

Fostering Learner Autonomy Through Student-Led Writing and Speaking Support in Teacher Education

Balázs Fajt*

Centre for Foreign Languages
Faculty of Finance and Accountancy
Budapest University of Economics and Business
Email: fajt.balazs@uni-bge.hu
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4983-3962>
<https://ror.org/00r3jwh90>

Szabolcs Csorba

Institute of English Studies
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary
Email: csorba.szabi96@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-3521-4577>
<https://ror.org/03efbq855>

Emese Schiller

Institute of Research on Adult Education and Knowledge Management
Faculty of Education and Psychology
Eötvös Loránd University
Email: schiller.emese@ppk.elte.hu
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1875-4842>
<https://ror.org/01jsq2704>

Abstract. Learner autonomy is a fundamental aspect of language acquisition, particularly in higher education contexts, where students must engage in self-directed learning beyond formal instruction. While institutions often provide self-access support systems, their effectiveness depends on not only available resources but also educators' ability to facilitate autonomous learning. This practice-oriented paper examines student-led writing and speaking support programs as a means to foster learner autonomy and prepare teacher trainees for outside-class learning. By using the student writing and speaking support initiatives at a Hungarian university as an illustrative context, this paper offers a descriptive and reflective analysis to ground the discussion. The practice-based insights highlight the dual role of such initiatives in developing student skills while reinforcing reflective practice and consultation-based pedagogy in higher education. By critically overviewing institutional support mechanisms, this paper provides insights into potential models for integrating self-access learning into university curricula, contributing to both learner autonomy and professional development. The programs are introduced as examples of good practice, with

*Corresponding author

Received: 16/05/2025. **Accepted:** 11/09/2025

Copyright © Balázs Fajt, Szabolcs Csorba, Emese Schiller, 2025. Published by Vilnius University Press. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution Licence \(CC BY\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

broader implications for how similar initiatives can be adapted in other institutional contexts to promote autonomy, strengthen teacher education, and support lifelong learning.

Keywords: Learner autonomy, self-directed learning, higher education, writing and speaking support, consultation-based learning.

Besimokančiųjų savarankiškumo skatinimas pasitelkiant studentų vedamas rašymo ir kalbėjimo programas

Santrauka. Mokymosi savarankiškumas yra pagrindinis kalbos išmokimo veiksnys, tai ypač aktualu aukštojo mokslo institucijoje, kur studentai turi daug mokytis savarankiškai už formaliojo mokymo ribų. Nors aukštojo mokslo institucijos dažnai siūlo sisteminę pagalbą savarankiškam mokymuisi, tokios pagalbos veiksmingumas priklauso tiek nuo turimų išteklių, tiek nuo dėstytojų gebėjimo palengvinti savarankišką mokymąsi. Šiame į praktiką orientuotame straipsnyje pristatomos studentų vedamos rašymo ir kalbėjimo skatinimo programos kaip mokymosi savarankiškumą skatinančios priemonės, padedančios būsiniams mokytojams geriau pasirengti mokymuisi už auditorijos ribų. Kontekstą iliustruoja studentų rašymo ir kalbėjimo vedimo iniciatyvos viename iš Vengrijos universitetų, o mūsų diskusija grindžiama aprašomąja ir refleksivyąja analize. Mūsų praktinės įžvalgos atskleidžia dvigubą tokių iniciatyvų vaidmenį ugdant studentų įgūdžius ir stiprinant refleksivyą praktika bei konsultacijomis grįstą pedagogiką aukštajame moksle. Be to, kritiška institucinių paramos mechanizmų apžvalga suteikia įžvalgų apie galimus savarankiško mokymosi integravimo į universitetų programas modelius, tokiu būdu prisidedant tiek prie mokymosi autonomijos, tiek prie profesinio tobulėjimo. Programos pateikiamos kaip gerosios praktikos pavyzdžiai numatant jų platesnį poveikį – pavyzdžiui, kaip panašios iniciatyvos galėtų būti pritaikytos kitose institucinėse aplinkose siekiant skatinti savarankiškumą, stiprinti mokytojų rengimą ir remti mokymąsi visą gyvenimą.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: savarankiškas mokymasis, aukštasis mokslas, pagalba mokantis rašyti ir kalbėti, konsultacinis mokymasis.

1. Introduction

Learner autonomy is a crucial factor in language acquisition (Benson, 2011, particularly in higher education contexts, where students are expected to engage in independent learning beyond the classroom (Birdsell & Niioka, 2024; Litzler & Bakieva, 2017; Moore, 2012). While formal instruction provides a structured foundation, the limited contact hours in university settings necessitate opportunities for self-directed learning (Khalid et al., 2020). Institutions play a key role in fostering learner autonomy by offering self-access support systems (Gremmo & Castillo, 2006; Thornton, 2020), which guide students in developing their writing (Chiu, 2012) and speaking skills (Curry, 2014) outside the traditional curriculum (Karlsson et al., 2007). However, the effectiveness of such support depends not only on the resources available but also on how educators are prepared to facilitate autonomous learning (Little, 1995; Thavenius, 1999). One way to strengthen autonomous learning is through teacher education and professional development (Jiménez & Vázquez, 2022). Research suggests that those teachers who incorporate student-centred, autonomy supportive teaching approaches are more effective in fostering self-directed learning among their students (Adinda & Mohib, 2020). This is important because while a variety of factors influence the way a teacher teaches, past educational experiences may also prove an important source of teaching knowledge (Oleson & Hora, 2014). In this regard, initiatives that involve both students and teacher trainees in outside-class learning support serve a dual purpose: they enhance students' skills while simultaneously preparing future educators to integrate self-access learning

strategies into their own teaching practice. Despite the growing recognition of self-access learning, there is still a need to examine how teacher trainees develop consultation and feedback strategies that empower students to take ownership of their learning (Borges & Castro, 2022).

This paper presents a practice-oriented account of student-led writing and speaking support programs fostering learner autonomy and preparing teacher trainees for outside-class learning facilitation. By using the Student Writing and Speaking Support initiatives at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church, this paper offers a descriptive and reflective analysis, drawing on program documentation, consultation guidelines, and practitioner reflections to explore how structured consultation systems help students develop self-directed learning habits while simultaneously equipping teacher trainees with essential skills for providing learner-centred feedback. The paper also investigates the institutional role in supporting both students and teacher trainees by offering structured materials, supervision, and ongoing evaluation. By presenting these initiatives as good practice, the paper aims to inspire other institutions to adapt similar models for sustainable learner autonomy support and teacher training. Such integration of self-access learning support into teacher education can enhance both student learning outcomes and the professional development of future educators. The discussion has broader implications for how universities design and implement outside-class learning initiatives that encourage learner autonomy, professional growth, and sustainable institutional support.

2. Learner autonomy and self-directed learning in language learning

The concept of learner autonomy has been a central theme in language education, emphasizing the importance of students taking responsibility for their own learning (Chan, 2003; Cotterall, 2000; Illés, 2012). First introduced by Holec (1981), learner autonomy refers to the ability of learners to set their own goals, select the appropriate learning strategies, and monitor their progress independently. This approach shifts the focus from teacher-centred instruction to a more learner-driven process, where individuals actively engage in self-regulation and decision-making (Kuhl, 1984 as cited in Corno, 1993). In addition, autonomous learners tend to be more motivated and effective in acquiring a language, as they develop personalized strategies that align with their individual needs and preferences (Gandhimathi & Devi, 2016; Porubin, 2024).

The concept of *Self-Directed Learning* (SDL) is deeply intertwined with learner autonomy, emphasizing the learner's ability to take charge of their own educational journey (Smith, 2008). Knowles (1975 as cited in Benson, 2011, p. 36) defines SDL as a process in which learners identify their learning needs, establish goals, implement strategies, and evaluate their progress. This approach shifts the responsibility of learning from the instructor to the student, fostering independence and critical thinking skills (Smith, 2015).

However, learner autonomy does not emerge in isolation; it is influenced by the social and institutional contexts in which learning takes place. For instance, while low power distance cultures, such as those often found in Western educational traditions, value learner autonomy and a more egalitarian relationship between students and teachers,

yet, in high power distance cultures (often associated with collectivist societies), learner autonomy may conflict with expectations of the teacher authority and group-oriented learning (Kole, 2025). Similarly, institutional pressures such as standardized testing and rigid curricula can restrict learners' ability to exercise autonomy, thus creating tensions between the pedagogical ideals and the classroom realities (Amalo & Petraki, 2024). Given these constraints, autonomy must be supported through structure guidance. Learners need support in developing metacognitive awareness self-evaluation skills, and strategies for independent study (Chinpakdee, 2022). One key institutional initiative that promotes autonomy is the establishment of self-access learning centres, which provide students with a range of resources to explore language learning at their own pace (Birdsell, 2024; Burton et al., 2024; Herrera Díaz, 2012). These centres typically include multimedia tools, extensive reading materials, and opportunities for peer collaboration, enabling students to take control of their learning beyond the classroom (Mynard, 2024). Yet, the effectiveness of self-access centres is not guaranteed, as their success depends not only on the provision of the appropriate resources and facilities but also on learners' motivation and readiness to take responsibility for their own learning (Choi, 2012).

Another approach to cultivating autonomy is through one-to-one consultation-based learning or consultation-based collaborative learning, where educators serve as facilitators rather than direct instructors. This method encourages learners to seek personalized guidance, reflect on their own progress, and adjust their learning strategies accordingly. In addition, consultation-based support plays a crucial role in enhancing self-monitoring skills and fostering reflective learning, allowing students to develop a deeper awareness of their strengths and areas for improvement. Within this framework, both peer-assisted and teacher-guided feedback serve as essential tools in promoting metacognitive awareness, which is a crucial component of successful SDL. By engaging in structured consultations, learners become more conscious of their learning strategies, making them more adept at adjusting their approaches based on feedback and self-reflection (cf. Mynard & Carson, 2012).

To sum up, prior literature highlights not only the benefits of learner autonomy but also the cultural and institutional challenges that complicate its implementation. Recognizing these tensions is essential for understanding how autonomy can be fostered in diverse educational settings, ensuring its relevance in contemporary language education (Shaban, 2025). Importantly, this discussion extends beyond learners themselves, as the successful promotion of autonomy in the classroom is closely tied to the autonomy of teachers (Thavenius, 1999).

3. Relevance to future teachers

For future teachers, developing their own autonomy is crucial to effectively fostering learner autonomy (Benson, 2011). If teachers do not experience autonomy in their own professional growth, they may struggle to cultivate it in their students. This perspective underscores the importance of teacher autonomy not only as an individual right but also as a prerequisite for fostering independent learners. When teachers have the freedom to adapt

curricula, experiment with methodologies, and engage in self-directed professional development, they are better equipped to design and implement learner-centred instruction that encourages students to take ownership of their learning (Fabela-Cárdenas, 2012).

Second, a key avenue for enhancing teacher autonomy is through collaboration, reflective practice, and consultation-base support, which are elements that should be embedded in teacher training programs (Borges & Castro, 2022; Hertel, 2009). In such a structured yet flexible environment, one can engage in reflective dialogues, receive guidance, and collaborate with peers (Harford & MacRuairc, 2008). This process mirrors the way learner autonomy is developed through structured support that gradually fosters independence (Mynard & Carson, 2012). What is more, the significance of learner autonomy support extends to both students and teacher trainees, particularly in areas such as communication development (Karasova & Kleckova, 2023; Kelly, 1996) Such consultations provide structured guidance that helps learners gain confidence, improve self-efficacy, and develop autonomy in their language learning journey (Curry, 2014). These consultations act as a bridge between formal instruction and independent learning, offering students the necessary support to refine their skills while gradually becoming more self-sufficient learners (Karlsson & Kjisik, 2014; Langner, 2006; Mynard & Carson, 2012; Yamashita & Kato, 2012). For teacher trainees, these experiences further reinforce the importance of reflective practice and scaffolding in their own teaching approaches, allowing them to incorporate the SDL principles into their future classrooms (Borges & Castro, 2022).

4. Describing student-led writing and speaking support programs

4.1 Writing support

For many students, academic writing can feel like an overwhelming challenge. Whether struggling with structuring arguments, refining grammar, or mastering the nuances of academic tone, students often find themselves needing personalized guidance beyond what is offered in the classroom (Vickers & Ene, 2006). While a compulsory academic writing course is available as part of the curriculum at the above-outlined university, academic writing is a difficult endeavour for native speakers, let alone non-native speakers of English; consequently, the need for further practice arose, which prompted the establishment of the consultation-based *Student Writing Support Program*. This program offers a safe, structured space where students can improve their writing through tailored, one-on-one consultations by offering guidance and fostering independent learning habits, building self-confidence, and even helping train future teachers to become more effective educators.

Students who seek support typically begin their journey with a simple email. The process is designed to be accessible and student-friendly: they reach out to the Writing Support team, explaining their concerns, perhaps a research paper that needs clearer argumentation or an essay that has received critical feedback from a professor. Some students want to strengthen their writing skills to ensure that they pass university exams. Others simply want to become better academic writers, recognizing the long-term ben-

efits of refining their skills. Once a student has signed up, a brief initial discussion takes place, either via email or at the start of their first consultation. Here, the student and their consultant discuss goals, past struggles, and expectations. It is also discussed whether they have received specific feedback from their professors (i.e., what aspects of writing they should be working on), or simply what aspects of writing they personally find the most challenging. These questions ensure that the consultation is tailored to the student's individual needs, thereby making the experience more effective.

All sessions are conducted on-on-one typically lasting 30 minutes, allowing for focused attention on each student's writing. The approach emphasizes active participation and learner-centred guidance: rather than merely correcting errors, consultants guide students to identify patterns in their writing, helping them understand why certain mistakes occur, and how to fix them independently (cf. Karlsson et al., 2007; Mynard & Carson, 2012). In this particular context, if a student struggles with organization, for example, they might be encouraged to map out their argument visually before starting their next essay. If grammar is an issue, the consultant might introduce error logs, a strategy where students track their most common mistakes and practice self-correcting. Finally, the writing process is also broken down into manageable steps, allowing students to focus on one aspect at a time (cf. Ellis & Sinclair, 1989). In a single session, they might work on clarifying their thesis statement, structuring paragraphs effectively, or improving cohesion between ideas. Some students return for multiple sessions, gradually building their skills over time.

4.2 Speaking support

Much like writing, demonstrating English proficiency in a high-stakes setting can be an intimidating experience for many students. Learning grammar and vocabulary in class is one thing, but producing smooth, confident speech under pressure is an entirely different challenge. Words do not always come out as planned, pronunciation can feel awkward, and sometimes, no matter how well-prepared students are, their minds simply go blank (Curry, 2014). This anxiety is precisely why speaking support at the investigated university was established. Designed to help students develop and refine their speaking skills through personalized, structured consultations, the Student Speaking Support Program provides a supportive, low-pressure environment where students can practice, receive feedback, and gain confidence. But it is not just about exam preparation, rather, it is about equipping students with lifelong speaking strategies that enable them to become independent, self-assured communicators.

For many students, reaching out for support is the hardest step. Some know exactly which aspects of speaking they struggle with (perhaps pronunciation, fluency, or structuring responses) while others feel a general discomfort when speaking in English (Ellis & Sinclair, 1989). Regardless of their starting point, every student who joins the program at the above-mentioned university follows the same simple process: they send an email. From the outset, the program is designed to empower students by putting them in control of their own learning. In their initial contact, students describe what they want to improve, outline

their past experiences with speaking tasks, and share any feedback they have received from professors or past exam performances. This allows the consultant to understand each student's individual challenges and tailor the sessions to their specific needs.

When students attend their first consultation, whether online or in person, as arranged via email, they are not immediately thrown into exam-style tasks. Instead, each session begins with a fluency warm-up, allowing students to ease into speaking naturally (Ghasemi & Mozaheb, 2021). The consultant starts with general discussion prompts, encouraging students to talk about everyday topics such as their studies, hobbies, or recent experiences (Qiu & Lo, 2017). This informal conversation serves as a way to relax students, helping them overcome their initial nervousness and get comfortable speaking freely. If fluency is a concern, the consultant introduces practical strategies to help students maintain the flow of speech and avoid long pauses (cf. Wood, 2009). These may include using filler words, discourse markers, and linking devices, which allows students participating in the program to keep talking smoothly while they gather their thoughts (Syamsudin et al., 2024). In cases where students struggle to find the right words, they practice rephrasing techniques, learning how to express ideas in different ways without losing their train of thought. These simple yet effective strategies ensure that students remain engaged in conversation, focusing on communication rather than perfection (Oxford, 1990).

Once the student feels comfortable, the session transitions into targeted practice, specifically tailored to their individual needs and exam requirements (Mynard, 2024). Since many students participating in the program are also preparing for proficiency exams, consultants focus on key components of these tests, ensuring that students develop the skills necessary for success (cf. Morrison, 2011). One of the most common tasks in such exams is picture description or picture-prompted discussion (cf. Lavalley & Briesmaster, 2017). To prepare for this, the consultant provides an image and asks guiding questions, helping the student logically structure their response, i.e., by first describing the setting, then the people, and finally, their actions (cf. Kao et al., 2016). However, proficiency exams demand more than just basic description. Students participating in the program are encouraged to go beyond surface-level observations by expressing opinions, making comparisons, and speculating about what might be happening or what could happen next. This deeper engagement not only enhances critical thinking but also demonstrates a higher level of language proficiency, as students learn to connect the image to broader topics, such as technology or environmental issues. These connections help showcase the ability to discuss abstract ideas, articulate viewpoints, and engage in meaningful conversations.

For some students, structured discussion practice is more beneficial (cf. Benson, 2011), particularly when preparing for exam-style speaking tasks. In these exercises, they practice forming coherent, well-structured responses to common topics such as travel, education, or social issues. Others benefit from role-play activities, which simulate real-life speaking situations (cf. Ali et al., 2016). These are particularly valuable when debating topics or expressing opinions that require supporting arguments and logi-

cal reasoning. Through interactive discussions and debate-style exercises, students refine their spoken English while also developing the confidence to think and respond spontaneously in high-pressure situations (Cinganotto, 2019).

Throughout the session, the consultant provides real-time feedback, ensuring that students not only recognize their mistakes but understand how to correct them (cf. Benson, 2011). Instead of simply pointing out errors, the consultant asks guiding questions, encouraging students to reflect on their own speech (Kelly, 1996). Since these sessions primarily focus on fluency-based tasks, consultants avoid frequent interruptions, while, instead listening attentively and making an error log to track recurring mistakes. Delayed error correction is then provided, allowing students to focus on speaking naturally during the session while still receiving constructive feedback at the end (Fu & Li, 2020). If a sentence sounds unnatural, students are encouraged to repeat it with improved pronunciation or restructure it for better clarity. By engaging in this self-correction process, students become more aware of their speaking habits and learn to monitor their own language use independently, leading to lasting improvement (cf. Ellis & Sinclair, 1989).

For those who sign up with a partner, pair work practice becomes an essential part of the session. Since the Basic Exam includes a collaborative speaking component, these sessions replicate the exam environment in a supportive, low-pressure setting. The consultant carefully observes the interaction, guiding students on how to engage in natural conversation, ask follow-up questions, and build on each other's ideas. If one student tends to dominate the conversation, they are encouraged to give their partner more space to contribute. Conversely, if a student struggles to respond, they can practice employing learning strategies that enhance their learning journey (cf. Rokhaniya et al., 2024), such as conversation-maintenance techniques like expressing agreement, paraphrasing, or using linking phrases to keep the discussion flowing (Oxford, 1990). This collaborative speaking experience helps the participating students build the confidence and adaptability needed to navigate real-world conversations with ease.

At the end of each session, students not just simply walk away with verbal feedback; instead, they leave with clear, actionable steps to continue improving on their own. The consultant might recommend recording themselves answering discussion questions and listening back to identify patterns in their speech (cf. Ellis & Sinclair, 1989). Throughout the program, the participating students are encouraged to use AI tools and language learning apps to refine their pronunciation and enhance their fluency (e.g., Son et al., 2023). Additionally, students are encouraged to join conversation groups or participate in the university's buddy program, providing them with authentic, real-life speaking experiences. These strategies reinforce the idea that speaking proficiency is not developed in isolation but through continuous practice and engagement beyond the session itself (Putri & Nuraini, 2022). At the same time, institutional assessment systems often reward memorised accuracy and formulaic answers rather than spontaneous, autonomous communication, thereby creating a mismatch between what is practiced in support sessions and what is evaluated in exams. Addressing this misalignment remains a key challenge for embedding consultation-based support sustainably within university curricula.

5. Conclusion and implications

Although this paper focuses on a specific institutional context, namely, the Student Writing and Speaking Support programs at a Hungarian university, the insights discussed here have broad relevance for educators, language program designers, and teacher educators working in diverse language learning environments. In an era where higher education increasingly values learner autonomy, transferable skills, and experiential learning, the model presented in this paper offers practical and adaptable strategies that extend well beyond its original setting.

First, the integration of student-led consultation programs provides a replicable and scalable model for fostering learner autonomy. Regardless of the institutional size, budget, or student demographics, the core idea of offering structured, one-on-one or small-group consultations can be implemented with relative flexibility. In large universities, such programs can be institutionalized within writing or language centres (Mynard, 2024), while in smaller educational institutions, they might be integrated into language courses or other educational support initiatives (Lagner & Kühn, 2016). Crucially, consultation-based support empowers students to take ownership of their learning, encouraging them to set goals, monitor progress, and apply feedback independently (Mynard & Carson, 2012). This learner-centred approach is particularly valuable in contexts where traditional classroom instruction is constrained by time, curricular demands, or high student-to-teacher ratios. In such cases, outside-class learning initiatives offer a complementary platform where students can develop critical metacognitive and self-regulation skills at their own pace (Benson, 2011).

Second, the dual-purpose structure of the program supporting both language learners and teacher trainees demonstrates a highly sustainable model of experiential learning that could be beneficially adopted in a wide variety of teacher education contexts. By involving pre-service teachers in real consultation scenarios, the program offers a form of situated learning that bridges theory and practice. Teacher trainees not only gain insight into the challenges learners face, but also develop key pedagogical skills such as scaffolding, giving formative feedback, and applying principles of learner autonomy in a real-world setting. This experience strengthens their reflective practice and increases their professional confidence. Such experiential training is especially useful in programs aiming to foster 21st century teaching competencies, including adaptability, communication, and mentoring skills. As teacher trainees internalize these practices, they are more likely to carry them into their future classrooms, contributing to a broader culture of learner-centred pedagogy (cf. Voinea, 2019).

Third, the emphasis on personalized, learner-centred feedback within these consultation programs highlights the value of tailoring support to the individual needs, goals, and learning styles of students (Ellis & Sinclair, 1989; Kelly, 1996). Across educational contexts, educators can adopt similar approaches by designing flexible support systems that move beyond one-size-fits-all instruction. These may include offering informational feedback sessions or learning journals (Chinpakdee, 2022). Moreover, by helping students articulate their own learning objectives and reflect on their development, such

programs not only improve immediate performance but also cultivate sustained independent learning skills and the capacity for ongoing self-directed enhancement (Benson, 2011). These elements are especially important in diverse and multilingual classrooms, where students' prior experiences, expectations, and confidence levels may vary widely (Benson et al., 2018).

Fourth, the institutional role in facilitating learner autonomy (through structured training, professional supervision, the development of consultation materials, and ongoing evaluation) underscores the importance of top-down support for sustainable innovation (cf. Mynard, 2024). Hence, universities and language departments seeking to replicate this model should consider investing in tutor training schemes, providing access to consultation guides or handbooks, and creating feedback loops that allow for continuous program improvement. Institutional recognition of the consultants' work through course credits, certificates, or inclusion in teaching portfolios may further enhance motivation and ensure quality.

Notably, at the university examined in this paper, a structured system is in place where consultants receive course credits for their contributions. These credits are applicable toward academic scholarships, thereby integrating practical experience with academic advancement. This system thus exemplifies how curriculum integration can effectively bridge theoretical knowledge with real-world application. Furthermore, the experience gained through consultancy work is formally documented as part of their academic records, which supports students aspiring to pursue a career in teaching by enhancing their professional qualifications and practical experience. Hence, this approach also demonstrates a comprehensive curriculum design that fosters both academic and professional growth.

Additionally, programs like the one described in this paper offer a valuable space for bridging the often-separate domains of academic support and teacher training. By fostering a holistic approach that combines language support and teacher training, institutions can create cohesive models where both functions reinforce each other, ultimately enhancing the development of teaching practices (Borges & Castro, 2022). This may encourage a shift in how we conceptualize learner support: not as solely remedial or supplementary, but as an integral part of both student success and teacher development. Furthermore, such integration may promote a sense of shared responsibility among students, consultants, teacher educators, and administrators contributing to a more collaborative institutional culture.

Finally, this account points to broader implications for the way how higher education institutions conceptualize and implement outside-class learning opportunities. As universities increasingly seek to equip students with transferable skills and lifelong learning habits (Pinto Molina & Sales, 2008), programs that promote autonomy, reflection, and self-efficacy become indispensable (Daff et al., 2024). Hence, the writing and speaking support models described here may not only improve language proficiency but also cultivate academic resilience, initiative, and critical thinking. These are skills that extend far beyond language learning and contribute meaningfully to students' academic and

professional trajectories. At the same time, it is of importance to acknowledge the limitations of this paper: as a practice-oriented descriptive account rather than an empirical study, it does not include systematic data collection, participant perspectives, or formal analysis. The insights should, therefore, be understood as illustrative examples of good practice rather than generalizable findings, and future research could build on this work by incorporating empirical evidence on outcomes, consultant experiences, and long-term impacts across institutions.

Author contributions

All authors contributed equally to the study conception and design, and writing up the manuscript. All authors have approved the final manuscript.

References

- Adinda, D., & Mohib, N. (2020). Teaching and instructional design approaches to enhance students' self-directed learning in blended learning environments. *Electronic Journal of eLearning*, 18(2), 162–174. <https://doi.org/10.34190/EJEL.20.18.2.005>
- Ali, D., Khalili, A., & Fatima, B. (2016). Developing EFL learner's speaking ability, accuracy and fluency. *English Language and Literature Studies*, 6(2), 177–186. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ells.v6n2p177>
- Amalo, B. K., & Petraki, E. (2024). Exploring the enabling factors and constraints for developing learner autonomy in an underprivileged Indonesian EFL context. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, 21(3), 640–660. <https://doi.org/10.18823/asiatefl.2024.21.3.8.640>
- Benson, P. (2011). *Teaching and researching autonomy in language learning* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education.
- Benson, P., Chappell, P., & Yates, L. (2018). A day in the life: Mapping international students' language learning environments in multilingual Sydney. *Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 20–32. <https://doi.org/10.29140/ajal.v1n1.21>
- Birdsell, B. J. (2024). Crossing language boundaries on campus: Using a SALC as a learning space for interactive homework. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 15(4), 420–441. <https://doi.org/10.37237/150404>
- Birdsell, B. J., & Niioaka, S. (2024). Integrating a SALC into a short-term study abroad program: Analyzing one former student's experience. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 15(4), 379–395. <https://doi.org/10.37237/150402>
- Borges, L., & Castro, E. (2022). Autonomy, empathy and transformation in language teacher education: A qualitative study. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 13(2), 286–304. <https://doi.org/10.37237/130207>
- Burton, G., Borsetto, E., Giglio, A., & Voltmer, L. (2024). Creating a self-access academic writing centre at a trilingual university: What have we learned in the first three years?. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 15(2), 127–147. <https://doi.org/10.37237/150202>
- Chan, V. (2003). Autonomous language learning: The teachers' perspectives. *Teaching in higher education*, 8(1), 33–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1356251032000052311>
- Chinpakdee, M. (2022). Using learning journals to promote learner autonomy. *ELT Journal*, 76(4), 432–440. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccab056>
- Chiu, H. L. W. (2012). Supporting the development of autonomous learning skills in reading and writing in an independent language learning centre. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 3(3), 266–290. <https://sisaljournal.org/archives/sep12/chiu/>
- Choi, J. (2012). Self-access English learning needs: Student and teacher perspectives. *International Journal of e-Education, e-Business, e-Management and e-Learning*, 2(5), 389–393. <https://doi.org/10.7763/IJEEEE.2012.V2.151>

- Cinganotto, L. (2019). Debate as a teaching strategy for language learning. *Lingue e Linguaggi*, 30, 107–125. <https://doi.org/10.1285/i22390359v30p107>
- Cotterall, S. (2000). Promoting learner autonomy through the curriculum: Principles for designing language courses. *ELT Journal*, 54(2), 109–117. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/54.2.109>
- Curry, N. (2014). Using CBT with anxious language learners: The potential role of the learning advisor. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 5(1), 29–41. <http://sisaljournal.org/archives/mar14/curry>
- Daff, L., Tame, C., & Sands, J. (2024). A course design approach that encourages reflective practice habits. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 22, 100990. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2024.100990>
- Drake, S. M., & Reid, J. (2018). Integrated curriculum as an effective way to teach 21st century capabilities. *Asia Pacific Journal of Educational Research*, 1(1), 31–50. <https://doi.org/10.30777/AP-JER.2018.1.1.03>
- Ellis, G., & Sinclair, B. (1989). *Learning to learn English learner's book: A course in learner training* (Vol. 1). Cambridge University Press.
- Fabela-Cárdenas, M. A. (2012). The impact of teacher training for autonomous learning. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 3(3), 215–236. <https://sisaljournal.org/archives/sep12/fabela-cardena/>
- Fu, M., & Li, S. (2020). The effects of immediate and delayed corrective feedback on L2 development. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 44(1), 2–34. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S027226312000001X>
- Gandhimathi, S. N. S., & Devi, A. (2016). Learner autonomy and motivation: A literature review. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6(3), 1–10. <https://scispace.com/pdf/learner-autonomy-and-motivation-a-literature-review-51g1lprqr8.pdf>
- Ghasemi, A. A., & Mozaheb, M. A. (2021). Developing EFL learners' speaking fluency: Use of practical techniques. *Mextesol Journal*, 45(2), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.61871/mj.v45n2-15>
- Gremmo, M.-J., & Castillo, D. (2006). Advising in a multilingual setting: New perspectives for the role of the advisor. In T. Lamb, & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Supporting independent learning: Issues and interventions* (pp. 21–36). Peter Lang.
- Harford, J., & MacRuairc, G. (2008). Engaging student teachers in meaningful reflective practice. *Teaching and teacher education*, 24(7), 1884–1892. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.02.010>
- Herrera Díaz, L. E. (2012). Self-access language learning: Students' perceptions of and experiences within this new mode of learning. *Profile Issues in Teachers Professional Development*, 14(1), 113–127.
- Hertel, S. (2009). *Beratungskompetenz von Lehrern* [Counselling competences of teachers]. Waxmann Verlag.
- Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and foreign language learning*. Pergamon.
- Illés, É. (2012). Learner autonomy revisited. *ELT Journal*, 66(4), 505–513. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccs044>
- Jiménez Raya, M., & Manzano Vázquez, B. (2022). Case pedagogy in initial teacher education: An analysis of its contribution to the development of professional competences for autonomy. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 13(2), 262–285. <https://doi.org/10.37237/130206>
- Kao, S. M., Carkin, G., & Hsu, L. F. (2016). Questioning techniques for promoting language learning with students of limited L2 oral proficiency in a drama-oriented language classroom. In J. Winston, & M. Stinson (Eds.), *Drama education and second language learning* (pp. 11–37). Routledge.
- Karasova, J., & Kleckova, G. (2023). Supporting learners through effective communication: Student teachers' communication strategies to address learner behaviour. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education (Online)*, 48(3), 19–36. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.T2024030500009091155982714>
- Karlsson, L., & Kjisik, F. (2014). Watching our Words-Researching and Developing Language Counselling. *ELT Research*, (30). http://resig.weebly.com/uploads/2/6/3/6/26368747/kjisik_and_karlsson.pdf
- Karlsson, L., Kjisik, F., & Nordlund, J. (2007). Language counselling: a critical and integral component in promoting an autonomous community of learning. *System*, 35(1), 46–65. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0346251X06001187>

- Kelly, R. (1996). Language counselling for learner autonomy. In R. Pemberton, E.S.L. Li, W.W.F. Or, & H. D. Pierson (Eds.). *Taking control: Autonomy in language learning* (pp. 93–113). Hong Kong University Press.
- Khalid, M., Bashir, S., & Amin, H. (2020). Relationship between self-directed learning (SDL) and academic achievement of university students: A case of online distance learning and traditional universities. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 42(2), 131–148.
- Kole, J. K. T. (2025). Applying Hofstede's cultural dimensions in education: Insights, critiques, and implications for diverse classrooms. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 13(1), 94–110. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojss.2025.131007>
- Langer, M. & Kühn, B. (2016). *Sprachlernberatung an Universitäten – Anspruch und Wirklichkeit. Ist da, wo Sprachlernberatung draufsteht, auch Sprachlernberatung drin? - Eine Pilotstudie* [Language counselling at universities – demand and reality. Is language counselling really available where needed? – Pilot study]. Unpublished Manuscript.
- Langer, M. (2006). Dokumente zur Sprachlernberatung. Zur Vorentlastung in Sprach(lern)projekten [Documents of one-to-one language counselling. Promoting language learning projects]. *Zeitschrift für interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht*, 11(2), 1–5. <http://tujournals.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de/index.php/zif/issue/view/>
- Lavalle, P. I., & Briesmaster, M. (2017). The study of the use of picture descriptions in enhancing communication skills among the 8th-grade students—Learners of English as a foreign language. *i.e.: inquiry in education*, 9(1), Article 4. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.nl.edu/ie/vol9/iss1/4>
- Little, D. (1995). Learning as dialogue: The dependence of learner autonomy on teacher autonomy. *System*, 23(2), 175–181. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X\(95\)00006-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X(95)00006-6)
- Litzler, M. F., & Bakieva, M. (2017). Learning logs in foreign language study: Student views on their usefulness for learner autonomy. *Didáctica: Lengua y Literatura*, 29, 65–80. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5209/DIDA.57130>
- Moore, P. J., (2012). Supporting the language and learning development of EAL students in Australian higher education. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 3(2), 182–195. <https://doi.org/10.37237/030205>
- Morrison, B.R. (2011). Self-directed learning modules for independent learning: IELTS exam preparation. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 2(2), 51–67. <http://sisaljournal.org/archives/june11/morrison>
- Mynard, J. (2024). Self-access language learning support in Europe: Observations and current practices. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 15(2), 258–278. <https://doi.org/10.37237/150209>
- Mynard, J., & Carson, L. (2012). Introduction. In J. Mynard, & L. Carson (Eds.), *Advising in language learning: Dialogue, tools, and context* (pp. 3–25). Routledge.
- Noguchi, J. (2014). Evaluating self-directed learning skills in SALC modules. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 5(2), 153–172. <https://sisaljournal.org/archives/june14/noguchi/>
- Oleson, A., & Hora, M. T. (2014). Teaching the way they were taught? Revisiting the sources of teaching knowledge and the role of prior experience in shaping faculty teaching practices. *Higher Education*, 68, 29–45. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-013-9678-9>
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Newbury House.
- Pinto Molina, M., & Sales, D. (2008). Knowledge transfer and information skills for student-centered learning in Spain. *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 8(1), 53–74. <https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2008.0012>
- Porubin, L. (2024). Learner autonomy and personalized learning in the 21st century. In *Universitas Euro-paea: spre o societate a cunoașterii prin europenizare și globalizare 2*, 135–139. <https://doi.org/10.54481/uekbs2024.v2.45>
- Putri, N. S., & Nuraini, E. I. (2022). Study buddy: An English training program for college students who failed their English comprehensive exam. *KnE Social Sciences*, 2022, 177–184. <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v7i7.10661>

- Qiu, X., & Lo, Y. Y. (2017). Content familiarity, task repetition and Chinese EFL learners' engagement in second language use. *Language Teaching Research*, 21(6), 681–698. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168816684368>
- Rokhaniyah, H., Ardiyanti, D., Susilowati, I., Virgiyanti, D. F., & Nuraini, E. I. (2024). Classroom management strategies in EFL speaking class. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 12(1), 53–62. <https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v12i1.8895>
- Shaban, H. A. S. (2025). A critical overview of language learner autonomy in applied linguistics. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, 6(1), 4178–4192. <https://ijrpr.com/uploads/V6ISSUE1/IJRPR38069.pdf>
- Smith, R. (2008). Learner autonomy. *ELT Journal*, 62(4), 395–397. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccn038>
- Smith, S. (2015). Learner autonomy: Origins, approaches, and practical implementation. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, 2(4), 82–91.
- Son, J.-B., Ružić, N., & Philpott, A. (2023). Artificial intelligence technologies and applications for language learning and teaching. *Journal of China Computer-Assisted Language Learning*, 2023, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jccall-2023-0015>
- Syamsudin, S., Istiadah, I., Syafiyah, S., Cahyono, A. E., & Mulyono, S. (2024). Utilizing fillers for addressing speaking challenges, improving self-confidence and motivation in EFL learning. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, 18(4), 1327–1334. <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v18i4.21629>
- Thavenius, C. (1999). Teacher autonomy for learner autonomy. In S. Cotterall, & D. Crabbe (Eds.), *Learner autonomy in language learning: Defining the field and effecting change* (pp. 163–166). Peter Lang.
- Thavenius, C. (1999). Teacher autonomy for learner autonomy. In S. Cotterall, & D. Crabbe (Eds.), *Learner autonomy in language learning: Defining the field and effecting change* (pp. 163–166). Peter Lang.
- Thornton, K. (2020). The changing role of self-access in fostering learner autonomy. In M. Jiménez Raya, & F. Vieira (Eds.), *Autonomy in language education: Present and future avenues* (pp. 157–174). Routledge
- Vickers, C. H., & Ene, E. (2006). Grammatical accuracy and learner autonomy in advanced writing. *ELT Journal*, 60(2), 109–116. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/cci097>
- Voinea, M. (2019). Rethinking teacher training according to 21st century competences. *European Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 4(3), 20–26. <https://doi.org/10.26417/ejms.v4i3.p20-26>
- Wood, D. (2009). Effects of focused instruction of formulaic sequences on fluent expression in second language narratives: A case study. *The Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 12(1), 39–57. <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/CJAL/article/view/19898>
- Yamashita, H. & Kato, S. (2012). The wheel of language learning. A tool to facilitate learner awareness, reflection and action. In J. Mynard, & L. Carson (Eds.), *Advising in language learning: Dialogue, tools and context* (pp. 164–169). Pearson Education.