talk uninhibitedly about their thoughts and feelings about studying in the Australian institution, away from home. I had seen a poster, thought it was a public meeting, turned up and the students were too polite to eject me.

The afternoon was an eye-opener for me. Students who, at other times, were stoical, even cheerful, when consulting me about their work, now allowed the strain to show. There were no complaints as such, but there was exhaustion and some tears. People shared problems and exchanged advice. They spoke of loneliness, isolation and homesickness, but affirmed their determination to persevere. For me, the afternoon was summed up by a letter that one student read aloud to the group. It was from a friend at home, responding to one that the student had sent her earlier. It took the form of a story about a donkey.

Once a farmer had an old donkey, stiff in the joints and clumsy after a lifetime of hard work. One day the donkey was working near a well and fell in. The farmer looked over the lip of the well and saw it was a long way down.

*The donkey is heavy, thought the farmer. And really not much use any more. It would take me hours to get it out of there. And for what? It's not worth the trouble. I may as well fill up the well instead.*

So he got a spade and started heaving dirt into the well. It took some time. When it was nearly done the farmer saw an astonishing thing. The donkey's head appeared over the lip of the well. Each time another spadeful of dirt had landed, the donkey had stepped on top of it, until eventually it was out of the well.

For that group of students, this was a very meaningful story. Whatever our system throws at them, they have to step on top of it and carry on. If anything is lacking in their approach, it is not a failure to take responsibility. As an academic skills adviser I know that these students take responsibility for themselves, by making the fullest possible use of the resources of my university, which includes consulting people who understand the system and are able to tell them when they are making mistakes. Often, they ask me to clarify what their teachers want in an assignment. They want to know whether the work they are doing is going to be valued by their markers and, commonly, they want me to flag every mistake in their drafts and teach them how to correct these. They do not feel confident to make these decisions without advice. If all this seems overly dependent to us, the problem may lie with a rather ethnocentric notion of responsibility rather than with the approach of the students.

### **Responsibility and autonomy in Western culture**

If we interpret dependence on teachers as a refusal to take responsibility, it is because, in our culture, responsibility is identified with autonomy. We see this again and again in the literature on autonomous learning, where the aim of inducing students to take responsibility for their learning is routinely stated. The goal, as Boud (1988a: 7) articulates it, is to *enable students to become more autonomous in their learning: that is, assist students to learn more effectively without the constant presence or intervention of a teacher... the role of teachers is not just to transmit knowledge but also to help students take increasing responsibility for their own learning.*

There seems little room in this conception, as Pennycook (1997: 43) observes, for the student *who independently chooses to come to a teacher to learn and would prefer that teacher to teach in a 'teacherly' way.*

Moreover, autonomy means more than pursuing learning activities without a teacher. It means setting one's own goals and developing one's own standards. Dearden (1975: 7 quoted in Boud 1988a: 19) characterises an autonomous person as *defining what he really wants, or what is really in his interests, as distinct from what may be conventionally so regarded; conceiving of goals, policies and plans of his own, and forming purposes and intentions of his own independently of any pressure to do so from others.*

We find similar emphases in Rogers (1983: 158 quoted in Boud 1988b: 36) who writes:

*The evaluation of one's own learning is one of the major means by which self-initiated learning becomes also responsible learning. It is when the individual has to take responsibility for deciding what criteria are important to him, what goals must be achieved, and the extent to which he has achieved those goals, that he truly learns to take responsibility for himself and his directions*

Breen and Mann (1997: 134) similarly see autonomy as a quality of the person, a *way of being* in the world.

All of this is consistent with our beliefs about human nature, as we see in this passage from Knowles (1975: 14-15) who sees self-directed learning *as in tune with our natural processes of psychological development. When we are born we are totally dependent personalities. We need parents to protect us, feed us, carry us and make decisions for us. But as we grow and mature we develop an increasingly deep psychological need to be independent, first, of parental control, and then, later, of control by teachers and other adults. An essential aspect of maturing is developing the ability to take increasing responsibility for our own lives – to become increasingly self-directing.*

The effect of placing our ideas within such a framework of psychology is to naturalise our assumptions, to make them seem universally applicable. However the identification of responsibility with independence is a cultural assumption, rather than a natural or universal truth (Benson and Voller 1997: 8, Pennycook 1997: 36 and 44). Aversion to dependence is a Western value, not a universal one. It finds no echo, for example, in the Chinese proverb quoted by Matalene (1985: 794): *Depend on your parents at home and depend on your friends elsewhere.*

Even in Western cultures it comes and goes. The signature religion of the West, Christianity, is after all an ideology of dependence and submission to the authority of Rome or more directly of God. If we look back over the history of Western culture, it has been marked, more often than not, by hierarchical social structures in which patronage and authority were exercised by those above and deference and obedience were given by those below. Such expectations, for that matter, are found in Western workplaces today.

When Heron (1988: 83) states - *The hierarchical, authoritarian model... has served its historical and cultural purpose. The time is ripe for an alternative, democratic model* - I have to recognise the statement as ideology, rather than truth. I have to see it as a product of this cultural moment. Although I share this ideology and consider myself fortunate to be teaching at this time, it is important to recognise it for what it is ie: a cultural artifact, built on cultural assumptions about the self and its relationship to society. We can then put a brake on the kind of missionary zeal that has not served ourselves or our students very well in the past. Otherwise there is a risk, as Pennycook (1997: 43) has put it, that *the promotion of learner autonomy around the world may become yet another version of the free, enlightened, liberal West bringing one more form of supposed emancipation to the unenlightened, traditional, backward and authoritarian classrooms of the world.*

### **Misconceptions about *other* ways of learning**

We have been mistaken in other assumptions about what is right and natural. Early in the rise of the deep versus surface learning paradigm, it seemed unquestionable that memorising constituted a refusal to reflect and understand. Blanton (1998: 229) articulates this idea in an article criticizing *transmission models of pedagogy* when she states:

*The only way for any of us to access new concepts ... is to ... process that which is new... through our own individual experience by talking and writing about it in our own individual voices. Otherwise, we rely on memory, and mouth or copy others' words; what we 'know' - if memorized, mouthed or copied - we know by rote ... I doubt if anyone would call this learning.*

The educational tradition of *Confucian-heritage cultures* (Biggs 1996: 46) has been much maligned in Western universities for its emphasis on memorising texts. *Asian students are perceived to be relentless rote learners, syllabus dependent, passive and lacking initiative; brought up in, and committed to, what we would regard as a surface approach to learning* (Biggs 1990: 4). Only the success of Asian students in Western education impelled us to look more closely at memorising and to learn that similar behaviours can have quite different meanings in different cultures (Biggs 1990 and 1996, Lee 1995, Marton, Dall'Albe and Tse 1996). Lee (1995) explains the role of memorising in Confucian-heritage cultures as a necessary step on the way to understanding, rather than an end in itself. He quotes the Chinese scholar Chu, who summarised the learning process thus:

*Generally speaking, in reading, we must first become intimately familiar with the text so that its words seem to come from our own mouths. We should then continue to reflect on it so that its ideas seem to come from our own minds. Only then can there be real understanding. Still, once our intimate reading of it and careful reflection on it have led to a clear understanding of it, we must continue to question ... If we cease questioning, in the end there'll be no additional progress.*  
(Lee 1995: 35-36)

The activity of memorising, then, is not the issue, but what the learner does with it. The same is true of dependence on the teacher for advice and information. I am often faced with the apparent paradox that some of the most effective learners who consult me are those who are the most concerned with obtaining models of correct practice and correction of their errors. These are most often international students, studying in English as their additional language. The important thing about their approach is not that they seek correction, but what they do with it. Certainly, there have been students, and more often local students, who wanted me to correct their work instead of learning how to do it themselves. For the most part, students want me to correct their work and explain what I am doing, so that they can learn how to do it themselves. They make demonstrated progress between one consultation and the next, not because I have

refused to show them what to do, but because I have shown them and they have gone away and learned to do it. If their concept of responsibility does not encompass deciding for themselves what they must learn to do, it does encompass other ideas from the Confucian heritage ie: that learning is desirable, that everybody can learn, and that diligence is the way to do it (Lee 1996).

It may seem that this approach will enable students to deal only with the particular problems they encounter in specific assignments, rather than developing skills that will help them to deal with new problems in new contexts. That might be so, if correction were given without explanation but these students want the explanation as well as the correction. They are interested in whether their *error* relates to a rule they can learn, an idiomatic expression they must memorise, a convention of the genre, an accommodation to the audience, a matter of status (as novice or expert) or a matter of the ethos of the discipline or of the academic milieu. As we talk about the different ways in which language and textual choices may be considered appropriate or not, they develop a clearer picture of the unspoken criteria surrounding written texts. This in turn enables them to ask more effective questions of their subsequent drafts of writing.

### **Responsible dependence on teachers**

However committed we may be to autonomous learning, we must recognise that there are countless things that students cannot readily discover for themselves, and that they are being responsible if they do not hesitate to ask someone who knows. In any new situation, it is responsible to depend upon others who know more than you do, so that you can learn how to operate in the new context. Even while the autonomous learning movement has been gathering steam, there has been a parallel shift, in the opposite direction, in the practice of writing centres. It has long been orthodoxy that tutors should be non-directive and non-interventionist to the extent that they should teach by refusing to teach (Clark: 2001). This is affirmed in the context of language teaching by Pemberton Toogood, Ho and Lam (2001: 23), who have learned *to control the impulse to teach*. Reflecting on their practice, they write:

*We've seen all the advisers exhibit tendencies to intervene in the learning process ... and feel it necessary for advisers to be aware of the danger that learners' ability to develop their self-directed learning might be undermined, if these tendencies are not guarded against.*

(Pemberton Toogood, Ho and Lam 2001:21).

Recently, however, articles have appeared that reflect on the failure of this policy when it comes to teaching students from other language and cultural backgrounds. As one tutor in a European language centre put it: *Students come to the Writing Centre ... [because] they do not know something and they need someone to fill that gap* (Rado quoted in Santa 2002: 34).

Increasingly, tutors in writing centres are recognising their role as *cultural informants* (Blau and Hall 2002) and teachers of discourse conventions, which are likely to remain mysterious to students unless they are explicitly examined. As Purves (1991: 62) has pointed out the schemata needed for successful study include, in addition to knowledge about the language, some knowledge about the structures and styles of the prevailing discourses, and about the functions of various kinds of texts within the culture. One example of this kind of knowledge is Hinds's (1986) important characterisation of the *writer-responsible* approach of Western academic writers and the *reader-responsible* approach of their counterparts in Asia. Certainly, this is an insight that I failed to reach even after much exposure to examples. Like our students, I have benefited from the explanation of somebody who knew. We can readily think of other features of our discourse that may need explaining, such as the objective, impersonal tone of scientific writing or the assumption that progress is achieved through testing the ideas of other scholars.

Candy (1988: 67) makes a helpful distinction between *emotional autonomy* and *epistemological autonomy*. Attitude is one thing and mastery another. It is wise for students to recognise how much they do not know about *the underlying principles, or the structure of knowledge* in a new domain (Candy 1988: 69). The novice's '*need for assistance*' *does not necessarily represent some pathological inadequacy on the part of the learner. On the contrary, it may even be evidence of a higher-order form of autonomy which allows him or her 'to choose between dependence and independence as he [or she] perceives the need'* (Candy 1988: 73).

To the extent that local students are also novices in university education, and in the various disciplines they come to study, these points apply to them as well as to students from overseas, if to a lesser degree.

Like Candy, Higgs (1988) does not see autonomy as a monolithic concept. While committed to promoting autonomous learning, she stresses that developing one's own standards and criteria is not enough:

*I see the teacher playing the role of a manager, who creates a supportive and stimulating learning environment, who is available as a resource person, who challenges learners to achieve their potential and who helps learners to become aware of institutional requirements and expectations associated with the disciplines in which they are studying ... This last role is an especially important one, since students bring to the learning task their own standards for their work, but they need to learn what others expect of them.*  
(Higgs 1988: 41)

Higgs is raising a very important point, which is the institutional context of student work. While there is a prevailing assumption in Western education that individuals are learning for themselves, their goals and their criteria for learning are surrounded by the powerful goals and criteria of the institution. We might hope to transform these, but it would be irresponsible to ignore them. For our international students, one of the responsibilities they shoulder is that of satisfying the requirements of their host institution. In doing so, they are not only serving themselves and the institution, but often more importantly, they are fulfilling responsibilities to their families, colleagues and sponsors at home. In this sense, too, these students are not learning for themselves alone. This is consistent with Salili's (1988: 88) observation that *in Chinese culture achievement goals are ... for the benefit of the group (eg: family or state) rather than the individual*. For this reason, he uses the word *responsibility* in the sense that I have been urging, when he says:

*Driven by a sense of duty towards their parents, and influenced by cultural values which emphasise hard work and endurance, Chinese students take more personal responsibility for their success and failure.* (Salili 1988: 89)

Responsibility in the sense of autonomy may well be desirable but at the same time, it is a luxury that not everybody can afford. Often responsibility means accepting what the world requires of us, as when we take responsibility for looking after a baby or an elderly parent, for turning up to work, for the drudgery of daily life or for finishing a course of study on time. For international students, studying away from home entails accepting a responsibility. Taking the most direct route to learn what they need to know is also taking responsibility and this may mean asking for models so they can see what is wanted and asking for correction so they can learn to do it. This may seem a long way from the Knowles's (1975 in Higgs 1988: 44) *self-rating instrument* for autonomous learners, which asks students to develop a concept of themselves as *non-dependent and self-directing* people but it is nonetheless effective for students who practise it.

### **Retreat from autonomy?**

In highlighting the gap between the concept of self-enjoined by Knowles (1975) and the cultural norms described by Salili (1988), I am not seeking to promote an *alternative stereotype* of the kind that Smith (2001: 73) has noticed developing on the basis of generalisations about values of interdependence or group-orientation in Asian cultures (Smith 2001: 72). These generalisations, Smith (2001: 71) says, have led to suggestions that a *retreat from autonomy* is warranted in Asian settings and he cautions against this trend. He points out that his students in Japan, when left to their own devices, engaged in voluntary, solitary activities to improve their command of English (Smith 2001: 78). I think that, instead of constructing polarised generalities about a Western and an Eastern sense of self, we need to try to work with the approaches of the people who consult us.

Whenever we generalise about culture, we are likely to find ourselves on swampy ground. Certainly, it is useful to learn whatever we can about the cultures of our students, but what we learn must serve as a dynamic and shifting background rather than as stereotypes which guide our practice. Contrastive rhetoric has been a valuable corrective to the idea that Western rhetoric is universal and other rhetorics are now seen to encompass much variation and change. (For discussions of this see Mohan and Lo 1985: 518-520,

Spack 1997: 771, Zamel 1997: 346, Scollon 1997, Atkinson 2003 and Hirose 2003). The same is true of ideas about learning and about the self. While many writers stress the collective nature of Confucian-heritage cultures (Tang 1988: 183, Salili 1988), Scollon (1995) reminds us that individualistic cultures are also collective and collective cultures are also individualistic. If learning is very often undertaken for the benefit of the collective, this is not because Confucian-heritage cultures lack a concept of learning for oneself.

*While much of the discussion on Eastern culture points to collectivism, there is a neglect of 'individualism' or individuality in the Eastern tradition. In fact, in the Chinese tradition, 'self' constitutes a significant reference point in a person's value system. Human relationships actually extend from the self, and are centred around the self.*  
(Lee 1996: 33).

There is, Lee (1996: 34) says, *a long-established concept of learning for the sake of one's self* which is understood to encompass judgement, creativity and self-cultivation. However, at the same time, *the self in the Chinese tradition is usually undermined* by relational restraints (Lee 1996: 33). As I have argued, we can add to these restraints the practical restraints of scholarships and sponsorships and of the collective effort on the part of families to prepare, finance and send a person to study overseas.

While an awareness of different cultural orientations can provide a useful corrective to ethnocentric assumptions about learning, we must expect variation and change in culture and in individual students. It is important not to replace our traditional stereotypes with *alternative stereotypes* that will likewise stand between us and the student in our office (Spack 1997: 765, Zamel 1997: 342-343).

Happily, it is unnecessary to transform a student's sense of self, of their relation to others, or of the value of hierarchy and authority, in order to offer the benefits of the techniques we have developed to foster autonomous learning. The routines that develop metacognition are not evidently dependent upon transformations of this kind. Here I am thinking of the varieties of *reflection notes* that many teachers ask students to write in conjunction with each assignment (Yeo, Loss and Zadnik 2003). Cotterall (2003a) asks for *cover sheets* in which students are asked to write a brief summary of their essay, to comment briefly on any problems they had in organising it, to write one specific feature of language on which they would like feedback from their tutor and to reflect on the process of producing the written text. This is one way in which Cotterall (2003b: 79) implements her aim of providing *opportunities for learners to make decisions about the quality and effectiveness of their ... texts, and about planning, composing and revising their texts.*

Similarly, in the Language Teaching Centre at the Central European University in Budapest, in a course that aims at *raising awareness of practising and reflecting upon the conventions of written texts*, Petric (2003: 23) routinely asks students for *reflection-in-writing* and *reflection-on-writing*. The first consists of notes on questions and directions such as these: *What is academic writing? What are the differences between writing in English and in your native language? Write an outline of your writing process or present it as a drawing or a diagram.* Students then discuss what they have written, in small groups.

*Reflections-on-writing* are oral discussions following the introduction of a technique such as peer evaluation or collaborative writing. Students are asked to talk about whether they *found the activity useful, enjoyable, what aspects made them uncomfortable, whether they would use it in the future, and how they would adapt it* (Petric 2002: 24). This sort of exercise, Petric (2002: 24) says, conveys the message that *differences are respected, and that writing strategies are ... a matter of personal choice.*

Indeed, it is choice that Higgs comes to emphasise in her reflections on the roles of teachers and students in autonomous learning. She began with the assumption that self-directed learning must be a very active process but came to question this assumption.

*Yet it became evident to me that self-directed learners could well choose to learn in what we generally regard as being the more passive modes (eg: listening to a lecture). Thus the 'activity' of autonomous learners, I concluded, is best thought of as the pursuit of*

*whatever learning activities the learners consider would best help them to achieve their learning goals.* (Higgs 1988: 48)

Knight (1996: 36) concurs, deciding that *independence ... is not the absence of guidance but the outcome of a process of learning that enables learners to work with such guidance as they wish to take, whether it be from peers, from electronic media, or from tutors*. This, it seems to me, accords much better with the idea of respecting student decisions in the learning process rather than the prescription I have heard on occasion from colleagues, that students must be made to take responsibility for their learning.

## References

- Atkinson, D 2003. Writing and culture in the post-process era in *Journal of Second Language Writing* 12 49-63.
- Benson, P and P Voller 1997. Introduction: Autonomy and independence in language learning in Benson P and P Voller (Eds) *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (1-12). London: Longman.
- Biggs, J 1990. Asian students' approaches to learning: Implications for teaching overseas students in Kratzing, M (Ed) *Eighth Australasian Learning and Language Conference Proceedings* (2-50). Brisbane: QUT Counselling Services
- Biggs, J 1996. Western misperceptions of the Confucian-heritage learning culture in Watkins D and J Biggs (Eds) *The Chinese learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences* (45-67). Hong Kong and Melbourne: CERC & ACER
- Blanton, L 1998. Discourse, artifacts, and the Ozarks: Understanding academic literacy in Zamel V and R Spack (Eds) *Negotiating academic literacies: Teaching and learning across languages and cultures*. Mahwah, N J: Lawrence Erlbaum. First published in 1994 *Journal of Second Language Writing* 3
- Blau, S and J Hall assisted by S Sparks 2002. Guilt-free tutoring: Rethinking how we tutor non-native-English-speaking students in *Writing Center Journal* 23 (1) 23-44
- Boud, D 1988a. Introduction to the second edition in Boud, D (Ed) *Developing student autonomy in learning* (7-16). London: Kogan Page
- Boud, D 1988b. Moving towards autonomy in Boud, D (Ed) *Developing student autonomy in learning* (second edition) (17-39). London: Kogan Page
- Breen, P and S Mann 1997. Shooting arrows at the sun: Perspectives on a pedagogy for autonomy in Benson P and P Voller (Eds) *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (132-149). London: Longman
- Candy, P 1988. On the attainment of subject-matter autonomy in Boud, D (Ed) *Developing student autonomy in learning* (second edition) (59-76). London: Kogan Page
- Carter, B 2001. From awareness to counselling in learner autonomy in L Dam (Ed) *Learner Autonomy: New Insights. AILA Review 15*, 26-33
- Champagne, M-F, T Clayton, N Dimmitt, M Laszewski, W Savage, J Shaw, R Stroupe, M Myint and P Walter 2001. The assessment of learner autonomy and language learning in L Dam (Ed) *Learner Autonomy: New Insights. AILA Review 15*, 45-55
- Chanock, K 2002. From mystery to mastery in James, B, A Percy, J Skillen and N Trivett (Eds) *Changing identities: proceedings of the Language and Academic Skills Conference held at the University of Wollongong 29-30 Nov. 2001* [CD-ROM]. Wollongong: University of Wollongong

- Clark, I 2001. Perspectives on the directive/nondirective continuum in the writing center in *The Writing Center Journal* 22 (1) 33-58
- Cotterall, S 2003a. Promoting autonomy through an academic writing course. Paper presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Tertiary Writing Network Colloquium at Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand, 5-6 December, 2002: *Developing a voice: critical issues in academic literacies*.
- Cotterall, S 2003b. Promoting learning autonomy through an academic writing course in Kirkness, A (Ed) Proceedings of the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Tertiary Writing Network Colloquium at Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand, 5-6 December, 2002: *Developing a voice: critical issues in academic literacies* (76-83). Auckland: Auckland University of Technology
- Dearden, R 1975. Autonomy as an educational ideal in Brown, S (Ed) *Philosophers discuss education* (3-18). London: Macmillan
- Dearn, J 1998. What happens when you stop lecturing in a large first year class? Students' perceptions, learning outcomes and teacher responses. in Stokell, R (Compiler) *Proceedings of the Third Pacific Rim Conference on the First Year in Higher Education* (Vol I and Vol II). Auckland: Auckland Institute of Technology
- Heron, J 1988. Assessment revisited in Boud, D (Ed) *Developing student autonomy in learning* (second edition) (77-90). London: Kogan Page
- Higgs, J 1988. Planning learning experiences to promote autonomous learning in Boud, D (Ed) *Developing student autonomy in learning* (second edition) (40-58). London: Kogan Page
- Hinds, J 1986. Reader vs writer responsibility: A new typology in Connor, U and R Kaplan (Eds) *Writing across languages: Analysis of L2 text* (141-152). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley
- Hirose, K 2003. Comparing L1 and L2 organisational patterns in the argumentative writing of Japanese ESL students in *Journal of Second Language Writing* 12, 181-209
- Kember, D and L Gow 1991. A challenge to the anecdotal stereotype of the Asian student in *Studies in Higher Education*, 16, 117-128
- Knight, P 1996. Independent study, independent studies and 'core skills' in higher education in Tait, J and P Knight (Eds) *The management of independent learning* (29-37). London: Kogan Page
- Knowles, M 1975. *Self-directed learning: A guide for learners and teachers*. London: Prentice-Hall
- Lee, O 1996. The cultural context for Chinese learners: conceptions of learning in the Confucian tradition in Watkins D and J Biggs (Eds) *The Chinese learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences* (25-41). Hong Kong & Melbourne: CERC & ACER
- Little, D 1997. Responding authentically to authentic texts: a problem for self-access language learning? in Benson P and P. Voller (Eds) *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (225-236). London: Longman
- Littlewood, W 1997. Self-access: why do we want it and what can it do? in Benson P and P Voller (Eds) *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (79-92). London: Longman
- Long, D 1990. *Learner-managed learning: the key to lifelong learning and development*. London: Kogan Page

- Marton, F, G Dall'Alba and L Tse 1996. Memorising and understanding: the keys to the paradox? in Watkins D and J Biggs (Eds) *The Chinese learner: Cultural, psychological and contextual influences* (69-83). Hong Kong & Melbourne: CERC & ACER
- Matalene, C 1985. Contrastive rhetoric: an American writing teacher in China in *College English*, 47 (8), 789-808
- Ming-Sheng, L 1998. Students' perceptions of teacher communication style in the use of pedagogies: a case study of expatriates teaching English in China in Tapper, J and P Gruber (Eds) *ACSC '98: Teaching Communication Skills in the Disciplines. The Proceedings of the Australian Communications Skills Conference* (94-105). Melbourne: University of Melbourne
- Mohan, B and W Lo 1985. Academic writing and Chinese students: Transfer and developmental factors in *TESOL Quarterly* 19 (3), 515-534
- Pemberton, R, S Toogood, S Ho and J Lam 2001. Approaches to advising for self-directed language learning in Dam L (Ed) *Learner Autonomy: New Insights. AILA Review 15*, 16-25
- Pennycook, A 1997 in Benson P and P Voller (Eds) *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (35-53). London: Longman
- Petric, B 2002. Students' attitudes towards writing and the development of academic writing skills in *Writing Center Journal* 22 (2), 9-27
- Purves, A 1991. The textual contract: literacy as common knowledge and conventional wisdom in Jennings E and A Purves (Eds) *Literate systems and individual lives: perspectives on literacy and schooling* (51-72). Albany: State University of New York
- Rogers, C 1983. *Freedom to learn in the 80s*. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E Merrill
- Salili, F 1996. Accepting personal responsibility for learning in Watkins D and J Biggs (Eds) *The Chinese learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences* (85-105). Hong Kong & Melbourne: CERC & ACER
- Samuelowicz, K 1987. Learning problems of overseas students: two sides of a story in *Higher Education Research and Development* 6, 121-133
- Santa, T 2002. Writing center orthodoxies as Damocles' sword: An international perspective in *Writing Center Journal* 22 (2), 30-38
- Scollon, R 1995. Plagiarism and ideology: Identity in intercultural discourse in *Language in Society* 24, 1-28
- Scollon, R 1997. Contrastive rhetoric, contrastive poetics, or perhaps something else? in *TESOL Quarterly* 31 (2), 352-358
- Sheerin, S 1997. An exploration of the relationship between self-access and independent learning in Benson, P and P Voller (Eds) *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (54-65). London: Longman
- Smith, R 2001. Group work for autonomy in Asia: insights from teacher-research in Dam, L (Ed) *Learner Autonomy: New Insights. AILA Review 15*, 70-81
- Spack, R 1997. The rhetorical construction of multilingual students in *TESOL Quarterly* 31 (4), 765-777

Stanton, H 1988. Independent study: a matter of confidence? in Boud, D (Ed) *Developing student autonomy in learning* (second edition) (118-131). London: Kogan Page

Tang, C 1996. Collaborative learning: The latent dimension in Chinese students' learning in Watkins, D and J Biggs (Eds) *The Chinese learner: Cultural, psychological and contextual influences* (183-204). Hong Kong & Melbourne: CERC & ACER

Voller, P 1997. Does the teacher have a role in autonomous language learning? in Benson, P and P Voller (Eds) *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (98-113). London: Longman

Yeo, S, R Loss and M Zadnik 2003. Reflections on teaching science students the skills of self-reflection and self-directed learning in *Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> Pacific Rim, First Year in Higher Education Conference, QUT 9-11 July 2003* (CD Rom)

Zamel, V 1997. Toward a model of transculturation in *TESOL Quarterly* 31 (2), 341-351

#### **About the author**

**Kate Chanock** heads the Language and Academic Skills Unit of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at La Trobe University. Her main research interests are the cultures and discourses of academic study and the metacognitive language needed to help students to communicate at university.

Email: c.chanock@latrobe.edu.au