

**AILA Research Network on Learner Autonomy in Language Learning** (written for the July 2011 issue of the *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*)

Founded in 1993, the *ReN on Learner Autonomy in Language Learning* is a group of approximately 400 educators and researchers from all over the world who are interested in the study of learner and teacher autonomy in language learning. The ReN on Learner Autonomy (ReNLA, for short) has consistently been one of AILA's most successful research networks (formerly called 'scientific commissions'), and it has been particularly active over the last three years.

Under the overall coordination of Garold Murray of Okayama University, Japan and Richard Smith of Warwick University, UK, ReNLA has been providing its members with updates on events, recent publications, and some opportunities to publish. On the ReN's redesigned website, <http://ailarenla.org/>, Bulletins and back issues of newsletters can be consulted, with reference being made also to short reports of research in the website's *Learner Autonomy in Language Learning (LALL)* section. The ReN has also begun to lend its support to autonomy-related events in various parts of the world which meet criteria including peer review of abstracts following an open call for papers, video-recording for general viewing of keynote presentations, and provision of a publication opportunity. Instances of collaboration so far have been the Zirve University, Turkey conference in 'Implementing Learner Autonomy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century', June 2010; the Cutting Edges conference on 'Autonomy and Community in Language Learning, Teaching and Training', Canterbury Christ Church University, July 2011; and the upcoming Independent Learning Association Conference to be held in Wellington, New Zealand, in August 2012. In order to promote exchange amongst members, the ReN maintains a discussion forum, AUTO-L, and an online membership database.

Finally, papers presented at the ReN's symposium in 2008 at the AILA Congress in Essen, Germany, have recently been published by Multilingual Matters in a collection entitled *Identity, Motivation and Autonomy in Language Learning* (ed. G. Murray, X. Gao and T. Lamb.). The ReN's symposium at the 2011 AILA Congress in Beijing will be titled 'Social dimensions of autonomy', and we are intending for this, too, to form the basis for a useful and ground-breaking collection of papers. For more information on these and other ReN on Learner Autonomy activities, please visit the website or contact the convenors.