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Claudia Molnár: Are our learners ready for the autonomy approach?
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Are our learners ready for the autonomy approach?

Diese Veröffentlichung ist eine explorative Studie, in welcher untersucht wird, ob angehende Lehrkräfte im ersten Jahr (TTS) bereit sind, völlig autonome Lernende zu werden. Dies folgt aus den Vorstudien, die untersuchen, wie autonom TTs bei der Entwicklung ihrer eigenen Englischkenntnisse sind. Die Studie gliedert sich wie folgt: Hintergrund für die Studie, Teilnehmer und Forschungsmethoden sowie Ergebnisse. Sie wird mit einer Erörterung der Ergebnisse, der Grenzen und der Vorschläge, wie diese Studie als Plattform für die weitere Forschungsarbeit genutzt werden könnte, abgeschlossen. Für die Studie, die sowohl qualitative als auch quantitative Elemente umfasst, wurde eine gemischte Methodik gewählt. Der qualitative Teil beinhaltet einen Vorkursfragebogen und die Ergebnisse der summativen Bewertung der Teilnehmer. Die qualitativen Elemente umfassen die Reflexionen, das Kursdesign, die SMART-Ziele und abschließend die schriftlichen Feedbackgespräche. Die Studie wird in Anlehnung an Dam und Legenhouse‘ (1996) durchgeführt, um zu messen, ob eine ähnliche Studie im ungarischen Kontext ähnliche Ergebnisse liefern würde.

1. Introduction

This study explores whether first year trainee teachers (TTS) are ready to be fully autonomous learners. This follows on from preliminary studies investigating how autonomous TTs are in developing their own English language skills. The study is broken down into a background to the study, the participants and research methods, the results and then concludes with a discussion on the findings, the limitations and suggestions for how this study could be used as a platform for further research. Each of the sections can be found in the relevant subsequent chapters below.

2. Background to study

This is a multi- faceted, mixed study comprising of both qualitative and quantitative elements. The qualitative research methods are in the form of a pre course questionnaire and the results of the participants’ summative assessment. The qualitative elements are the reflections of the learners’ language learning experiences, the course structure they designed, SMART targets and on exit written feedback interviews. As Miles and Huberman state “quantitative and qualitative inquiry can support and inform each other” (1994: 310, in Dörnyei, 2007: 42).

In my assumptions I argue that Hungarian learners are not yet ready for the ‘full’ autonomy approach, but what is that? Morrison and Navarro (2014) describe it as learners developing a “personalised syllabus which builds on any official

teaching/learning constraints that may already exist.” The learners were offered guided self-direction as it was felt that by breaking the process of autonomy down into smaller chunks, which then built on one another, this would reduce the complexity and potential anxiety of a fully autonomous setting. With the added anxiety of the first year of higher education (HE), which can often be stressful and with the added pressure of the need to develop their language, as well as learn an abundance of new information, it was pertinent to consider that the process of, and the relationship between the development of both autonomy and language proficiency could prove problematic (Benson, 2007).

Candy (1991) states that “learning is a social activity” and that the role of the educator is to “maximise learner’s opportunities and accomplish their goals.” Additionally, the Hungarian education system is still very much teacher led and as Illés suggests: “Education cannot function without teacher control. How teachers exercise this control and how much they deem appropriate to relinquish should be their decision, based on the knowledge of their teaching context and their students in particular. Any model of learner autonomy should therefore be adopted only after careful appraisal of its relevance to a specific educational setting” (Illés, 2012: 508).

This study set out to offer first year TTs (trainee teachers) a self-directed learning opportunity through reflection, target setting, self-assessment and the choice of the order and elements of the materials they deem important to assist and support them in their broader academic courses. Knowles (1985) describes self-directed learning as

A process in which individuals take the initiative without the help of others in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating goals, identifying human, and material resources, and evaluating learning outcomes.

Reflective learning is defined as “a deliberate process of undertaking cycles of inquiry” (Ramsey, 2006) and the movement between action and reflection. In terms of the context of this study, teaching and learning are regarded as the actions. In figure 1 below reflection follows the first action, the consideration of then informs future actions.

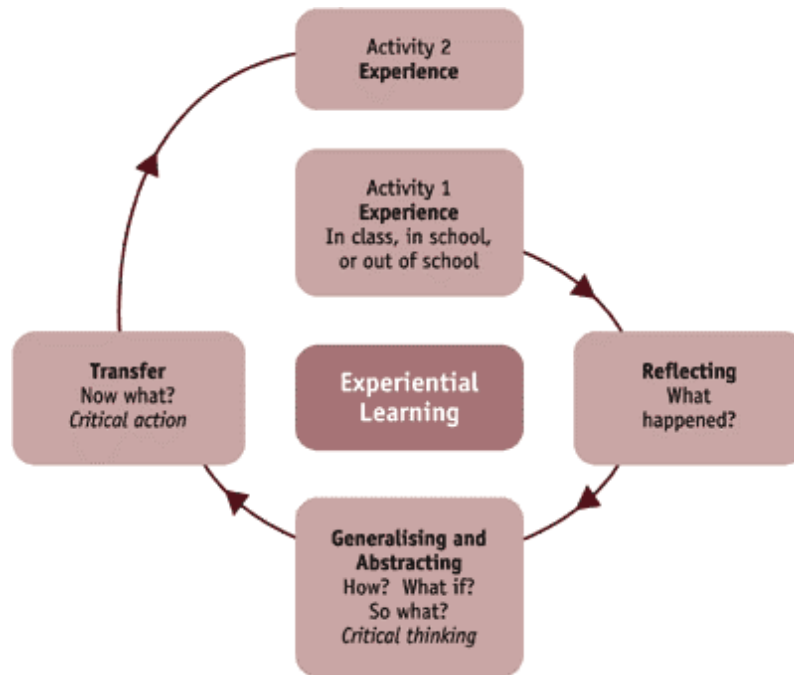


Figure 1: Experiential Learning through Reflection

Self-reflection is considered to be a key aspect of teachers' professionalisation (Meyer-Siever, 2017) with reflection informing future educational planning. However, it is not a competence that always comes naturally, it needs to be an integral component in teacher education programmes to ensure that future teachers make it a natural admission to their everyday teaching practice. For the purpose of this study supported power was given to the learners in order to explore whether they would use their language improvement lessons to best support them in their English and American studies and pedagogy courses. In a learning environment which is generally top down, this would offer the learners the opportunity to recognise their own strengths and needs and build a programme around these, as a first step in their teacher education journeys. Lave and Wenger posit that "The master as the locus of authority (in several senses) is, after all, as much a product of the conventional, centered theory of learning as is the individual learner...a decentred view of the master as pedagogue moves the focus of analysis away from teaching and onto the intricate structuring of a community's learning resources" (Lave and Wenger, 1991: 94).

By affording the group this opportunity, it set a learning environment of collaboration and enhanced the levels of trust and self-empowerment between the individual learners and the teacher, thus creating a classroom community. Marzano, posits that 'Metacognition is the engine of learning' (Marzano, 1998: 127), thus reflection is a key aspect within the process, meaning that how the learning environment engages learners' beliefs is paramount to the learning outcomes, therefore, community classrooms aim to embrace this concept (Watkins, 2005). Although the university stipulates the use of a coursebook and

the end of semester assessment is based on the content of the book, it does not stipulate which elements of the coursebook units and in what order they should be taught. Many scholars have argued that restraining students from working at their own pace on the same material at the same tempo, towards the same goals is not effective (Morrison and Navarro, 2014). The course assessment is standardised and is compulsory as it acts as a prerequisite for future study, however, formative assessment measures are not currently standardised, thus students are able to discuss how and how often they would like to be assessed on course.

3. The Study

3.1 Preliminary Assumptions

From the situated cognition and the literature, the following assumptions were constructed to guide the phases of this research.

Assumption #1: Learners who perceived the course as pertinent to their educational situation/experience are more likely to use their knowledge to better engage with their broader academic studies.

Assumption #2: Trainee teachers will place a greater emphasis on teaching rather than on learning.

Assumption #3: Reflective instructional practices enhance the learner's active use of acquired knowledge.

3.2 Participants

The participants of the study are eight first year (2018/19 academic year cohort) trainee teachers, five male and three female, studying towards a five year Master's in Education (M.Ed.) in TESOL at a Transdanubian university in Hungary. (Group Profile, Appendix 1) Two of the participants have Drama minors, four have Information Technology minors and two are German majors and English minors. Although the benchmark entry requirement to the course is a B2 level language exam or an advanced level Matura examination in English (which awards students with a B2 level equivalent certificate) they are a mixed ability group, with two strong learners (both holding C1 level examination certificates (A and E) and two relatively weak (B1+) communicators (C and D).

Historically, the language teaching education elements of the degree course do not appear in the curriculum before the second or third years of study and then these focus on overarching pedagogical subjects rather than specifically on language teaching. The first 2 years of instruction are predominantly based on language improvement and the interdisciplinary subjects of Literature, Linguistics, Culture and Politics in the English and American studies and German major programmes and the theoretical aspects of Drama and Information Technology, in the respective departments. This gives the learners time to focus

on their language development by engaging with the course materials and their language improvement classes.

3.3 Study and data collection

The study is designed around Dam and Legenhouse' model (1996), where Irish learners of French were given full autonomy over their language learning programme and were invited to not only select the materials, they would like to work with but also to set the curriculum, make decisions on methods and approaches and even decide on the forms of assessment.

At the university language teachers are bound by the use of a coursebook (Outcomes Advanced, Dellar & Walkley, 2017) and need to base their materials around this. That said this does only act as a tool and teachers are encouraged to supplement the book with authentic and any other materials deemed appropriate and necessary. This is due to the fact that at the end of the year the learners take a standardised exam based on the content of the book. In order to contextualise the language improvement course, it is pertinent to mention that there are four first year groups, who meet for written and spoken communication classes once a week. Each class is ninety minutes (two times forty- five minutes) and these classes are not necessarily taught by the same teacher for each aspect, and not all of the groups share the same teacher(s) at all.

For the purpose of this study the lecturer only teaches this group, as opposed to any of the control groups) in order to avoid any conflict of interest. They meet once a week for four hours (four times forty-five minutes, which is equal to three full hours) of instruction, combining all elements into one continuous session with a fifteen-minute break after the first ninety minutes.

The basis of the study is also in line with Benson's (2011) framework and used reflection and target setting as a basis for the decision making. The reflection at the beginning of the course was designed to discover whether their beliefs about language learning stem from their learning experiences (Mori, 1999 in Vibulphol, 2004). Three principle data collection modes were employed, the first being the completion of the questionnaire, which comprised of three sections: **Teaching, Learning and Classroom Management** with each section making ten statements which the learners had to respond to on a seven point likert scale from *strongly disagree* through to *strongly agree*. The thought process behind the division of this questionnaire was to discover whether the participants, being in their first year of teacher education, would consider teaching to be the most important aspect of education, as opposed to learning or classroom management, although (Wang et al., 1990) revealed that the way in which the classroom is managed is more influential than any other variable. The assumption here was that the participants would place a greater emphasis on teaching rather than the other two domains as Hungary continues to follow the dominant approach and believes that learning is

defined as “being taught” (Watkins, 2005) and this will have been the participants learning experience thus far.

4. Methodology

The chosen methodology was a mixed methodology of both quantitative and qualitative data collection.

Each aspect of the initial reflection stages was awarded a full 45 minutes in order to enable the participants to reflect on their previous learning experiences and think about their real beliefs rather than making pressurised decisions. Thinking is also considered a vital aspect of classroom processes (Marzano, 1998) and is often not given the time or space required for it to be truly effective.

4.1 Stage One: On Entry Teacher Beliefs Questionnaire

Learners individually completed a questionnaire based on teacher beliefs (Appendix 2) in order to contextualise and set the tone for their future studies. Dörnyei states that surveys aim to “describe the characteristics of a population by examining a sample of that group” (Dörnyei, 2007: 101), in this context the ‘population are (trainee) teachers. This questionnaire was designed to explore the learners’ preconceived ideas about language teaching and learning and how these may impact on their language learning actions (Holec, 1987, Vibulphol, 2004) and effectively promote success. Statements in the teaching component focussed on the use of L1, teacher control, planning, the encouragement of reflective learning, course materials, learner autonomy, student engagement and communication. The Learning component offered statements around student use of L1, self-correction, Hungarian learners per se, accuracy and fluency, language use, written assessment, communication, course content and materials, responsibility and translation. The Classroom Management section presented statements pertaining to teacher assessment and feedback, timing, engagement, teacher and learner talking time, learner interaction, monitoring, learning environment, the role of the teacher, group/pair work and questioning. All terminology was defined prior to the completion of the questionnaire.

The results were calculated (via *Microsoft Excel*) in two formats: initially on face value, with a coded scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The results were then recoded in an inverse order, highlighting the negatively phrased questions: 2, 8 and 9 in the domain of teaching, 14 and 15 in the domain of learning and 21, 24, 25 and 30 in the domain of classroom management. The below rule was then followed for calculations:

7>>>>1
6>>>>2
5>>>>3
4>>>>4

3>>>>5

2>>>>6

1>>>>7

4.2 Stage Two: Reflection and Modes of Instruction

Stage two was a reflection on the participants' language learning history, in order for them to decide on how they would like the course to run and the lessons to be managed.

In small groups paying particular attention to materials, modes of tuition and opportunities to communicate, they discussed their language learning journey's and then came together as a full group to feedback on their experiences (Appendix 3). This gave the teacher the opportunity to carry out a needs analysis and to determine the group dynamics and potential student roles, by this the dominant, the shy and potential disruptive or passive learners, is meant. (see the group profile, Appendix 1).

Following the discussion, the learners were given an example of the final exam they would be taking at the end of the semester (Appendix 4). They were instructed to use this and their curriculum for the semester to determine how the course should be designed.

Once the learners had had a chance to go through the exam and their curricula, using their coursebooks, they then discussed how they would like the course to run. In small groups they decided on their choice of units, the methods of instruction, supplementary material, their own contributions and the mode of assessment (Appendix 3). The compulsory units of the coursebook to be followed are: Semester 1: Cities, Relationships, Culture and Identity and Politics. This semester is assessed by an attainment exam, with task topics based on the subjects of the semester, both through language improvement and the academic subjects. Semester 2: Going Out Staying In, Conflict and Resolution, Science and Research and Nature and Nurture. This closes the first year and learning is assessed through a proficiency exam at C1 level, based on materials covered over the entire academic year. The outcomes of the discussion are listed in the results section.

4.3 Stage Three: Classroom Contract

The third stage was for them to draw up a class contract in order to support them in following their targets and to remind them of what had been discussed and agreed. By doing this in collaboration with one another, and in isolation from the teacher, again sets the precedence of community, engaging learners with the processes involved, developing behaviour patterns and acting as learner training and a greater interest in academics (Railton and Watson, 2005). One aspect of this method, in addition to the participants becoming more effective learners of English and taking on more responsibility for their own learning (Ellis and Sinclair, 1989) was to act as a 'Model' for the TTs to consider for future teaching

practice. The results of the reflection task and contract are presented in the results section below.

4.4 Stage Four: Target Setting

The fourth step was for the students to set SMART (Short, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic Timebound) targets for themselves, based on their own self-assessment of their strengths and areas in need of development (Appendix 5). The reason target setting was chosen, was to place the responsibility of learning onto the students and as a guided discovery task to introduce them to the concept of self-reflection. Shell (1997) suggests that “some have found that the view of the ‘professor as a dispenser of knowledge’ too confining and potentially exclusionary to some learners.” Through the collaborative tasks of setting the order of curriculum and the mode of study, the level of responsibility of future learning shifts from the teacher to the learner. The SMART targets take the responsibility to another level by emphasising learning rather than teaching. They also encourage the learner to focus on and engage with their own learning process, which in return reaps many benefits, namely improved performance and behaviour and better learning outcomes (Watkins, 2005: 48). This stage was carried out individually, with the participants being asked to consider their strengths and areas for development. Once they had done this, during open class guided discussion, the learners made suggestions as to how they might use their strengths to develop in their recognised areas. Following this, in collaboration with the teacher, each learner set themselves SMART targets with clear aims and objectives (Appendix 6). Examples of targets set can be seen below:

- “I won’t care about mistakes as I can learn from them.” (Objective: “I will make mistakes”.)
- “By the end of the semester I will have greatly improved my pronunciation and I will have a more British accent.”
- “By the end of the semester I will be much more confident in my English speaking”.
- “I would like to be less shy to communicate.” (Objective: “I will ask and answer 5 questions per class.”)
- “By the end of October (mid-term) I will be able to write longer sentences using linking words.”
- “I will be able to write more correctly, mostly spelling.”
- “I will be able to speak more confidently in English Civilisation.” (Objective: record 2 – 3 words per week and use them daily in context)
- “I would like to be more confident in English”

4.5 Stage five: On Exit Feedback Questionnaire

Stage five was a feedback questionnaire, in the form of a written ‘interview’ exploring the participants’ target setting experience and their views on learner autonomy (Appendix 7). This was designed to allow comparability across the participants (Dörnyei, 2007: 135) and as the administration procedures of a questionnaire are vital in order to ensure quality elicited responses, (ibid: 113) this survey was administered via e mail to enable the participants to work independently and afford them the appropriate time they needed to consider their answers.

5. Results

5.1 Stage One: On Entry Teacher Beliefs Questionnaire

Eight first year TTs completed the questionnaire, which consisted of 30 questions, split into three categories: Teaching, Learning and Classroom Management. The results were calculated in two phases, on face value and then in an inverse order, using SPSS software. The higher the ranking the more the participants agreed with the statements. Although, during face value analysis the questionnaire turned out not to be reliable and, as can be seen from the data below, there were no correlations between the three components, the results did however, reveal some interesting tendencies.

Table 1 below presents the mean results by component and reveals that teaching, as predicted in the initial hypothesis scored significantly higher than learning at 4.86, followed by Classroom management at 4.54. Learning yielded the lowest score level with only 3.96 mean score.

Table 1: mean responses by component.

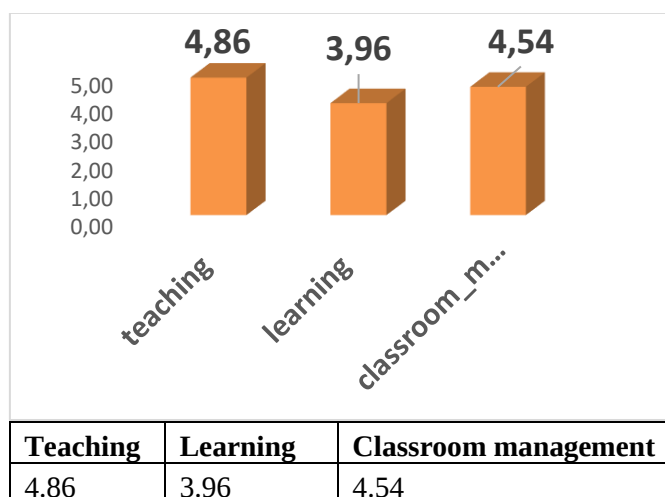


Table 2: presents the average results by participant.

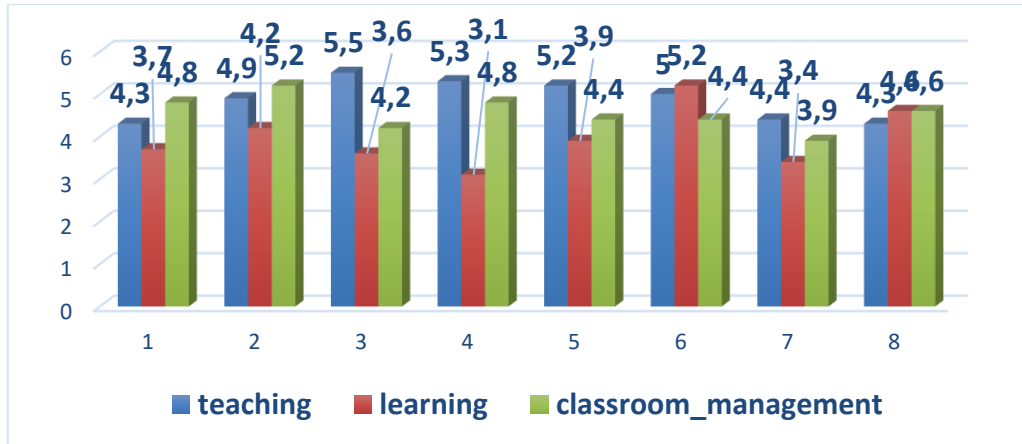


Table 3: average responses by participant.

Teaching	Learning	Classroom Management
4.3	3.7	4.8
4.9	4.2	5.2
5.5	3.6	4.2
5.3	3.1	4.8
5.2	3.9	4.4
5	5.2	4.4
4.4	3.4	3.9
4.3	4.6	4.6

5.1.1 Inverse order results

By selecting the negatively worded statements, creating a feature of the target responses (Dörnyei, 2007: 106) and recoding them in an inverse order, highlighting participants' recognition of key elements of classroom management, learning and teaching, reveals that the averages of the three domains are relatively similar and there are some correlations.

5.1.2 Results of the correlation

Teaching was significantly related to learning, $r = .69$, p (two-tailed) $< .05$.

Teaching and classroom management show a non-significant negative relationship $r = -.39$, p (two-tailed) $> .05$.

Classroom management and learning were not related $r = .000$, p (two-tailed) $= 1$

The tabularised results also present a different indication. Table 3 presents the mean responses by inverse components, indicating a reduction in the Teaching average and an increase (0.8) in Learning and (0.2) in Classroom Management.

Table 4: mean responses by inverse component

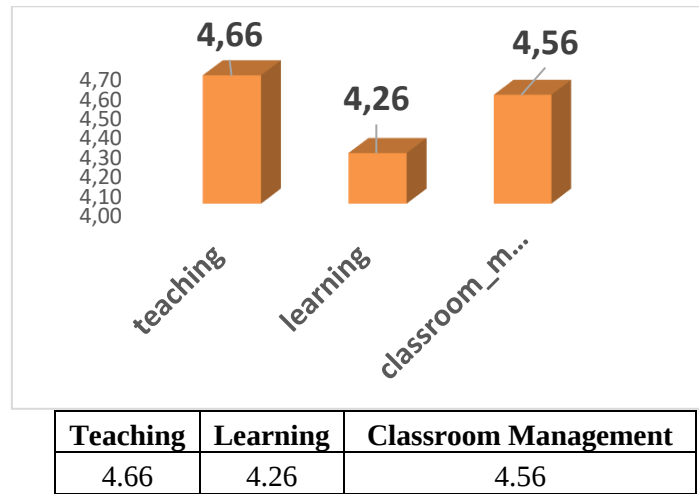


Table 5 presents the average results by respondent, revealing slight differences in all categories.

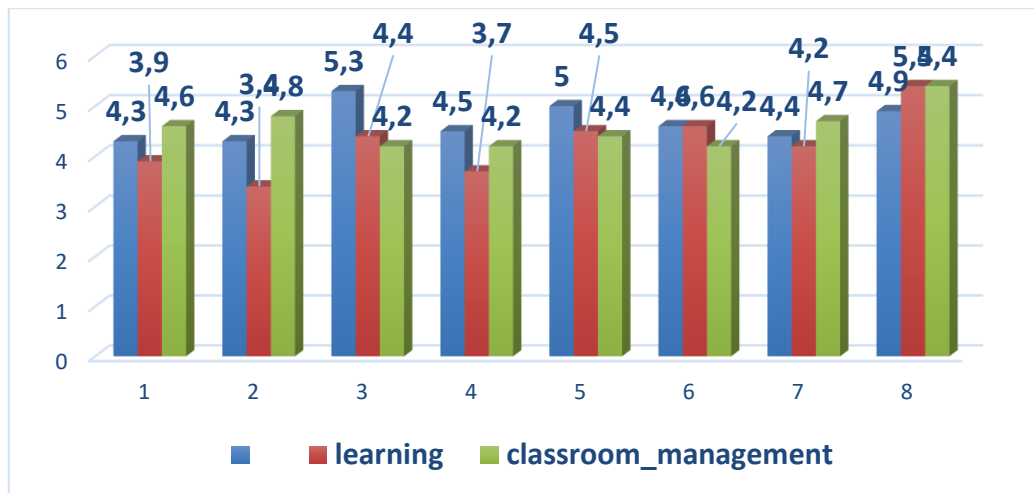


Table 5: average results by respondent, revealing slight differences in all categories.

Teaching	Learning	Classroom Management (CM)
4.3	3.9	4.6
4.3	3.4	4.8
5.3	4.4	4.2
4.5	3.7	4.2
5	4.5	4.4
4.6	4.6	4.2
4.4	4.2	4.7
4.9	5.4	5.4

Table 6: Average responses by participant

Student 1 presents very slight increases in their average responses: *Teaching* 4.3-4.3 *Learning* 3.9-3.7, *CM* 4.6-4.8. Student 2 presents more significant increases: *Teaching* 4.3-4.9, *Learning* 3.4-4.2, *CM* 4.8-5.2. Student 3 presents almost no change in the area of *Teaching* 5.3-5.5, however, a decrease of almost a whole point in the *Learning domain* 4.4-3.6 and no difference within *CM* 4.2-4.2. Student 4 presents the greatest difference in their beliefs on *Teaching* 4.5-5.3, a decrease in the *Learning domain* 3.7-3.1 and a minimal increase in their beliefs within the domain of *CM* 4.2-4.8. Student 5 displays a minimal increase in beliefs around *Teaching* 5-5.2, a decrease of almost 60% in *Learning* 4.5-3.9 and no difference in beliefs surrounding *CM* 4.4-4.4. Student 6 presents minimal increases in their beliefs in all aspects: *Teaching* 4.6-5, *Learning* 4.6-5.2 and *CM* 4.2-4.4. Student 7 reveals no change in beliefs within *Teaching* 4.4-4.4, and almost whole point reduction in *Learning and CM beliefs* 4.2-3.4 and 4.7-3.9 respectively. Finally, student 8 presents a slight reduction in *Teaching beliefs* 4.9-4.3, yet, more significant reductions in their beliefs around *Learning and CM*; 5.4-4.6 and 5.4-4.6 respectively.

5.2 Stages Two and Three: Reflection and Modes of Instruction

Following the group's discussion on the order of the coursebook units they wished to follow, based on their academic curricula (here in plural as not all participants were following the same programme) the outcome is as follows: order of elements of units: Culture and Identity, Politics, Cities, Relationships, Conflict and Resolution, Going Out Staying In, Nature and Nurture and Science and Research. This can be crossmatched with the curriculum for the first year, across both semesters, which focusses predominantly on Linguistics, Literature and Culture as all the elements of the coursebook units contain language that has been matched to the curriculum subjects.

Following this the participants drew up a list of modes of instruction (Appendix 3). These were categorized by positive and negative experiences and elements of: teaching, learning, methodology, autonomous learning and motivation. The participants were split into two groups: A and B. Table 6 below presents a 'transcript' of the reflection task, including the class rules.

Gro up	Teachi ng +	Teachi ng -	Learning +	Learnin g -	Motivati on	Autono mous learning	Teacher responsibi lities	Class Rules
A	Oral tests Speakin g exercis es	Vocab test writing practice listenin g tasks	Less strict than other classes Teacher more open and understan ding than in other subjects.	Lots of reading	To be able to read books Use the computer Watch videos Group projects	Reading in English Having a penfriend Surfing the net Gaming Speaking to foreigner s	Be respectful. Prepare creative topics Create. Provide opportuniti es for speaking. Create opportuniti es for slower students to catch up.	English Only with 'pop up Hungari an.' Assess ment per unit which forms 50% of the final grade with the summat ive
B	NEST (Ameri can) Exchan ge progra mme Being able to start learnin g in primary school	Not enough gramma r Non interacti ve Little opportu nity to for speakin g Teacher s only used Hungari an Large class sizes	Easier when using modern devices	Learning for the sake of learning- non effective Written assessme nts No differenti ated learning	Ability to communi cate in English. Meet new people Use in employ ment Better understan ding of others. Being able to use the language fluently Use for internatio nal media	Use of Eng. Forums Using on holiday Using online	Only use English. Create platforms for interaction and communic ation. Offer tips from class to support out of class learning. Support book with own resources. Be flexible.	Everyon e must contribu te to/in all lessons. Support book with own resource s.

Table 6: 'transcript' of the reflection task, including the class rules.

5.3 Stage Four: Target Setting

Below are some examples of targets set, for full target sheets see Appendix 6.

- "I won't care about mistakes as I can learn from them." (Objective: "I will make mistakes".)
- "By the end of the semester I will have greatly improved my pronunciation and I will have a more British accent."

- “By the end of the semester I will be much more confident in my English speaking”.
- “I would like to be less shy to communicate.” (Objective: “I will ask and answer 5 questions per class.”)
- “By the end of October (mid-term) I will be able to write longer sentences using linking words.”
- “I will be able to write more correctly, mostly spelling.”
- “I will be able to speak more confidently in English Civilisation.” (Objective: record 2 – 3 words per week and use them daily in context)
- “I would like to be more confident in English”

5.4 Stage five: On Exit Feedback Questionnaire

The feedback was designed in the form of an interview exploring the participants’ target setting experience and their views on learner autonomy (Appendix 7), in order to allow comparability across the participants. (Dörnyei, 2007: 135) Only 4 of the remaining six participants (two dropped out mid-course) responded to the feedback request. Full responses can be found in Appendix 7, however, some examples are presented below (spelling error corrections have been applied for ease of reading):

- “When I am learning outside the classroom on my own”
- “it was interesting to decide which topic would be the best to begin with”
- “The most beneficial was that I saw my development.”
- “I could see where I am so I saw that I need to improve”
- “to use my time and resources creatively”
- “SMART targets give me more self-confidence and motivation.”
- “I began to speak with foreign students.”
- “I knew what I wanted to achieve so I learnt outside of the classroom”
- “For me it felt useful, since I unlocked a certain part of the language I needed for a long time now.”

6. Discussion

The initial results of the teacher beliefs questionnaire, which placed Teaching and Classroom Management above Learning is indicative of the weighting of teaching over learning in the Hungarian education system, which remains very much teacher led with little hands on practical teaching but “an abundant coverage of theory” (Soproni, 2013). As beliefs in learning are said to be formed through experience (Morrison & Navarro, 2014: 34) it is possible that participants drew on both negative and positive learning experiences when making their choices.

With reference to the results of the Target Setting, it is evident that confidence plays a huge role in students’ self-perception as language learners. The comments,

from the exit questionnaire, pertaining to confidence are the most promising aspects of this study as Woodrow (2006) discovered that communication with teachers and performing in front of a class are major contributors to language anxiety, particularly when answering direct question and engaging in group discussions. Other interesting aspects were the comments “these targets doesn't provide enough motivation if there is no supervision” and “the targets faded with time, even though you tried to bring them up.” These are key indicators of the need for guided autonomy. It is a misconception that autonomous or self-directed learning is self-instruction. In general terms the targets would have been reset at regular intervals, however, when asked, the majority of the group didn't want to reset them, despite the positive feedback at the end of the course.

Let us refer back to the preliminary assumptions:

- Learners who perceived the course as pertinent to their educational situation/experience are more likely to use their knowledge to better engage with their broader academic studies. In accordance with the feedback from the post course questionnaire, it is clear that the participants of this study did consider the course and its elements both relevant and important in both their English language studies and on their paths towards becoming language teachers.
- Trainee teachers will place a greater emphasis on teaching rather than on learning. When we consider the mean of the total responses in teacher beliefs we can see that there is barely any difference between the emphasis TTs place on Teaching or Classroom management and the difference between their ranking of learning is a mere .4 % lower. However, in the exit questionnaire students commented on how their focus shifted towards learning through the use of target setting.
- Reflective instructional practices enhance the learner's active use of acquired knowledge. This hypothesis can also be said to be proven as almost all participants commented in the development of their self-confidence and more active use of language as well as the positive results of the attainment assessment at the end of the semester, which they all passed. (No papers were marked by the teacher, in line with university policy).

7. Conclusion

This study set out to explore whether our students are ready for the autonomy approach and whether their teacher and learning beliefs would alter by the end of the course and whether, through ongoing reflective practice, they would develop their self-confidence to become more active speakers of the English language. The results of this data collection have enhanced the validity of this study, which may now pave the way for deeper and broader research into these areas. These participants have demonstrated a shift in their focus, from not only teaching to

learning, but also to their own needs and learning methods. Further research is required, with a larger sample and across more universities in Hungary, to give a clearer picture.

In terms of the formative assessment outcomes of the participants, it is clear that not only one size fits all and that it is possible to cover all the necessary material and meet proposed learning outcomes, without following a rigid format.

Our students may not be ready to be fully autonomous learners but they are ready to become them and as autonomous learning does not mean making the teacher redundant (Little, 1991), this study demonstrates that by guiding our learners towards autonomy, through reflective and collaborative practices, they have a clearer understanding of their own developmental needs and how they may reach their full language learning potential. This data has clear implications for curriculum planning as well as teacher education programmes and a departmental approach to self-reflection would be a welcome addition to the curriculum including how to write a reflective journal.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Group Profile

Student ID	Sex	Level	Character	Role
A	M	C1	Strong and highly motivated	Natural leader, critical thinker, communicator, collaborator
B	M	B2 -	Shy but motivated.	Passive, creative critical thinker
C	F	B1+	V Shy, lacks confidence	V passive, critical thinker
D	F	B1+	V shy, low confidence, low motivation	Reluctant passive, creative Potential drop-out.
E	F	C1	Strong, sociable, medium motivation	Passive leader, collaborator, communicator
F	M	C1	Strong, sociable, low motivation	Dominant, leader, communicator potential disruptor.
G	M	B2	Lacks confidence in language skills but generally sociable, Low motivation	Creative Collaborator
H	M	B2+	V confident, strong communicator, motivated	Potential disrupter but creative collaborator, leader

Appendix 2: Pre Service EFL Teacher's Language Teaching and Learning Beliefs Questionnaire (in a Hungarian context)

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this questionnaire. Full anonymity is guaranteed.
Please choose **ONE** answer for each statement.

Teaching	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Partially disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Partially agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
The teacher should never use the L1							
The teacher should have complete control throughout the lesson							
The teacher should ensure all lessons are well planned and prepared							
The teacher should always stick to the lesson plan completely							
Teachers should encourage reflective learning							
The teacher should cover all aspects of the course materials							
The teacher should help students to learn better both inside and outside of the classroom							
It is important to give students regular written tests.							
It is not necessary to make sure all students are engaged all the time							
Teachers should aim for maximum communication in all lessons							

Learning							
Students should never use the L1 in the classroom.							
Students should self-correct and correct each other							
Hungarian learners are motivated and engaged							
It is more important to be accurate than to be fluent.							
Grammar and vocabulary are more important than pronunciation and cohesion							
Written tests are an effective measure of language learning							
Being able to communicate and be understood is the most important aspect of language learning.							
Students should make decisions about course content and materials							
Translation tasks are no longer important.							
Students should take responsibility for their own learning							
Classroom Management							
The teacher should correct all student mistakes as they happen							
Timing is very important							
All students should be engaged at all times							
Only one student should be talking at any time.							
Students should only speak when asked a direct question.							
Monitoring for delayed feedback is more effective than on the spot correction							
The teacher should create a comfortable confident learning environment.							
The teacher should take a more facilitatory role.							
Group work should outweigh individual work							
Student questions should always be answered by the teacher.							

Appendix 3: Student Reflections and class rules

Teaching

- ⊕ it was good to learn English in our school because the classes were only English.
- ⊕ English lessons weren't too strict compared to other lessons.
- ⊕ Teachers were more gentle and understanding than the teachers in other subjects.
- ⊖ We were assessed by written tests, tests, or instead of oral exams.
- ⊖ As observed students ~~was~~ had our opportunity to catch up to others.

Learning:

- ⊕ It was easier to learn languages using modern devices/sources.
- ⊕ The key motivation was being able to use the language; speak fluently and understand the international media.
- ⊖ Learning for the sake of it. → not effective

Solutions:

~ We should have been assessed by more oral presentation
 ~ if able, low skilled students could attend on extra, helped classes to catch up.

Improving:

- reading in English (books, media, apps etc...)
- watching films, series in English (Netflix) language
- find a penfriend
- using interesting English phrases
- writing in English

1. culture + identity
 2. politics
 3. cities
 4. relationships
 5. conflict
 6. going out + staying in
 7. nature, nature
 8. science + research
 Filter Exam.

1st Year T.T. class

1. English only. Min. 80%

2. Assessment Unit 1-4

3. Everyone contributes

- watching movies / TV shows / Youtube
- reading
- practicing on websites
- looking up words you don't know
- gaming
- speaking in English / Foreign people

Interactive / communicative
 tips from class to help
 outside class
 supplement with own resources
 flexible / versatile

Appendix 4: End of Term examination (example with half of content)

End of Term examination

End of First Semester Assessment- Instructions.

You have 2 hours to complete the exam.

-Choose **ONE** writing task- you have **40 minutes** for this and may use a monolingual dictionary.
At the end of the 40 minutes the dictionaries will be collected in.

-Complete the rest of the exam (reading and language components)-you have **80 minutes** for this.
During this time you should also go back and proofread/edit your written work.

The reading and language component carries 50 points. The pass mark is 60%

The writing component is graded by level- the minimum level of achievement is 3.(60%)

Good luck!

Lexis and language

Write full sentences, in the correct forms, using the words below. You may add any extra words so long as they are in the correct form and context.

1. One of the /most depressing/winter.

2. If/leave/on time/catch/train

3. Biggest concern/future/planet/environment

4. I love most/young people/passion/interest

5. Had/ weather/different/have/have/better/time

Create sentences with true meanings of the given collocations/idioms-the first one has been done for you as an example.

Rolling in money:

That part of the city is the richest, everyone is *rolling in money*.

1. A step in the right direction:

2. Shadow of war:

3. Full to the brim:

4. Absolutely appalling

5. Traditional stereotype:

Reading and use of language

Please choose the correct clause (from below) to complete the text. There are two extra clauses you do not need. Write your answer in the box provided.

Prince Harry is to marry his American actress girlfriend Meghan Markle.

The prince,____, will marry Ms Markle next spring and they will live at Nottingham Cottage at Kensington Palace, London. The couple, _____secretly got engaged earlier this month.

, _____ Prince Charles said he was "delighted to announce" his son's news and said that Ms Markle's parents had given their blessing.

Only the Queen and "other close members of his family" initially knew of the engagement which took place in London. The announcement, issued by Clarence House, _____, said details about the wedding day would be "announced in due course".

The engaged couple will appear _____ on Monday afternoon, and will take part in a broadcast interview in the evening.

The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh said they were "_____ and wish them every happiness", a Buckingham Palace spokesman said.

Prince William and Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, said they _____ "very excited for Harry and Meghan", adding: "It has been wonderful getting to know Meghan _____

Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose predecessor _____ wished them "many years of love, happiness and fulfilment".

Prime Minister _____ offered her "very warmest congratulations" and wished the couple "great happiness for the future".

Labour leader _____ said: "I wish them well - I hope they have a great life together."

He joked: "Having met Harry a couple of times I'm sure they're going to have a great deal of fun together."

- A. fifth in line to the throne
- B. Jeremy Corbyn
- C. for photographs outside Kensington Palace
- D. the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall's official residence,
- E. who have been dating since the summer of 2016
- F. delighted for the couple

Honduras presidential vote: Both candidates claim victory

Supporters of the two candidates have been celebrating on the streets. With 57% of votes counted, the electoral tribunal has so far given Mr Nasralla the lead. He has just over 45% of the vote and Mr Hernández just over 40%, the tribunal's president announced in the early hours of Sunday.

Opinion polls conducted before the election suggested Mr Hernández would win, but Mr Nasralla had recently made headway. President Hernández has been heavily criticised by the opposition for standing for a second term even though re-election was prohibited under the Honduran constitution, until a 2015 Supreme Court ruling overturned the ban.

Shortly before the electoral tribunal announced the partial results, President Hernández told cheering supporters that he was certain of victory. He was joined by the crowds in shouts of "Four more years!" Mr Nasralla was equally confident of victory even before the partial results were made public, telling his backers "We are winning!".

Mr Hernández has been credited with lowering the murder rate in one of the world's most violent countries. He also conducted a purge against corrupt police officers and created a new militarised police force.

Revamped new maximum-security prisons have helped the government regain control over some jails from inmates. But the opposition has linked Mr Hernández with a huge scandal, alleging that social security funds had gone into his 2013 presidential campaign. They also say his government has become increasingly authoritarian, with a new anti-terrorism law making it a crime to march in protest.

Decide if the following sentences are true (T), false (F) or not mentioned (/).

1. More than half of the votes have already been counted.
2. The two candidates have the same number of votes.
3. The announcement came on Sunday morning.
4. Neither Mr. Hernandez nor Mr. Nasralla were predicted to win.
5. Mr. Hernandez has run for election before.

Choose the most appropriate heading (A-L) for each paragraph (1-10). There are two extra headings you don't need. Write the number of the heading in the box.

Does England need 300,000 new homes a year?

1. The claim is that building 300,000 new homes a year in England would start to make housing more affordable and experts seem to agree on 300,000 as a good starting point but there is not universal confidence that it would make much difference to affordability.

2. Chancellor Philip Hammond told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show that experts agree that 300,000 new homes a year would start to make inroads on the affordability of housing.

The figure was recommended by a House of Lords economic affairs committee report last year, which described it as the minimum annual amount needed to meet demand in England (housing is a devolved issue) and "have a moderating effect on house prices".

3. We've spoken to a number of experts to see if they agree. Malcolm Tait, professor of planning at University of Sheffield, said that the 300,000 recommended by the report "is on the high side of recommendations, but was derived due to their view that in order to keep house prices consistent with wages, this was the figure required".

4. Richard Disney, professor of economics at University of Sussex, said: "The simple answer is this is a number plucked out of thin air, since affordability depends on price and income."

Writing

You are studying abroad for the semester. Write an e mail to a friend describing your experiences.

Include the following points:

- Describe the environment and compare it to your home environment.
- Discuss the people you have met and those you are surrounded with
- Mention at least 3 positive and 2 negative aspects of your stay.

You should spend 40 minutes on this task. Please write a minimum of 250 words.

Write about the following topic:

In some countries an increasing number of people are suffering from health problems as a result of eating too much fast food. It is therefore necessary for governments to impose a higher tax on this kind of food.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

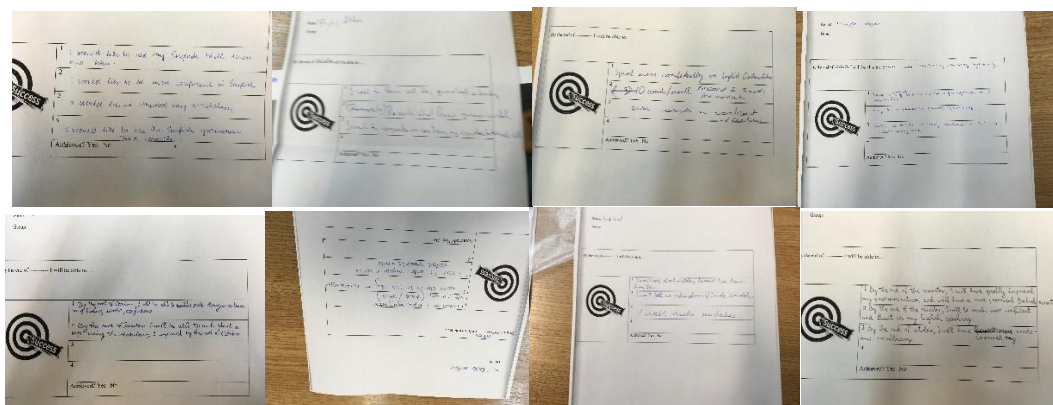
Give reasons for your answers and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

You should spend 40 minutes on this task. Please write a minimum of 250 words.

Appendix 5: SMART Target sheet example

NAME:	
GROUP:	
BY THE END OF ----- I WILL BE ABLE TO....	
	1
	2
	3
	4

Appendix 6 :Participants' Target Sheets



Appendix 7: End of Semester Feedback Focus Group Questions

1. In your own words, describe what language learning autonomy is.
2. In the class you were given autonomy over the order of topics and the order of the tasks within each unit. Did this affect your degree of motivation / involvement?
3. In the class you were asked to reflect on your language learning journey as you begin your language teacher (training) journey. What were the benefits to you?
4. Describe the (dis) advantages of setting yourself SMART targets.
5. To what extent has setting SMART targets helped in making you more autonomous in your out of class language learning?
6. Before this class, what did you do to develop your own language skills outside of the classroom? Has this changed after the class?

Answers

Student A (Adam)

In your own words, describe what language learning autonomy is.

Learning autonomy seems and sounds like a student based method where the teacher puts the choices into the learners' hand, giving them freedom, but also responsibility. In my opinion this method is quite helpful for language learners with true, long-term motivations, otherwise it may cause some issues. It

was strange for us, because we got used to teaching, however, with this situation the focus switched to learning for our own sake. I guess that was the whole point after all.

In the class you were given autonomy over the order of topics and the order of the tasks within each unit. Did this affect your degree of motivation / involvement?

It is certain that our own list could have been beneficial for us although I have to say that it didn't turn out as well as I imagined. To be completely honest, my motivation didn't change at all, despite the fact that we changed the order of the units. My intention was to go through all the units with almost every topic so I would have done everything anyway. And as a student who attends on each and every class and lecture, I tried to use my memory to create a sort of chronological order using the book's units which would have gone forward simultaneously with other English - Drama - IT classes, but I feel like this couldn't really happen only with few exceptions. But that's my opinion only.

In the class you were asked to reflect on your language learning journey as you begin your language teacher (training) journey. What were the benefits to you?

Hmm this is a tough one. I would say the most beneficial part was the freedom what gave me the opportunity to learn about things which seemed to be useful in that period of time. As an example, on Wednesday I had a British culture lecture which main focus was on Political relations of Britain inside and outside of the country. Next day we had the political Unit as well, which 'came' in time, some connections could be found here and there, it was a great to be the part of program.

Another thing is that this experience surely drew our attention and I'm 100% sure many of us will try this out once we can start teaching our foreign language.

Describe the (dis) advantages of setting yourself SMART targets.

For me this SMART target paper seemed like a New Year's resolution, because we stated / set our goals then the targets faded with time, even though you tried to bring them up. I think if you would you like to use these targets to the benefit of the students, then the targets need to have bigger attention otherwise students won't take it seriously. For me it felt useful, since I unlocked a certain part of the language I needed for a long time now.

As a disadvantage or a negative experience from my side was the choosing method of these points.

To what extent has setting SMART targets helped in making you more autonomous in your out of class language learning?

The SMART targets I chose were something I missed to learn for a while. The targets reminded me every time I opened my books that something needs to be done otherwise my real- life teaching will be good enough but not the best I could do. Once I was done with my research I started using them and as a result now I feel more confident. Yet as I stated above these targets doesn't provide enough motivation if there is no supervision.

Before this class, what did you do to develop your own language skills outside of the classroom? Has this changed after the class?

Due to my teaching periods I need to improve my vocabulary and work on my speech which is usually done by surfing and searching on the internet, keeping an eye on the improving world and the current trends, while speaking to my friends and ex-trainees. This class made me interested in the autonomous learning process and the Outcomes book gave useful resources of listening and vocabulary exercises. Other than that I don't really think anything has changed. I do hope things will change once I am done with the IT and Math related classes because they take a lot of time what they shouldn't do, nevertheless my curiosity will move me forward one way or another.

Student B (ERIK)

In your own words, describe what language learning autonomy is.

It is the process of learning a foreign language autonomously. So language learners can decide how to learn that language and how to develop their language skills. They choose the exercises to practise, they can map out a plan of learning for themselves. They have more freedom in this kind of language learning, but it also means that they are responsible for their own learning and development.

In the class you were given autonomy over the order of topics and the order of the tasks within each unit. Did this affect your degree of motivation / involvement?

Yes it did, because it was interesting to decide which topic would be the best to begin. I liked it, because we could choose the topics that are more beneficial to us regarding our other lessons in the university. It was good and useful to begin the more important topics earlier than the less important ones. It

increased my motivation. Regarding the order of the tasks I would have preferred if the teacher had chosen the order of the tasks, because she knows better which tasks would be more important to do.

In the class you were asked to reflect on your language learning journey as you begin your language teacher (training) journey. What were the benefits to you?

The benefit to me was that I could see my own language learning journey. I could sum up of my experience in language learning. I collected the good and the bad things and memories. The most beneficial was that I saw my development.

Describe the (dis) advantages of setting yourself SMART targets.

The advantages are to clarify my goals and ideas, to use my time and resources creatively and productively to achieve them. SMART targets give me more self-confidence and motivation. If I achieve my SMART targets, I will consider myself more successful.

To what extent has setting SMART targets helped in making you more autonomous in your out of class language learning?

I knew what I wanted to achieve so I learnt outside of the classroom. I practised the grammar learnt during the class and I made grammar exercises. I learnt the vocabulary of the lessons and I used the online vocabulary builder of Outcomes.

.Before this class, what did you do to develop your own language skills outside of the classroom? Has this changed after the class?

I did similar things. I bought English student's books and workbooks for myself to practise grammar and to expand my vocabulary. I watched films and series in English to develop my listening skills.

Student C (Eszti)

In your own words, describe what language learning autonomy is.

As we can tell what we want to learn and what the teacher expect.

When we are developing our language skills with watching movies with english subtitles, reading english books, magazines or articles or when we learn grammar and vocabulary without teacher's expectation.

In the class you were given autonomy over the order of topics and the order of the tasks within each unit. Did this affect your degree of motivation / involvement?

It was a bit strange for me. I never have had this autonomy..and I am more motivated if the teacher expect something and if I have to write test.

In the class you were asked to reflect on your language learning journey as you begin your language teacher (training) journey. What were the benefits to you?

Now I know that the grammar is less important than the speaking.
And I can develop my language skills for myself too.

Describe the (dis) advantages of setting yourself SMART targets.

My smart target was that I can speak more about anything.

I think it was successful because I could realise that I speak without thinking whether it was right or not.

To what extent has setting SMART targets helped in making you more autonomous in your out of class language learning?

I began to speak with foreign students.

Before this class, what did you do to develop your own language skills outside of the classroom?

Has this changed after the class?

I watch movies with english subtitles, listen english music.

Now I think I can speak more effectively.

Student D (Fruzi)

In your own words, describe what language learning autonomy is.

When I am learning outside the classroom on my own. I am learning new words in order to broaden my vocabulary.

In the class you were given autonomy over the order of topics and the order of the tasks within each unit. Did this affect your degree of motivation / involvement?

It didn't affect my degree of motivation as I may learn what we held the most important in the course book.

In the class you were asked to reflect on your language learning journey as you begin your language teacher (training) journey. What were the benefits to you?

I could see where I am so I saw that I need to improve as fast as possible because other members are at a higher level and I would like to be better.

Describe the (dis) advantages of setting yourself SMART targets.

We learnt how to be good teachers, we need to be interested in every topics.

I was frightened because of the self-determination.

To what extent has setting SMART targets helped in making you more autonomous in your out of class language learning?

I found the key to the solution on my own. I could learn how to learn autonomy.

I found plenty of interesting topics, collocations.

Before this class, what did you do to develop your own language skills outside of the classroom?

Has this changed after the class?

I watched films in English or with English subtitles.

I watched videos about grammar, vocabulary,

I had a penfriend. Yes, it has changed after the class.