THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TEACHING INDEPENDENT LEARNING AND ITS BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Mirzayeva Zulkhumor Abdukakhor qizi,
Namangan State University, Teacher

Shokhidova Mashkhura Kobiljanovna
Namangan State University, Teacher

ABSTRACT:

This article focuses on the significance of teaching students' independent learning, which help them to be knowledgeable and independent learners. It is based on giving basic information about independent learning and its essential benefits for improving students' self-education. There are various points of view on this topic. The authors draw attention to the big role of command, team work. They consider project technology as one of its varieties, directed to enhancement of learner's creative and cognitive potential. The authors conclude that proper organization of independent work contributes much to development of students' independent learning and reflective skills.

The concept of 'independent learning' is connected with, or part of, a number of other educational concepts and wider policy agenda of contemporary relevance such as 'personalized learning', 'student-centered learning' and 'ownership' of learning. It has been seen as one of the important elements of 'personalized learning' and as basic to the continuing development of a system of school education that promotes high quality and lifelong learning and social equity and cohesion.

Keywords: Independent learning, student well-being, benefits, self-education, higher education, approach, strategies, promotion.

INTRODUCTION:

In building a definition of independent learning, however, the key may be said to be a shift of responsibility for the learning process from the teacher to the pupil. This shift in responsibility involves pupils having a comprehending of their learning, being motivated to learn and work with teachers to form and create their learning atmosphere.

Pupils do not become efficient independent learners by themselves. Rather, pupils have to learn how to learn, showing that useful ways to learn can and should be promoted by teachers.

The promotion of independent learning depends a new role for teachers, which is based not on the traditional transmission of information but on process-oriented teaching, which ensures that pupils are actively involved in the learning process and become lifelong learners: where effective, independent learning depends on productive interactions between pupil and teacher. The promotion of independent learning however is most fruitful when a whole school approach is taken and teachers are supported by senior managers. In essence, when such beneficial factors integrate, the effect of independent learning has been seen as positive. Many authors claim that the introduction of independent learning has led to developed test scores and wide-ranging benefits for pupils. These benefits seem to have a specific impact on particular groups of pupils, such as boys and girls; gifted pupils (pupils whose abilities are developed to a level that is

significantly ahead of their year group); pupils with special educational needs; and 'socially excluded' children (children who are excluded from social participation because their living standards are below those of their peers).

As we come to the independent learning in higher education, independent learning skills are one of the "secrets to success" for tertiary level learning, and the importance of such skills is widely acknowledged in the most universities. There are consistent references to "independent learning" in statements of graduate learning outcomes and capabilities across the sector. For instance, The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) specification for the Bachelor Degree (2013) refers to graduates at that level having "a broad and coherent body of knowledge … as a basis for independent lifelong learning," and "communication skills to present a clear, coherent and independent exposition of knowledge and ideas" (p. 48). There are many different ways to articulate the nature of independent learning. It is sometimes related to as "self-regulated learning," "self-directed learning" or "learning how to learn" (Meyer, Haywood, Sachdev, & Faraday, 2008, p. 2). Zimmerman (1986) introduced that self-regulating learners have the following three key characteristics: "understanding of their own approach to learning and how best to efficiently maximize their learning; motivation to take responsibility for their learning; and ability to work with others to enhance the depth and breadth of their learning" (p. 308).

In 2008, Meyer, et al. (2008) conducted a comprehensive review of the international literature on independent learning and noted broad agreement that independent learners: "develop the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills needed to make responsible decisions and take relevant actions in regard to their own learning"; are curious, self-confident and self-reliant; understand their own learning needs and interests; and value learning "for its own sake" (p. 15). An independent learner actively (rather than passively) receives knowledge (Boekaerts, 1997) taking a degree of "ownership" of learning. Independent learners can manage their studies, their time and themselves (University of New South Wales, 2013). Being an independent learner does not define that a student is separated in their approach to learning (Meyer, et al., 2008; UNSW, 2013). Indeed, it is an important characteristic of independent learners that they are able to identify when they should seek out the assistance of others, such as tutors, lecturers, or peers to support their learning (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Damon & Phelps, 1989).

Having the skills and capacity to learn independently at the tertiary level is a key element of student learning success (UNSW, 2013). However, we hardly explicitly teach and develop this skill in our discipline classrooms. Instruction on how to be an independent learner is not commonly found in law lectures, physics labs, or English literature classrooms. Rather, university teachers tend to assume that students are already equipped with the essential independent learning skills to provide t their transition to tertiary study. In our classrooms we tend to draw attention to the imparting new disciplinary knowledge, rather than asking if students understand what skills are demanded to support their learning efficacy, both in their first year and throughout their degree. We also make the assumption that where students lack the vital independent learning skills that they will define this for themselves as an issue needing attention, and seek out support for this endeavor on their own. These expectations and assumptions are really problematic issues. Majority of the first year students, whether they have come to university directly from the final year of secondary schooling, or from another context, simply do not understand how a tertiary student learns. For students who come to university straight

from school, they have been sitting in classrooms, only four or five months earlier (and for a period of 12 years previously), where teachers have largely controlled the learning process, telling them what they need to know, when and how they should study, reminding them when work is due, and periodically checking on their progress (UNSW, 2013). It is not yet a common feature of the final years of secondary education around Australia that Year 11 and 12 students are specifically prepared for the different learning atmosphere that is found at university. The sudden shift to an expectation of learning independence and self-management, particularly in the context of the widening participation agenda (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales, 2008), is a challenge for many students. Upon entering university, it is no reaction or surprise that "some students thrive, others find it hard or problematic to adjust" (UNSW, 2013).

The expectation that students come to university equipped to be independent learners, and the absence of explicit instruction as to the learning skills our students need to be successful learners in our disciplines, is a significant student well-being issue which is discussed in more detail in the following section (Field, Duffy, & Huggins, 2014a). When students lack independent learning skills, they are impeded in terms of successfully transitioning to effective and efficient tertiary learning practices. This can hamper their learning and comprehending of discipline knowledge, skills and attitudes. One way to address this problem is to identify more explicit, classroom level instruction on independent learning (Field, et al., 2014a). These are skills and attitudes that students should not be left to work out for themselves. Rather, central academic skills and learning centers, and academic staff in their classrooms, share a joint responsibility for developing core student learning capacities, such as independent learning.

However, while putting theory into practice in the curriculum, the authors have argued that the teaching of independent learning skills is important for university student learning success and for the promotion of student well-being. We have also argued that the acquisition of independent learning skills should not be left to chance, but rather explicitly taught in the formal curriculum. A question then arises as to how this should best be done? Zimmerman (1986) tells us that teaching skills in planning, organisation, self-instruction, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation will support positive learning outcomes. By teaching these skills and integrating them into the intentionally designed curricula of our disciplines, academic staff can promote students' shift from dependent to independent learning.

The authors have firstly written about macro-level strategies for encouraging independent learning, including:
• Motivating institutional and faculty level buy-in as to the significance of independent learning skills.
• Improving collegial relationships between academic support services staff and discipline academics, so that expertise in terms of learning skills are used.
• Cultivating students' self interest in their studies.

At the micro classroom level, there are a number of ways that independent learning skills and habits can be encouraged in law students. First, flipped classrooms provide many chances for students to enhance independent learning skills. Flipped classrooms represent a reversal of traditional teaching where students gain first exposure to new material outside of class, usually by reading or lecture videos, and then class time is used to do the harder work of assimilating that knowledge through strategies or teaching techniques such as problem-solving, discussion or debates.

When a student's first exposure to learning materials occurs outside of class, a student must manage when, how, and to what extent they engage with the learning material. When this exercise is followed up with tutorials that show the reading material, a student can assess how well the independent learning that they have done has prepared them to participate in class discussion. In this fashion, students are implicitly compelled to reflect upon how well their independent learning strategies have prepared them for tutorial work and assessment. If students feel underprepared during class, they can begin to make adjustments to their learning routine, or their engagement with material, so that their independent learning activity better matches the expectations of the classroom.

On the other hand, guided journaling supports a chance for students to express on their learning process. Hunter Schwartz, Sparrow and Hess (2009, p. 101) argued that structured journaling works best for these objects and suggest that students can be motivated to write about three topics:

1. Description of the [learning] practice – what did the students do;

2. Reflection on that experience – how effective was the strategy, how does the strategy compare to other, alternative strategies the students might have adopted; and,

3. Future planning – how will the students' results and reflections influence future efforts to accomplish the same general task.

Also, there are a host of metaphors used for the role of teachers in facilitating independent learning. The most common metaphors consider teachers as coaches (Allan *et al.*, 1996; Van Grinsven and Tillema, 2006), mentors (Malone and Smith, 1996) and guides (Bishop, 2006). These metaphors focus on teachers understanding how pupils think and learn and guiding them towards independence. The British writers Malone and Smith (1996) emphasise that it is important for teachers to consider individual pupils rather than the class as a whole. The importance of teachers as mentors involves teachers relaying their enthusiasm about a topic to pupils, and encouraging pupils to make enquiries for themselves. Therefore, teachers have to provide opportunities for pupils to make these enquiries, for example by encouraging pupils to ask challenging questions. This may increase pupils' intention to be coached.

CONCLUSION:

This article has argued that independent learning skills are a significant part of legal education as a learning outcome as well as a well-being outcome. Confronting the university student well-being issue generally, and the law student well-being problem more specifically, demands a lot of various strategies. There is no magic panacea for addressing these challenges. Rather, academics who foster environments where students can learn how to learn contribute to autonomy supportive learning environments that foster students' academic success and well-being.

There is a consensus in the literature concerning the importance of raising independent learning in the long term (Evans, 1991). This involves teachers building up a repertoire of strategies to promote independent learning and gradually engaging pupils in becoming more independent, by modelling learning behavior and providing pupils with a supportive scaffold. During this gradual process of becoming more independent, pupils need assistance and feedback, not only on the results of their learning, but also on the process of learning itself (Artelt *et al.*, 2003).

REFERENCES:

1) Allan, B., Cook, M. and Lewis R. (1996). The independent learner: developing independence in learning. Humberside: University of Humberside Press.

2) Ashford, S., & Cummings, L. (1983). Feedback as an individual resource: Personal strategies of creating information. Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 32, 370-398.

3) Bishop, G. (2006). True independent learning - an andragogical approach: giving control to the learner over choice of material and design of the study session. Language Learning Journal, 33, 40-6.

4) Black, A., & Deci, E. (2000). The effects of student self-regulation and instructor autonomy support on learning in a college-level natural science course: A self-determination theory perspective. Science Education, 84, 740-756.

5) Boekaerts, M. (1997). Self-regulated learning: a new concept embraced by researchers, policy makers, educators, teachers and students. Learning and Instruction, 7(2), 161-186.

6) Bradley, D., Noonan, P., Nugent, H., & Scales, B. (2008). Review of Australian Higher Education: Final report. Retrieved from http://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv%3A32134

7) Centre for Studies in Higher Education (CSHE). (2011). National Summit on Tertiary Student Mental Health, August 4-5, 2011, Melbourne. Retrieved from www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au

8) Hunter Schwartz, M., Sparrow, S. & Hess, G. (2009) Teaching law by design: Engaging students from the syllabus to the final exam. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.

9) Meyer, B., Haywood, N., Sachdev, D. & Faraday, S. (2008). Independent Learning – Literature Review, Research Report DCSF-RR051 (Department for Children Schools and Families).

10) Van Grinsven, L. and Tillema, H. (2006). Learning opportunities to support student selfregulation: comparing different instructional formats. Educational Research 48(1), p. 77-91.