

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Technologies for Organising Independent Learning in the Educational Process

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Abstract. This article examines the pedagogical foundations of using digital technologies to organise independent learning in higher education. Moving from an overview of available tools to their classroom implementation, the author outlines a self-regulation framework in which technology supports, rather than replaces, learners' planning, monitoring, and evaluation of their own work. The paper explores learner readiness, criteria for selecting technologies, and instructional strategies based on learning management systems, flipped learning, digital portfolios, and automated feedback. The findings aim to enhance learner autonomy, motivation, and critical digital literacy among university students.

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Independent learning has become one of the central aims of modern higher education, since graduates must continue to learn long after formal instruction ends. In language education, this aim is closely linked to learner autonomy, defined as the capacity to take charge of one's own learning (Holec, 1981; Little, 1991). Digital technologies have greatly expanded the opportunities for such learning by giving students access to materials, feedback, and communication beyond the classroom (Reinders & White, 2016). However, access alone does not guarantee effective independent study. Research on out-of-class learning shows that students often use technology in an unplanned and fragmented way (Lai et al., 2018). Consequently, teachers must organise independent learning deliberately, so that each technology is linked to a clear goal, a defined task, and a means of checking progress.

Organising independent learning requires a clear understanding of the learners' readiness. The approach described here is intended for university students of philology and foreign language education at the Upper-Intermediate (B2) to Advanced (C1) levels. Such learners can work with authentic materials, but they often lack strategies for setting goals and managing time. Learner autonomy is not an innate quality but a capacity that develops through guided practice (Benson, 2011). From the perspective of self-regulated learning, independent study consists of three phases: forethought, performance, and self-reflection (Zimmerman, 2002). Without such guidance, even motivated students tend to postpone tasks and overestimate their own progress. The selection of technologies should therefore follow pedagogical rather than technical criteria, namely the learning phase being supported, the type of feedback provided, and the degree of learner control.

Within this framework, technologies for independent learning can be grouped according to their function. At the planning stage, learning management systems and digital planners help students set goals, follow deadlines, and access course materials in one place. These systems also give teachers data on student activity. At the performance stage, flipped learning moves the presentation of new content to video lectures and online readings, leaving classroom time for discussion and problem solving (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Mobile applications, online corpora, and open educational resources allow students to study at their own pace and to personalise the content. At the reflection stage, digital portfolios provide a record of progress, while automated and peer feedback tools help learners notice gaps in their performance. Feedback is most effective when it tells learners where they are going, how they are doing, and what to do next (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

The instructional methodology relies on student-centred strategies in which the teacher acts as a facilitator. Students begin by setting personal learning goals and choosing suitable digital resources with the teacher's guidance. They then complete weekly independent tasks on a learning platform, receive automated and peer feedback, and record their progress in an electronic portfolio. A central element of the procedure is a short reflective report in which students evaluate the effectiveness of the tools they used and plan the next stage of study, so that technology becomes an object of critical analysis rather than a source of ready-made answers. The teacher monitors progress through platform data and gradually reduces support. Regular consultations help students adjust their plans and maintain motivation. By positioning learners as active managers of their own learning, this approach turns the availability of technology into lasting autonomy.

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