

# Cultivating Independent Learning for Assurance of Learning in University English Programs

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## Abstract

Many will agree that independent learning (IL) is important for learning languages successfully, but incorporating IL in a curriculum can be challenging. As part of a project to meet one of the three learning goals associated with an Assurance of Learning (AOL) initiative, researchers at a Japanese university worked towards enhancing the independent learning skills among English learners. To do this, they set up a scaffolded approach to support students' independent learning. In the spring semester of 2019, students created personalized study plans aimed at improving their targeted English skill(s). Study plans were periodically checked by teachers and revised by students. This paper explains how independent learning is incorporated into English courses and presents the results of a student survey (n=947) and a teacher survey (n=35). Most students found the IL assignments useful yet reported difficulty with locating resources or finding time to study independently. The findings led researchers to revise the IL system and to develop language learning strategies that can guide students' IL more effectively.

**Key terms:** independent learning (IL), learner autonomy (LA), language learning strategies (LLS), English curriculum development, Assurance of Learning (AOL)

## 1. Introduction

This paper explores the way independent learning (IL) is incorporated in a mandatory, highly coordinated English program at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU). To address the lack of research on how language programs incorporate IL in the curriculum, this study examines how one program introduced IL and demonstrates how to provide a pathway for students to become independent learners and reach institutional learning goals. Specifically, we discuss why nurturing independent learners was identified as one of the major goals of the English program, and how IL plans in English classes were introduced, implemented outside of the classrooms, reviewed by the students themselves and their teachers, revised, and graded.

The next section reviews current literature on learner autonomy and its connection to assurance of learning (AOL). Section 3 explains the university's teaching context and how the independent learning program is implemented and examined for AOL. The aims and methods of the study are then explained in Section 4. We then share sample materials used to implement IL and present the findings of teacher and student surveys to the readers with the hope that the materials and survey results may inform their teaching practice. We will conclude by offering suggestions on

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how to maximize students' English learning outcomes through exposing them to the idea of learner autonomy (LA) by promoting it throughout the English program.

## **2. Independent Learning within an English Language Curriculum**

### **2.1 Independent Learning in Asian Tertiary Context**

Becoming an independent learner is seen as one of the ideal goals in education. The most widely cited definition of learner autonomy (LA) is “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” (Holec, 1981, p. 3). Holec notes that this ability “is not inborn but must be acquired either by ‘natural’ means or (as most often happens) by formal learning, i.e., in a systematic, deliberate way”, suggesting a need for a coordinated approach to develop LA in an educational setting. Benson’s work (2001, 2005, 2007) is notable, especially his state-of-the-art book and articles reviewing theory and literature on autonomy in language teaching and learning. Benson introduced a number of approaches, such as resource-based, technology-based, learner-based, and classroom-based approaches, to guide teachers’ practice about autonomy in a classroom setting. The words ‘independence’ and ‘autonomy’, according to Benson (2001, p. 14), are terms “for what is essentially the same concept.” Holec (1985) emphasized that the term autonomy should describe a capacity of the learner, but others started to use it for situations in which learners studied outside the language classroom (Benson, 2001). In this paper, the term LA is used as a broader goal, while the term IL is used for the tasks and activities within the curriculum. Developing LA has become a significant theme in language education not only in the Western context, but also among Asian learners (Tomita & Sano, 2016). Meanwhile, the teacher’s role in nurturing independent learners inside and outside classrooms has generally been acknowledged (Chan, Spratt, & Humphreys, 2002), yet principles to guide language courses with a focus on LA are lacking (Cotterall, 2000). As a result, as Cotterall (2000) points out, not many teachers or programs incorporate IL in the classroom or assess the learners’ IL efforts.

Some practical studies related to LA have emerged in the Japanese university context in the last decade in language curricula. For example, Taylor, Beck, Hardy, Omura, Stout, and Talandis (2012) discuss utilizing a stamp card system, in which students receive points for extra work, as an induction to encourage self-access learning outside the classroom. Tomita and Sano (2016) emphasize the need for teacher support in guided autonomy and autonomous learning. Another study that supports guided IL is by Curry, Mynard, Noguchi and Watkins (2017). They conclude that while Japanese university freshmen were able to learn most of the Self-Directed Language Learning (SDLL) skills that were introduced in their SDLL course, they needed additional support for selecting, using and evaluating resources, choosing strategies they could use, and evaluating their learning gains. Their SDLL course was an elective course, and they recommend SDLL skills “be integrated into mainstream university language classrooms in a more systematic way” (Curry et al., 2017, p.31). In another case, Shelton-Strong (2018) encourages peer and self-assessment for IL. Furthermore, Arnott, Curry, Lyon and Mynard (2019) stress that instructors need to intervene in the time management of university students, despite the main role of being language educators. Recent

publications within Japan often come from particular institutions that have developed a strong learning support system such as a dedicated self-access learning center (SALC), which offers language learning support outside the core curriculum. As a medium-sized university with a focus on nurturing academic English in a short time, we concur with the five principles for designing language courses proposed by Cotterall (2000), which are concerned with “(1) learner goals, (2) the language learning process, (3) tasks, (4) learner strategies, and (5) reflection on learning” (Cotterall, 2000, p. 110). The challenge teachers often face is with transferring the decision-making responsibility to students (Cotterall, 2000). Although we developed our IL practices based largely on previous experiences, the five principles above overlapped with our ideas and plans for how to approach IL.

## **2.2 Independent Learning for Assurance of Learning**

Despite the recent abundance of literature on IL, there is a lack of literature where IL is connected to AOL within a language program. Nurturing an independent, life-long learner is one of the key objectives of education according to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT, 2006). Therefore, it is only natural that language curriculum developers pay attention to IL as a step toward acquiring LA within the AOL framework. Assurance of learning refers to “the process of evaluating how well a school accomplishes its educational goals” (Blackwell, 2016, p. 2), and it is a key component of international accreditation processes (Blackwell, 2016). In this research context, at the researchers’ institution, not only colleges but also the Center for Language Education (CLE), which teaches English, Japanese, and six Asia-Pacific languages, have been striving to review educational goals and align the standards appropriately. First, coordinators of the English program reflected on their mission as a university, which derives from the opening declaration of the university (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, 2000), which upholds “that it will be a place where the young future leaders from countries and regions throughout the world will come to study together, live together, and understand each other’s cultures and ways of life, in pursuit of goals which are common to all mankind” (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, 2000). Then, the CLE utilized the university’s opening declaration to declare their mission as a language program as being “to cultivate learners who have the language skills necessary for communication in different contexts from daily life situations to learning in specialized areas, the intercultural competence necessary to collaborate effectively with others, and the ability to become lifelong autonomous learners” (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, 2020). It could be argued that the last part of the mission, to cultivate learners who have the ability to become autonomous learners, is the ultimate goal of any educational institution whereby learners take charge of their learning even after they leave school. Researchers, who are also teachers in the English program, argue that cultivating independent learners takes considerable effort and time invested by the learners, and a certain level of intervention and scaffolding by the teachers will help them become more independent.

### **3. Teaching Context and IL in the English Program**

The study took place at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU), a medium-sized private university in southern Japan. It is an international, dual-lingual university, at which half of the students study English and the other half study Japanese as a foreign language. The students need to improve their English competencies to succeed in English-medium lectures. That is, they are expected to reach B1+ in the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFR) by the time they complete their mandatory English courses, which typically takes one to four semesters, or between 4 months and 2 years. Since the university's business school started the process of securing external accreditations to heighten its reputation, the whole university, including the Center for Language Education in which the study took place, has been focusing on AOL. The students take a placement test at the time of enrollment. The majority of English learners are divided into four levels of the standard track of the English program: elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-intermediate. Although there is some variety in the proficiency level of students within a single level, students' target exit level on the CEFR scale for each of the four courses are A2 for Elementary, A2+ for Pre-Intermediate, B1 for Intermediate, and B1+ for Upper-Intermediate, respectively. The IL program was implemented in each of the levels and students were assigned IL tasks, such as extensive reading and extensive listening, moving from a more controlled approach in the lowest level to an increasingly less restrictive approach to task selection and utilization of resources in the higher levels.

The English program has identified three major learning goals for students to achieve: (1) acquire academic competence in English; (2) obtain the English skills to communicate effectively in multicultural contexts; and (3) develop the ability to set and achieve goals in English. This project aims to address the third goal. It includes three learning objectives, which are to (3a) create and implement a personal study plan for English; (3b) locate and utilize English learning resources; and (3c) achieve a target score on a standardized English test for study or work. Achieving the second learning objective (3b) includes using resources such as self-study TOEFL or IELTS textbook materials, the Self-Access Learning Center (SALC), and online resources such as YouTube. The standardized English tests in the third objective (3c) include TOEFL<sup>®</sup>, IELTS<sup>™</sup> and Pearson Progress test, now referred to as Pearson Benchmark Test. At the time of the study, not every course addressed 3c; however, it is now addressed in every course, as the Benchmark Test is taught and administered in class. Our focus was to examine how different courses within our curriculum are addressing learning objectives 3a and 3b, and this practice can fill the gap in the field of learner autonomy by adding an IL component with AOL in mind. The following paragraphs will show the various approaches of how standard-track courses were originally implementing IL before AOL was considered. Although different materials and methods of delivery were used in each level as can be seen below, the overall pattern was from more controlled in lower levels to less controlled in higher levels.

First of all, in the lowest level, Elementary English students were guided through each step of the IL process. At first, similar to the style in other levels, students began by considering a recent

test score and deciding on which skills needed the most improvement. The students were using the Pearson Progress test, and the feedback on the test included not only a breakdown of their scores on reading, listening, speaking and writing, but also a set of can-do statements which targeted specific areas that needed improvement. Working from this list of skills to improve, students were provided with sets of practice activities targeting those specific can-do statements. This list of can-do statements provides a number of choices for students to use as a basis for self-study to fill in gaps in their language learning. For example, if they need to work on “can describe people, places, and activities,” they may be provided with a set of relevant activities, such as picture description tasks. While heavily controlled, students were still given a choice of activities to try. They were assessed on the completion of their tasks, which comprised a small percentage of their final grade.

The IL program in Pre-Intermediate English also exerted control over the resources that students could choose from, but students could still choose which language skills to focus on, and various kinds of tasks were recommended by the instructors, sometimes aimed at preparing for a standardized assessment such as the Progress test. Instead of physical notebooks, students worked online to try specific tasks using Microsoft OneNote pages. For example, if students wanted to practice speaking, they would go to the relevant section of their OneNote page and there would be some tasks they could choose from to complete. Such tasks included picture description, recording and dictation, singing an English song, reading aloud, and repeating. On the OneNote page, there were many such tasks listed for each skill, which teachers could easily check by moving between students’ pages in the virtual notebook in one click. Although the approach to IL was more controlled in terms of task choice than higher level courses, students were still expected to work independently and make choices about which skills to focus on and which tasks to complete. Students were graded on completion of the various tasks and given constructive feedback to encourage their continued IL.

In Intermediate English, some extra accountability and scaffolding was required. Students were expected to choose a skill, for example vocabulary or reading, and they would fill up a certain number of pages of a notebook with related practice. Specified resources were shared for students to use, but with each class teacher’s approval, the students were encouraged to choose other resources as well. The notebooks were collected twice a semester at the end of each quarter and teachers gave written feedback to students about their progress. Students also received a score which counted towards their final class grade; in this case, they were graded on the content of their IL.

Upper-Intermediate English students were given worksheets (see Appendix A) and were required to write down a recent proficiency test score, in this case the breakdown of their score on the TOEFL ITP®. Students considered what section of the test they were strong or weak on and then chose skills to study to improve that section’s score. Once students had decided what areas to concentrate on, they would then look for resources to help them to reach their goal of scoring 500 by the end of Upper-Intermediate English. If a resource or learning method was deemed ineffective by the class teacher, students were advised to adjust their study plan accordingly. An example of an

ineffective plan would be if a student decided to watch a Netflix drama in an attempt to increase their academic listening skill. The teacher would then direct the student toward better sources of academic listening. A score was assigned to students based on their planning, evaluation of resources, and revision of their plan as opposed to the actual content of their IL itself.

#### **4. Survey Methodology**

The following questions were explored in assessing the current IL program.

1. How do students perceive the effectiveness of guided IL?
2. How do English teachers perceive guided IL in terms of effectiveness and workload?
3. How can instructors assist learners with IL to address the AOL learning objectives?

To help the researchers gauge the teachers' and students' perceptions, a series of survey questions were given and analyzed (see Appendix B and C).

#### **4.1 Participants and Instruments**

To explore the first question, student surveys from the participants who were registered in the mandatory English classes at the university at the time of data collection were used. To examine the second and third questions, feedback from teachers acquired from a survey and oral discussion was used. Data was collected through anonymous online questionnaires using Google forms, one given to the English teachers, and two administered to the students at the end of each quarter in the spring semester 2019. Thirty-five teachers responded to the survey (see Appendix B). The first student survey was answered by 832 students. This pilot survey was conducted before the students completed all the IL tasks. The pilot survey included a few extra open-ended questions that asked about the students' particular purpose for IL. It was then used to categorize and create a list of choices for the second survey, in which the questions were modified by adapting some of the open-ended responses into multiple choice questions. Another refinement was to change from a 10-point Likert scale to a 6 point one since we did not need such an incremental scale. The student data we report on was derived from the second survey which was answered by 947 students out of 994 students registered in the program (see Appendix C). We also took into consideration feedback gained through comments from teachers at a faculty development workshop as a way of ensuring triangulation.

#### **4.2 Procedures**

One teacher survey and one student survey were administered at week 7 of the 15-week semester. Another student survey was given at week 14, toward the end of the semester while a second teacher survey was not administered since we collected the information that we planned to consider and did not want to unnecessarily burden teachers. Based on the pilot survey mentioned in 4.1, the second student survey focused on (1) how long students were spending on IL each week, (2) their purpose for independent learning, (3) the ease of locating materials to use, and (4) how useful students found IL in regards to language learning goal 3b; locate and utilize English learning

resources. We asked the same questions to all students, which helped validate the effectiveness of each level's approaches and helped us to tailor suggested materials to the various levels' students.

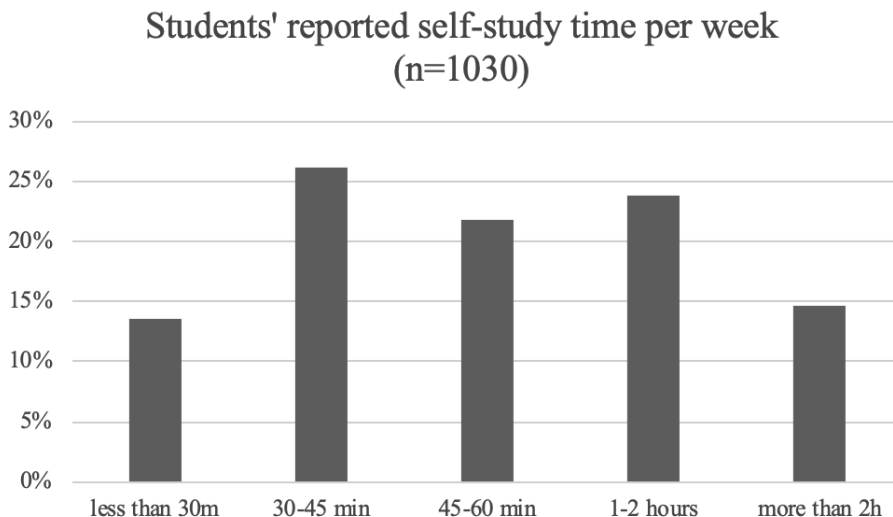
## 5. Findings

### 5.1 Students' Reactions to Independent Learning

In this section, we report on the second survey given to students at the end of the semester, first on students' reactions to IL and on teachers' reactions at 5.2. We found that the time students were spending on their IL varied depending on their course level. At the Elementary level, students were spending the most time of all four levels. About 24% of Elementary English students were spending between one and two hours per week on IL. Another 24% of them reported spending more than two hours on their IL, meaning that nearly half of the students spent more than one hour per week. In Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate and Upper-Intermediate, the results were almost identical to one another, with about 35% of the students reporting that they either spent between one and two hours, or more than two hours on their IL each week. Overall, 40% of students across all levels of the curriculum reported spending more than one hour per week on IL (see Figure 1). Considering IL is only a small portion of the total course grade, one to two hours per week seems an appropriate amount, in addition to their regular homework.

Figure 1.

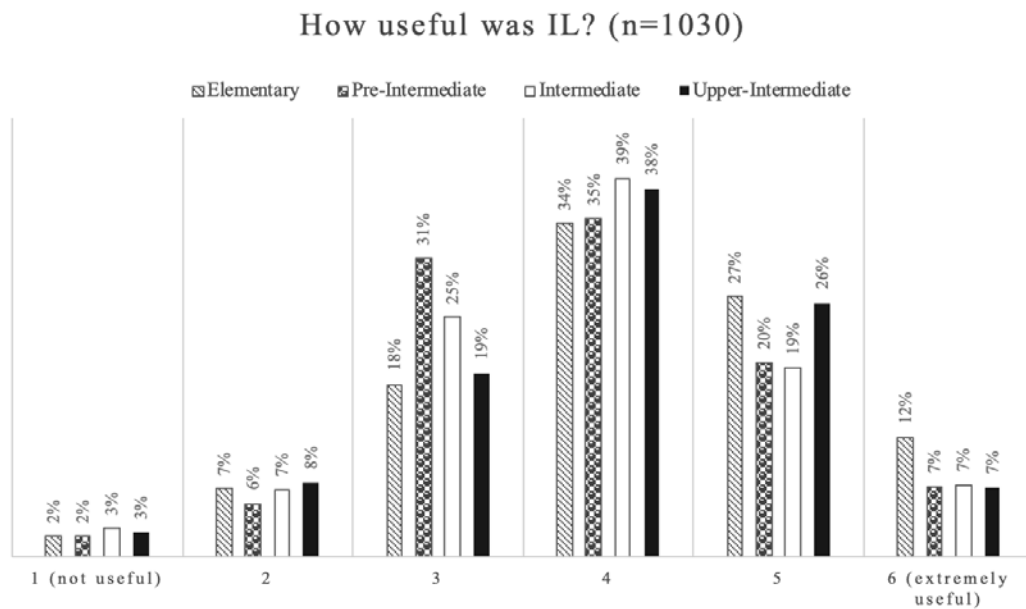
*Students' Reported Amount of Time Spent on IL on Average Per Week.*



Another question asked about the main purpose behind their IL. Predictably, due to the way IL was introduced in Elementary and Pre-Intermediate, the foci of their studies were evenly split between proficiency test scores, such as TOEFL®, IELTS™, and the Pearson Progress test, and studying specific skills related to vocabulary, grammar, listening, speaking, writing, and reading. Meanwhile, in Intermediate and Upper-Intermediate, the focus of students' IL studies was greatly skewed

towards the study of TOEFL®. About 75% of students identified TOEFL® as one of their primary purposes for their work on IL. This result is perhaps unsurprising considering that the TOEFL® score result factored heavily toward students’ course grade. This seems to indicate that when given the choice, students’ focus for IL will likely be centered on goals that align with their grade. The next question asked how easily students could find materials for their independent study. This question was extremely relevant to Upper-Intermediate students that needed to locate and evaluate their own materials but became a less relevant question for students in the other levels since most of the materials were provided to them directly. This was expected, but we kept the same questions to observe differences between levels. The results show that Upper-Intermediate students required some more suggested resources since 53% of them responded that it was difficult to find appropriate materials for self-study. Finally, students were asked to rate the effectiveness of their IL. A six-point Likert scale was used with a 1 being not useful and a 6 being extremely useful. Students across the curriculum answered that they thought it was on the useful side, with 71% scoring a four or higher (see Figure 2).

Figure 2.  
*Students’ Assessments on the Effectiveness of IL by Course Level*



### 5.2 Teachers’ Reactions to Independent Learning

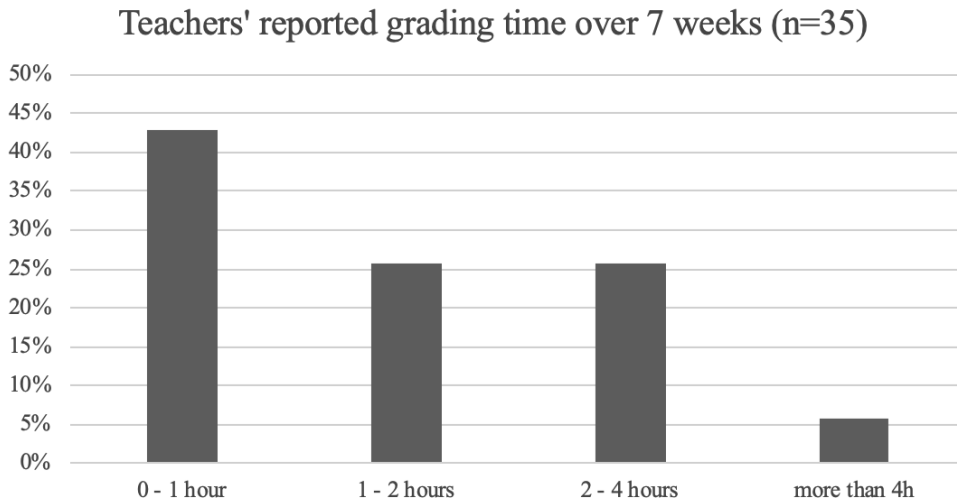
The teacher survey was intended to investigate at the midway point in the semester (1) how the IL curriculum was helping students achieve the goals of creating and implementing their study plan in accordance with learning goal 3a, (2) how the program was helping students learn to locate and utilize resources in accordance with learning goal 3b, and (3) how much time teachers were committing to the program, inside and outside of classes (see Appendix B). The teachers’ evaluation



of the IL program in terms of students creating and implementing the study plan was mostly positive with 80% of teachers scoring six or more on a 10-point usefulness scale. Similarly, 70% of teachers reported a six or higher in terms of the program helping students locate and utilize resources. The time that teachers spent in class was fairly uniform, with 94% of teachers using two hours or less of class time in the first six weeks of class devoted to explaining and helping students with their IL plan. In terms of workload outside of class, the bulk of teachers, 68%, were spending two hours or less for marking over a 6-7 week period. However, a small percentage of teachers were spending four hours or more (see Figure 3). This points to a concern with the way IL was being implemented because teachers were devoting varying amounts of time and effort for marking and feedback.

Figure 3.

*Teachers' Reported Amount of Time Spent Marking IL Over One Quarter.*



## 6. Discussion

Student survey results were used to gauge how students perceive the effectiveness of guided IL. We found that overall, 71% of students found IL tasks useful; however, we did not elicit qualitative responses from the students, and future research into what could help them more is desired. Responses from the teacher survey indicate that the majority perceive guided IL to be effective in helping students achieve their learning goals. Regarding the workload, we found that there is variation in the effort and workload associated with checking and providing feedback to the students on IL tasks. It became apparent that some teachers spent more than four hours per 6-7 week period, while others spent less than 1 hour per 6-7 week period marking IL. This shows a potential need for the refinement of each level's standardized assessment system and further training of teachers to promote consistency both within and between levels of the program with regard to giving IL feedback to students. Of course, there is always likely to be some variation in the speed at

which teachers provide feedback, and at the time of the data collection, teachers in most levels were not given much guidance on how much feedback to provide to their students.

Insights gained from the student and teacher surveys and shared teacher experiences shed light on how to better implement and assist IL to address the AOL learning objectives. Rather than assessing students strictly on the content of their IL work, it is primarily the process of their personal IL experience that we are concerned with. By the time students complete Upper-Intermediate English, they should be able to achieve the first two AOL learning objectives of (1) creating and implementing a personal English study plan and (2) locating and utilizing appropriate resources. The third AOL objective of achieving a target score on a standardized test such as TOEFL® is now addressed outside the IL curriculum in each level through coursework and mandatory testing. The first two AOL objectives align with Cotterall's five principles, and the personalization of students' IL goals and study methods ensure that the products of their IL efforts will vary greatly which makes it challenging to assess their end results in a standardized way. Instead, it is the process of students setting up their plans and finding appropriate resources that can be assessed in a standardized manner. Grading and feedback from teachers should be given after initial plan-setting so that students can confidently begin their IL. Midway through the semester, students can be asked to evaluate their IL and make changes as needed to improve their plan and resources so that they can reach their IL goal by the end of the semester. This two-step process only requires teachers to assess IL plans and resources a minimum of two times during the semester, though students in need of extra help can be encouraged to visit the SALC or their teacher's office hours for assistance.

Having explicit AOL objectives to govern the IL program in a top-down manner is proving helpful since IL activities can be designed with the specific purpose of guiding students to reach the desired institutional learning outcomes. From our experiences, most students in the lower levels could benefit from more structured tasks, assistance with finding appropriate resources, and additional guidance as they learn to study English autonomously. On the other hand, students in the higher levels should be ready to take more control of their IL plan. They will have had training in the earlier levels and should also have a greater understanding and appreciation of their personal English-language goals since most are at least a year into their collegiate studies and have been asked to consider their language goals in other courses. In this way, a progressive approach to IL, whereby students are increasingly given more freedom and are expected to become more autonomous in their IL choices, can be implemented throughout the English levels so that students should be able to reach the AOL learning objectives by the time they finish the required English courses.

Two specific areas of desired improvement to our IL program are to enhance student motivation so that they increase the amount of time spent on IL each week, and to decrease the amount of time teachers spend introducing, guiding, and assessing IL. Increasing students' motivation towards IL can be a daunting task since many have different reasons that hold them back from learning English on their own (Curry, Mynard, Noguchi & Watkins, 2017). Individual

counseling has yielded positive results for many students (Hobbs & Dofs, 2015), yet the burden of this task can be too great for teachers with large numbers of students who might need different forms of help at different times throughout the semester. So that students can get one-on-one counseling on their IL plans as they need it, student and teacher advisors at the university's SALC are now trained to provide IL guidance. This will allow students to get personalized IL assistance outside of their normal class times, which will help to decrease the amount of time class teachers have to spend giving feedback. Students should also be afforded the opportunity to share their IL plans and experiences with classmates every 1-2 weeks, primarily so that they can learn from each other, but also to provide extrinsic motivation since they know they will periodically have discussions with their peers in front of their teacher.

Through shared teacher experiences, it has become apparent that a major factor detrimental to students' motivation towards and time spent on IL, especially in the lower levels, can be that some students simply do not know what to do each week to help them reach their goals. This points to the need for student access to specific and manageable methods for doing their IL. Therefore, we started looking into Language Learning Strategies (LLS). LLS are detailed activities students can use to help them autonomously learn the specific aspects of the English language that they are targeting with their personal IL goals (Hardan, 2013). Research has suggested that successful Japanese learners of English utilize a variety of LLS and have a greater awareness of their own language learning (Kato, 2005; Fewell, 2010; Gamble, 2016). To help with this, an extensive and easy-to-navigate online list of LLS, along with explicit instructions and examples for their use, is being developed at the institution so that students can choose LLS that are in line with their specific IL goals. The researchers anticipate that this online LLS database will help to increase student motivation by providing structured and focused IL activities for them to choose from while at the same time decreasing the need for teachers to frequently provide personalized IL guidance and feedback.

## **7. Conclusion**

Through analyzing student and teacher feedback, this article has demonstrated that coordinated English-language IL programs can provide a pathway for students to become successful autonomous learners by guiding them to reach institutional learning goals through AOL. The IL program was tailored to each of the institution's four standard-track levels of English proficiency, with less guidance and more freedom to personalize learning goals and approaches as students progressed to the higher levels. Most teachers reported that they felt the program was successfully guiding students to reach the AOL learning goals, and student survey results indicate that despite having a wide variety of language goals, most learners found their IL assignments useful. Limitations of this study include the lack of qualitative feedback from students which would have helped provide further insight into students' impressions of IL, especially in regards to their motivation. Additionally, we need to be cautious in generalizing the results, because of the possible variations with which each teacher was approaching IL in their classrooms. While this institution's

IL program can benefit from changes aimed at increasing student motivation towards, and time spent on, IL, and at decreasing the IL-focused efforts required of teachers, all adaptations should be made within a clear AOL framework and through IL goals that are explicit to both teachers and students. Future research will focus on improving the IL program so there is a smooth and progressive transition between levels, implementing the language learning strategies (LLS) database for optimal student experience, and trying to measure the effectiveness of IL on students' language learning and motivation.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Example Study-Planner from Upper-Intermediate Course

1. Write your highest TOEFL ITP score from last semester below:

(Leave blank if you don't know or if you've never taken the TOEFL ITP before)

Fall 2018 TOEFL Score = Total: \_\_\_\_\_ (Section 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Section 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Section 3: \_\_\_\_\_)

2. Write the TOEFL ITP score you will try to get this semester:

Spring 2019 Desired TOEFL Score = Total: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Write the percentage (%) of your self-study time that you plan to study for each TOEFL section:

Section	% of self-study time	Section	% of self-study time
1. Listening	%	3. Reading	%
2. Grammar (S&WE)	%	Vocabulary Skills	%

\* If you do not plan to self-study for a section, write "0%".

\* Your total percentage should equal 100%.

**4. Weekly Study Plan:** When do you have time to do TOEFL self-study this semester?

Think about your daily schedule, then make a personal TOEFL self-study plan:

1. Put an "X" in the boxes you do not have free time (because of classes, meetings, work, etc.)
2. Put a "O" in the boxes you will try to do TOEFL self-study this semester:

*(You have to put at least two "O"s and try your best to self-study during these times each week)*

	1st period	2nd period	3rd period	4th period	5th period	6th period	evening
Monday							
Tuesday							
Wednesday							
Thursday							
Friday							
Saturday							
Sunday							

\* We will be practicing in class and I will give you homework, but to get a high score you must also study for the TOEFL on your own. You need to set up a personal TOEFL self-study plan this semester and try your best to do it every week. Remember, your highest TOEFL score from this semester will be worth 25% of your UIE-B grade and it can be used to apply for student exchange programs.



**5. TOEFL Self-Study Resources:** Your homework is to try out some TOEFL ITP self-study resources and find the ones that you like the most. You can find your own resources online, in the SALC, in the library, or in a bookstore.

Write about three resources that you plan to use for TOEFL self-study this semester:

<u>Resource Name</u> Write book titles and website names or URLs	<u>Target Section(s)</u> Listening / Grammar / Reading / Vocabulary	<u>Why do you plan to use this resource?</u> What makes this a good resource for your TOEFL self-study?



**6. Set up weekly TOEFL Study Plan:** Fill out the table below to show what you plan to do for 2 TOEFL self-study sessions each week from now until the end of the quarter:

When Day + period	Where Location	What Name of resource(s)	How & Why * <u>How</u> will you use the resource(s)? What will you do for self-study? * <u>Why</u> will you do this? What goal(s) are you trying to accomplish?

**Teacher Feedback** (students should not write in the section below)

Grading: Late Penalty = - ___ points	
1. Student correctly completed side one (tasks 1-4)	___ / 5
2. Student found three TOEFL ITP resources and wrote why they plan to use them (task 5)	___ / 15
3. Student clearly explained what they will try to do for their TOEFL Study Plan (task 6)	___ / 10
<b>Total Score = ___ / 30</b>	

**Teacher's Comments:**

**Appendix B: Teacher Questionnaire**

SP2019 Q1 Study Plan Teacher Survey

*\*The actual form was given as a Google form. The layout is adapted for publication.*

This survey is for teachers to share their impressions of the Study Plans (self-study programs) being implemented in their courses in SP2019. If you are teaching in more than one of these courses, please fill out a separate survey for each course. Your feedback will help us to make improvements on our study plans for FA2019. Please submit your reply by June 6th.

- Which course are you filling out this study plan survey for?  
 > Choose from course names: Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate
- How well does this course's study plan instruct students on AOL's Learning Goal 3A: "Create and implement a personal study plan for English"?

> Very poor (1) --- Very well (10)

3. If you have any ideas on how this course's study plan can be adapted to better instruct students on Learning Goal 3A, please share them below: \_\_\_\_\_
4. How well does this course's study plan instruct students on AOL's Learning Goal 3B: "Locate and utilize English learning resources"?  
> Very poor (1) --- Very well (10)
5. If you have any ideas on how this course's study plan can be adapted to better instruct students on Learning Goal 3B, please share them below: \_\_\_\_\_
6. How much time did the implementation (in-class time) of this study plan take you this quarter?  
> 1 hour or less / 1 to 2 hours / 2 to 4 hours / 4 hours or more
7. How much time did the assessment and advising (outside class time) of this study plan take you this quarter?  
> 1 hour or less / 1 to 2 hours / 2 to 4 hours / 4 hours or more
8. If you have any ideas on how this course's study plan can be adapted to require less teacher time, please share them below: \_\_\_\_\_
9. What are some common problems that your students are having with this course's study plan?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. If you mentioned any problems above, do you have any ideas on how this course's study plan might be adapted to diminish them? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Lastly, if you have any other ideas on how this course's study plan might be improved for the Fall semester, please share them below: \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix C: Student Questionnaire

#### Q2 Study Plan Survey 自主学習についての調査

*\*The actual form was given as a Google form. The layout is adapted for publication.*

Please answer the following questions about Study Plan in your class. You only need to answer once for both A and B courses. 英語クラスにおける自主学習についての質問にお答えください。AとB両方のコースについて、一度のみ回答してください。

1. What is your class code? (e.g., EA or CW, etc.) クラスコードを選んでください。  
: \_\_\_\_\_
2. How long are you spending on Self Study for your English courses each week on average? 毎週平均して、英語コースの自主学習に何時間かけていますか。
  - a. Less than 30 minutes
  - b. 30-45 minutes
  - c. 45-60 minutes
  - d. 1-2 hours
  - e. More than 2 hours
3. What is your focus for Self Study for your English courses this quarter? 今クォーター、英



語の自主学習で何に焦点を当てていますか。

- TOEFL
  - IELTS
  - Progress test
  - Vocabulary
  - Grammar
  - Reading
  - Speaking
  - Listening
  - Writing
  - Other
4. If you answered “Other” above, what is your main focus for working on Self Study? 「その他」を選んだ場合、特に何に焦点を当てているか教えてください。 : \_\_\_\_\_
5. How easy is it to find resources/ practice materials for Self Study for your English courses? 英語コースにおける自主学習のために教材を探すのは簡単ですか。  
> Very difficult (1) --- Very easy (6)
6. How useful is Self Study for working toward your English goal(s)? あなたの英語についての目標に、自主学習はどれだけ役に立っていますか。  
> Not useful (1) --- Extremely useful (6)