

Language Learning Beyond the Classroom.

David Nunan and Jack C. Richards (Eds.). 2015. New York: Routledge. Pp. xvi + 302.

David Nunan and Jack C. Richards have compiled an engaging collection of case studies focusing on out-of-class activities that facilitate autonomous learning for second language (L2) learners. Inspired by years of observing how successful language learners throughout the world are often highly motivated, reflect on their progress, set their own goals, and seek out opportunities for language learning outside the classroom, the editors present a wide range of resources and opportunities currently available for bringing learning beyond the classroom and promoting autonomous learning. Citing learning contexts in Asia, Europe, North and South America, and Australia/Oceania, this book provides information on how out-of-class learning activities can be designed, planned for, and implemented for L2 learners.

Each of the 28 case studies is organized as a chapter with five parts: an introduction and overview of the activity; a vignette providing a real-world example of the activity in use; the theoretical underpinning and principles that can be derived from the activity; a discussion of how the activity can be applied in other contexts; and the advantages and disadvantages of using the activity. Rounding out each chapter are five discussion questions designed to stimulate deeper reflection and a useful list of relevant resources. The studies are grouped and presented according to their relevance to one of five categories: Involving the Learner in Out-of-Class Learning, Using Technology and the Internet, Learning Through Television, Out-of-Class Projects, and Interacting with Native Speakers. This uniform structure, although repetitive, makes this volume a practical pedagogical reference tool for teachers who are interested in exploring the latest methodology for learning beyond the classroom.

In Part 1, “Involving the Learner in Out-of-Class Learning,” six studies detail various strategies available for implementing practical out-of-class language learning activities. The activities explored include extensive reading programs, listening logs, and vocabulary notebooks, all of which are noted to be enhanced by teacher modelling and scaffolding and by the careful choice of level-appropriate materials. The importance of preparing learners to work on their own and developing strategies for raising or maintaining learner motivation are reoccurring themes throughout the studies in this section. In “Using Songs and Lyrics in Out-of-Class Learning,” for example, Kerekes draws on her own experiences as a highly motivated learner of English in her native Hungary to speak to the role listening to music and learning song lyrics can play in retaining vocabulary and grammar. In “Out-of-Class Pronunciation,” Long and Huang report on the experience of one of the authors developing an out-of-class method of teaching pronunciation to L2 English university learners with low motivation in China. By creating home tasks that required learners to present their work in class and peer-evaluate classmates’ performances, the authors found students developed the motivation to actively engage in pronunciation activities outside the classroom and ultimately improve their pronunciation skills. “Dialogue Journals,” by Chiesa and Bailey, shows how the use of dialogue journals between teachers and learners can provide learners with an avenue for exploring language expression, focusing more on meaning than on grammatical or spelling accuracy. Preparation, support, and authentic materials are

highlighted as key elements in these out-of-class activities that aid in increasing or maintaining learner motivation levels.

Part II, “Using Technology and the Internet,” contains six studies dealing with the affordances offered by technology and the Internet to enhance learning beyond the classroom. This section focuses on the development of entertainment-based activities such as gaming and social media as language learning strategies. For example, Beatty, in “Online Language Learning with Social Networks,” explores the successful learning experiences of a Canadian L2 learner of Mandarin Chinese through the use of the social network *Livemocha*. Through this engaging case study, the pros and cons of using *Livemocha* are explored, and Beatty demonstrates how trial and error and experimentation with the various affordances of the site can provide meaningful interactions with other learners and promote language learning. In “Learning Vocabulary Using Two Massive Online Resources,” Coxhead and Bytheway discuss how TED Talks, presentations on a wide range of subjects given by different speakers, and MMORPGs, online synchronous games with large numbers of players collaborating on tasks, can be used to support language learning. Chik’s “I Don’t Know How to Talk Basketball Before Playing NBA 2K10” outlines how a Chinese student’s use of gaming provided him with multiple language learning opportunities. Disappointingly, several of the case studies chosen here center on the same or very similar online learning resources. The choice of more diverse explorations of technology’s use outside the classroom might have made these chapters stand out more from other studies in the book in which the affordances of technology are similarly explored.

Part III, “Learning Through Television,” offers case studies of the use of television as a medium for creating activities supporting autonomous language learning. It is noted that students need to reinforce their learning outcomes from television viewing to deepen cognitive processing by using structured tasks like taking notes or using flashcards. In one of the most poignant vignettes in the book, Curtis describes his personal experience of how watching episodes of a popular television series facilitated his 10-year-old son’s learning of a new language in “Learning English Through the Language of the Pokémon.” Curtis posits that television provides a safer learning environment for children in a new country than a classroom and is an engaging medium that attracts young language learners with cartoons with intensive repetition of songs and rhymes. Lin and Siyanova-Chanturia explore the learning experiences of two Hong Kong L2 English learners in “Internet Television for L2 Vocabulary Learning.” The authors suggest that television, used systematically with strategies such as narrow viewing (watching programs on the same or similar topics) or interlingual or intralingual subtitles, can be a useful resource to support out-of-class learning. In “Extensive Viewing,” Webb underlines the importance of extensive viewing of television for its potential to supply large quantities of L2 spoken input to support vocabulary and listening comprehension skills. Like the other authors, Webb adds the caveat that structuring the activity is of vital importance, with classroom support necessary to instruct students in how to use narrow viewing techniques, pre-teach vocabulary, and create keyword lists or glossaries.

Part IV, “Out-of-Class Projects,” explores examples of creative project-based learning. Grode and Stacy contribute a case study entitled “Authentic Materials and Project-Based Learning: In Pursuit of Accuracy” on the experiences of a Japanese L1 learner of English using a “shadowing” process that involved closely observing and then recreating scenes from a popular

American television series, *Sex and the City*. The authors detail how the learner's experience helped her progress in pronunciation, grammar, and discourse style in an English as a foreign language class in Japan. In the "learning-to-learn" project outlined by Pontes and Shimazumi in "Learning-to-Learn with Ourselves and with our Peers Through Technology," adult learner discourse competence at the aural and written level was targeted through co-operative tasks and peer mediation on the *VoiceThread* platform. The authors reported that learners appreciated the sense of ownership and authenticity that this activity provided but cautioned that technical problems, time management difficulties, and learner timidity were drawbacks. Calvert presents "The Ecology of English," a case study of one initiative to link real-world experiences in sustainability and language learning in California. The author reported that field trips improved motivation and group cohesion, with takeaways including meaningful interaction between group members and heightened awareness of issues of ecology and sustainability within the local community.

Part V, "Interacting with Native Speakers," presents seven chapters dedicated to exploring how learners can negotiate interaction with native speakers in a variety of contexts. As learner strategies for creating interaction with native speakers are context dependent, this section lends itself particularly well to the use of vignettes to explore out-of-class learning opportunities. In comparing the experiences of two Malaysian students who participated in a trans-national education program in New Zealand, Macalister, in "Study-Abroad Programme Design and Goal Fulfilment," offers the assessment that one of the challenges to this kind of study abroad experience is the temptation for learners to stay within a pre-formed friendship group and thereby miss vital language learning opportunities that can be gleaned through interacting with local native speakers. Stanley authors an interesting case study of her own lifelong experiences as a L2 learner of Spanish in "Talking to Strangers." Stanley notes that her success in moving out of her comfort zone and seeking out situations in which she was initially unable to communicate effectively was due in part to her outgoing personality and strong sense of identity as a language learner. Grau and Legutke, in "Linking Language Learning Inside and Outside the Classroom," present a project in which students were required to interview English-speaking tourists at different tourist attractions in their German city. The authors report that the high school students experienced an increase in motivation and confidence in their language ability through the preparation, execution, and subsequent presentation of the interviews.

Autonomous learning has been understood to help learners achieve a more focused and personal perspective on their own learning, leading to better learning outcomes (Victori & Lockhart, 1995). In this book, Nunan and Richards have compiled an interesting and colorful collection of activities designed to enhance autonomous learning for L2 learners. While the highly-structured presentation form imposed on the authors makes the chapters easy to navigate and the information within clearly accessible, some of the case studies lend themselves more fluidly to the structure than others. The natural overlap of themes within the case studies is somewhat at odds with the editors' attempts at organizing the studies into clearly defined sections. Most of the chapters in the project-based learning section, for example, could easily have appeared in the parts dedicated to technology or television. Perhaps a non-theme-based organization of the chapters, such as by geographical region, would have made this overlap less noticeable. What this collection does succeed in is enabling readers to clearly understand the activities described, identify key principles, and perhaps most meaningfully, experience one real-

world example of how this activity was embodied. These features, along with the discussion questions at the end of each chapter, make this book a useful pedagogical tool in teacher education classrooms as well as an important resource for teachers seeking to explore and develop strategies to promote and facilitate out-of-classroom learning among their own students.

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REFERENCES

Victori, M., & Lockhart, W. (1995). Enhancing metacognition in self-directed language learning. *System*, 23(2), 223-234.