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Learners' Beliefs Concerning Learner Autonomy

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1. Introduction

The introduction of the concept of learner autonomy almost four decades ago, and the emphasis subsequently placed on the autonomy of language learners, has brought about transformative changes in language pedagogy.

This shift from traditional teacher-centred approaches to learner-centred pedagogy, and from a focus on linguistic to communicative competence, as well as the transition from behaviouristic to cognitive descriptions of language acquisition, have had a profound impact (Arfae, 2017). Various countries worldwide have not only encouraged but, in some instances, mandated educational institutions at different academic levels to implement measures fostering language learner autonomy (Lamb, 2008). The emergence of autonomous-driven or autonomy-inspiring language schools has prompted adjustments in teaching methodologies to meet evolving demands in the field. Despite encountering challenges related to complexities, confusions, and misconceptions, the relatively young concept of language learner autonomy has garnered substantial support. The prevailing literature, as discussed in subsequent sections, predominantly attests to the significant and positive influence of promoting language learner autonomy on the language learning experience of second/foreign language learners.

This study embarks on an exploration of students' attitudes and beliefs towards autonomous learning, a dimension that remains crucial yet puzzling within the broader context of language education. The research seeks to explore learners' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities in the learning process, how these perceptions vary across different levels of education, and the autonomous activities learners engage in while learning English. By exploring these areas, this paper seeks to highlight the complex relationship between learners' beliefs and the practice of autonomy in language learning.

Given the central role that beliefs play in the construction of autonomous behaviour, understanding learners' beliefs provides educators and curriculum designers with a framework for fostering environments that promote autonomy. Furthermore, this research compares the beliefs of secondary school students with those of university students, highlighting developmental stages in autonomous learning practices.

In order to facilitate this research, the study involved a comprehensive survey of both secondary school and university students in Miercurea Ciuc (Csíkszereda), Romania. The comparative analysis resulting from this research will contribute to the ongoing dialogue on learner autonomy and provide valuable insights for educators.

The following sections therefore present a comprehensive literature review, outline the research methodology and provide a detailed discussion of the findings of this study. The ultimate aim is to enrich the conversation about learner autonomy, challenge prevailing assumptions and propose pedagogical interventions that resonate with the lived experiences of today's language learners.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definitions

The concept of autonomy in language education has undergone significant evolution since its early origins. Tracing its roots to the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project, autonomy was initially defined by Holec (1981: 3) as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning". Inspired by humanistic expectations stemming from the political upheavals of late-1960s Europe, early experiments focused on self-directed learning, resulting in the establishment of self-access centres and learner training.

Language learner autonomy refers to the ability of learners to take control of their own learning process and make decisions independently (Holec, 1981). Holec's foundational definition of learner autonomy, foregrounding the learner's capacity to make decisions about their learning, has endured the test of time. According to Holec (1981), learner autonomy involves a shift from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach, where learners actively participate in their own learning process and engage in self-directed learning activities. This means that learners are not solely dependent on their teachers, but instead, they take an active role in deciding what, when, and how they learn (Little, 2007).

Learner autonomy also emphasizes the development of learners' metacognitive and self-regulatory skills, such as goal setting, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation, which are crucial for their lifelong learning (Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015). Furthermore, learner autonomy is not solely determined by individual factors but is influenced by various external factors as well. These factors include the learning environment, access to resources, and the support and encouragement provided by teachers and peers. Autonomy-supportive teaching practices, as mentioned by Reeve (2006), play a pivotal role in fostering learner autonomy by creating a supportive and empowering learning environment that encourages learners to take ownership of their learning.

Little (1991) pointed out that “autonomy is not exclusively or even primarily a matter of how learning is organized”:

Essentially, autonomy is a *capacity* – for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. It presupposes, but also entails, that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his learning. The capacity for autonomy will be displayed both in the way the learner learns and in the way he or she transfers what has been learned to wider contexts.

(Little, 1991: 4)

Complementing Holec’s (1981) definition, Little (1991) also introduced a psychological dimension, emphasizing the learner’s ability for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. The evolution of definitions, including subtle nuances such as the shift from ‘ability’ to ‘capacity’, reflects the ongoing discourse that seeks to capture the essence of autonomy while acknowledging its intricate nature (Benson, 2011).

According to Little (1991), it is imperative to recognize that learner autonomy goes beyond mere organizational aspects and does not imply a withdrawal of teacher initiative and control. Contrary to being a singular teaching method or a state achieved by a select group of learners, autonomy is fundamentally a capacity—a multifaceted ability encompassing detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. Central to autonomy is the development of a specific psychological relationship between the learner and the learning process and content. This capacity manifests not only in how the learner acquires knowledge but also in their ability to apply learned concepts to broader contexts. In conventional language, autonomy conveys a substantial degree of independence from external control. However, it is crucial to underscore that the liberties granted by autonomy are never absolute; they are perpetually contingent and confined (Little, 1991).

To sum up, language learner autonomy refers to the ability of learners to take control of their own learning process, to make informed decisions, and to actively engage in self-directed learning activities. It involves learners’ awareness of their own learning needs, preferences, and responsibilities, as well as their metacognitive and self-regulatory skills. Promoting learner autonomy requires a shift from a teacher-centred to a learner-centred approach and the development of an autonomy-supportive learning environment. Defining autonomy in language education is not a static issue (Benson, 2007). The dynamics of educational landscapes, cultural variations, and pedagogical innovations continually reshape our understanding of autonomy. Navigating these complexities requires educators to engage in ongoing dialogue, embrace

diverse perspectives, and remain attuned to the continuously evolving nature of learner autonomy.

2.2.Importance of understanding learners' beliefs about learner autonomy

Language learner autonomy plays a central role in language learning as it empowers learners to take ownership of their own learning process and actively engage in language acquisition. Autonomy allows learners to develop self-regulatory strategies, set their own goals, and monitor their progress, which ultimately leads to more effective and meaningful learning outcomes. Research has shown that learners with high levels of autonomy tend to be more motivated, persistent, and engaged in the learning process (Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015). On the other hand, learners who hold negative beliefs about their ability to be autonomous learners may feel disempowered and dependent on external sources for learning.

Furthermore, learner autonomy enhances learners' confidence, self-efficacy, and sense of agency, which are essential factors in language acquisition (Little, 2007). Learner autonomy also promotes the development of critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and metacognitive awareness, all of which are important for successful language learning (Benson, 2011). Moreover, learner autonomy fosters a sense of responsibility and independence, preparing learners for lifelong learning and enabling them to continue learning even outside formal educational settings. By acknowledging learners' beliefs, educators can avoid potential conflicts and misunderstandings between the expectations of learners and the instructional methods employed in the classroom.

Schmenk (2005) suggests that learner autonomy can vary significantly depending on the students' cultural background, personal experiences, and prior educational systems they have been exposed to. For example, learners from collectivist cultures may have a stronger belief in the role of the teacher as the authority figure and may feel uncomfortable with autonomous learning approaches that emphasize self-regulation and independent decision-making. Schmenk (2005) underscores the critical importance of recognizing the cultural embeddedness of learner autonomy in language education and raises awareness about the potential dangers of cultural blindness in its promotion. The author argues for a reframing of autonomy within specific local language learning environments rather than presenting it as a universally applicable, culturally neutral concept. The cautionary approach outlined by Schmenk challenges the dominant tendency to promote learner autonomy as a universally beneficial principle without proper consideration of its cultural nuances. By emphasizing the risk of

inadvertently homogenizing and decontextualizing learner autonomy, Schmenk suggests that an uncritical and universal application of this concept may result in a loss of its specific cultural and political meanings. This perspective calls for a more nuanced understanding of autonomy that acknowledges and respects the diverse cultural contexts in which language learning occurs, ensuring that the promotion of learner autonomy is sensitive to and aligned with the specific cultural and political intricacies of each educational setting (Schmenk, 2005).

By being aware of these cultural differences in learners' beliefs about learner autonomy, educators can make informed decisions about the instructional methods they employ and ensure that learners' beliefs are respected and acknowledged in the learning process (Palfreyman & Smith, 2003). Understanding learners' beliefs about learner autonomy is essential in education as it can significantly affect learners' behaviour, attitudes, motivation and overall learning outcomes.

2.3.Theoretical perspectives

Theoretical perspectives on language learner autonomy revolve around various frameworks and concepts. As mentioned above, Holec (1981) is one of the most influential figures in this area since his definition has been the starting point for most researchers on the subject. Benson (2011) states that learner autonomy involves learners taking responsibility for and having control over their learning. Schmenk (2005) emphasizes the need to globalize learner autonomy, acknowledging the influence of cultural and social factors on learners' autonomy. Kormos and Csizér (2014) explore the interaction of motivation, self-regulatory strategies, and autonomous learning behaviour, highlighting the diverse learner groups and their differing levels of autonomy. Lee (2017) examines the relationship between self-determination theory and language learner autonomy, emphasizing the importance of incorporating autonomy within research on motivation. Dörnyei (1994) emphasizes the role of motivation in fostering language learner autonomy. Reeve (2006) focuses on teacher autonomy-supportive behaviours and their impact on students' autonomy development. Little (2007) discusses the fundamental considerations of language learner autonomy, revisiting key issues and concepts. Cotterall (1995) investigates learner beliefs and their readiness for autonomy. These perspectives provide insights into the definition, development, and factors influencing learner autonomy.

2.3.1 Holec's concept

Holec's concept of autonomy in foreign language learning revolutionized the way educators and researchers think about learner-centred approaches. Holec (1981) defined autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one's own learning” and emphasized the importance of learners being active participants in the language learning process. He argued that traditional teaching methods often limited learners' control and self-direction, hindering their ability to become independent language learners. Instead, Holec advocated for fostering learner autonomy by creating opportunities for learners to make decisions about their learning goals, strategies, and materials. This approach empowers learners to take ownership of their learning and develop the skills and motivation necessary for lifelong language learning. Holec's concept of autonomy has had a significant impact on research and practice in the field of language education.

Scholars such as Benson (2011) and Schmenk (2005) have expanded on Holec's ideas and explored various aspects of learner autonomy, including the role of motivation, self-regulatory strategies, and the interaction between autonomy and other psychological theories, such as self-determination theory. In addition, practitioners and educators have embraced the notion of autonomy to improve both teaching and learning outcomes. For example, Jiménez Raya and Vieira (2015) provide a case-based approach to teacher and learner development, emphasizing the importance of autonomy in language education. Overall, Holec's concept continues to serve as a foundation for promoting learner-centred pedagogies, empowering students to become active and self-directed learners, and enhancing the overall language learning experience. It has provided new research opportunities and influenced language teaching practices around the world, making a valuable contribution to the field of language education.

2.3.2 Versions of autonomy

According to Benson (2007), the journey of autonomy in language education involves not only historical milestones but also conceptual expansions. As autonomy became increasingly entrenched in language education discourse, scholars like Allwright (1988) advocated for radical restructuring, challenging the traditional confines of the classroom, and fostering innovative learning approaches. The quest for autonomy extended beyond the individual learner to encompass collaborative and negotiated dimensions, reflecting the dynamic nature of language learning and teaching. Allwright's vision emphasized the importance of social

interaction and collaboration in the language learning process, introducing a communal aspect to the concept.

An important turning point in the discussion of autonomy occurred in the middle of the 1990s when attempts were made to operationalize it as a matter of degree. Nunan's (1997) model delineated five levels of learner action, while Littlewood (1997) proposed a three-stage model. The challenge lies in correlating autonomy levels with language proficiency stages, underscoring the intricate relationship between autonomy and linguistic demands.

Benson's (1997) introduction of 'technical', 'psychological', and 'political' versions of autonomy provided a nuanced lens to examine this construct. He describes them as follows:

1. In 'technical' versions of learner autonomy, the concept is defined simply as an act of learning a language outside the framework of an educational institution and without the intervention of a teacher.
2. 'Psychological' versions define autonomy as a capacity - a construct of attitudes and abilities - which allows learners to take more responsibility for their own learning.
3. Lastly, 'political' versions of learner autonomy define the concept in terms of control over the processes and content of learning. The main issue for political approaches is how to achieve the structural conditions that will allow learners to control both their individual learning and the institutional context within which it takes place. (p. 19)

The technical dimension relates to the mastery of language learning strategies, psychological autonomy involves the development of self-regulation and motivation, and political autonomy explores the learner's understanding of the broader societal and political contexts influencing language use. Benson comes to the conclusion that the first two versions of autonomy are rather limited and that the third version needs to be studied in more detail. Other models, such as Ribé's (2003) 'convergence-divergence' positions and Oxford's (2003) expanded version, emphasized the legitimacy of diverse representations while often implying the hierarchical nature of autonomy versions.

Critical voices emerged challenging mainstream autonomy, with scholars like Pennycook (1997), Holliday (2003), and Schmenk (2005) proposing radical alternatives. Their critiques, rooted in the application of autonomy in English Language Teaching (ELT) contexts, called for a more contextually sensitive approach, challenging individualistic and culturally biased perspectives.

Palfreyman and Smith (2003) contributed to the discourse by examining the cultural dimensions of autonomy. Their work highlighted the diverse cultural interpretations of autonomy, challenging the notion of a universal understanding. Cultural contexts significantly influence how autonomy is perceived and practiced, adding a layer of complexity to its definition.

As Benson (2007) remarked, the shift toward autonomy within classrooms since the early 1990s did not diminish the importance of self-access centres. Learning beyond the classroom poses challenges and opportunities for autonomy, demanding a capacity for autonomy and teacher support. The emergence of blended learning, combining electronic and human intervention, reflects the changing landscape of language education.

In recent decades, autonomy has actively shaped classroom dynamics. Collaborative projects, negotiated learning, and curriculum-based autonomy, underscore the integration of autonomy within broader perspectives on language teaching and learning. The classroom becomes a dynamic space where autonomy, far from being an abstract ideal, manifests in tangible pedagogical practices.

2.3.3 Self-determination theory and its relation to language learner autonomy

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a psychological framework that emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in motivating individuals' behaviour and promoting their well-being (Reeve, 2006). In the context of language learner autonomy, SDT provides valuable insights into the factors that influence learners' motivation and self-regulatory strategies. From Reeve's point of view (2006), SDT posits that individuals have innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and satisfying these needs leads to greater motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes.

In the language learning context, as mentioned by Lou et. al. (2018), autonomy is closely connected to learners' sense of control and ownership over their learning process, as well as their ability to make choices and set goals. SDT highlights the significance of creating a supportive and autonomy-enhancing learning environment, where learners feel competent, connected, and free to express themselves. Reeve (2006) also outlines that autonomy-supportive teachers play a crucial role in fostering learners' autonomy by providing meaningful choices, promoting self-regulatory strategies, and offering constructive feedback. By integrating SDT principles into language education, teachers can empower learners to take ownership of their learning, develop intrinsic motivation, and engage in autonomous learning

behaviours. Ultimately, SDT provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the complex relationship between autonomy and motivation in language learning and offers practical implications for designing effective pedagogical interventions that promote learner autonomy.

2.4 Factors Influencing Language Learner Autonomy

Language learner autonomy, the ability of learners to take control of their own learning process, is influenced by various factors. One crucial factor is motivation, which plays a significant role in determining learners' willingness to engage in autonomous learning (Dörnyei, 1994). Learners who are motivated are more likely to set goals, take responsibility for their learning, and seek out opportunities for independent practice and exploration (Kormos & Csizér, 2014). Another important factor is the role of teachers in facilitating autonomy (Reeve, 2006). Teachers who provide a supportive and autonomy-enhancing learning environment can empower learners to take ownership of their learning and develop self-regulatory strategies.

Additionally, the influence of sociocultural contexts cannot be overlooked, as cultural beliefs, norms, and practices can either support or hinder the development of autonomy (Schmenk, 2005). Moreover, learner beliefs and readiness for autonomy can significantly shape their engagement with autonomous learning (Cotterall, 1995), and the interaction between learners' self-determination and language learner autonomy has been explored to understand their combined impact on learning outcomes (Lou et al., 2018). Other factors, such as learner identity, prior experience, and language learning strategies, also play a role in influencing language learner autonomy (Little, 1991; Daflizar, 2023). Recognizing and addressing these various factors can contribute to the development of learner autonomy and enhance language learning experiences for learners.

2.4.1 The role of motivation in fostering language learner autonomy

Motivation plays a crucial role in fostering language learner autonomy. Motivation provides the drive and energy for learners to engage in autonomous learning behaviours. Dörnyei (1994) emphasizes the importance of motivation in the language classroom, stating that it has a significant impact on learners' willingness to engage in autonomous learning activities. Motivated learners are more likely to set goals, actively seek opportunities for language practice, and persist in their learning efforts.

Motivation in learning is a multifaceted construct influenced by various components within educational contexts. Dörnyei (1994) delineates three distinct sets of motivational components that are specific to learning situations. Firstly, course-specific factors play a pivotal role in shaping students' engagement with the educational environment. These factors encompass elements such as interest, relevance, expectancy, and satisfaction, all of which influence how students interact with the syllabus, teaching materials, and learning tasks. Secondly, teacher-specific elements significantly contribute to the motivational landscape. Affiliative drive, the teacher's authority type (whether autonomy-supporting or controlling), and the teacher's role in socializing student motivation are crucial aspects within this set. Lastly, group-specific dynamics, including goal-orientedness, the norm and reward system, group cohesion, and the classroom goal structure, collectively impact the ways in which students interact within a learning group.

Motivation in second language (L2) learning is a nuanced and complex construct that operates at three distinct levels, as outlined by Dörnyei (1994). At the language level, L2 motivation is shaped by integrative and instrumental subsystems. Integrative factors include social and cultural elements, while instrumental factors include considerations of future career goals. The learner level is concerned with stable personality traits such as need for achievement and self-confidence and includes variables such as language anxiety and perceived competence. Finally, the learning situation level includes course-specific, teacher-specific, and group-specific motivational components, each of which influences how students engage with the learning environment. This three-level framework provides a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of L2 motivation and allows for a more nuanced approach to promoting effective language learning experiences (Dörnyei, 1994).

Kormos and Csizér (2014) further highlight the relationship between motivation, self-regulatory strategies, and autonomous learning behaviour, suggesting that motivated learners are more likely to employ effective learning strategies and demonstrate greater autonomy in their learning process.

Teachers also play a crucial role in motivating learners to become autonomous. Reeve (2006) emphasizes the importance of autonomy-supportive teaching, where teachers provide choice, relevance, and meaningful feedback to students, fostering their motivation, and promoting their autonomy. Motivation is therefore a key factor in fostering language learner autonomy, as it acts as a driving force behind learners' engagement in autonomous learning behaviours, and it is influenced by both internal and external factors (Dörnyei, 1994).

2.4.2 Teacher's role in promoting learner autonomy

The early 1990s saw a shift towards the implementation of autonomy in the classroom (Benson, 2007). In the language classroom, the role of the teacher is essential in fostering student autonomy in fostering students' motivation by creating a supportive and inclusive classroom atmosphere. Daflizar (2023) argues that the teacher should act as a facilitator, creating an environment that supports learner autonomy. In autonomous classrooms, teachers take on roles such as counsellor, facilitator, advisor, manager, and guide. This involves providing opportunities for learners to make choices, set goals, and reflect on their learning process. Teachers can encourage autonomy by incorporating learner-centred activities and projects that allow students to take ownership of their learning (Reeve, 2006).

Furthermore, Lee (2017) cautions against solely subsuming self-determination theory into research on language learner autonomy, suggesting the need for a broader perspective that encompasses learners' own beliefs, values, and goals. Teachers can engage in dialogue with students to better understand their individual needs and aspirations, and then provide guidance and support accordingly (Dörnyei, 1994).

The promotion of learner autonomy in language education is a nuanced and multifaceted endeavour, as articulated by Jiménez Raya and Vieira (2015). The authors emphasize the uniqueness of each path to autonomy, highlighting that there are no one-size-fits-all approaches or recipes for fostering autonomy in the classroom. Instead, diversity in pedagogies for autonomy is considered the norm. To guide educators in this complex task, Jiménez Raya and Vieira (2015) propose nine broad pedagogical principles for developing pedagogy for autonomy. These principles include encouraging responsibility, choice, and flexible control; providing opportunities for learning to learn and self-regulation; creating opportunities for cognitive autonomy support; fostering intrinsic motivation; accepting and providing for learner differentiation; encouraging action-orientedness; fostering conversational interaction; and promoting reflective inquiry.

The authors (Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015) underscore the significance of learning how to learn and self-regulation in the development of learner autonomy. The Common European Framework is presented as offering possibilities for autonomy development by transferring responsibility from the teacher to students and raising awareness of the learning process. Metacognitive learning strategies, such as advance preparation and self-assessment, are identified as essential components of self-regulated learning. Furthermore, teachers are acknowledged for their pivotal role in materials and task design to support learner autonomy.

The integration of approaches that enhance learner control over decisions and internal factors influencing responsibility is suggested as a viable strategy in pedagogy for autonomy. This approach involves organizational, procedural, and cognitive aspects of autonomy support, aiming to encourage learners' engagement and deep-level thinking. Ultimately, pedagogy for autonomy seeks to create an atmosphere of freedom for learners and teachers to collaboratively explore possibilities, empowering learners to become progressively involved in their own learning and fostering a sense of agency beyond the classroom (Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015).

On the whole, the teacher plays a pivotal role in promoting learner autonomy. By creating a learner-centred classroom environment, supporting students' motivation, and engaging in dialogue with learners, teachers can empower students to take ownership of their learning journey. This involves providing autonomy-supportive teaching practices that facilitate learners' goal setting, decision-making, and metacognitive processes (Reeve, 2006). Ultimately, it is through the teacher's guidance and encouragement that learners can develop the necessary skills and attitudes for autonomous language learning.

2.4.3 Learners' beliefs and readiness for autonomy

Benson (2008) notes that much of the literature often focuses on what teachers can do to promote learner autonomy, but rarely considers learner perspectives and learning outside the institution. Fewer studies have been undertaken that focus on learners' perspectives. However, learners' beliefs about their own abilities, the nature of language learning, and the role of the teacher can greatly influence their readiness to take control of their learning process. Cotterall (1995) emphasizes the importance of investigating learner beliefs, as they can impact learners' motivation and engagement with autonomous learning. Csizér and Öveges (2020) conducted a mixed-methods study on language learner autonomy and language planning, highlighting the interplay between learners' beliefs and autonomously directed behaviour. They found that learners who had more positive beliefs about their ability to self-regulate their learning engaged in a wider range of autonomous learning behaviours.

Another study conducted by Xhaferri et al. (2015) investigated both students' and teachers' beliefs at SEEU Tetovo and PH Zug about learner autonomy, which resulted in a comparative analysis. The study concludes that understanding and promoting learner autonomy (LA) among teachers and students in contexts similar to Zug and Tetovo is crucial. In Macedonia, where LA is a relatively new concept, traditional teaching methods hinder teacher autonomy, thus affecting students' ability to learn independently. In Zug, while some teachers

encourage autonomy, others still adopt a controlling role. Teachers in Tetovo should act as guides and motivators to foster LA. Recommendations include guiding students on planning their learning, increasing opportunities for creative work, and shifting towards learner-centred classrooms. Workshops for teachers to exchange ideas and develop awareness of LA are suggested, along with integrating LA modules into the curriculum. It's emphasized that first-year students should be taught autonomous learning methods to encourage conscious autonomy. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of incorporating LA into education and offer valuable insights for language teachers, students, and curriculum designers.

Lee (2017) raises the issue of subsuming self-determination theory into research on language learner autonomy, suggesting that autonomy should be examined through a multidimensional lens that considers different learner perspectives. Understanding learner beliefs and their readiness for autonomy can help educators design learner-centred approaches that promote autonomy and empower learners to take ownership of their learning process. Furthermore, it is important for teachers to adopt autonomy-supportive practices, such as those discussed by Reeve (2006), in order to create an environment that fosters learner autonomy. By recognizing the influence of learner beliefs and promoting autonomy, language educators can empower learners to become active, self-directed learners.

2.5 Approaches for fostering language learner autonomy

Implementing approaches and strategies to foster language learner autonomy is crucial for promoting students' self-directed learning and motivation. Following six distinct approaches proposed by Benson (2001/2011), Daflizar (2023) aimed to examine and evaluate them, highlighting the similarities and common strategies among these approaches.

One prominent approach is the **resource-based approach**, which places a strong emphasis on self-study, self-access, and distance learning. In this model, learners are encouraged to explore a variety of materials independently, supported by guidance services to guide them through their individual learning journeys. By providing resources and guidance, this approach enables learners to tailor their learning experiences to their specific needs and preferences.

Technology-based approaches harness the power of digital tools to promote learner autonomy. Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), e-Tandem learning, and Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) are utilized to provide diverse learning opportunities. These technologies facilitate interactive and engaging language learning experiences, allowing

learners to connect with resources and peers beyond the traditional classroom setting. This approach acknowledges the role of technology in enhancing autonomy by providing learners with access to a wealth of language resources and interactive platforms.

Curriculum-based approaches involve joint negotiation between teachers and learners in determining course content and procedures. This collaborative decision-making process empowers learners to decide what and how they learn and fosters a sense of responsibility and agency for their educational journey. By involving learners in the decision-making process, curriculum-based approaches contribute to the development of autonomous learners who are actively engaged in shaping their learning paths.

Teacher-based approaches emphasize the pivotal role of educators in promoting learner autonomy. This involves continuous professional development for teachers, raising awareness of their influence on learners' autonomy. Teachers act as facilitators, guiding students toward becoming self-directed learners. Through training and reflection, teachers can create a supportive environment that enhances autonomy by encouraging students to take initiative and responsibility for their learning.

Classroom-based approaches integrate various tools and strategies such as portfolios, cooperative learning, and self- and peer assessment. These techniques engage learners in decision-making and evaluation processes within the classroom context. Portfolios allow learners to showcase their progress and reflections, while cooperative learning fosters collaboration and shared responsibility. Self- and peer assessment provide opportunities for learners to critically evaluate their own work and that of their peers, contributing to the development of autonomy in learning and evaluation.

Learner-based approaches focus on developing metacognitive skills and strategies for self-regulation. These skills empower learners to monitor and regulate their learning processes, set goals, and make informed decisions about their learning strategies. By providing training in metacognition, learners are equipped with the tools to become more autonomous in their language learning endeavours.

Daflizar (2023) highlights that the promotion of learner autonomy is best achieved through a combination of these approaches. A comprehensive strategy that incorporates resource-based, technology-based, curriculum-based, teacher-based, classroom-based, and learner-based approaches provides a holistic framework for empowering language learners. By embracing these diverse approaches, educators can create an environment that fosters autonomous learners, capable of navigating their language learning journey with confidence and efficacy.

2.6 Playful foreign language learning as a means to enhance autonomy

Playful foreign language learning can be an effective strategy for enhancing learner autonomy. According to Cruaud (2023), incorporating playfulness into language learning can create a supportive environment that encourages learners to take ownership of their learning process. By engaging in activities that are enjoyable and interactive, learners are more likely to actively participate and make their own decisions about how they learn. This can foster a sense of autonomy and independence in language learners, allowing them to explore their own interests and preferences in language learning (Cruaud, 2023).

Furthermore, playful language learning can provide opportunities for learners to develop their problem-solving skills and creativity, key aspects of autonomy. Through games, role-plays, and other interactive activities, learners can practice and experiment with the language in a safe and enjoyable environment, without the fear of making mistakes. This not only boosts their confidence but also encourages them to take risks and explore different language learning strategies (Cruaud, 2023).

Cruaud considers that playfulness in language learning promotes a learner-centred approach, allowing learners to set their own goals, make choices, and take responsibility for their own learning. Learners actively engage with the language and develop their problem-solving skills, leading to greater autonomy. Therefore, integrating playful activities into foreign language classrooms can significantly contribute to the development of learner autonomy.

2.7 The use of technology to support learner autonomy

The use of technology has become increasingly important in supporting learner autonomy in language learning (Kormos & Csizér, 2014). Technology tools and resources provide learners with opportunities for self-guided and independent learning. For example, online language learning platforms offer a wide range of interactive exercises, video tutorials, and language practice activities that learners can access anytime and anywhere, allowing them to set their own learning pace and focus on specific areas they need to improve. Moreover, technology facilitates access to authentic language materials, such as podcasts, e-books, and online articles, which learners can explore independently to enhance their language skills and cultural understanding.

Digital tools like language learning apps and mobile applications provide learners with personalized learning experiences by allowing them to track their progress, set goals, and

receive immediate feedback. Furthermore, technology enables learners to engage in communicative activities beyond the classroom through online language exchange programs or virtual language communities (Beatty, 2010). These platforms connect learners from different parts of the world, enabling them to practice their target language with native speakers and peers. This kind of interaction promotes learner autonomy by fostering learner-initiated communication and providing opportunities for authentic language use outside the formal classroom setting. In short, the use of technology in language learning has the potential to enhance learner autonomy by providing learners with a wide range of resources, opportunities for self-guided learning, and access to authentic materials.

3. Research Methodology

This paper aims to investigate students' attitudes and beliefs towards autonomous learning, a dimension that remains essential but challenging within the broader context of language education. The research seeks to uncover learners' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities in the learning process, how these perceptions vary across different levels of education, and the autonomous activities learners engage in while learning English.

As already explained in the theoretical part of this paper, learners' beliefs about their own abilities, the nature of language learning, and the role of the teacher can greatly influence their readiness to take control of their learning process. Cotterall (1995) emphasizes the importance of investigating learner beliefs, as they can impact learners' motivation and engagement with autonomous learning. Csizér and Öveges (2020) highlight the interaction between learners' beliefs and autonomously directed behaviour, finding that positive self-regulation beliefs lead to more autonomous learning behaviours. Similarly, Xhaferri and her colleagues (2015) found that promoting learner autonomy among teachers and students is essential, particularly in regions where traditional teaching methods dominate.

Despite the existing body of research, there has been a lack of focused research on how these factors play out in the region of Miercurea Ciuc, Romania, making this study both timely and necessary. The present exploratory study aims to fill this gap by conducting a comprehensive survey of both secondary school and university students in this region, providing valuable insights to inform educational practices and foster a more supportive environment for autonomous language learning. To achieve the research aims, the following questions were formulated.

3.1 Research Questions

1. What are learners' perceptions regarding learner autonomy?
2. How do these perceptions vary across different educational levels?
3. What autonomous activities do students undertake while learning English?

3.2 Hypotheses

Our hypotheses are related to the second question. It is assumed that with age and educational level, student autonomy will develop and students will have greater commitment and responsibility for their own development and learning. Furthermore, it is assumed that there may be a strong correlation between language level and autonomy.

Hypothesis 1 – University students present a more autonomous attitude towards learning English, with age they become more mature in their learning habits.

Hypothesis 2 – Students with higher self-perceived language level show a more autonomous attitude towards learning English than their lower-level peers.

3.3 Participants

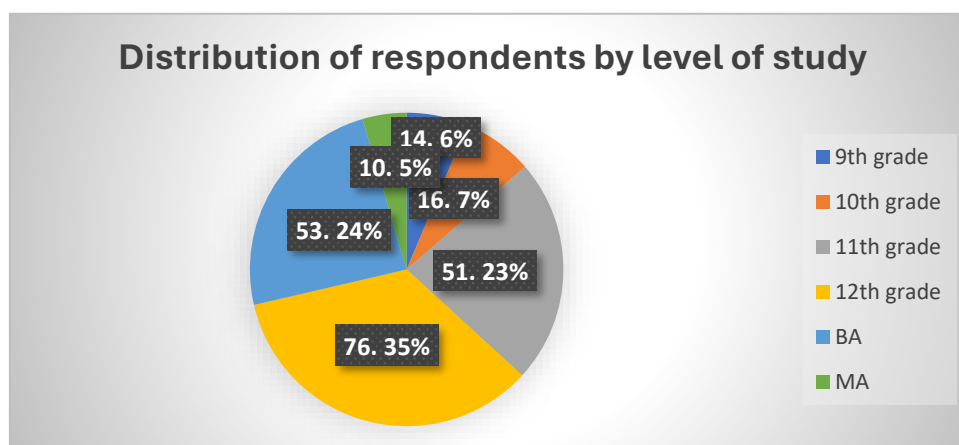
A total of 220 students took part in the study from different secondary schools with Hungarian language of instruction in Miercurea Ciuc (Csíkszereda) and university students from Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania enrolled in both BA and MA studies. At the time of data collection, they were all learning English as a foreign language in their respective institutions. In total there were 157 secondary school students from grades 9 through 12, and 63 university students. In terms of residence, there were almost equal proportions of urban (54.1%) and rural (45.9%) respondents. The gender breakdown of the survey was 60.9% female and 39.1% male. According to their own assessment, the respondents are at different language levels in English: 10.5% are at beginner level, 52.3% at intermediate level and 37.3% at advanced level.

Data collection was carried out using convenience sampling, meaning that the questionnaire used to collect data was distributed through different social media platforms to reach university students and was sent out to high school English teachers who asked their students during English class to fill out the questionnaire. When collecting the data, we tried to be as broad as possible, both in terms of grades and different specializations.

For secondary school students, the following proportions were obtained: 14 respondents from grade 9, 16 from grade 10, 51 from grade 11 and 76 from grade 12 (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1

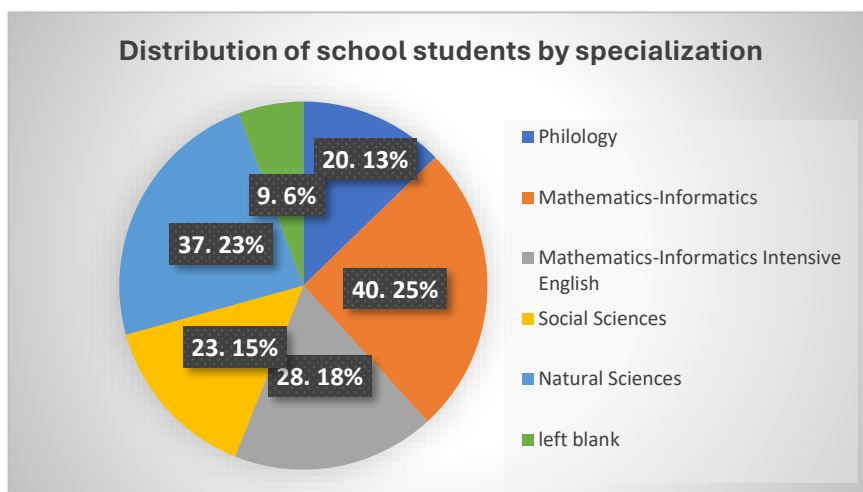
Distribution of respondents by level of study



In terms of specialization, as seen in Figure 2 below, 20 respondents from Philology, 40 from Mathematics-Informatics, 28 from Mathematics-Informatics Intensive English, 23 from Social Sciences and finally 37 from Natural Sciences (9 respondents did not respond to this question).

Figure 2

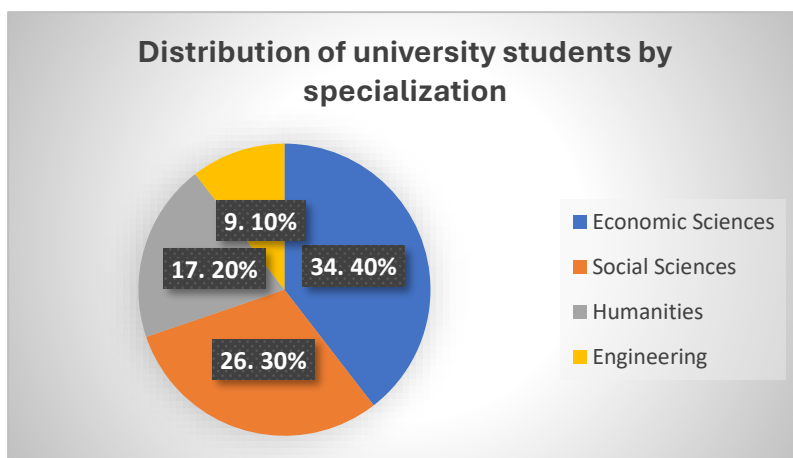
Distribution of high school students by specialization



The data collected from university students revealed the following distribution: 53 were pursuing Bachelor's degrees and 10 were enrolled in Master's programs. Regarding their fields of study, 34 students specialized in Economic Sciences, 26 in Social Sciences, 17 in Humanities, and 9 in Engineering (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 3

Distribution of university students by specialization



3.4 Instrument

As it was mentioned above, data collection was carried out using an online questionnaire (Google Form), written in the participants' native language, Hungarian, and consisted of 3 major parts: demographic data, Likert-scale statements and open-ended questions.

The methodological framework of the study adopts a mixed methodological approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative content analysis to explore nuanced dimensions of language learning. At the heart of this methodology is a carefully designed questionnaire that serves as the central instrument for data collection (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire aims to explore participants' perceptions and attitudes towards different aspects of language learning. Several elements have been adapted from previous research on the subject of language learner autonomy.

The questionnaire incorporates a diversity of open questions and scales. The first seven questions (1-7) cover demographic data, the respondents' current level of education and their field of study. The next three questions (8-10) ask about respondents' English language skills (*How do you rate your level of English?*), language use (*When do you use English outside of school?*), and language learning preferences (*How do you like to learn English? Alone / in pairs / in a group / with teacher guidance*)

The following section (question 11) employs a Likert scale, offering a nuanced range for responses from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). This scale is particularly utilized in the series of statements adapted from Cotterall's (1995) work, which examines critical themes in language learning, including the role of the teacher and learner, feedback, learner independence, confidence, and approaches to studying. The use of the Likert scale in this section allows for the quantification of subjective attitudes and beliefs, facilitating a systematic analysis of data patterns.

Additionally, the questionnaire integrates questions from the research conducted by Rushidi and Rushidi – Rexhepi (2015), who focus on autonomous learning activities and English language learning plans. These questions employ a different response scale – "never, rarely, sometimes, often, always" - to assess the frequency of participants' engagement in learning activities (see question 12 in Appendix 1). Covered topics include awareness of learning needs, self-effort, broader autonomous activities, self-esteem, usage of reference materials, and application of technology in language learning.

The questionnaire also includes questions adapted from Marjanovikj-Apostolovski's (2015) insights on teachers' perspectives on language learning autonomy, recontextualized to

reflect students' perspectives. These questions explore the shared and separate responsibilities of teachers and students in educational scenarios, such as ensuring progress in class, ensuring progress outside of class, etc. (see question 13 in Appendix 1).

The six statements in question 14 relate to the importance students attach to different aspects of autonomy in the educational context. For each statement they were asked to choose between the options of completely unimportant, not important, important or very important.

The last four (15-18) open-ended questions from the doctoral thesis of Szöcs (2017) are incorporated to collect rich, qualitative data, offering deeper insights into participants' personal experiences and perspectives on language learning. Open-ended questions ask about different aspects of an individual's experiences and perspectives on learning English. These questions explore the methods by which the individual initially learned English and ask for a brief account of the language learning process. The questions also seek to understand the contexts outside school in which English is used, exploring both current use and aspirations for further learning. They further explore how long the learner plans to study English, the level of proficiency they would like to achieve and the motivations behind these goals. They ask about possible declines in motivation to learn English, seeking insights into the possible reasons for such declines and strategies used to overcome the challenges. Finally, they ask for advice on effective approaches to English language learning for others.

This carefully composed questionnaire drawing from previously validated sources, and employing varied response scales and open-ended questions, underpins the study's comprehensive methodological approach. It not only enables the collection of valuable data on learner beliefs and attitudes but also enhances the analysis by weaving together qualitative and quantitative insights, thus offering a multifaceted understanding of the investigated phenomena.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process involved distributing the questionnaire to the participants. The questionnaire was open for completion from March 5 to April 5, 2024. For data collection, a convenience sampling approach was employed, where the questionnaire was distributed across various social media platforms (such as Facebook groups and university email addresses) targeting university students, and also distributed to high school English teachers who then requested their students to complete it during English classes. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided with instructions for completing the questionnaire. The anonymity and confidentiality of their responses were assured.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

Upon completion of data collection, the gathered responses were subjected to statistical analysis to identify trends, patterns, and relationships. Quantitative techniques were employed to analyse the data and address the research questions effectively. SPSS statistical software was utilized to facilitate data analysis and interpretation.

Responses to open-ended questions were analysed using qualitative content analysis, meaning the researcher tries to establish and group emerging patterns and trends based on the presence of words, themes and concepts.

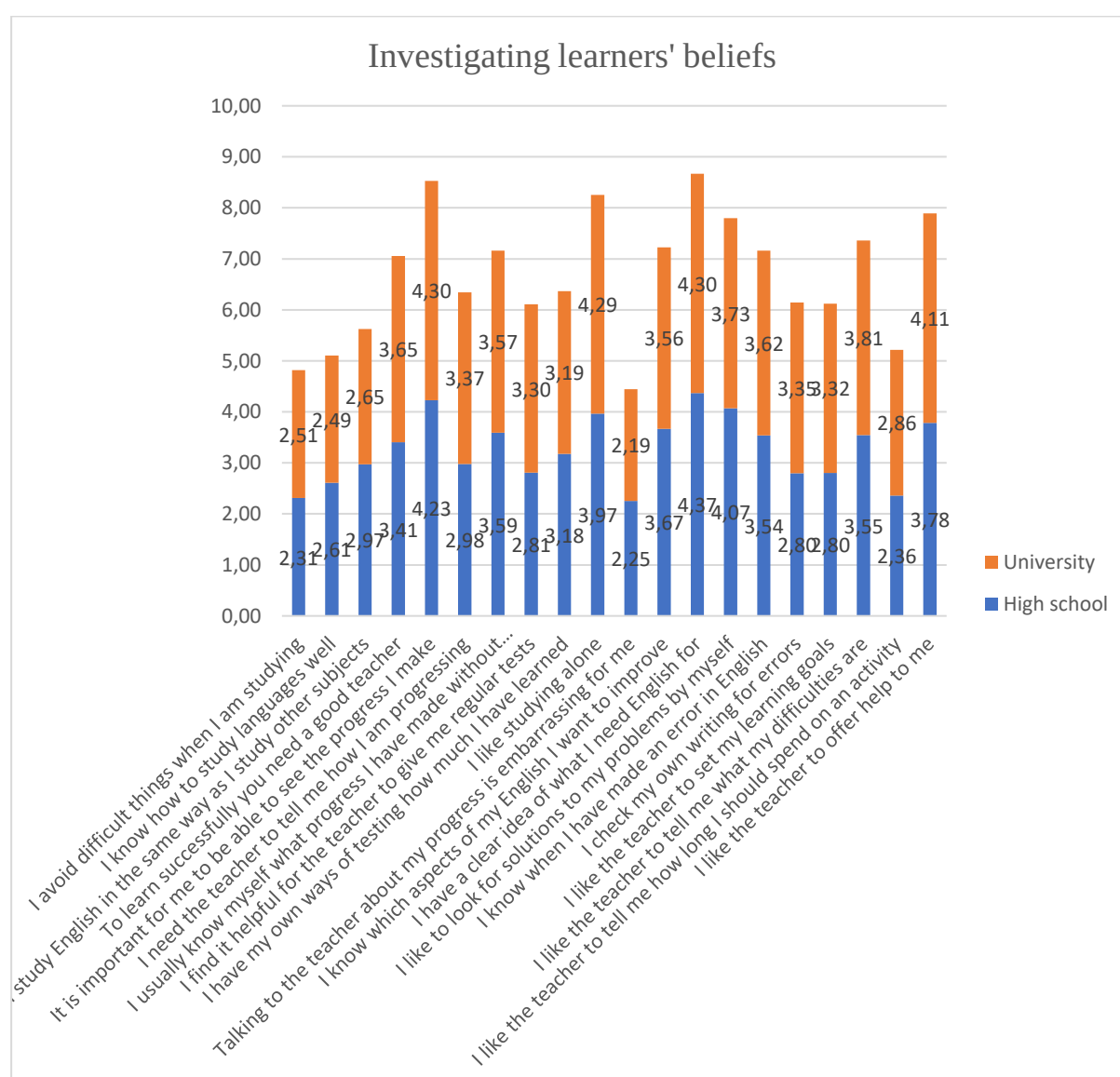
4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Likert scale analysis

The comparison of high school and university students' opinions about different aspects of learning the English language, as shown in Figure 4 below, provides a more complex picture of how learner autonomy develops and emerges.

Figure 4

Investigating learners' beliefs about learner autonomy



Role of the teacher:

The data indicates a nuanced view of the teacher's role in learner autonomy. Students generally agree that having a good teacher is crucial for successful learning, underscoring the teacher's foundational impact (*To learn successfully you need a good teacher* – 3.48). More specifically, learners are appreciative of teachers who identify their difficulties (*I like the teacher to tell me what my difficulties are* – 3.62) and offer help (*I like the teacher to offer help to me* – 3.88), suggesting that they value guidance that helps them recognize and navigate their learning challenges. However, they show a preference for setting their own learning goals and managing time spent on activities, as indicated by lower agreement scores (*I like the teacher to set my learning goals* – 2.95; *I like the teacher to tell me how long I should spend on an activity* – 2.5). This suggests a desire for greater self-regulation within structured learning environments.

Role of feedback:

Feedback is significantly valued, with students emphasizing the importance of seeing their progress (*It is important for me to be able to see the progress I make* – 4.25), demonstrating a strong desire for visible and measurable signs of learning advancement. However, the lower score on regular testing (*I find it helpful for the teacher to give me regular tests* – 2.95) and neutral response on needing teacher updates on progress (*I need the teacher to tell me how I am progressing* – 3.09) imply a preference for less frequent and perhaps less formal modes of feedback, preferring to observe their progress through more organic or self-directed means.

Learner independence:

Responses strongly reflect a high value on learner independence. High scores in favour of studying alone (*I like studying alone* – 4.06), knowing what aspects of English to improve (*I know which aspects of my English I want to improve* – 3.64), having a clear purpose for learning English (*I have a clear idea of what I need English for* – 4.35), and self-sourcing solutions to problems (*I like to look for solutions to my problems by myself* – 3.97) suggest a learner group that is confident in self-managed learning. These responses indicate a well-defined sense of personal learning objectives and strategies among the students.

Learner confidence in study ability:

While students show confidence in knowing when they have made errors (*I know when I have made an error in English* – 3.56) and understanding their own progress without external affirmation (*I usually know myself what progress I have made without the teacher telling me* – 3.59), they are slightly less confident in their overall language study skills (*I know how to study*

languages well – 2.88). This could suggest areas where targeted instructional support or strategy training might further empower their autonomous learning efforts.

Approach to studying:

The students gave low scores to statements suggesting differences in the methods used for studying English compared to other subjects (*I study English in the same way as I study other subjects* – 2.37), avoiding difficult tasks (*I avoid difficult things when I am studying* – 2.58), and feeling embarrassed to discuss their progress with teachers (*Talking to the teacher about my progress is embarrassing for me* – 2.24). These results suggest that students disagree with these statements; they are comfortable handling English in a manner similar to other subjects, do not avoid challenges, and feel at ease discussing their progress with teachers. These findings suggest that students have a proactive and confident attitude towards the challenges of language learning and are capable of managing their learning process independently.

Overall, the data portrays a group of learners who value autonomy, with specific appreciation for strategic guidance from teachers that enhances their independent learning capacities. While they desire less directive feedback and more control over their learning processes, they show a robust inclination towards self-directed study. Enhancements in instructional practices should therefore focus on fostering learner resilience in facing challenges and promoting strategies that enhance self-regulated learning.

4.2 Crosstabulation analysis on the relationship between self-perceived language level of students and their attitude towards autonomous learning

The crosstabulation analysis reveals significant relationships between students' self-perceived language levels and their attitudes towards autonomous learning. These findings highlight distinct differences in how beginners, intermediate, and advanced learners approach their language studies and perceive their learning autonomy. I selected those where significance level was below 0.05 since a p-value lower than or equal to a predetermined significance level (often 0.05 or 0.01) is considered to indicate a statistically significant result.

1. **Knowing effective language learning methods** (*I know how to study languages well.*)

A substantial proportion of beginners (65.2%) do not know how to study languages well, compared to 46.3% of advanced learners who claim they do (see Table 1 below). This indicates that as students progress, they gain better insight into effective language learning strategies.

Table 1

Crosstabulation analysis – I know how to study languages well

		I know how to study languages well					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
How do you assess your English proficiency? What level do you think your English is?	Advanced	5	16	23	23	15	82
		6.1%	19.5%	28.0%	28.0%	18.3%	100.0%
	Beginner	10	5	7	0	1	23
		43.5%	21.7%	30.4%	0.0%	4.3%	100.0%
	Intermediate	15	29	48	17	6	115
		13.0%	25.2%	41.7%	14.8%	5.2%	100.0%
Total		30	50	78	40	22	220
		13.6%	22.7%	35.5%	18.2%	10.0%	100.0%

2. **Necessity of a good teacher for successful learning** (*To learn successfully you need a good teacher.*)

Both beginners and intermediate learners (65.2%) agree that a good teacher is essential for successful learning. In contrast, only 36.6% of advanced learners share this view, suggesting a higher level of self-sufficiency and autonomy among advanced students.

3. Personal methods for self-assessment (*I have my own ways of testing how much I have learned.*)

A significant 60.9% of beginners do not have their own methods to test their learning, indicating a reliance on external validation. Nearly half of the advanced learners (47.6%), however, agree that they have personal methods for self-assessment, reflecting greater autonomy in evaluating their progress.

4. Awareness of areas needing improvement (*I know which aspects of my English I want to improve.*)

A notable 43.5% of beginners are unsure about which aspects of their English they want to improve. In contrast, 61.8% of intermediate learners and 67.1% of advanced learners clearly know which areas they need to focus on, showcasing a more targeted approach to language development as proficiency increases.

5. Clarity on the purpose of learning English (*I have a clear idea of what I need English for.*)

While all groups have high awareness of why they need English, beginners (48.1%) show a lower percentage compared to intermediate (86.1%) and advanced learners (86.6%). This indicates that higher proficiency levels correlate with a clearer understanding of learner needs and motivations to study English.

6. Awareness of making errors (*I know when I have made an error in English.*)

Among advanced learners, 74.4% can recognize when they make errors in English, whereas 47.8% of beginners do not have this awareness. Intermediate learners are almost evenly split, with 47% indicating they can sense errors. This awareness seems to develop significantly with increased proficiency.

7. Self-checking writing for errors (*I check my own writing for errors.*)

A large majority of beginners (69.5%) do not check and correct their own writing, contrasting with 56.1% of advanced learners who do. Among intermediate learners, 40.9% do not engage in self-checking. This trend indicates that the practice of self-correction grows with language proficiency.

8. Preference for teacher's help (*I like the teacher to offer help to me.*)

Despite their autonomy, 62.2% of advanced learners still appreciate teacher assistance, compared to 52.2% of beginners who completely agree with needing help, and a significant

75.6% of intermediate learners who also value teacher support. This suggests that regardless of proficiency, teacher support remains valued, though to varying degrees.

Conclusion of the crosstabulation analyses

The analyses indicate that as students' language proficiency increases, so does their sense of autonomy and self-sufficiency in learning. Beginners rely more on teacher guidance and lack self-assessment techniques, while advanced learners demonstrate a higher level of independence and self-awareness in their learning process. However, the preference for teacher support remains significant across all levels, emphasizing the role of educators in facilitating autonomous learning. The findings validate the second hypothesis, which proposed that students with higher self-perceived language levels exhibit a more autonomous attitude towards learning English than their lower-level peers.

4.3 Autonomous learning activities and English language learning plans

In terms of autonomous learning activities and English language learning plans, there is not much difference between university students and secondary school students (see Table 2 below).

Table 2

Autonomous learning activities and English language learning plans

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
I make decisions and set goals of my learning.	3.35	.989
I make good use of my free time in studying English.	2.64	1.026
I preview before the class.	2.21	1.062
I practice English outside the class also such as: record my own voice; speak to other people in English.	3.30	1.308
I use audiovisual materials to develop my speech such as: listen to BBC, watch English movies, read English newspapers etc.	3.95	1.192
I note my strengths and weaknesses in learning English and improve them.	3.16	1.016
Besides the contents prescribed in the course, I read extra materials in advance.	2.09	1.167
I use internet and computers to study and improve English.	3.94	1.077

The overall values show that both groups scored lower on statements such as “I preview the material before class” (2.21) and “I read additional materials beyond the curriculum” (2.09). However, they scored significantly higher on “I use audiovisual materials to improve my

language skills” (3.95) and “I use the internet and other applications to enhance my language skills” (3.94).

These findings suggest that, while students are not inclined to engage in reading either for class preparation or beyond the curriculum, they show a strong preference for using audiovisual and internet-based content to develop their language skills. Consequently, teachers, considering these findings, could provide additional materials that do not require reading but instead utilize internet applications and audiovisual resources.

4.4 Shared and separate responsibilities of teachers and students in educational scenarios

Figure 5

Learner and teacher responsibilities based on high school students' answers

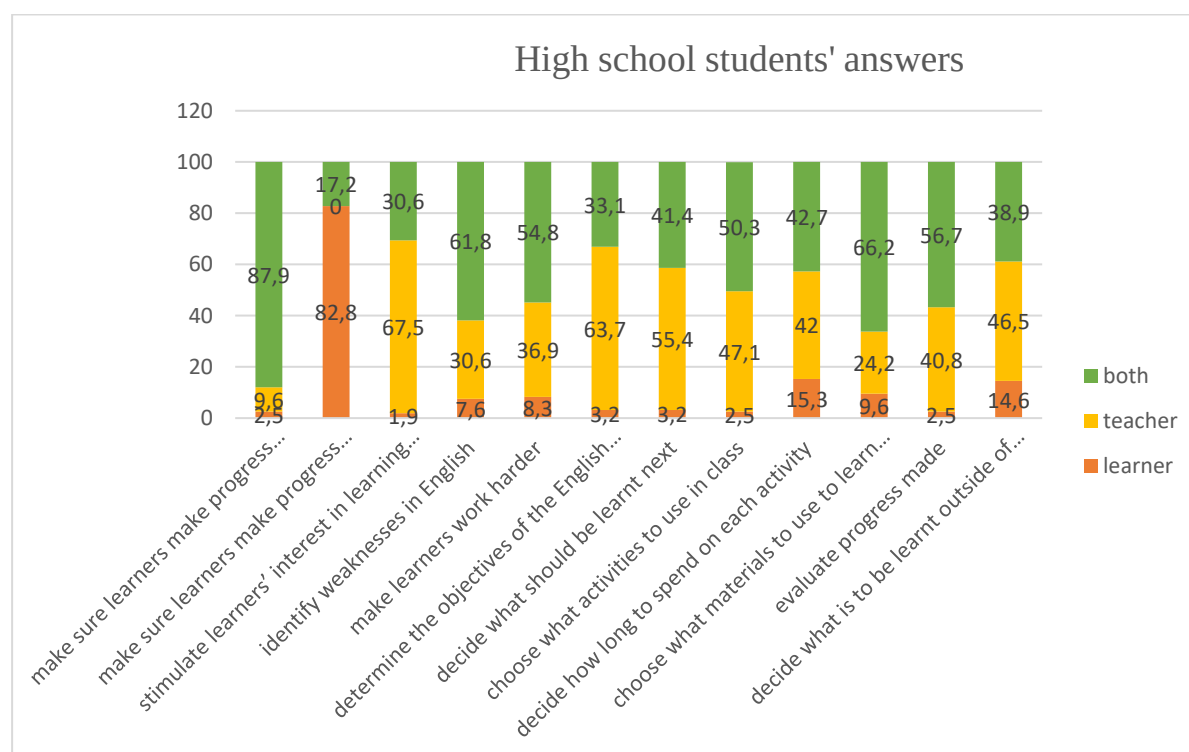
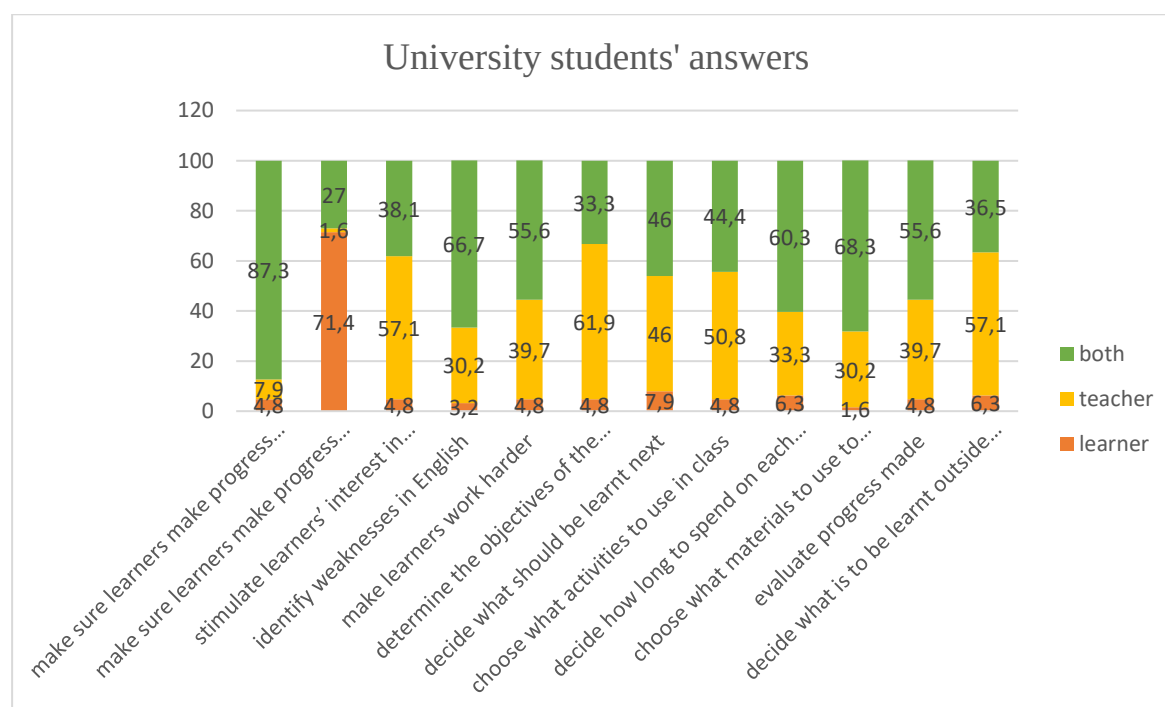


Figure 6

Learner and teacher responsibilities based on university students' answers



In comparing Figure 5 and 6 above, several trends become apparent. Secondary school students tend to attribute more responsibility to the teacher in the majority of categories, although there is recognition of their role in the learning process. This suggests a developing sense of autonomy that is still quite teacher-dependent. For example, regarding the statement “Stimulate learners’ interest in learning English” secondary school students identified the teacher’s role as 67.5%, whereas university students only attributed 57.1%. Similarly, when asked about “Deciding what should be learnt next” secondary school students assigned 55.4% of responsibility to teachers, whereas university students allocated only 46%. Additionally, in the category of “Deciding how long to spend on each activity” secondary school students attributed 42% of responsibility to teachers, while university students indicated only 33.3%.

University students, on the other hand, show a slight increase in acknowledging their own role in the learning process, indicating a more mature autonomy. There is a greater balance between the roles of teacher and learner, with a tendency for students to take more responsibility for their learning outcomes, especially in deciding on learning activities. For instance, university students show a higher inclination towards deciding what should be learnt next, with 46% attributing this responsibility equally to both teachers and themselves, compared to 41.4% among high school students. Additionally, in terms of deciding how much time to spend on each activity, university students show a higher preference for shared responsibility, with 60.3%

indicating this, compared to 42% among high school students. These trends suggest a shift towards greater autonomy and decision-making among university-level learners in their educational journey.

In the case of both groups, the responsibility for ensuring that learners make progress outside class is seen predominantly as the students' role (82.8% and 71.4%), indicating that students are aware of their own responsibility and its impact on their development. On the other hand, stimulating learners' interest in learning English is predominantly viewed as the teachers' role (67.5% and 57.1%), as well as determining the objectives of the English course (63.7% and 61.9%). This suggests that educators play a crucial role in motivating and guiding students in their language learning process.

Certain responsibilities are seen as shared between students and teachers. For instance, ensuring learners make progress during lessons is acknowledged as both parties' responsibility (87.9% and 87.3%). Similarly, identifying weaknesses in English (61.8% and 66.7%), making learners work harder (54.8% and 55.6%), choosing materials to use for learning English (66.2% and 68.3%), and evaluating progress made (56.7% and 55.6%) are tasks perceived to involve collaboration between students and teachers, highlighting a cooperative approach to language education.

Overall, the transition from secondary to university education appears to accompany an evolution towards greater learner autonomy. This reflects a developmental progression in self-directed learning, with university students demonstrating increased confidence in their ability to control and evaluate their educational experiences. This could inform educators about the shifting needs of students as they progress through their academic careers, emphasizing the importance of gradually transferring more responsibility to learners and encouraging them to cultivate their autonomous learning skills.

4.5 Importance of different aspects of autonomy in the educational context according to students

Using English outside the classroom and becoming more autonomous in language learning play important roles for both groups, highlighting the significance of practical language use and self-directed learning (see Table 3 below). However, expressing opinions on what should be learned in the classroom is considered the least important aspect for both groups. This suggests that the organization of lessons and the selection of classroom materials are predominantly seen as the teacher's responsibility. In contrast, setting their own learning goals is more emphasized among

university students compared to secondary school students, indicating a greater focus on personal responsibility and goal-setting at the higher education level.

Table 3

Different aspects of autonomy in the educational context

Statements	Secondary school students		University students	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Using English outside of class	3.68	.546	3.68	.534
Learning grammar outside of class	2.80	.723	3.25	.671
Becoming more autonomous in language learning	3.46	.594	3.56	.532
Expressing opinions on what should be learned in the classroom	2.86	.645	2.92	.768
Learning from peers, not just from teachers	3.35	.649	3.41	.613
Setting your own learning goals	3.41	.680	3.62	.521

4.6 Contexts of using English among participant students

In analysing the information provided by respondents, we identified different contexts in which English is used. These data highlight the diversity of the widespread use of English, which underlines its global relevance and applicability in a wide range of contexts. The most common themes and their relevance in the context of language learning are detailed below:

- 1. Watching movies, series, videos, and listening to podcasts in English;**

“I usually watch films, short films and TV series in English, but I also like to expand my vocabulary by reading books in English or communicating with people from abroad.”

“I watch films in English, sometimes with subtitles, I like a lot of English-speaking bands and artists, I learn lyrics quickly.”

- 2. Reading books, articles and engaging with educational materials:**

Engaging with English language content is a prevalent method of language use outside the classroom. This form of engagement not only serves as entertainment but also acts as an immersive learning experience, exposing learners to various dialects, accents, and cultural contexts. It enhances listening skills, expands vocabulary, and provides insights into idiomatic expressions and slang, making it a multifaceted approach to language acquisition. (*“Reading posts, articles, watching videos”, “I usually consume English*

content for entertainment on a daily basis (reading online comics and watching YouTube videos)”

3. Social media and online environments:

The use of English on social media platforms and other online environments is another significant area of application. These digital spaces allow for real-time communication with a global audience, offering endless opportunities for practicing reading and writing skills. Furthermore, navigating these platforms in English can introduce learners to current global trends, debates, and cultural nuances, facilitating a deeper understanding of the language in its contemporary use (*“On online platforms, in all apps such as Instagram, TikTok”, “Social media, keeping in touch with people abroad, reading books”*).

4. Vacation and travel:

The use of English during vacations and travels remains a key context for its use. This practical deployment of language skills for interacting with new cultures and navigating unfamiliar settings underscores the practical benefits of language proficiency (*“On trips abroad and in larger cities (within the country)”*; *“When traveling”*; *“On holidays, talking to friends abroad”*).

5. Volunteering and participation in international mobility programs:

Volunteering activities, participation in international mobility programs like the Erasmus program, are essential for broadening the scope of language learning. These activities extend the learning experience beyond the traditional classroom setting, fostering linguistic competencies in a variety of contexts. They offer learners the opportunity to apply their language skills in meaningful, real-world situations, promoting personal, academic, and professional growth, as well as contributing positively to the global community (*“When volunteering or communicating with friends in a foreign language”*; *“Erasmus, travel, general discussions”*).

These categories emphasize the diverse and rich contexts in which the English language is utilized outside of academic settings, highlighting the importance of real-world applications in enhancing language proficiency and learner autonomy. Each category represents a unique set of opportunities for learners to engage with the language in ways that align with their interests and goals, illustrating the multifaceted nature of language learning and its relevance to various aspects of daily life.

When comparing the answers of university students and school students to the question of how they use English outside of school, it is found that both groups use English in a wide range

of contexts, with a particular emphasis on online environments, entertainment and the integration of the language into everyday life. The answers of university students suggest slightly more varied uses, while the answers of school students are dominated by the internet and video games, probably reflecting their age group and interests.

4.7 Respondents' English language learning experiences

Analysing the English language learning experiences shared by respondents, we can categorize their strategies into distinct methods, each illustrating a unique approach towards acquiring language proficiency:

1. Digital interaction and gaming:

A significant number of respondents highlighted the use of digital platforms, and online gaming as effective methods for learning English. These environments offer immersive experiences that facilitate both casual and structured interactions in English, promoting practical language use in conversational contexts (*"I used to play a lot of games in English and we used to communicate almost every day in voice chat."*; *"It worked automatically, the social media, video games and browsing the internet indirectly produced results."*)

2. Media consumption:

Watching movies, series, and listening to music in English were frequently cited across responses. This category underscores the role of entertainment and media in language learning, offering exposure to varied accents, colloquial language, and cultural contexts, thereby enhancing listening comprehension and vocabulary (*"90% of my vocabulary comes from movies"*; *"From a very young age, I started watching videos on topics that interested me: make-up, sports, skincare. I developed a basic vocabulary; I understood the structure of language. Later I also started reading. Now I do everything in English"*).

3. Educational settings and formal instruction:

Formal education, including school lessons and participation in specific training courses, forms a foundational aspect of language learning for many. This theme highlights the importance of structured learning environments and professional guidance in acquiring grammatical structures and foundational vocabulary (*"I had a very good English teacher in primary school, who taught us so much basic grammar that it's very easy for us to do in high school. Also, I developed my vocabulary by watching English films and playing video games in English"*).

4. Reading and self-study:

Engaging with written content in English, including books and online articles, was mentioned as a key strategy. This approach facilitates an in-depth understanding of language structure, expands vocabulary, and improves reading comprehension skills (*“For me, regular reading in English (on a pleasant-to-useful basis) helped me to make great progress in a relatively short time. However, since I’ve been studying consciously (e.g. for exams), I pay more attention to everything English, I look up everything, and there are plenty of opportunities to learn online for free from qualified teachers (I mostly watch videos on YouTube). And of course, school is part of the development. :)”*).

5. Social and practical use:

Communicating with English speakers, both in digital environments and during travels, was identified as a crucial practice. This real-world application of English reinforces learning by putting language skills into practice, enhancing both spoken fluency and listening comprehension (*“I learnt English by being abroad when I was very young and I met a foreign person and talked to him a lot and learnt a lot. Besides, my sister is an English teacher and I learnt a lot from her too”*).

Together, these topics highlight the diverse approach to English language learning, where individuals use a combination of digital tools, educational resources, media and personal creativity. It seems that by immersing learners in English language learning through a variety of channels that suit their interests and lifestyles, language learning can become embedded in their everyday lives, making the language learning process more engaging and effective.

The role of a good teacher in the journey of learning English is frequently highlighted by the students as a crucial element for success. *“I really liked my English teacher in secondary school and I learnt a lot from her because she is a very inspiring person.”*

A good teacher not only imparts linguistic knowledge but also inspires, motivates, and guides learners towards effective strategies and resources for language acquisition. Their influence extends beyond traditional teaching methods. This supportive and engaging approach fosters a deeper connection with the language, making the process of learning English more enjoyable and effective for students.

Analysing the English learning experiences of university students versus school students reveals distinct nuances in their approaches. University students tend to adopt a more holistic strategy, integrating formal education with self-directed learning activities. This group

often emphasizes the importance of diversifying their learning methods, such as engaging with complex texts and practicing spoken English in real-life situations, suggesting a strategic and goal-oriented mindset towards achieving proficiency.

In contrast, school students' strategies frequently align with incorporating English into their leisure activities, like gaming and watching English-language media. School students seem to capitalize on the immersive aspects of entertainment and digital platforms to enhance their language skills, often viewing English learning as an extension of their hobbies.

While both groups recognize the value of formal education, university students often cite a broader array of supplementary self-study techniques, indicating a transition towards more independent learning styles. On the other hand, school students demonstrate a reliance on interactive and visually stimulating content, which may cater more directly to their developmental stages and interests.

The contrast between the two groups underscores the evolutionary path in language learning strategies, moving from an entertainment-focused approach in school to a multifaceted and self-driven method in university. This evolution reflects not only a deepening commitment to learning English but also an adaptation of strategies to fit changing lifestyles, interests, and educational environments.

4.8 English language learning goals and desired proficiency levels

Analysing the responses about English learning goals and desired proficiency levels, several key aspirations and motivations emerge:

- The goal of reaching C1 level proficiency is frequently cited, underscoring a desire for a high operational command of English. This reflects an ambition to engage effectively in complex environments, balancing both the need for nuanced communication and the practical benefits of fluency in professional, academic, and social settings.

“C1, I think it can be useful in many places and can also provide security in certain situations, perhaps an advantage at a job, each language is a new opportunity.”

- Equally significant are aspirations towards C2 level proficiency and achieving native-like fluency. These ambitions denote not just a wish for comprehensive language command but also a pursuit of excellence, allowing for seamless integration in native English contexts and the highest forms of linguistic and cultural fluency (*“I would like to speak at a near-native level one day, so that I can make new friends when I travel*

later on and not let my language deficiency be an obstacle.”; “I want C2 level, as I want to work abroad in the future”).

- Aspirations towards B2 level proficiency also emerge, indicating a practical and foundational goal for many learners. B2 level signifies the ability to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, making regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. This level is often viewed as a crucial milestone for academic studies, professional advancement, and personal confidence in using English (*“I want a B2 exam, because without it I will not get a degree at the university where I want to study”).*
- The concept of life-long learning resonates strongly, reflecting a commitment to ongoing language acquisition beyond achieving specific proficiency milestones. This outlook celebrates the journey of learning as continuous, driven by curiosity, the pursuit of personal and professional development, and the adaptability to navigate a globalized world. It acknowledges the evolving nature of language and its uses, advocating for a sustained engagement with English to remain proficient and relevant (*“I think it is a lifelong process and there is always room for improvement.”; “I want to improve my language skills constantly”).*
- Linking language learning to professional opportunities, some learners explicitly identify English proficiency as a key to unlocking global career paths and enhancing job prospects. This practical orientation highlights the instrumental value of English in today’s professional landscape (*“I’d like to reach intermediate level in my studies, because it’s easier to get a job”).*

These themes collectively reveal a landscape where language learning is viewed not just in terms of reaching a specific proficiency level but as a lifelong endeavour that intertwines with personal growth, professional aspirations, and the intrinsic value of cultural and intellectual enrichment. English is perceived as a vital tool for navigating the complexities of the modern world, with learners embracing both the challenge and the joy of continuous improvement and engagement with the language.

When comparing the English learning aspirations of university students with those of school students, a nuanced picture emerges, revealing differences in motivation, goals, and perspectives on the learning journey.

University students often set their sights on achieving the highest levels of proficiency, like C2 or native-like fluency, reflecting a deep commitment to language mastery. This ambition suggests not only a desire for linguistic excellence but also an understanding of English as a

critical tool for global professional and academic opportunities. Moreover, university students frequently view English learning as an ongoing process, indicative of a life-long learning approach. They recognize the importance of continuous engagement with the language, aiming to refine and maintain their skills over time.

In contrast, school students express a broader range of motivations, including interest in the language and its practical benefits, such as travel and cultural exchange. Their goals, often centred around reaching C1 level, are driven by a desire for confident communication in diverse situations. While school students also acknowledge the value of English for future opportunities, their approach to learning reflects a blend of personal enjoyment and practical utility. There is an implied recognition of English's role in opening doors to future possibilities, yet their aspirations are also closely tied to current interests and the immediate applicability of the language.

The difference between the two groups can be attributed to their respective stages of life and education. University students, possibly more focused on career and academic aspirations, prioritize achieving the highest possible command of English. School students, meanwhile, balance their learning goals with personal interests and the immediate benefits of language skills, embodying a more exploratory and open-ended approach to language acquisition.

4.9 Motivational fluctuations in English language learning

The responses regarding decreases in motivation for learning English show a significant pattern:

- Many learners cite feelings of ineffectiveness, unmet high expectations, and experiences of failure, often leading to disappointment and decreased motivation. This suggests the need for setting realistic goals and celebrating small achievements to foster a sense of progress (*“Reduced motivation due to inefficiency”*).
- The attitude of teachers, including negativity or indifference, plays a significant role in influencing motivation. Positive reinforcement and supportive teaching strategies can significantly enhance learners' engagement and motivation (*“The teacher's strong, negative criticism reduced my motivation when I made a mistake in my speech. I got over it when I promised myself that I would prove I could learn English just for that”*).
- After reaching a certain level, some students struggle with a lack of direction or perceived stagnation, highlighting the importance of setting new learning objectives to maintain motivation (*“After passing the English exam, my motivation decreased a bit*

but I used and practiced the same way.”; “The longer we learn a language, the less progress we make, and therefore the less motivation we have”).

- The inability to practice regularly can lead to a decline in motivation. Creating more opportunities for language use in everyday situations or through language exchange can revive interest (*“Lack of time, but I tried to fit it into my daily schedule later.”; “Other things came into my life that kept me from practicing and I fell out of it. It was hard to get back into the mood”*).
- Anxiety about speaking and limited time are common barriers. Strategies like time management for language learning and gradual exposure to speaking can reduce these concerns (*“I am afraid to speak and because of anxiety I cannot express myself properly. I am trying to remedy the problem”*).
- The setup of the educational system and curriculum, especially an overemphasis on grammar or a curriculum that becomes monotonous, can discourage enthusiasm. Incorporating diverse, real-world language use and activities that cater to different learner types can enhance motivation (*“I think it’s the fault of the teachers and the system, who expect you to always focus on grammar, so you can’t really learn English.”; “Grammar can become very monotonous after a while, and even learning at school can become too monotonous, so I thought it would be useful to introduce alternative learning methods”*).
- Stress related to language exams and negative peer influence can also reduce motivation. Building a supportive learning community and focusing on the personal benefits of language learning, rather than external validation, can help overcome these challenges (*“I think that motivation is also affected by poor assessment, constant bullying from peers and the teacher’s attitude”*).

Incorporating these insights, it’s evident that overcoming motivational declines in English learning involves understanding the specific causes and implementing targeted strategies. Whether through adapting learning goals, diversifying learning methods, seeking supportive environments, or employing stress management techniques, the path to sustained motivation is personalized and requires a conscious effort to navigate the challenges associated with language learning.

The examination of responses regarding decreases in motivation for learning English reveals an interesting dynamic between instances where learners take responsibility for their

motivational challenges and where they attribute these challenges to external factors. This analysis offers insights into learners' perceptions of control and accountability in their language learning journey.

4.9.1 Cases where learners take responsibility

- Learners recognizing their failure to find regular practice opportunities often see this as a personal shortfall. They understand that seeking out or creating situations for language use is within their control.
- While some learners internalize feelings of ineffectiveness or failure to meet high expectations as personal shortcomings, there is also an acknowledgment that external support and guidance (or lack thereof) can significantly influence these perceptions.
- When discussing anxiety about speaking and the challenge of finding time for study, some learners reflect on personal strategies for managing these issues, indicating an acceptance of responsibility for overcoming these barriers.

4.9.2 Cases where responsibility is attributed externally

- Negative experiences attributed to teachers' attitudes—such as indifference, negativity, or personal conflict—are often seen as external challenges that learners feel they have little control over. The responsibility for motivation in these cases is placed on the teacher's behaviour.
- Criticisms of the educational system or curriculum design, including an overemphasis on grammar or lack of engaging content, are viewed as institutional failings. Learners see these as external factors impacting their motivation, with the responsibility for change lying with educational authorities.
- External pressures, including the stress of exams and negative peer influence, are also seen as external challenges. Learners may feel victimized by these situations, viewing the responsibility for their motivational decline as lying with the educational context or social environment rather than with themselves.

This analysis demonstrates that learners' perceptions of responsibility for maintaining motivation in language learning are complex, influenced by both personal agency and external factors.

4.9.3 Conceptual differences in motivational declines

University students might be more inclined to attribute motivational declines to external academic pressures and personal expectations. Being at a higher educational level, they often face intense demands from their studies, including the stress of achieving high grades, meeting graduation requirements, and preparing for post-graduate opportunities. This group may also experience stress and anxiety related to language exams or achieving proficiency levels necessary for academic or professional advancement. However, they might also take personal responsibility for overcoming these challenges, recognizing the importance of self-motivation and resilience in achieving their long-term goals.

School students, on the other hand, might attribute decreases in motivation more to external social factors, such as peer influence and teacher attitudes. The social environment of school, including the support or discouragement from peers and the quality of interaction with teachers, can significantly impact their motivation. Challenges like monotony in curriculum or lack of practical application of language skills might also be highlighted. Yet, when it comes to overcoming these motivational barriers, school students might look more towards external changes—such as a change in teaching methods or curriculum—rather than internal strategies.

4.10 Respondents' suggestions for effective English language learning

Based on the surveyed students' responses, the most common suggestions for effectively learning English can be grouped into several key strategies, each contributing to a holistic approach to language acquisition.

- Students highly recommend engaging with the language in natural and enjoyable contexts. Watching movies and series, playing video games, and pursuing hobbies in English allow learners to experience the language as it's used in various settings, mirroring the way one learns their first language (*"Watch films and TV series, if they like to play games, they can put the game on English and after a while they will learn the words"*).
- Making friends with English speakers and participating in programs like the Erasmus exchange offer invaluable opportunities for real-life conversation practice (*"More practice, participation in Erasmus programs"*; *"Try to make friends and talk to native English speakers, or simply read books/novels in English. That is the most effective way"*).

- Building a solid foundation with the help of a teacher and engaging in daily practice are essential for steady progress. Setting personal goals, staying motivated, and not giving up in the face of challenges encourage a disciplined approach to learning. Utilizing language learning apps and attending English camps or workshops can supplement traditional learning methods with interactive and targeted exercises (*“Learn the basics from your teachers, and once you have that, get to know the language and try to use it all the time”*).
- Taking advantage of the technology by changing the device settings to English, using apps such as Duolingo and Xeropan, and consuming English-language media, including listening to podcasts and translating lyrics, offers daily immersion and practice. These tools ensure that learners have continuous exposure to English, improve listening skills and expand vocabulary in a context-rich environment (*“Do what they like, but in English. Make their hobby the ‘curriculum’.”*).

Overall, these strategies underscore the importance of a balanced learning approach that integrates formal education with immersive experiences, social interaction, consistent practice, and the strategic use of technology and media. By combining these elements, learners can navigate the journey of English language acquisition more effectively, turning the process into an engaging and rewarding part of their daily lives.

5. Conclusions

The present study aimed to explore the dynamics of learner autonomy among secondary and university students, employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to gain a deeper understanding of educational perspectives at different stages. The findings reveal significant insights into the progression and consistency of autonomous learning attitudes across different educational levels.

Quantitatively, the use of Likert scale assessments revealed that the general trends in perceptions of learner autonomy are remarkably similar between high school and university students. This suggests a consistency in the development of autonomous learning attitudes despite the different educational settings. Such a trend underscores the idea that educational environments, whether in secondary or higher education, play a crucial role in nurturing autonomy. The similarity in responses across the two groups suggests that the foundations of autonomous learning are established early and continue to develop in a relatively stable manner through successive educational stages.

Qualitatively, responses to open-ended questions not only corroborated these findings but also enriched our understanding by providing contextual insights and personal narratives that illustrate the complexities of fostering autonomy. This qualitative data complements the quantitative analysis by highlighting the nuanced ways in which students at both educational levels recognize and engage with their learning processes.

Reflections on research questions and hypotheses

1. **What are learners' perceptions regarding learner autonomy?** The findings indicate that both secondary and university students recognize the importance of learner autonomy. However, the depth of understanding and engagement with autonomous learning strategies increases with educational level.
2. **How do these perceptions vary across different educational levels?** Secondary students are beginning to understand and value autonomy, but they still rely significantly on teacher guidance. In contrast, university students exhibit a higher degree of self-sufficiency and proactive engagement in their learning processes. This variation aligns with the hypothesis that higher educational levels correlate with greater learner autonomy.
3. **What autonomous activities do students undertake while learning English?** Both secondary and university students participate in various autonomous learning activities.

However, university students are more likely to engage in activities that require higher levels of self-regulation and critical thinking, such as setting personal learning goals and using diverse resources to enhance their language skills.

Moreover, the crosstabulation analysis indicated that as students' language proficiency increases, so does their sense of autonomy and self-sufficiency in learning. Beginners tend to rely more on teacher guidance and lack self-assessment techniques, while advanced learners demonstrate a higher level of independence and self-awareness in their learning processes. However, the preference for teacher support remains significant across all levels, emphasizing the enduring role of educators in facilitating autonomous learning. This reinforces the notion that autonomy does not mean complete independence from teachers but rather involves a supportive dynamics where teachers guide and support learners towards greater self-sufficiency. The study's findings validate the hypothesis that students with higher self-perceived language levels exhibit a more autonomous attitude towards learning English than their lower-level peers. This has important implications for language education, suggesting that fostering learner autonomy should be a gradual process that is closely linked to the development of language proficiency. Educational strategies should therefore be tailored to progressively build autonomy, starting with more structured guidance and gradually encouraging more independent learning practices as students' proficiency and confidence grow.

Practical implications and future research

One practical implication of this study is the evident preference of students for audiovisual content and internet-based applications over traditional reading materials. This suggests that teachers should incorporate more multimedia resources and online tools into their curriculum to engage students more effectively. By using platforms like educational videos, podcasts, and interactive online exercises, teachers can better respond to students' preferences and enhance their autonomous learning experiences. Moreover, educators should be aware of the different levels of autonomy that students exhibit and tailor their instructional strategies accordingly. For secondary students, it is crucial to provide structured support and gradually introduce autonomous activities. For university students, teachers can focus on refining and expanding their autonomous skills, encouraging more independent exploration and critical thinking.

Future research could expand on this study by exploring the impact of specific educational interventions designed to enhance learner autonomy. Longitudinal studies tracking

the development of autonomy from secondary to higher education would provide deeper insights into how autonomous learning attitudes and behaviours evolve over time. Additionally, examining the role of cultural and contextual factors in shaping learner autonomy could offer valuable perspectives for developing tailored educational strategies in diverse learning environments. Investigating teachers' beliefs about learner autonomy and their instructional practices can also provide a more comprehensive understanding of how educational environments influence the development of autonomous learning.

In conclusion, this study confirms that fostering learner autonomy is a multifaceted endeavour that requires a nuanced understanding of the educational landscape at different levels. By integrating both quantitative consistency and qualitative depth, the findings advocate for a balanced educational approach that progressively nurtures autonomy. This approach prepares learners not only for academic success but also for lifelong learning, equipping them with the skills and motivation necessary to navigate the evolving demands of their educational and professional futures. The study highlights the importance of both teacher support and student independence in cultivating a productive learning environment, ultimately contributing to the broader discourse on educational practices and learner development.

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Appendix 1

Online kérdőív

1. Nemed

- ☐ Nő
- ☐ Férfi

2. Tanulmányi szint

- ☐ iskola
- ☐ egyetem

3. Hányadik osztályba jársz? (Ha iskolás vagy)

4. Milyen osztályba jársz? (pl. társadalomtudományok, természettudományok, matematika-informatika, filológia stb.)

5. Milyen képzésen veszel részt? (Ha egyetemi hallgató vagy)

6. Milyen szakterületen tanulsz?

- ☐ Társadalomtudományok (pl. Szociológia, Humánerőforrás, Kommunikáció és közkapcsolatok)
- ☐ Gazdasági tudományok (pl. Gazdasági informatika, Marketing, Agrár- és élelmiszer gazdaság)
- ☐ Humántudományok (pl. Fordító-tolmács, Román-angol nyelv és irodalom stb.)
- ☐ Mérnöki tudományok

7. Honnan származol?

- ☐ faluról
- ☐ városról

8. Hogyan értékeled az angoltudásod? Mit gondolsz, milyen szinten van az angoltudásod?

- ☐ kezdő
- ☐ középfok
- ☐ haladó

9. Mikor, milyen helyzetben használod az angolt iskolán kívül?

10. Hogyan szeretsz angolt tanulni? (több választ is megjelölhetsz)

- ☐ egyedül, magamban
- ☐ párban
- ☐ csoportban
- ☐ a tanár irányításával

11. Kérlek, jelöld be a válaszodnak megfelelő szám megjelölésével, hogy mennyire értesz egyet vagy mennyire nem értesz egyet az egyes állításokkal a nyelvtanulással kapcsolatban.

- 1 – egyáltalán nem értek egyet
- 5 – teljesen egyetértek

	1	2	3	4	5
1) Ugyanúgy tanulom az angolt, mint a többi tantárgyat.					
2) Tanulás közben kerülöm a nehéz dolgokat.					
3) Tudom, hogyan kell jól tanulni nyelveket.					
4) A sikeres tanuláshoz jó tanárra van szükséged.					
5) Fontos számomra, hogy lássam a fejlődésemet.					
6) Szükségem van arra, hogy a tanár megmondja, hogyan haladok.					
7) Általában én is tisztában vagyok vele, hogy milyen előrehaladást értem el anélkül, hogy a tanár megmondja nekem.					
8) Hasznosnak találom, ha a tanár rendszeresen számonkér/tesztel.					
9) Megvannak a saját módszereim arra, hogy teszteljem, mennyit tanultam.					
10) Szeretek egyedül tanulni.					
11) Kínos számomra a tanárral beszélni a fejlődésemről.					
12) Tudom, hogy a nyelvtudásom, mely területeit akarom fejleszteni.					
13) Pontosan tudom, hogy az angol nyelv mire jó.					
14) Szeretem önállóan megtalálni a megoldásokat a problémáimra.					
15) Megérzem, amikor hibát követek el az angol nyelv használata közben.					
16) Mindig leellenőrzöm és kijavítom a saját írásaimat.					
17) Szeretem, ha a tanár meghatározza a tanulási célokat.					
18) Szeretem, ha a tanár elmondja, hogy mely területen vannak nehézségeim.					
19) Szeretem, ha a tanár megmondja, hogy mennyi időt kell töltenem egy tevékenységgel.					
20) Szeretem, ha a tanár segítséget nyújt nekem.					

12. Az alábbi kérdések az önálló tanulási tevékenységre és az angol nyelvtanulással kapcsolatos tervekre vonatkoznak.

	Soha	Ritkán	Néha	Gyakran	Mindig
1) Döntéseket hozok és célokat tűzök ki a tanulásommal kapcsolatban.					
2) Jól kihasználom a szabadidőmet, hogy angolul tanuljak.					
3) Óra előtt átismétlem az anyagot.					
4) Az órán kívül is gyakorlom az angol nyelvet, például felveszem a saját hangomat; beszélgetek másokkal angolul stb.					
5) Audiovizuális anyagokat használok ahhoz, hogy fejlesszem a beszédemet, például: hallgatom a BBC-t, angol filmeket nézek, angolul olvasok újságokat stb.					
6) Megfigyelem az erősségeimet és gyengeségeimet az angol nyelvtanulásban, és javítok rajtuk.					
7) A tananyagban előírt tartalmak mellett előre elolvasok plusz anyagokat.					

8) Használok az internetet és különböző alkalmazásokat az angol nyelvtudásom fejlesztésére.					
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13. A tanár, a tanulók vagy mindkettőjük felelőssége:

	Tanár	Tanuló	Mindkettő
1) biztosítani, hogy a tanulók fejlődést érjenek el a tanórák során			
2) biztosítani, hogy a tanulók az órán kívül is fejlődjenek			
3) a tanulók érdeklődésének felkeltése az angol nyelvtanulás iránt			
4) azonosítani a gyengeségeket az angol nyelvben			
5) a tanulók munkájának hatékonyabbá tétele			
6) az angol órák céljainak meghatározása			
7) eldönteni, hogy mit kellene tanulni legközelebb			
8) kiválasztani, hogy milyen típusú gyakorlatokat alkalmazzanak az osztályban			
9) eldönteni, hogy mennyi időt töltsenek egyes tevékenységekkel			
10) kiválasztani, hogy milyen eszközöket használjanak az angol nyelvtanuláshoz			
11) az előrehaladás értékelése			
12) eldönteni, hogy mit tanuljanak a tanórán kívül (pl. mi legyen a házi feladat)			

14. Véleményed szerint:

	Teljesen jelentéktelen	Nem fontos	Fontos	Nagyon fontos
1) Az angol nyelv tanórán kívüli használata				
2) A nyelvtan tanulása a tanórán kívül				
3) Önállóbbá válni a nyelvtanulásban				
4) Véleményt nyilvánítani arról, hogy mit kellene tanulni az osztályteremben				
5) Tanulni a társaktól, nem csak a tanároktól				
6) Kitűzni saját tanulási célokat				

15. Te hogyan tanultál meg angolul? Számolj be röviden az angol nyelvtanulási tapasztalataidról.

16. Meddig szeretnél még angol tanulni? Milyen szintet szeretnél elérni? Miért?

17. Megtörtént már veled, hogy csökkent az angol nyelvtanulási kedved, motivációd? Mit gondolsz, mi volt ennek az oka? Hogyan léptél túl ezen a helyzeten?

18. Mit javasolnál másoknak, mit tegyenek, hogy megtanuljanak angolul?