



AUTONOMY IN LANGUAGE LEARNING: experiences, actors, resources
Bolzano Multilingual Centre and Merano Multimedia Language Centre

A seminar organised by the Office for Bilingualism and Foreign Languages
at the Department for Italian Culture of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano

1-2 December 2017

Call for papers

The seminar aims at reflecting upon approaches to autonomous language learning in the 21st century society and upon the function of self-access language learning centres in promoting the process and culture of language learning.

Prompted by the many years of experience of two self-access centres financed by the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, the Bolzano Multilingual Centre and Merano Multimedia Language Centre, as well as other public and university self-access centres in Italy and Europe, the seminar aims at:

- creating a platform to share experiences in setting up and managing self-access language centres
- involve teachers in considering how to promote autonomous learning and integrate the available local resources in the learning process
- raise awareness of autonomous language learning among people of every age group.

By **autonomy** we mean the learner capacity to be responsible and critical actors of their own learning, identifying their own needs and objectives, making informed decisions and choosing the most appropriate resources from those available to meet their needs and objectives. Far from being an exclusively individual mode of learning, autonomous learning involves forms of social, formal and informal learning, while also making use of the interaction with other learners, teachers, tutors and language advisors.

The seminar will feature a first part directed to everybody on Friday afternoon, and sections reserved to teachers and professionals on Saturday. For the Saturday's sections, registration is obligatory.

The sections are dedicated to reflecting on current practices in self-access language centres, on language advising and other forms of learning support, as well as to illustrating principles and approaches of independence pedagogy for autonomy.

1. **Best practices** – experiences in self-access language centres: spaces, resources, roles, actors, institutional context
2. **Language advising** and other forms of learning support
3. **Workshop for language teachers** – towards autonomous language learning: theory and practice.





Proposals for individual or joint presentations for these sections will be accepted regarding experiences or research relating to:

Section 1. Best practices

- Organisation and function of spaces in self-access language centres
- Criteria and evaluation of learning materials
- The role of authentic materials
- Criteria for presenting and cataloguing materials
- Learner needs
- Social aspects of learning (e.g. tandem learning, learning groups, etc.)
- The role of digital materials
- The function of the self-access language centre within the institution

:Brief presentations (20 minutes) followed by discussion. Final discussion and summary.

Proposals for this section, in the form of an abstract of no more than 300 words, are to be sent to **Anna Dal Negro** and **Anikó Brandt** by **15 July 2017**:

anna.dalnegro@sprachen.uzh.ch

brandt@uni-bremen.de

Proposals will be accepted in Italian, German or English.

Section 2. Language advising and other forms of learning support

How can we best support learners in their autonomous learning process? What do learners ask of us? What are our experiences with regard to the various forms of learning support (reception, language advising, tutoring, online advising, etc.)? Which methods of informal support (e.g. tandem learning, study groups) can be useful? How are they established? With what results?

And what are our needs as professionals, advisors, tutors?

Following a general introduction, this section will open up spaces for exchange and discussion, first in small groups, then in a plenary session. All participants are invited to contribute on the basis of their experience. In order to facilitate discussion, it is advisable to prepare contributions in the form of posters, short handouts (maximum one page), or PowerPoint or video presentations (maximum five minutes), identifying specific questions and issues to be discussed.

Proposals for this section, in the form of an abstract of no more than 200 words, are to be sent to **Maria Giovanna Tassinari** by **15 July 2017**.

giovanna.tassinari@fu-berlin.de

Proposals will be accepted in Italian, German or English.

Section 3. Workshop – towards autonomous language learning: theory and practice

Pathways towards autonomous learning in the language classroom: methods and strategies, individual and group tasks, discussion. Participants are invited to bring suggestions and examples of classroom activities.





After these sections, working groups are planned with the aim of identifying paths for further development, networking and discussing possible synergies. Participants may register during the seminar for one of the groups, which will meet in the afternoon.

1. A network and agenda for self-access language learning centres
2. The role of digital media and self-access language learning centres
3. Staff: organisation and training

The seminar will be held at Centro Trevi, via Cappuccini 28, Bolzano, Italy.

