

〔論 説〕

A Study on the Relationship between Learner Autonomy and Academic Grades

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I Background

1. What is the problem?

One of the supreme educational objectives is helping students become autonomous learners. Teachers expect their students to acquire learning autonomy. In order to attain this supreme aim, every teacher makes as much effort as possible. Students are expected to be an autonomous learner by the latest when they enter a college. However, in spite of teachers' endeavors, why do some students fail to get that status? These days many less autonomous students are reported to be found in various universities in Japan. This situation is one of the hottest topics in the educational area in Japan (*The Mainichi* 2008). Many teachers have a desire to know the reason. Unfortunately, no scientific research has answered the question yet because it takes a long time to discover whether or not one student can be an autonomous learner. In addition, no one can predict it beforehand. However, this problem cannot stay unsolved. Thinking of less autonomous students, many factors come up. In this paper, they will be examined carefully.

2. Relation between learner autonomy and English proficiency

Firstly, does learner autonomy have something to do with academic test-scores? There is good research to consider the relation between learner autonomy and English proficiency. Language learners are often categorized into some levels: beginner, basic, intermediate, advanced or others. The division is based on learners' English proficiencies. When you think of the relation between learner autonomy and English proficiency, the survey conducted by STEP (2006), a Japanese testing society, is interesting. STEP tests are administered in seven bands from Grade 5 (beginner) to Grade 1 (advanced). In 2005, STEP sent its 12,000 successful examinees a questionnaire, which asked the respondents how they studied, how much they studied, how much they used English and so on. About 60% of the students in each grade replied. Based on the results, STEP classified its successful examinees as described in the table.

Table 1 Successful examinees and their characteristics

Grades	Characteristics
Grade 5 to Grade 3	Dependent learners
Grade pre-2 to Grade 2	Independent learners
Grade pre-1 to Grade 1	Independent users

STEP (2006)

Table 1 shows that examinees who belong to Grade 5 to Grade 3 are teacher dependent and those who belong to Grade 2 or Grade pre-2 are maybe teacher dependent to some extent but can study by themselves. Those who belong to Grade pre-1 or Grade 1 can use English in daily lives. Therefore, learners who have enough English ability to pass Grade pre-1 test or are close to the ability can be said to be learner autonomous. What level of English proficiency do most students in Chiba University of Commerce (hereafter referred to as CUC) have? The English Division of the Commerce Department of CUC streams the students according to the results of placement test-scores. The results show that the English proficiency level of the students mostly fall into Grade 3 or 4 of STEP test. That means most of the students of CUC are not independent learners in English learning. They stay in the teacher dependent level. Generally, college students have studied English for at least six years by the time they enter a college and some of them only have elementary level of English proficiency. This situation does contain some problems. The problems are assumed to consist of two factors: those of English education and those of learners' psychological states.

3. Making the research team

In order to solve the problem, two teachers from the English division (one majored in applied linguistics and the other majored in American literature) and two teachers from the psychology division made a research team. After some discussion, our research team decided to focus on students' present thoughts about English learning because one person's present thoughts are often influenced by his or her past thoughts and experiences. Some elements of learner autonomy can be inferred by analyzing current behaviors conducted by both students who succeeded in becoming autonomous learners and students who failed to do so.

4. Strategies

What separates autonomous learners from dependent ones? One factor is surely whether or not a person has acquired skills to use some strategies against a task given to him or her. Lowly achieved students often claim that they do not know how to study. The claim is good evidence that they have not acquired skills of using

strategies. On the contrary, good learners have a tendency to have acquired some coping strategies to deal with tasks. One of the best examples in English learning is students' coping strategies to deal with lessons taught by the grammar translation method. The strategy is simple: before the lesson, students look up unfamiliar words of their textbooks in a dictionary, and translate one or two pages of English sentences into Japanese. In class, students compare their translation with the one translated by the teacher, and correct their translation if it is not well translated. Students review their notebook before the examination. The strategy really works in grammar translation class. The phenomenon of adopting this way was seen in English classrooms all over Japan (Sakai 1990). This means good learners are often good at acquiring coping strategies by inventing, and / or acquiring from others. Poor learners do not use or invent coping strategies.

5. Self-efficacy

An individual is said to try to control many things that influence his or her life. The endeavor to control his or her life covers all the areas of his or her daily life. Sometimes the control brings a good effect and sometimes it hardly brings any effect. Through experiencing many trials and errors a person gets a feeling that he or she can cope with a new task the person has never met. That feeling is called self-efficacy. It is a self-control mechanism which is made by accumulation of various experiences. Self-efficacy is considered as a person's feeling that causes him or her to be able to change the outside surroundings by his or her behavior. In addition, facing difficult tasks, students with higher self-efficacy have a tendency to make more effort and deal with the tasks more continuously than those who are less confident (Bandura 1977). Self-efficacy often ensures him or her to gain individual and / or social benefits including academic ones. Mori (2004) investigated 413 college students and reported that learners with high self-efficacy had a tendency to use effective learning strategies. Considering the above, poor performers seem to have stopped trying to control many things that bring them good results sometime during their elementary or high school days while good performers seem to have not stopped trying.

6. Typical behavior of less autonomous students

Sakai, who has been teaching English to lowly achieved students for more than twenty years, claimed that after a long time of observing poorly performing students, one typical behavior could be observed. When a teacher gives some assignment to the whole class, poorly performing students often say to classmates, "What should I do?" "What does the teacher require us to do?" and "What kind of assignment do I have to do?" Those students always depend on others for what to do next. They always flinch from pondering about what to do and how to do it, and sometimes fail

to make necessary schedules to complete the task. Certainly, thinking of processes and schedules requires students to have some pains. However, those pains will help students to get skills of administrating any project at their age level. Less autonomous students often have avoided those pains. Therefore, they have not improved the skills of completing what their teachers require them to do since they were elementary school children or junior high school students. Instead, they seem to end up believing that they can get necessary information by asking a friend. Those students always miss opportunities to pick up skills for becoming good performing students. When Sakai talked in the meeting of the research team about the behaviors of students who are always dependent on others, Nakamura, a psychology teacher, claimed that that way seemed to be also another strategy and that this type of students were able to cope with the tasks in their own ways by depending on teachers or others. Some depend on teachers, some depend on parents, and some depend on friends. In short, when developing, a person has a tendency to depend on others and it is a kind of strategy. Nakamura continued that the worst type was not these students but those who did not do anything. This type can not make any progress. Behavior of the students Sakai has mentioned can easily be observed whereas that of the students Nakamura has mentioned is difficult to be seen. Therefore they stay unnoticed by teachers. However, the number of those students seems to be increasing in universities.

7. Students who do not depend on teachers

Why do some students not depend on even their teachers in school? The answer to the question is not easy but we can conjure that those students have not acquired skills of getting enough assistance from their teachers, or that they have not met teachers whom they respect yet. In order to get some assistance from teachers, students have to open their hearts to teachers and show they are in trouble. Those students have closed their hearts to teachers whatever their experiences were. At the aspect, teachers' roles are very difficult and important. They cannot be attentive to students too much because in that case students may stay dependent on teachers. On the contrary, teachers cannot be too strict because students may give up getting some assistance from them. Teachers should observe their students carefully and be sometimes helpful and sometimes keep away from them according to students' levels of autonomy. Considering this, our research team has decided that the big framework of this research should be to study teachers' roles for helping students to be autonomous learners. Of course we cannot reach the final destination immediately. We have to tackle one small problem after another to reach the goal.

8. Making the instrument

Our first task was to set out to investigate the relationship between students' test-scores and cognitive styles: learner autonomy and self-efficacy. In order to make an instrument for the investigation, we made a survey of some past scientific papers. As for learner autonomy, Sakai et al. (2008) invented a set of questionnaires suited for Asian students, and they conducted some research on Japanese college students by using the instrument. Therefore, we decided to use some questionnaire items for the part of learner autonomy. As for self-efficacy, Pintrich and De Groot (1990) originally made an instrument called Motivation Strategies for Learning Questionnaire [MSLQ] and Mori (2004) translated it into Japanese. We used some items out of Mori's translation. Then we made a set of questionnaires (see Appendix) for students in CUC.

II Purposes

This paper is aimed to investigate "what the typical character of less autonomous learners is", "what the typical character of students with less self-efficacy is", and "what the relationship between students' cognitive styles and their English test-scores is." We will seek the solutions of the problems by examining three hypotheses:

- 1) If a student has high self-efficacy, he or she is an autonomous learner.
- 2) If a student has high self-efficacy, he or she is a good performer in school subjects.
- 3) If a student is a good performer in school subjects, he or she is not teacher dependent.

III The First Phase of Research

1. Procedure

The instrument (see Appendix) was given to 357 students in twelve English classes. The Commerce Department of CUC where the four research members belong has three divisions: Commerce, Economics, and Management. In each division, the academically top placed classes and bottom classes were selected. In addition, we conducted this questionnaire with first-year and second-year students from October to December 2007.

2. Results

1) Analysis of each scale

Table 2 shows the mean, SD, and Cronbach's alpha of self-efficacy scale (SE), learner autonomy scale (LA), and teacher dependency scale (TD). Internal consistencies of each scale were assessed by Cronbach's coefficient alpha. The

obtained coefficients were .93, .92 and .93 for the SE, LA, and TD, respectively, and these were satisfactory. Therefore, the reliabilities of these scales were confirmed. The score of SE was calculated by summing items 1 to 9. That of LA was calculated by summing items 10 to 20. That of TD was calculated by summing items 21 to 31.

Table 2 Mean, SD, and Cronbach's coefficient alpha of each scale

	Mean	SD	<i>a</i>
Self-Efficacy (SE)	25.58	9.08	.93
Learner Autonomy (LA)	30.48	10.08	.92
Teacher Dependency (TD)	40.29	9.09	.93

Table 3 displays items with high and low scores of learner autonomy scale and teacher dependency scale. In terms of LA, the average of the score of item 20 is the highest and that of item 10 is the lowest. These results seem to be quite reasonable.

Table 3 Items which show high and low score

Item	Score (SD)
[Items which show high score in LA]	
(20) To evaluate the course	3.01 (1.25)
(18) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay, and self-evaluation	2.96 (1.23)
[Items which show low score in LA]	
(10) To decide your class's goal of study in one semester	2.48 (1.11)
(16) To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework	2.59 (1.15)
[Items which show high score in TD]	
(29) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essay, and self-evaluation	3.80 (1.03)
(22) To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance, and test scores	3.80 (1.14)
[Items which show low score in TD]	
(26) To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work	3.36 (1.09)
(21) To decide your class's goal of study in one semester	3.46 (1.14)

Scores range from 1 to 5

2) Relationships among self-efficacy, learner autonomy, and teacher dependency

Table 4 shows the correlation among SE, LA, and TD. The score of SE correlates significantly with the score of LA ($r = .344, p < .01$), indicating that students who have high self-efficacy were highly autonomous in their learning. On the other hand, the score of SE was unrelated to that of TD ($r = .102, n.s.$).

Table 4 Correlations among self-efficacy, learner autonomy, and teacher dependency

	Learner Autonomy	Teacher Dependency
Self-Efficacy	.344**	.102
Learner Autonomy		.124*

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

3) Relationships between students' performance and self-efficacy, learner autonomy, and teacher dependency

In CUC, English classes were streamed according to test-scores of students' English proficiency tests. Thus in order to clarify the relationships between their performance and SE, LA, and TD, scores of those scales in good performance classes were compared with those in poor performance classes. As a result, students who belong to good performance classes showed high SE and TD ($t(346) = 3.87, p < .001$; $t(318) = 3.64, p < .001$, respectively). On the other hand, no difference was observed in terms of LA between the classes ($t(345) = 0.65, n.s.$).

Table 5 Relationships between students' performance and self-efficacy, learner autonomy, and teacher dependency

	Total	Good performance	Poor performance	t
Number (%)	350 (100%)	230 (65.7%)	120 (34.3%)	
Self-Efficacy	25.58 (9.08)	29.92 (9.29)	> 26.05 (8.13)	3.87***
Learner Autonomy	30.48 (10.08)	30.23 (10.37)	30.97 (9.52)	0.65
Teacher Dependency	40.29 (9.09)	41.58 (9.08)	> 37.73 (8.60)	3.64***

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

3. Discussion of the first phase research

1) Regarding Hypothesis One

Table 4 shows the relationship between SE and LA has significant correlation. This result verifies Hypothesis One: "If a student has high self-efficacy, he or she is an autonomous learner." Table 4 also shows that the relationship between SE and TD has no significant correlation. This result gives us no wonder because high degree of self-efficacy is obtained by making effort, but teacher dependency does not require students to make any big effort.

2) Concerning Hypothesis Two

The result in Table 5 also verifies Hypothesis Two: "If a student has high self-efficacy, he or she is a good performer in school subjects." However, the result also shows that the relationship between good performers and teacher dependency has significant relation. This result may support STEP's research result that students with English proficiency level of Grade 3 or Grade 4 are teacher dependent. If so, the more teacher dependent students become, the higher scores they can achieve. Considering these results, it is no wonder that no difference is observed in terms of LA.

3) As for Hypothesis Three

The result in Table 5 does not verify Hypothesis Three: "If a student is a good performer in school subjects, he or she is not teacher dependent." This result tells us very interesting phenomenon about English education in CUC. As stated above, a college student is expected to be learner autonomous and not teacher dependent when he or she enters a university. Of course, we admit many students who are not learner autonomous to CUC. However, after getting an education in the college, high performers are still teacher dependent. This means that English education in CUC may not help good learners be autonomous but only have them do just as teachers say.

4) English learning in CUC

Table 4 indicates that the more self-efficacy the students have, the more learner autonomous the students become. However, Table 5 shows there is no significant relation between highly performing and learner autonomy though highly performing and self-efficacy have significant meaning. English learning in CUC may not require students to have learner autonomy.

IV The Second Phase of the Research

1. Analysis of characteristic groups

Two of the three hypotheses are verified but one is rejected. In order to discover the reasons, we decided to make a follow-up research as the second phase of the research. In the research we had semi-structured interviews and asked the interviewees their idea of English learning to know the students' thoughts which could not be measured by the instrument. After examining the results of the first phase of the questionnaire, we made categories in which we would select the interviewees.

2. Making four groups

In order to make categories, the subjects were ranked based on the score of LA. Each group consisted of almost the same number of subjects. One-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted on self-efficacy using the above groups to examine the relationships between SE and the level of LA. F-value for SE for groups produced by the score of LA was significant ($F(4,340) = 12.38, p < .005$). The results of multiple comparisons using LSD indicated that the scores of SE of the highest group (⑤) and the next highest group (④) were higher than those of the other groups (①②③). Moreover the highest group (⑤) showed higher self-efficacy compared with the next highest group (④). Next, the subjects were also ranked according to their scores of TD. Details of each group are shown as Table 7. ANOVA were conducted on self-efficacy using the above groups to examine the relationships between SE and the level of TD. There were no significant differences.

Table 6 The relationship between self-efficacy and learner autonomy

Learner Autonomy	Low		Middle		High	F
	①	②	③	④	⑤	
Number of subjects	78	60	75	63	71	
Range of LA score	11~22	22~29	30~33	34~38	39~55	
Mean LA score(SD)	15.95(4.47)	26.43(2.00)	31.71(1.22)	35.81(1.29)	43.85(4.02)	
Self-Efficacy (SD)	24.82(9.76)	26.82(8.33)	27.41(8.11)	30.49(7.14)	33.89(8.89)	12.38***

*** $p < .001$

Table 7 The relationship between self-efficacy and teacher dependency

Teacher Dependency	Low		Middle		High	F
	①	②	③	④	⑤	
Number of subjects	44	82	71	60	63	
Range of TD score	11~32	33~37	38~43	44~48	49~55	
Mean TD score(SD)	26.14(6.53)	34.06(1.41)	40.72(1.61)	45.20(1.44)	53.13 (1.93)	
Self-Efficacy (SD)	26.36(8.77)	29.15(8.89)	28.15(7.12)	29.95(8.74)	30.13(11.29)	1.50

Table 8 shows cross table of each category produced by above analyses. Then, four groups were chosen according to the cross table. The group (a) consisted of students with high LA and low TD. Students in the group (b) had low LA and high TD, those of the group (c) had high LA and high TD, and those of the group (d) has low LA and low TD.

Table 8 Cross table of each group (Number of students)

		Teacher Dependency				
		Low	Middle			High
		①	②	③	④	⑤
Learner Autonomy						
Low	①	11 (d)	16	10	10	26 (b)
	②	11	12	14	8	8
Middle	③	14	27	15	9	3
	④	5	19	16	11	7
High	⑤	2 (a)	8	15	22	19 (c)

To know the character of each group, we used ANOVA. However, the group (a) had only two students, so one-way ANOVA was not conducted. Table 9 shows that average score of group (c) self-efficacy was especially high. As for the performance, group (b) students tend to have good performance.

Table 9 Performance and self-efficacy of each selected group

Group	a	b	c	d
Learner Autonomy	High	Low	High	Low
Teacher Dependency	Low	High	High	Low
Number	2	26	19	11
No. of high performance	1	22	15	6
No. of low performance	1	4	4	5
% of high performance	50.0	84.6	78.9	54.5
Self-efficacy	25.50 (7.78)	24.46 (11.05)	38.42 (9.35)	24.72 (9.93)

3. Selection of interviewees

As stated above, we classified the respondents of the questionnaire into four categories depending on the points of learner autonomy and those of teacher dependency. Group (a) students had higher learner autonomy and low teacher dependency, group (b) had low learner autonomy and high teacher dependency, group (c) had high learner autonomy and high teacher dependency, and group (d) had low learner autonomy and low teacher dependency. From each group we chose several interviewees who showed the feature of the group prominently. We had English teachers ask the students to cooperate with the interview. We emphasized the participation was not obligatory and that the results would never affect their grades.

4. Limitation of this research

Scheduling an interview during a given period of time was difficult. We failed to contact some of the interview candidates. Some teachers asked the candidates without a sufficient explanation and some of the students felt reluctant to go for an interview. We interviewed one group (a) student, two group (b) students, and one group (c) student. Because we could not obtain cooperation from any group (d) students, we asked a student with relatively low learner autonomy and relatively low teacher dependency to be interviewed. We need to interview as many students as possible for better objectivity, but this time we interviewed only a limited number of students due to time and resource constraints. We cannot draw a definite conclusion because the number of the interviewees is small. The analysis of the interview, however, can provide a hint for further research.

5. Process of the interview

We asked the interviewees the following issues orally (See Table 10). At the end

of the interview we had free conversation time and exchanged opinions about English education. The interview took about 30 minutes per interviewee. Three of our research members took turns interviewing. In the first interview (student A), two members attended, but after the second interview, one of the three interviewed one student. The interviews were conducted in a small meeting room on campus from December 2007 to January 2008. In thanks for their cooperation, we prepared lunch or snacks for the interviewees. At lunchtime we talked over lunch. With one student (student C) we talked over tea and cake after the fourth period. We made an effort to create a casual atmosphere. The interviews were recorded with the interviewee's permission.

Table 10 List of questions in the interviews

1. Regarding English
Do you like English? --Since when do you think so?
Are you good at English? --Since when do you think so?
What were your English classes like in your junior high school? --How were the teachers?
What were your English classes like in your high school? --How were the teachers?
What are your English classes like now in CUC? --How are the teachers?
Did you study English out of class when you were a junior high school student?
Did you study English out of class when you were a high school student?
Do you study English out of class now?
2. Concerning Learner Autonomy
What do you think you should do by yourself to improve English?
3. As for Teacher Dependency
What do you think teachers should do to help students improve English?

6. Results of the follow-up research

1) Interview of Student A (high learner autonomy, low teacher dependency)

Student A belongs to a class for students with poor English ability, though he attended a private English school for elementary school students and has studied English from childhood. He thinks he is competent in English, especially in conversation. He says that he is good at speaking and listening to English but does not like learning grammar and vocabulary. As to school lessons, he liked English classes in junior high school. When he started preparing to enter university while still in high school, he lost interest in English. Now he enjoys English classes at CUC

because the English courses place emphasis not only on grammar and reading but on conversation and listening. He willingly accepted the offer of the interview and expressed his opinions. The interviewer had the impression that he is aggressive about everything and tries different things without hesitation. Student A is fully aware of the importance of learner autonomy, but he has not learned English voluntarily since junior high school. According to him, few students around him have learned English independently without compulsion from teachers. He belonged to sports clubs in junior high school and high school and did not have much time to study. Now he is busy working part-time and does not have any time to study English at all. Though he knows learner autonomy is necessary, his situation makes it difficult to achieve the objective. The interview of student A suggests that he is a student who feels the need to become an autonomous learner but his circumstances make it difficult.

2) Interview of Student B (low learner autonomy, high teacher dependency)

Student B is a high-achieving student. He belongs to a class for top performers. In the interview he gave convincing answers to various questions. Though he is performing well in class and has excellent records in all subjects, he says he is not good at English. Especially he does not like communicating with foreign people. He regrets he did not study hard in junior high school or high school. He says he does not have a request for teachers. He thinks school classes are never enjoyable and that students should not expect teachers to amuse them. According to him, class management, such as selection of textbooks, teaching methods, and evaluating methods, have to be decided by teachers, and students should not interfere in the teachers' way. On the other hand, he thinks students are responsible for their grades. He blames himself for having been lazy before entering university. He says he does not have English ability because he did not study hard though his teachers taught him properly.

3) Interview of Student C (low learner autonomy, high teacher dependency)

Student C is a quiet but serious student. Though he was not good at English in junior high school, he started to like English in high school. Now he enjoys classes at CUC. He belongs to an English class for excellent students. He prefers learning grammar, reading texts, and expanding vocabulary to activities such as pair work, group work, and conversation. The interviewer had the impression that he has worked hard consistently since junior high school.

4) Interview of Student D (high learner autonomy, high teacher dependency)

Student D likes English very much. He belongs to an English class for excellent students and is performing very well. He works part-time as a private preparatory

school teacher. He teaches English to junior high school students.

5) Interview of Student E (relatively low learner autonomy, relatively low teacher dependency)

We asked a few group (d) students (those with low learner autonomy and low teacher dependency) to cooperate with the interview, but all of these students refused. It is notable that we could not gain the cooperation of any of them. Some of these students refused to do an interview the moment the teacher asked them. Some answered with a yes to the teacher but did not reply to an email from a research member. The students with low learner autonomy and low teacher dependency may lack interest in learning and reveal an uncooperative attitude toward teachers. Instead, we interviewed a student with relatively low learner autonomy and relatively low teacher dependency. Student E belongs to an English class for poor performers. According to his English teachers, he is barely-noticeable in class. Though he attends classes regularly and is obedient to his teachers, he seldom speaks even when he is called on. In the interview he gave one-word answers to almost every question. When the interviewer added a few words, he always agreed with the interviewer's opinions. We had the impression that he is psychologically immature.

7. Discussion of the second phase research

1) Learner autonomy of Student A

In class Student A is making efforts in his own way. According to him, what students should do in class is to look up words in an electronic dictionary before the teacher calls on them. We, teachers, take it for granted that students look up words and read texts in advance before class, but for him that is a part of autonomous learning. He says that to write the meaning of each word in the textbook is the best way for busy students to improve English. There is a difference between our ideal of autonomous learning and student A's image of an autonomous learner. We think that he will not be able to improve his ability if he continues his method of learning because looking new words up in a dictionary is not enough to improve English proficiency. Even if he spends more time looking up unfamiliar words, he will not enhance his English ability. The case of student A suggests that, even if a student is aware of the importance of learner autonomy, his or her efforts do not contribute to improving the ability when the student believes in an irrelevant method. Previous studies have revealed that high learner autonomy helps students improve their English ability. However, it is true only when students know proper methods of learning and study English effectively. A student like student A, who scores high on learner autonomy but believes in an inappropriate way of learning, is not expected to make progress. Student A is also fully aware of the need to study autonomously,

but he cannot or does not make time to study out of class. The interview of student A indicates that students with high learner autonomy do not always develop their ability.

2) Teacher dependency of Student A

In the questionnaire, student A made a low score on teacher dependency. He gave us a lot of opinions about effective teaching and class management. Good teachers for him are those who encourage students to speak in class and place emphasis on conversation and group work. Meanwhile, he does not like teachers who place importance on grammar and reading. He says that students do not have to study grammar and reading to gain practical English ability. On the contrary, most English teachers strongly believe that classroom activities such as conversation, group work, and presentation, are important in English class, but learning grammar and mastering reading skills are also necessary to polish English ability effectively in limited time. In studying English, student A does not depend on teachers. He thinks students should make efforts without relying on others. His attitude to study autonomously is important. However, he places too much confidence in his way of studying and does not accept teachers' advice. The interview of student A suggests that not only learner autonomy but teacher dependency is indispensable for students. The role of teachers is more important than we had expected. Teacher dependency as well as learner autonomy leads to improvement in English.

3) Limitation of the instrument used in this survey

The interview of student B shows the limitations of the questionnaire. The questionnaire lists items concerning class management. Student B thinks teachers have all the responsibilities as far as classes are concerned, but that students have to study by themselves out of class to improve their ability. His answers in the questionnaire show low learner autonomy and high teacher dependency, because he thought he was asked about teaching in university. The case of student B indicates that there is room for improvement in the items of the questionnaire so that it can include students' out of class activities.

4) About low learner autonomy and high teacher dependency

Student C is relying on teachers to decide learning styles. He follows his teachers' way obediently. His attitude to do as he is told has attained good results. He gets good grades in every class. The case of student C shows that those with high teacher dependency can accept teachers' advice and achieve effects. However, student C's point of learner autonomy is very low. We think that depending too much on others and lacking autonomy can prevent his future progress. As long as he is taught by good teachers and placed in a good learning environment, he can

improve his ability. When he has to study all by himself, especially after graduating from university, it will be difficult for him to continue to develop his English ability. He needs to have autonomy for further advancement.

5) About high learner autonomy and high teacher dependency

Student D knows students cannot improve their ability without autonomic learning. Especially he thinks that preparing lessons beforehand and reviewing what they have learned out of class are indispensable. However, he says that it is not until he got a job as an English teacher that he realized the importance of these things. He may have thought differently without his experience in the private school. The interview of student D suggests that creating an opportunity for students to become aware of their own and teachers' responsibilities is effective. Experience of a teaching assistant would be a good way to give students a chance to consider their learning styles.

6) About low learner autonomy and low teacher dependency

In this research we failed to examine the students with low learner autonomy and low teacher dependency in detail, but now we need to support these students. This is a subject for a further study.

V Pedagogical Implications

1. As for teacher dependency

In the follow-up interviews, we found that three of the five students are highly teacher dependent and they are high performers in English learning. Two of them (Students B and C) are less learner autonomous students. Student B said in the interview that students should study outside classrooms to improve their English ability, and he seems to be an autonomous learner. However, as the student also said that classes should be teacher-oriented, that idea is one of the typical characteristics of less autonomous students in East Asian Area (Sakai et al. 2008). Both Student B and Student C are very obedient to their teachers and seriously study their lessons. They accept what their teachers say and the advice given to them. They have gotten good grades. They seem to be typically good students in CUC. However, even though their self-efficacy levels are high, if their learner autonomy is low, their self-efficacy is just enough to cope with what teachers say in class. Their possibilities of having an attitude to study outside classrooms such as reading English books and talking to a foreigner actively are very low because they study English only in required courses. The Commerce Department in CUC offers a lot of elective English courses after they finish their required courses such as Reading, Writing, Advanced English, Oral Communication, and News English. However, except students who

belong to the English teacher training course, only a few students out of about 800 take those elective classes every year. CUC's Twilight course also offers courses for English proficiency tests such as TOEIC or STEP test at low cost. Students from the first year to senior can take the courses but about 10 students join each course. These facts tell us current English classes especially for excellent students do not help them to be autonomous learners.

2. How to solve the problem mentioned above

Student D is teacher dependent but shows high learner autonomy. He says that it is not until he got a job as an English teacher that he realized the importance of these things (preparing lessons and reviewing). Therefore, the SA (Student Assistant) and TA (Teaching Assistant) system in CUC is a good way for students to improve their learner autonomy. However, all the learners cannot be employed as SA, even if they are good learners. What is another way to help students improve their learner autonomy? In CUC, except spring semester in the first-year, students in the first year and second-year take four English lessons a week. In all the classes, teachers select textbooks, decide the lesson's pace and the way to evaluate. That means that students are taught in the teacher-oriented method. There is no project or presentation type which requires students to select their topic, research, and study outside the classroom. Of course, considering students' English proficiency level, if all the classes are taught that way, various problems may occur in many classes. Only the best class based on the English placement test from each department should be taught that way. Then, the number of students with high learner autonomy will increase.

3. Problem of students like Student A

The results show that if students with low English proficiency are teacher dependent, their academic scores become better. Student A's point of teacher dependency is low. One of the reasons he cannot get good grades in English learning seems to be that he does not depend on teachers well. He has a belief that studying English grammar and reading English books are not important and teachers should encourage students to speak in class and place emphasis on conversation and group work. We cannot make some assertion by considering one person's quote but it can be easily assumed that such students do exist in CUC. On the contrary, most English teachers in CUC believe that learning grammar and mastering reading skills are also necessary to polish English ability effectively in limited time and have designed the syllabuses by mastering English grammatical rules, especially in the spring semester of the first year. The reason Student A's point of teacher dependency is low may be that he is disappointed in English lessons in CUC after he entered the school. The "Course of Study," kind of educational standards and benchmarks which the Ministry

of Education, Sports, Science and Technology has regulated for elementary and secondary school students, requires English teachers in secondary schools to teach English communicatively. It is easily assumed that the number of that kind of students will be increasing in the future. If so, the syllabuses should be changed to make English classes communicative enough for students like Student A to have a wish to be teacher dependent.

4. How to deal with students who do not open their hearts to teachers

This problem is very difficult for English teachers to deal with. However, it can be easily guessed that the number of this kind of students is and will be increasing in CUC. There are two possible ways to cope with these students. According to the theory of Maslow (1943), in addition to psychological and safety needs, people have to be loved and belong to a group. Teachers should smile to them and greet them to make them feel they are loved and make them want to belong to the class. Teachers can make rapport with them so they will open their heart to teachers. The other way is to have a good system of counseling. We do have student counseling rooms in CUC. Of course it is important. In addition, many colleges and universities have Study Centers. There some counselors and assistants are waiting for students to ask for advice about school life or studies. Such places surely help those students open their hearts and have a positive attitude about school life.

5. Relationship between teacher dependency, self-efficacy and learner autonomy

Before the first phase of this research, our research team members had thought that high performing students were independent from teachers, had high self-efficacy, and were able to study by themselves. In the first phase of the research, however, only half of this prediction has been proved. Good performers of English learning were not always autonomous learners but they were students with high self-efficacy. The results have revealed that good performers in English learning in CUC stay at the area of self-efficacy and have not reached that of learner autonomy. Why are they staying? One of the keys lies in experiences of making efforts to study English for university entrance exams. In ESL (English as Second Language) countries, students acquire high self-efficacy by trial and error through communication outside classrooms. However, in EFL (English as Foreign Language) countries like Japan, they cannot get high self-efficacy by communication because people rarely speak English outside classroom. Most students in Japan get high self-efficacy in English learning by studying for entrance exams of universities. In order to succeed in passing entrance exams to higher education systems, students have to accept responsibility for their own learning. That means learners should take responsibility to understand what, why, and how they are learning, and to what degree they succeed in their effort. This is what Little (1999) defines as autonomous learners.

Burning desire to enter a university helps high school students develop learner autonomy in English learning. Of course, it does not mean that they are autonomous learners in English communication. Unfortunately, most students in EFL countries like Japan cannot have good opportunities to develop their self-efficacy by communication. At most they merely become autonomous learners by making fierce efforts to study for exams. However, once a student has learned much vocabulary and mastered rules of English grammar, it is not so difficult for him or her to practice English communication if he or she has enough motivation to be a good English speaker, for he or she has already acquired basic skills and study habits. Actually, most Japanese good speakers of English have experienced studying for entrance exams. Most students in CUC, however, have not experienced such serious learning in English because English level of Grade 3 of STEP test is a goal of junior high school education. In summary, to be autonomous learners in English learning in Japan, students have had to go through the self-efficacy process by studying for entrance examinations. If they miss chances of acquiring high self-efficacy by studying for examinations, it seems that they do not have possibilities of becoming autonomous learners except by living in an English speaking country for a long time. It is not English teachers but entrance examinations that help students be autonomous learners. Competition for entering a university will be less tight in Japan in the future, and English ability of Japanese college students will end up on the decline. English teachers should invent a better method to help students study English than resorting to entrance examinations.

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Appendix

Questionnaire for Learner Autonomy

This questionnaire is conducted for the benefit of the 2007 CUC Grant-Aided joint research "A Study on Teachers' Role to Improve Learner Autonomy." We observe the law to protect private information, and we will use the data of this questionnaire only for the research and not use it for other aims. Please cooperate. Please write your student number. It will be used only for arranging the data. If you are reluctant to write your student number, please write only your gender code (1 male, 2 female).

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Please choose one of the choices.

1. Year a. 1st-year b. 2nd-year c. 3rd-year d. 4th-year
2. Class a. Commerce b. Economics c. Management
3. Student Number

1. What is your feeling for your self-efficacy for English learning. Please choose the most suitable one out of the six choices.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not at all	Hardly	Seldom	Sometime	Mostly	Totally

- (1) Compared to others, I feel I am good at studying.
- (2) I feel I can get along in English classes well.
- (3) I feel I can get good grades.
- (4) Compared to others, I feel I am a good learner.
- (5) Compared to others, I know the contents of English classes well.

- (6) I feel I can do well in class.
- (7) I feel I can work out problems well or do assignments teachers give.
- (8) My English learning ability is better than other classmates.
- (9) I think I can understand what is taught in class.

2. When you are taking classes, how much responsibility should you take concerning the following items? Please choose one of the five choices.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Hardly	I don't know.	Mostly	Totally

- (10) To decide your class's goal of study in one semester.
- (11) To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance, and test scores.
- (12) To decide the textbook and materials you use in class.
- (13) To decide topics and activities you learn in class.
- (14) To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson.
- (15) To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work.
- (16) To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework.
- (17) To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules.
- (18) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essays and self-evaluation
- (19) To assess your study
- (20) To evaluate the course

3. When you are taking classes, how much responsibility should your teacher take concerning the following items? Please choose one of the five choices.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Hardly	I don't know.	Mostly	Totally

- (21) To decide your class's goal of study in one semester.
- (22) To keep record of your studies such as assignments, attendance, and test scores.
- (23) To decide the textbook and materials you use in class.
- (24) To decide topics and activities you learn in class.
- (25) To decide the pace of the lesson in one lesson.
- (26) To decide the type of classroom activities, such as individual, pair and group work.
- (27) To decide the amount, type and frequency of homework.
- (28) To decide classroom management, such as seating and class rules.
- (29) To decide ways of assessment, such as attendance, essays and self-evaluation

- (30) To assess your study
- (31) To evaluate the course

Thank you for your cooperation.

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[抄 録]

英語学習者は、学習する過程で、教員に依存した状態から自律して学習できる状態に至ることが理想とされるが、その過程をうまく進む者とそうでない者に分かれる。本研究では、前者と後者にどのような違いがあるのかを明らかにすることを目的に、英語教員と心理学を専門とする教員がチームを組み、英語力によって学習者をわけ、質問紙による調査を実施することにした。先行研究を参考にしながら、質問紙の尺度を考案し、「教員への依存性」、「自己効力感」、「学習者の自律性」を質問に取り入れた。商経学部の1年生と2年生の英語クラスから、成績別に6クラスを選び、計357人にその質問紙を与え調査を実施した。その結果、教員への依存性、自己効力感、学習者の自律性の3つの尺度に関しては、十分な信頼性が確認された。相関分析の結果、学習者の自律性が高いと、自己効力感が有意に高いことが示された。しかし、教員への依存性と自己効力感との間に有意な相関は見られなかった。また学力高群と低群とを比較したところ、学力高群の方が自己効力感が高く、さらに教員への依存性が高いことが示された。質問紙調査のあとの追調査として、調査対象者から尺度得点のパターンに特徴のある群を選び出し、英語学習に関する考えを半構造化面接によって聴取した。その結果、全体として商経学部の学生は英語学習に関して自律しておらず、教員に依存しながら自己効力感を高くしている学習者が高学力群になっていることが判明した。