Promoting learner autonomy through COIL: Japan-Korea game creation project

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Overview

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- Our COIL Project & Method
- Analysis & Results
- Discussion & Next Steps
- References

What is COIL?

What is COIL?

[telecollaboration is] "the application of <u>online communication tools</u> to bring together classes of <u>language learners</u> in <u>geographically distant locations</u> to develop their foreign language skills & intercultural competence through collaborative tasks & <u>project-based work</u>"
(O'Dowd, 2011, p. 342)

Why COIL?

- Motivate students to use their second language
- Improve language competence (e.g., Casañ-Pitarch et al., 2020)
- Improve intercultural competence (e.g., de Castro et al., 2018; Lázár, 2014)
- Increase learner autonomy (e.g., Dooly, 2017)

What is learner autonomy?

- "Autonomy is the ability to take charge of one's own learning." (Holec, 1981)
- "...autonomous learners take **responsibility** for their own learning, are **motivated** to learn, gain **enjoyment** from their learning, are **open-minded**, **manage their time well**, **plan effectively**, meet deadlines, are happy to work on their own, display **perseverance** when encountering difficulties and are **low in procrastination** when it comes to their work." (Macaskill & Taylor, 2010, p. 357)

How might COIL increase learner autonomy?

Dooly, 2017 (p. 176): **Student-oriented, longitudinal COIL projects**

COIL focused on mutual support & reciprocity is an apt environment for promoting LA (Little, 1996; Ushioda, 2000; Warschauer & Kern, 2000).
→ Argued based on studies that highlight social dimensions of language learning (Benson, 1996, 2001; Carter, 2006; Lewis, 2014; Little, 1996).

How might COIL increase learner autonomy?

- Synchronous videoconferencing tools can foster L2 speaking and even boost LA (Lenkaitis, 2020).
- COIL → increased digital literacy → increased LA

Digital literacies (Hafner, Chik, & Jones, 2015, pp. 2-3)

Table 1. *Dimensions of Digital Literacies and the Affordances of Digital Tools*

Dimension	Focus	Example practices	Questions for pedagogy
Doing	Actions in the physical world	Sharing pictures with friends Searching for a place to eat online	How can we effectively manage information with digital tools?
Meaning	Forms of representation	Reading a web page Posting to a social network site	How can we effectively communicate: • using hypertext? • using combinations of word, image, graphics and sound?
Relating	Patterns of interaction	Writing fan fiction for a massive online audience Commenting on a blog post Collaboratively writing an online article in a wiki	How can we use digital tools to: • manage relationships? • attract the attention of an online audience? • collaborate with peers?
Thinking	Experiencing and thinking about reality	Communicating through CMC Participating in online affinity spaces	How should we think about our online communications: • as ephemeral conversations?
Being	Social identity	Presenting oneself in a social network site Adopting an expert role in an online (e.g. fan, gaming) community	How can we use digital tools to manage impressions? What identities are possible in digital spaces? How do these identities relate to those that are possible in classroom spaces?

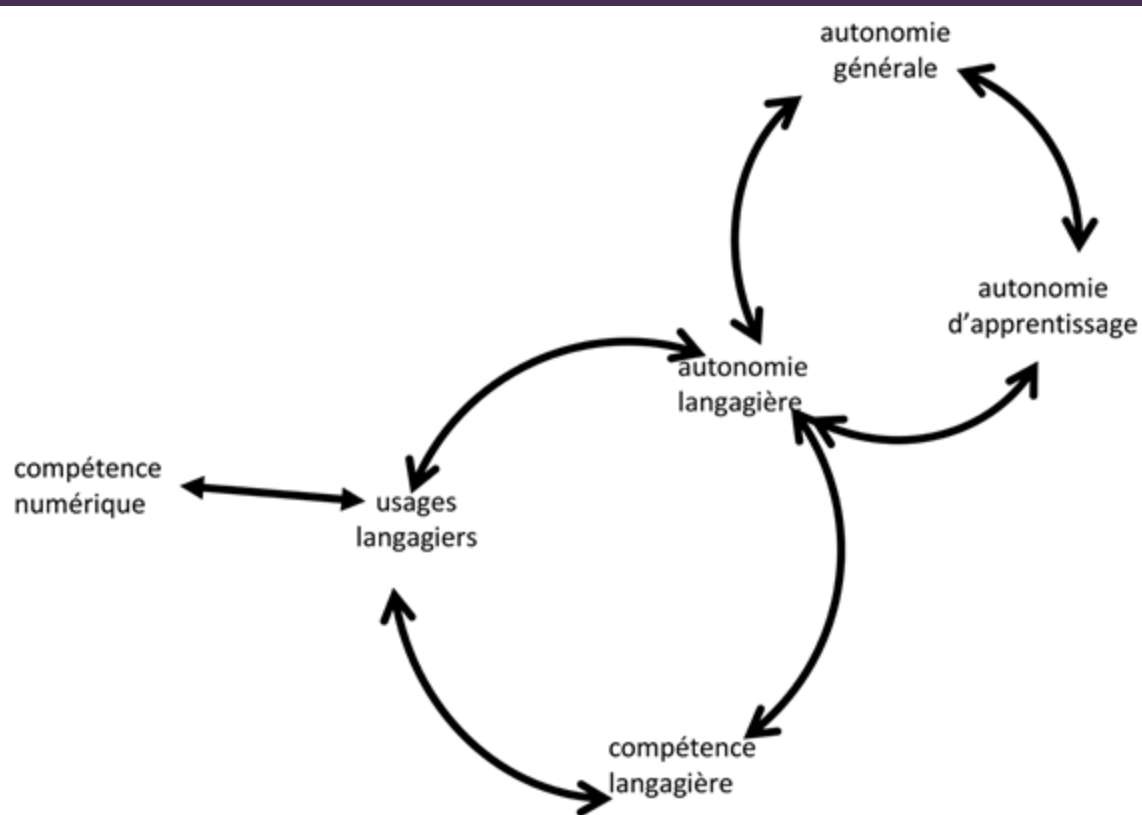# Toffoli & Perrot, 2017 (p. 17)

Diagram 6: Interactions between different types of autonomy and proficiency

Research question

Will students participating in a COIL project increase their learner autonomy?

Our COIL Project (Method)

COIL: Collaborative online international learning

COIL participants

- Kwangwoon University, South Korea
  - Development of English Education Program
  - 8 students
  - 3rd & 4th year
- Kyoto Sangyo University, Japan
  - Seminar for English majors I
  - 17 students
  - 3rd year
- Comparison group

Schedule

- Week 1: Introduction (KU/KSU separate)
- **Week 2, Zoom**: Icebreakers
- Week 3: KU holiday
- **Week 4, Zoom**: Comparison & analysis task
- **Week 5, Zoom**: Project work
- **Week 6, Zoom**: Project work
- **Week 7, Zoom**: Present 1st draft games, peer feedback
- **Week 8, Zoom**: Project work
- **Week 9, Zoom**: Final draft of game

Project

- Make a game together for learning English
- Share it on the [project website](#)

Korea-Japan COIL Project 2024

Collaborative development of games for English language learning

This website showcases the learning materials and results of a collaborative online international learning (COIL) project.

Data collection for COIL group

- Questionnaires
  - Pre/mid/post COIL reflection
    (adapted from Guth & Helm, 2017)
  - **Pre/post learner autonomy
    (adapted from Morrison & Navarro, 2017; Tsai, 2021)**
  - Pre/post intercultural competence
    (adapted from Lee and Song, 2019)
- Post-COIL focus groups (Japan only)

Questionnaires for comparison groups

- **Pre/post learner autonomy**
  - Flipped classes (taught by 1st author in Japan)
  - **Lecture/discussion classes (taught by others in Japan & Korea)**
- Pre/post intercultural competence
  - Lecture/discussion classes (taught by others in Japan & Korea)

Learner autonomy questionnaire

- 36 questions (English, Japanese, Korean)
- Likert scale (1 strongly disagree - 6 strongly agree)
- Reliability: Cronbach's alpha 0.91 (pre), 0.92 (post)
- Examples
  - I have my own ways of testing how much English I have learned.
  - I choose appropriate materials for my own English learning.
  - I set my English learning goals.
  - When I have problems learning English, I seek support from peers.

Analysis & results

LA results: COIL group

- N = 25 (8 Korean & 17 Japanese, English majors)
- Learner autonomy scores significantly increased following the COIL intervention.
- Effect size was medium to large.

	Pre-test (LA)	Post-test (LA)	t-test
Mean	4.04	4.39	$t(24) = -2.98$
SD	0.37	0.44	$p = .003$ $d = .6$

LA results: Comparison group

- N = 13 (8 Japanese & 5 Korean, English majors, no COIL experience)
- LA scores did not significantly increase from the beginning to end of semester.
- Effect size was medium to large.

	Pre-test (LA)	Post-test (LA)	t-test
Mean	3.90	4.16	$t(12) = -2.07$ $p = .061$ $d = .57$
SD	0.29	0.27	

Mean learner autonomy
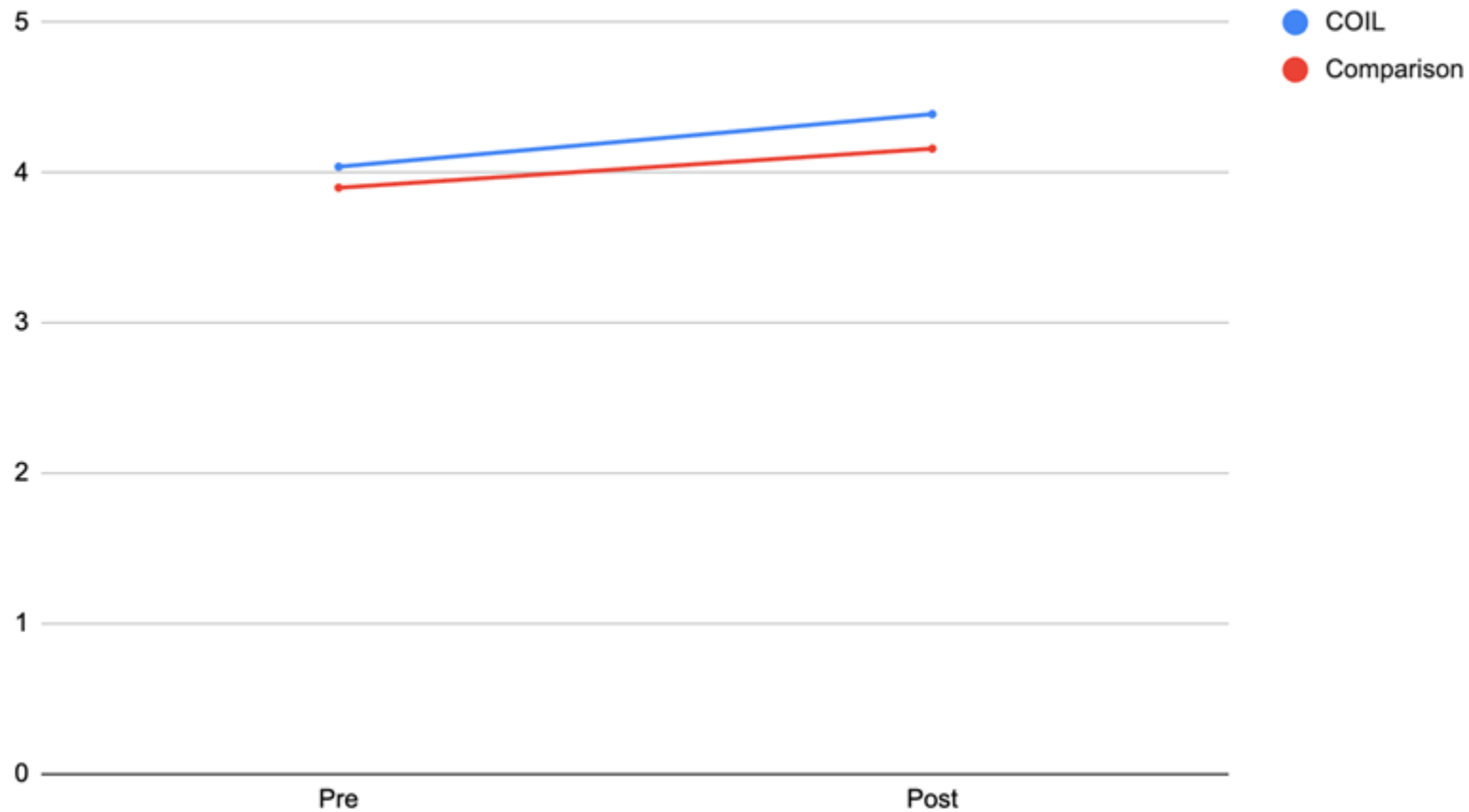
Discussion & Conclusion

Discussion

- The COIL project helped students to increase their LA
  - COIL → increased digital literacy → increased LA
- Students in the comparison group also similarly increased their LA
  - A larger group may have reached significance
  - Longer time from pre to posttest (15 vs. 10 weeks)
  - Other classes may have affected their LA
  - LA questionnaire may not be measuring LA

Next steps

- Ongoing: Japan - Taiwan COIL project
- Analyze qualitative data (Japan focus groups)
- Eliminate redundant items in LA questionnaire
- Reconsider LA questionnaire items (do they really measure LA?)
- Follow up LA measure?

Thank you!

ありがとうございました！
감사합니다!

Questions? Comments? Suggestions?

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