



The Nexus of Directed Motivational Current (DMC) and Learning Autonomy in English for Specific Purposes (ESP): A Reframing of Student Self-Regulating and Motivation

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Abstract: *This study examines the nexus between Directed Motivational Current (DMC), a novel motivational theory, applied linguistics, and student learning autonomy within English for Specific Purposes (ESP) contexts. The objectives are to understand how students describe and experience a DMC and how the DMC reframes students' perceptions of their learning autonomy and self-regulation. Using a qualitative case study with 13 participants from a private vocational campus in Ternate, North Maluku, Indonesia, who were systematically selected, the research identified two main themes: DMC as an unstoppable flow state and reframing autonomy from the right to vote to Self-Governance. Additionally, the study revealed a significant and transformative connection between DMC and student autonomy in ESP learning. DMC acts as a catalyst that reshapes students' understanding of autonomy, going beyond mere self-governance, driven by self-directed learning (SRL). The findings suggest that clear, intense objectives in DMC support and sustain proactive SRL behaviours, such as self-supervision and environmental management, which are crucial for achieving specific and challenging ESP objectives. These findings have implications for ESP teaching and curriculum design. Instructors should encourage students to make informed choices and help them set goals to trigger DMCs, such as through authentic projects linked to their careers. Instruction should focus on teaching self-regulation strategies to sustain DMC flow, rather than adding extra tasks. ESP educators should empower students to create their own disciplined learning rules, rather than just passively following the curriculum.*

Keywords: *Directed Motivational Current, Learning Autonomy, ESP, Self-Regulating, Motivation*

INTRODUCTION

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is essential as professional specialisations expand. Unlike general language learning, ESP requires precise skills, since mistakes can have serious consequences (Dörnyei et al., 2014). Achieving mastery involves student autonomy, enabling independent learning and adaptation to specific materials (Little, 1991). Learning autonomy, the capacity to regulate one's actions (Benson, 2001, 2011), is vital but does not fully explain how

students maintain effort despite complex barriers. Recent psychology research indicates that motivation, or willpower, predicts long-term success more reliably than ability. This led to DMC, a state of intense, focused motivation towards higher goals (Dörnyei et al., 2014). DMC emphasises how strong motivation propels self-directed learning.

Researches indicate that learners who experience DMC demonstrate greater engagement and persistence in language learning (Zarrinabadi & Khodarahmi, 2023). However, the intensity, sustainability, and relationship between DMC and learner autonomy within ESP, particularly in non-Western contexts such as Indonesia, remain underexplored. No empirical research has been conducted on the central and mechanistic relationship between DMC and learning autonomy, especially in the challenging context of ESP. While it is understood that DMC can enhance productivity, there is no clear explanation of how this energy translates into adequate learning controls.

Many academics have acknowledged the connection between autonomy and motivation (Ushioda, 1996; Dickinson, 1995), emphasising the importance of independence in motivation. The existing literature underscores the importance of sustained motivation and learner autonomy for mastering ESP content (Ushioda, 2011; Nga Thanh, 2014). Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) exemplifies this mechanism. DMC helps students become more independent, shifting them from passive participants (with voting rights) to active, proactive learners with self-discipline and self-governance.

This research examines the link between Directed Motivational Current and learner autonomy in English for Specific Purposes, focusing on how DMC influences ESP students' independent learning through Self-Regulation strategies (Zimmerman, 2000). The findings aim to enhance language motivation theory and assist ESP educators in supporting students' transition to self-driven learning.

Research Problems

1. How do ESP Students describe and experience the Directed Motivational Current (DMC) in their learning?
2. In what ways does a Directed Motivational Current (DMC) reframe students' perception of their learning autonomy and self-regulation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Directed Motivational Current (DMC): A New Motivational Framework
Research on second language motivation has evolved to reflect a more dynamic understanding of its complexities (Dörnyei et al., 2015). Rather than assuming a direct cause-and-effect relationship between internal and external factors and a learner's motivation level, scholars now recognize that these factors may interact non-linearly, influencing motivation across different stages of language learning, including ESP learning.

The Directed Motivational Current (DMC) was developed by Dörnyei, Henry, and Muir (2015). This motivation theory is more detailed and profound than traditional motivation theories. DMC refers to a period of intense and sustained motivation aimed at achieving a highly significant long-term goal. The concept of the DMC provides a valuable framework for understanding these fluctuations in motivation, emphasising that motivation is not static but can surge intensely at certain moments, driven by a personal vision and specific goals (Dörnyei et al., 2016; 2014). This perspective underscores the importance of aligning classroom activities with learners' long-term aspirations, fostering sustained engagement.

Moreover, the DMC framework offers educators a practical tool, providing insights into how peak motivational experiences can energise and nurture long-term motivation in ESP learners, thereby addressing both immediate and future learning needs (Peng & Phakiti, 2022). It consists of four main parts forming a directed motivational flow (Peng & Phakiti, 2022): (1) a clear, highly desired goal, (2) A triggering factor, (3) a salient facilitative structure, and (4) positive emotions.

The concept of vision, rooted in Goal-setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 2006) and the Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2009), posits that motivation stems from the gap between the current state and the desired outcome. However, the DMC framework goes beyond goal-setting by addressing fluctuating motivation, not just effective goal-setting, and emphasises vision as the highest-order motivational force in language learning (Dörnyei et al., 2016). The second key component of DMC is the triggering factor, which is essential for launching a motivational surge. This shows students' ownership of a language task, confidence, and ability, enhancing engagement.

This concept aligns with self-determination theory, which posits that autonomy and competence are critical for motivation (Ryan et al., 2021; Deci & Ryan, 2012). While self-efficacy plays a role, initiating a DMC independently is insufficient; there must also be a balance between the task challenge and the learners' abilities to avoid demotivation or boredom. A specific stimulus or condition acts as the initial trigger, without which a DMC cannot occur.

The third characteristic of DMC is a supportive framework that provides routines and resources, creating a structure for learners to engage with tasks and maintain motivation. This framework includes positive emotional experiences that enhance motivation and support learning (Henry et al., 2015). The framework serves as a perceptual roadmap that guides learners through the stages necessary for achieving their goals, ultimately leading to sustained momentum. Over time, learners enter a semi-automatic state where the motivational flow becomes effortless. The final defining feature of a DMC is positive emotionality, which refers to the enjoyment and satisfaction derived from activities that bring the learner closer to their goals. By applying DMC principles, ESP instructors can create effective learning environments that align curricula with students' professional goals and foster long-term motivation to continue learning.

When a student is in the DMC flow, they no longer require external support; their motivation flows continuously and naturally, inspiring them to take initiative and assume responsibility (Dornyei, 2019). In this study, DMC is regarded as the main engine driving learning autonomy, especially for ESP students with clear professional goals.

Learning Autonomy

The concept of learning autonomy has evolved into a key principle in language education, positioning students as active participants in the learning process. "The ability of learners to take responsibility for their own learning" defines learning autonomy, as Henri Holec (1981), often regarded as the "father" of learning autonomy, explains. Learners are responsible for setting goals, choosing methods, monitoring their progress, and assessing outcomes. Researchers like Little (1991) expand on this, highlighting the importance of autonomy as a psychological capacity rooted in an individual's abilities and desires. According to Dickinson (1995), autonomy includes two aspects: autonomy to learn (the capacity to learn independently) and autonomy in learning (the freedom to select a structured learning environment). Peter Benson, a prominent figure in this domain, describes learning autonomy as the ability to control, manage, and learn independently (Benson, 2001; 2011).

Essentially, autonomy is a dynamic process influenced by internal and external factors, highlighting the positive connection between autonomy and motivation (Liu, 2015). It is deeply connected to the psychology of language learners, focusing on internal experiences that affect their learning processes and outcomes. In DMC, autonomy enables learners to select meaningful strategies, monitor their progress, and remain motivated toward their goals.

While autonomy and DMC have been examined independently, their connection remains underexplored, especially within ESP contexts. Advocates for educational systems that foster learner autonomy believe it promotes long-term academic and career success, highlighting motivation and independence as key to language learning achievement (Honarзад & Rassaei, 2022; Nga Thanh, 2014). Their research suggests that motivation, particularly when combined with autonomy, yields improved performance in English as a foreign language. This implies that investigating the link between DMC and learner autonomy among Indonesian EFL students in ESP could offer valuable insights into how self-directed behaviours support ongoing motivation.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a method of language teaching that targets the specific needs of learners. General English (EGP) emphasises language mastery for everyday communication, whereas ESP concentrates on developing language skills applicable in particular professional or academic fields. "An approach in which content decisions and methods are based on the learner's reasons for learning" is the definition of ESP (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The nature of ESP is needs-driven; materials and assignments are customised to the student's area of study, such as engineering, medicine, or business. ESP materials tend to engage

students more due to their high relevance. According to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), this relevance helps students recognise the immediate benefits of what they learn. Consequently, the ESP environment offers an ideal setting for examining the link between material relevance, high motivation, and self-directed learning.

Directed Motivational Current and ESP Context

Despite increasing interest in DMC, research within ESP contexts remains limited. ESP learners tend to have extrinsic, career-focused motivations that align well with the purpose-driven nature of DMC (Jahedizadeh & Al-Hoorie, 2021). For example, engineering students learning English to access global technical resources or professionals seeking international collaboration often experience strong motivational spurts tied to their specific careers. Although the DMC framework is theoretically suitable for ESP contexts, few studies have examined how DMC functions in these goal-oriented environments.

Gaining insights into how learners' future professional identities influence their sustained language efforts is crucial for understanding the role of DMC in ESP. This gap suggests the need to explore how DMC motivates ESP learners toward their specific career-related language goals. Despite this, research on DMC remains an important future research direction, encouraging further studies in this area (Gümüş & MuiR, 2020).

Research on DMC in ESP contexts highlights its potential to boost student motivation and learning outcomes. The DMC framework, which focuses on elements such as clear vision, mastery experiences, triggering, and positive emotionality, offers a promising approach to overcoming the motivational challenges faced by ESP learners. Early studies (Dörnyei et al., 2016; Henry et al., 2015) show that incorporating DMC components into curriculum design and teaching practices can lead to deeper engagement and sustained motivation. For instance, aligning ESP materials with students' fields of study (building vision) and providing challenging yet attainable tasks (creating mastery experiences) can increase intrinsic motivation and confidence in using English for academic and professional purposes.

These findings suggest that ESP instructors can develop activities to enhance students' DMC, thereby improving their language skills and preparing them for professional English use. However, additional research is necessary to examine how each core element of DMC interacts in different ESP contexts and to understand how to create and maintain a supportive structure that fosters DMC among students. It is hoped that understanding these core elements and their relationship with contextual factors, such as students' motivation and autonomy, will lead to more effective ESP teaching strategies.

Basic Concept of Self-Regulation (SRL)

It is a process where students systematically activate and sustain their cognition, behaviour, and affective responses, focusing on achieving their own goals. SRL is more than just intelligence; it is a form of self-discipline that can be learned and developed. SRL Phases and Cycles: Most SRL models, such as

Zimmerman (2000) or Pintrich's (2000) cycle models, divide this process into three main phases: Forethought Phase, which involves strategic planning and goal setting (DMC key). Students analyse the assignment and assess their own self-confidence (self-efficacy). Performance Phase (Performance/Execution) includes applying learning strategies, self-monitoring (to track progress), and self-control (to modify strategies when necessary). Self-Reflection Phase (Self-Reflection) involves evaluating oneself and attributes (assessing success or failure), which influences the forethought phase in the next cycle. This is also supported by (Kormos & Csizér, 2014), who found that motivational factors and self-regulation strategies influence autonomous learning behaviour.

SRL and DMC, in the context of ESP-SRL, function as operational mechanisms through which student autonomy or independent ability is realised. Students are compelled to employ self-regulation strategies, such as time management, and seek out authentic ESP resources, as well as manage their learning environment, due to the intensity of DMC. This process transforms passive autonomy into active autonomy driven by strong internal motivations.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative case study approach to investigate how the DMC experience significantly impacts the independent learning of ESP students, particularly through the effective use of Self-Regulation. By focusing on participants' feelings, memories, experiences, and thoughts, this study aims to understand the importance of their experiences (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018). A qualitative design was chosen to gain a deeper understanding of complex issues that quantitative data cannot provide (Dunwoodie, Macaulay, & Newman, 2023). Investigating the case helps reveal overlooked details. A case study captures micro-encounters and the social realities of students in DMC ESP learning, allowing for a detailed analysis of specific situations.

Participants

This study was conducted at a private vocational institution in Ternate, North Maluku, Indonesia, specifically within the Informatics and Computer program. A total of thirteen students exhibiting DMC were involved in this research. They were selected through a systematic sampling procedure, which facilitated the identification of participants capable of providing valuable insights pertinent to the research questions, considering that all participants possess motivation, although not all exhibit DMC. The students' experiences with learning ESP vary. This criterion was established to ensure alignment with the study's objectives and to obtain accurate information relevant to the research findings. The detailed demographic information is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Participant (P)

Code of Participant	Gender	Age	English Level	ESP Experience	Criteria of DMC
P1	Female	21	Elementary	4 years	Available
P2	Female	21	Elementary	4 years	Available
P3	Male	22	Elementary	4 years	Available
P4	Male	23	Intermediate	3 years	Available
P5	Male	22	Elementary	3 years	Available
P6	Male	19	Elementary	4 years	Available
P7	Male	21	Intermediate	3 years	Available
P8	Male	21	Elementary	3 years	Available
P9	Female	20	Intermediate	3 years	Available
P10	Female	22	Elementary	4 years	Available
P11	Male	22	Elementary	3 years	Available
P12	Female	23	Intermediate	3 years	Available
P13	Female	22	Elementary	4 years	Available

Data Collection

The researcher collected data through semi-structured and in-depth interviews with each of the 13 participants. Interviews are conducted face-to-face, individually on campus, and via WhatsApp video calls, depending on the students' willingness and their individual considerations. A predetermined interview protocol was used to guide the interview, ensuring all relevant topics were covered. The interview protocol includes an open-ended question to elicit students' and lecturers' perspectives on the strategy used, as well as the transition to a technology-based strategy, and the role of the DMC.

The interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy and facilitate detailed analysis. Each interview lasted 45 to 60 minutes, allowing for additional time to explore the questions in depth. Before the interview, participants were informed about the purpose of the research. Written informed consent was obtained from each participant before the commencement of the interview. The complete list of questions for semi-structured interviews is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Questions for semi-structured interview

No	Questions
1	How did you define your goals in ESP learning & what makes this difference from others?
2	Is there any momentum or special period where your motivation very high, focus and unstoppable? How do you feel?
3	In the past, what autonomy learning means to you & do your experience of high motivation changes your perceptions of autonomy?
4	Give me examples of how do you manage your learning process during your high motivation period? What strategy did you use?
5	If you have to choose one word, is the high motivation makes you feel free or bound of your own learning rules? Why?

Data Analysis

Audio-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim to ensure their richness and authenticity, capturing reliability, pauses, repetitions, and informal language. This detailed transcription was essential for thematic analysis, enabling the detection of subtle meanings and patterns that might be overlooked in edited transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). Authentic voice recordings enhanced interpretative depth and kept coding grounded in genuine expressions (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). The thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2019) six-phase approach. It involved familiarising oneself with the data through reading and listening, generating initial codes by recognising patterns, organising these codes into broader themes, reviewing themes for accuracy and coherence, defining and naming themes with clear descriptions, and finally, producing the report by selecting an illustrative theme.

Researchers coded separately to maintain the integrity of their results. After creating the initial code, they reviewed each other's work and discussed any differences until they reached an agreement. This approach minimised bias and ensured that the themes accurately represented participants' perspectives.

Themes were confirmed through peer debriefing and re-evaluation of the data to ensure consistency with the interview excerpts. An audit trail was maintained to record coding choices, theme development, and any modifications. The analysis was conducted systematically and collaboratively, enhancing the rigour and trustworthiness of the findings. The coding process and themes are detailed in Table 3.

Table 3. Coding and Themes

Code found	Theme
a. Purpose of superordinate and clarity of direction. b. Automatic flow and focused energy	DMC as Unstoppable Flow State
a. Shifting the definition of autonomy (choice of control) b. Self-monitoring and Environment control (SRL proof)	Reframing Autonomy: From the right to vote, to Self-Governance.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on deep interviews with thirteen participants, this study identified two central key themes that explain the nexus between the Directed Motivational Current (DMC) and autonomy learning in the context of ESP. These findings provide fundamental support for the proposition that DMC plays a role in transforming passive autonomy into proactive self-regulation.

DMC Acts as an Unstoppable Flow State

The essence of the DMC experience is outlined in the first theme. Participants characterized DMC as a cohesive and enduring psychological state marked by intense energy, mental clarity, and purpose. It describes superordinate goal clarity, where DMC is linked to an ESP goal that holds existential significance for participants. This makes it a 'life ticket' or 'personal determination' that goes beyond the demands of traditional academics, focusing on specific needs and strong

determination. It brings to the global demand for professional English; understanding how DMC operates in ESP can lead to pedagogical strategies that align with learners' professional goals and academic needs (Hyland, 2022). This goal supports cognitive processes, removing doubts from the learning decision-making process. Participant 1 (P1) P9 and P6 explored below:

P1. I have a clear goal. I am not only a college graduate, sir; I am also capable of working for a large corporation. My ticket to life is this.

P6. To be more precise, I want to be able to describe computer devices during the test without being anxious.

P9. This is not the same, sir. This is a personal objective, and I set a deadline for myself.

Additionally, behavioural automation and emotional resilience are evident. Students with DMC reported a shift from initially forced behaviours to automatic responses. DMC offers high emotional resilience; resistance and failure in ESP are no longer causes of burnout, but rather sources of motivation. Participants explored below:

P4. It feels like an automatic, never forcing myself, to open a book.

P13. I know how to carry myself, sir. There is a groove that I have made

P1. ... Since then, I promised to be more focused.

DMC is a strong drive and integrated psychological state where goals become existential, making ESP studying a life necessity rather than just an academic task. Activities become automated through flow, reducing hesitation and friction, with focus becoming the default.

Reframing Autonomy from the Right to Choose, to Self-Govern

The focus of the research questions is on the second theme, which illustrates how DMC influences students' perspectives and autonomy habits. Autonomy is no longer viewed as just loose freedom but as a vital force of self-control. It was found that the recipient's role has shifted to the designer.

Those who participated recounted a shift from external autonomy (choosing lecturers) to internal autonomy (creating and implementing a private education system). This indicates that learning designers are assuming their own roles.

P7. I used to think that autonomy was the lecturer telling me to choose material; now, I make my material system according to my interests, hobbies, and feelings.

P8. In the past, there was a certain level of relaxation; lecturers directed, but now it turns out that it is the learner's responsibility to be disciplined and determine the direction of their own path.

These results also show a manifestation of proactive self-regulation (SRL). To maintain the flow, participants must practice a high level of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) during the DMC experience. Detailed, planned, and deliberate SRL practices are evidence of this reframing.

P10. Make a study journal, record computer terms, evaluate yesterday's study methods, and see exam results as well.

P11. Once I disabled my cellphone for hours, I only used sources from books and asked the lecturer or friends

P12. I worked on the technique of choosing the easiest one, one by one, and the commitment had to be completed that night.

Reframing autonomy involves strict self-regulation, transforming students from passive recipients into active participants in their education. They demonstrate self-monitoring, complex strategies, and environmental control, embodying discipline to achieve DMC goals. This is also supported by Kormos & Csizér (2014), who found that motivational factors and self-regulation strategies influence autonomous learning behaviour.

Thus, these results suggest that DMC catalyses the transformation of conventional (passive) autonomy into self-governance (active). Here, SRL is no longer an option, but an essential mechanism for achieving the goal of ESP driven by the state of unstoppable flow.

DISCUSSION

This discussion aimed to understand the results regarding the relationship between Directed Motivational Current (DMC) and Learner Independence through the lens of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) theory in the context of English for Special Purpose (ESP).

The main results show that DMC functions as a transformational catalyst, transforming learning autonomy, considered a right, into self-governance —a proactive discipline. When combined with previous research, this study proposes a model in which the directed motivational current (DMC) directly activates and sustains self-regulatory mechanisms. This discovery, which qualitatively conceptualises DMC as "Unstoppable Current," confirms and expands on Dörnyei et al.'s (2014) theoretical framework on DMC. Students not only report an increase in quantitative motivation; they also display a range of integrated psychological states characterised by sustained emotional resilience and a clear sense of purpose. This condition effectively overcomes volitional obstacles in independent learning.

The ESP goal, also known as the "life ticket" or "personal determination," is central to the DMC experience. According to the theory of the Self-Motivation System (MSS), this goal surpasses the ought-to self (external expectations) and is rooted in the L2 self (internal aspiration). Internal motivational conflicts or ambivalences are naturally resolved when goals become integral to professional identity, as seen in ESP.

The clarity of this primary objective facilitates focused cognitive attention. This aligns with Kuhl's (1985) theory of volitional control. DMC provides the necessary authority to maintain an action-oriented strategy, thereby enabling students to distinguish between pertinent and irrelevant information related to their objectives. The process of learning decision-making becomes more efficient and automatic (P4) because a singular primary goal directs each decision, consequently

diminishing the cognitive burden commonly linked to autonomy, such as the selection of materials.

Students describe DMC as a "railroad" and an "automatic stream." This closely resembles the concept of the Flow State (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The primary difference is that DMCs maintain this stream over a more extended period and focus on the end goal rather than the immediate task at hand. This continuous flow state helps preserve the stability of the ESP's work.

Furthermore, the findings related to emotional surge and resilience (P6) illustrate the affective function of DMC. Failure, such as an unsuccessful interview, does not induce fatigue or learning difficulties (Seligman, 1975); however, it results in positive attributional adjustments. Students tend to attribute failure to a deficiency in strategy, an internal and modifiable factor, rather than to innate talent, which is considered fixed. With this valuable insight, the Self-Reflection phase within the SRL cycle was promptly activated, encouraging students to alter their strategies and maintain the momentum of DMC efficiently. The concept of DMC transcends mere goal-setting, encompassing a supportive framework that enables students to select appropriate learning methods, cultivate positive emotions, and identify events that stimulate motivation (Dörnyei et al., 2014; Peng & Phakiti, 2022).

The influence of DMC on students' understanding of learning autonomy is the second most crucial theme of the study. DMC encourages students to reach a level of learning independence (SRL), which redefines the concept of autonomy beyond rights (Little, 1991). The results indicate that students have shifted from external autonomy (making choices from available options) to internal autonomy (P7). Here, students are responsible for creating and managing their own education system. This is in line with Ushioda (1996) and Dickinson (1995), who state that motivation is related to the selection of learning autonomy, and DMC directly supports this claim.

This role as the "architect" of the micro-curriculum directly reflects the forethought phase (planning) in the SRL model. Here, measures of autonomy are no longer based on freedom but on how effective and decisive the control systems they use are.

The recognition that autonomy equates to 'responsibility for discipline' (P8) directly integrates DMC and SRL. DMC energy supplies an impetus, whereas self-governance provides a framework for channelling that vitality. The notion of 'power to resist' underscores the independence of control, along with the belief (Zarrinabadi & Khodarahmi, 2023) that examining the effects of experiencing directed motivational currents on learners' beliefs is warranted.

DMC experience requires a high level of SRL practice to maintain a steady flow. This shows that SRL is an autonomous implementation mechanism driven by DMC to be Self-Monitoring and Evaluation. One example is the use of a 'daily study journal' to record progress and evaluate strategies (P10), which is a complex

metacognitive activity. Students not only track their learning process but also monitor results or grades. This shows highly structured autonomy, with students independently engaging in a critical self-reflection step vital for renewing the SRL cycle. Self-regulation is key to helping learners become independent professionals and lifelong learners (Gupta, N., et al., 2024).

Furthermore, DMC is also viewed as a means of environmental control. Essential mechanisms of SRL for eliminating distractions include autonomous actions like 'turning off the phone' and strict resource selection (P11). Environmental control in DMCs becomes necessary to maintain focused flow and extends beyond a mere strategy. Here, autonomy refers to the right to control the environment to achieve a specific goal, confirming the positive relationship between autonomy and motivation (Liu, 2015). Additionally, autonomy is associated with high, direct, and intense motivation (Jahedizadeh, S., & Al-Hoorie, A. H., 2021), as indicated by DMC.

The theoretical nexus and contribution of this research propose a nexus model in which DMC functions as an energy generation mechanism, and an SRL transmission mechanism is activated to transform students' autonomy potential into measurable performance.

The results fill a gap in the literature by demonstrating that learning autonomy is a dynamic spectrum that can be influenced by extreme motivational conditions. It is not a static or binary concept. Students are highly motivated by the DMC to enforce much stricter rules and self-discipline than those imposed by external institutions. Passive autonomy, or choice, focuses on what they can do, while reframed autonomy, or self-order, emphasises what they can do to attain intrinsic goals and learn ESP. This clearly exemplifies mature independence and the capacity to organise oneself to reach significant goals, and again strengthens the proof that the critical relationship between self-regulation and high motivation (Werner & Milyavskaya, 2019)

ESP aims to provide convenience and support job security. DMC is vital for precision and high skill. ESP is a language teaching method tailored to students' academic or professional needs, focusing on essential language, genres, and skills with both general and discipline-specific materials (Anthony, 2018). The study recommends that ESP educators facilitate vision, helping students articulate their ideal L2 Self goals to trigger DMC. DMC should also serve as an SRL tool, teaching self-supervision, evaluation, and environmental management to sustain DMC and improve learning.

Thus, the relationships identified are not merely correlations but causal-mechanistic connections: DMC provides will, and reframing SRL/Autonomy offers a way to express that will in a structured and sustainable manner within a demanding ESP environment.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that Directed Motivational Current (DMC) significantly transforms ESP learners' autonomy from passive choice into proactive self-governance, sustained by self-regulated learning (SRL). Theoretically, it positions DMC as a dynamic motivational surge that activates volitional control and emotional resilience within the ESP context. Practically, it suggests that ESP instructors should design goal-oriented, autonomy-supportive curricula to trigger and maintain DMC. However, this study's limitations include a small sample size from a single vocational campus in Ternate, North Maluku, Indonesia, which may restrict the applicability of the findings. The results are rich in context but specific to informatics and computer students with prior ESP exposure. Future research should examine DMC-autonomy dynamics across various ESP fields and cultural settings, using longitudinal designs to track motivational changes over time.

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