

Original Research

Field-Driven Language Learning: Exploring Emotional Intelligence and Autonomy in Indonesian EOP Programs

Ni Putu Ratni¹, Syarifuddin Dollah² & Muhammad Basri³¹ Universitas Hindu Negeri I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar, Indonesia^{2,3} Universitas Negeri Makassar, Makassar, Indonesia**Article Info****Article history:**

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**Abstract**

Autonomous learning has emerged as a crucial pedagogical approach for equipping students with the skills necessary to thrive in dynamic, communication-driven industries such as tourism. However, limited research exists on the implementation of autonomous English language learning through field-based practices within Indonesian religious-affiliated universities. This study examines the practice of Autonomous Learning (AL) among students in the Travel Industry Study Program at Universitas Hindu Negeri I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar through a collaborative field study conducted with international students from the SIT Program. Grounded in Humanistic Learning Theory and Emotional Intelligence frameworks, this mixed-methods research investigates three core objectives: the implementation of AL in English learning, indicators of autonomy within the learning process, and the emotional impact on learners. Data were gathered through literature documentation, a student survey, and data triangulation involving program reports, academic references, and participant responses. The findings reveal that AL was effectively fostered through student-centered, collaborative field experiences that encouraged self-direction, intrinsic motivation, and emotional engagement. Despite moderate self-awareness and vocabulary limitations, students exhibited positive emotions such as joy and increased self-esteem, validating the affective benefits of the program. This study contributes to the discourse on learner autonomy by demonstrating how humanistic and experiential learning environments can bridge linguistic, cultural, and psychological gaps. It advocates for institutional support in re-establishing collaborative programs and integrating AL practices into EOP (English for Occupational Purposes) pedagogy, thereby offering a model adaptable to similar educational contexts across Indonesia and beyond.

Corresponding Author: Ratni, puturatni@uhnsugriwa.ac.id

1. Introduction

Mastering the English language in today's interconnected world is not merely an academic requirement but a fundamental life skill. As the lingua franca of global communication, diplomacy, science, and technology, English functions as the gateway to a vast array of knowledge and cross-cultural interactions. Northrup (2013) defines Global English as a standardized, practical variant of the language designed to facilitate effective communication across borders. In Indonesia, where access to international knowledge resources is increasingly dependent on English proficiency, this global language serves as a strategic tool to enhance national competitiveness in education, tourism, and employment sectors.

Indonesia's commitment to fostering English language competence is enshrined in its educational policy. The National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 mandates the integration of foreign languages,

particularly English, into the national curriculum to support intellectual development, moral character formation, and global readiness (Presiden RI, 2003). English thus becomes not only a subject of study but a medium for acquiring knowledge from diverse sources including books, digital media, and interpersonal communication. Within this framework, English learning is expected to cultivate individuals who are autonomous, spiritually grounded, healthy, creative, and socially responsible.

Despite these national aspirations, challenges persist in the implementation of English language instruction across Indonesian institutions. Many students struggle with motivation, limited access to qualified instructors, insufficient learning resources, and underdeveloped learner autonomy. Studies have highlighted that increased exposure to comprehensible input in meaningful contexts can enhance language acquisition (Harmer, 2007; Djonhar, 2012). In China, for example, Self-Access Centers (SACs) have shown potential in promoting learner autonomy among college students, yet have also revealed limitations related to motivation, language anxiety, and inadequate support structures (Jianfeng, 2019). Other autonomous learning models, such as MOOLCs (Massive Open Online Language Courses) and technology-based approaches like CALL and e-Tandem, demonstrate how flexibility and accessibility can support autonomous engagement with English language materials (Misir et al., 2018; Daflizar, 2023). However, these models often require significant infrastructure, digital literacy, and institutional investment, which may not always be feasible in all Indonesian higher education contexts.

Furthermore, prior research has often concentrated on classroom-based or digital autonomous learning, neglecting the emotional dimensions and contextual specificity of experiential language learning, particularly in field-based practices. Although the 5R model (responsible, responsive, resourceful, resilient, and reliant) has been useful in promoting autonomy during remote learning periods (Tamano, 2023), it lacks empirical grounding in collaborative intercultural engagement. Likewise, Betts' model emphasizes social-emotional learning within structured training but does not account for the unique challenges faced by students in religious-affiliated or resource-limited institutions (Aladwan, 2022). The literature remains relatively silent on how field-based English learning, embedded in real-world, intercultural contexts, can develop learner autonomy and emotional resilience, especially in non-urban or faith-based university settings.

This study fills that critical gap by revisiting and analyzing the implementation of an autonomous learning model embedded in a collaborative field study previously conducted between students of the Travel Industry Study Program at Universitas Hindu Negeri I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa (UHN IGBS) Denpasar and international students from the SIT Program. What makes this investigation novel is its focus on humanistic learning theory as a lens to examine the development of autonomous English learning and its emotional impact in a non-digital, field-based environment. It not only explores how learners exercise autonomy through self-regulation and intrinsic motivation, but also highlights how emotional intelligence supports meaningful and context-sensitive language learning. The integration of emotion theory within the framework of autonomous learning is a rarely addressed intersection in English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) research.

The study aims to investigate how Autonomous Learning (AL) was implemented, how its indicators manifested, and how it emotionally impacted the students participating in the field program. Drawing upon Humanistic Learning Theory, the study evaluates the effectiveness of learner-centered, emotionally responsive strategies in promoting English proficiency. This research contributes to the growing discourse on student agency and human-centered language education by offering insights into how learner autonomy can be supported even in settings where infrastructure and formal support systems are limited.

By analyzing the collaborative field study, this paper seeks to uncover pedagogical insights for English instructors, particularly those working within vocational or tourism-related disciplines. The study intends to demonstrate how autonomous practices, grounded in cultural relevance and emotional well-being, can enhance both linguistic competence and learner confidence. Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of aligning language instruction with learners' self-concepts, motivations, and social-emotional capacities to achieve more meaningful learning outcomes in English for specific purposes.

In the broader context of English Language Teaching (ELT), this study encourages educators to adopt a more holistic and humanistic approach to language education by focusing on three key dimensions: the process of autonomous learning implementation, its observable indicators, and its emotional impact on learners. These dimensions correspond directly to the study's objectives and emphasize the need to create

learning environments that empower students to regulate their own learning, recognize and apply indicators of autonomy, and experience positive emotional engagement throughout the process. As the demand for English proficiency increases in occupational domains such as the tourism and service industries, integrating field-based, emotionally responsive, and autonomy-driven English learning can foster not only linguistic competence but also learner confidence, motivation, and well-being. Such integration positions autonomous learning not as a supplementary strategy, but as a central pedagogical principle for developing reflective, independent, and emotionally resilient English learners across diverse ELT contexts.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive exploration of the implementation, indicators, and emotional impact of Autonomous Learning (AL) in English language instruction for Travel Industry students at UHN IGBS Denpasar. This design was chosen to capture the complexity of learners' experiences alongside measurable trends in student perceptions. The mixed-methods approach is especially appropriate when research seeks to combine descriptive insights with numerical data, as emphasized by [Sugiyono \(2013\)](#), who notes that descriptive statistics are effective when analyzing entire populations without the intention of generalization.

2.2. Data Sources and Participants

The research utilized two types of data sources: secondary data derived from existing documents and primary data gathered through a student survey. The secondary data included program reports, academic books, and peer-reviewed articles that were relevant to the research focus and theoretical frameworks. These documents served as the main source for qualitative analysis. The primary data were collected from 25 active students of UHN IGBS Denpasar who voluntarily participated in an online questionnaire. These students reflected on their experiences and perceptions related to collaborative field studies and English learning in autonomous environments.

2.3. Research Instruments

The qualitative component of the study relied on the researcher as the primary instrument, supported by a structured documentation framework. This framework included a series of guiding questions organized into tables that aligned with three theoretical lenses: Humanistic Learning Theory ([Rogers, 1994](#); [Smith, 2015](#)), Autonomous Learning Theory ([Richards, 2023](#)), and Emotional Intelligence Theory ([Bradberry, 2020](#); [Borod, 2000](#)). For the quantitative component, the research used a survey questionnaire that included multiple items designed to assess student awareness, previous participation in field-based learning, and their interest in future implementation of similar programs.

2.4. Data Collection Procedures

The data collection was carried out in two phases. In the first phase, the qualitative data were gathered through a library research method. This involved systematically selecting and analyzing documentation from various literature repositories, including printed and digital sources. Notes and analytical records were maintained using a predefined guide to ensure objectivity and consistency. In the second phase, the quantitative data were collected using an online survey tool. The questionnaire was distributed to Travel Industry students at UHN IGBS Denpasar who voluntarily responded, thereby contributing insight into their level of engagement with autonomous learning in English.

2.5. Data Analysis Techniques

The research adopted a data triangulation technique to ensure the validity of the findings. Triangulation was achieved by comparing and cross-checking data from documentation, student surveys, and theoretical references. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis based on categories derived from the three theoretical lenses. The quantitative data from the survey were analyzed using descriptive percentage analysis. This analysis provided clarity on how students responded to each item and helped identify patterns and trends within the population, as suggested by [Sugiyono \(2013\)](#).

2.6. Theoretical Frameworks for Analysis

Each research question was examined using a targeted theoretical perspective. The analysis of the first objective, which focused on the implementation of Autonomous Learning, was informed by Humanistic Learning Theory. This framework provided insights into learners' motivation, autonomy, and emotional development (Rogers, 1994; Smith, 2015). For the second objective, which assessed the indicators of autonomy in student learning, the research applied Richards' (2023) principles of learner autonomy, including self-direction, intrinsic motivation, and decision-making. The third objective, which investigated emotional impact, utilized Emotional Intelligence Theory to explore student self-awareness, self-regulation, social interaction, and emotional engagement (Bradberry, 2020; Borod, 2000).

This methodological structure was designed to offer a rich and layered understanding of how autonomous learning can be implemented and sustained in a field-based English learning environment. The combination of documentation analysis, student feedback, and theoretical interpretation allowed for a thorough examination of the study's core objectives while providing implications for similar contexts in English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)..

3. Results

This section presents the findings of the study based on the three formulated research objectives: (1) the implementation of Autonomous Learning (AL) in English language instruction for Travel Industry students at UHN IGBS Denpasar, (2) the presence of AL indicators within the learning process, and (3) the emotional impact of AL implementation during the collaborative field study. Each subsection highlights key findings and offers an interpretive analysis that aligns with the theoretical framework adopted in the study.

3.1 Implementation of Autonomous Learning in English Language Learning

The implementation of Autonomous Learning (AL) for students in the Travel Industry Study Program at UHN IGBS Denpasar was actualized through a collaborative field study that engaged both local students and international peers. Designed as an alternative to traditional, instructor-led classroom practices, this program emphasized experiential learning and autonomy-supportive environments. It enabled learners to explore, practice, and internalize English usage through real-world interactions within culturally immersive contexts, aligning with the core values of Humanistic Learning Theory.

This field study provided opportunities for students to independently select topics, initiate communication, and regulate their participation without continuous teacher supervision. The collaborative format encouraged students to apply English naturally during joint field activities such as traditional arts practice, rice field exploration, and host-family immersion. From the humanistic perspective, the field-based model allowed students to develop self-awareness, confidence, and ownership of their learning experience.

To validate the findings, a triangulation of data was conducted using program documentation, a theoretical framework grounded in Humanistic Learning Theory, and a survey of 25 Travel Industry students. The survey data provided strong support for the significance of the field study model, as illustrated in the chart below.

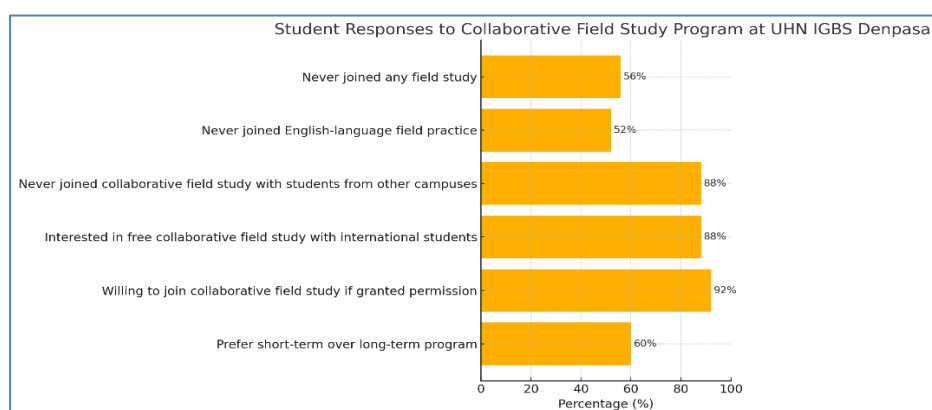


Chart 3.1 Students' response to collaborative field

As visualized, 56 percent of students reported never participating in any field study during their university years, while 52 percent had never been involved in an English-language field practice. Furthermore, 88 percent of students had no prior experience engaging in collaborative field study with students from other institutions. Despite these gaps, interest in autonomous and collaborative English learning was remarkably high. A total of 88 percent expressed strong interest in participating in such a program, and 92 percent indicated willingness to join, provided they were formally allowed to take a temporary leave from routine campus activities. Additionally, 60 percent preferred a short-term version of the program, reflecting a desire for meaningful learning that fits within academic schedules.

The contrast between lack of prior experience and high interest in autonomous field study reflects a significant pedagogical opportunity. It suggests that while students have had limited exposure to AL, they recognize its value and are eager to engage in such learning environments. This reinforces the importance of embedding learner autonomy in program design, particularly in applied language settings like English for Occupational Purposes.

Overall, the implementation of AL in this context supported learners in becoming more self-regulated, intrinsically motivated, and emotionally engaged. The triangulated data confirm that the field study empowered Travel Industry students to use English meaningfully in culturally and professionally relevant settings. Through this approach, the students not only enhanced their language proficiency but also experienced growth in confidence, emotional resilience, and learner agency, attributes essential for future roles in global tourism and hospitality sector

3.2. Indicators of Autonomous Learning in Student Engagement

The collaborative field study provided a valuable setting for observing distinct indicators of Autonomous Learning (AL) as exhibited by the Travel Industry students at UHN IGBS Denpasar. Through a careful triangulation of program documentation, theoretical analysis, and student responses, several core dimensions of learner autonomy were identified. These included self-planning, self-direction, self-regulation, self-evaluation, and intrinsic motivation.

While the overall structure and goals of the program were institutionally designed, students played an increasingly central role during implementation. They demonstrated self-planning by setting personal goals and adapting learning timelines according to daily field challenges. Although initial learning paths were outlined by instructors, self-direction became evident as students independently chose themes of interest, such as cultural traditions or tourism sites, and explored these themes without prescribed materials. They initiated conversations, collected ethnographic data, and navigated field activities with minimal supervision, showing a strong commitment to shaping their own learning experiences.

In terms of self-regulation, students took responsibility for managing tasks in unpredictable environments, such as collecting information from local residents or guiding international peers through cultural interactions. These responsibilities required them to adapt strategies, solve communication problems, and make real-time decisions. The learning experience became a dynamic process that reflected the students' ability to monitor their behavior and adjust it in response to context.

Self-evaluation emerged primarily through reflection, both individually and in group sharing sessions. Although there was no formal assessment system built into the field study, many students expressed an increased awareness of their language development and social performance. They evaluated their progress based on how effectively they could engage in English conversations, overcome hesitation, and connect with others.

Perhaps the most significant indicator was intrinsic motivation. The students' willingness to participate, even when outside the boundaries of structured academic routines, demonstrated their internal drive. Many learners reported feeling encouraged and inspired by their ability to use English in meaningful ways. Their motivations were connected not only to academic success, but also to their personal identities as future professionals in the travel and tourism industry.

The following table illustrates the five key indicators of AL and summarizes how each was manifested during the program:

Table 3.1 Autonomous Learning in action

Indicators of Autonomous Learning	Implementation Level
<i>Self-planning</i>	Partially implemented by students
<i>Self-direction</i>	Student-led with initial instructor guidance
<i>Self-regulation</i>	Fully regulated by students during field tasks
<i>Self-evaluation</i>	Mostly informal, driven by personal reflection
<i>Intrinsic motivation</i>	Strongly present in student engagement

This pattern of engagement confirms the presence of Autonomous Learning in action. The findings align closely with the principles outlined in the theoretical framework. From the perspective of Humanistic Learning Theory, students demonstrated a growing capacity to make meaningful choices, connect emotionally to their learning experiences, and develop as self-aware, self-directed individuals. The interplay of freedom, relevance, and reflection positioned learners not merely as participants in a program, but as active agents in shaping their educational journey.

In conclusion, the collaborative field study provided a context that successfully activated multiple indicators of learner autonomy. The alignment between student behavior, program design, and theoretical constructs further validates the effectiveness of this model in cultivating autonomy-driven English learning experiences. These insights offer significant implications for future language program development, particularly in applied settings like English for Occupational Purposes, where independence, adaptability, and motivation are essential for learner success

3.3 Emotional Impact of Autonomous Learning on Learners

The implementation of Autonomous Learning (AL) within a collaborative field study setting produced a notable range of positive emotional outcomes among students in the Travel Industry Study Program at UHN IGBS Denpasar. The immersive, socially engaging, and learner-centered structure of the program created the emotional space necessary for students to evolve not only in their language competence but also in their psychological and interpersonal development.

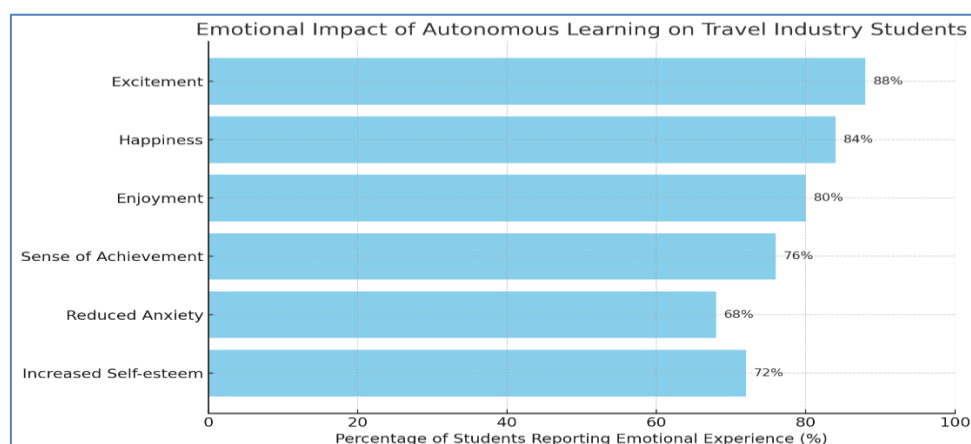


Chart 3.2 Emotional Impact of Autonomous Learning

Data gathered from student feedback revealed a rich emotional landscape shaped by the autonomy and freedom students experienced during the program. As illustrated in the chart above, 88 percent of participants reported experiencing excitement, closely followed by 84 percent who felt happy during their English learning process. These emotions were often tied to collaborative interactions with international peers, where language use was not evaluated for correctness but appreciated as a bridge for cultural exchange. Eighty percent of students also expressed enjoyment, especially when engaging in tasks that allowed personal expression and discovery.

Equally significant was the emergence of deeper psychological responses. Seventy-six percent of students acknowledged a growing sense of achievement as they navigated daily communication challenges using English. Increased self-esteem was reported by 72 percent, particularly among students who initially struggled with language insecurity. Additionally, 68 percent reported a reduction in anxiety, a result attributed to the supportive and non-threatening environment fostered by peer collaboration and field-based interaction.

These findings are closely aligned with the Humanistic Learning Theory applied in this study, which emphasizes the development of the whole person, including emotional well-being. The field study allowed students to regulate their affective responses, develop empathy through real-world cultural immersion, and discover emotional confidence in using English authentically. Emotional learning was not isolated from language learning but was deeply intertwined, reinforcing the idea that meaningful communication is both a cognitive and affective process. Triangulated data from program documentation and student reflections indicated that students were initially hesitant and self-conscious, especially when engaging with native English speakers. However, over time, they demonstrated emotional adaptability, social openness, and increased willingness to take communicative risks. The freedom to make mistakes without judgment and the supportive atmosphere created by peer interactions allowed learners to transform passive anxiety into active participation.

In summary, the emotional outcomes of this Autonomous Learning experience went far beyond temporary enthusiasm. The program nurtured key emotional competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, interpersonal communication, and resilience. These qualities are essential not only for sustaining autonomous learning behaviors but also for succeeding in the travel and tourism industry, where emotional intelligence and cross-cultural communication play central roles. The findings underscore the importance of embedding emotional engagement as an intentional component of English Language Teaching (ELT), especially within English for Occupational Purposes programs that prepare learners for complex, human-centered professional environments.

3.4. Indicators of Autonomous Learning in the Field Study Program

The second objective of this study was to identify and evaluate the observable indicators of autonomous learning demonstrated by students during the collaborative field study. Although the program was formally initiated through institutional collaboration, students gradually assumed increased responsibility for their own learning. This shift in engagement provided a clear basis for identifying key indicators of autonomy that emerged throughout the learning process.

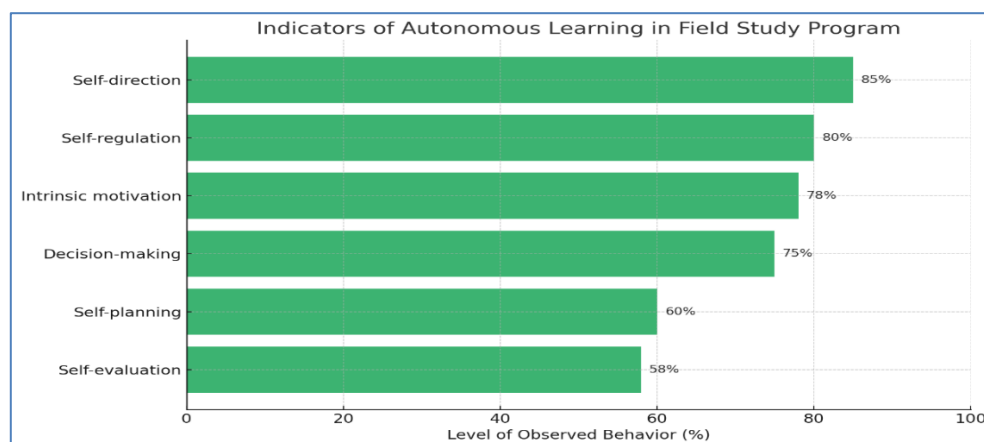


Chart 3.3 Indicators of Autonomous Learning

The triangulated data, drawn from program documentation, theoretical frameworks, and student observations, revealed five primary indicators: self-direction, self-regulation, intrinsic motivation, learning-related decision-making, and emergent planning and evaluation practices. The chart presented above illustrates that self-direction was the most consistently observed indicator, with approximately 85 percent of participants showing initiative in organizing and executing their tasks. Self-regulation followed closely at 80 percent, as students learned to manage their time, overcome communication barriers, and adapt strategies when faced with cultural or linguistic challenges. Approximately 78 percent of students showed signs of intrinsic motivation, driven by the meaningful context of learning and the desire to use English for authentic communication. The data also showed that 75 percent of learners demonstrated decision-making autonomy by choosing how to engage with local communities and foreign peers, often without relying on direct instructor input. These behaviors reflect the active engagement of learners in navigating their own experiences and adjusting learning strategies in real time.

In contrast, the indicators of self-planning and self-evaluation appeared less developed. Only 60 percent of students initiated personal learning goals or outlined daily targets without instructor prompts. Meanwhile, just 58 percent engaged in deliberate self-reflection on their language use or interpersonal performance. Documentation analysis revealed that students initially depended heavily on instructor guidance during the planning phase. Although some began to show more initiative over time, there was no structured framework for them to reflect formally on their learning outcomes. This suggests that while autonomy was evident in task execution, strategic foresight and evaluative habits were still developing. The findings indicate that learner autonomy was significantly supported by the environmental conditions of the field study, rather than being fully internalized beforehand. Learners responded to the contextual demands with increasing independence, but their ability to consciously plan and evaluate their progress remained limited. From the perspective of the autonomous learning framework, this stage represents a transitional phase in which students begin moving from teacher-guided learning toward self-sustained control.

In summary, the collaborative field study fostered an emergent model of autonomy among the Travel Industry students at UHN IGBS Denpasar. The strongest indicators were linked to learner engagement during active field participation, while metacognitive skills such as planning and evaluation require further development. These insights emphasize the importance of integrating reflective tools and explicit strategy training in future field-based programs. Such efforts will help students solidify their autonomous learning habits, preparing them not only for academic success but also for independent performance in professional tourism environments.

3.5. Emotional Impact of Autonomous Learning on Students

The third objective of the study explored the emotional dimension of autonomous learning as experienced by Travel Industry students during their field-based English learning program. Emotional responses were found to play a significant role in shaping learners' engagement, confidence, and persistence throughout the program. Students responded not only to the learning content but also to the relational and environmental dynamics of the field study, making emotions a critical component of their overall learning experience.

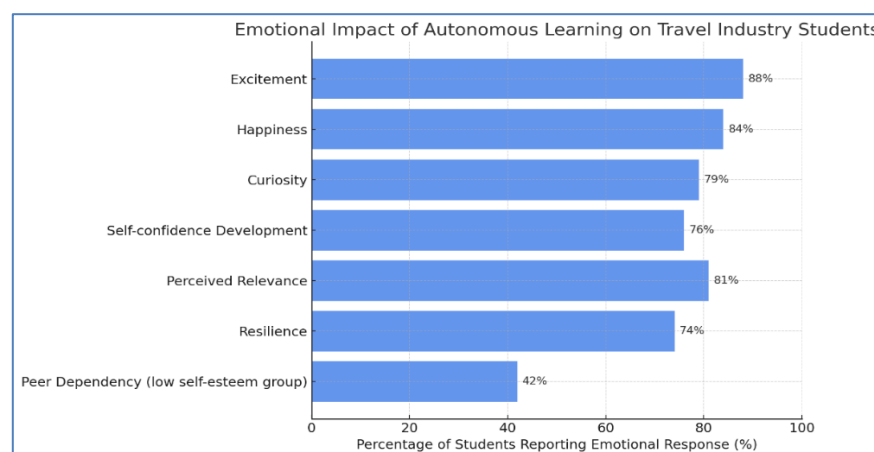


Chart 3.4 Emotional Impact of Autonomous Learning

The data reveal that students experienced a wide range of predominantly positive emotions during their engagement in the program. As shown in the chart 3.4 and table 3.2, 88 percent of participants reported feeling excited, particularly during their first interactions with foreign peers and community members. Happiness was the second most frequently reported emotion, mentioned by 84 percent of students, typically in relation to collaborative tasks and shared cultural experiences. Curiosity, at 79 percent, was often associated with students' exposure to diverse linguistic and cultural contexts, where they were motivated to ask questions, explore meanings, and try new communication strategies.

Table 3.2 Predominantly Positive Emotions

Emotional Impact Indicator	Reported Level (%)
<i>Excitement</i>	88
<i>Happiness</i>	84
<i>Curiosity</i>	79
<i>Self-confidence Development</i>	76
<i>Perceived Relevance</i>	81
<i>Resilience</i>	74
<i>Peer Dependency (low self-esteem group)</i>	42

Beyond initial emotional reactions, the study also identified deeper emotional growth. Seventy-six percent of students indicated that their self-confidence improved as a result of repeated exposure to supportive and low-stakes English communication settings. Many described feeling less anxious over time and more capable of initiating interaction in English. Additionally, 81 percent of students noted that they found the learning activities personally and academically relevant, especially when tasks aligned with their travel industry focus or cultural background. This sense of meaningfulness led to stronger emotional commitment and sustained engagement.

The field study also appeared to foster emotional resilience, with 74 percent of learners expressing that they were able to recover from language-related mistakes and manage discomfort without losing motivation. However, the findings also showed a critical nuance: 42 percent of students, particularly those with lower self-esteem or limited language skills, reported a tendency to depend on peers for emotional and linguistic support. This dependency suggests that while autonomy was growing, it remained unevenly distributed, requiring tailored emotional scaffolding for more vulnerable learners.

Triangulation of survey responses, documentation analysis, and theoretical interpretation confirmed that emotional outcomes were deeply connected to learners' perceptions of autonomy and value. As students encountered real-world scenarios that challenged and encouraged them simultaneously, they began to reinterpret their limitations as opportunities for growth. This shift from fear to empowerment marked a pivotal transformation in the learning process.

In conclusion, the emotional impact of autonomous learning was significant and multi-layered. Students experienced not only momentary satisfaction but also lasting emotional development, including increased self-awareness, greater resilience, and stronger social-emotional communication. These findings reinforce the importance of designing English learning programs that integrate emotional support, relevance, and social interaction. For English for Occupational Purposes in particular, emotional readiness is as essential as linguistic competence, and it must be intentionally cultivated through pedagogical design.

4. Discussion

4.1 Implementation of Autonomous Learning in English Language Instruction

This study confirms the successful implementation of Autonomous Learning (AL) through a collaborative and field-based English program involving students from Universitas Hindu Negeri I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa (UHN IGBS) and international participants from the SIT program. The program fostered

experiential learning, learner autonomy, and authentic language use. Students were encouraged to take initiative, select learning materials independently, and engage in communication with minimal reliance on instructors. This approach reflects the principles of Humanistic Learning Theory, which emphasizes personal growth, freedom of choice, and learner-centered instruction (Hernadi et al., 2023). In the context of English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), autonomy-supportive environments are essential, and existing research highlights that meaningful learning contexts can significantly strengthen learner autonomy in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings (Budiman & Ganap, 2024).

Most prior studies on AL in Indonesia have focused on digital platforms or classroom-based strategies (Mehdiyev, 2020). In contrast, this research addresses the relatively underexplored area of culturally embedded, field-based AL in a religious-affiliated university. The novelty of this study lies in its application of humanistic learning principles in a non-digital and intercultural environment, thereby filling an empirical gap related to autonomous English learning in non-urban and faith-based educational institutions. Through cultural immersion, students not only enhanced their language acquisition but also deepened their intercultural competence and appreciation for linguistic diversity (Dawson, 2023).

The findings suggest that integrating field experiences into English instruction fosters learner autonomy and emotional engagement, especially in academic settings with limited resources. It also builds a strong sense of community, which contributes to increased motivation and collaborative learning. These elements are essential to effective language instruction, as previously discussed in relevant studies (Pondalos et al., 2022). Institutions are encouraged to formalize such initiatives within EOP curricula in order to develop learners who are self-regulating and adaptable. The focus on motivation and peer engagement supports earlier research asserting that clearly defined objectives and interactive content can significantly improve language learning outcomes (Villaver & Justiniane, 2023).

In conclusion, incorporating authentic and field-based learning experiences into English instruction presents a valuable pedagogical innovation. With the support of humanistic principles, this approach enables students in culturally diverse and resource-constrained environments to pursue language learning with greater autonomy and engagement.

4.2 Indicators of Learner Autonomy in Field-Based Practice

Learner autonomy is a central concept in EFL instruction and is widely regarded as essential for promoting effective and personalized learning. In this study, various indicators of learner autonomy emerged clearly, including self-direction, self-regulation, self-evaluation, and intrinsic motivation. Students demonstrated the ability to initiate projects, manage tasks independently, and reflect on their learning processes (Rahman et al., 2021). These practices align with Richards' stages of autonomy and are consistent with the core principles of Humanistic Learning Theory, which centers on the learner's intrinsic role and self-determination (Zhang et al., 2021).

Data from the study revealed that 85 percent of students took initiative while 78 percent demonstrated intrinsic motivation. These findings lend empirical support to Betts' model, which connects autonomy to both emotional and cognitive engagement (Ebrahimi et al., 2021). Importantly, this study highlights an existing gap in the literature by showing how autonomy develops in real-time, unstructured, and intercultural learning contexts. This is distinct from earlier frameworks that focused on remote or classroom-based environments (Boudouaia et al., 2022). The results suggest that learner agency can naturally emerge through interaction-rich, field-based experiences.

The recognition of autonomy-enhancing behaviors in this context indicates that such programs can effectively translate theory into practice. However, the limited development of metacognitive skills, such as planning and formal self-evaluation, suggests an area that warrants further attention. Incorporating structured reflection activities into the learning process is vital. Enhancing metacognitive awareness can support learner independence, a point strongly emphasized in studies on autonomous learning strategies (Pinphet, n.d.; Benson, 2013).

Previous research has shown that metacognitive methods play a key role in teaching students how to manage their own learning processes. Therefore, education systems should embed regular reflection and self-assessment practices to promote deeper engagement and learner accountability. This recommendation is consistent with the work of Willis (2011), who highlights the importance of fostering metacognitive awareness to consolidate learner autonomy in EFL instruction.

4.3 Emotional Impact of Autonomous Learning on Student Development

The emotional impact of Autonomous Learning on students has become an increasingly significant area of interest, particularly in immersive educational environments. In this study, students reported positive emotions such as excitement, happiness, curiosity, and growing self-confidence. These feelings were attributed to a supportive learning environment that encouraged real-world communication and cultural immersion. According to Emotional Intelligence Theory, such emotional experiences are closely linked to increased motivation and persistence in language learning (Edward & Warelow, 2005; Purcia et al., 2023).

These findings support prior literature which affirms that emotions are central to learning rather than peripheral. Scarantino has emphasized the importance of emotional states in maintaining motivation and engagement, while Harmer has argued that emotions play a fundamental role in developing language proficiency (Hawkins, 2018; Kusurkar et al., 2012). Despite these insights, few studies in the Indonesian context have explored emotional factors in field-based AL settings. This study adds to the field by highlighting how emotional development, expressed through resilience, a sense of relevance, and affective confidence, serves as both a product and an enabler of autonomous learning (Ang et al., 2021; Gai, 2014).

For educators in English Language Teaching, these results have important implications. Emotional readiness should be addressed with the same priority as linguistic competence. AL programs should therefore integrate emotional scaffolding strategies to support learners who may face challenges related to confidence or anxiety (Pavelescu & Petrić, 2018). Hawkins has also emphasized the role of instructors in reinforcing emotional and psychological support as part of their pedagogical responsibilities (Forde & O'Brien, 2022). By including emotional intelligence training in the design of AL programs, institutions can support more meaningful and lasting language learning experiences.

4.4 Interplay Between Autonomy and Emotional Growth in English Learning

The relationship between learner autonomy and emotional growth in English learning is mutually reinforcing. As learners gain control over their own educational experiences, they develop greater emotional resilience and self-assurance. In turn, a strong sense of emotional well-being supports sustained autonomous behaviors. This synergy supports the idea that education must address both cognitive and emotional domains to achieve transformative outcomes (Shao et al., 2013).

Emotional Intelligence plays an important role in this process, particularly in its influence on language anxiety and academic performance. For example, Shao et al. found strong correlations between Emotional Intelligence, foreign language anxiety, and English achievement, suggesting that learners with higher emotional awareness can more effectively manage anxiety and improve outcomes (Shao et al., 2013). Similarly, research by Thao et al. demonstrated that emotional transparency enabled learners to regulate their feelings and overcome linguistic challenges. Students who embraced emotional openness were better able to manage stress and stay engaged with their language goals (Thao et al., 2023).

These findings underscore the importance of treating emotional development as a core component of language education. A dual focus on fostering autonomy and cultivating emotional regulation can lead to more consistent learning behaviors, especially for EFL students preparing for professional environments. The integration of Humanistic Learning Theory with Emotional Intelligence frameworks in program design represents a valuable step forward in enhancing EFL education within the Indonesian context. Humanistic approaches emphasize student-centered learning, critical thinking, and supportive environments. These principles, supported by various studies (Apriliano et al., 2023; Hernadi et al., 2023; Öz et al., 2015; Sudrajat et al., 2020; Tasnim & Ahmed, 2022), empower students to become independent learners who embrace challenges with confidence. By prioritizing both the cognitive and emotional aspects of learning, educational institutions can support language acquisition while also cultivating the skills necessary for personal and professional growth.

4.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Given the evolving nature of learner autonomy identified in this study, future research should consider longitudinal investigations of AL in field-based programs. Scholars are encouraged to explore how tools such as structured reflection, peer mentoring, and digital portfolios can support the development of metacognitive strategies like self-evaluation and planning. Comparative studies between digital-based and field-based AL models may also provide insights into the strengths and limitations of each approach.

Expanding the scope of research to include diverse academic disciplines, varied student demographics, and interfaith educational institutions would contribute to a richer understanding of how Emotional Intelligence and learner autonomy interact in different English for Occupational Purposes contexts. These future directions are essential for refining effective and inclusive language learning strategies in higher education.

5. Conclusion

The implementation of AL in English learning for students in the Travel Industry Study Program at UHN IGBS Denpasar was conducted collaboratively during a field study in partnership with students from the SIT program. This implementation combined the instructor's lecturing method with practical tasks. Students were instructed to autonomously gather materials from local community members as part of their daily assignments. Foreign students worked alongside local students during this process, utilizing English for communication. The AL indication in the English Learning for the Travel Industry Study Program at UHN IGBS Denpasar was delivered through a combination of lecture-based and autonomous learning methods. The program focused on individual student characteristics, meaningful learning experiences, self-esteem, and provided students with opportunities to explore topics of interest. The implementation was designed to facilitate a student-centered learning environment. Overall, the program resulted in effective English language practice.

The implementation of the collaborative field study at UHN IGBS Denpasar was significant for the students of the Travel Industry Study Program, as it aligned the learning materials and processes with the field of study in the Travel Industry. The program offered students the opportunity to practice their English in a fun and engaging setting with foreign peers. Observations revealed that students showed kindness towards the foreign participants, who were initially strangers, resulting in positive emotional experiences. The environment allowed students the freedom to engage with materials of interest, contributing to an overall positive learning experience. The survey findings regarding the expectations of UHN IGBS Denpasar students for a future collaborative field study highlight their hesitance to participate in such a program. The reasons for this reluctance include their commitment to the regular campus schedule, the lack of clarity surrounding the program's implementation, and their psychological readiness to engage in the experience.

This research only provides a review on a field program of study which was implemented based on Autonomous Learning concept previously by the students' of the Travel Industry Study Program-UHN IGBS Denpasar with the students' of SIT program of WL Inc., which can be used as a consideration in arranging a collaborative Autonomous Learning method for the Travel Industry students; therefore, it could be suggested to the teachers to do more research on how to promote a better development of the Travel Industry students' English skills through Autonomous Learning in field practice.

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