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Grant Awardee Report

I attended PanSIG expecting to encounter primarily AI-focused content. What I found was something much more interesting. The conference was well characterized by the opening comments by Motoyasu Sano, “harmony of humans and ICT is the future”.

The conference topics of agency and autonomy are very close to the Learner Development SIG’s “aim to support autonomous learning and teaching” (“About Us,” 2012). While many presenters did discuss the use of AI and how it might contribute to both teacher and learner agency and autonomy, there was another more human side as well. Specifically, two focal points that drew me in were storytelling and play and how agency and autonomy are critical and emergent in these activities.

Thus, by reflecting on the conference and my own research interests, I’d like to explore how conference attendees discussed the ways in which teachers can give students space to play, tell stories, and be human in the context of intensifying artificiality in classrooms and the world, most recently in the form of artificial intelligence.

REPORT

I went to Chiba prefecture for PanSIG 2025 with the support of the Learner Development SIG conference grant. I greatly appreciated this financial support. For me, living in Shikoku, many of the major academic conferences and events are difficult to attend. In fact, this was my first experience attending an in-person academic conference in Japan, and my first time presenting in person as well. After attending the presentation, I want to reflect on my experience through the lens of my own pedagogical focus—giving students space to play, tell stories, and be human in a world of increasing artificiality and social distance.

I expected to see mostly presentations about generative AI and large language models (LLMs). It is not a topic that I am particularly interested in, personally. Yet, these topics have recently dominated publications and presentations in language learning and teaching research. Indeed, many presenters discussed the use of AI with respect to the conference theme of agency and autonomy. I was happily surprised, however, to find many presentations which didn’t touch on the topic at all.

After attending several of the talks on AI, I found myself somewhat disappointed. Certainly, the speakers presented their research well and made valid arguments. Furthermore, where they faced difficulty in their teaching or research with AI, the talks that I attended seemed to serve as a valuable means of AI literacy development for both speakers and attendees alike. This seems very important considering the very frequent changes in capabilities and features of such software.

In the opening ceremony, Motoyasu Sano said that “harmony of humans and ICT is the future”. My negative reaction to AI is to what I see as an unfortunate general movement away from taking time to think deeply and engaging in human interaction toward efficiency seeking, resulting in what I see as a disharmony. It seems to me that depth in interaction is being avoided. Whether this path will continue remains to be seen, but I find myself doubling back on what I think are more interesting questions which were also discussed at the conference. Below, I will explore how presenters at the

conference gave students space for their more human endeavors. Specifically, how we can learn, develop, and teach with stories and play.

These questions of stories and play are closely related to my dissertation (Johnson, 2025) about peer interaction during a collaborative storytelling game, which I was writing at the time of the conference. Furthermore, a recent publication (deHaan & York, 2025) highlights how agency and autonomy are critical for both teachers and learners in making playful learning effective. The authors argue that teachers can give their students the freedom to play, and in doing so learn, by building playgrounds and giving them SPACE. The acronym unpacks as Safe, Participation, Agency, Critical, Experiences (deHaan & York, 2025; p. 87). Safe implies support structures and inclusivity, and allowing learners to learn from failure. Participation includes a connection to society, community, and culture, as well as choice and self-direction. By Agency, they also imply autonomy, dialogue, and interaction. Within Critical they include reflection, interdisciplinarity, and purposeful action. In Experiences, they include relatedness, identity, relevance and meaning. Accordingly, I was very much attuned to how these presentations might fit in with both my own research and this new framework which features agency front and center. There were several talks that sparked my interest and two that inspired me deeply.

James Dunn's (2025) presentation discussed his use of a collaborative storytelling game with his law students for critical thinking and learner agency. He found that his game adaptation offered learners effective input through reading the rules, since they had to comprehend them in order to play. Their game actions, which were where they had the greatest agency, let them play with ideas and language. He also found that his learners improved in terms of vocabulary retention through the game-based learning activities.

This type of game aligns with both of the interests I highlighted above (stories and play). Among games used in the classroom, collaborative storytelling games in general, and tabletop roleplaying games (TRPGs) like the one Dunn used in particular, excite me the most. They have been drawing more and more interest academically as well, especially for their use in learning. I grew up playing these games and immersing myself in worlds of fiction crafted by myself and my friends. This immersiveness and the high degree of agency they give players to affect the story in almost any way has always been attractive to me. This background is actually the primary reason for my focus on playful and narrative-focused education research. TRPGs give players a fictitious world to play with together, and I've long puzzled how we educators might turn that into a playground for our learners. It was encouraging to see another TESOL educator making this happen in their teaching context.

Jacob Reed (2025) presented his use of analog games as a central feature of a self-directed learning course for developing language skills, genre awareness, and leadership skills. He offered students choice in terms of what games to play and focused on setting up the circumstances for students to learn, rather than directing it. Another interesting component was the analogue of a student leader and game master (GM). In TRPGs, typically a GM manages the game rules, setting, and story, requiring tremendous knowledge and preparation, or alternatively a knack for improvisation. Bringing this feature into other analog games for its value in student-leadership and learning seems clever and he suggested it was indeed valuable. Obviously, a self-directed learning course is well suited to student autonomy and agency-oriented development, but the use of analog games as a centerpiece for this course was intriguing to me. The context is quite different from anything I teach, so my takeaways from this presentation were less direct than those I'll introduce next, but I want to revisit the concepts introduced here later.

Two other presentations I attended inspired me quite directly. I intend to implement their content into my teaching at the earliest opportunity. The first was a fascinating presentation that touted both playful learning and storytelling in its abstract. Sauvignon and Agaësse's (2025) presentation

about Lego Serious Play not only discussed these topics, but demonstrated them in a hands-on manner. The simple four step framework for the method they demonstrated is “Question, Build, Share, Reflect”. The question is a prompt which is then built with Legos. Then participants share the story or process of building in response to the prompt, before reflecting on this entire process. We got into groups and were given the same materials and directions that their students were—a small bag of legos each and the “question”, or rather instruction, to build a tower in two minutes. Following the two minutes we talked about our thought process with our group. This of course was just the warm-up to the much more interesting second question.

For the main activity, we built an answer to “What do you love about teaching?”, and then again told the story of our build. What was so interesting was how the interaction with the materials contributed directly to the thinking process, and vice versa - there was a lot of direct feedback. We then shared the story of the process and reflected on it within a group, which I found really powerful. I could quite literally feel the power of play for thinking. I also recorded my story to help remember the process.

Finally, I really enjoyed Gareth Barnes’ (2025) presentation about his use of Socratic dialogue and storytelling with older adult learners. He borrowed the symbolism of the hearth from Greek mythology as a focal gathering place where his students could share their stories. This talk invited me to reflect deeply on my own experience. Until a few years ago I had been teaching older learners in evening classes for over ten years. As Barnes pointed out, older learners have rich life experiences and as such they come to lessons with a lot of knowledge and abilities, but often a lot of responsibilities as well. These learners are, I think, used to having agency in their lives and I have always found it challenging to direct them as a language teacher. I think the use of Socratic dialogue and storytelling to channel their experiences and question each other critically gives a very appropriate means to give direction to their language learning without subverting their autonomy.

His last slide opened the floor to the attendees by challenging us to consider what we might give up to yield more agency to our learners, and further what a hearth might look like in our context. I had just finished a process of shifting agency to the learners in my classes, so it was actually a very tough question. What else could I do to develop my students’ agency? Could I push it further? I think my own answer might connect with his second question. I teach with board games and storytelling games, and those boards, figures, cards, and dice in many ways serve as a focal gathering point, much like a hearth. Reed (2025) used games in his teaching context in the same way. I think that a framing device, like the hearth or tabletop game, may be particularly useful for aligning games, storytelling, and agency in the classroom. It is something I will be interested in exploring in the coming semester.

I feel greatly privileged to have been able to attend the conference. I hadn’t realized what an incredible opportunity it would be for meeting like-minded teacher-practitioners. I met many people who I had interacted with through JALT events online and many more I had never met. Some of the ideas challenged me and others inspired me. I think the physical aspect of play, as in Lego Serious Play, and the components of board games and other analog games may serve as a very important focal point for collaborative thinking and form the foundations of a playground where the learners realize agency in their pursuits.

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PanSIG's Metacognitive Takeaways for Preparing My Novice Scholars for University

Learner Development SIG - PanSIG 2025 Conference Review

Kanda University of International Studies: May 16-18, 2025 - Chiba, Japan

PanSIG 2025 was my first JALT conference and was supported by a grant from the Learner Development (LD) SIG. During the weekend, I explored Kanda University's SALC (Student Access Learning Center), interacted with attendees during poster sessions, participated in the LD SIG Forum, and listened to guest plenaries and various presentations incorporating the themes of autonomy, agency, metacognition, and assessment relating to my research. Talking with many volunteers at the SALC, I saw the many opportunities offered to students attending the university such as the English Cafe,where volunteers told me how they had chances for English practice, advising, group conversation, culture sessions, workshops, and international events for students to participate in.

My current role is as an English Literature Arts specific teacher for junior and high school students at a high English level English international school in Tokyo. In this role, I regard my students as novice researchers, preparing them for APA citation, literature analysis, and argumentative essay writing. I am currently researching metacognition, the study of cognition processes used during learning such as attention, memory, knowledge and beliefs, thinking, reasoning and understanding, and perception of information. These processes are highly linked with learner agency and autonomy, the theme of the PanSig2025 conference. The reasoning, beliefs, and research understandings that were presented at the conference contained invaluable insight into why autonomy and metacognition are so important to us as educators

My interest in attending PanSIG 2025 was to learn more about its themes of autonomy and other metacognitive strategies due to several curriculum problems I have seen during my 4 years teaching in Japan. All of the schools I have taught at have employed traditional classroom approaches, no matter the student level, and have focused less on creative writing and scholarly research and more on passing exams. Using this type of system has negative effects on students and "instills fear of making mistakes, stifles independent thinking,...suppresses individual opinions in children, and severely hinders the diversified development of children" (Jiang, 2024, p. 181).

For example, one metacognitive approach that was shared during the conference was CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), which uses metacognition to combine content with language learning. CLIL has been proven to have more benefits compared to traditional university classrooms using CBI (Content-Based Instruction), which lean towards teaching exam material only. CBI has been proven ineffective for serving students' needs compared to the more integrated, creative approach of CLIL which includes more liberal arts modules and materials (Wadden, 2023, p. 238-239). With those universities which employ CBI only focusing on content, instructors who wish to reap the benefits of metacognition work/training are forced to insert their own metacognitive strategies and standards work/training into their syllabus, impacting class time management and work life balance. Without a metacognitive curriculum foundation, some educators have said that "we don't have time to focus on metacognition, because we are too busy covering the content," (Firth, 2024, 13).

With my students goals in mind, some reflective questions came to mind before and during the conference such as: What techniques and skills can I share with my students to increase their learner autonomy and metacognitive thinking to help them succeed? How can I make my students more aware of their own learning processes by giving them more agency in the classroom? According to a study by Bolanle for example, students who have increased learner agency and autonomy have increased academic performance that helped them succeed in school (Bolanle, 2024, 119).

One of the most impressive presentations at PanSIG 2025 was Saturday's plenary, *Benefits of Autonomy-Supportive Teaching* presented by John Reeve. He mentioned the different types of student-directed agentic engagement both inside and outside the classroom that leads to higher learner motivation. Inside the classroom, students know what they want out of the class and say what they are interested in, ask for a say in what to do and how to do it, and generate opinions (Reeve, 2025). Outside the classroom, students explore, seek out sources of support (mentors, role models, collaborators), authentic settings and new community offerings to exercise their interests and pursue their goals, seek progress-enabling innovation and feedback, search for new and better technology, improve, enrich, and personalize the physical environment, and improve their own interpersonal relationships (Reeve, 2025).

Reeves continued that AST, autonomy supportive teaching, includes educators presenting learning activities in need-satisfying ways by asking students personal interests and goals, gives students a say/choice (autonomy), offers a challenging goal to strive for (competence), and has students pursue a prosocial goal together (relatedness). By explaining how said activities are useful and beneficial, acknowledging negative feelings, and using invitational language, students are more cognitively aware of their learning environment, why they are learning what they're learning, and thinking about how to enhance their learning which creates a motivation cycle for academic success (Reeve, 2025).

After attending the plenary, I thought of how to use autonomy-supportive teaching ideas in my own classroom and school. Teacher-based agentic engagement increases learner satisfaction such as students providing thoughts such as appreciation for their classmates knowing their interests, needs, wants, preferences, and being able to ask classmates questions that will help them learn. With such findings, I could consider starting a mentor program at my school, having students 1 year older support and guide those younger than them. By giving students the opportunity to be leaders and role models, they can not only help the next generation grow and develop, but by becoming more hyper-aware metacognitively of their own goals and and challenges can help guide themselves in a better direction as well through self-discipline, responsibility, and social skills development through leadership.

After the session, I reflected upon my own teaching, finding similarities between autonomous support teaching and my own practices over the past year. For example, I have sought students' input, asking for their opinions on specific ways on how they would like the class to prepare them for taking the TOEFL/IELTS, inviting them to write some tangible goals for the class, having them think

about what helped them with their learning experience. Reeves suggested not only asking students directly, but using online methods such as Google Forms. This reminded me of my literature class in the previous semester when, instead of designating pre-chosen books for the year, I gave all my students a form to choose their books instead. Aligning with autonomous supported teaching, by continuously asking for student feedback I was able to improve student-teacher relations and student motivation. Also, by listening to the students' requests to move tests based on other class workloads and by organizing and teaching the reading in a more understanding way, I have noticed how students have been more appreciative of and shown more interest in the class.

Another way to increase student autonomous satisfaction was explained in Macdonald's presentation, *Student reflection on classroom English use using a reflective tool.* Macdonald used student reflections during class to have in-class discussions about what they noticed about themselves (metacognition awareness). Taking action with their new realizations, they talked with their peers and set higher goals because others were setting higher goals. Through discussion and reflection, their perspectives changed such as "I thought I overestimated my goal," and felt more confident about achieving the new goal instead. It was also concluded that some students don't check themselves automatically but only if prompted. Also, metacognitive post discussion summary questions were asked such as "How did you feel about the discussion? Did you learn anything from your classmates? Did they have any similar feelings or differences? Has your way of thinking changed in any way? Are you satisfied with your English use? Do you have any goals from now on?" which effectively increased class student motivation (MacDonald, 2025). These questions are very similar to those in Reeves' presentation, all relating to how peers see each other in the classroom, to goal setting, and to awareness of English usage.

Student autonomy and accountability were also observed to have increased in another presentation by Kunert, where workbooks replaced participation grades. Using them every week with a pre-teacher written completed example notebook and adding up graded points for completing each section of questions based on a rubric, she included word families, visualization for vocabulary, diary entries, and summaries of videos. When students wrote in their workbooks versus a classroom textbook, it was proven that they wrote longer and more complex sentences. She also promoted autonomy by allowing students to choose their own topics, and by having them write argumentative research essays through the lens of the culture around them while incorporating their own personal views and ideas (Kunert, 2025).

Kimura and Tachino's presentation about scholar autonomy and productivity tips resonated with my own experiences with my student scholars because they often complain about not having time for their own writing. Kimura and Tachino recommend that writers should create a regular writing schedule, establish routines, have an accountability system (writing group, writing partner), and after completing their own writing time reward themselves. Writing time should be scheduled and protected as well as knowing one's daily energy levels based on the time of day. Research has shown that academic writers who engaged in brief daily writing produced significantly more pages than those who waited for large blocks of time (Kimura & Tachino, 2025). Knowing this information, I am interested in surveying and interviewing my own students about their best writing times during the day such as morning or afternoon, incorporating that 10-15 minutes of class workbook writing time, and assessing opinions about their learning experience with a pre-workbook survey and post-workbook survey.

This year's PanSIG has helped me tremendously as an editor for LDJ Issue 10, the LD SIG's Learner Development Journal. The theme of LDJ10 is metacognition (thinking about thinking) and autonomous reflection/assessment, , so my experiences at PanSIG 2025 have really contributed to my understanding of these issues While my novice English Language Arts teacher background was different compared to the other university-based educators I met at the conference, there were

many key points that I strongly related to during the presentations. Many of my senior students aim for top Tokyo universities like Waseda and Rikkyo, and I wish to provide for them the knowledge of self-sufficiency skills to be prepared for university learning styles and structure. PanSIG 2025 was a wonderful experience in showing me the connections of all the SIG communities and how we can use metacognition, autonomy, assessments, and motivation strategies in the classroom for our students' futures. I am grateful for the opportunity to have attended.

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Exploring Growth and Fixed Mindsets Among Japanese University EFL Students

ABSTRACT

In this research project, I examined the mindsets of Japanese university EFL students, all non-English majors, toward learning English and explored practical classroom implications. A questionnaire based on the five key areas of Carol Dweck's growth and fixed mindset theory (Dweck, 2006) was administered. The results were examined and reflected upon alongside an initial diagnostic assessment and students' written reflections. The findings suggest that students exhibit growth mindset tendencies in the areas of others' success, effort, and response to criticism while exhibiting fixed mindset tendencies in the areas of challenges and obstacles when learning English. Based on these findings, ways to better support and engage students in their English learning are discussed.

Keywords: growth and fixed mindsets, classroom practices, reflection, learner autonomy

INTRODUCTION

My research interests include learner autonomy, and I have explored and adopted various teaching techniques to help students become more autonomous learners in my classes. At my previous university, for example, I introduced an approach to incorporate reflection based on Kolb's experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984) into my TOEIC courses (Sakurai, 2015) and qualitatively examined how students changed through reflection (Sakurai, 2017). I have worked at my current university for five years, and through my experience in my Practical English classes, I have observed that many students lack interest and confidence in English. They also tend to be reluctant to work toward improvement, and shy away from challenges. Reflecting on the underlying causes, I was introduced to Carol Dweck's mindset theory at JALT 2023. According to Dweck, a growth mindset is the belief that a person's basic qualities, such as abilities, intelligence, and personality, can be developed and cultivated. People with a growth mindset value effort, embrace challenges, learn from feedback, and see failure as an opportunity to improve because they believe in their ability to grow. In contrast, a fixed mindset is the belief that these traits are innate and unchangeable. As a result, people with a fixed mindset tend to avoid challenges, give up easily, and view failure as a reflection of their limitations or a judgement of their identity. I began to wonder what type of mindset my students have and whether understanding their mindset might help address the challenges I face in the classroom. I began my research project with the following research questions:

(1) What trend do students, as a group, show on the growth vs. fixed mindset continuum in the context of learning English?

(2) How can I incorporate the findings of this research project into my teaching and classroom practices particularly in activities in Practical English? Furthermore, do the findings have any implications for promoting learner autonomy? If so, in what ways?

STUDENTS AND COURSE

The research project involved a total of 40 students, four female and 36 male students, from three Practical English 1 classes during the 2024 spring semester. One class consisted of eight students: four third-year retakers and four second-year elective students majoring in Economics, Social Studies, Law, or Commerce. The other two classes consisted of 32 second-year students who took Practical English as a mandatory elective for foreign languages. Their majors were Economics or Social Studies. An initial diagnostic assessment was administered to understand the students' attitudes and expectations toward the course. The results showed that just under half of the students (46%) liked or somewhat liked English, while 21% disliked or somewhat disliked it. Additionally, 59% felt they were not good at English, whereas only 10% felt confident or somewhat confident in their English skills. The course was divided into two modules, and students gave a presentation at the end of each module. In relation to the presentations, they engaged in various activities such as rehearsing their presentations in pairs, receiving feedback from peers and the instructor, writing reflections, and doing self-evaluations.

PROCEDURE

The questionnaire (Appendix A) is based on five aspects of growth and fixed mindset illustrated in the diagram by Nigel Holmes (Dweck, 2006, p. 263). These aspects—*challenges, obstacles, effort, criticism, and the success of others*—are derived from Dweck's mindset theory and are used as criteria to assess students' mindset tendencies. To see whether students' mindsets vary in different situations, each key aspect includes two contexts: a general mindset and a mindset in learning English. Students rated their mindset on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating a fixed mindset, 5 indicating a growth mindset, and 3 indicating a neutral stance. The questionnaire, together with the initial diagnostic assessment for the course, was administered during the first week of the semester. A written reflection, which includes follow-up questions on some items in the questionnaire (Appendix B), was completed after each oral presentation. Some information from the initial diagnostic assessment and the two reflections is also referenced to further analyze and support the findings of the questionnaire. As Dweck (2006) mentions, "We are all a mixture of the two mindsets" (p. 217), a person's mindset shifts between growth and fixed mindsets depending on situations and circumstances. Therefore, the purpose of this questionnaire is not to categorize students' mindsets as either fixed or growth, but rather to identify trends and tendencies as a group. Since the concept of the two mindsets is new to me, the research is designed and the findings are discussed primarily in relation to the concepts and ideas from *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (Dweck, 2006), the pioneering work on the topic.

RESULTS

The questionnaire results are presented in parentheses, showing the number of students who selected each option (Appendix A). The results revealed that, when students learn English, 45% of students tended to avoid challenges, while 30% embraced them. When facing obstacles, 53% tended to give up easily, but 23% persisted. Most students (85%) saw effort as key to mastering English, the majority (68%) were open to learning from criticism, and 63% found inspiration in others' success. There were two aspects, challenges and obstacles, that showed a notable gap in students' responses between the general and English learning contexts. In terms of their approach to challenges, more students (48%) exhibited fixed mindset tendencies in learning English than in general situations (25%). Specifically, 5 students selected option 1 (avoid challenges) and 13 selected option 2 in learning English, whereas in general situations, no students chose option 1. Furthermore, 48% reported embracing challenges in general, which was seven more students than those in the context of learning English. A similar trend was observed in obstacles, with 38% of students reporting that they became defensive or gave up easily when faced with challenges.

In the context of learning English, however, this number increased to 53%, which was six more students than in general situations.

ANALYSIS AND REFLECTION

The questionnaire results indicated that, as a whole, students tended to exhibit fixed mindset tendencies in the areas of challenges and obstacles. They demonstrated the strongest growth mindset tendencies in the area of effort. These findings were consistent with my initial observations. In contrast, I was surprised to find that students exhibited growth mindset tendencies in the areas of criticism and success of others. Specifically, when it came to the success of others, this trend was further corroborated by students' written reflections (Appendix B). In these reflections, a large number of students (32 out of 40) reported they felt inspired and motivated by seeing their peers successfully give their oral presentations. Furthermore, in their second written reflections, 32 expressed that seeing their success positively influenced their own performance in oral presentations. Only one student indicated they felt somewhat threatened or intimidated by peers' successes (Appendix B). I initially assumed that, due to their lack of confidence in English, students might have viewed their peers' success as a threat to their self-esteem or a source of insecurity. However, the result turned out to be the opposite and led me to reconsider giving students more chances to learn from each other's successes and strengths.

One way would be through pair or small group discussions where students share their success stories of delivering presentations. In these discussions, students could describe the mindset they adopted, how they overcame challenges, and how they achieved their desired outcomes. Since pair work has consistently received high ratings in student surveys in my classes, this could be a powerful way to introduce and promote peer-supported reflection. Another approach would be to simply add a few targeted questions to the existing written reflection. For example, students could be asked to consider what successful presenters did differently and which mindsets or attitudes they could apply to their own future presentations.

I also find these approaches effective in enhancing the overall quality of students' reflections. Since I first introduced reflective practices in my teaching, a recurring challenge has been that students often have a limited range of perspectives to reflect on and struggle to think deeply. I have been exploring ways to scaffold their reflection more effectively. These new approaches, which encourage students to consciously learn from their peers' successes and strengths, will offer them fresh perspectives for reflection and serve as a valuable addition to my current reflective activities.

Another observation was the noticeable shift in students' attitudes toward challenges. While half of the students demonstrated a growth-oriented mindset in general situations, this mindset did not fully transfer to English learning (Appendix A). This trend was also evident in students' written reflections, with nearly equal numbers of students reporting that they had avoided challenges (Appendix B). This pattern aligned with what I had observed in class. For example, when students were given presentation options for their two-minute PowerPoint presentations, many students tended to choose the least challenging option, which allowed them to keep the full script in front of them while speaking. I encouraged them to try option 2, where they would present with the script face-down and flip it over only when necessary, or option 3, where they would speak without the script. To help students choose more challenging options, I used various strategies: giving praise and positive feedback, allocating practice time with peers, explaining benefits, and setting clear goals. Despite these efforts, I still struggled to encourage students to step out of their comfort zone and challenge themselves more.

The findings made me reconsider the issue from a different angle, wondering what might be holding them back and what I could do to narrow the gap. According to the students' reflections, common reasons for avoiding challenges included fear of failure, shyness, insecurity, worries about their English skills , and simply taking the easy way with minimal effort. Exploring the reasons behind

this shift in depth could provide insights into how to support students in taking on challenges in the English learning context and create a learning environment that encourages such an attitude.

Furthermore, many seemed to see choosing the more challenging option as risky or troublesome, rather than an opportunity to grow and improve. As a way to help students embrace challenges more, I find Dweck's four-step process potentially useful. According to Dweck (2006), developing a growth mindset involves the following four key steps: First, accept that you have a fixed mindset. Second, become aware of your fixed mindset triggers and how your "fixed mindset persona" reacts and impacts you. Third, name the persona. Fourth, educate the persona through a growth mindset. For example, in their written reflections, many students viewed presenting with option 2 or 3 as a challenge. To apply Dweck's four-step process through written reflection, I could guide students as follows. First, I could have students look back on moments when they chose the easiest option and write a short dialogue with two personas: the one that wanted to take on the challenge and the one that was tempted to shy away from it (fixed mindset persona). Then, from the dialogue, I could have them name their fixed mindset persona and objectively examine how it influenced their thoughts and actions. Finally, students could write another dialogue with the named persona to persuade the persona to take on the challenge. Since I have never explicitly instructed on such a detailed, step-by-step reflection process before, this would be an interesting attempt to try in the classroom.

FINAL REMARKS

At this stage in my teaching career, I have sometimes fallen into the trap of relying too much on my past classroom experiences and acting on what I believe is best for my students without truly understanding who they are and what they need. This research project has given me the opportunity to recognize and challenge my assumptions, as well as to better understand my students through the lens of growth and fixed mindsets. Changing one's mindset is a long journey and, given the constraints of a 90-minute weekly class over a 15-week semester at university, it doesn't seem like a realistic goal to achieve. What seems more realistic is to explore ways to help students maintain and make use of the growth mindset they already have. Finally, for me, an autonomous learner is someone who takes responsibility for their own learning and continues to learn independently even after the course has ended. The skills of thoughtfully reflecting on their own language learning experience and acting on their own are crucial to becoming such a learner. This project has given me valuable insights into new approaches to reflection: reflecting on peers' successes and reflecting with a detached self. I look forward to applying these new insights and approaches in my future classes to better serve my students' learning.

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APPENDIX A

自分ついて当てはまると思うものを1つ選んでください
(Please select one option that applies to you.)

1. 挑戦・チャレンジ について (Challenges)

【一般】(in general)

	1	2	3	4	5	NA	
挑戦を避ける (avoid challenges)	(0)	(10)	(11)	(13)	(6)	(0)	挑戦を喜んで受け入れる (embrace challenges)

【英語学習】(in English learning)

	1	2	3	4	5	NA	
挑戦を避ける (avoid challenges)	(5)	(13)	(10)	(11)	(1)	(0)	挑戦を喜んで受け入れる (embrace challenges)

2. 障害について (Obstacles)

【一般】(in general)

	1	2	3	4	5	NA	
守りに入る・簡単に諦める (get defensive or give up easily)	(4)	(11)	(6)	(17)	(2)	(0)	失敗や逆境に遭っても努力し続ける (persist in the face of setbacks)

【英語学習】(in English learning)

	1	2	3	4	5	NA	
守りに入る・簡単に諦める (get defensive or give up easily)	(3)	(18)	(10)	(8)	(1)	(0)	失敗や逆境に遭っても努力し続ける (persist in the face of setbacks)

3. 努力について (Effort)

【一般】(in general)

	1	2	3	4	5	NA	
努力を意味がない・悪いものと捉える (see effort as fruitless or worse)	(0)	(1)	(0)	(17)	(22)	(0)	努力を習熟への道だと捉える (see effort as the path of mastery)

【英語学習】(in English learning)

	1	2	3	4	5	NA	
努力を意味がない・悪いものと捉える (see effort as fruitless or worse)	(0)	(1)	(5)	(14)	(20)	(0)	努力を習熟への道だと捉える (see effort as the path of mastery)

努力について【英語学習】について答えてください。そう思う理由や例え、そう思うようになった経験を書いてください。
(Write about your choice regarding *Effort* 【 in English learning】. Write reasons, examples, and/or experiences that led you to feel so.)

4. 批評・批判について (Criticism)

【一般】(in general)

	1	2	3	4	5	NA	
役に立つ否定的なフィードバックを受け入れない (ignore useful negative feedback)	(1)	(4)	(9)	(17)	(9)	(0)	批評から学ぶ (learn from criticism)

【英語学習】(in English learning)

	1	2	3	4	5	NA	
役に立つ否定的なフィードバックを受け入れない (ignore useful negative feedback)	(1)	(2)	(10)	(14)	(13)	(0)	批評から学ぶ (learn from criticism)

5. 他者の成功について (Success of Others)

【一般】(in general)

	1	2	3	4	5	NA	
他の人の成功に脅威を感じる (feel threatened by the success of others)	(2)	(5)	(5)	(19)	(8)	(1)	他の人の成功から学びやインスピレーション・刺激を見つける (find lessons and inspiration in the success of others)

【英語学習】(in English learning)

	1	2	3	4	5	NA	
他の人の成功に脅威を感じる (feel threatened by the success of others)	(1)	(3)	(10)	(18)	(7)	(1)	他の人の成功から学びやインスピレーション・刺激を見つける (find lessons and inspiration in the success of others)

他者の成功【英語学習】について答えてください。そう思う理由や例え、そう思うようになった経験を書いてください。
(Write about your choice regarding *Success of Others* 【 in English learning】 Write reasons, examples, and/or experiences that led you to feel so.)

APPENDIX B

The following is an excerpt from the reflection entry sheets used for the first (above) and second (below) oral presentations, translated into English.

Selected Items from the First Oral Presentation Reflection

③ 以下の質問で当てはまると思うものを 1 つ選んでください
(Select one option that best applies to you for the following questions.)

1. 今回の発表は自分の中でどれくらい挑戦したと感じますか
(To what extent do you think you took on a challenge in this presentation?)

挑戦を避けた avoided challenges	1 (8)	2 (16)	3 (4)	4 (7)	5 (5)	NA (0)	積極的に挑戦した actively embraced challenges

答えを選んだ理由を書いてください
(Explain why you chose this answer.)

4. クラスメートの発表について：発表が上手（成功）しているクラスメートについてどう感じましたか
(Regarding your classmates' presentations: How did you feel about classmates who gave successful presentations?)

脅威に感じた・恐れを感じた felt threatened or fearful	1 (0)	2 (1)	3 (5)	4 (14)	5 (18)	NA (2)	インスピレーション・刺激を得た felt inspired or motivated

どのような恐れを感じましたか。又は具体的にどんなことからどのようにインスピレーションを得たと感じましたか
(What specific fears did you experience? Or how did you feel inspired or motivated by their presentations?)

Selected Items from the Second Oral Presentation Reflection

③ 以下の質問で当てはまると思うものを 1 つ選んでください
(Select one option that best applies to you for the following questions.)

1. 今回の発表は自分の中でどれくらい挑戦したと感じますか
(To what extent did you feel you took on a challenge in this presentation?)

挑戦を避けた avoided challenges	1 (7)	2 (10)	3 (7)	4 (6)	5 (6)	NA (4)	積極的に挑戦した actively embraced challenges

A) 挑戦を避けようとした又は挑戦してみようとした理由はなんですかB) 実際に挑戦を避けて・挑戦をしてみてどのように感じますか。
(What were the reasons for either avoiding challenges or taking on the challenge? How do you feel about your choice?)

3. 前回の発表で発表が上手い・成功していると感じたクラスメートは、今回、自分が発表する際にいい影響を与えたと思いますか
(Do you think the classmates who gave successful presentations had a positive impact on your own presentation this time?)

			特に影響なかった No significant impact				
悪い影響を与えた had a negative impact	1 (1)	2 (0)	3 (7)	4 (16)	5 (16)	NA (0)	自分の発表にいい影響を与えた had a positive impact

そう感じる理由を具体的に教えてください
(Please provide specific reasons for your answer.)