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CHAPTER FIVE

SUPPORTING AUTONOMY DEVELOPMENT IN ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: WHAT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS DO TEACHERS NEED?

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Abstract

An ongoing action-research project¹ at the CRAPEL² has shown that students at a vocational high school near Nancy have engaged with more or less success in an out-of-school and out-of-curriculum Internet-based foreign language learning scheme (Bailly et al. 2008). The less successful students sometimes lack the necessary skills such as knowing how to choose keywords for a search on the Internet, or how to assess the quality of the learning resources they find. They are puzzled by contradictory information or select unsuitable resources. Personal motivation and accessible online resources are not sufficient conditions to make self-directed learning (Holec 1998) possible or easy for those students, whose learning process is oriented by the social promotion of teaching/heteronomy over learning/autonomy (as defined by Holec 1990; Holec 1991; Little 1991). Autonomous use of the Internet is related to the capacity to look critically at the information and tools it offers (Villanueva 2006). The aim of this

¹ A team action-research project on Advising Practises in Self-Directed Learning Schemes. This group is composed of the author and her colleagues: Claude Normand, Myriam Pereiro, Eglantine Guély, Rachel Viné, Jinjing Wang.

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chapter is to outline some aspects of online learning, teaching and communication that must be taken into account by teachers working in Internet-based language learning environments claiming to promote and support the development of learner autonomy.

1. The Internet: a friendly environment for autonomous language learning

The process of learning and acquiring is a complex one, integrating biological, psychological and sociological factors. Only a complex theoretical model (psycho-socio-cognitivo-constructivist) can encompass all its dimensions. The acquisition process is a result of an interaction between nerve cells, affect, motivation and the learner's environment (Morin 1990, Weil-Barais 1993). Language acquisition, like any acquisition, takes place i) as much through individual, self-monitored activities as through collective, interactive and social activities (France and Lundgren-Cayrol 2003); ii) through analysing the language or the learning process as well as through producing meaning or discourse in the target language or about the target language; iii) through imitating and repeating as well as through deducing and re-constructing mental activity (Klein 1989). It is only possible to learn at one's own rhythm, using one's own materials and tools and following one's own personal learning style, which may evolve over time. This explains the great variability of group teaching effects on individual acquisition (Holec 1985). In a given class, some pupils succeed better than others in learning and acquiring a foreign language, in terms of linguistic or communicative competence. Autonomy is the only methodological model that really centres on the learner (Puren 2004, 48) and can take into account individual differences in reasons and ways to learn. ICT (information and communication technology) and the Internet support autonomy because they enable: i) an individualisation of the learning trajectory; ii) collaborative and cooperative learning; and iii) communication or simulation of communication (Dumas 2004).

1.1. Individualisation of the learning trajectory

The Internet is already an alternative (rather than a mere complement) to the foreign language class. It provides eclectic resources useful for teaching as well as learning languages and for learning to learn them (Guely 2008). This eclecticism of resources provides a means of satisfying the demand for a diversity of cognitive styles (Luzón 2006). It enables a personalised balance to be struck between the need to be guided (by ex-

perts, by instructions for activities, by categorization of resources) and the need to explore and experiment on one's own (select one's own resources, use them in a personal way, proceed by trial-and-error). Moreover, the diversity of online resources and contents can satisfy idiosyncratic needs for communication or learning activities. Potentially, at least, synchronically or non-synchronically, all discursive genres, from conversation to debate, from instructions to novels, are available online, in a wide range of languages, styles and speech registers. The Internet is thus particularly suited to an individualised approach to learning. However, the terms individualisation, or learner-centredness, should not hide the fact that learners are not isolated: they are also parents, friends, pupils, colleagues, neighbours, professionals, citizens—that is to say, social beings needing connection to others in order to learn.

1.2. Collaborative and cooperative learning

Autonomy cannot be conceived without heteronomy (Morin 1990). Language learning is an activity that can lead to collaborating and cooperating with others. Thanks to the Internet, it has become easier, cheaper, less time-consuming and less effort-demanding, to interact with different learning partners that meet one's needs:

- experts in the target language-and-culture: teachers, native speakers, competent non-native speakers;
- experts in teaching: language or other subject teachers, tutors;
- experts in learning: consultants, advisors, other learners;
- peers: other learners, or social peers in the target language, members of the same networks or communities of practice (Wenger 1989), colleagues and so on.

The virtual reduction of geographical and social distances enables distant speakers to form groups, to work, to have conversations, to interact, to keep informed, to improve their mind, and even to flirt! (On the relationship between language, desire and sexuality, see Kulick and Cameron 2003). Such communicative opportunities, which are indispensable to learning and acquisition, are made easier by the progress of digital technologies (France and Lundgren-Cayrol 2003).

1.3. Communication or simulation of communication

The Internet as a global social environment, or as a “social matrix” (Kenning 2007), offers many possibilities for self-immersion in various

communicative contexts. Such a self-immersion can support or even foster effort and motivation to learn a language. Digital communication facilitates (though it does not spontaneously provoke) interactions between individuals who would not have met elsewhere than on the web. Online, people can assume roles that are centred more on the *communicator* than on the *learner* dimension of their identity. Palfreyman (2006), Hafner and Candlin (2007), and Hogan-Brun and Laux (2001) give examples of learning practices through online contact with authentic discourses or speakers in the target language. Of course, those meetings and interactions on the web cannot claim to replace school trips abroad, or linguistic summer schools, or international exchanges like Erasmus. Nevertheless, digital communication provides opportunities for more frequent immersion in a language and culture to a greater number of people (for instance, people with limited mobility), and in communicative contexts that can be more varied and even more authentic than during some trips abroad.

For all these reasons then the Internet can aid the transition from a pedagogical model based on heteronomy to a model based on autonomy, in which all decisions about learning are the learner's responsibility. Thanks to the vast amount of resources available on the Internet, often free of charge, teachers can liberate themselves from their roles of transmitter of linguistic and cultural contents, or of evaluator or group animator. They can take on new functions such as resource selector, designer of digital learning environments (either based on the development of autonomy or not), or "consultant" (Porcher 1998; Reinders 2008) in language learning. The pedagogical relationship is transformed as a result of the change of roles. Students can be invited to choose their own learning materials and decide for themselves how they are going to work. But this is not always an easy task to do.

2. Constraints and limitations of autonomous online language learning

The multiplication and diversification of online resources are important but not sufficient conditions for a pedagogical approach based on autonomy. Besides being numerous and diverse, resources that are useful in autonomous learning should also be adjustable, self-contained and "aussi accessibles que possible"³ (Carette and Holec 1995, 89). This is not always the case with online resources. In addition, the learner has to have the ability to learn online. When faced with the quantitative and qualitative

³ as accessible as possible

complexity of Internet resources, learners may encounter difficulties with the process of resource selection when it is not supported by some kind of guidance. In this section I will underline some aspects of the Internet that may hinder unsupported autonomous online learning practices.

Firstly, the availability of online resources is not always as optimal as one could wish. For instance, our current research with high school students learning Turkish, Japanese, Dari, Dutch or French sign language, reveals a shortage of accessible learning resources for these languages. It is a fact that some languages or varieties are more present on the Internet than others. Moreover, some discursive genres, such as spontaneous oral conversation or service encounter interactions are less represented or more difficult to access, if not completely absent or limited to confidential audience - such as research networks. For certain languages, it is not easy to find the stand alone resources necessary for self-directed learning (for instance, an activity with instructions in the L1 and an answer key; or a video in the target language accompanied by a transcription and a translation in the L1). Many pedagogical websites offer materials and tasks that are not suitable for self-directed learning or for users who are not used to forging their own learning method. Some websites provide pre-constructed advice, but not always in an accessible language. Few pedagogical websites offer the opportunity to interact with a learning advisor⁴.

Next, quantity engenders complexity, multiplying information and sources of information and increasing the degree of uncertainty (Morin 1990) when one has to select one material in particular. The logic by which the Internet is organised is not clear to everyone. Reconstructing a global meaning from the information one finds on the Internet, in particular with the hypertext function, requires linguistic, cultural and communicative skills, and other special skills, such as being able to anticipate and build meaning (Villanueva 2009). Ill-prepared learners are at risk of getting lost in “a jungle of hyperlinks” (Hogan-Brun and Laux 2001, 255). The availability of digital resources is related to the socio-cognitive distance between the subject and the digital culture, in all its dimensions: technical, ritual, distinctive or normative. We are not all equal when confronted with the Internet. There are digital divides, linked to social, cultural and economic factors (Levy 1997). Digital culture, as has been shown in France (Donnat and Berthomier 2007) and Belgium (Brotcorne 2009), reveals divisions of age, sex, academic achievement, cultural practices and, of course, income. Learning on the Internet supposes that one

⁴ For one example, see the websites *Français en ligne* and *Portugais en ligne* conceived by Eglantine Guely, a PhD student at the CRAPEL/ATILF: <http://francaisenligne.free.fr>; <http://portugaisenligne.free.fr/>.

has access to the equipment (and a subscription) even if one does not necessarily own it. The fact that many educational institutions provide such facilities favours a more democratic access to digital resources. But many online resources are subject to copyright or subscription fees, which limits their access to the wealthier.

Access to resources also depends on the distance between the cognitive rationale of learners and that of teachers or other experts, who select, organise and publish those resources online “selon les critères qui leur sont propres. Ces critères ne sont pas arbitraires mais ils ne sont que rarement explicités”⁵ (Kazeroni 2004, 161). A gap between the underlying assumptions of learners and resource organisers about what language learning entails could hinder access to appropriate resources, if, for example, the only materials on offer are centred on the linguistic system when the learner needs cultural information. In an independent learning situation, that is without any outside help, cultural and cognitive skills of the Internet users, their degree of familiarity with computers, their ideas, attitudes or preconceptions about language, about their own language and about learning may limit their fields and modes of exploration (Narcy 1998). For autonomous learners, that is, who are able to pilot and control learning by themselves, the capacity to use the Internet either as a form of language immersion or as a resource centre implies that they are Internet and computer literate who know how to navigate and use the technical functionalities, and also that they know how to learn: “Capacité d’apprendre et matériels appropriés sont bien des prérequis pour tout apprentissage autodirigé”⁶ (Carette and Holec 1995, 94). The ability to select appropriate resources and activities is related to the acquisition or mastering of a number of concepts in the fields of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and didactics, and to understanding how languages, communication and learning work.

Another cognitive condition for accessing resources lies in the learner’s degree of mastery in L1 and L2. A minimum of knowledge in written language (or literacy) is required to establish any communication via the Internet. Online resources are obviously more easily accessible to literate people than to non-literate ones. Online authentic materials may be difficult to select without a minimum of knowledge in the target language, or at least, in a language different from the first or target language (for instance, a French person learning Japanese with materials in English). The linguistic gap is a source of cognitive inequalities: well-read users and re-

⁵ according to criteria of their own. These criteria are not arbitrary but they are rarely made explicit.

⁶ The capacity to learn and appropriate materials are prerequisites for self-directed learning.

laxed multilingual speakers may well be better prepared for online language learning. Experts who advise autonomous online learners must know and understand the influence of the Internet on communicative practices, linguistic change and learning in order to help learners select appropriate learning materials. But it is not sure that teacher training, at least in France, puts sufficient emphasis on the impact of language, communication and learning awareness on the acquisition process, or on the way to help learners develop metalinguistic, metacommunicative and metacognitive skills. And as far as online communication is concerned, it is not sure whether teachers' underlying preconceptions about language and culture are always in phase with the ongoing changes and reorganisations of linguistic and cultural practices induced by digital communication. Analyses of digital discourses show that technology generates linguistic evolutions (Anis 2003; Atifi 2007; Kenning 2007; Mourlhon-Dallies 2007). Observation of such discourses, sometimes found by chance, attests to the reality of a complex multilingual competence in which the borders separating oral and written forms, discursive genres and even languages, become blurred. This is something that Internet users should be aware of while selecting texts in foreign languages they want to be able to understand or produce.

These limitations to the development of learner's autonomy in online situations justify the idea that Internet-based learning should be aided by language learning experts who also are highly familiar with online tools, discursive genres and communication and navigation rules.

3. Supporting autonomy development in online learning environments: the blog *Languesenligne* at the High School Emmanuel Héré

Our research on Internet-based supported self-directed learning takes place at a high school near Nancy. At this school learners are offered the opportunity to learn any language of their choice in a self-directed way, with the help of a personal advisor. The school had no physical self-access centre (SAC) when the project started and students were supposed to find their own resources outside school. Research interviews with students showed that some of them tried to use the Internet but encountered difficulties due to limitations in online learning abilities described above:

“on the Internet you find everything, but not necessarily things that are interesting for a dialogue, it can be things to ask where is the bank, but in a dialogue this is useless”;

“I didn’t know how to do how manage it”;
 “on the Internet it is vague, one can tell you anything, you must know what to pick, you must find the site”;
 “it’s hard to find dialogues in Japanese on Internet”;
 “there are things for Japanese language but they are not well classified, it’s not in order, we have to do it all on our own”

Those findings led to the creation of a distant self-access centre designed to support both access to resources and development of the ability to select useful and appropriate resources. While waiting for the creation of a physical SAC, a blog seemed to be the cheapest and fastest way to give students access to varied learning resources in several languages.

On the basis of this ongoing research I will present now two aspects of the way the Internet can affect the attempt to establish conditions that are favourable to the development of language learning autonomy. One aspect relates to the assumption that digital tools can support the development of learning abilities, as France and Lundgren-Cayrol (2003, 25) suggest: “les outils informatiques ont la capacité de réorganiser le fonctionnement mental ; en les exploitant, l’apprenant peut envisager d’autres modes de fonctionnement mental et ne pas se limiter uniquement à améliorer ceux qu’il connaît déjà”⁷. The second aspect concerns the impact of digital tools on advisor’s discourse and work.

3.1. Pre selecting, organizing and describing online resources: does the blog help learners?

The blog, named *Languesenligne*⁸, is a collection of links that are classified and briefly described and commented. These links lead in one click to pre-existing online resources that match different needs and styles. *Languesenligne* offers direct access to 15 languages (including French Sign Language) and indirect access (via pre-selected sites) to more than thirty languages and to varied online resources made for learning or for communicating from any connected computer, at school or at home:

- websites specialised in foreign language teaching and learning using traditional classroom categories (grammar, vocabulary, oral

⁷ Computer tools have the capacity to reorganise mental functioning; by using them, learners can consider other modes of mental functioning and not limit themselves only to improving those that they already know.

⁸ <http://languesenligne.blogspot.com>

expression, culture) and activities (dialogues, drills, exercises).
For instance:

- Italien-Facile.com;
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages>;
- <http://www.apprendre-langues.com>
- language exchange platforms and communities:
 - <http://lang-8.com>
- language immersion sites:
 - <http://www.yabla.com>
- language podcasting sites:
 - <http://www.worldlanguagespodcasting.com>
- community language learning platforms:
 - Langmedia <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu>
 - Busuu.com
- video sharing websites
 - Youtube
 - DailyMotion
- learning tools: dictionaries, learning tips, translators, descriptions and explanations on the sites and platforms.

Thus, this blog garners and gives access to all sorts of resources (documents or activities) matching various learning needs and styles: video, audio, transcriptions, translations, pre-constructed activities with feed-back or correction, short video courses by professional or non-professional teachers and native speakers, songs, texts, films and so on. These resources are classified under categories such as communication, listening, vocabulary, grammar, culture, everyday life or songs as in the example below (see Figure 5-1).



Figure 5-1. Screenshot of *Italien en ligne*

For instance if the learner chooses the entry *compréhension orale* she will arrive at a list of hyperlinked websites that provide various resources for practising the ability to understand oral messages in Italian. Each hyperlinked website is followed by a short description of its contents in French as in the examples in Figure 5-2.

The blog prompts learners to first of all select a general communicative or linguistic objective before selecting specific learning resources. To facilitate the students' selection of these, the language used to write the text of the blog (titles, subtitles, key-word, website-presentations and assessments) is related to the learning meta-language that students used during the interviews and advisory sessions, and that teachers use in class. Thus the blog script, or text, is influenced by the way the creators of the blog perceived what could be understood or not by its users. More investigation needs to be done to assess the efficiency of the blog in helping students monitor their learning. In particular we need to investigate whether or not contents and layout of the websites meet students' expectations and to what extent the blog helps them find useful resources. Part of the next phase of the experimentation will be to try to involve students in taking an active part in the development of the blog, by suggesting links or writing comments in it. They are already invited to participate but do not often do so (one student suggested a site that was already present). We hypothesize that Internet literacy insecurity may partly explain this communicative absence on line. This is another question our future research will address.

MARDI 17 NOVEMBRE 2009

la cucina italiana

Sur cette page, de nombreuses vidéos de recettes de cuisine italienne. On entend et on voit le chef, et on peut aussi lire les ingrédients et la recette avant d'écouter ou pendant qu'on écoute.

Publié par crapel [0 commentaires](#) [Liens vers ce message](#)
 Libellés : [compréhension orale](#), [cuisine](#), [video](#)

JEUDI 22 OCTOBRE 2009

WorldLanguagePodcasting

Des italiens discutent en italien sur leur vie en Australie. Conversations naturelles, idéal pour commencer à s'entraîner à comprendre deux personnes qui parlent ensemble. Des transcriptions sont disponibles, certains services du site sont payants.

Publié par crapel [0 commentaires](#) [Liens vers ce message](#)
 Libellés : [communication](#), [compréhension orale](#)

Greatsong

Un site avec des paroles de chansons en italien, des traductions, des clips... Tout pour s'entraîner à comprendre ou à prononcer. Ce lien mène directement vers une chanson populaire (sono l'italiano) dans laquelle on peut reconnaître facilement des mots comme "guitarre", ou "piano" ou des expressions comme "spaghetti al dente" et "parmesan". Lire les paroles avant d'écouter peut aider à retrouver les mots ensuite simplement en écoutant.

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 Libellés : [chansons](#), [compréhension orale](#), [vocabulaire](#)

SAMÉDI 10 OCTOBRE 2009

Apprendre à écouter l'italien

Sur cette page du site apprendre-italien.com vous trouverez des liens vers des ressources pour travailler la compréhension auditive de l'italien, en particulier vous pourrez trouver des documents sonores avec leurs transcriptions pour vous aider à suivre ce que vous écoutez.

Publié par crapel [0 commentaires](#) [Liens vers ce message](#)
 Libellés : [compréhension orale](#)

Figure 5-2. Description of website contents

3.2. Supporting autonomy development with a blog: does the blog help advisors?

Learner advising, as practised and taught at the CRAPEL, is based on the assumptions that autonomy is developmental (Blin 2004) and that, according to sociocultural theory, this development can be stimulated and

nurtured by establishing a specific kind of “rogerian” pedagogical relationship (Chalon 1970) between a learner and an expert during advisory sessions. We owe Gremmo (1995), Ciekanski (2005) and Reinders (2008) detailed descriptions of this type of advisory session to which interested readers may refer.

At Emmanuel Héré High School, students involved in the self-directed scheme are offered support in the form of face-to-face advisory sessions, provided by specially trained teachers. The teachers help learners to take personal decisions about their learning, by suggesting criteria for the assessment of learning situations, methods and outcomes, or by assessing learners’ learning processes. The aim of the sessions is to help learners to think profitably about their learning process and language acquisitions. This objective is common to technology-rich or technology poor environments. Actually, advisory sessions were already taking place at the school before the blog existed. Since the launching of the blog, advisors and learners have been able to use it during advisory sessions. More than fifty of these sessions have been recorded so far and are being transcribed and analysed. I will present here various ways in which the presence of the Internet, as a third party in the communication situation, may affect participants’ discourse and relationships, thus impacting on advisors’ communicative and pedagogical roles.

First findings indicate that to discuss online learning, advisor and learner both need a certain form of Internet literacy that is, both a capacity to communicate on line (understanding and producing online oral and written texts and messages and reaching communicative goals) and the ability to talk about it by using a terminology that allows them to convey and negotiate meaning. When the advisory session takes place with no access to the Internet, computer off for instance, advisory sessions show no significant differences with “classical” advisory sessions. When the Internet is on, however, data shows that it can support collaboration and symmetry between learner and advisor and that it can back up advisors’ verbal strategies for establishing contact and guiding learner’s cognitive activity.

In the following extract, we see a learner and an advisor collaborating in the use of Internet. The advisor (Adv) displays limited knowledge and skills in both the use of Internet and its meta-language (*italics turns 1 and 3*) and the learner (Lnr) assists her by providing information (**bold turns 2 and 4**) she seems to lack:

Example 1⁹.

1. Adv: (...) alors vas-y voir euh il faut que en fait on va pas y arriver par google il faut vraiment que tu te mettes dans la barre d'adresse ici et tu tapes donc http t'enlèves le www *je crois ou je sais plus s'il faut le garder je lui demanderai si il y est mais je crois qu'il faut l'enlever*
2. Lnr: ouais **ça marche même sans ça sans http donc on peut**
3. Adv: ça marche même sans http voilà et si ça se trouve il est sur cet ordi de toute façon blog zut je le sais par cœur pourtant languesenligne tout attaché au pluriel languesenLIGNE ligne au singulier point blogspot point com ++ euh ouais vas-y voir +5' ouais *il a pas trop l'air de vouloir ah si il y est*
4. Lnr: **ils sont juste un peu lents**

Internet use during advisory sessions also creates openings for topics other than learning. While keyboarding or waiting for the computer to complete a task, communication can become more centred on the learner/advisor relationship. Topic choice can establish phatic communion between learner and advisor as in the following example. While the computer is booting, the advisor asks the student a question on the placement he did during the preceding weeks. This topic lasts 15 turns. At turn sixteen, the advisor offers to close the topic *training sessions*, by using the word *responsable*, (in charge) and orients the discussion towards the main topic of advisory sessions: the learner's capacity to study in an autonomous way. The learner agrees and at turn 18, the computer is ready to work, and they go on discussing online language learning matters.

Example 2

1. Adv: (...) ça s'est bien passé ton stage
- 2 to 13: (...)
- 14 Adv: d'accord bah je te pose la question parce que des fois les stagiaires on leur fait faire des photocopies ou vider la poubelle
- 15 Lnr: ah oui non non mais le pire c'est que moi mon patron il était pratiquement jamais là (oui) vu qu'il est professeur ici donc des fois je passais la journée complète tout seul au bureau mais j'étais occupé donc je voyais pas le temps passer
- 16 Adv: **et responsable**
- 17 Lnr: voilà
- 18 Adv: bah tu vas réussir à apprendre en a- en autodirection alors y a pas de problème avec ça ALORS si tu veux écoute qu'est-ce qu'on prend mozilla ou internet explorer
- 19 Lnr: non internet explorer

⁹English translations of the examples in the appendix

This extract shows how the advisor keeps focussed on her role. But at other moments, information provided by the Internet will distract her attention. In the following extract, the advisor ceases for a moment to communicate directly with the learner and starts communicating with herself on the basis of the information loaded onto the computer. She is so absorbed in her thinking and talking to herself (bold in turns 1 and 3) that she misses the learner's question in turn 2 (*italics*):

Example 3

1. Adv: (...) podcast en Français NON en Français c'est ++ **ah génial euh j'en ai besoin pour mes étudiants de Français Langue Etrangère ça je savais pas que ça existait pour le Français c'est nouveau**
2. Lrn: *ils viennent en France pour apprendre l'italien*
3. Adv: **à mon avis c'est récent** il faut que tu prennes l'italien alors attends c'est world language podcasting **ah oui faut absolument que je montre ça à mes collègues ++++ qu'est ce qu'on a comme langues le Français l'Anglais et le CHINOIS aussi ah super**
4. Lrn: et l'indonésien +++ okay donc ça marche ouais ah oui ça je connais
5. Adv: DONC t'as l'interface euh ici en Anglais mais alors après déjà en Italien

These three examples give insights into some potential sources of advisor difficulties in establishing appropriate communication when this latter is linked to the use of the Internet (lack of Internet literacy, too much or insufficient small talk, listening quality impaired by technical difficulties or by distractions induced by the interaction with the Internet). More research needs to be done to know whether the blog helps or hinders the advisors' work. In particular, advising being a matter of co-construction of meaning, our research asks questions related to the linguistic activity of the advisor at work: what verbal strategies are directly linked to the blog? What role does the blog text play in the collaboration between learner and advisor?

Thus our research addresses the role of language and the Internet in the development of learners' autonomy, and in particular, in the transmission of learning expertise from advisor to novice. By combining diverse discourse analysis methods on blog texts, advisory sessions, research interviews and questionnaires that give access to students and advisors' practices, strategies, attitudes and beliefs, we hope to improve our understanding of what could be done to enhance learners' capacity to study a language independently online. Our corpus will also be made available online for use in advisor training.

4. Conclusion

The encounter between the Internet and the pedagogy of autonomy highlights the need for new kinds of teachers and new jobs in language learning training, which call for multiple expertises including specific skills and knowledge about languages and cultures, languages learning and digital tools and communication. In this ever changing world, linguistic and pedagogical practices rapidly evolve under the pressure of technological innovation whose “programmed obsolescence” cannot be ignored (Galisson 2004: 148). It thus seems inadequate and outdated to keep on basing language teachers’ training solely on subject matter. This idea is not new. In 1970, Yves Chalon, founder of the CRAPEL, wrote:

On aperçoit alors la vanité de tout effort qui consiste à former des maîtres dans la seule perspective de la discipline qu’ils auraient à enseigner. Nous sommes quelques uns à penser que déjà certains types d’enseignement des langues, où le savoir est dispensé par les seuls auxiliaires électroniques vont peu à peu se substituer à la classe d’anglais ou d’allemand que nous avons connue¹⁰. (Chalon 1970, 5)

Teachers and future teachers who want to work in online learning environments that aim to develop autonomy thus have to assume new roles and practices. We hope that our research will be of some use in their professional preparation.

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¹⁰ One can see then the vanity of training school masters only for the subject they will have to teach.

Some of us think that certain types of language teaching in use already, where knowledge is given by electronic auxiliaries alone, will little by little replace the English or German class that we have known. (Chalon 1970, 5)

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Sitography

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<http://www.yabla.com>
<http://www.youtube.com/>

Appendix

Translations of the extracts from advisory sessions

Example 1

1. **Advisor:** so have a go or we have to actually we can't do it with google you really have to go in the URL window here and you type like that so http you get rid of the www I think or I don't remember if you have to leave it I'll ask her if it it's there but I think we have to get rid of it
2. **Learner:** yeah it works even without that without http so we can
3. **Advisor:** it works even without http there and you never know it might be on this computer anyway blog damn I know it by heart languesenligne as one word in the plural languesenLIGNE ligne in the singular dot blogspot dot com ... er yeah go and see +5' yeah it doesn't look like it wants to ah yes there it is
4. **Learner:** they're just a bit slow

Example 2

1. **Advisor:** how did it go in the company (talking about internship) 2 to 13 (...)
14. **Advisor:** right uhm I'm asking because sometimes trainees are asked to do photocopies or empty the waste baskets
15. **Learner:** oh yes no no but the worst thing was that my boss was practically never there as he's a teacher here so sometimes I'd spend the whole day on my own at the office but I was busy so I didn't see the time go by
16. **Advisor:** and in charge
17. **Learner:** right

18. **Advisor:** uhm you will manage to learn by yourself so there won't be a problem with that SO if you want listen what do we use mozilla or internet explorer

19. **Learner:** no internet explorer

Example 3

1. **Advisor:** (...) podcast in French NO in French it's ++ oh great er I need this for my students in French as a foreign language I didn't know it existed for French it's new

2. **Learner:** they come to France to learn Italian

3. **Advisor:** in my opinion this is new you need Italian so wait it's world language podcasting oh yes I've got to show this to my colleagues ++++ what languages are there French, English and CHINESE too oh great

4. **Learner:** and Indonesian +++ okay so it works yeah ah yes I know that

5. **Advisor:** SO you have the interface er here in English but then after that it's in Italian

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