DOCTORAL (PHD) DISSERTATION

Melinda Mikusová

FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AT HOME:

A MIXED METHODS STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOME LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND SELF-REGULATED LANGUAGE LEARNING IN HUNGARY

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Eötvös Loránd University

Faculty of Education and Psychology

Language Pedagogy PhD Programme

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Abstract

English language learning at home has become increasingly popular in recent years, especially with the advancement of technology and the availability of online resources. Many online courses, language exchange platforms, and language learning apps offer interactive and engaging opportunities to help learners improve their language skills. Learning at home has several advantages, and as students are free to plan, organise, and assess their learning, it stands out as an important growing realm for studying language learner self-regulation. While self-regulated learning at home has gained increasing attention in recent years, it remains an under-researched area. Many studies have focused on self-regulated learning in traditional classroom settings, but there is a need for more research to explore self-regulated learning in the home context (Pintrich, 2000). This dissertation tries to fill this gap by investigating the bidirectional relationship between the home environment and self-regulated language learning. The central focus of this research project was to delve into the self-regulated language learning experiences of 12- to 19-year-old Hungarian English language learners in their home environment, including those engaged in homeschooling. More specifically, the three interrelated studies presented here used a mixed-methods design: 1) to examine the curriculum-level enablers and barriers to fostering self-regulated learning and explore where self-regulation and out-of-school learning are located in the Hungarian National Core Curriculum; 2) to gain an insight into self-regulated language learning of conventional school students, with special attention on homework completion using a questionnaire (N = 123); and 3) to investigate the self-regulated language learning of homeschooled learners via interviews with homeschooling parents (N = 12) and their homeschooled children (N = 11). In general, the studies aimed to analyse how the home environment contributes and can contribute to self-regulated learning development in Hungary.

The document analysis showed that from a self-regulatory perspective, the newest National Core Curriculum is highly forward-looking and progressive, reflecting the changing needs of students in a rapidly evolving world. In addition, the questionnaire study revealed that students do not consciously use self-regulated learning strategies while completing their homework assignments at home. Even if students recognise the importance of learning at home, older – 16 years and over – participants in this study do not value their homework assignments as tasks that could enhance their proficiency but believe in their skills more than their younger counterparts. The data also showed that younger students apply more self-regulatory strategies while doing their homework tasks, mainly because they fear the negative consequences of not doing their homework (homework control), in order to protect their ego and reputation, and to gain recognition and appreciation from teachers and parents (introjected motivation). Moreover, the interview study supported the claim that the home environment promotes self-regulated learning. The homeschooling experience provides ample opportunities for self-regulation, as students are responsible for managing their learning and completing assignments independently. The investigation also identified several similarities and differences between homeschooled and school students' language learning experiences. For example, as it turned out, self-regulation in most participants activates only when the necessity occurs.

The implication of my research provides valuable insights into the role of self-regulation in the home environment, offering practical recommendations for parents, educators, and policymakers to support learners' development of self-regulatory skills. The dissertation contributes to the theoretical understanding of how self-regulation skills develop

in students within the context of their immediate environment and sheds light on the specific factors, practices, and dynamics that influence the acquisition and refinement of self-regulation abilities. It is highlighted throughout the dissertation that a comprehensive understanding of self-regulation in the home environment can inform the development of interventions and support strategies for learners struggling with self-regulation difficulties, ultimately leading to improved outcomes in their academic performance and long-term success.

Keywords: self-regulation, self-regulated learning, homeschooling, home environment, language learning at home, homework completion

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1 Introduction

Why do students behave the way they do? Why do some students put more effort into schoolwork than others? Why are some learners more effective and successful than others? Many researchers think self-regulation is one of the strongest determinants of learning success (Baumeister et al., 1998; Zimmerman, 2000). The objective of this research is to try to provide a new approach to elaborate on the complex problem of student behaviour, more precisely, self-regulated language learning behaviour.

Specifically, the study aims to find links between the benefits associated with learning in natural environments and self-regulated behaviour. This aim is important because, in today's teacher-oriented and teacher-directed traditional school setting in Hungary, students tend to depend on their teachers (Öveges & Csizér, 2018). The main practical problem is that students expect their teachers to motivate them and to tell them what and how to learn and to what extent, which leads to the fact that they do not know how to organise and regulate their learning; moreover, they do not even feel the urge and need to do so (Mikusová, 2019). Most students are satisfied with and accept this passive role in the learning process, put the bare minimum of work into language learning, and do nothing more than the necessary or assigned homework (Bujis & Admiraal, 2013; Curtis & Nourie, 1989).

My dissertation explores a novel and relatively under-researched area: the self-regulated language learning behaviour of students within the home learning environment. By focusing the investigation on how students regulate their language learning at home, my study significantly contributes to expanding and enhancing existing knowledge and theoretical frameworks related to self-regulation. Unlike conventional studies focusing on language learning within classroom settings (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005), this research shifts the spotlight to the home learning context. In doing so, it reveals a fresh perspective on the factors and dynamics that influence self-regulated behaviour in a more private and personalised learning environment.

Moreover, this research project is one of the few to include homeschooled students as participants. By exploring the self-regulated language learning experiences of these students, who learn predominantly at home within their family context, the study delves into an even less explored educational setting. Comparing self-regulation across children who attend traditional classroom settings and those who are homeschooled offers a rare opportunity to gain insights into how different learning experiences affect students' self-regulated learning behaviours.

In addition, the geographical emphasis of the study on the Hungarian educational system also contributes to its originality. While self-regulation has been studied in various international contexts, the examination of self-regulation in the Hungarian home learning environment contributes to the growing body of literature on self-regulation in diverse educational settings. This localised viewpoint allows for cultural nuances and specificities to be taken into account, resulting in a more holistic understanding of self-regulated behaviour within this particular context.

Therefore, the research adopts a comprehensive perspective by examining the bidirectional relationship between self-regulation and the home learning environment. By integrating Bandura's (1986) classic theory of self-regulation and recognising the significance of context in self-regulation models (Panadero, 2017), the study offers a deeper understanding of how the home learning environment shapes self-regulated behaviour and vice versa. These two theories were chosen as they link self-regulated behaviour and learning context and pinpoint that self-regulated learning is context-dependent.

To summarise, the main objective of this research is to examine how the home learning environment 1) *shapes* self-regulation supportive practices and 2) is *shaped* by practices committed to supporting self-regulation. Moreover, in order to give a thorough understanding and a broad context for further research on self-regulation within the Hungarian educational system, it also aims to investigate how self-regulation and the role of the home environment are included in the Hungarian National Core Curriculum. Hence, the dissertation tries to answer questions such as how the home learning environment affects the students' motivation to learn, and how it contributes to the development of self-regulated learning behaviour, how students regulate their language learning at home, and how the home environment itself influences self-regulated language learning behaviour. The view of student learning taken here supposes that social-contextual factors, among others, influence what and how students learn. The current research emphasises that student learning does not happen in isolation but is exposed to various social and contextual factors that exercise an inhibiting or fostering effect on the whole learning process. Thus, we must examine all the relevant social and contextual influences to analyse student learning.

Panadero's (2017) theoretical paper concluded that even though self-regulation has become one of the most prominent topics in the field of education, it is necessary to apply the existing self-regulation theories in entirely new and specific contexts. Pintrich (2000) also highlighted that there is a clear need for more research on "how self-regulation develops in natural contexts" and "how different features of the context can shape, facilitate, and constrain

self-regulated learning" (p. 493). More precisely, they both suggested examining the role of various educational environments and how these specific contexts affect self-regulated learning. In response to this gap, context-specific research has been conducted. The dissertation hopes to help language teachers develop their learners' positive attitude toward learning languages by using an outside-the-classroom environment - the home learning context's opportunities - to improve and develop their students' self-regulatory skills.

As the above-outlined framework indicates, this exploratory study focuses on the development of self-regulation in the home environment and intends to gather data from language learners who learn in traditional classroom settings and from homeschooling families who primarily learn languages at home. The study seeks to find which self-regulatory processes appear in students in the home learning environment and whether homeschooled participants show strengths or weaknesses in certain self-regulation processes compared to their school counterparts who study at home only after school ends. Therefore, the current research is designed as a mixed-method exploratory study using qualitative data from interviews and document analysis, along with quantitative data from a questionnaire. This approach ensures triangulation, enabling different aspects of the studied phenomenon to surface (Creswell, 2003).

The dissertation is divided into two parts. Part I provides an overview of the theoretical background to the study, while Part II details the three studies that were conducted. Part I presents the background, context, and theoretical framework of the study as well as the research niche it tries to fill. The topic of this dissertation requires three different literature reviews. The first part concentrates on defining self-regulation and tries to analyse its role in education. Furthermore, it describes some of the most widely used self-regulation models. A separate sub-chapter focuses on the development of self-regulation and investigates what self-regulation research says about the possible links between learning context and self-regulation. A distinct part of this dissertation deals with the role of self-regulation in language learning and the importance of out-of-class language learning. The last part elaborates on the narrow focus of the current research project: the home learning environment, focusing mainly on Hungarian homeschooling. It investigates the history of homeschooling in Hungary and reviews the most important research findings up to date.

Part II of the dissertation involves the methods and results chapters. This dissertation consists of three independent but interrelated studies dealing with self-regulation through various lenses and perspectives, each presented in a separate chapter. Each chapter provides a detailed account of the methodology used, the participant sample and recruitment process, the

data collection procedures, and the data analysis techniques employed. In addition, each chapter presents the main results of the study and draws conclusions based on those findings. The reason behind this decision was threefold: 1) to simplify comprehension and, at the same time, minimise confusion between the study findings, 2) to enable readers to fully understand the research process, and 3) to highlight the contribution of each study component.

The study combines different research methods, such as analysis of educational documents, questionnaire study, and interviews with homeschooled students and their parents. Therefore, two qualitative studies and one quantitative study have been carried out. The presentation of the studies follows an inverted three-tier pyramid structure, meaning it starts from the broadest topic and progresses to give the most specific information. First, the results of the Hungarian National Core Curriculum (NCC) analyses are presented (see Chapter 4) to provide a context for the study. This document is a central-level document issued by the Hungarian Government, which regulates the content of Hungarian education. Chapter 5 describes the results of the quantitative questionnaire study, which aimed to investigate Hungarian English language learners' – enrolled in conventional schools – self-regulation processes and self-regulated learning behaviour at home, as well as the mediating role of the students' motivation toward English language learning in general, and perceived responsibility. This study also connects the topic under investigation with a more focused and specific set of cases and situates the problem in the context of the dissertation's main discussion, namely self-regulation at home. Chapter 6 focuses on the self-regulated language learning process in the home environment from the point of view of homeschooling parents and their children. The interview study investigates how the homeschooling experience affects the language learning process, how homeschooled students self-regulate their learning, and how the home environment shapes their self-regulated behaviour. Consequently, the study provides a platform for homeschooling families to express their beliefs and portray their learning experiences. Quotes extracted from the participants' discourse are used to illustrate the findings.

In addition, the results of the three studies are integrated into Chapter 7, which compares and contrasts the results and highlights possible connections between the home environment and self-regulated behaviour. It also links the study findings to each other and compares them with the results of previous research. Finally, the whole dissertation ends with a comprehensive summary of the main findings accompanied by an in-depth exploration of the primary limitations inherent in the research design. Some pedagogical, methodological,

and theoretical implications are mentioned, and possible future research directions are outlined.

The current study contributes to the field of education in three significant ways. First, it adds to the body of literature on self-regulated language learning and especially helps fill in some gaps on the role of different contexts in developing self-regulated behaviour. Secondly, this research looks into self-regulated learning behaviour within a learning environment that has not been widely explored before—the home context. By focusing on an entirely new learning environment, it tries to expand the existing knowledge and framework of self-regulation. In addition, the dissertation hopes to expand the methodological repertoire available for further self-regulation studies conducted in similar contexts.

As Oxford and Lee (2008, p. 315) emphasised, "language learning is a difficult journey across a demanding landscape by extremely complex beings who behave in complicated ways", and there are still a lot of open issues and questions. This dissertation is an attempt to make this bumpy road easier. It can serve as a kind of map or GPS that tries to speed up and simplify the demanding path of language learning, as – pointed out throughout the dissertation – self-regulation seems the fastest way to success.

PART I

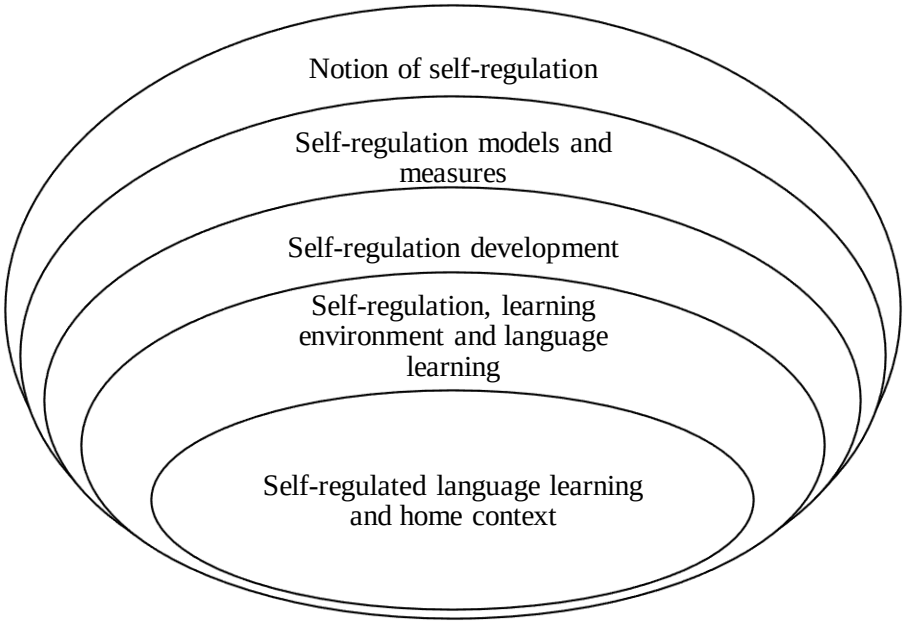
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2 Review of the literature

As this dissertation aims to investigate self-regulated learning at home, the literature review will follow a broad-to-specific structure (see Figure 1 for a visual representation). It will move from the general (self-regulation research) to the specific topic placed in context (self-regulated language learning at home). Therefore, the first part focuses on self-regulation, including the evolution of definitions, gives an overview of the most commonly used self-regulation models, and examines what self-regulation research says about the teachability and development of self-regulation. The next part of this section reviews the roles of various learning environments in self-regulated learning and narrows down the topic to the home learning environment with a special focus on language learning. The last chapters offer a discussion of homeschooling education, examining its place in the Hungarian context.

Figure 1

Visual Representation of the Literature Review Section



The literature review will end with a summary of the main research findings, which aim to examine self-regulation in the home context. As the literature review will clearly demonstrate, the number of these studies significantly increased during the COVID pandemic because the crisis led to an increased interest in homeschooling research. In addition, due to

the pandemic – the transition to distance home learning – self-regulation has also received increased attention.

2.1 History of self-regulation research in education

Almost 45 years ago, Dansereau (1978, p. 1) stated that to that point, "educational research and development efforts have been directed almost exclusively at the improvement of teaching", while the learning aspect of education has been neglected. In 1975, during the sixth annual *Conference on Applied Linguistics*, the participants realised that there was a "shift from research that exclusively focused on language teaching to research that investigated language learning" (Larsen-Freeman, 2017, p. 427).

The history of research on self-regulation dates back to the late 1970s when Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975) attempted to identify what differentiates good language learners from others. Based on their own experiences, both authors pointed to the fact that there is an apparent difference between good learners and poorer ones. Both of them tried to figure out the main reasons behind this difference. In addition, they postulated that effective learning strategies could be imparted to poorer learners and might help these learners progress faster with learning. These good language learner studies provided a starting point for learning strategy research (Oxford, 1990), and since then, countless studies have revealed that those learners who are labelled as good employ a wide variety of learning strategies (see O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990, among many others).

However, many researchers challenged the overly simplified and optimistic view that by identifying the learning strategies of good learners, these strategies can be used by poor learners to accelerate their learning progress. In the 1970s, several researchers emphasised that language learning success does not just depend on effective language learning strategies but is much more complex and that individual differences play a significant role in language learning outcomes (Ellis, 1975; Skehan, 1978). These researchers argued that learners are different and that not all learning strategies apply to all good language learners. Since then, researchers have tried to identify the key to language learning success, and the investigation of self-regulation falls into this field of inquiry.

The leading scholars in self-regulation research (Zeidner et al., 2000; Zimmerman, 2008) all emphasise to date that: a) there is a need for greater definitional clarity, b) there are too many self-regulated models present in the literature, and c) there are different views on

how to develop and measure self-regulation. All these issues will be addressed separately in the following chapters in order to place the present study in the context of existing literature.

2.1.1 Definition of self-regulation

Self-regulation has been defined in different ways over the years. Boekaerts and Corno (2005, p. 200) concluded that over the past twenty years, researchers had "struggled with the conceptualization and operationalization of self-regulatory capacity, coming to the conclusion that there is no simple and straightforward definition of the construct of self-regulation." The first attempt to describe self-regulation goes back to the late 1980s as an outcome of a symposium at the *American Educational Research Association* annual meeting in 1986. After the event, Zimmerman (1986) developed one of the earliest working definitions of self-regulated learners. He stated that "self-regulated learning theorists view students as metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning process" (p. 308).

Nowadays, a vast body of information is available about self-regulation, and many researchers have attempted to describe and explain the fundamental processes of this complex phenomenon. As Yang (2005) summarised, even though it is generally accepted that successful and effective learners of all ages self-regulate, the definitions of self-regulation vary in how they depict its diverse psychological dimensions (summarised in Table 1 below).

Table 1

Definitions of Self-Regulation in Chronological Order

Author	Definition
Zimmerman, (1989, p. 329)	Students can be described as self-regulated to the degree that they are metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning process.
Cohen (1990, p. 10)	An approach wherein learners make decisions, alone or with the help of others, about what they need or want to know, how they will set objectives for learning, what resources and strategies they will use, and how they will assess their progress.
De Lemos (1999, p. 3)	An individual's capacity to modulate behavior according to internal and external changing circumstances.
Demetriou (2000, p. 210)	Actions directed at modifying a system's present state or activity and which are necessary either because that state (or activity) is diverting from a previously set goal or because the goal itself needs to be changed.
Pintrich (2000, p. 453)	An active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behaviour, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the

	environment.
Zimmerman (2000, p. 14)	Self-regulation refers to self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned and cyclically adapted to the attainment of personal goals.
Dunlosky & Ariel (2011, p. 105)	An act of self-regulated learning is any student behavior or cognition that is directed toward reducing a discrepancy between a current perceived state and a goal relevant to performance or learning.
Collett (2014, p. 431)	The capability of people to recognise and respond to context-situated behavioural, cognitive, or metacognitive cues, ideally modifying aspects of their functioning in the particular context to meet the needs signalled by these cues.
McClelland et al. (2017, p. 277)	Self-regulation therefore entails cognitions, emotions, and actions that arise within the individual and do not differentiate between conscious and subconscious (or even automatic) action.

Based on the above-highlighted definitions, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Researchers cannot find common ground as to whether self-regulation is a process or an action (Demetriou, 2000; Pintrich, 2000), an approach (Cohen, 1990), a capacity or capability (Collett, 2014; De Lemos, 1999) or a system, which comprises a complex set of factors contributing and influencing self-regulation in learning (Zimmerman, 1989).
2. Self-regulation is not a single measurable construct but refers to using various interrelated processes. Therefore, self-regulated learners use various (meta)cognitive, motivational, behavioural, and environmental processes – often simultaneously – to enhance learning, acquire new skills and knowledge, and at the same time regulate their behaviour, emotions, and thoughts. The definitional differences partly arise from the fact that despite the interplay of these processes, many of them are investigated in isolation, and the definitions are aligned with the specific objectives of each study. It is evident from the definitions that some researchers focus on "broad, sweeping, higher-order constructs (e.g., self-regulation) as well as narrower constructs (e.g., self-regulated learning) and lower-order constructs (e.g., metacognitive strategies, self-observation, automaticity)" (Zeidner et al., 2000, p. 750), which means that self-regulation is an umbrella concept that covers self-regulated learning, which in turn overarches various lower-level processes.
3. The differences in how self-regulation is defined and conceptualised are partly caused by the fact that self-regulation is studied from various perspectives. In other words, the definitions: a) vary based on the theoretical perspective that one takes (see Chapter

2.1.2 for details) and b) depend on the type of study being conducted (for more information, see Chapter 2.1.3).

4. Regardless of their theoretical focus, self-regulated learners share the following characteristics: a) are active participants in their own learning process, b) adjust their emotions, thoughts, and actions as needed in a given situation, c) their behaviour is goal-oriented, d) they consciously use specific strategies to attain these set goals, e) they control, monitor, and evaluate their learning progress, and f) modify, adapt or change their behaviour and strategies to improve learning.
5. Self-regulation is a key to – academic – success and is an essential (pre)condition for studying successfully. As Schunk and Ertmer (2000, p. 632) emphasised, self-regulation "has both qualitative and quantitative aspects because it involves which processes students use, how frequently they use them, and how well they employ them."

Boekaerts and Niemivirta (2000) perceive this definitional complexity as useful, as it is possible to break down self-regulation into manageable units or subsystems to make the investigation of the issue more comprehensive. However, it is worth noting that, apart from these differences, the main components are essentially the same; thus, (meta)cognitive, motivational and behavioural points of view are taken into account in line with the influence of the learning environments. Therefore, it is possible to classify the previously conducted self-regulation studies around one or more of these – overlapping – categories: a) (meta)cognition-centred studies, b) motivation-centred studies, and c) behaviour-centred studies (Yang, 2005).

Cognition-centred self-regulation studies investigate the learners' use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, such as setting goals, planning how to achieve them, monitoring the learning task, using learning strategies to solve particular problems (Cohen, 2014), repeating and storing the information (Chamot, 2008) and evaluating one's performance (Shunk, 1996).

Motivation-centred studies attempt to explain self-regulated learning on the basis of the student's motivations. Using a particular self-regulated strategy alone is insufficient; students must be motivated to control their learning process (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). Therefore, motivation-centred self-regulatory studies aim to investigate the following motivational dimensions: the students' goal orientation (Zimmermann, 1989), self-efficacy belief (Bandura, 1986), task value (Pintrich, 1999) or anxiety (Zimmermann, 1989), which are in constant interaction with – and form an indispensable part of – self-regulated behaviour.

The roles of students' attributions, intrinsic motivation, goal orientation, and self-efficacy beliefs are further discussed in sub-chapter 2.2.

As Yang (2005) highlighted, some researchers focus on the importance of the behavioural aspects of self-regulation due to the fact that cognition and motivation do not invariably result in tangible actions or behaviours. Self-regulated learners take responsibility and control their learning over a long period of time. These studies explore the students' ability to resist temptations such as watching television, playing online games, going out with friends and other sources of distraction to control their learning. In addition, self-regulated learners seek help and assistance more often when needed and consciously regulate their learning environment; thus, they seek quiet places. According to Zimmermann and Martinez-Pons (1986), self-regulated learners – in terms of behaviour – select, organise and construct their social and physical environment to optimise their learning.

In line with Kormos and Csizér's (2014) definition, the term self-regulation is used in the current dissertation to refer to "self-regulatory control that involves the use of strategies which are largely conscious processes that students apply to control their learning" (p. 279). Therefore, a self-regulated language learner in the following can be characterised as a learner who takes initiative in pursuing learning objectives and thereby actively manages the complete language acquisition process from cognitive, motivational, and behavioural standpoints (Zeidner et al., 2000). Therefore, the concept of self-regulated language learning is viewed as a construct composed of foundational elements like motivation, cognition, metacognition, and behaviour. However, the constitution and interplay of these elements are influenced by external factors, including environmental circumstances (such as school, home, and library settings) and social influences (like parents, peers, teachers, and friends). These external factors intricately shape how the building blocks of self-regulated language learning manifest and interact within an individual's learning journey.

2.1.2 Models of self-regulated learning

Several theoretical models of self-regulated learning have emerged in the literature over the last 40 years (e.g., Boekaerts, 1999; Pintrich, 2000; Schmitz & Wiese, 2006; Zimmerman, 1989, 2000, 2009). Each model outlines various processes and stages learners go through while being engaged in a learning task and reflects a slightly different theoretical perspective (Collett, 2014). For example, phenomenologists (McCombs, 1989) focus on the students' self-concepts. According to McCombs (1989), "self-regulation develops naturally with the development of self-concepts and self-processes such as self-awareness, self-

monitoring, and self-evaluation" (p. 71). Constructivists (Paris & Byrnes, 1989) assume that the environment around the learner and the learner's prior experiences are essential in self-regulated learning, whereas attribution theorists (Schunk, 1996) examine how students view the cause of their learning events.

As a concept, self-regulation has been mostly influenced by Bandura's (1986) socio-cognitive theory. Pintrich's (2000) and Zimmerman's (2000) models – the general models of self-regulated learning – are both based on socio-cognitive theory. Within these models, self-regulation is conceived as a dynamic interplay encompassing an individual's personality, actions, and the environment. Presented below are the most popular and extensively employed self-regulation models.

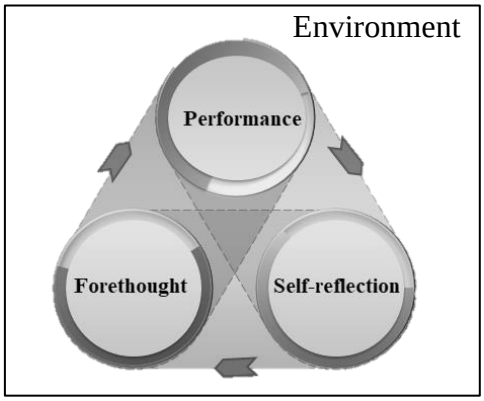
Zimmerman (1989, 2000, 2009) – one of the contributors of self-regulation research – developed three models over the years. His initial model consisted of three influencing processes consistent with Bandura's (1986) social-cognitive learning theory. In his first model, known as the *Triadic Model of Self-regulated Learning*, Zimmerman (1989) established the interaction between behavioural, environmental, and covert self-regulation. As Zimmerman (1989) pointed out, "students can be described as self-regulated to the degree that they are metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviourally active participants in their own learning process" (p. 329).

His second model, the cyclical phases model (2000, see Figure 2), conceptualises self-regulation as a process with forethought, performance or volitional, and self-reflection phases. However, the sub-processes belonging to each phase were given visual representation only in Zimmerman and Campillo's (2003) work. The list of sub-processes underwent some further changes – some new metacognitive and volitional strategies were added to the performance phase – and the model achieved its current form only in 2009 (Zimmerman & Moylan, 2009).

The current form of Zimmerman's model (see Figure 3) still consists of three basic phases and their underlying subprocesses, such as self-regulated strategies and tools. The forethought phase is characterised by goal setting and strategic planning and involves all the self-motivation beliefs, such as self-efficacy, outcome expectations, task interest/value and goal orientation which take place prior to the activity. The performance phase, occurring during learning efforts, incorporates everything related to self-control, such as the chosen learning strategy, time management, handling stress, imagination and attention regulation, environmental structuring, and all the self-observation strategies that affect attention and performance.

Figure 2

Zimmerman's (2000) Self-regulation Model



Note. Based on Zimmerman (2000).

Last but not least, the self-reflection phase includes all the strategies of self-judgement (such as self-evaluation and causal attribution) and self-reaction (such as self-satisfaction, comparison of the final results with initially set goals), which follow the performance efforts and determine the learner's reaction to the whole experience, which, in turn, influences the subsequent learning efforts (forethought phase), thus completing the self-regulatory cycle. To sum up, Zimmerman conceptualised self-regulated learning as a dynamic, cyclical, and multi-layer process influenced by social and environmental factors. According to Zimmerman and Moylan (2009), a learner must complete multiple cycles of the aforementioned model to attain a goal.

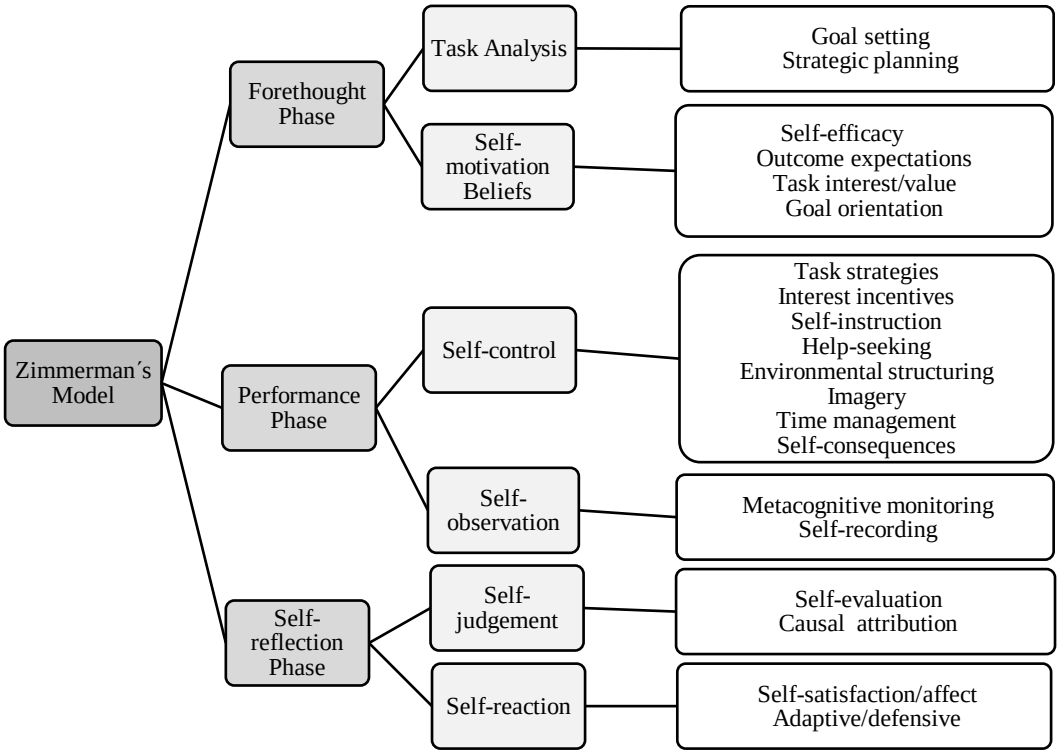
Another self-regulation model, similar to the above-described Zimmerman's models, was developed by Pintrich. Pintrich's (2000) model is based on social-cognitive theory as well, and in his model, self-regulation processes "are mediators between personal and contextual characteristics and actual achievement or performance" (p. 453). Pintrich's (2000) model identified four phases within the self-regulatory process: 1) planning, 2) self-monitoring, 3) control, and 4) reflection or evaluation. Each of these phases is further structured into four distinct domains of regulation: cognition, motivation/affect, behaviour and context. He posits that the four phases reflect an ordered sequence learners go through while carrying out specific tasks and occur simultaneously and dynamically, producing various interactions between the diverse processes and components.

A structurally and content-wise different model is Boekaers's (1999) three-layered model of self-regulated learning. This model stands out as one of the few hierarchical models available. The inner layer of her model represents the regulation of processing modes (specifically, selecting and applying cognitive strategies), a core ability upon which the other

layers are built. The middle layer represents the regulation of the learning process, which involves using metacognitive knowledge and skills to direct one's learning (skillful coordination and organisation of diverse lower-level cognitive strategies). The outer layer of the model represents the regulation of self. It involves motivational regulation (including the selection of learning goals, task significance, expectations, needs, and personal resources), which consequently affects metacognitive and cognitive skills. Boekaerts (1999) asserts that acquiring competencies across each of the three layers in her proposed self-regulation model is essential to becoming a proficient self-regulated learner.

Figure 3

Zimmerman and Moylan's (2009) Self-regulation Model's Subprocesses



Note. Based on Zimmerman and Moylan (2009).

The last model presented in this dissertation is the one proposed by Efklides (2011), which started to gain increased recognition only in recent years (Jiang & Kleitman, 2015). She developed the *Metacognitive and Affective Model of Self-Regulated Learning* (MASRL), which briefly aims to demonstrate how metacognition, cognition, and affect interact at a macro-level or at a micro-level as a person works on a task. Therefore, the model consists of two levels: 1) person level and 2) task×person level. The person level of self-regulated learning or "macrolevel" (Efklides, 2011, p. 6) contains person characteristics (i.e., motivation, self-concept, affect, ability, control beliefs, metacognitive knowledge, and

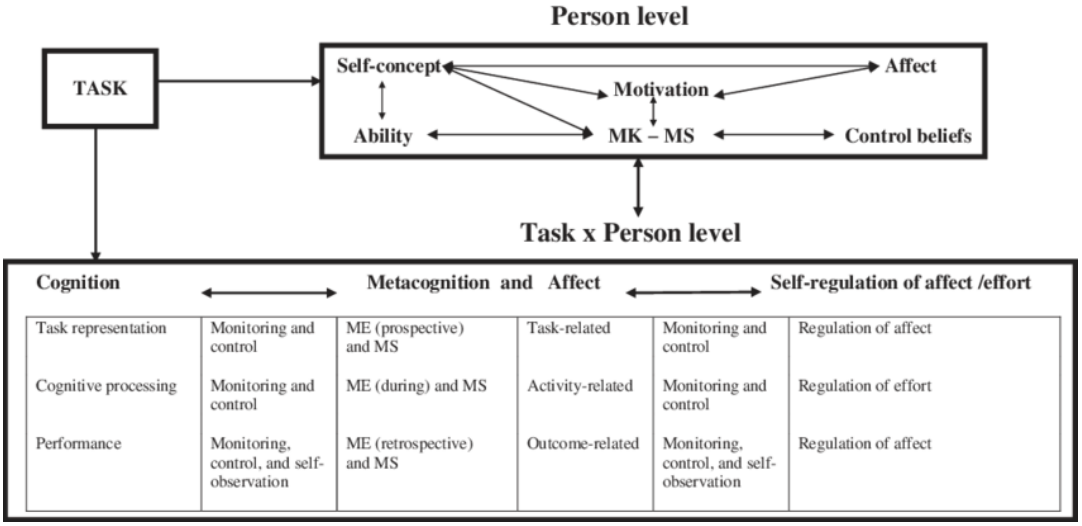
metacognitive skills), along with their diverse interconnections. These variables constitute top-down influences on self-regulation. As she stated, at this level, the specific task is viewed in general (e.g., self-efficacy in mathematics, self-concept in language learning) and leads "to decisions regarding engagement with a particular task and top-down self-regulation" (p. 10). In the task×person level or "microlevel" (Efklides, 2011, p. 6), various interactions occur between the type of task and person-level characteristics. These task-specific processes are described as having bottom-up influences on self-regulated learning. She gave the following example for easier comprehension:

> For example, one may start with the belief that a problem can be easily solved but, while working on it, because of the experienced feeling of difficulty, give up the effort to solve it. These subjective experiences take the form of ME [metacognitive experiences - author's comment] and/or affective reactions (e.g., positive or negative affect) as the person works on the task. […] The Person and the Task × Person levels interact and inform each other so that what is specific and transient at the Task × Person level may feed back and inform the more stable person characteristics and vice versa. (p. 10)

The MASRL model involves three phases in task processing: 1) the task representation phase (beginning task processing), 2) the cognitive processing phase (during performance), and 3) the performance phase (after performing the task). In each of these phases, metacognition plays a role in controlling and monitoring. For the interaction of the two levels and various processes, see Figure 4.

Figure 4

The MASRL Model



Note. Adopted from Efklides (2011). ME = metacognitive experiences; MK = metacognitive knowledge; MS = metacognitive skills. Permission has been granted by Taylor & Francis. www.tandfonline.com

Based on the above-described models, it is evident that:

1. There are several self-regulation models present in the literature, and each model has its own unique perspective on how individuals regulate their behaviour. There is no universal model that could be applied to all learning situations. The models are mainly criticised for "not sufficiently reflecting the real examined phenomena of self-regulated learning occurring in a particular context, and in certain situations to specific participants" (Jakešová & Kalenda, 2015, p. 187).
2. Many self-regulation models focus on individual-level processes and do not account for the broader social, cultural, and environmental factors that can influence behaviour. However, self-regulation cannot be understood in isolation from the social and environmental contexts in which it occurs. Overall, contextual factors play an important role in shaping self-regulation (Zimmerman, 2000), and models of self-regulation should take these factors into account in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how individuals regulate their behaviour.
3. The above-described models – and those not mentioned here – can be categorised into *process-models* (e.g., Efklides, 2011; Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman, 1989; 2000; 2009) and *component-models* (e.g., Boekaerts, 1999). Wirth and Leutner (2008) described the main differences in the following way. While component models describe self-regulated learning "in terms of different learner competencies that foster self-regulated learning and that are considered as relatively enduring attributes of the person" (p. 102), process-models "aim to describe the (ideal) process of self-regulated learning in terms of the properties of a series of phases or events" (p. 103).

As the present dissertation aims to investigate how a chosen language learning context, i.e., home(schooling) environment, influences the self-regulation of English language learners in Hungary, it will use Pintrich's (2000) model of self-regulated learning as a theoretical framework. The main reason for choosing this model, in addition to the fact that it has been applied extensively in developmental research, is that it builds on Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, thus emphasising the dynamic triadic interaction of personal factors, behaviour, and environment. As the study aims to investigate self-regulated language learning at home from different perspectives (conventional school students studying at home, parents who homeschool their children and homeschooled students), Pintrich's (2000) model seems to be the best choice as it views self-regulation processes as "mediators between personal and contextual characteristics and actual achievement or performance" (p. 453). Moreover, from a social cognitive perspective, self-regulation is situation-specific – a theory on which the

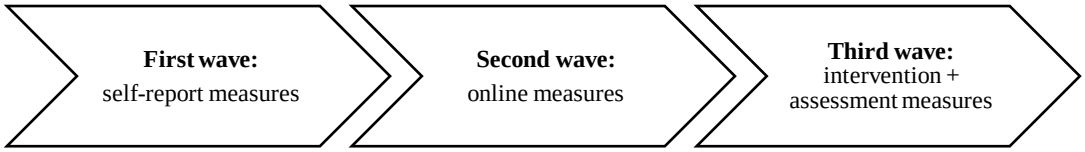
current dissertation is based – meaning that self-regulated strategy use varies from task to task. As a result, students do not uniformly employ self-regulation across all aspects of their learning. This assertion is echoed by various researchers (Booth et al., 2018; Davis et al., 2020; McInerney & King, 2018; Weinstein et al., 2011) who emphasise the idea that the level of involvement in self-regulation fluctuates across diverse learning domains. This idea further highlights the dynamic character of self-regulation as it flexibly adapts to the unique demands and distinct requirements of varying learning environments.

2.1.3 Measuring self-regulated learning

As highlighted in the aforementioned review, there are several aspects of self-regulated learning that are not observable, and this contributes to the complexity of conducting research in the field of self-regulation (Anthony et al., 2013). Therefore, it is not surprising that several instruments were developed throughout the years. Panadero et al. (2016), in their review, concluded that self-regulated learning measures developed in three major waves (see Figure 5). The first wave is characterised by self-report measurements like questionnaires, surveys, and interviews and relies on students' narratives and honesty in self-reporting. The second wave measured self-regulated learning as a process, relying on thinking-aloud protocols, traces, and observations of overt behaviour. The latest wave involves measures that combine assessment and act as an intervention (e.g., learning diaries).

Figure 5

Historical Development of Self-regulated Learning Measurements



Note. Based on Pandero, Klug, and Järvelä (2016).

Once researchers have determined their interest – the self-regulation skills and behaviours they aim to research – they must choose among various data collection methods and tools. The classification of self-regulation measures presented in this dissertation is the one proposed by Winne and Perry (2000) because it represents different divisions and pinpoints the difficulties researchers face when researching self-regulation. They classified self-regulation measures into two categories: event measures and aptitude measures. Event measures view self-regulated learning as a situation-specific event with a beginning and an

end or, in other words, preceded by a prior event and followed by a subsequent event. In contrast, aptitude measures view self-regulated learning as "a relatively enduring attribute of a person that predicts future behavior" (p. 534). Table 2 below provides a summary of the main self-regulated learning measures according to Winne and Perry's classification.

Measuring self-regulated learning as an event

Winne and Perry (2000) focused on the following event measures in their article:

- *Think-aloud measures* are used during task performance and usually ask participants to verbalise their thoughts while engaged in an activity.
- *Error detection tasks* – as their name suggests – are used to examine whether the participants detect an error that was placed in the task by the researchers in advance and to observe how the participants react to these detected errors.
- *Trace methodologies* focus on so-called traces, which are "observable indicators about cognition that students create as they engage with a task" (p. 551). Students use strategies to organise and regulate their learning by underlining and highlighting some key points, note taking, adding additional labels and comments, and creating summaries.
- *Observations of performance* are used by researchers to observe the self-regulated behaviour of participants in various contexts for learning. Observers carefully watch the participants and record the frequency of observed student behaviours as well as verbal (questions, verbal expressions) and non-verbal cues or signals (gestures, facial expressions, body language).

Table 2

Classification of Self-regulated Learning Measures

Measuring self-regulated learning as an aptitude:	Measuring self-regulated learning as an event:
Self-Report Questionnaires	Think Aloud Measures
Structured Interviews	Error Detection Tasks
Teacher Judgments	Trace Methodologies
	Observations of Performance

Note. Based on Winne and Perry (2000).

Measuring self-regulated learning as an aptitude

Up to the present time, questionnaires remain the most commonly employed tools for assessing self-regulated learning (Montalvo & Torres, 2004). The following self-report questionnaires of self-regulated learning are described below:

- the *Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire* (MLSQ; Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, & McKeachie, 1991),
- the *Self-Regulation Questionnaire* (SRQ; Brown, Miller, & Lawendowski, 1999),
- the *Learning and Study Strategies Inventory* (LASSI; Weinstein & Schulte, 1987).

Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) was developed by Pintrich et al. (1991). It is mainly based on Pintrich's model of self-regulated learning (see Chapter 2.1.2). The MSLQ is a "self-report instrument designed to assess college students' motivational orientations and their use of different learning strategies for a college course" (p. 2). Altogether, there were 81 items on the original version. It consisted of two main sections, a motivation section (31 items) and a learning strategies section (31 +19 items). The learning strategies scale addresses five "cognitive and metacognitive" strategies: rehearsal, elaboration, organisation, critical thinking, and metacognitive self-regulation. The additional 19 items were "resource management strategies": managing time and the study environment, effort regulation, peer learning, and help-seeking. The Cronbach's alphas of the scales ranged from 0.52 (help-seeking) to 0.93 (self-efficacy for learning).

Eight years later, Brown et al. (1999) constructed the *Self-Regulation Questionnaire* (SRQ). The original model was designed as a behavioural model of addiction, later adapted to the educational context. Initially, it consisted of 63 items and each of the seven scales contained nine items: 1) informational input, 2) self-evaluation, 3) instigation to change, 4) search for alternatives, 5) planning for change, 6) implementation of strategies for change, and 7) goal attainment evaluation plan. Based on their study conducted with 391 American undergraduate students aged 17 to 24, Carey et al. (2004) proposed a shorter 31-item version of the SRQ. They investigated the psychometric properties of the original SRQ, and their analysis yielded a single-factor structure. This led to the development of the 31-item questionnaire, the *Short Self-Regulation Questionnaire* (SSRQ), which demonstrated good internal consistency ($\alpha = .92$) and correlated highly with the original SRQ questionnaire ($r = .96$).

The first version of the *Learning and Study Strategies Inventory* (LASSI) was developed by Weinstein et al. (1987) and consisted of 77 items. LASSI was revised in 2002, and three additional items were added to the questionnaire (Weinstein et al., 2002), while the

third, most recent edition of the LASSI (Weinstein et al., 2016) consisted of 60 items and ten subscales. All three versions measure various components of strategic learning: *skill* (information processing, selecting main ideas, and test strategies), *will* (attitude, motivation, and anxiety), and *self-regulation* (concentration, time management, self-testing, and using academic resources).

Self-report questionnaires have many advantages, as they are easy to design, administer, and score (Winne & Perry, 2000). Many researchers, however, realised that these measures "are subject to personal bias, and as a result, it is important to provide an alternative perspective, such as that of a parent or teacher" (DiBenedetto & Zimmerman, 2013, p. 32). The following measures were developed to address this limitation – as they rely on multiple sources of information – and help to triangulate the findings:

- the *Self-regulated Learning Interview Schedule* (SRLIS) + the *Rating Student Self-Regulated Learning Outcomes: A Teacher Scale* (RSSRL) - Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1988),
- the *Self-Regulation Strategy Inventory* (SRSI), which includes a self-report (SRSI – SR; Cleary, 2006) measure, a teacher rating scale (SRSI – TRS; Cleary & Callan, 2014), and a parent rating scale (SRSI – PRS; Chen et al., 2015).

Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986, 1988) were the first researchers to measure self-regulated learning through structured interviews. They created the so-called *Self-regulated Learning Interview Schedule* (SRLIS). Participants were given six fictional tasks under six different learning contexts: in classroom situations, at home, when completing writing assignments outside class, when completing mathematics assignments outside class, when preparing for and taking tests, and when poorly motivated. The following example was given for the home learning context: "Most students find it necessary to complete some assignments or prepare themselves for class at home. Do you have any particular methods for improving your study at home?" (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1988, p. 285). The responses were scored quantitatively in three ways:

1. *strategy use* – whether participants use one of the 14 defined self-regulated learning classes or not, therefore scored dichotomously by the researcher
2. *strategy frequency* – the number of times a strategy has been mentioned by the participant in his or her answer in the six contexts scored by the researcher
3. *strategy consistency score* – this score is estimated by the participants based on their answers; participants were asked to rate on a 4-point scale (1 = seldom, 2 =

occasionally, 3 = frequently, and 4 = most of the time) how consistently they use the mentioned self-regulated learning strategy

In order to validate the SRLIS, Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1988) developed the *Rating Student Self-Regulated Learning Outcomes: A Teacher Scale* (RSSRL). The RSSRL measures the "students' use of self-regulated learning strategies that are readily observable in school or the immediate outcomes of strategy use (e.g., completing assignments on time or being prepared for class)" as well as "the motivational dimension of self-regulated learning: intrinsic interest in academic tasks" (p. 285). All 12 items were responded to on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1988) concluded that there is a correlation (r = .70) between the students' interview responses and the teachers' ratings.

The *Self-Regulation Strategy Inventory – Self-Report* (SRSI-SR), developed by Cleary (2006), is a self-report questionnaire that tries to assess the frequency of regulatory behaviour as students prepare for a science test. Students are asked to rate how often they use certain self-regulatory strategies described in items using a seven-point Likert scale from 1 (never) to 7 (always). To supplement the student data, two additional instruments were also developed. The *Self-Regulation Strategy Inventory – Teacher Rating Scale* (SRSI-TRS) was developed by Cleary and Callan (2014) and aimed to capture the frequency of various observable self-regulatory behaviours in the classroom: help-seeking behaviours, self-motivation tactics, and organisation behaviour. Moreover, Chen et al. (2014) developed the 23-item *Parent Rating Scale of Self-Regulation Strategy Inventory* (SRSI-PRS) to measure student self-regulatory behaviour at home. Parents were asked to rate the frequency with which their children engage in help-seeking at home, managing the environment, and various maladaptive regulatory behaviours. An example item from the *Parent Rating Scale* is, "My child rewrites class notes to make sure they are neat and organized" or "My child makes sure no one disturbs him or her during study time."

To summarise, aptitude measures "ask respondents to generalize their actions across situations rather than referencing singular and specific learning events while learners experience them" (Winne & Perry, 2000, p. 542). Although the use of event measurements could provide useful guidance for future research, the current dissertation uses only aptitude measures of self-regulated learning: self-report questionnaires and semi-structured retrospective interviews with homeschooled students and their parents. These measures do not examine self-regulated learning while students are engaged in a specific task. Instead, they

focus on how students rate (questionnaires) or verbalise (interviews) their regulatory actions and beliefs.

Based on the instruments measuring self-regulated learning, it is crucial to clarify the emergence and development of self-regulation skills and examine what the literature says about its manifestation in the early years. Thus, the following chapter will offer a possible answer to the following questions: At what age do children develop self-regulation learning techniques? What does self-regulation mean in the early years? How should parents promote self-regulated learning in their children? Why is it essential to support self-regulation development in early childhood?

2.1.4 Self-regulation development in education

It is hard to think of students achieving academic success without being self-regulated learners (Baumeister et al., 1998; Zimmerman, 2000); therefore, it is important to understand whether it can be taught or not. This question has been researched for many decades, and the available literature suggests that self-regulation can be enhanced (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005; Schunk & Ertmer, 2000; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1994).

Albert and Csizér (2022) emphasised that research on individual differences (IDs) and the influence of these differences on the learning process and outcomes are frequently researched, yet research on self-regulation differences is limited. An issue that researchers usually neglect is the "trait- and state-characteristics of ID factors" (p. 306). Csizér and Albert (2021) pinpointed that traits are mostly stable and consistent dispositions of individuals and remain unchanged, while states are dynamic and change rapidly depending on contextual influences. The available literature suggests that self-regulation can be conceptualised as both a trait and a state (Winne & Perry, 2000). Self-regulation as a trait refers to individual differences in the overall capacity to regulate and control one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. It reflects a relatively stable characteristic that influences an individual's ability to manage their actions and achieve long-term goals. On the other hand, self-regulation as a state refers to the temporary fluctuations in an individual's self-regulatory abilities within specific situations or contexts. As discussed in the measures of self-regulation (Chapter 2.1.3), both ability measures and event measures also reflect this distinction. By employing both types of measures, a comprehensive understanding of self-regulation as both a consistent trait and a situation-specific state can be attained. However, researchers face significant challenges, particularly disagreements on contentious topics, such as self-regulation development, promotion, and enhancement.

Some researchers contend that regulatory processes develop before birth and evolve over time (Posner & Rothbart, 2000), while others think that "the first signs of self-regulation and metacognition are present in the early stages of life" (Moreira et al., 2022, p. 2). Others have indicated that "self-regulation develops naturally with the development of self-concepts and self-processes such as self-awareness, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation" (McCombs, 1989, p. 71). This means that as the child develops and grows, his or her gained information about the self from the interactions with physical objects and other people "becomes more consolidated as well as more differentiated into areas or domains of self-knowledge" (p. 64). McCombs (1989) thinks that self-regulation gradually emerges at around eight years of age. During this period, children initiate the formation of their self-system processes and self-perceptions. Consequently, they should be offered positive reinforcement and encouragement through observations, direct guidance, and external feedback.

Kopp (1982) argued that self-regulation develops in infants at approximately 36 months of age and represents an outgrowth and internalisation of self-control. According to her perspective, this age does not indicate maturity in self-regulatory development; instead, it signifies a developmental milestone. At this point, children exhibit behaviours that involve distinct self-regulatory processes. A similar conclusion was drawn by Whitebread et al. (2007, p. 444), who conducted a classroom observation study. They concluded that three- to five-year-old students demonstrated early attempts at regulation. More precisely, "regulating the cognition or behaviour of other children in the group (other-regulation) or those related to group construction of a task (shared regulation)" emerged from their analyses.

As Schunk (1989) put it, "self-regulation does not automatically develop as people become older, nor is it passively acquired from the environment" (p. 99). He argues that the sub-processes change during development, and the interventions vary in terms of their effect on the acquisition of self-regulation skills. He listed modelling, social comparisons, reward contingencies, goal setting, and attributions as the most influential procedures that help students react to their own learning progress and regulate future behaviour. Addressing the same issue, Schunk and Zimmerman (1997) have argued that self-regulation embodies the ultimate aim of learning. They introduced a four-level theory outlining the progression of self-regulation development. According to their theory, students advance through four consecutive levels of skill acquisition: observation, emulation, self-control, and self-regulation. In the initial *observational level*, students observe a proficient model. *Emulation*, the subsequent level, involves students mimicking the demonstrated skill while receiving feedback, praise, and guidance from the model to ensure proper execution. Moving on to the *self-control level*,

students attempt to perform the skill independently, under structured conditions, and in a controlled setting. Last but not least, the *self-regulation level* emerges when students endeavour to apply the skill in novel situations, under varying conditions, and with new individuals. Thus, self-regulation constitutes the final, last phase of development in becoming a self-regulated learner.

Although the various levels partly overlap, the four levels represent a shift from social sources to self-sources. Meaning that "the first two levels (observational, emulative) rely primarily on social factors, whereas the second two (self-controlled, self-regulated) depend more on influence by the learner" (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007, p. 12). For an extensive overview, see DiBenedetto (2011) – one of Zimmerman's students – who wrote an article about how Zimmerman himself uses these four levels to educate his doctoral students. Zimmerman's (2001) theory was further supported by Barkley (2012), who argued that self-regulation is at first external and, with the help of the environment, becomes internal through *internalisation*. Therefore, from a self-regulation developmental point of view, teacher and parental behaviour and involvement (Gao & Luo, 2022; Pino-Pasternak & Whitebread, 2010) need special attention.

To sum up, an issue most researchers seem to agree on is that self-regulation develops slowly. McClelland et al. (2017, p. 280) identified two important "turning points" in the development of self-regulation: 1) transition to schooling and 2) adolescence as a turning point for self-regulation. McClelland's team identified these points in a student's life because, during these events, students go through various biological, cognitive, emotional, and social development and changes, which influence students' self-regulated behaviour in either positive or negative ways. Many researchers agree with their view and think that the primary setting in which self-regulation development should happen is the school context (Zimmerman, 2008). Unfortunately, the theoretical knowledge and the acknowledged importance of self-regulation do not always translate into the everyday classroom – teaching and learning – practice. However, with so much data available, it is crucial to analyse how we can benefit and take advantage of all this information.

2.2 The role of motivation in self-regulated learning

This chapter specifically focuses on the relationship between self-regulation and motivation. As Dörnyei and Skehan (2003, p. 612) pinpointed, "self-regulation and motivation are inextricably bound together, as they both concern the antecedents of increased learner achievement." The present chapter will review the most important theories of

motivation and give an overview of how these various theories relate to self-regulation research. Expectancy-value theories, goal theories and self-determination theories will be further discussed throughout the following sections, and each theory will be linked to self-regulation. I felt that an analysis of this connection between motivation and self-regulation could not be omitted from the present dissertation for multiple reasons. First, the quantitative and qualitative research instruments used in different studies include questions on participants' motivations; therefore, a short review of our existing knowledge of motivation theories is justifiable to interpret the main findings. Second, motivation research and self-regulation research are inseparable because motivation interweaves self-regulation on multiple levels. On the one hand, we can talk about motivational self-regulation, how an individual uses regulation to manage or sustain one's motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). On the other hand, motivation influences how an individual engages in self-regulatory behaviours (Zimmerman, 2000). Therefore, motivation is vital to understanding how self-regulation works. Last but not least, as Cohen and Dörnyei (2002, p. 172) pointed out, "motivation is often seen as the key learner variable because, without it, nothing much happens."

2.2.1 Expectancy-value theories

All expectancy-value theories are based on the expectancy-value framework, simply expressed with the following formula: expectancy x value = motivation. The motivation to perform a task is the product of (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011):

- one's *expectancy for success* in a given task (an individual believes that he/she will be successful)
- the *task value*, so the value/importance/interest one attaches to a task

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) make a distinction between three sub-theories within the expectancy-value framework:

Attribution theory was developed by Weiner (1986). The theory posits that people make causal explanations (attributions) for their perceived causes of success and failure after an event. These causal explanations for the results (let it be personal or environmental) have an influence on the individual's subsequent behaviour. According to Weiner (1986), these attributions have three dimensions: *locus, stability,* and *controllability* dimension, which influence emotions and, in turn, motivation to perform future tasks. *Locus* refers to whether the perceived cause is internal (comes from within the individual, e.g., lack of effort or lack of ability as the cause of failure) or external (comes from the outside, e.g., task difficulty causing

failure or luck leading to success). The *stability* dimension refers to whether the cause is fixed or likely to change (temporary). Using the previous examples, therefore, effort is seen as an internal and unstable cause, ability is classified as internal and stable, luck is considered external and unstable, and task difficulty is an external and stable cause. Lastly, *controllability* – as its name suggests – refers to the individual's control over the cause. For instance, one has high control over effort and ability, while luck and task difficulty are out of one's control.

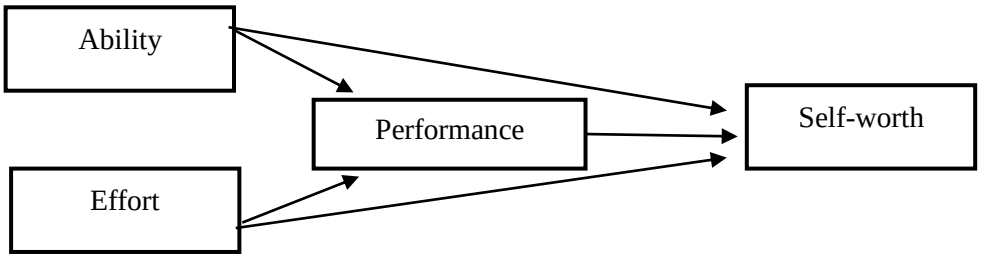
According to the *self-efficacy theory* – proposed by Bandura (1986) – motivation to perform a certain task depends on one's judgements about his or her abilities and competence. Bandura (1977, p. 193) makes a distinction between outcome expectancies or "a person's estimate that a given behavior will lead to certain outcomes", and efficacy expectations or "the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcomes." These self-judgements and expectations influence the individual's choice of activities, effort, and persistence they put into performing a task. Bandura posits that people with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to engage in various activities. In contrast, those with low self-efficacy tend to avoid specific tasks, lose faith easily, and are more likely to give up. Another important feature of the theory is that self-efficacy beliefs are based on four primary sources. The first and, at the same time, most influential sources are *performance accomplishments*. These are rooted in "personal mastery experiences," gained when an individual successfully conquers a challenging task. These successful experiences ensure that the person believes in his or her abilities. The second influencing sources are *vicarious experiences* or observations of success and failure of others. Witnessing someone similar to oneself accomplishing a task can heighten the observer's self-efficacy beliefs. Self-efficacy can also be influenced by *verbal persuasion*, so receiving positive feedback or encouragement from an influential or credible person. The fourth factor affecting self-efficacy is *emotional arousal*; thus, the better one feels (emotionally, physically, and psychologically) about themselves, the more accurately they will evaluate their personal abilities in a given situation.

Last but not least, the *self-worth theory* developed by Covington (1984) posits that "people are highly motivated to maintain a fundamental sense of personal value and worth, especially in the face of competition, failure and negative feedback" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 17). The theory has four main elements: *ability*, *effort*, *performance*, and *self-worth*. These four elements are arranged in a causal structure as the first three interact and influence each other to create an individual's level of self-worth (see Figure 6). Therefore, based on the

theory, self-worth is determined by self-evaluated efforts, abilities, and performance in an activity.

Figure 6

Schematic Figure of The Self-worth Model



Note. Based on Covington (1984).

Self-regulation vs expectancy-value theories

Many researchers throughout the years have emphasised that effective self-regulation requires not only learning goals (see goal theories in Chapter 2.2.2) but "a sense of self-efficacy (perceived competence) for learning, and positive attributions (perceived causes of outcomes) that enhance self-efficacy and motivation" (Schunk, 1996, p. 2). According to Bandura's (1986) social cognitive view, self-regulation consists of three sub-processes: self-observation, self-judgment, and self-reactions. Self-observation refers to examining one's behaviours, while self-judgement involves comparing one's behaviour with one's goal; therefore, this process offers information about progress. Self-reactions are basically (behavioural, personal, or environmental) responses to self-observations and self-judgements.

In the view of Bandura (1986), self-efficacy entails an individual's self-response to the possibility of engaging in a particular behaviour. Therefore, self-efficacy – "beliefs in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3) – also plays an important part in self-regulation. However, many students have inaccurate judgements about themselves, their skills, knowledge, and their performance. Hacker et al. (2008) call this phenomenon *calibration*. They define calibration as a "degree to which a person's perception of a performance corresponds with his or her actual performance" (p. 433). A series of studies conducted by Hacker (Hacker et al., 2000; Bol & Hacker, 2001) have reached the same conclusion regarding calibration accuracy. The outcomes from both studies suggest that students with lower achievements tend to exhibit overconfidence, while those with higher achievements often display underconfidence when

predicting and reflecting on exam outcomes. These states of overconfidence and underconfidence might negatively influence student self-regulation. Sandars and Cleary (2011, p. 883) suggest that students facing a discrepancy between their perceived and actual performance "either need to be able to generate informative internal feedback or to be given external feedback by tutors or teachers." Nevertheless, many learners who accurately assess their performance fail to take corrective measures and actions.

In addition, experiences (success or failure stories) are inseparable parts of these expectancy-value theories, and these past experiences have an influence on current (self-regulatory) behaviour and achievement. "People's perceptions of the causes of their behavior influence how they behave on future occasions" (Bandura, 1977, p. 107). Therefore, finding relevant and realistic causes for potential failure is a prerequisite for effective self-regulation.

2.2.2 Goal theories

As their name suggests, goal theories focus on goal setting as they are linked to task performance. Goal theories "propose that human action is triggered by a sense of purpose, and for action to take place, goals have to be set and pursued by choice" (Dörnyei & Shekan, 2003, p. 616). According to Locke et al. (1990) – the leading scholars of goal theories – human behaviour is regulated by goals. Two widely used theories belong here: the *goal-setting theory* (Locke et al., 1990) and the *goal-orientation theory* (Ames, 1992).

Simply put, Locke et al.'s (1990) *goal-setting theory* "seeks to explain differences in performance among individuals in terms of differences in goal attributes" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 20). Locke et al. (1981) defined the term goal as "what an individual is trying to accomplish; it is the object or aim of an action" (p. 126). Locke and Latham (2002) stated that core goal properties (specificity, challenge), goal moderators (ability, feedback, goal commitment, situational resources, self-efficacy, task complexity) and goal mediators (choice/direction, effort, persistence, strategies) influence performance and motivation which lead to better performance. To sum up, the theory posits that goal setting increases performance.

The *goal-orientation theory* developed by Ames (1992, p. 262) tries to explain student behaviour. Her theory makes a distinction between two contrasting goal orientations. *Mastery orientation* is based on the belief "that effort and outcome covary, and it is this attributional belief pattern that maintains achievement-directed behavior over time." Mastery orientation involves mastery goals focusing on 1) the intrinsic value of learning, 2) developing new skills, 3) improving competence, and 4) monitoring progress. A *performance-oriented student* only

wants to demonstrate ability, to outdo others, and so is led by performance goals. As Ames (1992, p. 262) emphasised, "especially important to a performance orientation is public recognition that one has done better than others or performed in a superior manner." Therefore, the most important thing for a performance-oriented student is to look smart.

Self-regulation vs goal theories

The review of self-regulated learning models (see Chapter 2.1.2) showed that self-regulation requires students to have goals (Zimmerman, 1989). For example, Zimmerman's model involves goals across all its phases: the forethought phase involves goal setting and strategic planning; in the performance phase, goals guide behaviour and attention and serve a motivational function; and during the self-reflection phase the student assesses whether their goals have been met and adjusts their actions to reach the intended objectives. As proposed by Zimmerman (2008), goal-setting is a crucial proactive source of academic self-regulation. According to Zimmerman (2008), effective goals are specific and proximal. *Proximal goals* can be achieved in a shorter time than longer-lasting or distal goals (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). *Effective goals* are also hierarchical (short-term vs long-term goals), congruent (goals coincide with one's and others' goals), and difficult. Locke et al. (1990) argue that students with challenging and ambitious goals are more inclined to self-regulate their learning than those who set easily attainable goals. Zimmerman (2008) also thinks that self-selected goals are more efficient in guiding self-regulation than those imposed externally. Therefore, the origin of the goals is another advantageous property of effective goals. Moreover, when talking about effective goals, he takes the issue of consciousness into account – the student is aware of an active goal. The last characteristic feature of effective goals involves focus, so whether the goal aims to enhance the learning process or focuses on performance outcome. Regarding the information mentioned above, it can be stated that self-regulation cannot be imagined without goals.

2.2.3 Self-determination theory

The last direction in motivation research presented in this dissertation is self-determination theory. According to the creators of this theory, "the fullest representations of humanity show people to be curious, vital, and self-motivated. At their best, they are agentic and inspired, striving to learn, extend themselves, master new skills, and apply their talents responsibly" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 68). Therefore, they contend that humans are born with intrinsic interests. Ryan and Deci (2000, p. 70) stated that even intrinsic motivation "requires

supportive conditions, as it can be fairly readily disrupted by various nonsupportive conditions." They listed tangible rewards, threats, deadlines, directives, pressured evaluations, and imposed goals as factors that diminish intrinsic motivation. In contrast, choice, opportunities for self-direction, acknowledgement of feelings, and activities that hold intrinsic interest catalyse intrinsic motivation.

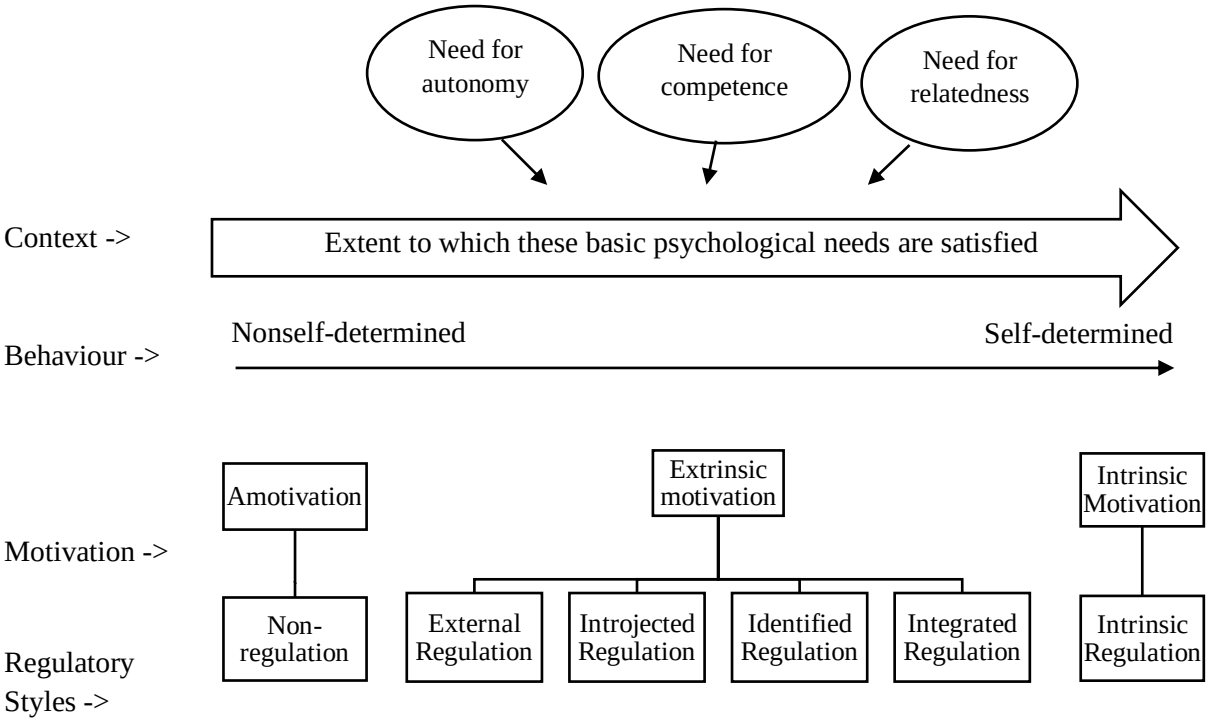
Deci and Ryan (1985) developed a motivation continuum ranging from amotivation to intrinsic motivation. As they stated:

> different motivations reflect differing degrees to which the value and regulation of the requested behavior have been internalized and integrated. Internalization refers to people's "taking in" a value or regulation, and integration refers to the further transformation of that regulation into their own so that, subsequently, it will emanate from their sense of self. (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 71)

Figure 7 presents the different types of motivation as proposed by Ryan and Deci (2000) with the corresponding (self) regulatory styles. The following description of each regulatory style is based on Ryan and Deci (2000), while language learning examples are taken from Noels et al. (1999).

Figure 7

Types of Motivation with Corresponding Regulatory Styles



Note. Based on Ryan and Deci (2000).

Amotivation is the least self-determined form of motivation. It is "the state of lacking the intention to act" (p. 72). External regulation is performed only to satisfy an external demand, avoid punishment, or get an external reward. For example, a student who studies a foreign language solely to secure course credit or to receive a teacher's praise. Introjected regulation is a "relatively controlled form of regulation in which behaviors are performed to avoid guilt or anxiety or to attain ego enhancements such as pride" (p. 72). Despite its internal origin, introjected regulation's perceived source of motivation remains external. An example of this type of regulation is a student who does his or her language homework only to stop feeling guilty or learns a language assignment to impress others.

Identified regulation is a more autonomous and self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. This emerges when an individual places value on an activity and considers it personally significant. For instance, engaging in a hobby for its intrinsic worth. Integrative regulation, on the other hand, takes place when identified regulations are assimilated to the self, meaning "they have been evaluated and brought into congruence with one's other values and need" (p. 73). Integrated regulations are similar to intrinsic motivation, although "still considered extrinsic because they are done to attain separable outcomes rather than for their inherent enjoyment" (p. 73). Lastly, individuals guided by intrinsic regulation are innately motivated, undertaking activities for the sheer sake of their inherent satisfaction, enjoyment, and pleasure. An example of this type of motivation – taken from Noels et al. (1999) – is a student who enjoys finding a unique method to convey a thought in a foreign language.

Self-regulation vs self-determination theory

The essential point of self-determination theory is that people regulate themselves for various reasons, and therefore, it encompasses the complex nature of self-regulated learning. The more the basic psychological needs (autonomy, relatedness and competence) are met, the more intrinsic the regulation becomes. Based on the theory, intrinsic motivation requires autonomy, competence and relatedness supportive conditions for intrinsic regulation to take place. The theory posits that an intrinsically motivated person uses self-regulatory strategies and that motivation is an important prerequisite of self-regulated behaviour. Even Dörnyei (2005) noted that the field of language teaching and learning seems to be heading away from focusing on the teacher to the learner and their language learning processes. Ushioda (2003, p. 96) highlighted that motivation is no longer focusing on how we motivate our learners but on how we help them to motivate themselves and "to lead them to reflect on and evaluate their own achievements and learning experience in a constructive manner."

In conclusion, motivation and self-regulation are intertwined and have a substantial impact on learning performance. Both fields of study inform and impact one another. Motivation research sheds light on self-regulation, while self-regulation research adds to our understanding of motivation. The interaction of motivation and self-regulation is critical for improving learning outcomes and achieving peak performance.

2.3 Self-regulated language learning and the learning context

The influence of context on language learning has been a longstanding research area, evidenced by the extensive availability of data pertaining to diverse learning environments. The classroom setting represents only one context where foreign language learning might take place that can be supplemented by out-of-classroom or out-of-school learning (Benson, 2011). Moreover, there is growing evidence that "informal experiences outside the classroom may offer just as meaningful learning opportunities as the structured learning environment established within schools" (Sandberg et al., 2011, p. 1334). The following sections will start with a brief overview of the term learning context and narrow the focus section by section. At first, self-regulation beyond the classroom setting will be detailed, while the chapter will end with an analysis of the relationship between self-regulation and home context.

2.3.1 Definition of learning context

Fraser (1994) emphasised that each learning context can be characterised by physical and psychosocial components. The physical component includes all the physical aspects of an environment, such as space, furniture, light, sound, temperature, and access to learning resources. In contrast, the psychosocial component is the social environment, incorporating all the interactions between individuals within the given learning environments, such as students with students, students with teachers, and students with parents. These components supplement each other in creating a learning context that affects and optimises the ability of students to learn.

It has been highlighted repeatedly throughout the literature that powerful learning environments enhance and promote the acquisition of self-regulatory skills (Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman, 2000). According to Boekaerts (1996), educational psychologists started to study learning in context mainly because they realised that students' learning behaviour is highly situated. "Students' conceptual structures and their cognitive strategies are influenced by the environment in which they have been acquired", and "the social and cultural

environment in which learning processes take place is reciprocally affected by students' actions" (p. 100). Boekaerts (1996) was one of the first researchers to emphasise that this relationship between learning environments and self-regulated learning is bidirectional. The environment not only shapes self-regulation, but self-regulatory skills also shape the learning environment and "determines whether one considers that environment as instrumental to achieve the learning goals that one has set for oneself" (p. 454). The link between self-regulation and the learning environment is further supported by empirical evidence. Studies have shown that self-regulation can be influenced by the specific experiences and conditions students encounter in the learning environment (Blume et al., 2021). For example, a study conducted by Horvath et al. (2006) showed that classroom self-regulation varied depending on whether students worked on easier or more complex tasks or individually or in small groups, for instance. In summary, the relationship between the environment and self-regulation is reciprocal, with each influencing the other. A supportive and enriching learning environment can foster students' self-regulatory skills, while strong self-regulation empowers students to make the most of their learning environment.

Bronfenbrenner (1994) proposed a learning environment theory that comprises a set of complex layers of microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem "conceived as a set of nested structures, each inside the other like a set of Russian dolls" (p. 39). All these systems are believed to influence students' development, including learning and academic performance. Microsystem refers to the student's immediate environment and includes all the interactions and relationships students make with their direct setting (e.g., home, classroom). These relationships are bi-directional, meaning that not only is the child influenced by others, but the child is also capable of influencing other people. In the mesosystem, the person's microsystems are interconnected and influence each other; for example, parents and teachers interact with each other, which may influence the child's development. Thus basically, "a mesosystem is a system of microsystems" (p. 40). The exosystem includes social systems not directly involving the child, yet events within these settings indirectly affect their development. Thus, it influences the child through one of the microsystems. The following example was given by Guy-Evans (2020): "The parent might come home feeling stressed and have a short temper with the child due to something which happened in the workplace, resulting in negative consequences on development." The macrosystem represents the outermost layer and consists of cultural elements that affect a child's development, such as belief systems, socioeconomic status, customs, lifestyles, wealth, poverty, or ethnicity. Last but not least, the fifth level is known as the chronosystem.

This pertains to the temporal aspect of a student's development. It encompasses changes occurring over the child's lifetime within their environment, such as life events, shifts in family structure, personal experiences, and historical events.

According to Boekaerts (1996, p. 100), the shift toward the contextual approach changed the focus away from studying learning abilities and outcomes 1) to students' capacity to (self-) regulate their learning process and 2) to teachers' skills to create appropriate learning environments. Self-regulation is seen "not only to guide one's own learning during formal schooling, but also to educate oneself and up-date one's knowledge after leaving school" (p. 101). Therefore, many researchers see the primary goal of formal education in self-regulation development.

The subsequent chapters examine self-regulated learning first in the out-of-school context and then specifically in the home environment. As Csizér and Albert (2020) advised, it is not enough to focus on the characteristics of the students when trying to examine and explain individual differences. However, special attention must be paid "to describing the learning process and its effects. Moreover, if learning takes place in a classroom setting, the individual differences of language teachers and their effects on learning/teaching should also be explored" (p. 217). Therefore, the following chapters will consider the specificities and characteristics of each environment and the actors present in that specific environment.

2.3.2 Self-regulated language learning beyond the classroom setting

Throughout history, there have been many times when people did not have access to formal education or were unable to attend school for various reasons. Prior to the establishment of formal schools, children learned from their families and communities through practical activities and apprenticeships. In recent times, there has been a significant increase in access to education, particularly in developed countries. Compulsory education laws have been introduced in many countries, making it mandatory for children to attend school for a certain number of years. Today, technology has expanded the possibilities for learning beyond the classroom, with virtual classrooms and online learning platforms providing students with access to education from anywhere in the world (for a detailed overview, see Collins & Halverson, 2018).

Mainly because we live in a technology-rich world, a great deal of language learning takes place beyond the classroom. Sundqvist (2011, p. 107) uses the term "extramural English" to refer to "any type of contact that young people (learners) have with English outside the walls of the classroom." She highlighted that when speaking about extramural

activities, “no degree of deliberate intention to acquire English is necessary on the part of the learner, even though deliberate intention is by no means excluded from the concept.” Therefore, she uses it as an umbrella term for concepts such as “out-of-class” or “out-of-school” English, or “naturalistic” or even “self-directed naturalistic” learning of English.

It is not surprising that many students try to improve their foreign language proficiency beyond the school walls. There is a growing body of literature which examines technology-supported language learning, for example, the use of mobile technology in language learning (Stockwell, 2021), digital games as language learning tools (Chik, 2014), and internet-assisted language learning (Kanellopoulou & Giannakoulopoulos, 2021), in addition, there are studies which focus on specific online activities and their effect on language learning, for example, reading and writing online fanfiction (Black, 2006), watching English TV drama series (Wang, 2012) and YouTube videos (Wang & Chen, 2020), reading comic books (Karap, 2017), singing songs to facilitate language learning (Ludke et al., 2014), chatting online with other learners (Abdollah & Ahad, 2009), and using online dictionaries (Jin & Deifell, 2013).

In order to present and comprehend the situation of out-of-school language learning in Hungary – where the data collection takes place – the following paragraphs present some significant research results. In Hungary, teachers give homework (for an extensive overview, see Chapter 2.3.3.2) regularly to get students to work with the school material outside the classroom (Imre et al., 2021; Márton, 2019; Mihály, 2003, 2006). In addition to homework, students engage in various forms of independent language learning beyond the classroom. Gál (2015) conducted an interview study with Hungarian secondary and tertiary students and concluded that the majority of those interviewed students were not satisfied with the efficiency and effectiveness of language education in the Hungarian school system. As Öveges and Csizér (2018, p. 5) also pointed out in relation to English language teaching in Hungary, “various international surveys often present a negative picture of the language skills and language learning opportunities of our population.” However, the system-related requirements (e.g., it is a mandatory area of the school-leaving exam) make it necessary for students to acquire essential knowledge. In this case, students have several options; they can use the services of private teachers, attend organised language courses, or independently prepare and improve their proficiency.

Albert et al. (2018a) conducted a quantitative study investigating the framework and effectiveness of foreign language education in Hungary with a representative sample of 8131 students (7th graders: N = 3717, 11th graders: N = 4414). Their study revealed that a

considerable proportion of 11th graders (n = 1434) take extra lessons in at least one foreign language; therefore, participating in private lessons is especially prevalent in Hungary. Their results are consistent with those obtained by Médián-Szénay (2005), who found that every fourth student in Hungary sooner or later turns to a private teacher primarily because school language education does not meet their needs.

Józsa and Imre (2013) also conducted a questionnaire study with 11th-grade students (N = 119). Their results showed that Hungarian students are exposed to a lot of English while listening to music (98% of students), watching movies and using social media (67% of students), searching for information online (62% of students), playing various online games (51% of students), while talking to friends (39%), and reading books (35%). Only 1 per cent of students answered that they do not use English outside the classroom. One limitation of their study is that they predefined the extracurricular activities, leaving no room for participants to include additional activities on the list. As a result, the responses may not fully represent the complete spectrum of activities. Mezei (2012) avoided this shortcoming – providing a pre-prepared list of activities to choose from – in her dissertation. Her findings are in complete harmony with Józsa and Imre's (2013) findings. Mezei (2012) concluded that her study participants perceived themselves as self-regulated and autonomous due to their engagement in the aforementioned activities independently, without teacher involvement. For her participants, self-regulation and autonomy meant doing something alone and independently without the teacher.

Albert et al. (2018a; 2018b) also highlighted that coming into contact with the target language outside the classroom and increasing language proficiency can greatly contribute to positive language learning experiences. Their survey showed that both seventh-grade and eleventh-grade language learners in Hungary mostly listen to music in the foreign language they learn and watch movies, series or videos. Seventh-graders play computer games more often than eleventh-graders, while eleventh-graders visit various internet sites more often than their primary school peers. A somewhat complementary finding revealed that eleventh graders search for foreign language cultural content (e.g., movies, videos) more often than seventh graders attending primary school. This finding suggests that age and the length of the learning experience influence students' motivation and self-regulatory behaviour.

Creating links to the idea presented by Benson et al. (2001), it is important to acknowledge that self-regulation extends beyond managing learning strategies. It also involves skilfully managing a variety of learning materials. Benson et al. differentiate between two categories of these resources: conventional resources like books and modern

technology resources such as DVDs, computer applications, and video games. Considering Albert et al.'s (2018a, 2018b) discoveries, it is clear that these various resources, whether traditional or technological, have a noticeable impact on how language learners behave and their experiences beyond the classroom.

Several studies have also examined these links between technology-assisted self-regulated language learning strategies and learning performance. For example, Kormos and Csizér (2014, p. 275) conducted research on the possible links between various motivational characteristics and self-regulatory strategy use and "how the application of these strategies influences learners' independent use of traditional and computer-assisted learning resources outside the foreign language classroom." Their study involved 638 Hungarian language learners studying in different educational contexts: secondary schools, universities and colleges, and private language schools. The most significant conclusion that Kormos and Csizér (2014) drew from their study is that: 1) motivational variables have effects on autonomous learning by the mediating roles of self-regulatory strategies and 2) motivational variables alone (e.g., strong goals, positive future self-guides) without effective self-regulation are not enough to enhance autonomous learning behaviour.

Similar results were obtained by An et al. (2021, p. 2), who purposefully used the term technology-based self-regulated English learning strategies to "refer to specific actions taken by the learners to learn English or to enhance their English learning in technology-using conditions." In their recent study, which was based on expectancy-value theory (see Chapter 2.2.1), they aimed to investigate the possible links between language learning self-efficacy beliefs, enjoyment, technology-based self-regulated learning strategies, and learning outcomes, which in their study referred to the participants' obtained score in the *National College English Test-Band 4* (CET-4). A total of 525 undergraduate students from a university in Northern China, whose ages ranged from 17 to 25, participated in their study. Their findings showed, as hypothesised, that technology-based self-regulated learning strategies mediated the relationship between English learning enjoyment and learning outcomes (the obtained test score). This means that students who enjoy learning English are more likely to regulate their learning process and, in turn, improve student outcomes.

Kuure (2011) conducted a case study centred around Oskari, a 19-year-old Finnish individual who was preparing for his matriculation examination. The study focused on exploring Oskari's language learning activities facilitated by technology. Utilising a range of data sources, including video and audio recordings, interviews, computer logs, screenshots, and field notes, Kuure (2011) collected information about Oskari's computer usage patterns.

The findings indicated that Oskari primarily utilised his leisure time for engaging in online video games with his friends. These games provided him "an opportunity for language learning, not as an objective as such, but as a means for nurturing social relationships and participating in collaborative problem-solving and networking among peers" (pp. 45-46). Her results corroborate the ideas of Lai and Gu (2011), who listed access to native speakers and other target language learners, authentic learning materials and engaging learning experiences, and facilitation of positive learner identities as the key benefits of technologies for language learning.

The above-presented results all emphasised that 1) motivated language learning behaviour (goal orientation, intrinsic interest) leads to the enhancement of self-regulatory strategies, 2) technology has greatly impacted every aspect of our life, even education, and students use various technological inventions to regulate their learning process, 3) technology not only promotes language learning but takes it to another level as it boosts autonomy development, and 4) even though technology provides authentic learning experiences, in order to use them effectively for educational purposes, children have to realise their full potential and consciously use them to achieve their learning goals and objectives.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to emphasise two partially negative aspects here, as noted by Stockwell and Reinders (2019), due to the frequent occurrence of overly elevated expectations regarding the influence of technology and its role in language learning and teaching. First, technology cannot enhance motivation and autonomy "unless appropriate pedagogies are applied that capitalise on the affordances of the technologies and include sufficient training in how to use the technologies for language learning purposes" (p. 40). Second, "sufficient motivation can make up for various deficiencies in learner aptitude and the learning environment", but in contrast, "when the learner has sufficient aptitude and an ideal learning environment, a lack of motivation can result in an inability to make the most of these" (p. 41). This idea again pinpoints that motivation is a key determinant of learning success and an indispensable component of self-regulation.

In summary, we can conclude that language education in the system of schooling in Hungary alone cannot provide an adequate pillar to meet all the system-related requirements and needs of the students; some extra effort – put into language learning beyond the classroom – is definitely needed. As Ushioda (2008) emphasised, as long as students expect their teachers to motivate them (the teacher externally regulates motivation), "learners cannot be expected to develop skills in regulating their own motivation on which good language learning depends" (p. 30). Consequently, a holistic approach that encompasses both in-class

and extracurricular language learning becomes crucial for fostering comprehensive language proficiency and self-regulation.

2.3.3 Self-regulation and the home environment

As the present dissertation focuses on self-regulation at home, the following chapters will provide an exclusive review of the main findings in this area. At first, I elaborate on the specific opportunities and advantages that the home environment presents from a self-regulatory perspective. This will be followed by an in-depth depiction of the role played by homework tasks – assignments that link the classroom to the household – in the development of self-regulation.

2.3.3.1 Self-regulation opportunities in the home environment

The most recent research – mainly due to the Covid pandemic – has significantly deepened our understanding of how students regulate their (language) learning at home. All the major educational actors had to face new challenges. Teachers had to find new ways to continue the teaching-learning process without disruptions, and learners found themselves enrolled in home-based distance learning. While formal schooling happened face-to-face with fixed classroom structures and routines and under continuous, constant teacher supervision, this new learning situation required students to organise and regulate various aspects of the learning process autonomously. Huber et al. (2020) specifically highlighted that this new learning situation was challenging, mainly for students with self-regulation difficulties. To sum up, moving the educational experience from the school setting to the home environment offered a good opportunity for students to improve their self-regulation skills as this new context required a self-directed and active learner who took responsibility for his or her learning.

Brody and Ge (2001) proposed that organised home environments and positive parent-child relationships contribute to the advancement of self-regulatory skills. While there's a common belief that informal learning contexts hold greater power in shaping students' perceptions of success, progress, and satisfaction in line with their individual needs compared to formal learning settings (Boekaerts & Minnaert, 1999), this does not imply that informal contexts are superior to formal ones. Boekaerts and Minnaert (1999), in their study, determined that these unique learning conditions influence the learning process's quality and subsequently elevate students' appreciation for learning.

Fifty years ago, Macnamara (1973) highlighted that motivation differentiates classroom learning from out-of-classroom learning. He argued that "the main thrust in language learning comes from the child's need to understand and to express himself" (p. 475). Macnamara explained that this need factor is missing in a classroom: "the teacher seldom has anything to say to his pupils so important that they will eagerly guess his meaning." Moreover, "pupils seldom have anything so urgent to say to the teacher that they will improvise with whatever communicative skills they possess to get their meaning across" (p. 476). His finding is consistent with that of Boaekrets (1997), who suggested that learning in a natural context, due to its non-coercive nature, positively affects the application of different self-regulatory strategies and the manifestation of individual characteristics. In this sense, the classroom is neither cumulative nor purposeful in the true sense of the word, as it provides a fragmented, indirect experience and is driven by the goals set by the teacher (Molnár, 2002). Boekaerts (1996) similarly highlighted that an environment, which is externally regulated, hinders the development of self-regulated learning. In a different article, Boekaerts and Minnaert (1999) went further and emphasised that the perception of choice is what differentiates learning at home from formal learning contexts. In the words of Boekaerts and Minnaert (1999), self-regulation:

> will only emerge when students are allowed to learn in a context where they can weigh the feasibility and desirability of alternative actions and goals […] using their own criteria. The perception of freedom of action (an appraisal which informs students that they can act according to their own wishes, expectations and needs) in a supportive context (where they can borrow resources when needed) will help them to translate their own needs, expectations and wishes into clear intentions. (p. 542)

To sum up, it is commonly accepted that supportive contexts and relationships contribute to observed advantages in self-regulation development. For example, "home and school environments where children experience authoritative forms of parenting and teaching (e.g., warmth and responsiveness, support for autonomy, clear communication, scaffolding) are likely to exert a positive influence on children's self-regulation" (Perry et al., 2018, p. 459). According to Baumrind (2013, p. 13), an authoritative parent "displays neither the coercive disciplinary style expected of an authoritarian personality nor the indulgent disciplinary style expected of a democratic personality but in contrast to both is responsive and demanding, confrontive and autonomy supportive, affectionate and power assertive." However, as one of the oldest articles on self-regulation highlighted, no matter how good or advantaged a learning environment is, it cannot guarantee learning success. Sometimes

students – even high achievers – fail to use contextually specific strategies and control their learning process (Zimmerman, 1986).

While analysing the home learning environment, it is also important to examine the relationship between homework and self-regulated language learning, as this task extends school learning in the Hungarian context. What makes homework a unique educational practice is that "of all the learning strategies a teacher may use, it is the only one that crosses the boundary separating school and home, encompassing the two worlds of school and home that all children inhabit" (Vatterott, 2009, p. 158). The following sub-chapter analyses and investigates the role homework plays in self-regulation development.

2.3.3.2 Self-regulation and English homework completion

In Hungary, students are frequently given homework by their teachers (Imre et al., 2021; Öveges & Csizér, 2018). Bembenutty (2011) conducted an interview with Harris Copper, the leading expert of homework research, who explained that he is not satisfied with his 1989 definition of homework. He defined homework as "tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are meant to be carried out during non-school hours" (1989, p. 7). In Bembenutty's (2011) study, he explained that the qualifier "during non-school hours" creates a wrong impression because mainly secondary school students complete their homework during the school day – in halls, between two lessons or during lessons – and if he could, he would change the qualifier to "during noninstructional time." He is not the only one who stated that homework should be completed during non-school hours. Wallinger (2000, p. 484) defined homework as "work assigned to students by teachers that was intended to be done outside of school time." While MacBeath and Turner (1990, p. 6) have noted that homework is "relevant to teachers' curricular objectives […] takes place outwith formal classroom teaching and […] is primarily the responsibility of the learner himself/herself." All these definitions have in common that homework should be completed beyond the classroom walls as after-school work.

Teachers have been expected to set homework assignments for centuries as their role in the academic curriculum has greatly expanded (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2005). Wallinger (2000, p. 483) found that foreign language teachers would reply to the: "How important is homework to student success in your class?" question that "daily practice of the foreign language through homework is a vital component of success in language learning." This practice remains commonplace among foreign language teachers to this day.

Corno and Xu (2004) pointed out the similarities and differences between work jobs and homework in their thought-provoking and, at the same time, interesting comparative analysis. They argue that homework is neither optional nor an activity that students freely elect. These tasks are assigned by the teacher with the teacher's requirements, objectives and expectations in mind. "As in the workplace, careless efforts and a laissez-faire attitude are likely to make the wrong impression" (p. 228). Similarly, students usually face negative consequences when they do not finish their homework.

Another aspect Como and Xu (2004) mentioned is connected with reward. At school, students are awarded good grades for their performance which leads to advancement in school. In the workplace, hard work usually pays off in the form of financial compensation and career promotion. Moreover, appropriate resources (e.g., textbooks, Internet, computers, other tools and equipment), a quiet environment, and even those who cohabit in that environment are necessary to complete homework and work tasks successfully. Especially they stated that "the external resources needed for homework can be viewed as a kind of home office for the child with features like those needed in the workplace" (p. 228) and last but not least, both activities (work and homework completion) benefit from planning and preparation.

To continue with how homework and jobs differ, Corno and Xu (2004) highlighted that employers supervise their employees closely, but homework completion is only loosely supervised by adults. Homework completion is challenging because students move their work from the classroom setting, which is deliberately planned to monitor student progress, to the learner's home, supervised by parents. They have proposed that homework is "the first time a child is asked by an authority figure outside the home to engage in serious work on a regular basis, with personal discretion concerning when and how each assignment should be completed" (p. 229).

Reviewing the available homework literature, we can identify three main themes that frequently appear as primary reasons for giving homework. The first big category involves lesson-related reasons, such as: giving students an opportunity to practise or review what was learnt during the day and learn concepts that could not be covered during the school day (Hoyle, 2005), facilitating preparation for the next class and revision of work done during the day and allowing teachers to check that students have understood what they have tried to teach during their lessons (Wallinger, 2000). Vatterott (2009, p. 2) also noted that teachers often assign homework to extend learning time as they are "overwhelmed by an already glutted curriculum and pressures related to standardised tests."

Second, many teachers give homework for various parental reasons, i.e., to communicate with parents about students' progress (Hoyle, 2005) or through homework assignments, parents are informed about what their child learns at school (Holte, 2016). Dettmers et al. (2010) also emphasised that many teachers think homework is a great tool to reinforce the relationship between parents and their children, so parents feel involved in their child's education. Mihály (2003) stated that homework often conflicts with various extracurricular activities or social events, while parents usually insist on maintaining this practice as they form an opinion about their child's school based on the quality and quantity of homework. Thus, many parents 1) expect their teachers to give homework to their students as they believe that homework is a sign of a tough school and rigorous curriculum, and 2) believe that teachers are obliged to extend learning beyond the school walls (Vatterott, 2009).

The third identified category involves learning-related reasons, so these reasons take on a learner perspective. Teachers often assign homework as they believe these tasks develop and facilitate study skills and habits and help students realise their responsibility for learning development (Hoyle, 2005). Homework allows learners to learn at their own pace and enables the acquisition of further knowledge (Vatterott, 2009). With the help of homework, students might also acknowledge that learning occurs outside the classroom, not only at school (Bembenutty, 2011). As students do these tasks without teacher supervision and guidance, students personally regulate homework completion and choose their own task-related strategies (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011).

Students have several daily assignments from various subjects and approach homework tasks differently (Hong & Milgram, 2000). Ramdass and Zimmerman (2011) found evidence that highly self-regulated learners approach their homework differently than their less skilled counterparts. As described in Chapter 2.1.1, self-regulation involves motivational, cognitive, and metacognitive aspects. Ramdass and Zimmerman (2011) analysed these separately in relation to homework completion. They stated that motivational self-regulation implies that the student values homework, sees its importance and believes in themselves and their capabilities to complete homework assignments successfully. The cognitive aspect of self-regulation involves all the learning strategies students use before, after and while completing their tasks, including those that help with information processing. Some learners carefully and consciously choose the learning strategies they use while working on particular homework tasks, while other students reflect and evaluate the homework completion process and the outcome. Some learners create step-by-step plans (planning), put homework assignments ahead of other things, think about the time needed and choose a

scheduled time to complete tasks (time management). Other learners prefer certain places and arrange the learning environment, e.g., turning off distracting items (environmental structuring) to fit their needs. Lastly, the metacognitive component of self-regulation happens when students set goals for their learning, carefully monitor their progress and try to find reasons and solutions for problems they face while doing their assignments (Corno & Xu, 2004; Hong & Milgram, 2000; Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011).

It has been demonstrated by Zimmerman and Ramdass (2011) that homework assignments help students strengthen their self-regulation. They argue that homework is an excellent tool for self-regulation development, as self-regulation develops gradually with repeated practice. After reviewing five articles, they found that self-regulatory skills and motivation beliefs positively correlated with homework tasks. The previous idea was further supported by Hong and Milgram (2000), who identified three types of motivation relevant to homework completion within the scope of their study. A student might be self-motivated, parent-motivated, or teacher-motivated. Self-motivation refers to the child's personal and intrinsic motives to complete homework tasks. Parent-motivated students engage in homework to fulfil their parents' expectations, which is influenced by the degree parents are involved in and intervene in the learning process, as well as the ways parents motivate their children. Teacher-motivated children do their homework assignments to satisfy their teachers. This form of motivation is shaped by teacher-student relationships, the methods employed by teachers to inspire their students, and the degree of respect students hold for their teachers. Hong and Milgram (2000) emphasised that these are not mutually exclusive but collectively contribute to a student's overall motivation to varying degrees.

In 2005, Zimmerman and Kitsantas performed research with 179 female high school students attending a religious school that placed a strong focus on homework, with students receiving over three hours of homework daily. The researchers explored the relationship between homework practices, self-efficacy beliefs, perceived responsibility, and academic achievement. They discovered that the students' utilisation of self-regulation strategies was predicted by their self-efficacy beliefs and perceived responsibility for their learning. Self-efficacy and perceived responsibility also played a mediating role between homework practices and academic achievement. Corno and Xu (2004) highlighted that it is only after students see the value of homework assignments that they increase their regulatory skills to manage these tasks.

Elementary school students should be given shorter and easier tasks to create positive attitudes and predispositions to school and learning in general, and the tasks' complexity

should increase as students get older (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011). Janis-Norton (2013, p. 114) argues that self-reliance naturally and gradually develops as children get older. She emphasised that at a young age, the effectiveness of homework completion depends on parents. Parents need to guide their children into developing useful study habits. She thinks modelling behaviour is important in this sense, e.g., students should see their parents reading books and using dictionaries. However, it is important for parents to strike a balance between offering assistance and guidance to their child's academic progress and allowing their child to develop autonomy and self-reliance. This is especially true for homework completion; if parents become involved and control the learning process, children not only lose self-confidence and belief in their abilities but also transfer responsibility to their parents. While parents may have good intentions to assist their child with homework, it is important to remember that homework is ultimately the child's responsibility. They need to develop the skills and habits necessary for success in school and beyond.

The same holds true for teachers. As students grow older and progress, teacher support is gradually diminished, and students are expected to assume responsibility for their development. They are tasked with deciding where, why, when, how, and with whom they complete the assigned tasks, and thus they are expected to integrate their own self-regulatory strategies (Zimmerman & Ramdass, 2011). According to Janis-Norton (2013, p. 11), effective homework habits "enable children to get the most out of their homework" and can be applied and transferred into the classroom setting.

From a self-regulatory perspective, another relevant aspect is the gap between preferred and actual learning preferences, as highlighted by Hong and Milgram (2000). In the classroom, teachers determine the learning conditions which might not match individual learning preferences. They stated, "because the learner's choices are limited, a large discrepancy between preferred and actual ways of studying is understandable" (p. 58). However, at home, this discrepancy between preferred and actual learning preferences tends to be smaller, as students have more control over the learning environment. Their study showed that the closer the conditions are to how children prefer to complete their homework and the way they actually do it, the higher their homework achievement gets.

However, Bembenutty (2011) argued that not all students approach their tasks effectively; sometimes they use ineffective strategies. He defined homework failure and maladaptive homework behaviour in the following way:

> Homework failure refers to any action, behaviour, affect, or belief that is an attempt to regulate homework actions in ways that will result in detracting from reaching long-

> term academic achievement. Similarly, maladaptive homework behaviour refers to learners' efforts to achieve homework outcomes in a manner that will result in undesirable academic outcomes (p. 460).

He highlighted *self-handicapping* (sabotaging own success), *procrastination* (delaying important tasks), *defensive pessimism* (creating worst-case scenarios), *defective academic delay of gratification*, *misregulation* (choosing strategies that handicap progress), *under-regulation* (regulating task completion inadequately) as behaviours that hinder successful homework completion.

Despite its many positive benefits, many researchers claim that the "effectiveness of homework in any subject is questionable because there are so many contributing variables" (Wallinger, 2000, p. 483). For example, as Vatterott (2009, p. 13) emphasised, children who complete their homework are often attributed "virtues of being compliant and hardworking", while learners who fail to complete their homework are perceived as lazy and non-compliant. However, she emphasised that many students are in situations which hinder the completion of homework, i.e., non-supportive parents or parents who are intellectually unable to provide help or inappropriate learning environments. These cannot be accredited to students, and they cannot be blamed for these issues, so her claims point out how completing homework also depends on social-contextual characteristics and influences. The previous idea was highlighted by Falus (2004), who concluded that homework which necessitates assistance, support, and the use of technology or access to online resources – and which are not provided for everyone – may deepen inequality among students. Only carefully designed homework can increase children's independence and promote student responsibility for their learning.

To sum up, the available literature suggests that homework plays an important part in self-regulation development, and successful homework completion highly depends on self-regulatory strategies. As homework completion is closely linked to social-contextual factors, the teachers' and parents' influence cannot be overlooked. Parental involvement can be conceived as a continuum going from no involvement to doing the child's homework. This diversity may be due to the child's age, skill and abilities, the parent's educational level, and parents' free time to get involved in the homework completion process. The teacher's involvement also teeters anywhere along a continuum, from simply assigning homework from a coursebook to carefully thinking about its purposefulness. The most important issue is that teachers assign homework with clear and well-defined goals, outline all the requirements, expectations, and evaluation criteria and communicate these to students and their parents (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011). Even Kohn (2007, p. 17), who has a highly negative stance

on homework in general and stated that homework "may be the single most reliable extinguisher of the flame of curiosity," highlighted that if teachers decide to assign homework, the tasks should be "designed to promote two things: high-quality learning and the desire to keep learning."

The next chapter will focus on a group of learners for whom the entire learning process is, in the strictest sense of the word, nothing but homework. These students are homeschooled, have an individual work schedule (*egyéni munkarend* in Hungarian), and learn outside the walls of the classroom, at home. According to Johnson (2021), that student can be called a homeschooler whose parents claim their child is schooled at home instead of public or private schools.

2.4 Homeschooling education in Hungary [1]

Homeschooling, once considered an unusual, "deviant practice", is nowadays widely seen as "an acceptable alternative to conventional schooling" (Stevens, 2003, p. 90), at least in the American context, where over three million children are being educated at home (Ray, 2022). In fact, many online articles reported that because of the unique school closures worldwide, homeschooling has grown in popularity (Hamlin & Peterson, 2022; Johnson, 2021; Zill, 2021).

Hungary offers some opportunities for those who are dissatisfied with and disappointed in the education provided by the public school system. Choosing to be a private student, attending a private school, or educating children at home are just a few options for parents who seek alternatives to public education. Since the authorisation of the *1993 LXXIX Act on Public Education*, homeschooling is no longer a peripheral or illegal movement but has become a viable alternative for Hungarian families to follow, as the law allows parents to teach their children as private students at home. For many different reasons, parents (see Chapter 2.4.2 for available information) take the matter into their own hands, accept complete responsibility for their children's educational welfare, and start teaching them at home.

2.4.1 Homeschooling as an alternative choice for education

Homeschooling is an option when parents decide to pull their kids out of traditional or private schools and provide them with education at home. Homeschooling is defined simply as a parent-led home-based education (Pell, 2013). Lines (1994) has a similar definition; she

[1] This chapter is an expanded version of the literature review section of the article published in *Working Papers in Language Pedagogy* in 2020, referred to as Mikusová (2020) in the *References* at the end of this dissertation.

only emphasises that homeschooling is the education of school-aged children at home instead of the conventional educational institution. On the contrary, Holt and Farenga (2003) noted that homeschooling is a "process by which children grow and learn in the world without going, or going very much, to schools" (p. 20). Their definition precisely expresses that some homeschooling children might actually attend school classes. This observation was further emphasised by Petrie et al. (1999), who characterise the concept as "the full-time education of children in and around the home by their parents or guardians, or by tutors appointed by the parents or guardians" (p. 6). Petrie et al. (1999) also emphasise that homeschooling responsibilities involve various individuals beyond parents. Furthermore, the phrase "in and around the home" suggests that homeschooling is not limited solely to the home environment.

In line with these ideas, for the purposes of this study, I define homeschooling as an alternative to traditional formal school formats, in which parents educate their children not exclusively but at home instead of sending them to traditional public or private schools. Therefore, homeschooled children, most of the time, learn at home, led by their parents. Having some school lessons, taking classes from other tutors and getting help from others are not considered exclusions; however, parent-led education should outweigh the time of education provided by others so that homeschooled children and private students, whom several different qualified teachers give private lessons, are not mixed.

In Hungary, two concepts are used frequently: *otthonoktatás* (homeschooling) and *otthontanulás* (home-based studying or home education). There is a slight difference in the meaning and rationale behind these two concepts. As Gaither (2008) noted, many reject the term homeschooling "as what they are doing is qualitatively different than conventional schools are" (p. 230). The present dissertation will use the terms homeschooling and home education interchangeably to reduce repetition.

2.4.2 Reasons for homeschooling

Several studies have demonstrated that the reasons for choosing home education are diverse (Romanowski, 2006). Compared to this, Hungary lacks information regarding homeschooling parents' motives. The results of previously conducted studies – that aimed to gather information about the primary reasons for choosing homeschooling education (Gaither, 2017; Isenberg, 2007) – indicate that some reasons frequently come into view. Most commonly, families homeschool for academic, social, familial, and religious reasons. Better fulfilment of educational needs, religious reasons, poor school learning environment, and the desire to build stronger family bonds are among the most important reasons influencing

parental decisions (Pell, 2013). Grubb's (1998) survey, based on self-reported data, noted that parents seem to favour homeschooling because it allows them to teach their kids proper social, moral, and religious values. Her report also pinpoints that the fear of the negative influence of peer groups and the increasing number of school crimes, such as robbery, assault, continuous mockery, guns, and drug use, belong under the key reasons that have convinced some families to choose homeschooling education.

Many parents think the educational system is too old-fashioned and follows and operates on similar principles as schools that existed hundreds of years ago. These institutions, which are far from the needs of the 21st century, do not prepare the students enough for everyday challenges (Collom, 2005; Pell, 2013). In addition, these parents are frequently "motivated by an active role construction, strong sense of efficacy for helping the child learn, and positive perceptions of life context" (Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007, p. 265). Families have many options on how to teach their children at home. They can rely on a preplanned, prepackaged curriculum designed for homeschoolers, or they may choose to prepare their own material (Lyman, 1998; Ray, 1994). Homeschooling parents may try to apply various methods to fulfil the needs of their children. The conditions are given; thus, the lessons are not limited to their home only. According to Pell (2013), homeschoolers have their own computers, electronic devices and other resources, which contribute to more diverse ways of teaching and learning than the ones most public schools can provide. Working outdoors, taking field trips and visiting various institutions are commonly used homeschooling approaches (Basham, 2001).

2.4.3 Homeschooling regulations

In many European countries, homeschooling is a legal alternative to public and private schools but is restricted to specific conditions. To illustrate the diversity of the regulations, homeschooling restrictions of the Visegrad Group countries are summarised below (see Table 3).

Poland legalised homeschooling in the *1991 Education Act*, and it is legal up to date. Before 2021, the headmaster of the school granted permission. Parents had to present 1) an opinion of the public psychological-educational counselling office, 2) a declaration that a child will be given the best possible education enabling the implementation of the core curriculum, and 3) a commitment to prepare their children for annual exams. In 2021, the Polish President signed an amendment to the *Education Law*, which abolished the obligation to attach a psychological opinion to the application and deleted the zoning requirement

(students were admitted to the schools closest to their residences). Nowadays, parents are free to decide how to organise their homeschooling practice. However, students have to take annual exams at the school where their permission was granted (for an excellent overview of Polish homeschooling regulations, see Berkowicz, 2021).

Table 3

Homeschooling Regulations in the V4 Countries

Criteria	Hungary	Slovak Republic	Czech Republic	Poland
Legal status	Legal	Legal	Legal	Legal
Start of homeschooling	1993	2008	2004	1991
Authority for homeschooling permission	Until 2019: headmaster of the school As of 2019: Educational Authority	Headmaster of the school	Headmaster of the school	Headmaster of the school
Grade level availability	No restrictions	Before 2021: Preschool or first four years of primary school Since 2021: secondary level of primary school	Only for the first four years of primary school level Lower secondary school level homeschooling is still in the experimental phase	No restrictions
Qualifications for homeschooling parents	No specific qualifications required	Parents are required to hold a teaching certification to homeschool a primary school child	Children can be educated at home by someone who has completed their secondary education with a school-leaving exam	No specific qualifications required
Frequency of exams	At least 2 times each year	Periodic assessments by authorities (twice a year)	Periodic assessments by authorities (twice a year)	Periodic assessments by authorities (exams at the end of each school year)

Homeschooling has been accepted as a legal alternative to school attendance in Slovakia since 2008 and in the Czech Republic since 2004. The Czech government started a five-year homeschooling experiment in 1998 and, based on the satisfying results, legalised the practice in 2004. However, according to this law, only children aged 6 -10 (primary school level) can be homeschooled. When children reach the age of 11, they have to go back to school. However, a new homeschooling experiment began at the lower secondary school level

in the 2007/2008 school year, targeting children aged 11-15 years. The experiment was supposed to end in 2013, yet it is still in process. Families who have been granted permission to homeschool - by the headmaster of the school the child is enrolled - have to pass school exams twice a year. In addition, children can be educated at home by someone who has completed their secondary education with a school-leaving exam (see Mazur et al., 2019, for more information).

In Slovakia, homeschooling was legalised only in 2008 and has one of the strictest regulations of the V4 countries. The local school might give permission but only for preschool or primary school children. Parents who want to educate their preschool children at home are required to have a complete secondary education (with a school-leaving exam), while permission to homeschool a primary school child is granted only if the educator is a qualified teacher. That means parents who do not fulfil the above qualification requirements must hire a certified teacher to homeschool their children. Parents are obliged to allow in-site inspections at home, and homeschooled children are tested twice a year. Recently, there was a new law change, which allowed homeschooling at the secondary level of primary school (between ages 10-14) from September 1, 2021 (for more details, see Hrabovská Francelová, 2021).

In Hungary, homeschooling students are supervised by an authorised school and have to pass exams annually. *Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education* makes it clear that homeschoolers belong to the category of private students. Until 2019, the authorised school's headmaster made the final decision regarding students' private status, taking into account the child welfare service's approval. As of September 2019, the private student status has been replaced by an individual work schedule (*egyéni munkarend* in Hungarian). The basic principle of the previous law was that compulsory education could be fulfilled as a private student if it was not detrimental to the student's development. The amendment's text, however, states that the basic principle of compulsory education can be fulfilled by going to school. Therefore, this strict law change has recently made homeschooling difficult in Hungary. In addition, instead of headmasters, a governmental authority, the Educational Authority (*Oktatási Hivatal* in Hungarian), decides whether a child can acquire this status or not.

Since the private student status was legalised in 1993 in Hungary, the number of home-educated students has proliferated. The number of homeschoolers, since they are classified as private students, is unknown; however, according to the annual country reports on education, the number of private students in the system shows a growing tendency from year to year (see Table 4 for available data). However, the preliminary data from October

2020 showed that the number of students with an individual work schedule is 5214, which indicates an almost 50% drop compared to 2019, mainly due to the above-mentioned new, strict regulations.

Table 4

Number of Private Students in Hungary

School year	Number of private students
2014/2015	7417
2015/2016	6990
2016/2017	7613
2017/2018	7673
2018/2019	8046
2019/2020	9545
2020/2021	5214

Note. Central Statistical Office.

Although Hungarian parents' interest in homeschooling has increased recently, it is still challenging to gather Hungarian data. Even though the number of followers of home education is slowly rising, public opinion is divided and diverse, which might be caused by the fact that there is little research focusing on homeschooling education in the Hungarian context. The following chapter will briefly overview some research findings conducted with homeschooling families and offer examples from the international and Hungarian context.

2.4.4 Homeschooling and self-regulated learning research

Numerous studies have been carried out over the years to examine different aspects of homeschooling (for an excellent systematic review of these homeschooling studies, see the updated version of Kunzman and Gaither, 2020). Most of the studies conducted up to date focus on various pedagogical aspects of homeschooling, i.e., mainly on the teaching-learning process at home. One of the most widely researched issues is whether homeschooled children outperform their school-attending peers in various subjects and on standardised tests; therefore, these studies are interested in homeschooling achievements and aim to answer the question: Which educational strategy is better? (Neuman & Guterman, 2016a).

Originally, Martin-Chang et al. (2011) intended to compare the academic achievements of children who were homeschooled with those who attended traditional schools. However, during their study, they realised that the homeschooled families they observed could be categorised into two distinct groups. Some families in their sample

followed a structured homeschooling format, while other students were taught in an unstructured way. Their results showed that homeschooled students enrolled in a structured education format scored better on the *Woodcock-Johnson subtests* than those in traditional schools. In addition, their results also discovered that students studying in an unstructured format scored worse on the referenced subtests than their school counterparts. However, these results should be interpreted with caution as only 37 public school students and 37 homeschooled students (25 engaged in structured homeschooling and 12 in unstructured homeschooling) participated in their study.

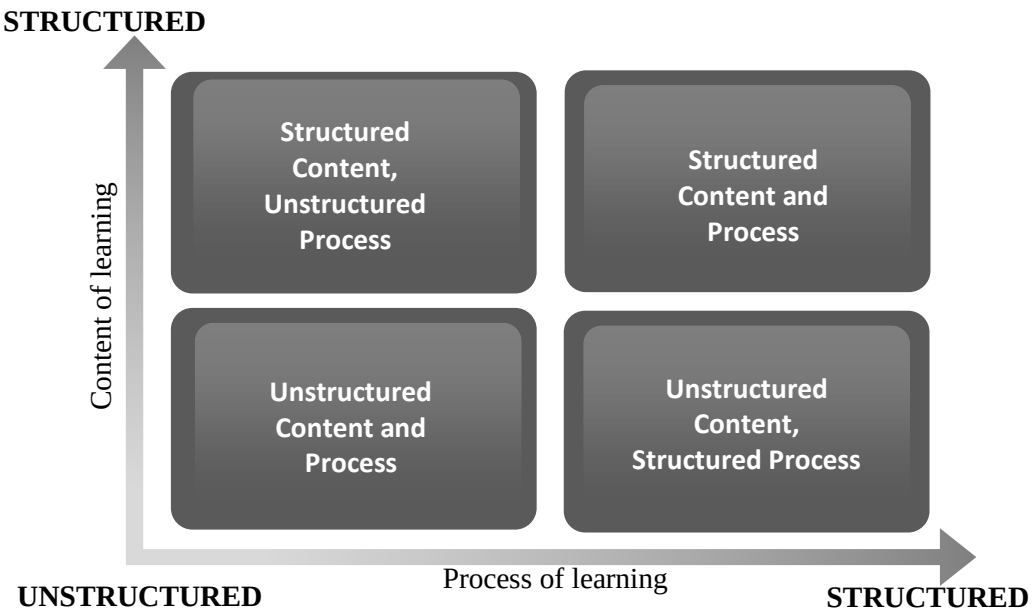
Martin-Chang et al.'s (2011) finding that there are many homeschooling trends prevalent in today's society is not unique but something that frequently comes into view when examining homeschooling families. However, Neuman and Guterman (2016b) pointed out that this division (structured vs unstructured homeschooling) is not comprehensive as it ignores two important dimensions: content and process. They used the following example to express their dissatisfaction with the above-presented classification of homeschooling families:

> So, for example, the family may deal with content that was planned in advance (structured content) but do it at inconsistent times depending on when family members are available (unstructured process). In contrast, the opposite situation can occur in which the family does not decide on content ahead of time (unstructured content) but sets times for learning (structured process). (p. 3)

As suggested by Neuman and Guterman (2016b), when classifying homeschooling families, one has to take into account: 1) the degree of structure in the learning content (the 'what' aspect), and 2) the degree of structure in the learning process (the 'how' aspect). Figure 8 depicts the two axes, examining the content and process proposed by Neuman and Guterman (2016b). The top of the vertical axis represents structured learning content, while the bottom represents no structure. The right side of the horizontal axis represents a structured learning process; the left side lacks any structure in the learning process. When combining these two axes, "we can not only ask if and to what extent the family's approach represents structured EHE [elective home education – author's comment] or unstructured EHE (unschooling); we can also examine the degree of structure in the content of learning and the degree of structure in the learning process separately" (p. 13).

Figure 8

Classification of Homeschooling Families Based on the Degree of Structure



Note. Based on Neuman and Guterman (2016b).

For instance, Ray (2010) conducted an extensive study involving 11,739 homeschooled students from all 50 states in the United States, as well as Guam and Puerto Rico. His research entailed a questionnaire in which parents were requested to rate, using a 7-point scale, the level of structure in their home education practices, spanning from highly unstructured to very structured learning approaches. From this study, Ray concluded that three variables displayed positive links with student achievement: 1) greater levels of structure in homeschooling, 2) increased financial investment in educational materials such as textbooks, tutoring, and various software, and 3) an extended duration of time dedicated to structured learning, which he defined as "time during which the child is engaged in learning activities planned by the parent; it is a time during which the child is not free to do whatever he or she chooses" (Ray, 2010, p. 20).

Jones (2013), in her study, aimed to examine homeschooling education from children's perspectives using a photovoice technique. "Photovoice is a research tool involving the use of photographs to stimulate responses and discussion" (Jones, 2013, p. 109). Her study involved nine participants, aged between seven and 14 years, who were recruited from six homeschooling families. The participants were asked to take as many photos as they wished in two weeks, to select the five most important, and then to provide narratives in either written (PowerPoint presentation) or verbal (semi-structured interview) form, using their photos as a basis. The themes emerging from Jones' (2013) conversations included: identity and

development of self, experiences and perceptions of learning, and relationships with others. Most of the participants chose photos of themselves being engaged in various activities. Jones (2013) interpreted this as students seeing themself playing a central role in their education. The participants' narratives revealed that her homeschooled participants are aware of their active role in their education and have ownership over it. Based on the results of her study, she concluded that:

> For the home-educated children in this research the context in which they experienced their education was an important part of how they identified themselves and compared themselves to others. More crucially, however, was that their sense of self influenced their learning choices, their willingness to learn and their engagement and passion for learning. (p. 116)

In this context, she proposed that the homeschooling experiences of the participants have a significant influence on the development of their self and identity. The findings propose that the learning environment at home, characterised by flexibility and choice, which is fostered and supported by family members, plays a pivotal role in promoting intrinsic motivation for learning.

According to Deci and Ryan (2000), students need autonomy (choice, control, and responsibility in learning), competence (confidence, self-esteem), and relatedness (need to feel connected) to experience increased intrinsic motivation (see Chapter 2.2.3). Contexts which satisfy these needs are believed to promote engagement and enjoyment and are essential predictors of growth in self-regulation behaviours. In her quantitative study, Riley (2013) particularly emphasised differences in competence, autonomy, and relatedness between homeschooled students and students in traditional education. The study used the *Basic Psychological Needs Scale* (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagné, 2003), a 21-item Likert-type scale that "measures the extent to which the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are generally satisfied in a subject's life" (Riley, 2013, p. 13). In her study, homeschooled students (n = 58) scored higher on autonomy and competence satisfaction subscales than traditionally schooled students. However, there was no perceived difference between the two groups of participants in the area of relatedness. According to Riley (2013), this increased intrinsic motivation in homeschooled students may be due to the individualised, flexible, student-led nature of homeschooling education, as opposed to conventional classrooms where the primary motives, goals, objectives and reward systems are all externally defined.

Other homeschooling-related studies try to examine the methods of instruction used by these families. The teaching methods of homeschooling families greatly depend on how much time the parents plan to spend on directing various teaching activities, which "could fall

anywhere along a continuum from direct instruction (the most time spent in direct teaching activities) to self-study (the least amount of time in direct teaching activities)" (Clements, 2002, p. 3). She found that homeschooling curricula can be classified into five primary categories:

- *Textbook-based curriculum*: closest to traditional school education, characterised by the use of textbooks, workbooks, worksheets and tests,
- *Literature-based curriculum:* the learning and teaching process is based on literature (e.g., novels, books, biographies),
- *Computer-based curriculum:* students use various computer software (mini-lectures, tests, quizzes, instructional videos) in their learning,
- *Video/satellite*: homeschooling students watch a teacher teaching an actual class either in the form of a videotaped lesson or broadcast live over a satellite system,
- *Unschooling*: students learn from real-life experiences.

Furthermore, Hanna (2012) carried out a longitudinal study spanning a decade, from 1998 to 2008, involving 250 homeschooling families. Her investigation revealed two noteworthy shifts: 1) the increased use of technology and 2) a growing inclination toward establishing connections with other homeschooling families. Over the years, families progressively turned to Internet resources as a means to expand the spectrum of learning possibilities, embracing new materials, diverse curricula, online courses, and avenues for seeking support and assistance. This shift was driven by the aim to meet the specific educational needs of their children.

Other studies focus on the outcomes and influences of home education. Neuman and Guterman (2016a) conducted an interview study with 30 mothers involved in homeschooling and concluded that the interviewees almost "completely ignored conventional aspects of the educational process outcome […] and they do not perceive the goals of the educational process in a conventional manner" (p. 9). Instead, their analysis of interview data revealed that the outcomes of homeschooling - as perceived by homeschooling mothers - align with the key attributes of the constructivist paradigm in education. Constructivism in pedagogy assumes that "knowledge cannot be transferred to the students but rather must be built up by them" and that it is "not possible to separate the learning content from the manner and context in which it was learned" (p. 3). Their results showed that homeschooling parents perceive inquisitiveness, creativity, self-awareness, self-confidence, independence, and autonomy within their children as a result of their homeschooling lifestyle. Therefore, their interviewees

believe that the mentioned traits, qualities and abilities are not merely an academic pursuit but are formed through previous and current experiences and the environment (an idea in line with the social constructivist viewpoint).

Homeschoolers also do not suffer from poor self-concepts (Murphy, 2014). Medlin (2000), in his review, concluded that homeschooling students score as well as or better than their formal schooling peers on various measures of self-concept and self-esteem. One of the earliest studies on the topic was conducted by Taylor (1986). *Using the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale* (PHCSCS), he discovered that "the self-concept of the homeschooling children was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than that of the conventionally schooled population on the global scale and all six subscales of the PHCSCS" (pp. 186-187). He maintained that the main reasons behind this condition might be due to lowered anxiety levels at home, increased responsibility and autonomy in learning, satisfaction with the results, individualisation and diversity homeschooling offers.

Gray and Riley (2015a; 2015b) conducted a follow-up interview study with 75 young adults – unschooled during their school years – and concluded that most participants viewed their homeschooling experiences positively and would like to homeschool their own children. According to the study participants, the most frequently reported advantages of homeschooling were freedom and independence, time to pursue their own interests, continued interest in learning, improved motivation, learning ability, and an increased sense of responsibility for their life. The study participants were asked to reflect on their college experience as well. The participants reported that they could adjust to the new academic requirements without difficulty. A striking difference they experienced is that compared to their schooled classmates, the participants did not feel burned out by previous schooling experience.

Currently, only a limited number of studies have examined homeschooling in the Hungarian context. The present dissertation will describe three of these studies. The first study (Eggendorfer & Kopp, 2018) tried to identify the main reasons why parents chose homeschooling in Hungary. Eggendorfer and Kopp (2018) analysed 118 blog posts written by three homeschooling mothers and concluded that two families were "ideologists" and started homeschooling because they wanted to share their values, beliefs, and views with their children, while the third family chose homeschooling for pedagogical reasons, mainly because were dissatisfied with the public school system.

Páll (2015) conducted an interview with a Hungarian homeschooling mother and her 14-year-old daughter, who chose a special type of homeschooling. The child was enrolled in

Clonlara's Off-Campus program. Clonlara is an American School offering an off-campus program for homeschooling families all over the world, where parents are free to design their own education and curriculum. Even Hungarian law makes it possible by stating: "Hungarian citizens may study abroad without permission and may complete their compulsory education at a foreign educational institution" (National Public Education Act § 91). His results showed that: 1) the learning process of these families enrolled in Clonlara is very diverse, as many options are available, and 2) the mother characterised their learning experience as being highly self-regulated.

In addition, I conducted an interview study in 2020 with four homeschooling mothers about their motivational processes. The study identified nine demotives – negative influences that cancel our existing motivation (Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p. 138) – which could be classified into external demotives: 1) milieu-related influences, 2) unexpected life events, 3) major life changes, and 4) other external factors; and internal demotives: 1) confidence-deficiency, 2) uncertainty, 3) belief(s), 4) lack of free time, and 5) lack of energy. I also found that families use a variety of coping strategies, such as reframing their thoughts, talking about the problem with others, efficacy management, and help-seeking to remotivate themselves. Positive, unpredictable life events and major life changes are considered important external remotives, while internal forces, such as determination, enjoyment, pleasure, and satisfaction with the results, are considered to be the most salient when discussing remotivation - getting your motivation online again (Ushioda, 1998, p. 86).

To sum up, homeschooling learning is often not structured. It requires students to take increased responsibility for their development, making it a learning context that provides an excellent opportunity to extend and supplement our existing knowledge of self-regulated language learning. According to Chik (2012, p. 96), language learning "is no longer only taking place in fixed locales (e.g., schools and classrooms)", but "new mobilities" have emerged. At home, students can practice and use the target language autonomously through activities they are passionate about. Therefore, homeschooling – situated almost entirely out-of-school and in a learning context where children are free to plan, organise, and evaluate their learning – stands out as an important emerging realm for investigating language learner self-regulation.

PART II

METHODOLOGY

3 Overall research design

This chapter depicts the overall research design of this dissertation comprising three studies; therefore, the following sections will provide a general overview of the research approach used in this project. First, a general summary of the primary rationale behind the research and methodology is outlined in Chapter 3. It also describes how the separate studies are built upon each other (for schematic representation, see Figure 9). Chapter 4 gives a detailed report on document analysis, while the quantitative study is presented in Chapter 5 and the qualitative study in Chapter 6. All chapters start with a detailed description of the study's participants and instruments, present the research questions addressed in each study, explain the methods, focus on the data collection and analysis procedure, summarise the main findings, and try to answer the proposed research questions. Chapter 7 reviews the major results of the three studies, attempts to find a relationship between separate studies, and compares these findings to previous research. Finally, Chapter 8 offers research conclusions and highlights some pedagogical, theoretical, and methodological implications. Furthermore, it points out some of the limitations of the current research project and presents some future research directions.

3.1 Aims, rationale, research niche, research gap

The objective of this research was to provide a new approach to elaborate on the complex problem of human behaviour, more precisely, self-regulated learning behaviour. The main aim of this research project was to:

- Analyse the extent to which the Hungarian National Core Curriculum incorporates self-regulated (language) learning promotion and how it translates into self-regulation supportive practices in the home learning environment
- Examine how the home learning environment is *shaped* by practices committed to supporting self-regulation
- Explore how the home learning environment itself *shapes* self-regulation supportive practices

It is evident from the literature review presented above that 1) thanks to technological advancements, the classroom is no longer the only place where a language can be learnt, but

there are many opportunities and resources for language learners outside the classroom setting (Benson, 2011), 2) language learning beyond the classroom not only offers opportunities to develop self-regulation but also requires increased self-regulatory awareness and greater responsibility on the part of the students due to the lack of structure and supervision (Sundqvist, 2011), 3) the home environment is as - if not more - important for language learning as the classroom environment (Sandberg et al., 2011), 4) self-regulation is context-specific, i.e., it is affected and influenced by different relationships, events, and experiences (Zimmermann, 2000), 5) self-regulated learning can only be examined in the light of learners' motivations (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and, foremost, 6) self-regulation is believed to play a crucial role in language learning success (Zimmermann, 2000).

According to Boekaerts (1997), learning in a natural context, due to its non-coercive nature, positively affects the application of different self-regulatory strategies and the manifestation of individual characteristics. Understanding how students use various self-regulated (language) learning strategies in personally managed contexts, such as the home environment, 1) may provide an insight into the development of student self-regulation, 2) may help teachers and other education actors to understand how to take advantage of an individual's contextual resources in the teaching process, 3) may uncover principles for designing better resources for language learners, 4) may give teachers ideas on how the home environment can be used to enhance language learning, 5) may provide guidance to teachers about how to use the home environment effectively in their language teaching process, and 6) may help teachers promote language learning outside the classroom environment.

Based on the literature review, the current research project attempts to fill the following gaps:

1. First, it is scarce to find empirical studies that investigate self-regulation context-specifically (Panadero, 2017). Although during the pandemic, there was a sudden increase in the number of research conducted on self-regulated learning at home and in online learning environments (Bylieva et al., 2021; Cai et al., 2020), only a few studies have investigated self-regulated learning development in natural contexts (Jackson, 2016). Mainly quantitative self-regulatory studies have been conducted in the Hungarian context (Csizér & Kormos, 2012; Kormos & Csizér, 2014; Molnár, 2002; Réthy, 2003), while the number of Hungarian self-regulatory qualitative studies is low up to date (Mezei, 2008; Mikusová, 2019; Mikusová, 2021).
2. Second, the study chose to examine self-regulated learning behaviour within a less-explored educational setting, namely, the home environment. By venturing into this

underresearched domain, the study sought to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by shedding light on self-regulation within a novel learning context. In addition, this is the first study – to the author's knowledge – that attempted to examine self-regulation in homeschooled learners. Homeschooling received a new meaning because of the pandemic outbreak and became part of our everyday life because students had to learn at home, as schools were closed due to COVID-19. The pandemic has brought new challenges for students, as well as their parents and teachers. The available research suggests that home learning requires homeschooled students to engage in increased self-regulatory behaviour (Kunzman & Gaither, 2020); therefore, the investigation of the home environment offers an outstanding opportunity to deepen our understanding of the phenomenon of self-regulation.

3. Third, in the Hungarian context, teaching students how to learn is an integral learning outcome (National Core Curriculum, 2020), yet there is significant variation in what constitutes student self-regulation. There is an empirical gap arising from a lack of in-depth research on how students' self-regulated English learning can be improved and how teachers can use the home environment for language learning development. As Molnár (2002) also highlighted, there is a severe need for mapping the Hungarian situation of students' self-regulatory development.

3.2 Research methods

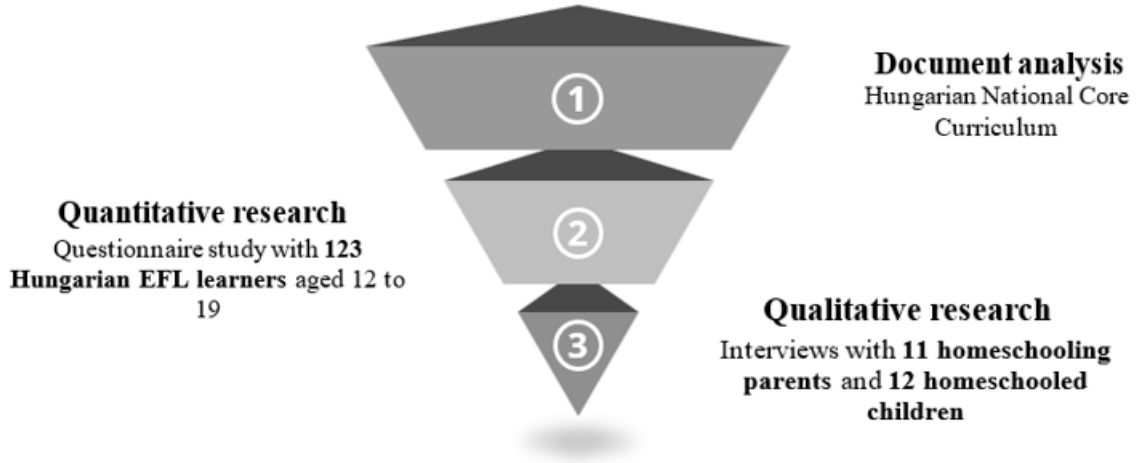
To fully understand the language learning experiences of homeschooled learners and students who are enrolled in traditional schools and learn at home only after their lessons, a variety of data sources were employed to identify both the commonalities and distinctions in these experiences. As this study aimed to understand and gain first-hand experiences directly from study participants, eliciting information happened through interviews and questionnaire studies, not through outsider observations.

My research project involves three independent but interrelated studies dealing with self-regulation through various lenses and perspectives (see Figure 9 for the visual representation of the conducted studies). Therefore, the current research was designed as a mixed-method exploratory study using qualitative data from interview study (conducted with homeschooling parents and their homeschooled children who learn languages at home), document analysis (the previous and most recent Hungarian National Core Curricula), and quantitative data from a questionnaire survey study (conventional school English language learners aged 12-19 years old) to ensure triangulation of data and allow the different facets of

the studied phenomenon to emerge (Creswell, 2003). Thus, in addition to data triangulation, this research project also used methodological triangulation, i.e., multiple methods within a research project (Denzin, 1978).

Figure 9

Visual Representation of the Overall Research Design



The subsequent chapters present the studies using top-down processing, visualised as an inverted pyramid, moving from a general to a specific topic. At first, the analysis of the Hungarian National Curriculum from a self-regulated learning perspective is detailed, followed by the analysis of the questionnaire study results with traditional school students. Finally, the results of the interview study with homeschooling parents and their children are presented. An overview of the proposed research questions, methods of data collection and analysis can be found in Appendix A.

4 Self-regulation in the Hungarian National Core Curriculum (Study 1)[2]

4.1 Research aims and research questions for study 1

The first study of this research project is based on document analysis as a form of qualitative research (Bowen, 2009). Document analysis relies on examining and interpreting various documents to elicit information and gain a more profound understanding of the researched issue. Merriam and Tisdell (2015, p. 189) claimed that "documents of all types can help the researcher uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem." The present document analysis examined the status of self-regulated (language) learning in compulsory public education in the Hungarian context. The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which self-regulated learning promotion is included in the Hungarian National Core Curriculum (NCC) and to identify potential areas for improvement. The research explored how self-regulated (language) learning is conceptualised and defined in the curriculum, how it is integrated into subject-specific goals and learning outcomes, and how it is operationalised in instructional practices and evaluation methods. Simply put, this study was conducted to answer the following research question: What does the Hungarian National Core Curriculum say about self-regulated learning?

The main objective of this document analysis was to provide additional background information and place the study participants and the subsequent studies in context. In addition, as the analysis offered supplementary data, it helped the development of other research instruments used in this research project. Therefore, the content analysis of the NCC documents played a pivotal role in defining the interview and survey questions, serving as the backbone of this dissertation. The study also aimed to obtain information about what is prescribed in these documents and deepen our understanding of the phenomenon under study from a theoretical point of view before proceeding with the questionnaire study and interviews.

4.2 Research design and methods for study 1

4.2.1 Research context for study 1

In Hungary, students have to attend ten years of compulsory education, after visiting a kindergarten, until age 16 (see chapter 2.4.3 for more information on private learner status, which was recently replaced by an individual work plan). Basic education in Hungary lasts

[2] This chapter is an expanded version of the article published in *Modern Nyelvoktatás* in May 2021, referred to as Mikusová (2021) in the *References* at the end of this dissertation.

eight years and is divided into primary level (ISCED 1) and lower secondary education (ISCED 2). ISCED 1 comprises grades 1 to 4, ISCED 2 comprises grades 5 to 8, while upper secondary education (ISCED 3) usually covers grades 9 through 12. The previous sentence indicates that after completing basic school, students are free to continue their studies in general secondary schools (*gimnázium* in Hungarian) or in various vocational education and training tracks.

The Educational Authority supervises and is responsible for, among others, the Hungarian education system. The curriculum regulation in Hungary has a three-level structure. At the highest level, the National Core Curriculum defines and summarises the general objectives of public education and "lays down the foundations for the body of knowledge to be acquired in school, and thus creates unity in public education" (NCC, 2012, p. 10635). In addition, it "serves as guidance for the authors and editors of textbooks, the designers of teaching aids and tools, the developers of state examination requirements and national measurement and assessment tools" (NCC, 2007, p. 7642). The first NCC was published in 1995 and later revised in 2003, 2007 and 2012, while the latest NCC was published in 2020. The second level of regulation is represented by framework curricula based on the NCC and serves as a basis for local curricula development. Local curricula are developed by schools at an institutional level and represent the third-level curriculum regulation (NCC, 2012).

As highlighted, the National Core Curriculum provides a framework and guidelines for what students should learn and be able to do in a given subject. It is argued that by incorporating self-regulated learning into the core curriculum, teachers can be prompted to promote self-regulation development and use among their students. For instance, the curriculum can include self-regulated learning strategies such as goal-setting, task analysis, and self-evaluation, which can be taught and practised across various subjects (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005; Schunk & Ertmer, 2000; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1994). Overall, the NCC can serve as a powerful tool for promoting self-regulated learning development and practices in schools, which can ultimately help students become more effective and efficient learners beyond the school walls.

4.2.2 Methods of data collection for study 1

In order to provide a comprehensive overview of the development of self-regulated learning in the Hungarian educational system, the most recent and previous versions of the NCC documents were included in the analysis. The documents were collected in electronic

forms from the *Hungarian Gazette,* also known as *Magyar Közlöny* in Hungarian, the official journal of the Hungarian government: NCC 1995 (Issue. No 91 of Magyar Közlöny, 1995), NCC 2003 (Issue. No 147 of Magyar Közlöny, 2003), NCC 2007 (Issue. No 102 of Magyar Közlöny, 2007), NCC 2012 (Issue. No 66 of Magyar Közlöny, 2012), NCC 2020 (Issue. No 17 of Magyar Közlöny, 2020). Therefore, the current research involved all five NCC documents (NCC 1995, 2003, 2007, 2012, 2020) in the analysis.

The rationale behind the decision to involve each NCC document in the analysis was the assumption that more than the analysis of the current NCC 2020 would be needed to provide an overall picture of and enough information about self-regulated learning in Hungary. The previous versions provided further information about how the attention toward self-regulated learning has changed in NCC documents over the years. Another reason for this decision was the fact that the NCC 2020 is only an amendment. As Table 5 shows, the NCC 2007 and the latest NCC 2020 are not new documents, but only the modifications, revisions and changes of the original, existing curriculum are published. The NCC 2007, therefore, involves only the changes made to the NCC 2003, while the NCC 2020 lists all the modifications executed on the NCC 2012.

Table 5

Historical Overview of the NCC Legislations

	Original legislation	**Amendments**
NCC 1995	Government Regulation No 130/1995. (X. 26.)	
NCC 2003	Government Decree 243/2003. (XII. 17.)	
NCC 2007	Government Decree 243/2003. (XII. 17.)	Government Regulation No. 202/2007. (VII.31.)
NCC 2021	Government Decree No. 110/2012. (VI. 4.)	
NCC 2020	Government Decree No. 110/2012. (VI. 4.)	Government Decree No. 5/2020 (I. 31.)

4.2.3 Methods of data analysis for study 1

The document analysis followed the steps outlined by Bowen (2009). At first, extensive reading of the chosen documents – the current and previous versions of the Hungarian National Core Curriculum – was carried out. Next, excerpts, quotations, or sections were selected from the chosen documents and organised into higher-order themes and categories through content analysis. The documents were analysed using the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) to identify the key themes related to the conceptualisation and integration of self-regulated learning as part of these documents.

Documents were coded inductively (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006), with higher levels of abstraction (bottom-up coding) achieved through multiple readings. The study primarily focused on the foreign language learning section. However, it analysed the full length of the documents to see the exact number of direct references to self-regulation and its components and to see in which subject area it is emphasised the most. The document analysis covered the following elements: 1) the structure of the documents and 2) the ways self-regulation and its components are integrated into the documents.

First, it focused on the number and location of the Hungarian words for self-regulation, its synonyms and components in the different sections of the NCC documents. Predefined sets of concepts were developed to guide the analysis throughout the process. The coding framework included direct references to self-regulation and its synonyms (such as autonomy, independent learning, self-directed learning, active learning, and self-initiated learning), and it looked for its various components (e.g., goal setting, motivation, help-seeking, self-efficacy beliefs, self-evaluation). By reading the texts, further relevant keywords and notions were identified and added to the preliminary list of search terms (codes), higher-order categories were created based on these search terms, and operational definitions were provided.

Each identified component was noted down, and at the end of the analysis, an overview is presented about how these diverse components of self-regulation appear in 1) the overall statements of intent, 2) the description of various subject areas, and 3) different levels of education. Therefore, the study tried to identify what components of self-regulation should be promoted according to NCC, at which age group, and in which subject area. To find an answer to the research question proposed above, the documents' texts were analysed and guided by the questions "what", "where", "how", and "when". Thus, the research tried to explore the role of self-regulation in the educational process over the years and analysed how the opportunities and demands for self-regulation in the chosen documents have evolved and changed. The following chapters will give a detailed overview of self-regulated learning development in the NCC and compare the researched issue in the selected documents.

4.3 Results and discussion for study 1

The findings of the document analyses are organised around the proposed research question. The analyses – as emphasised previously – involved all five versions of NCC documents (1995, 2003, 2007, 2012, and 2020). The main reason behind this choice was that there had been many changes (technological, political, methodological, and regulatory) over

the years, which made it necessary to examine the older versions. It was thought that only by understanding these changes in older versions can we analyse the current state and situation of self-regulated learning in the newest version.

4.3.1 What does the Hungarian National Core Curriculum say about self-regulated learning? (RQ1)

In order to effectively address the research question and provide a thorough analysis of the state of self-regulated learning in the Hungarian context, the subsequent sections will delve into the NCC documents. This will encompass a concise historical overview. Following that, attention will be directed towards the integration of self-regulation within the broader perspectives articulated as "common values in school education", "key development tasks", and "key competences", as outlined by Bereczki (2015). Furthermore, a distinct section will examine the presence of self-regulation across diverse subject areas and educational levels within the curricula. This exploration will particularly highlight its role in the realm of foreign language learning.

4.3.1.1 The historical overview and general structure of the NCC documents

First, the results section will provide a historical and general overview of the structure of NNC documents. The current National Core Curriculum (2020), like its predecessors (NCC 1995, 2003, 2007, 2012), represents the top-level document issued by the Hungarian Government, which regulates the content of Hungarian public education. Since their first authorisation, the NCC documents 1) shape the teaching process of Hungarian schools by defining the basic requirements every student has to master and 2) have undergone some changes both content-wise and structurally.

The first National Core Curriculum issued in 1995 consisted of only two large parts. The first part summarised the role of the national core curriculum in regulating the content of compulsory education, specified seven general educational goals and age-specific characteristics of student development. In addition, it defined ten subject areas and some common recommendations on how to teach them. The second part set out the requirements and content for each subject area of education and divided these into grades 1-6 and 7-10. Unlike the other NCC documents, the 1995 version detailed those minimal requirements students had to acquire by the end of grades 4, 6, 8 and 10. Simply, the requirements appeared in structured grade-specific tables and used the following central units: teaching material,

developmental requirements (competencies and skills), and minimal achievements to characterise each subject area.

The first part of NCC 2003, as for the NCC 1995, summarised the primary role of the national curriculum in regulating the content of public education. The 12 years of compulsory education were divided into four stages, and eight proposed developmental tasks were linked to these stages. The stages of education defined in the NCC 2003 were: grades 1-4, grades 5-6, grades 7-8, and grades 9-12. In the NCC 2003, the detailed content-related requirements were omitted; instead, the document set out the principles and objectives of the ten proposed subject areas and outlined the structure of development tasks. The whole document ended with a glossary, which summarised the main terms and their definitions used in the document.

Although the NCC 2007 was only an amending document, it had brought major changes, as it introduced *Key Competences* recommended by the European Union (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006). One of these was the competence of *Efficient independent learning*, an issue relevant to the current dissertation. Structurally, the document was similar to the NCC 2003 but much more fragmented.

Compared to the NCC 2007, the 2012 version had the following unique features. Structurally, it has retained the three-part structure. The first part dealt with the general tasks and values of public education and described the development fields and educational goals. The second central part set out key competences and offered some guidelines about how these should be acquired, so the required abilities, skills, knowledge and attitudes were highlighted. The third main part was a glossary of the terms and definitions of content regulation. Content-wise, one of the main differences was that – as the NCC 1995 – the 2012 version precisely highlighted the concrete curriculum contents at three levels of education (grades 1-4, 5-8, and 9-12) and re-defined the key competences and development fields.

In the current 2020 version, the general educational goals and development fields remained the same, as well as the general structure of the document. However, modifications have been performed in classifying the subject areas and the key competences. There is no information on how the key competences have been ranked – perhaps in terms of importance or relevance – however, the development of *learning competence* was listed first, which is also not negligible from the perspective of this dissertation. The goals and objectives of the given subject, the main topics, and the required learning outcomes are all described in relation to each subject area.

4.3.1.2 Self-regulation in the overall statements of intent

In order to see which national curricula emphasised the development of self-regulatory strategies, direct, explicit references to self-regulation were first measured. The coding framework included five predefined concepts collected from existing self-regulation literature: *önszabályzó tanulás* (self-regulated learning), *önálló tanulás* (independent learning or autonomous learning), *aktív tanulás* (active learning), *önirányított tanulás* (self-directed learning), *önkezdeményezett tanulás* (self-initiated learning). The direct occurrences of these terms were investigated in each version of the NCC. Table 6 shows the exact number of explicit references as they appear in the texts, but their shorter or altered forms were also involved in the analyses. For example, the phrase *önszabályozó tanulás* was searched through its stem önszabály* so as not to miss other direct references like önszabályozás, önszabályozott or önszabályozó tanulás.

As Carley (1993, p. 85) emphasised, "the more complex the concept that one is trying to generalize to the less likely it is that specific synonyms will appear in the text." Therefore, the data analysis used the above-described predefined set of concepts as a base and identified additional concepts during the coding process while reading the texts. This step was considered necessary because if only explicit concepts were used, the meaning would get lost. Implied concepts were believed to uncover self-regulation-related issues that could not be interpreted and considered.

The extensive reading of the documents revealed that not only the above-described predefined concepts but the terms *önművelés* ("[…] developing a desire for and habit of self-education"), *önkontroll* ("[…] development of the internal motivation and self-controlling mechanisms of learning"), and *önfejleszés* ("[…] developing the need for self-development") could be added to the predefined list of concepts. All the above excerpts were taken from the online English version of the NCC 2007 and were compared to the terms used in the Hungarian version.

The Hungarian term *önszabályozó* (self-regulatory) was mentioned in connection with differentiated learning organisation as follows: "Preference should be given to organisational solutions that promote the development of intrinsic motivation and *self-regulatory mechanisms for learning*" (NCC 2007, p. 7656, emphasis added). An interesting finding is that the English version of the NCC 2007 used the term *self-controlling mechanisms of learning* instead of self-regulatory mechanisms. As their name suggests, there are some differences between the two terms. Self-regulated learners try to understand the reasons and causes behind their behaviour, thoughts and mood. In comparison, self-control implies that a

student tries to inhibit and suppress a strong impulse. “In fact, self-regulation is what makes acts of self-control possible, or, as often happens, unnecessary” (Shanker, 2016). Therefore, there is a translation discrepancy between the Hungarian and the English version of the document. As English translations of further versions of the NCC are unavailable, differences in the translations of the terms and phrases of self-regulation are not analysed further in this dissertation; however, it could represent a valuable extension of self-regulation research and offer a useful direction for future studies.

Table 6 shows that the total number of occurrences of the predefined and implied concepts is 102 in the NCC documents, out of which 31 represent the explicit occurrences of the term *self-regulation*. In the 1995 version, no direct references to self-regulation were found. The term was mentioned seven times in the NCC 2003; however, these occurred outside the introductory sections. Self-regulation appeared only once in the overall statements of intent section in 2007 and 2012, and no direct hits were discovered in the 2020 version, i.e., all the explicit references to self-regulation appeared in the descriptions of various subject areas. The increasing number of occurrences suggests that the latest curricula documents put a more significant emphasis on the development of self-regulatory skills than the 1995 and 2003 versions and indicates that the curriculum developers value the importance of self-regulation.

Table 6

Coding Framework

Coding Framework		**1995 NCC**	**2003 NCC**	**2007 NCC**	**2012 NCC**	**2020 NCC**
Predefined set of concepts	önszabályzó tanulás	0	7	8	7	9
	önálló tanulás	3	2	7	10	5
	aktív tanulás	0	0	0	2	11
	önirányított tanulás	0	0	0	0	0
	önkezdeményezett tanulás	0	0	0	0	0
Implied concepts	önművelés	2	1	2	2	0
	önkontroll	5	0	1	5	1
	önfejlesztés, önfejlődés	0	3	4	6	1
	Total:	**10**	**13**	**22**	**32**	**25**

Even though the number of direct, explicit references to self-regulation is limited, indirect processes, strategies, and terms related to self-regulation could be identified throughout the documents. This is not surprising, as self-regulation is a complex process that

involves cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components. In the following, the "general educational goals or development fields", the "key competences", and the "subject areas" sections are characterised in each version of the NCC from a self-regulatory perspective. To explore the proportion and quality of the attention dedicated to these concepts, all the sentences and paragraphs in which these predefined and implied concepts occur are analysed below.

4.3.1.3 Self-regulation in the introductory sections of the National Core Curriculum

The role of the National Core Curriculum in the public education section consists of numerous parts, some of which are present from the very first NCC. One of these is the "differentiation based on the standard principles" section. In 1995, it only meant that the "content regulation in the NCC permits diverse and differentiated activities of both schools, teachers and students built upon the common foundation that serves unity" (NCC, 1995, p. 5308). In the 2003 version, the definition of differentiated learning support has significantly expanded and put a special emphasis on *learner-centeredness* (meeting the specific needs of the students by giving them enough time to work on and deepen their knowledge), *learning-focused approach* (how out-of-school and school learning, formal and spontaneous learning, and extracurricular activities complement each other), *continuous development of teachers' professional and pedagogical skill* (new role schools, teacher education and teacher training have to fulfil because of the rapid development of technology), *interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning* and *individual differences in learning* (the emergence of new knowledge content which has increased the need for integration and/or interdisciplinarity of traditional subjects and the creation of new subjects which take into account the interests and experiences of learners).

Therefore, the NCC 2003 put a special focus on student learning and, for the first time, emphasised that learning might take place not only at the school but also in other spheres of social life. From a self-regulatory perspective, the issues mentioned above are important because the learning process is also influenced - to varying extents - by environmental factors (Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman, 2000). Several aspects of the school experience, such as student- and learning-centred teaching styles and methods, impact the development of self-regulated learning skills. These factors are external to the learner but might lead an individual to become self-regulated in their learning process. According to the NCC 2003, digital tools and learning resources, the environment in which the student learns at home, teacher-related in-class actions (e.g., teacher evaluation and feedback), and the assigned tasks might

encourage students to self-regulate, take responsibility for and become autonomous in their learning process.

The NCC 2007 represented an approach "according to which teaching is but the organisation of the learning efforts of students: it's planning, control, regulation and assessment" (p. 7655). Therefore, the NCC 2007 was highly learning-centred and required teachers to take on new roles and responsibilities. The NCC 2007 stated that from a differentiated learning perspective, it is particularly important for teachers[3]:

- to give priority to those organisational solutions that promote the development of intrinsic motivation and students' self-regulatory mechanisms for learning
- to optimise the active participation of students in their learning process
- to differentiate learning (in the assigned tasks, their solutions, teacher assistance, monitoring and assessment) in a way that suits individual students
- to use information and communication technologies and computers as they offer a rich potential for learning
- to facilitate the exploration of learners' prior knowledge, skills and attitudes and provide opportunities for correcting any errors and reorganising knowledge

Therefore, the role of the teacher got increased attention in the 2007 version. Teachers played a vital role in creating learning environments that facilitate students' learning and motivate students to accept responsibility for their learning. From a self-regulatory perspective, it is important because students might make changes in their learning based on the feedback, evaluations and advice received from their teacher (Zumbrunn et al., 2011). Therefore, as the NCC 2007 highlighted, it is pivotal for teachers to constantly monitor and reflect on their own teaching and learners' learning processes. Teachers who know the motives, abilities, interests and learning habits of their students can effectively manage the tasks of organising learning. This process requires qualified teachers and a wide range of educational resources (books, printed materials, IT programs, and software).

The NCC 2012 used the exact description and only extended it with the basic principles of effective learning development. According to the NCC 2012, the primary role of the school is:

- to identify the learning difficulties of pupils and help them solve their problems
- to understand the personality and socio-cultural background of the pupil in order to prevent additional learning problems

[3] The NCC 2007 listed ten important issues; however, only the ones relevant to the topic of this dissertation are emphasised.

- to encourage the use of motivating and effective learning management methods, including games (e.g., chess, logic games)

The NCC 2020 mixed all the previously mentioned issues (i.e., learning- and learner-centeredness, acceptance of individual differences, and extended teaching roles) and significantly expanded the description of differentiated learning support. It put a strong emphasis on active learning, modern forms of learning and methodological solutions, and a special focus on various forms of pedagogical evaluation as these can help students effectively develop self-regulatory learning strategies.

Another novelty element of the NCC 2020 is that it started to view learning as a shared responsibility and task of various agents of the learning process and involved the school community, the learner, the teacher and parents in the achievement of learning and educational objectives. It acknowledges that effective education can only be achieved with parents' active involvement and contribution. On the one hand, schools and teachers have to help parents with the education of their children. On the other hand, teachers need information only parents can provide to carry out educational tasks. The information received may help teachers identify the factors that promote or hinder students' development.

4.3.1.4 Self-regulation in general education goals

Even though there are some striking differences between the NCCs, they share some common features. Each document starts with a description of general educational goals or development tasks. NCC 1995 listed seven development tasks, eight were defined in NCC 2003 and nine in NCC 2007. The 2012 version specified 12 general education goals, which were used – without any modifications – in the 2020 version. The NCC (2012, p. 10640) described these development areas as "incorporating traditional values together with the 21st century's new societal needs." Table 7 lists all the general educational goals presented in each version of the NCC to illustrate the changes performed over the years. The following sections will provide detailed information about those shared educational goals relevant to the present dissertation.

Table 7 illustrates that the general educational goals have broadened their scope throughout the years; however, some have been present since the NCC 1995. One of these development fields is called *learning to learn*. Therefore, teaching students how to learn has been an important task for schools since 1995. The documents recognised that many learning components could be taught and that every teacher's responsibility is to teach students to learn. This includes the potential for teaching and acquiring self-regulation abilities.

Significantly, the school environment emerges as the pivotal setting for cultivating this competence, a notion also emphasised by Zimmerman (2008).

Table 7

General Educational Goals and Development Tasks

NCC 1995	NCC 2003	NCC 2007	NCC 2012	NCC 2020
Knowledge on homeland and ethnography	Self-image and Self-knowledge	Self-image and Self-knowledge	Ethics	Ethics
Connecting to Europe and the world	Homeland and Peoples	Homeland and Peoples	National consciousness and patriotic education	National consciousness and patriotic education
Environmental education	European Identity - Universal Culture	European Identity - Universal Culture	Education for Citizenship and Democracy	Education for Citizenship and Democracy
Communication culture	Environmental education	Education for Active Citizenship and Democracy	The development of self-knowledge and community skills	The development of self-knowledge and community skills
Physical and mental health	Information and communication technologies	Economic Education	Family life education	Family life education
Learning	Learning	Education for Environmental Awareness	Physical and mental health education	Physical and mental health education
Career orientation	Physical and mental health	Learning to Learn	Responsibility, volunteering	Responsibility, volunteering
	Preparing for Adulthood	Physical and mental health	Sustainability and environmental awareness	Sustainability and environmental awareness
		Preparing for Adulthood	Career orientation	Career orientation
			Economics and financial education Media literacy education	Economics and financial education Media literacy education
			Learning to Learn	Learning to Learn

Note. The educational goals appear in the same order as they are listed in the original documents.

Looking at this development area – which was just called *learning* in the 1995 and 2003 versions – it is clear that the definition of learning and teaching underwent some changes throughout the years. The 1995 NCC stated, "learning is the modification of the psyche in response to external factors, not just the acquisition of knowledge and the operation of attention and memory." Thus, it completely omitted internal influences while defining the term learning. The NCC 1995 recognised that many aspects of learning could be taught, and

teachers are responsible for teaching learners how to learn. The analysis revealed that the NCC 1995 considered the following self-regulatory processes as teachable: time and environmental structuring, planning, and some – mainly (meta) cognitive – practising methods and techniques (e.g., developing reading comprehension, strengthening memory, developing appropriate recording methods, the need and habit of self-cultivation). The NCC 1995 version also highlighted the school library as an important setting and tool for developing learning autonomy and emphasised that to develop learning, teachers need to get to know their students (e.g., their preferred learning styles and study habits) and take into account their age and individual characteristics of cognition. Teachers then can decide the best – object-related and active, demonstrative-visual, and abstract-verbal – pathways for development. Interestingly, no other characteristic feature is considered while teaching students how to learn.

In the 2003 NCC, the *learning to learn* development field appeared under the name *learning*. The role of the teacher was broadened as 1) to evoke interest in students about various topics, 2) to give guidance on how to acquire the school material, 3) to teach learners how to learn with the main aim of developing student autonomy with special emphasis on creating favourable external conditions. Making students learn the methods and techniques of efficient learning involved: utilising prior knowledge and experience, designing individualised methods and procedures of learning, learning the method of group work and the importance of cooperative work, enhancing memory, improving one's way of thinking and developing the desire for and habit of self-education (the Hungarian version uses the term *önművelés*), getting to know the tools of lifelong learning, acquiring its methods, and developing basic skills. The 2003 version emphasised that students should become regular library users and learn to use the services of the school library and the library system.

The 2007 version of the NCC listed all these previously mentioned processes, but their rank order was different. One of the most striking differences is that developing the desire for and habit of self-education (the Hungarian version uses the term *önművelés* again) came into the main focus, and it was the NCC 2007 where the phrase *learning to learn* was first used in NCC history. The Hungarian version of the NCC documents use the term *tanulás tanítása*, which can be literally translated as the teaching of learning. There is a slight difference between these two phrases, as *learning to learn* implies a student-initiated and student-led process, and the *teaching of learning* requires authoritative figures who try to teach these learning skills to their students.

Compared to the 1995 version, the 2003 and 2007 versions highlighted that next to the school library, its IT base represents an important learning context and tool for learning. The NCC 2007 acknowledged that IT tools and various e-learning aids significantly transformed the learning process. The knowledge of and access to these information sources are seen as individual forms of learning. In addition, for the first time, the NCC 2007 emphasised that learning can also be organised outside school. It lists museums, exhibition halls, art performances and outdoor in general as the most important learning spaces.

In the 2012 version, the description of the *learning to learn* educational goal became much shorter in structure compared to the 2003 and 2007 versions. In the 2003 version, this section consisted of 483 words; in 2007, it involved 526 words; and in 2012, the number of words was reduced to 117. Content-wise, however, it included all goals that had been formulated in previous versions and, in addition, involved the idea that an essential part of teaching various learning skills is to increase the effectiveness of learning and evaluate the quality of knowledge.

To sum up, *learning to learn* encompasses key features of self-regulated learning. The Core Curriculum (2012, p.12) emphasises the role of the teacher in the teaching of the "ability to pursue and persist in learning, organise one's own learning, both individually and in groups, including effective management of time and information; to recognise the needs and opportunities and to know the process of learning." *Learning to learn* is characterised as an important, learnable skill which involves one's awareness of his or her suitable learning strategies and one's strengths and weaknesses. Taking control of one's learning as acquiring, processing, and assimilating new knowledge, searching for new learning opportunities, and asking for advice and support, if necessary, are essential for lifelong learning.

4.3.1.5 Self-regulation and the key competences

The "Key Competences" section has been part of the NCC since 2007. Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union on *Key competences for lifelong learning* (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006) consists of eight elements individuals need for a successful life and lifelong learning. The Hungarian National Curriculum rephrased these and defined nine key competences in the 2007 and 2012 versions and seven in the 2020 version (see Table 8 for the complete list of competences).

One of these competences was called *Effective independent learning* in the 2007 and 2012 versions, and *Learning competence* in the 2020 NCC. The definition of the *Effective independent learning* competence involved numerous references to various self-regulatory

processes. “Effective and autonomous learning requires that individuals know and understand their own learning strategies, strengths and weaknesses in their skills and competences, and are able to identify educational and training opportunities and guidance/support available to them” (NCC 2007, p. 7648). The document stated that this competence requires persistence, self-confidence, a positive attitude, and motivation. The following components of self-regulated learning could be identified in the definition of this competence: strategic planning and goal setting (organising one’s own learning), prior knowledge activation (building on prior learning and life experiences), acquiring, processing and assimilating new knowledge and using it in a wide range of new situations. This competence also requires time and effort in planning and control of context, help-seeking behaviour (seeking support and guidance when needed), self-awareness (recognising the needs and opportunities), monitoring progress towards goals (knowing the learning process), and self-assessment (evaluating own work).

Table 8

Key Competences in NCC documents

The original list of key competences	NCC 2007	NCC 2012	NCC 2020
Communication in the mother tongue	Communication in the Mother Tongue	Communication in the Mother Tongue	Learning competences
Communication in foreign languages	Communication in Foreign Languages	Communication in Foreign Languages	Communication competences (mother tongue and foreign languages)
Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology	Mathematical Competence	Mathematical Competence	Digital competences
Digital competence	Competences in Natural Science	Competences in Natural Science	Mathematical and thinking competences
Learning to learn	Digital Competence	Digital Competence	Personal and interpersonal competences
Social and civic competences	Effective independent learning	Social and Civic Competences	Competences for creativity, creative work, self-expression and cultural awareness
Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship	Social and Civic Competences	Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship	Employability, innovation and entrepreneurship competences
Cultural awareness and expression	Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship	Aesthetic and Artistic Awareness and Expression	
	Aesthetic and Artistic Awareness and Expression	Effective independent learning	

According to the 2012 version, other prerequisites for effective and autonomous learning are the development of individual learning strategies, the usage of ICT as a learning tool, the ability to maintain motivation, focus attention and critical thinking about the purpose and aim of learning. The NCC 2012 also highlighted the importance of individual work, cooperation with others, and knowledge sharing. The description, therefore, covers several elements of self-regulated learning but does not explain these specifically, does not provide real guidance and does not give practical advice for (language) teachers on how to develop these skills in students or incorporate them into their lessons.

The *Communication in Foreign Languages* competence section also emphasises that students should become lifelong learners, and in order to become one, they should acquire the strategies and tools for independent learning. The section highlighted the role non-formal learning settings play in the language learning process. Self-regulated learning in the 21st century is also intertwined with *Digital Competence*. Technology is an effective tool for students to enhance their learning. Self-regulated learners have the skills for using ICT tools effectively, and various ICT tools help the development of self-regulation. The 2012 NCC states that students should use ICTs confidently, creatively, and critically. This competence involves the recognition, evaluation, storage, production, presentation and exchange of information; and communication and networking via the Internet.

Compared to the previous versions, a striking difference is that the newest 2020 version completely rewrote and reordered the pre-existing competences but only listed them without providing any description. As opposed to the 2012 version, where key competences for learning were ranked last, learning competence was listed first in the 2020 version. The 2020 version covers independent (language) learning but remains in its list-like description.

4.3.1.6 Self-regulation in various subject areas

Ten subject areas were defined in the first four versions of the NCC. Their names were almost identical in all versions, but their content differed. In the 1995 version, these subject areas were characterised by: the content to be taught, developmental requirements and competencies, and the minimum outcome level or minimum level of achievement students had to reach at the end of 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th grade. In the 2003 and 2007 versions, the specific content features were omitted. Instead, some general principles and objectives were defined, and development tasks were set in relation to each subject area. The NCC 2012 and NCC 2020 characterised the structure of each subject area again. The content, principle, goals, development tasks, and general competencies were highlighted and organised along the three

phases of education: the phase of primary education (Grades 1-4 and Grades 5-8) and the phase of secondary education (Grades 9-12).

In the NCC 2020, the term subject areas (*műveltségi területek* in Hungarian) was changed to learning areas (*tanulási területek* in Hungarian), indicating that the focus is no more on content elements but rather on the learning process, which is reflected in the length of its chapters. Four of the nine direct references to self-regulation appear in the living foreign languages section in the NCC 2020. Self-regulation also appeared in the introductory sections of *Ethnography and ethnology* and twice in *Visual arts* subjects. In *Ethnography and ethnology*, self-regulation development appears as a task for teachers: "During the educational process, the teacher must strive to develop self-regulated learning in their learners and coordinate the learning process" (NCC 2020, p. 357).

In the *Visual art* section, it is identified as a goal of learning:

> A further principle of visual education, which is also reflected in the learning outcomes of the subject, is that in addition to individual task solving, there is room for creative and inclusive group activities, as group work helps self-awareness and *self-regulation*, self-evaluation, and develops listening abilities (NCC 2020, p. 416, emphasis added).

> Visual education is an extremely important part of students' personal development, as the activities are based on the learning-by-doing principle, help the emotional enrichment of students, develop empathy, intuition and have a quality-sensitive and self-demanding effect, which is undoubtedly one of the pillars of a self-constructive and *self-regulating* individual and community (NCC 2020, p. 407, emphasis added).

A surprising fact is that self-regulation explicitly appears twice in the *Ethics/Religious and moral education* section as an overall learning outcome (general requirement) in grades 1-4 and 5-8. By the end of grade 4, students are expected to recognise and name their emotional states, identify the characteristic features of their behaviour, set goals and define the steps needed to achieve these goals. As part of the self-regulatory outcome, students can identify their weaknesses and believe these can be improved. For that reason, students set short-term goals to improve their knowledge and skills. While striving towards achieving goals, students are expected to exercise self-control and reward themselves for working hard and reaching the set goals. From a self-regulatory perspective, by the end of the 8th grade, within the framework of ethics and religious education, students are expected to understand the concept and characteristics of their identity, distinguish between their real and virtual identity and make appropriate choices about the information they share about themselves online. Students are required to develop a reflective learning practice, initiate independent

learning and realistically describe the impact of their emotional states on their learning process.

The analysis revealed that the learner is at the centre of all the NCC 2020 learning areas. It is evident from the text that when creating the content of education, teachers have to consider the motives, needs, interests, and goals of their students, their age, individual characteristic features, background and past experiences. Therefore, the document builds on the fact that each student is unique regarding their skills, wills, self-regulation strategies and processes and academic environment, a finding consistent with Weinstein et al.'s (2000) strategic learning model. According to Weinstein and his colleagues (2000), students need skill, will, and self-regulation to be effective and efficient learners in various educational environments. The NCC learning areas also focus on various skills, not only content knowledge but also basic *skills*, such as writing, reading, numeracy, and the use of IT tools, and various study skills like goal-setting, notetaking, skimming and scanning, and the ability to recognise one's strengths and weaknesses. *Will* involves personal motivation, feelings of enjoyment while learning, subjective task value, and self-beliefs like a student's confidence in themselves, self-efficacy, and persistence and effort put into learning. *Self-regulation* refers to the management of each of these factors. The NCC requires students to strategically plan their learning process, seek help, monitor, and evaluate their learning progress on cognitive, affective and behavioural levels.

4.3.1.7 Self-regulation in the foreign language learning section

In 1995, teaching the first foreign language started in the fifth grade at the latest, so at the age of 11, and continued throughout compulsory education. In other words, in 1995, all learners attending school in Hungary were obliged to learn a foreign language for at least six years. As the document emphasised, at least one foreign language had to be taught to the degree that enabled the learner to use it in everyday situations. The document also advised schools to start teaching the foreign language one or more years earlier if the conditions (available teacher and teaching resources) allowed it. The Council of Europe's (2001) *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) recommendations were followed while the general foreign language requirements were developed, which is an international standard that describes language ability and proficiency.

The second and third versions of the NCC put the development of communicative language competence into focus. Studying a foreign language was compulsory for all pupils in general education from the fourth grade to the end of compulsory education. However,

schools were allowed to offer foreign language lessons before fourth grade if they had the appropriate conditions. Language learning in the first five grades was primarily a playful introduction to foreign languages. The NCC 2003 defined the minimum proficiency levels students had to achieve and aligned these with the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.*

In the case of the first foreign language, students were expected to reach A1- level by the end of 6th grade, A1 level by the end of 8th grade and B1 level by the end of grade 12 and A2 level in the second foreign language. The regulation remained the same in the 2007 version of the NCC. The NCC 2012 stated that learning the first foreign language is compulsory from grade 4, and the second foreign language learning may start in grade 7. According to the NCC 2020, teaching a second foreign language may start in the 9th grade. There are some differences in output requirements, as, at the end of grade 8, the previously set A1 level was raised to A2 level.

The foreign language learning section of the newest NCC is much more detailed than the descriptions in the previous versions. One of the main reasons is that even though the text is based on the CEFR, it is not taken literally but adapted to the language needs of various groups of learners. It specifically defines the features of foreign language learning at various levels and stages (grade 4, grades 5-8, grades 9-12) of education. In addition to the principles and objectives of teaching the subject, the NCC 2020 details, by grade, the main learning topics and the learning outcomes to be achieved by the end of each phase. These pre-defined outcomes guide teachers on lesson planning (i.e., what is expected of them, and what activities they should include in their language lessons).

One of the main aims of teaching a foreign language is "for the learner to acquire language learning strategies and to become an active, independent, self-regulated language learner" and to "understand that, as languages are constantly changing, the knowledge acquired must be constantly developed in order to meet the needs of various communication situations" (NCC 2020, p. 315). Becoming an active, independent, self-regulated language learner is a prerequisite for establishing the foundations for lifelong learning. Therefore, learner-centeredness plays an important role in foreign language teaching in the NCC 2020 as it places the learner at the centre of the teaching and learning process.

Learning-centeredness is also reflected in new assessment methods detailed in the NCC 2020. Alongside teacher evaluation, students have to learn the principles of self-evaluation. Therefore, setting own goals and reflecting on the learning process and outcomes is an important element of the learning and teaching process. Teachers have to support the

development of self-management and self-reflection, as well as the enhancement of personal autonomy, self-initiated openness and initiation, which goes beyond the school context. The document takes into account that foreign languages can be learnt outside the school setting through everyday activities, either independently or in cooperation with others. “In order to ensure self-regulated and sustainable language development, it is essential to build on extra-curricular activities in language teaching, thus making language learning goals alive and tangible” (NCC 2020, p. 315). Teachers should pay close attention to the effectiveness of the learning process when making decisions about their classroom practices. They should provide lessons that are as personalised as possible, differentiated according to the individual learner’s needs, and integrate 21st century tools and content.

An important aim of the NCC 2020 is to ensure that language learners are able to use the language in real-life situations, according to their communicative goals and needs and in situations related to their personal and professional life. Learners should “achieve a level of language competence in an institutional context that will enable them to continue their studies in higher education, and which can be used for learning, leisure, personal and professional purposes, both in the natural and digital spaces” (NCC 2020, p. 314). In teaching a living foreign language, active and activity-based learning, opportunities for language learning outside school, and the positive opportunities offered by digital technology are all included.

Another related finding is that out-of-school learning has become increasingly important throughout the years. The NCC 2020 especially highlighted that students should be given tasks meant to be solved at home to increase their autonomy. This finding aligns with Beishuizen and Steffens (2011), who stated that the interest in self-regulation research has increased because lifelong learning mainly occurs in informal learning environments. This finding is also important as: 1) more and more people realise that learning takes place outside of the classroom, unattended, and primarily under the direction of the students (Bjork et al., 2013), and 2) pinpoints that the NCC documents intend to provide and create up-to-date and forward-looking recommendations regarding the learning process.

The use of digital tools and platforms in the target language is also a skill that plays a prominent role among the specific foreign learning outcomes in the NCC2020. New in the NCC 2020 is the inclusion of computer-based language learning, the benefits of using digital technology and electronic resources in the language learning process. Smartphones, mobile applications, video games, and learning software are seen to motivate learners and the learning process and to contribute to the acquisition of new language elements. The document also states that while learning languages, learners can use the knowledge they have acquired

in other subjects, and languages also help students to acquire interdisciplinary knowledge across various subjects. In general, ICT tools promote autonomous language learning, which means that learners are able to develop their language skills autonomously and successfully acquire additional languages. It is important to note here that according to Benson (2011), self-regulation is not only about regulating learning strategies but also about managing various learning resources.

The NCC 2020 offers grade-specific foreign language teaching characteristics. In grade 4, learning has to be experiential and activity-based, focusing on developing communicative skills. Special attention must be paid to developing a positive attitude towards language learning. In grades 5-8, foreign language education plays a significant role in maintaining and strengthening motivation toward language learning, expanding the possibilities of language use and building further self-confidence in language usage. Teachers should explore students' individual differences and needs and modify the learning content accordingly. Current topics and news should be involved in language lessons to reduce the distance between classroom and real-life language use. In addition, the incorporation of info-communication tools, digital language learning resources, tools, and mobile applications is also emphasised. At this education level, students are expected to consciously use and choose the basic language learning strategies and exploit the language learning opportunities outside the classroom, mainly using their language skills to build relationships.

Foreign language learning in grades 9-12 involves the expansion of lifelong learning, self-regulated learning processes, strategies and attitudes. At this stage, the importance of informal and non-formal language learning opportunities outside the school environment and trips abroad are stressed. Thanks to the Internet, learners at this educational level are expected to 1) play an active, autonomous role in their language learning process, in addition, 2) identify their individual language learning goals and strengths, 3) consciously use language learning strategies, 4) maintain a positive attitude towards language learning, 5) prepare for lifelong learning with age-appropriate tools, and 6) actively participate in their language learning process.

To sum up, the document constantly stressed the importance of developing an independent lifelong language learner. Therefore, it is not surprising that various self-regulatory strategies can be identified throughout the NCC 2020 document's foreign language section. The analysis revealed that students should be taught to set goals, use appropriate learning strategies, monitor and evaluate their progress and consciously modify their learning process if necessary. Several self-regulatory strategies are listed as being important: pupils

need to understand the value of language learning (value activation), put extra effort into language preparation, believe in themselves and their capabilities (judgments of efficacy), observe their learning process (self-observations of behaviour), asks for help (help-seeking behaviour), manage the environment (control and evaluation of the context), and actively and consciously seeks for learning opportunities (behavioural awareness). Table 9 summarises the identified self-regulatory processes and their definitions taken from Pintrich's (2000) model and, in addition, features grade-specific examples especially taken only from the foreign language learning section of the NCC 2020 document.

Table 9

Identified Self-regulation Components in the NCCs

SRL processes	Definitions of the various processes taken from Pintrich (2000)	Examples from the NCC 2020
Target goal setting	"[…] involves the setting of task-specific goals that can be used to guide cognition in general and monitoring in particular" (p. 457)	The student sets language learning goals for him/herself (Grades 5-8). Learners set long-term language learning goals for themselves (Grades 9 -12).
Activation of relevant prior content knowledge	"[…] actively can search their memory for relevant prior knowledge before they actually begin performing the task" (p. 457)	When learning new words and phrases, the learner is able to recognise previously learned words and phrases (Grade 4).
Knowledge of strategy	"[…] includes all the knowledge individuals can acquire about various procedures and strategies for cognition, including memorizing, thinking, reasoning, problem solving, planning, studying, reading, writing" (p. 458)	When learning new words and phrases, learners are able to use appropriate learning strategies (Grade 4) The learner uses the language learning strategies effectively (Grades 9-12).
Cognitive control and regulation	"[…] includes the types of cognitive and metacognitive activities that individuals engage in to adapt and change their cognition" (p. 459)	The learner can independently correct errors that hinder comprehension (Grades 9-12) The student usually notices and corrects his mistakes (Grades 5-8).
Cognitive Reaction and Reflection	"[…] learners' judgements and evaluations of their performance on the task as well as their attributions for performance" (p. 460)	The learner can assess his/her language progress (Grades 5-8). The learner builds on his/her mistakes to improve his/her language skills (Grades 9-12).
Judgments of efficacy	"[…] individuals' judgments of their capabilities to perform, a task have consequences for affect, effort, persistence, performance, and learning" (p. 462)	The learner shows autonomy in his/her linguistic production and reception, is less and less hindered by various factors, believes in himself/herself (Grades 9-12). The learner is confident in using digital tools and platforms to develop their language skills (Grades 9-12).
Task value activation	"[…] task value beliefs include perceptions of the relevance, utility, and importance of the task" (p. 462)	The student understands the importance of language knowledge, and her motivation to learn the language continues to grow (Grades 9-12).
Interest activation	"[…] learners also have perceptions of their personal interest in the task or in the content domain of the task" (p. 463)	The learner knows words and vocabulary from content in other areas of knowledge relevant to the learner's interests (Grades 5-8).
Motivational Reaction and Reflection	"[…] After the students have completed a task, they may have emotional reactions to the outcome (e.g., happiness at success, sadness at failure) as well as reflect on the reasons for the outcome; that is, make attributions for the outcome" (p. 465)	The learner uses self-assessment methods to evaluate his/her language skills (Grades 9-12).
Behavioural forethought and	"[…] the formation of intentions is linked to subsequent behavior (i.e., time	The learner consciously chooses language learning strategies to

planning	and effort planning or management)" (p. 466)	maintain and improve their language skills (Grades 9-12).
Self-observations of behaviour	"[…] some form of behavioral observation and record keeping in terms of studying so as to provide useful information for future attempts to change learning and study habits" (p. 467)	The learner tries to work in a self-regulatory way to achieve his/her goals (Grades 9-12).
Behavioural Monitoring and Awareness	"[…] students can monitor their time management and effort levels, and attempt to adjust their effort to fit the task" (p. 467)	Learners consciously increase their effort to achieve their language learning goal (Grades 9-12).
Behavioural Control and Regulation	"[…] students may regulate their behaviour they expend studying based on their monitoring of their behavior and the difficulty of the task" (p. 468)	The learner recognises his/her shortcomings and mistakes, compensates for them more and more effectively and improves them by using the strategies learned (Grades 9-12).
Help-seeking behaviour	"[…] a behavioral strategy because it involves the person's own behavior, but it also involves contextual control because it necessarily involves the procurement of help from others in the environment and as such is also a social interaction" (p. 468)	The student works with peers in pairs and groups to achieve language learning goals (Grades 5-8). The learner becomes more aware of the use of self-, teacher- or peer-assessment to maintain and improve his/her language skills (Grades 9-12)
Persistence and increased effort	"[…] classic measure used in achievement motivation studies as an indicator of motivation" (p. 468)	The learner uses and creates short, simple texts in the target language during leisure activities (Grade 4). The student uses extra-curricular language learning opportunities to achieve his/her language learning goals. (Grades 9-12).
Behavioural Reaction and Reflection	"[…] students can make judgments about their behavior and in terms of reaction, the main behavior is choice" (p. 469)	The student recognises and seeks to take advantage of extra-curricular and playful language learning opportunities (Grades 5-8).
Perceptions of context and task	"[…] these perceptions are really cognitions, not aspects of the context, but the focus of the perceptions is outward, away from the individual's own cognition or motivation, and toward the tasks and contexts" (p. 469)	The student recognises content written, read and heard in a foreign language outside class (Grade 4).
Control of the tasks or context	"[…] attempts to control or structure the environment in ways that will facilitate goals and task completion" (p. 471)	The student works with peers on tasks to achieve his or her objectives (Grade 4).
Evaluation of tasks and context	"[…] these evaluations can be made on the basis of general enjoyment and comfort, as well as more cognitive criteria regarding learning and achievement and these evaluations can feed back into phase 1 components when the student approaches a new task" (p. 472)	The student can evaluate the success of a task with help (Grade 4)

The discovery that the Hungarian Core Curriculum explicitly emphasises self-regulated learning reflects a forward-looking and student-centred approach to education. This emphasis is crucial for several reasons:

1. *Lifelong learning*: The curriculum acknowledges that learning is a lifelong endeavour by highlighting the significance of self-regulation. These abilities help students deal with new challenges, seize continuing learning opportunities, and adjust to a world that is changing quickly (Zimmerman, 2000).
2. *Holistic skill development*: Self-regulated learners acquire skills that go beyond the confines of the classroom (Sandberg et al., 2011). The capacity to direct one's learning process, establish objectives, track advancement, and adapt strategies is useful in a variety of life circumstances, developing well-rounded individuals capable of continued growth.
3. *Autonomy and ownership*: By encouraging self-regulated learning, educators can help students take charge of their education (Oates, 2019). As they gain the capacity to tailor their education to suit their interests and requirements, students go from being passive recipients of knowledge to active participants.
4. *Flexible learning environments*: The inclusion of self-regulation in the curriculum encourages teachers to design flexible learning environments that accommodate various learning styles and paces (Oates, 2019). As a result, a more diverse and inclusive educational system may be created.

The insights gained from these findings provide a valuable roadmap for the practical implementation of self-regulated learning principles in teaching and teacher education, thereby enriching the incorporation of these principles into educational practices. Guided by my research, schools can implement targeted support for struggling students. In essence, the data serve as a guiding compass for developing interventions like study skills seminars and individualised coaching sessions. These targeted interventions might equip learners with the necessary tools to overcome obstacles and improve their self-regulation abilities. In addition, the present research has implications for practising teachers who want to increase their effectiveness. Based on the results, participating in targeted professional development seminars can enable instructors to use self-regulated learning strategies in their classrooms realistically. Lastly, the implications of these findings extend to reshaping assessment practices. Along with standard content evaluation, instructors might reorganise assessment techniques to measure the use of self-regulation strategies. This evolution could entail, but is

not limited to, evaluating students' abilities to organise, monitor, and modify their learning strategies—essential skills for developing into competent self-regulated learners.

4.4 Conclusions from study 1

Specifically, the following research question was addressed in Study 1: What does the Hungarian National Core Curriculum say about self-regulated learning? This study investigated the place of self-regulation in Hungarian educational sources using content analysis and tried to offer a better understanding of the approaches to self-regulation in the Hungarian context. As argued, the successful development of self-regulation also depends on curricular factors.

The analysis has shown that numerous references to self-regulation and its associated components are present throughout the examined documents. From a self-regulatory perspective, *effective independent learning, foreign language competence, and digital competence* turned out to be the most relevant key competence and *learning to learn* was identified as the most relevant educational goal. As underpinned in the results and discussion chapter, the description of these competences and goals contains multiple references to various self-regulation components: so cognitive, affective, motivational, behavioural and contextual self-regulation processes could be identified (Pintrich, 2000).

After reviewing the NCC documents, it can be seen that both teachers and parents are seen as playing an essential role in developing self-regulation. Teachers should guide pupils in planning their work, setting goals, and evaluating the chosen working method and strategy. They should help students to recognise those ways of learning – those strategies and techniques – which suit them the best and guide them to use these consciously. In addition, they should direct students through the learning process by encouraging them and giving them constant assessment. Therefore, the primary role of teachers is to guide students, develop their self-regulatory skills, and prepare them for lifelong learning and future careers.

In line with this finding, an increased parental role and involvement could be identified and is required. The importance of open school was emphasised in the 2007 version for the first time; it pinpointed that effective pedagogy can only be achieved with the active involvement of parents. The 2020 version emphasises: 1) the objective information of parents, 2) the preparation of textual assessments for parents on subject progress; in addition, it covers the relationship between students, teachers and parents based on mutual respect and open dialogue and highlights the continuous involvement of parents in the learning process at school.

To sum up, the analysis revealed that the newest NCC documents are explicitly modern in terms of self-regulated learning development. The NCC 2020 document's contents, goals, requirements, and recommendations can enhance students' self-regulation. The NCC documents suggest that self-regulation can be developed through teaching in a self-regulatory way (teachers modelling self-regulated behaviour), teaching for self-regulation (planning and developing lessons which foster self-regulation), and creating an environment which helps self-regulation development (creating an atmosphere where students are open to help-seeking, believe in their learning skills, and involve modern IT resources). The document emphasises the importance of learning outside the classroom as it provides sufficient space for 1) practising school material, 2) improving study skills, and 3) creating study habits. In addition, learning outside the classroom allows autonomous work as students can use the school material independently in situations of their choice. The document acknowledges that by teaching students how to self-regulate their learning, they will be equipped with the tools they need to succeed within and beyond the classroom setting.

5 Self-regulated language learning at home (Study 2)

5.1 Research aims and research questions for study 2

The literature review – as well as the findings of study 1 – highlighted that the home environment offers great opportunities for self-regulation development, which is an important predictor of academic success and achievement (Boekaerts & Minnaert, 1999; Brody & Ge, 2001). The primary objective of this questionnaire study was to examine the interrelationships among home learning experiences – especially focusing on homework completion – and the students' self-regulated learning behaviour, as well as the mediating role of the students' motivation toward English language learning in general and perceived responsibility. Therefore, the questionnaire focused on the self-regulation benefits of home learning and the home environments' influence on the students' self-regulation processes and, in addition, investigated the Hungarian English language learners' self-regulation processes at home while completing their homework assignments.

Homework completion was placed at the centre of the research because, in the Hungarian context, it is an activity that represents a real and common learning activity for most students. Investigating self-regulation in this context allows for a study that reflects real-life situations, where students need to independently manage their learning process outside of the formal classroom setting. These are tasks that students must do at home without the teacher's supervision, under their own control and regulation. Therefore, students decide *why* (motives, goals, plans), *how* (methods, strategies, various activities), *when* (timing, time constraints), *where* (physical environment), and *with whom* (social assistance) they perform that given task and so requires increased self-regulation. In addition, homework assignments offer a standardised learning task that all participants must undertake, allowing for a more comparative analysis across different students, age groups, and educational settings. This comparative approach enabled me to identify patterns and differences in self-regulation practices, providing a comprehensive understanding of how students approach and engage in self-regulated learning during homework completion. Lastly, the literature on education and learning often highlights the potential benefits of homework assignments in developing students' self-regulation skills (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011).

The data gathered from this study may help teachers recognise the learning development opportunities offered by the home learning environment and understand how the home environment can promote self-regulated learning. In terms of theoretical contribution to the field, the results offer novel insight into self-regulated learning at home context, focusing

on homework completion. The study attempts to fill the gap proposed by Pintrich (2000), namely that more research is needed to examine self-regulation development in natural contexts and how various contextual features influence self-regulated learning. Thus, the study adds to an understanding of the role of the home learning environment in students' self-regulated learning and so tries to deepen our theoretical knowledge of self-regulation in natural contexts.

Therefore, this study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- To examine the relationship between home learning experiences and various self-regulation processes
- To identify various self-regulation processes applied by Hungarian English language learners while completing their homework assignments

Based on the research objectives, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

RQ 2: What characterises Hungarian primary and secondary school students' self-regulatory strategy use while learning the English language at home?

RQ 2.1: How do language learning experiences at home and self-regulation processes relate to each other in Hungarian school students?

RQ 2.2: Which components of the self-regulated learning process can be identified in school learners' language learning at home while completing their homework assignments?

The first sub-question (RQ 2.1) focuses on examining the relationship between the home environment and self-regulated learning, highlighting how each influences the other. The second sub-question (RQ 2.2) aims to investigate the specific self-regulation strategies that are employed in practice.

5.2 Research design and methods for study 2

The following chapters outline the research design for the second study, starting with the description of the recruited participants. Following that is a description of the instrument used to collect data from the participants. The next section provides a full overview of the piloting process that was undertaken to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collection instrument. Finally, the data analysis procedure used to analyse the data collected from the participants is described.

5.2.1 Participants for study 2

5.2.1.1 Pilot study participants

Although the questionnaire was initially proposed for 11 to 19-year-old English language learners in Hungary, based on the piloting process, the minimum age limit for participation was raised from 11 to 12. A total of 35 Hungarian English language learners were enrolled in the pilot study (see Table 10). The mean age for participants was 15 (standard deviation [SD] = 1.7), with the youngest participant being 12 years of age and the oldest participant being 18 years of age. There were more female (*n* = 24) than male participants (*n* = 11). Participants were predominantly general secondary school students (*n* = 15), vocational secondary school (*n* = 7), and technical students (*n* = 6). In addition, a total number of seven primary school students participated in this study. Participants reported having an average of four English lessons per week (*SD* = 0.9) and seven years of English language learning experience (*SD* = 3.1).

When asked about their English language grades, three participants indicated grade 3, eleven students had grade 4 and twenty-one students grade 5. Most participants (*n* = 30) reported being satisfied with their English grades. Only six learners participated in private English classes; 24 indicated that they had travelled to another country, while 11 participants had never been abroad to an English-speaking country before.

Table 10

The Biodata of the Pilot Study Participants

		Sample distribution		Age		
		N	%	*M* (SD)	Min	Max
Gender						
	Male	11	31.40%	14.90 (2.2)	12	18
	Female	24	68.60%	14.91 (1.4)	12	18
Total sample		35	100.00 %	14.91 (1.68)	12	18

Even though choosing two or three random English classes could yield a higher number of respondents, for the pilot study, I purposefully selected snowball sampling to obtain data from several sources, including participants from different age groups and sexes to represent different grades and schools, as to increase the heterogeneity of the study participants. This sampling enabled the opportunity to reach a more diverse population than the one that a single classroom survey could have accessed. Snowball sampling was used to identify and select a set of initial possible parents with children who fit the study criteria.

These parents were asked to give referrals to other individuals. The parents' permission was obtained in addition to the children's consent as a first step.

The rationale for choosing lower and upper secondary school level, which covers the end of the primary school and secondary school education, i.e., the 10-19-year-old age group, is that in Hungary, students start learning their first foreign language in grade 4 of primary school (NCC, 2020) when they are nine years old. After three years of English language learning, it was presumed that students would be able to reflect on their language learning with the help of prepared questions. It is important to add that the participants who took part in the pilot study were excluded from the main study due to modifications made to the instrument (see Chapter 5.2.2.2 for details).

5.2.1.2 Main study participants

The target population for this questionnaire study comprised of students in Hungary between the ages of 12 and 19 who engage in English language learning. Altogether, 136 respondents completed the questionnaire in the main study, but only 123 were included in the final analysis (see Table 11). Seven responses were excluded from further analysis because they distorted the results and were labelled as outliers. Each participant marked one answer in the whole questionnaire or marked their answers following a specific pattern or sequence. Three participants were excluded because the trustworthiness of their answers was highly questionable. Two participants gave an invalid answer to the question about their age, and one participant used obscene words in his responses. Two additional participants indicated that there were university students who, therefore, did not fulfil the inclusion criteria.

The study participants for the questionnaire study were recruited in two ways. First, four potential English language teachers were contacted through e-mails. Therefore, the study relied on convenience sampling, i.e., I contacted the teachers I had close contact with and tried to reach their students. Parental consent was obtained before questionnaire completion. Second, to reach as many Hungarian students as possible, my social media profile was used to ask parents with children to give permission for their children to complete the questionnaire. In addition, the post on social media asked parents to share the questionnaire with further parents and their children. This type of sampling enabled the opportunity to increase the heterogeneity of the study participants and to reach a more diverse population than the one which a single classroom survey could have accessed.

36 male (29%) and 87 female (71%) students participated in the main study who attend various schools throughout Hungary. The ages of participants varied from 12 to 19

years, with a mean of 15.66 (*SD* = 2,08). Therefore, the study sample included lower secondary education (ISCED 2) and upper secondary level (ISCED 3) English language learners. Lower secondary education comprises grades 5 to 8. Altogether, 35 participants belong to this category: 11 were 6th graders, 8 were 7th graders, and 16 were 8th graders. The number of upper secondary level students, covering grades 9 to 12, is 88 in the main study: 12 students attended 9th grade, 22 were 10th graders, 29 were 11th graders, and 25 were 12th graders.

The English language learning experience of the participants is diverse. Generally, as emphasised in the NCC analysis study (see Chapter 4), in Hungary, students have to start learning a foreign language in the fourth grade and a second language in the ninth grade (NCC, 2020). There was only one 15-year-old participant for whom English was a second language and had only one year of English learning experience. Thirty participants had two to five years of English learning experience, while 34 students reported six to eight years of experience, 27 had nine to ten years of experience, and 30 had 10+ experience. These students presumably started learning languages before school. The average learning experience of respondents was eight years.

Table 11

The Biodata of the Main Study Participants

		Sample distribution		**Age**		
		N	%	*M* (SD)	Min	Max
Gender						
	Male	36	29.30%	15.58 (1.99)	12	19
	Female	87	70.70%	15.69 (2.12)	12	19
Total sample		123	100.00 %	15.66 (2,08)	12	19

The participants reported having an average of four English lessons weekly. Nine participants had grade 3, 19 participants had grade 4, and 95 participants had grade 5 in English language subject. Of the 123 respondents, 108 were satisfied with their grades, while 15 were dissatisfied with their school achievements. The analysis revealed that only a small proportion of participants attended extra private lessons. Altogether 24 respondents (20%) have private tutoring classes; out of these students, 17 are upper-secondary level students. Only seven lower secondary students reported having weekly extra English lessons.

Given the focus of the dissertation on home learning experiences, a separate question aimed to gather information about the time allocated to compulsory English learning at home.

This question inquired about the daily time participants spend on what they consider "actual English learning." Two distinct questions were posed to participants regarding their home learning experiences: a) the amount of time spent learning at home in general, and b) the amount of time spent learning the English language at home. The study revealed that 49% of the participants spend at least an hour daily on homework completion. The average minutes per day that students spend on learning and are academically engaged at home was 55. In addition, 37% of respondents reported being academically engaged for less than 30 minutes daily. The number of minutes students spend actively engaged in English language learning turned out to be surprisingly low. The data showed that participants are engaged in English learning at home for an average of only 13 minutes daily. Only a 19-year-old participant reported spending 60 minutes daily on English language learning, presumably because she was preparing for her school leaving examination. Five other 11th and 12th graders reported spending 35 or 40 minutes daily on language learning. All other participants were engaged in language learning for less than 30 minutes. In fact, 71 participants (58%) reported being academically engaged in language learning for less than 10 minutes daily. More than half of these participants (n = 37) spend less than 5 minutes preparing for their next English lessons. These 37 participants represent the exact 30% of all the respondents.

5.2.2 Methods of data collection for study 2

In this section, the instrument used to collect data in this study is outlined, as well as the procedures that were employed to create and pilot the final instrument. In addition, I will thoroughly discuss the relevant ethical considerations that were diligently addressed throughout this study. First, I will describe in detail the specific instruments that were used to collect data, including any standardised or validated measures. I will also explain how these measures were adapted or modified to meet the specific needs of this study. Following this, I will discuss the validation process, which was conducted to ensure that the instrument was appropriate for use with the target population. Moreover, the modifications made to the instrument as a result of the pilot test are described, and a comprehensive overview of the final version of the instrument is provided, including any changes made and the reasoning behind them. I aim to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings by offering a thorough explanation of the instruments used, processes followed, and quality measures implemented.

5.2.2.1 Instrument

In order to meet the objectives of the study, a specific instrument was developed. The following instruments were needed to fulfil the study aims: 1) a motivation questionnaire to establish the general motivational disposition of students, 2) a perceived responsibility scale for students' learning, 3) a home learning experience questionnaire to measure self-efficacy (students' belief in their capabilities) and expectancy (value home learning as a task that would enhance learning), and 4) a self-regulation questionnaire to measure the extent students can be considered self-regulated learners. Four previously used instruments were used, which cover all the areas relevant to my study:

1. *Motivation questionnaire* (Noels et al., 2000)
2. *Perceived responsibility scale* (Chan et al., 2002)
3. *Home learning questionnaire* (Trautwein et al., 2006)
4. *Self-regulation questionnaire* (Vandevelde et al., 2013; Hungarian version validated by Bacsa, 2012)

Based on the objectives and the systematic review of literature, the following scales from the instruments mentioned above - aligned with the target population and research questions - were used in the present study:

Motivation questionnaire

Noels et al. (2000) investigated French learners' motivation in Canada. The 2000 version of their questionnaire comprises 24 items covering five second language (L2) learning orientations that can be ordered along a continuum: external, introjected, identified, integrated, and intrinsic motivation (see Chapter 2.2.3 for Deci & Ryan, 2000). The participants used a seven-point Likert scale (1 = "does not correspond at all," 7 = "corresponds exactly") to respond to the items reflecting various reasons why students would learn the French language. Four items represented external regulation (e.g., "In order to have a better salary later on"); five introjected regulation (e.g., "Because I would feel guilty if I didn't know French"); four identified regulation (e.g., "Because I think it is important for my personal development"); five integrated regulation (e.g., "Because knowing French is a part of my identity") and six intrinsic motivation (e.g., "For the pleasure I experience when surpassing myself in my second language studies") items were included. In their study, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ranged from .73 to .95.

An adapted version of their *Language Learning Orientation* questionnaire was used for data collection to meet the needs of the current research. Several important revisions were made to the original questionnaire:

1. The word French was changed throughout the items to English language.
2. The phrase second language learning was modified to English language learning.
3. The integrated regulation items were left out because they are related only to second language learning motivation and because the first participants (regardless of age) could not understand and relate to them.
4. The original instrument with its 7-point Likert scale was modified, and a 5-point Likert scale is used instead. The reason behind this decision is manifold but is mainly influenced by the age of the respondents. First, because the questionnaire contains multiple items, a 5-point Likert scale is believed to be manageable for the younger participants. Second, it is easier to understand and identify with the 5-point Likert scale. Last but not least, as a significant proportion of respondents are teenagers, it is believed that they will use their mobile phones to complete the questionnaire. A 5-point Likert scale fits better on the phone screen than a higher-point scale.

Therefore, only 18 items from the original questionnaire were used in the pilot study. The number of items per factor varied between four and five: intrinsic motivation (four items), identified regulation (five items), introjected regulation (five items), and external motivation (four items). The Hungarian version used in the survey was developed by translation and back-translation between Hungarian and English to avoid any possible mistranslation.

Perceived responsibility scale

The perceived responsibility scale was adapted from Chan et al. (2002). The original scale had 13 items and aimed to investigate the participants' views of their responsibilities and those of their teachers in the language learning process. The participants had to use a five-point Likert scale - ranging from "not at all" to "completely" - to mark their answers. The original items were slightly modified to fit the chosen age category and the context of the present study (the original study was conducted in Hong Kong with tertiary students).

The biggest modification performed on the instrument is that the following three items were merged together: choose what materials to use to learn English in your English lessons, choose what activities to use to learn English in your English lessons and decide how long to spend on each activity. These three items were combined to form one in-class related

responsibility, and two relevant items related to getting good grades and achieving good exam results were added to the original instrument. This change was necessary because it is generally accepted that good grades and passing exams are key for students, their parents, and teachers in the Hungarian education system. Altogether 12 items and the same original 5-point Likert scale were used in this study. The participants had to mark their perceived level of responsibility regarding four dimensions of language learning: setting learning objectives, in-class and outside-class learning processes, and learning outcomes.

Home learning questionnaire

Trautwein et al.'s (2006) multi-item instrument is a 48-item questionnaire that measures six home learning facets. The original instrument presented participants with different sentences related to French homework assignments. They had to report the extent of agreement or disagreement with a statement on a four-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = "completely disagree" to 4 = "completely agree". Reliability coefficients for the scales in the original study ranged from .73 to .85.

Appropriate modifications were made in order to achieve the current research objectives. For example, the phrase *French homework assignments* were changed to English homework assignments, and the four-point Likert scale was changed to a 5-point one for the same reasons as discussed in the motivation questionnaire section of this chapter. In addition, the homework concentration scale was left out as it did not work for Trautwein et al. (2006), so they omitted these items from their main study. The remaining items were then translated into Hungarian and back-translated to compare translations with the original items for accuracy. The study adopted 27 items to measure five aspects of home learning. The five subscales are each described in detail above:

1. *Homework effort* (6 items): Items related to homework effort aimed to examine the amount of time, energy and attention put into completing English homework assignments. Example: "I do my best on my English homework."
2. *Homework expectancy component* (6 items): Six items were used to assess participants' self-efficacy, thus their belief in successfully completing English tasks at home. Example: "I always find a way to do my English homework correctly."
3. *Homework value component* (5 items): Regarding the value component, items are expected to check whether students value their home assignments. Thus, I aimed to examine how important English language assignments are for students. Example: "I do not learn much from our English homework."

4. *Perceived quality of homework task selection* (5 items): The subscale includes items which aimed to examine the participants' perspectives on their English language teachers' homework selection quality in their class. Example: "I sometimes feel that our English teacher only sets homework because it is expected of them."
5. *Homework control* (5 items): The last subscale includes items that aimed to examine the participants' perspectives on the negative consequences of not doing homework. Example: "If we do not finish our English language homework, we get into trouble with our teacher."

Self-regulation questionnaire

The original questionnaire, the *Children's Perceived Use of Self-Regulated Learning Inventory*, was developed by Vandevelde et al. (2013). The final version of their questionnaire compromises 80 items. This self-regulation questionnaire for 10-12-year-old students was translated into Hungarian and validated by Bacsa (2012). Therefore, the items were already available in Hungarian. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for Bacsa's items ranged from .64 to .84. In the current research, the participants were asked to rate 21 task-specific (i.e., learning at home) self-regulation strategies by using a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 = "not true at all for me to 5 = "absolutely true for me" with the purpose of rating how often respondents use each self-regulation strategy while completing English assignments:

1. *Task analysis scale* (4 items): Contains items analysing task demands, assessing interest and perceived difficulty of home assignments. Example: "Before I start learning, I ask myself, What do I already know about it?"
2. *Planning scale* (4 items): The scale includes items referring to goal setting, time management and strategy planning. These help students to self-regulate their learning prior to engaging in learning tasks. Example: "Before I start learning, I think of several ways to approach the task and choose the best one."
3. *Motivational strategies scale* (4 items): The scale items are about maintaining interest and about constant positive self-affirmation. Example: "During the learning process, I say to myself: You can do it, just keep working!"
4. *Monitoring scale* (5 items): The items on the monitoring scale relate to the conscious observation of the learning process. Example: "During the learning process, I check whether I understand everything."

5. *Process evaluation scale* (4 items): Process evaluation scale items refer to the conscious evaluation of the learning process. Example: “After I finish my schoolwork, I ask myself: Did I do it right?”

The language of the instrument devised for this research project was Hungarian, the participants’ and the researcher’s shared mother tongue. The questionnaire was designed to keep the statements short and contain simple words to enhance the response rate. Initial data were collected online via a web form. The *Google Docs* online data collection tool was used for gathering primary data, as the completed responses could be collected within a short time, and it was considered an easy way to manage and export the collected data. Participants responded to all survey items using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “not true at all” to 5 = “absolutely true”.

5.2.2.2 Procedures and validating the questionnaire

After the initial draft of the questionnaire was designed, it was validated in a two-stage process. As the first step, an initial version of the questionnaire was formulated by translating the original scale items from English into Hungarian. As a next step, the first round of English translation was discussed with an expert on the topic (my supervisor). This step was crucial, as I combined scales from different questionnaire sources and wanted to align them to establish a fully harmonised survey. Based on her feedback, a reworked version was created. In the next stage, a certified English interpreter translated each item back into English. In two cases, the English back-translations differed significantly from the original English items, leading to adjustments in the Hungarian translation of these specific items based on the remarks received.

Moreover, a think-aloud protocol was used to pilot the instrument for its use in the Hungarian foreign language learning context. Two respondents from the population under scrutiny (11-19-year-old Hungarian English learners) were selected voluntarily to participate. The volunteers were asked to read the questionnaire items one by one and reformulate them in their own words to check their understanding of the items to be applied. They were encouraged to indicate any unclear as well as ambiguous wording or phrasing of the questionnaire items. The first participant in the think-aloud process was an 11-year-old girl to set the minimum age limit for inclusion. Following the interview with her, the minimum age limit was adjusted to 12 due to her struggles in comprehending the questionnaire items. The girl expressed uncertainty and sought clarification several times. As a result, a 12-year-old

was recruited as a next step, who completed the questionnaire without any difficulties. The think-aloud resulted in minor adjustments concerning mainly the wording of the items.

As an additional quality assurance measure, an exploratory assessment of the web-based instrument was conducted prior to distributing invitations for participation in this research study. A 14-year-old boy was asked to complete the online version of the questionnaire and report on any problems related to the web-based design

Subsequently, the questionnaire was validated among a sample of 35 respondents, aged 12 to 18, selected from diverse schools across Hungary. In order to assess the reliability and validity of the questionnaire scales, various statistical analyses were performed using SPSS version 26. The internal consistency of the instrument (see Table 12) was determined using Cronbach's alpha test (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955). The study followed Nunnally (1978), who considered Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher to be an acceptable reliability coefficient. Items with the lowest item-total correlation were deleted first, and the remaining items were reanalysed until no single item's ITC was lower than .30. Principal component analysis was carried out to further examine the scales' psychometric properties and to support the decision related to the deletion of the items. Items loaded on another factor or having weak loadings, in general, were removed.

Table 12

New Reliability Coefficients and Deleted Items

Scales	M	SD	Cronbach's alpha	Items removed	New Cronbach's alpha	Improvement
Intrinsic motivation	3.7	.93	.86	-	-	-
Introjected motivation	3.4	.95	.77	-	-	-
Identified motivation	4.2	.84	.64	8, 5	.75	.11
External motivation	4.2	.64	.53	3, 18	.71	.18
Homework quality scale	3.5	.84	.88	-	-	-
Homework effort scale	3.7	.92	.81	5	.83	.02
Homework expectancy scale	4.2	.74	.73	23, 28, 44	.84	.11
Homework control scale	2.8	1	.71	46	.75	.04
Homework value scale	3.2	1	.82	-	-	-
Task analysis	2.2	1.3	.89	-	-	-
Planning	2.8	1.5	.88	-	-	-
Motivational strategies	2.7	1.4	.70	-	-	-
Monitoring	2.8	1.3	.78	-	-	-
Perceived usefulness of the home environment	4.3	.86	.71			

As it is evident from Table 12, Cronbach's alpha of seven scales was acceptable after the first analysis, so greater than .70, one was slightly below acceptable, and one was problematic with only .53. Column four indicates the number of removed items. Columns five and six show the newly computed reliability coefficients and the improvement achieved by deleting the items. The pilot study resulted in the removal of a total of 9 items. In the final version of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alphas range between .71 and .88, each above the set .70 limit.

Table 13 below summarises the pilot results of Hungarian English language learners' perceptions of their own and their English teachers' responsibilities using a 5-point Likert scale (labelled "Not at all" and "Completely"). Overall, students believe that their English teachers should decide the objectives of the lesson (*M* = 4.49, *SD* = .82), as well as choose the material (*M* = 4.86, *SD* = .43) and activities (*M* = 4.89, *SD* = .32) covered during the lessons. Regarding making progress outside the class, students take almost all the responsibility on themselves (*M* = 4.91, *SD* = .28), leaving almost none to their teachers (*M* = 2.43, *SD* = 1.01).

Table 13

Student Perceptions of Responsibility (Pilot Study Results)

Responsibilities	Their		Their teacher's	
	M	SD	M	SD
Make sure you make progress during lessons	4.11	.80	3.91	.95
Make sure you make progress outside of class	*4.91*	*.28*	*2.43*	*1.01*
Stimulate your interest in learning English	3.74	1.2	4.17	.89
Identify your weaknesses in English	*3.43*	*.95*	*4.54*	*.61*
Make you work harder	4.03	.99	4.00	.91
Decide the objectives of your English course	*2.71*	*1.2*	*4.49*	*.82*
Decide what you should learn next in your English lessons	*2.11*	*.99*	*4.86*	*.43*
Choose what activities to use to learn English in your English lessons	*1.97*	*.95*	*4.89*	*.32*
Pass exams successfully	*4.69*	*.58*	*3.51*	*1.25*
Evaluate your learning process	*2.57*	*1.17*	*4.69*	*.66*
Get good marks	*4.77*	*.55*	*3.06*	*1.21*
Decide what you learn outside class	*4.74*	*.66*	*2.54*	*1.34*

Note. Numbers in italic are statistically significant

When it comes to passing exams successfully (*M* = 4.69, *SD* = .58) and getting good marks (*M* = 4.77, *SD* = .55), students take responsibility on themselves, too. The participants perceive their teachers to be highly responsible for identifying their weaknesses in English (*M* = 4.54, *SD* = .61). While regarding this same item, they tended to consider their responsibility only as medium (*M* = 3.74). Overall, the learners perceived themselves as primarily

responsible for making progress outside class (M = 4.91, SD = .28). However, most of them marked that making progress during the English lessons is a shared responsibility with the teacher, showing that learners regarded teachers as having medium responsibility for this activity (M = 3.91, SD = .95).

The pilot analysis of the above-presented scales happened right before the COVID pandemic breakout. Further analysis was stopped for two reasons: 1) The scales related to home learning became irrelevant since each student shifted to distance learning from home, and 2) the pause was intended to allow students to transition back to their regular school routines, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness, dependability, and confirmability of the data. Therefore, the main study was conducted after September 2022, following the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to note that the pilot study data were not included in the final study analysis due to changes made to the research instrument. As a result, the pilot study participants were also excluded from the main study. As the last step, the questionnaire was modified based on the pilot study results and subsequent expert modifications, resulting in the creation of the final version to be utilised in the main study.

5.2.2.3 Final instrument

As a result of the performed pilot study analysis, the final version of the questionnaire consisted of four sections:

- Part 1 focused on students' motivation to learn English. This part involved four scales with a total number of 19 items. The intrinsic motivation scale was measured by four items, introjected motivation scale by five items, identified motivation by three items and extrinsic motivation by seven items.
- Part 2 explored which part of the educational process students take responsibility for and which part they delegate to their teacher.
- Part 3 asked questions about language learning at home, mainly focusing on homework completion at home. This section consisted of six scales and a total of 30 items: homework effort scale (6 items), homework expectation scale (6 items), homework quality scale (5 items), homework control scale (5 items), and homework value scale (4 items) and additional 4 items aimed to measure the students' general attitude toward learning at home (perceived usefulness of the home environment).
- Part 4 focused on concrete self-regulation strategies at home with the help of 21 items. Self-regulation strategies before learning involved: task analysis (4 items) and

planning (4 items); during the learning process: motivational strategies (4 items) and monitoring (5 items); and after the learning included: process evaluation (4 items).

- Part 5 elicited demographic information about participants' sex, age, academic background, number of English lessons weekly, satisfaction with English grade at school and number of private English lessons.

The final version of the questionnaire was administered online to the selected population. Even the teachers who were approached directly said that they do not need printed versions as they have set up online platforms for disseminating school materials due to the COVID pandemic. They used these platforms to send out the general link for the questionnaire. The final version of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix B.

5.2.2.4 Ethical considerations

The ethical considerations surrounding the online and offline distribution of the questionnaire were diligently addressed in this study to ensure the protection of participants' identity. Prior to accessing the questionnaire, parents were asked to provide explicit consent for their children's participation. By involving parents in the consent process, the study ensured that parents were aware of their children's participation in the research. This approach not only protected the rights of the participants but also upheld the principles of informed consent. In the case of offline distribution, additional ethical considerations were taken into account. As the topic of the questionnaire was not considered sensitive, and the schools had already obtained parental consent, no additional consent form was required for participants who filled in the questionnaire through their teachers.

In both cases, explicit instructions were provided to participants, assuring them of the privacy and confidentiality of their responses. Students were assured that they would not be identified individually. Instead, they were assigned unique identification numbers, disconnecting their responses from any personal identifying information. This approach guaranteed that responses remained confidential and provided a sense of reassurance to participants that their data would be used exclusively for the study's purposes and would not be shared with any third parties, including teachers or other external entities.

5.2.3 Methods of data analysis for study 2

5.2.3.1 Methods of data analysis in the pilot study

After collecting the data, data analysis was carried out. As the first step, all variable names and the corresponding numerical values were transferred to an SPSS file. The data

were analysed using the SPSS statistical package version 26. At first, descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic data. Then, the results obtained from the pilot study sample were analysed using a reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) to find unreliable items and test the overall reliability of the scales. As a second set of analyses, I applied the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to check whether all the items measured the variables of interest, to shorten my questionnaire, and so to increase the response rates. Correlation and regression analyses were not performed at this stage because of the low number of participants. Thus, several preliminary tests were conducted before further data collection, and based on these results, the final version of the questionnaire was prepared.

5.2.3.2 Methods of data analysis in the main study

The data collection procedure in the main study was the same as in the pilot study. *Google Docs* was used as a platform to create and administer the questionnaires, ensuring the data's confidentiality. The questionnaire responses were downloaded in Excel format and analysed with the help of the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26 software package. The data analysis was divided into several steps. At first, a reliability test was performed on the scales, followed by t-test analyses. The reliability coefficients were calculated and compared with the pilot study results to see how reliable the scales used in the main study were. In addition, independent samples t-test was used to determine whether there is a difference between two groups (e.g., male versus female, students above versus below 15 years, students having five or fewer years of language learning experience versus more than five years of experience, students spending 13 or fewer minutes vs more than 13 minutes on learning at home) in terms of the mean of a dependent variable (e.g., learning motivation scales, task-regulation scales, and home learning experiences).

In order to answer the proposed research questions in Chapter 5.1, various statistical methods were applied so that the results could be accounted for scientifically. Correlations were calculated for all possible pairs of scales with the main aim of identifying the relationship between various scales. Each statistical analysis is followed by a brief explanation of the possible causes for an effect, problem or difference, and a more in-depth and detailed summary is presented at the end of the chapter.

5.3 Results and discussion for study 2

5.3.1 Motivational disposition of the participants

The analysis revealed that Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the motivation scales of the main study were all – except one – above the set of .70 (Nunnally, 1978). The reliability coefficient decreased for the identified motivation from .75 to .67 in the main study (see Table 14). The removal of items would not increase the overall alpha score; however, the decrease might be attributed to the low number of items (three items) on the scale. Considering this scale contains only three items, the value could be better, but it is still not critically low. Dörnyei (2007) recommended a minimum number of four items per scale and considered a scale with .60 scores still acceptable. Therefore, the scale was kept for further analysis.

Table 14

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients of Motivation Scales in the Main Study

Scales	Pilot study (N = 35)	Main study (N = 123)	Number of items	Mean	SD
Intrinsic motivation	.86	.79	4	3.70	.93
Introjected motivation	.77	.72	5	3.40	.96
Identified motivation	.75	.67	3	4.18	.84
External motivation	.66	.75	7	4.22	.64

Independent samples t-tests (see Table 15) were carried out in order to examine whether the participants were significantly different from each other on various scales of the questionnaire, including gender (2 groups: male or female), age (2 groups: 12-15 or 16-19), learning experience (2 groups: 5 years of language learning experience and more), and English homework time (2 groups: deal with their homework for 13 minutes or more).

At first, a t-test was conducted on gender to determine whether the two groups (male and female) differed on the variables of interest. The results showed statistical differences in the means between the two groups in identified motivation (p = 0.01). The sample consisted of 36 males and 87 females. The findings indicate that the mean number of identified motivations by female respondents is statistically significantly higher (M = 4.32, SD = .79) than the mean number of identified motivations (M = 3.86, SD = .88) by male respondents: t(59,40) = - 2.695, p = 0.009. Therefore, the findings indicate that the difference between male and female respondents' mean numbers of identified motivation is statistically significant. At this point, female participants reported having higher levels of identified motives than their male counterparts. The results of a recent study in Hungary about foreign

language learning also showed that seventh-grade boys seem less motivated to learn languages than girls (Albert et al., 2018). They identified the biggest difference between the two genders in relation to the following item "It is very important for me to learn this foreign language." This item is also an example of identified motivation, as it involves personal importance and valuing an activity. Therefore, the results support the available research on gender differences in motivation.

Moreover, the analysis looked at the significant differences between participants above and below the age of 15. Age 15 was the cut-off value as it is the number halfway between the 12 to 19 age group. The results showed that older students (16 and older) scored significantly higher than younger students (15 and younger) in intrinsic ($t(111.073) = -2.41$, $p = 0.02$) and identified motivation ($t(99{,}435) = -2.334$, $p = 0.02$) scales. This finding supports Albert et al. (2018), who found a statistical difference in language learning motivation between primary school and secondary school students. They found that secondary school students are more motivated than their younger counterparts. They explained that they identified the biggest difference between the two groups (primary and secondary school students) in the case of the following item: "For the people around me, knowing this foreign language is part of general literacy." As proposed by Albert et al. (2018), for younger children, the social context in which the learner is exposed to the language has a motivating function.

In addition, the independent samples t-test (see Table 15) was also used to compare the means of those who reported dealing with homework for 13 or fewer minutes and those who dealt with it for more than 14 minutes. The groups were divided at this score because the average minute spent on English language homework was 13 minutes. Participants who spend more time dealing with homework ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.82$) reported significantly higher motivation from introjected factors (e.g., guilt, shame, pride – internal rewards and punishments) compared to those who spend less time on their homework assignments ($M = 3.15$; $SD = 0.98$). The results are in line with the definition of motivation. For example, Dörnyei (2001) defines motivation as the *choice* of a particular action, the *persistence* with it, the *effort* expended on it, and why people choose or choose not to engage in various tasks. The results reflect that students who spend more time doing their homework are more motivated. By definition, this means that they put more effort into doing homework even if they do it – as the results showed (see Chapter 5.3.2) – in order to avoid negative consequences.

Table 15

Results of the Independent Samples T-test

Variables	Gender		t-values	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male (n = 36)	Female (n = 87)		
Identified motivation	3.86	4.32	-2.695	0.01
Monitoring	2.56	3	-2.018	0.04
	Age			
	<15 (n = 51)	16< (n = 72)		
Intrinsic motivation	3.46	3.86	-2.410	0.02
Identified motivation	3.97	4.33	-2.334	0.02
Homework value	3.47	3.02	2.439	0.02
Homework expectancy	3.93	4.33	-3.037	<.001
Homework control	3.17	2.48	3.965	<.001
Task analysis	2.81	2.44	2.154	0.03
Planning	3.05	2.6	2.190	0.03
Student responsibility	3.58	3.92	-2.458	0.15
Perceived usefulness	4.1	4.39	-2.588	0.01
	Learning experience			
	five or fewer years (n = 32)	six or more years (n = 91)		
Homework value	3.52	3.09	2.090	0.04
Homework control	3.08	2.66	2.373	0.02
Task analysis	2.99	2.46	2.759	0.01
Planning	3.29	2.61	2.958	<.001
Motivational strategies	3	2.56	2.342	0.02
Process evaluation	2.76	2.29	2.105	0.04
Student responsibility	3.49	3.88	-2.474	0.02
Self-discipline	4.18	4.47	-2.399	0.02
Perceived usefulness	4.06	4.25	-2.188	0.03
	English homework time			
	13 or fewer min. (n = 71)	14 or more min. (n = 52)		
Introjected motivation	3.15	3.72	-3.501	<.001
Homework value	2.81	3.5	-3.276	<.001
Homework effort	3.2	3.93	-2.937	0.004
Homework control	2.6	3.1	-2.548	0.012
Task analysis	2.31	3	-4.160	<.001
Planning	2.5	3.18	-3.360	0.001
Motivational strategies	2.46	2.94	-2.811	0.006
Monitoring	2.62	3.21	-3.181	0.002
Process evaluation	2.11	2.83	-3.653	<.001

5.3.2 The home learning experiences of the participants

The reliability analysis of the home learning experience scales revealed that each scale had a Cronbach's alpha above .70, indicating good internal consistency and reliability (see Table 16). To examine potential differences among participants, various scales of the questionnaire were used in independent samples t-tests (see Table 15), including gender, age (12-15 vs 16-19), learning experience (5 years of language learning experience and more), and English homework time (deal with their homework for 13 minutes or more). Participants

aged 16 and above were found to perceive homework assigned by their teachers as less valuable for language learning purposes (M = 3.02, SD = .49) and indicated fewer negative consequences of not doing homework (M = 2.48, SD = 1.04) than younger participants. Older students, however, perceived the usefulness of the home environment significantly higher (M = 4.39, SD = .57) than younger respondents (M = 4.1, SD = .67), suggesting that older students are aware that language learning success depends highly on what they do at home beyond the school walls; however, they perceive homework (usually performed at home) as not entirely influential for their language learning development. These findings are consistent with those of Albert et al. (2018), who found that students in upper secondary schools were more likely to seek opportunities to practice a foreign language outside the classroom than their primary school counterparts.

The results of the present analysis showed that even though younger participants attached higher value to their homework (M = 3.47, SD = 0.4), they reported significantly lower levels of self-belief (M = 3.93, SD = .31) in homework completion than their older counterparts (M = 4.33, SD = 0.56). This might be caused by the fact that older participants feel competent enough to perform the tasks because of their experience. Trautwein et al. (2006, p. 1102) also inferred that for older students, homework completion "may less be a question of whether they are able to do the homework than of whether there is any point in doing it." As students get older, they form an opinion about various elements of the educational process. Drakulić (2022, p. 283) also pointed out that younger students initiate foreign language learning "with very positive attitudes and motivation which are later shaped by the language learning environment and the experience." The results indicate that although older students are more intrinsically motivated than younger students, homework completion is not among those activities which they rate highly in terms of importance and value.

Table 16

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients of Home Learning Scales in the Main Study

Scales	Pilot study (N = 35)	Main study (N = 123)	Number of items	Mean	SD
Homework quality scale	.88	.76	5	3.46	.84
Homework effort scale	.83	.83	6	3.67	.92
Homework expectancy scale	.84	.82	6	4.17	.74
Homework control scale	.75	.82	5	2.77	1
Homework value scale	.82	.81	4	3.21	1
Perceived usefulness of the home environment	.70	.71	4	4.27	.63

In addition, participants with less than five years of language learning experience feared the negative consequences of not doing their homework (M = 3.08, SD = .79) more than those with more experience (M = 2.66, SD = 1,04). Moreover, those who spend more time on homework completion showed greater fear of negative consequences (M =3.4, SD = .58) than those who spend less time (M = 2.9, SD = .45), indicating that homework control is an essential predictor of homework completion. This finding is consistent with the findings of Trautwein and Lüdtke (2009), who found that the quality, not the frequency of homework control, really matters.

5.3.3 Self-regulation strategies while learning at home

The results revealed that each scale had a Cronbach's alpha value above .70, indicating high internal consistency and reliability (see Table 17). The results of the t-tests also indicate that males and females differ significantly in their reported monitoring strategy usage, with females reporting higher monitoring strategy usage (M = 3, SD = .98) compared to male respondents (M = 2.56, SD = 1.13). No other statistically significant gender differences were noted in other self-regulatory strategy scales.

An interesting fact is that as opposed to what has been frequently emphasised in the literature that self-regulation develops as a student gets older, younger students reported using more task-specific self-regulatory strategies than older students. A statistically significant age difference was noted in two scales of self-regulation: task analysis (t(113,672) = 2.154, p = 0.03) and planning (t(111,966) = 2.190, p = 0.03). This finding aligns with that of Albert et al. (2018b), who found that seventh-graders outperform eleventh-graders in self-regulatory strategy usage and emphasised that Hungarian primary school students reported using learning-related self-regulatory strategies more often than high school students.

Table 17

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients of Self-Regulation Scales in the Main Study

Scales	Pilot study (N = 35)	Main study (N = 123)	Number of items	Mean	SD
Task analysis	.89	.72	4	2.60	.97
Planning	.88	.81	4	2.78	1.2
Motivational strategies	.70	.71	4	2.67	.94
Monitoring	.78	.82	5	2.87	1
Process evaluation	.86	.86	4	2.41	1.1

The difference in the results may be mainly due to the fact that while most studies focus on language learning outside the school setting in general, the present study focuses on task-specific self-regulation during homework completion. Since the data from the present study show that younger learners perceive homework as contributing more to their language learning success than older learners (see Table 15), the younger age group adopts more self-regulatory strategies while doing it to overcome obstacles and maintain motivation. Therefore, the present results support the fact often highlighted in the literature: self-regulation and value in a task are interrelated (Pintrich, 1999).

The results also revealed that task-specific self-regulatory strategies significantly differed among respondents based on their language learning experience. Two groups were formulated, students who learnt languages for five or fewer years (n = 32) and six or more years (n = 91). Participants with five or fewer years of learning experience reported spending approximately 18 minutes learning English at home. At the same time, students with a longer experience turned out to deal with English homework for only 11 minutes. This difference also turned out to be significant ($t(121) = 3.248$, $p < 0.001$). As shown in Table 15, respondents with five or fewer years of language learning experience indicated higher valuing of homework assignments (M = 3.52, SD = .56) and a stronger fear of negative consequences for not completing homework (M = 3.08, SD = .30) compared to those with at least six years of language learning experience. Interestingly, this aligns with Veijalainen et al.'s (2019) findings, suggesting that fear of negative consequences does not necessarily hinder self-regulation but can, in fact, enhance it. This might explain why participants with less experience reported employing task-specific self-regulatory strategies at a higher rate. A statistical significance was observed in four out of five self-regulation scales: task analysis ($t(54{,}327) = 2.759$, $p = 0.01$), planning ($t(121) = 2.958$, $p < 0.001$), motivational strategies ($t(121) = 2.342$, $p = 0.02$), and process evaluation ($t(58{,}674) = 2.105$, $p = 0.04$).

Although both groups demonstrated the use of a task-specific self-regulatory strategy, participants who spent at least 14 minutes on English homework outperformed those who only spent 13 minutes the maximum on homework completion. The results indicate that students who deal with their homework for a longer time scored significantly higher in each self-regulatory scale, namely: task analysis (M = 2.3, SD = .99 vs M = 3, SD = .78), planning (M = 2.50, SD = 1.25 vs M = 3.18, SD = .89), motivational strategies (M = 2.46, SD = .99 vs M = 2.94, SD = .78), monitoring (M = 2.62, SD = 1.11 vs M = 3.2, SD = .83) and process evaluation (M = 2.1, SD = 1.11 vs M = 2.83, SD = 1.06). This result might be caused by the fact that self-regulation takes time; planning, and task analysis happens before the actual

learning, monitoring and motivational strategies are applied as students do the assigned task. In contrast, process evaluation happens after the homework is done. Therefore, the time students spend on their home learning increases the usage of self-regulatory strategies, which increases the time spent on learning at home. This result corresponded to the studies investigating the relationship between the time spent on homework completion and academic achievement (Trautwein & Köller, 2003; Ozyildirim, 2021; Fan et al., 2017). These studies revealed that the time students spend on homework is positively related to achievement. Trautwein et al. (2006) found that time devoted to homework completion was statistically significantly predicted by: 1) perceived homework quality (positive effect) and 2) homework expectancy (negative effect). Therefore, as their results suggest, teachers should ensure that students value homework as a task that enhances their learning and should help them believe in their abilities to execute these assignments successfully.

5.3.4 Participants' perceptions of responsibility

The purpose of this inquiry was to collect information about the level of accountability students feel towards their learning and to identify their views on which parts of the learning process they are responsible for. Therefore, the study centres on how students perceive their own and their teacher's roles in the learning process. The participants were given a list of 12 educational activities and asked to rate on a 5-point Likert scale how responsible they felt for each aspect of their learning process.

Responsibility is highly context-dependent and culturally bound, making examining the issue of responsibility really difficult (Ayish & Deveci, 2019). According to Lenk (2019, p. 4), responsibility is not used only in a descriptive sense, e.g., someone is responsible for something, "but is above all an evaluative attributional concept - somebody is held (to be) responsible." He argues that responsibility involves the following elements: *someone* (the subject of responsibility) is attributed responsibility for *something* (i.e., situations, tasks, actions), in view of *someone* (an addressee or 'object' of responsibility) under "the supervision or judgement of a judging or sanctioning instance in relation to a (prescriptive, normative) criteria within a specific realm of responsibility and action." In this sense, the present questionnaire aimed to examine the learners' perspectives of their own and their teachers' responsibilities for various in-class and out-of-class learning and teacher processes.

The results suggest that Hungarian 12 to 19-year-old language learners held their teacher responsible for most areas of their learning which are hardly surprising given that Hungarian education is highly teacher-oriented and teacher-directed (Öveges & Csizér, 2018).

Chan et al. (2002, p. 13) concluded that "students have definite views about the teachers' roles and their own responsibilities." They posit that similar studies offer an excellent opportunity to develop learner autonomy and open the door to learner-centred learning, as the results might help teachers "identify which areas of responsibilities to transfer to the students, where there is more scope for student involvement and what contribution students could make in the whole language learning process."

The factor structure of the responsibility section (see Table 18) of the questionnaire was extracted by performing principal component analysis using varimax with Kaiser Normalization solution (rotation converged in 9 iterations). At first, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy was used to examine the appropriateness of factor analysis. The KMO value was 0.669, exceeding the commonly recommended value of 0.60 (Kaiser, 1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity was also significant (*Chi-Square* = 744.658, *df* = 154, $p < .001$), and all the items had very good communalities all above 0.500, confirming that the items shared some common variance with other items and that the data is a good fit for factory analysis.

Only the items with factor loadings of 0.50 and above were considered significant in interpreting the factors in the rotated factor matrix. Therefore, items with low loadings on the relevant components or loaded individually or could not be grouped with other items to form a separate factor were removed. The factor analysis extracted five components with an eigenvalue greater than one, which accounted for 63.04% of the total variance explained. These components were named: teacher's lesson responsibilities, motivation by the teacher, students' responsibility in learning, self-discipline, and passing the buck.

The first component (teacher's lesson responsibilities) had the highest eigenvalue and explained 15.71% of the overall variance. The second component (motivation by teacher) accounted for 14.99% of the variance, while the third component (students' responsibility in learning) accounted for 14.67% of the variance. Component 4 (self-discipline) and component 5 (buck-passing) explained 9.80% and 8.86% of the variance, respectively. The following components were identified:

- In Component 1, items - related to *teachers' responsibilities* in lesson planning and organisation as perceived by respondents, like choosing the activities and the lesson objectives - loaded strongly together. All these items reflect that, according to the participants, teachers are responsible for the class and lesson organisation. Further examination of measurement reliability revealed a good level of reliability (0.76) for this component.

- Component 2 was labelled *teachers' motivation responsibilities* in language learning due to the high loadings by the following items: to make students work harder, to stimulate students' interest in language learning and to identify students' weaknesses. The Cronbach's alpha measurement for component 2 showed good reliability (0.75).
- Component 3 derived was named *students' own responsibilities*. This factor was labelled as such due to the high loadings by the following items: stimulating own interest in language learning, identifying own weaknesses and making progress during lessons. The reliability coefficient for Component 3 fell slightly below the 0.7 limit (Cronbach's alpha = 0.68).
- Component 4 got the name *self-discipline* because it involves self-control and perseverance-related items and concentrates on students working hard beyond the classroom setting.
- Component 5 was named *passing the buck* as it involves items about blaming someone and avoiding responsibility. These items all focus on participants' perceptions that their teachers are responsible for their good grades and passing exams. The Cronbach's alpha values of the last two components were 0.65 and 0,68, below the set 0.70. Even though these values do not reach the set limits, they were considered acceptable mainly because of the small number of items (i.e., three each) that comprise them.

Further t-test analysis (see Table 15) revealed a significant age difference $t(121) = -2.458$, $p = 0.02$ in the case of the students' own responsibilities scale, meaning that participants who are more than 16 years old scored higher (M =3.92, SD = .79) on this scale than those participants who are less than 15 years old (M = 3.58, SD = .72). There was also a statistically significant difference in students' own responsibility scores, with students with six or more years of learning experience (M = 3.88, SD = .76) scoring higher than students with lesser experience (M = 3.49, SD = .75), $t(54.876) = -2.474$, $p = 0.02$ The analyses also showed that participants with six or more years of language learning experience scored significantly higher $t(121) = -2.399$, $p = 0.02$) on self-discipline (M = 4.47, SD = .57) than those participants who have less than five years of language learning experience (M = 4.18, SD = .62). These results are in line with literature in that responsibility develops gradually after students realise the importance of their own learning (Janis-Norton, 2013).

As opposed to what is frequently highlighted in the literature that younger students tend to perceive their teachers' role as more influential in their learning process than their

older ones (Nikolov, 2002), the present research showed that there is particularly no difference between young and older students in their perception of teacher responsibility neither in terms of age nor language experience. These results might pinpoint the teacher-dependent and teacher-centred education in Hungary (Reményi, 2016; Öveges & Csizér, 2018). No matter how old or competent a student gets, the teacher's presence, role, and other aspects of classroom instruction are considered important.

The results showed that responsibility in learning has a strong teacher component among learners. As Lauermann (2014, p. 75) emphasised, "individuals often engage in behaviors not because these behaviors are necessarily enjoyable, but because they feel an internal sense of obligation and duty to do so." Homework is a typical example of student duties in Hungary and an important tool through which teachers empower students to work independently (Zimmerman & Ramdass, 2011). Only by understanding how students perceive their learning responsibility and how it develops can teachers and parents offer help, employ targeted interventions to address responsibility deficits at an early stage, and create learning environments that contribute to student growth and development.

Table 18

Factor Analysis of the Responsibility Questionnaire

Component	Teacher's lesson responsibilities	Motivation by the teacher	Students' responsibility in learning	Self-discipline	Buck-passing	
	15.71%	14.99%	13.67%	9.80%	8.86%	63.04%
	0.76	0.75	0.68	0.65	0.68	Communalities
choose what activities to use in your English lessons [S]	0.766					0.637
decide what you should learn next in your English lessons [S]	0.730					0.643
decide the objectives of your English course [S]	0.695					0.665
decide what you should learn next in your English lessons [T]	-0.622					0.628
decide the objectives of your English course [T]	-0.593					0.507
choose what activities to use in your English lessons [T]	-0.591					0.638
stimulate your interest in learning English [T]		0.832				0.752
make you work harder [T]		0.747				0.605
identify your weaknesses in English [T]		0.723				0.579
stimulate your interest in learning English [S]			0.740			0.647
identify your weaknesses in English? [S]			0.712			0.547
make sure you make progress during lessons [S]			0.689			0.589
make sure you make progress outside class [T]				-0.719		0.601
make sure you make progress outside class [S]				0.708		0.713
decide what you learn outside class [S]				0.660		0.562
pass exams successfully [T]					0.783	0.76
pass exams successfully [S]					-0.711	0.707
get good marks [T]					0.605	0.565

Note. Letter T indicates the perceived teachers' responsibility, while letter S indicates the students' own responsibility.

5.3.5 How do language learning experiences at home and self-regulation processes relate to each other in Hungarian school students? (RQ2.1)

The quantitative study's first research question examined the relationship between learning experiences at home and self-regulated strategy use. More precisely, it aimed to examine how the learning experiences relate to self-regulatory strategy use.

5.3.5.1 The interrelationship of the scales

In order to determine the relationships between study variables and identify the strength of relationships among the scales, correlation analyses were performed. Following Evans' (1996) classification, Pearson r value of less than 0.2 will indicate a very weak correlation, 0.2 to 0.39 a weak, 0.40 to 0.59 a moderate, 0.6 to 0.79 a strong and 0.8 and greater a very strong correlation. The data revealed numerous significant correlations among the scales, but only those related to self-regulation and the home environment, which are the main foci of the research, will be presented.

Table 19 shows that the perceived usefulness of the home environment scale has a significant moderate positive relationship with intrinsic motivation (r = .57, p < .01), identified motivation (r = .44, p < .01), and external motivation (r = .45, p < .01), while only having a weak correlation with the introjected motivation scale (r = .29, p < .01). All the motivation scales were found to be significantly correlated with the perceived usefulness of the home environment scale. The participants' mean score for the perceived usefulness scale was 4.27 (SD = .63), indicating that participants were highly aware of the home environment's importance in the language learning process and valued it as an effective place for learning.

The perceived usefulness of the home environment showed no relationship with any self-regulation scale. The main reason for this might be that even if the home environment is valued, homework is not one of those tasks that are seen as contributing to learning success, so there is no relationship between the scales.

Of the four motivation scales, only the introjected motivation scale showed a significant (p < .05) positive correlation with all the five self-regulated learning scales. Introjected motivation showed a weak correlation with the task analysis (r = .26), the planning (r = 0.31), the motivation strategies (r = .29) and the monitoring (r = .35) scale, and a moderate correlation with the process evaluation (r = .43) scale. The correlation between introjected motivation and various self-regulation strategies might exist mainly because homework is something students are obliged to do; otherwise, they would feel ashamed and

guilty, therefore, self-regulate the learning process to avoid punishment. Individuals with introjected motivation engage in activities due to their feeling of obligation and pressure and in order to protect their ego and reputation and to gain recognition and appreciation from teachers and parents (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Brown and Lee (2015) also emphasised that children care what their peers think of them. "Children are in many ways even more fragile than adults. Their egos are still being shaped, and therefore the slightest nuances of communication can be negatively interpreted" (p. 113).

Table 19

Correlation Between the Scales (1)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. PU	-									
2. IM	.57**	-								
3. IJM	.29**	.41**	-							
4. EM	.45**	.41**	.17	-						
5. IDM	.44**	.42**	.42**	.33**	-					
6. TA	-.05	.01	.26*	-.12	.15	-				
7. PL	-.05	-.07	.31*	-.15	.09	.77**	-			
8. MS	-.07	-.07	.29*	-.03	.02	.53**	.65**	-		
9. MO	.16	.10	.35*	.04	.21*	.67**	.60**	.57**	-	
10. PE	.08	.22*	.43*	.04	.14	.71**	.61**	.57**	.66**	-

Note:

1. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
2. * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
3. Abbreviation: PU = perceived usefulness, IM = intrinsic motivation; IJM = introjected motivation; EM = external motivation; IDM = identified motivation; TA = task analysis, PL = planning, MS = motivation strategies, MO = monitoring, PE = process evaluation

However, from the data in Table 20, it can be observed that those who perceived the home environment as useful reported having a higher sense of responsibility (r = 43, p < .01) and self-discipline (r = .36, p < .01). The higher the perceived usefulness of the home environment was, the higher student responsibility and self-discipline were reported by participants. The result pinpointed that those who accept that language learning success depends on what students do outside the classroom reported increased responsibility and a higher degree of self-discipline.

In addition, all five self-regulation scales showed significant but weak correlations with the motivation by teacher scale (see Table 20) as follows: task analysis (r = .18, p < .05), planning (r = .20, p < .05), motivation strategies (r = .24, p < .01), monitoring (r = .27, p < .01), and process evaluation (r = .32, p < .01). These results indicate that the higher the score on these self-regulation strategy scales, the higher scores were given to teachers on their

motivational responsibilities. As the t-test analyses (Table 15) above suggested, younger students and students with less language learning experience scored significantly higher on self-regulation scales. In this sense, it can be assumed that this result indicates that the more task-related self-regulatory strategy is used, the more responsibility is given to the teachers' motivational practices. The main conclusion that can be drawn is that younger students require and need teacher support more than their older counterparts. At the beginning of their language learning experience, they do not see the personal value of learning other than passing exams and getting good grades. Students start to display responsibility only after they recognise the inherent value of language learning (Janis-Norton, 2013). However, homework is not one of those activities viewed as essential aids to English language learning development, especially not by older participants (Table 15).

Table 20

Correlation Between the Scales (2)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. PU	-										
2. TA	-.05	-									
3. PL	-.05	.77**	-								
4. MS	-.07	.53**	.65**	-							
5. MO	.16	.67**	.60**	.57**	-						
6. PE	.08	.71**	.61**	.57**	.66**	-					
7. TLR	-.05	.06	.07	-.11	.01	.06	-				
8. TMO	.01	.18*	.20*	.24**	.27**	.32**	-.27*	-			
9. SR	.43**	.15	.01	-.02	.21*	.19*	.10	-.16	-		
10. SD	.36**	-.10	-.07	-.15	-.05	-.14	-.22*	-.14	.27**	-	
11. BP	-.18	.02	.02	.08	-.02	.03	-.15	.34**	-.14	-.21*	-

Note:

1. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
2. * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
3. Abbreviation: PU = perceived usefulness, TA = task analysis, PL = planning, MS = motivation strategies, MO = monitoring, PE = process evaluation, TLR = teacher lesson responsibilities, TMO = motivation by teacher, SR = student responsibility, SD = self-discipline, BP = buck-passing

The process evaluation scale showed a significant positive correlation (r = .19, p < .05) with the student responsibility scale, meaning that students who reported using this task-related self-regulatory strategy more also perceived their responsibility higher. These results indicate that students who engage in process evaluation rated their own responsibilities higher. This can be interpreted in two ways. First, participants may see teachers as responsible for lesson organisation but take responsibility for learning outside the classroom on

themselves, which involves the conscious regulation of homework completion. Second, as teachers are perceived as controlling and dominating the lessons, students evaluate their homework completion process to avoid negative consequences. The answer may also lie in the fact that process evaluation signals the end of the homework process. In the classroom, it is usually only the end result that is evaluated and not the process that led to it, i.e., only the result counts. If students want to avoid, for example, bad grades or humiliating situations, they prefer to check whether the task has been successfully completed.

As shown in Table 21, the home learning experiences and self-regulatory strategy scales indicated weak, moderate and strong correlations, but the results showed that 15 out of 25 correlations were statistically significant. The homework value scale showed a significant strong relationship, and the homework quality scale showed a positive weak but significant relationship with all the self-regulatory strategy scales as follows:

- homework quality showed relationship with task analysis (r = .30, p < .01), planning (r = .26, p < .01), motivation strategies (r = .26, p < .05), monitoring (r = .26, p < .01), and process evaluation (r = .34, p < .01)
- homework value showed relationship with task analysis (r = .49, p < .01), planning (r = .45, p < .01), motivation strategies (r = .39, p < .01), monitoring (r = .49, p < .01), and process evaluation (r = .57, p < .01).

Table 21

Correlation Between the Scales (3)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. HES	-									
2. HVS	.48*	-								
3. HEXS	.44**	.08	-							
4. HQS	.39**	.67**	.23*	-						
5. HCS	.24**	.29**	-.09	.21*	-					
6. TA	.17	.49**	-.08	.30**	.23**	-				
7. PL	.16	.45**	-.09	.26**	.28**	.77**	-			
8. MS	.16	.39**	-.17	.26**	.23*	.53**	.65**	-		
9. MO	.32**	.49**	.06	.26**	.17	.67**	.60**	.57**	.	
10. PE	.28**	.57**	-.03	.34**	.18	.71**	.61**	.57**	.66**	-

Note:

1. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
2. * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
3. Abbreviation: HES = homework effort; HVS = homework value; HEXS = homework expectancy, HQS = homework quality; HCS = homework control; TA = task analysis, PL = planning, MS = motivation strategies, MO = monitoring, PE = process evaluation

Only these two home learning-related scales correlated with each self-regulation strategy scale. The results indicate that the more quality and value students attach to English homework, the more self-regulatory strategies they apply. This finding is unsurprising, given that when students perceive their teacher-assigned homework as beneficial for enhancing their language skills, they are more likely to not only focus on the end result (process evaluation) but also engage in analysing and planning the learning process, as well as monitoring and motivating themselves during learning. Consequently, they consciously regulate their completion of homework. These findings align with the results of Dettmers et al. (2010), who analysed the effects of homework quality on students' learning and homework behaviour. They reported that high ratings of homework quality predicted homework behaviour, including time spent on homework and effort put into homework completion. All these results suggest that well-selected (as perceived by students) and interesting homework tasks enhance student motivation and learning behaviour.

In addition, the homework effort scale correlated with monitoring (r = .32, p < .01) and process evaluation (r = .28, p < .01) scales, while the homework control scale correlated significantly with the task analysis (r = .23, p < .01), planning (r = .28, p < .01) and motivation strategies (r = .23, p < .05) scales. This finding suggests that the more effort is put into homework completion and the more participant fear the sanctions for failure to complete their homework, the more self-regulatory strategy use increases. This result ties well with previous studies, which indicate that students are more willing to complete their homework if the teacher controls it, i.e., homework checked, graded, corrected or discussed in the classroom (for an excellent overview, see Keane & Heinz, 2019).

5.3.5.2 Causal relationships among the scales

Through a series of multiple regressions, an attempt was made to identify the predictors for perceived usefulness of the home environment, as this forms a central focus of the study and holds potential pedagogical implications. One key reason for focusing on this issue was the prevalent notion in the literature that students' realisation of the importance of out-of-classroom language learning activities could trigger a profound transformation in their learning approach (Zimmerman, 1989). By understanding and investigating the predictors that influence how students perceive the usefulness of learning outside the classroom setting, the goal was to shed light on a fundamental aspect of the self-regulated learning journey.

The analysis was conducted in two phases: the first involved the dependent scale of the study (i.e., perceived usefulness of the home environment), while the second encompassed

the five predictor scales identified in the initial phase. The results of the regression analyses – only p-values less than 0.05 are reported - are shown in Tables 22 – 23. To provide a visual overview of the intricate relationships between the variables, a graphical representation can be found in Figure 10.

At first, stepwise multiple regression analyses were used to find the predictors that best explain perceived usefulness of the home environment among participants (for more information, see Table 22). All the scales (e.g., motivation scales, homework scales, responsibility scales, self-regulation scales) and demographic information (e.g., age, gender, learning experience, homework time) were entered simultaneously in the analysis. These insights collectively unveiled a comprehensive picture of the complex relationships governing the perceived usefulness of the home environment, highlighting the pivotal role played by various factors in shaping this perception.

When examining the influence of various forms of motivation individually, it became apparent that intrinsic (β = .26) and extrinsic (β = .16) motivations exhibited noteworthy predictive power in significantly determining the perceived usefulness of the home environment. With regard to the relationships between perceived usefulness and other scales, homework expectancy (β = .33, p < .001) showed the highest significant positive effects, while student responsibility (β = .15, p = 0.002) also positively predicted the perceived usefulness. Conversely, buck-passing exhibited a negative predictive relationship with the perceived usefulness of the home environment (β = -.14, p = .03). The independent variables explained 54% of the variance in the perceived usefulness of the home environment, with the model indicating significant predictors (F = 8.497, p < .001).

Table 22

Results of the Regression Analyses for Perceived Usefulness of the Home Environment as the Dependent Scale

Predictor	**B**	**Std. Error B**	**ß**	**t**	***p***
Dependent scale: perceived usefulness					
Homework Expectancy	.05	.012	.33	4.348	< .001
Buck-passing	-.05	.023	-.14	-.1995	.03
Intrinsic Motivation	.20	.0.07	.26	2.939	.002
Extrinsic motivation	.18	.08	.16	2.143	.03
Student Responsibility	.05	.023	.15	3.180	.002
R^2	.54				

Therefore, the results indicate that the extent to which respondents find the home environment useful is determined by the motivation to learn. That is, intrinsic motivation

plays a much more significant role in predicting the usefulness of the out-of-school (home) environment than extrinsic motivation. For every one unit increase in intrinsic motivation, the predicted value of perceived usefulness increases by .20, while one unit increase in external motivation increases the value of perceived usefulness by .18.

The data showed that the more an individual values the learning environment, the more motivated he or she is. The above statements are particularly applicable to intrinsically motivated students. The findings align with the notion that learners driven by intrinsic motivation seek opportunities beyond the classroom to enhance their skills and recognise the developmental prospects provided by the home learning environment (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Moreover, this pattern is notably pronounced among older students (16 and older) and students with more extended learning experience (six or more years), as the study revealed a significant difference in their perceptions of the home environment's usefulness when compared to younger students and students with less experience (see Table 15). The findings indicate that 1) the older the participants were, and 2) the longer their English learning experience was, the more value they attached to the importance of the home environment in the learning process, which increased their overall motivation. These findings are consistent with research showing that younger children tend to be more dependent on their teachers and accept what teachers tell them to do more than their older counterparts (Jarvis, 2006). Therefore, younger students tend to follow teacher instructions in the learning process and do not fully value the home learning environment. They cannot see its importance and rarely engage in other English language learning activities than homework completion.

Unsurprisingly, student responsibility also turned out to be an influential predictor (see Table 22). In addition, as the regression analysis showed, self-efficacy beliefs also predicted the perceived usefulness of the home environment, i.e., the belief that one can succeed at home. Therefore, it is evident that learning at home is motivated, organised and planned by the students. This perceived usefulness has a strong intrinsic component, i.e., it is dominated by the participants' feelings, motives, and opinions. The data showed that if the level of student responsibility increases – participants make themselves work harder – for one unit, the level of perceived usefulness will increase by .05. To see and appreciate the out-of-school environment and the opportunities it offers, one needs to take responsibility for one's learning, admit and see that learning is much more than a classroom activity and engage in language learning outside school, which also requires self-regulation on the part of the learner (Kormos & Csizér, 2014).

In order to deepen our understanding, another round of regression analysis was run on the main predictors (Table 23). According to the data presented in Table 23, four independent variables have demonstrated a significant influence on homework expectancy, which is the belief in one's capability to effectively do homework assignments. The level of their collective explanatory power turned out to be relatively high (R^2 = .48). Specifically, the homework value and teacher motivation scales display a negative predictive power on homework expectancy. This finding is somewhat surprising when viewed in light of expectancy and value theory (Eccles et al., 1998) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). According to these theories, one might anticipate a positive relationship between homework value and expectancy. However, the results suggest an inverse relationship: with each 1-unit increase in homework value, homework expectancy decreases by .25.

Table 23

Results of the Regression Analyses for Homework Expectancy, Buck-Passing, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation and Student Responsibility as the Dependent Scales

Predictor	**B**	**Std. Error B**	**ß**	**t**	***p***
Dependent scale: homework expectancy					
Homework Value	-.25	.11	-.23	-2.284	.024
Homework Effort	.31	.071	.38	4.393	< .001
Homework Quality	.25	.098	.23	2.500	.014
Teacher Motivation	-.38	.138	-.21	-2.771	.007
R^2	.48				
Dependent scale: buck-passing					
Homework Control	.09	.043	.21	2.169	.032
Teacher Motivation	.23	.088	.26	2.656	.009
R^2	.16				
Dependent scale: intrinsic motivation					
Homework effort	,05	,016	,32	3,374	,001
Teacher Motivation	,07	,031	,18	2,133	,035
R^2	.50				
Dependent scale: extrinsic motivation					
Homework expectancy	.39	.017	.27	2.278	.025
R^2	.30				
Dependent scale: student responsibility					
Self-discipline	.22	.123	.17	1.766	.02
R^2	.20				

As Yang and Xu (2017) emphasised, students are more likely "to keep themselves motivated in the homework process when (a) they think they can successfully complete homework assignments, and (b) they think that homework assignments are worthwhile." Contrary to the findings of Yang and Xu (2017), the present results suggest that homework value does not affect Hungarian school students' self-efficacy beliefs. However, as is evident,

homework value is negatively associated with expectancy. The greater the value assigned to homework, the higher the potential fear of failure. Students might worry that if they do not meet the expectations associated with homework assignments, it will reflect poorly on their abilities (Brown, 2007). This fear of failure could undermine their confidence in completing assignments successfully, and this might be a possible explanation of why students do their homework assignments, i.e., to avoid guilt, shame, or failure to gain teacher and peer recognition and avoid negative consequences.

In addition, high perceived homework value could also potentially create pressure on students to perform exceptionally well. This pressure might result in heightened performance anxiety, which can negatively impact their belief in their own capabilities to succeed, leading to a decrease in homework expectancy. Students who perceive homework tasks as highly valuable or important might also interpret them as more challenging or complex. This perception of increased difficulty could lead to self-doubt about their ability to successfully complete these tasks, thus lowering their homework expectancy. The t-test results further support this latter explanation. As it turned out, younger students value homework more than their older counterparts (F = 2.439, p = 0.016) but reported significantly lower self-beliefs than older participants. Therefore, significantly higher means (F = - 3.037, p = 0.003) were found for homework expectancy in older students than younger ones, meaning that older participants believe in their ability to complete homework assignments successfully (see Table 15). These results partially align with the findings of Trautwein et al. (2006), who reported that homework expectancy and intrinsic value were the highest in grade 5 and the lowest in grade 9.

In their comprehensive research, Albert et al. (2018) assessed what Hungarian students consider the most typical homework assignment. Their results showed that solving textbook and workbook tasks with mean scores above 4 are the most frequently given English homework assignments for seventh- and eleventh-grade students. These tasks are hardly motivating, and as older students become more confident in their abilities and competent language learners, they believe less in the value of their homework assignments for educational purposes. Albert et al. (2018, p. 159) also think that as language learning, in general, is limited to the workbook tasks, "learners have little or no opportunity to take responsibility for their language development and to make autonomous decisions, thus their autonomy in language learning is reduced." This finding was also reported by Bempechat (2019), who found that even though students often link homework completion with school success, most of them think homework is not conducive to their learning. She concluded that

students “crave high-quality, challenging assignments—and it is this kind of homework that has been associated with higher achievement” (p. 43). Therefore, another potential explanation for why an increase in homework value might lead to a decrease in homework expectancy might be that students’ personal values and interests do not align with the perceived value of the homework tasks set by the teacher. This misalignment could cause them to question the importance of the tasks, affecting their belief in their ability to complete them successfully.

Homework expectancy was also negatively predicted by the participants’ perceptions of their teachers’ motivation. For every one unit increase in teacher motivation, the predicted value for homework expectancy decreases by .38. A potential explanation for this unexpected result might be that when students sense strong teacher motivation, they might perceive less autonomy in their homework tasks. Students might attribute their success on homework tasks to the teacher’s motivation and guidance rather than their own efforts or abilities. This external attribution (Weiner, 1986) could result in lower self-efficacy beliefs, causing a reduction in homework expectancy.

Moreover, the regression analysis yielded positive coefficients for homework effort and homework quality as predictors of homework expectancy. This indicates that as the levels of homework effort and homework quality increase, students’ confidence in their ability to successfully complete homework tasks also rise. This positive relationship between homework effort, perceived homework quality, and homework expectancy aligns with psychological theories such as self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1982), attribution theory (Weiner, 1986), goal achievement and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). These factors collectively support the notion that increased effort and higher-quality work translate into heightened belief in successfully completing homework assignments.

Referring to Table 23, independent variables together explained 16% of the variance in buck-passing - shifting responsibility to someone else rather than taking ownership of a situation or problem - with the model indicating significant predictors ($F = 2.105$, $p = 0.009$). The regression analysis showed that buck-passing is positively predicted by homework control ($\beta = .21$, $p = .032$) and teacher motivation ($\beta = .26$, $p = .009$). These results might be explained by the teacher-centred and teacher-directed school environment in Hungary (Öveges & Csizér, 2018). An environment characterised by high teacher control and motivation responsibility might discourage active engagement and critical thinking among students. Students might view teachers as authoritative figures who are better equipped to make decisions. This perception can lead to students relying on teachers to take the lead and

make choices, contributing to a tendency to pass responsibility. Students who score higher on the homework control scale might feel that they have less control over their homework-related tasks. They might perceive external factors as governing their homework activities. This diminished sense of control might lead them to lean towards a buck-passing attitude. Moreover, a positive correlation between buck-passing and teacher motivation could also indicate that students who exhibit buck-passing tendencies might rely on external motivators, such as teacher enthusiasm, to drive their engagement. When they perceive high teacher motivation, they might feel less compelled to take personal responsibility for their learning and instead rely on external factors to guide their efforts.

An interesting finding is that this perceived teacher motivation also emerged as a positive predictor (β = .18, p = .035) of intrinsic motivation, along with homework effort (β = .32, p = .18). Teachers who take responsibility for motivation often contribute to a positive emotional climate in the classroom. Positive emotions can enhance students' enjoyment of learning, creating an environment that fosters curiosity, exploration, and ultimately, intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When teachers take responsibility for motivating students, they might create an environment that supports students' autonomy in learning. Autonomy support is linked to greater intrinsic motivation, as it allows students to feel in control of their learning. In addition, as the Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) posits, autonomy, competence, and relatedness are essential for fostering intrinsic motivation. When students willingly exert effort into their homework tasks, they are demonstrating their autonomy and competence. This fulfilment of basic psychological needs promotes intrinsic motivation by making the task more self-determined and satisfying.

In addition, engaging in tasks that require effort and result in mastery experiences (Bandura, 1997) can positively impact intrinsic motivation. As students witness their progress and accomplishments, they are more likely to be motivated by the inherent satisfaction of learning and improvement. Students who adopt this mastery-oriented mindset (Ames & Archer, 1988) are more likely to focus on the process of learning and growth rather than solely on outcomes. This mindset is conducive to intrinsic motivation, as students are motivated by the pursuit of personal improvement. In summary, the positive relationship between perceived teacher motivation, homework effort and students' intrinsic motivation is rooted in theories that emphasise autonomy, relatedness, and positive emotional experiences. Teachers who actively motivate their students create an environment that supports students' psychological needs, fosters positive attitudes toward learning, and enhances intrinsic motivation.

Upon investigating extrinsic motivation, the regression analysis results unveiled that homework expectancy alone accounts for 30% of the variance in participants' extrinsic motivation (refer to Table 23). The data demonstrated that with each 1-unit increase in homework expectancy, the anticipated level of extrinsic motivation would also rise by .39 units. The positive relationship between homework expectancy and extrinsic motivation suggests that when students believe they can successfully complete homework tasks (higher expectancy), they are more likely to be motivated by external rewards, outcomes, or pressures (extrinsic motivation). Believing in one's ability to complete homework tasks successfully might lead to compliance with authority figures' expectations, such as teachers or parents. This compliance can drive extrinsic motivation as students seek to meet external demands.

The second round of regression analysis resulted in self-discipline being the only predictor for student responsibility ($\beta = .17$). This finding is not unexpected, given that self-disciplined students tend to set clear goals and prioritise their tasks. This goal-oriented behaviour naturally aligns with a sense of responsibility. These students recognise the importance of fulfilling their educational responsibilities to achieve their academic objectives. In summary, the positive predictive relationship between the students' responsibility and self-discipline scales reflects how students who exhibit self-discipline are more likely to take ownership and an active role in their learning, resulting in a higher sense of responsibility for their educational outcomes.

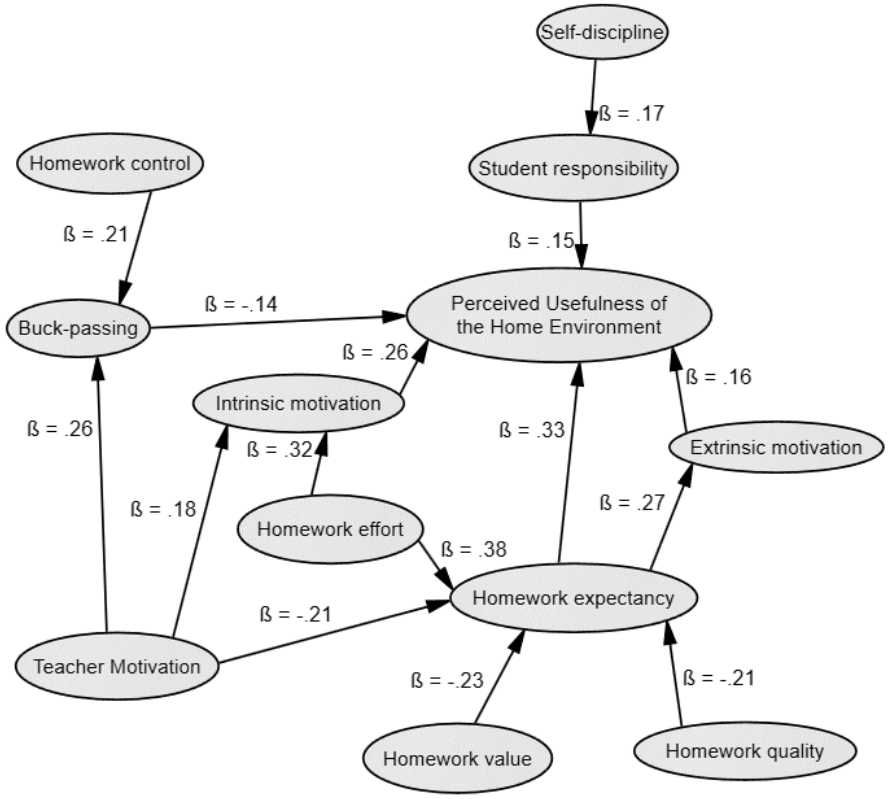
Based on the results of the regression analysis (as illustrated in Figure 10), several conclusions can be drawn. The outcomes of the regression analysis revealed that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation exert a direct impact on the perceived usefulness of the home environment. This implies that students who possess stronger intrinsic motivation, driven by personal interest and satisfaction, along with those who experience extrinsic motivation through external rewards or recognition, are more likely to consider the home environment as valuable for their learning. Furthermore, the findings also indicated that homework expectancy and student responsibility are also directly associated with the perceived usefulness of the home environment.

Interestingly, the analysis demonstrated that homework effort indirectly predicted the perceived usefulness of the home environment. This indirect prediction is mediated by both intrinsic motivation and homework expectancy. In other words, when students invest effort into their homework tasks, it leads to heightened intrinsic motivation and higher expectations about the efficacy of homework, which, in turn, positively influence their perception of the home environment's usefulness.

Notably, teacher motivation, teacher control, and the effectiveness of homework selection (homework quality) emerged as recurring factors across several analyses. These findings underscore the significance of teacher-related elements in shaping students' perception of the home environment. A teacher's motivation to engage and inspire students, along with their level of control in managing assignments, appears to play a role in influencing how students perceive the home environment as conducive to learning.

Figure 10

A Pathway Model of the Dependencies Between Scales



The independent samples t-test (see Table 15) revealed no significant difference in the teacher motivation responsibility between younger and older students, nor between students with less and more learning experience. Regardless of students' age or the duration of their language learning, they find the teacher responsible for stimulating interest in learning English, making students work harder and identifying weaknesses in English. Although the perceived teacher motivation predicts the perceived usefulness of the home environment only

indirectly, its underlying impact should not be overlooked, as it exerts its influence through the three aforementioned direct predictor variables.

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the interplay between the perceived usefulness of the home environment and various external factors. The outcomes underscore teachers' pivotal role in shaping students' perceptions of the home environment's usefulness across several dimensions. Notably, several predictor variables are intricately linked to teacher responsibilities and actions.

One significant predictor revolves around how students perceive the teacher's adeptness at selecting and integrating homework into the learning process. The quality of homework assignments, as perceived by students, seems to impact their overall assessment of the home environment's usefulness. This suggests that when students believe that the teacher's choice of assignments aligns well with the learning objectives, it contributes to a more favourable perception of the home environment as a valuable learning space.

Of significant note is the role of teachers' perceived motivation responsibilities. When students perceive that teachers are actively motivated to stimulate their interest in learning, encourage their efforts, and identify areas for improvement, it positively impacts their assessment of the home environment's usefulness. This reinforces the influence of teachers in creating a supportive and engaging learning atmosphere that extends beyond the classroom.

Additionally, the findings reveal an indirect relationship between homework control and the perceived usefulness of the home environment. This implies that students' understanding of the consequences of not completing assignments can indirectly influence their perception of how useful the home environment is for their learning. Collectively, these findings shed light on the multifaceted nature of factors that contribute to students' perceived usefulness of the home environment, ultimately underscoring the significant role that teachers and motivational factors play in shaping their educational experiences.

5.3.6 What components of the self-regulated learning process can be identified in school learners' language learning at home while completing their homework assignments? (RQ2.2)

The findings regarding the relationship between self-regulatory strategies and age or learning experience among the participants were surprising and contradicted the initial expectations. Older students and those with more extended learning experience did not demonstrate significantly higher usage of self-regulatory strategies compared to younger participants and those with shorter learning experiences. This suggests that the assumption

that older students would be more proficient in self-regulation due to their accumulated learning experience might not hold true in the specific context of language learning and completing homework assignments at home. In fact, the research revealed that younger participants and those with less experience scored higher on each self-regulatory scale, and many of these differences were statistically significant (as shown in Table 15). This suggests that younger learners and those with limited learning experience exhibited a higher level of engagement and proficiency in employing self-regulatory behaviours when completing homework assignments at home and so this finding challenges the notion that self-regulation skills naturally develop and improve with age and experience. One possible explanation for these results could be that younger learners might still be adapting to the formal education system and are more eager to demonstrate their competence and diligence through their homework completion.

Furthermore, the data provided valuable insights into the attitudes of younger students towards homework. It was observed that younger students showed a greater appreciation for homework and expressed a fear of the negative consequences associated with not completing their homework. These findings aligned with the research conducted by Trautwein and Lüdtke (2009), who also reported that homework control played a significant role in predicting homework completion.

The study results indicate that although homework is generally perceived as a beneficial activity for improving English language skills – especially by younger participants (see Table 15) – there is a strikingly low usage and frequency of self-regulatory strategies during homework completion. This is evident from the mean scores of the self-regulation strategy scales, which all fall below the midpoint value (as depicted in Table 17). In fact, the mean scores for all strategies are close to each other, suggesting that students do not frequently utilise self-regulated strategies while working on their homework. Surprisingly, despite valuing the importance of homework, most respondents seem to adopt a passive approach to homework completion, with many making minimal use or virtually no use of the listed self-regulation strategies. The actual engagement in self-regulatory behaviours appears to be limited, with only occasional or sporadic utilisation of specific strategies. In other words, the findings suggest that a significant proportion of respondents adhere to a “get-over-with-it” principle when completing their homework, lacking a systematic or conscious approach to self-regulated learning.

The high standard deviation of the self-regulation scales (each around 1, as shown in Table 17) indicates that the participants’ responses are widely dispersed from the mean score.

This suggests that there is no common trend or pattern in how they approach self-regulation while completing their homework assignments. The variability in self-regulation strategy usage is a significant finding as it highlights the diversity in participants' approaches to self-regulated learning and signals that different participants have unique ways of approaching their homework completion and engaging in self-regulated behaviours.

The findings of this research are concerning, as they suggest that self-regulation in the context of homework completion is often driven by fear of negative consequences. It appears that students' task-related self-regulation is influenced by a "you have to do it" attitude, indicating a lack of thoughtful and well-constructed self-regulation. The findings of this study have shown that the more students perceive homework control, the more task-related self-regulatory strategies they reported using (see Table 21). This kind of control positively and negatively affects students' homework activities.

On one hand, students may interpret homework control as something useful and beneficial, as it can enhance and stimulate their learning. However, even in this case, the self-regulation employed by the students does not appear to be fully intentional and purposeful. Instead, it seems to be driven by external pressures and expectations. On the other hand, this control and pressure, projected from school to the home environment, may undermine students' intrinsic motivation, autonomy, and sense of competence – all of which are fundamental human needs according to Deci and Ryan (2000).

The primary and most significant finding of this study is the crucial role of teachers in influencing learning motivation, self-regulation and the perceived usefulness of the home environment. The results indicate that teachers have a direct impact by providing motivation and effective lessons, as well as an indirect influence through appropriate homework assignments. These factors contribute to students' engagement in self-regulated learning behaviours both in and outside the classroom.

However, it is essential to consider some limitations while interpreting the results. The study specifically focused on task-related self-regulatory strategy use, which may involve a sense of compulsion or obligation. By examining self-regulation primarily within the context of homework completion, the study captured a specific segment of learning that might not inherently be intrinsically motivating for students. It is essential to recognise that students may employ different self-regulatory strategies in other language learning activities that they find more intrinsically enjoyable or engaging, such as language learning while using computer games, reading and watching series in English, or voluntarily attending extra classes. To gain a deeper understanding of students' learning profiles and motivations beyond the classroom, it

would be valuable to analyse how self-regulation differs during various tasks. Learners may employ self-regulation both consciously and unconsciously, and their learning experiences can vary in terms of being implicit or explicit, and formal or informal. By exploring these aspects, we can gain insights into the complexities of self-regulated learning in the home environment. Thus, including other qualitative techniques, such as additional interviews or observations of learning at home, could provide additional information and explanation about present findings.

In essence, the study centred on a specific aspect of learning, which is completing homework assignments, where the use of self-regulatory strategies might be influenced by external factors, such as the sense of responsibility or obligation. Therefore, the relatively low results on the self-regulation scales for this particular task do not necessarily imply that students are unable to self-regulate in other language learning contexts. Furthermore, the findings suggest that self-discipline, encompassing effort and perseverance in the learning process, plays a pivotal role in how students perceive the importance of the home environment in language learning (see Table 22). This highlights the significance of intrinsic motivation and individual dedication in shaping students' attitudes and behaviours towards self-regulated language learning.

The teachers' role in promoting their students' self-regulated learning strategies is generally accepted as it helps students develop learning skills that assist them with any academic subject (Carneiro & Veiga Simão, 2011). Ushioda (2003, p. 8) observed that the pivotal role of the teacher is not "finding strategies and incentives to get the learners to do what they want, but of providing the right kinds of interpersonal support and stimulation so that learners will discover things they want to do for themselves." The finding that participants value the home environment as a place that could enhance their learning holds great promise for educational practice and allows educators to forge meaningful links between the home and school contexts. Teachers can develop a more holistic and integrated approach to education by acknowledging and incorporating the home environment into educational practices.

Allwright and Bailey (1991) correctly pointed out that each classroom is unique because both the teachers and the students bring their own individual experiences and values into it. It is commonly accepted that students are not the same, even though each student tends to sit in the same spot, next to the same students, week after week. Bronson (2001, p. 234) added that in a "regimed classroom climate", students are "required to do the same thing at the same time in the same way." This uniformity discourages self-regulation as students

cannot learn to select the strategies most suitable for them and those that provide them stimulation.

Homework assignments, on the other hand, offer a refreshing departure from this regimented environment by providing students with unique and personalised learning opportunities. As students plan and regulate their homework completion process, they have the chance to exercise self-regulation skills (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011). The results of this study highlighted the significance of well-designed homework assignments that students perceive as useful for language development (see Table 21). Such assignments can have a positive influence on the self-regulation processes students employ during their learning. For educators, this finding underscores the importance of creating purposeful and meaningful homework assignments that align with students' learning needs and interests. By 1) offering a variety of homework tasks that cater to individual learning preferences, teachers can encourage self-regulation and foster a more engaged and motivated learning atmosphere and 2) empowering students to take ownership of their learning process and develop self-regulation skills through homework tasks, educators can nurture successful and autonomous lifelong learners. As a concluding remark, I would like to highlight the advice offered by Zumbrunn et al. (2011): "If our goal is to create successful lifelong learners, then we must first ensure that we teach them the strategies necessary for that journey" (p. 18). Homework assignments, with their individualised nature, serve as an excellent platform for students to practice and strengthen their learning strategies, including self-regulation.

5.4 Conclusions from study 2

Language learners' success in mastering a particular second or foreign language depends highly on the usage of self-regulated learning strategies (Zimmerman, 1998). For this reason, most researchers would agree with Macaro's (2002, p. 264) concluding remarks that "one thing seems to be increasingly clear, and that is that, across learning contexts, those learners who are pro-active in their pursuit of language learning appear to learn best." Self-regulation has been a topic of increasing interest in foreign and second language education in recent years, as there is a body of research on how self-regulated learning can help language learners develop in different learning environments (Collett, 2014). As Zimmerman (1998, p. 1) very clearly highlighted, what makes self-regulated learners different is that they view learning "as something they do for themselves rather than as something that is done to or for them." Dörnyei and Skehan (2003, p. 612) went further to call a self-regulated learner a "superhuman person."

This study sought to explore and understand students' self-regulated language learning behaviour in the home learning environment, particularly while completing homework assignments. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the participants' perceptions of the home environment's role in language development and how self-regulation strategies are utilised during homework completion. Notably, the older age group showed a higher appreciation for the home environment as a significant place for language development, highlighting its importance in supporting their learning.

Interestingly, the younger age group demonstrated a greater use of self-regulation strategies during homework completion. This heightened use can be attributed to their recognition of the homework's relevance in the learning process and the influence of teacher control over the assignments. The results emphasise the significance of purposeful homework that is well-prepared by teachers, as it positively impacts students' engagement in self-regulatory behaviours. Moreover, the findings revealed that fear of negative consequences served as a motivating factor for employing self-regulation strategies during homework. The sense of obligation, arising from perceived pressure to complete English homework, was positively linked to a conscious increase in task-specific self-regulation. These results underscore the complexity of students' self-regulatory behaviours and how external factors, such as teacher control and perceived pressure, influence their conscious use of self-regulation during language learning at home.

The results of this study shed light on the motivational factors that drive younger students' engagement with homework and their use of self-regulatory strategies. It is evident that younger students are motivated by introjected motivation, which implies their desire to avoid negative evaluations from teachers, parents, and peers. This fear of appearing in a negative light seems to influence their diligent approach towards homework completion and their proactive use of self-regulation strategies. On the other hand, older students, despite valuing homework less in terms of language development, display higher levels of self-confidence in their abilities to successfully tackle tasks. This confidence might stem from their accumulated learning experience over the years. Surprisingly, the study found a negative correlation between participants' age and their use of self-regulatory strategies related to homework. As participants grew older and accumulated more learning experience, they tended to employ fewer self-regulatory strategies during homework completion.

Another result to be highlighted is that the teacher's role and influence appeared in many places throughout the analyses. For example, teacher motivation turned out to be a predictor of self-regulated learning. The responses pinpointed the role of the teacher in self-

regulated learning, i.e., direct ways (teacher motivation) and indirect ways (students see that the teacher has appropriately chosen the homework) also impact self-regulation. What can be a solution? Teachers' faith in themselves and homework assignments. As Carr (2013, p. 179) stated, "when teachers believe in the importance of their homework enough to apply research-based strategies and truly facilitate effective homework practice, they will create a classroom of learners who also believe in the importance of the work and, ultimately, of themselves." Such an approach, combined with collaborative efforts between teachers and families, holds the potential to positively impact students' self-regulated learning and overall academic achievement.

6 Interview study with homeschooling families (Study 3)

6.1 Research aims and research questions for study 3

In Hungary, giving students homework to practice the material covered in class is common (Imre et al., 2021; Márton, 2019). Therefore, homework ensures that students deal with the school material even at home (National Core Curriculum, 2020). What about those students whose learning process is one piece of "homework"? There are students in Hungary, who are taught and learn, not exclusively, but at home (Mikusová, 2019). The present study focuses on these homeschooling families. Study 3 emphasises that student learning does not happen in isolation but is exposed to various social and contextual factors that inhibit or foster the whole learning process.

The broad focus of the interview study was to capture the self-regulated language learning process in the home environment from the point of view of homeschooling parents and their children, mainly to complement the findings of the quantitative study of the present dissertation as well as to offer an insight pertaining the views of homeschooling parents and children. This research aimed to investigate the perceived effects of the homeschooling experience on the language learning process and the self-regulation strategies employed by homeschooled students. Consequently, the study provided a platform for homeschooling families to express their beliefs and present their unique learning experiences.

In order to gain credible insight into homeschooling parents' and their children's views and experiences concerning self-regulated language learning at home, two interview protocols were developed. A homeschooling parent interview guide and a homeschooled child interview guide were constructed. An inductive qualitative approach was employed, using individual, semi-structured interviews. The coupling of viewpoints in this study made it possible to relate the learners' various self-regulated activities to many aspects of home education. The qualitative data collection method was particularly useful for unifying different perspectives and investigating the same phenomenon, self-regulation, from various angles. Even Richards (2003, p. 64) emphasised that the purpose of a qualitative interview, "however structured, is not merely to accumulate information but to deepen understanding." Therefore, the focus was put on the perceptions and experiences of those involved in homeschooling.

As emphasised in study one (see Chapter 4), the NCC document analysis showed that education and the teaching and learning process have already undergone great changes over the last two decades, new teaching and learning tools appeared, new assessment methods were introduced, new competences and education goals replaced the old ones, even new subjects were

created. Thus, classroom education is constantly evolving up to date, and further progress and improvements are yet to come.

In particular, competencies for lifelong learning, active involvement in the learning process, self-directed learning, problem-solving skills, and responsibility-taking were stressed, pinpointing the changing roles of teachers and students (NCC 2020). Offering students learning opportunities outside the classroom might help students develop these skills and realise that learning not only happens in school but in out-of-classroom settings. Understanding the role of the home environment in learning might offer teachers new possibilities for self-regulation development and support students in realising their active role in their learning. Therefore, it is argued that by knowing how the home environment affects student learning, teachers can consciously shape their in-class practices to improve their students' self-regulated learning.

A qualitative research approach was chosen for this study as qualitative methods are seen to be especially useful in "understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (Merriam, 2009, p. 13). As the present study seeks to capture the participants' subjective perspectives, experiences, and thoughts on homeschooling, it was informed by a phenomenological approach. Specifically, the phenomenological approach was used to describe "the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon" (Creswell, 2006, p. 57). Therefore, the present study focuses on how a small number of participants – in this case, 23 participants altogether – describe in their own words a phenomenon that all of them have experienced, i.e., the impact of homeschooling on learners' (self-regulated) learning.

For that purpose, this work takes an emic perspective (Pike, 1954) in order to identify the views and perspectives of participants – parents who have chosen to homeschool their children and the homeschooled students themselves. Gubrium et al. (2012) greatly emphasise the advantages of combining multiple perspectives. They highlighted that there is a shift from the how many participants are enough dilemma to the how can we include as many perspectives as possible question. They stated that "asking who can provide a different perspective on a topic by nature of their role can be just as important as asking how many people are needed to answer the question" (p. 249). As the study tries to answer exploratory questions, the semi-structured interview was chosen as an appropriate data collection method, allowing flexibility for modifications in the interview guide for the different groups of participants.

In order to understand the home environment's influence on students' self-regulation while engaged in the language learning process at home, to further explore how self-regulated

language learning at home can complement language learning at school, and to identify the self-regulation processes present in homeschooled participants, two types of research questions were developed: 1) research questions concerning English language teaching at home, 2) research questions concerning English language learning at home.

Research questions concerning English language teaching at home aimed to examine the researched topic from the homeschooling parents' perspectives. The first set of study questions sought to investigate homeschooling parents' perspectives on developing their children's self-regulatory skills while learning languages at home, as well as the impact of homeschooling experiences on language learning development. Furthermore, the study questions sought to identify some of the best practices of homeschooling parents that promote self-regulated (language) learning. As parents were asked to characterise their children's language acquisition, the questions sought to give an extra viewpoint on homeschooling kids' learning; consequently, it attempted to compare the parents' perceptions and the oral reports obtained from their homeschooled participants. The research project aimed to answer the following research questions:

RQ 3: What are the views of homeschooling parents in Hungary on developing their children's self-regulatory skills while learning languages at home?

RQ 3.1: How can the homeschooling experience be used by homeschooling parents to enhance their children's self-regulation?

RQ 3.2: How do Hungarian homeschooling parents integrate the development of self-regulated learning strategies into language teaching?

Research questions concerning English language learning at home aimed to capture the self-regulated language learning process in the home environment from the perspective of homeschooling children. The questions were designed to examine how the homeschooling experience influences their language learning process and how homeschooled students self-regulate their learning at home. Questions concerning English language learning are as follows:

RQ 4: What characterises Hungarian homeschoolers' self-regulatory strategy use in English language learning?

RQ 4.1: What components of the self-regulated learning process can be identified in Hungarian homeschooled students' language learning?

RQ 4.2: How does the home environment influence Hungarian homeschooled students' self-regulated English language learning?

6.2 Research design and methods for study 3

6.2.1 Participants for study 3

The population for this interview study consisted of homeschooling parents and their homeschooled students in Hungary. I used convenience sampling to find homeschooling families on the Internet and self-select the initial participants using their own blogs. The sole requirement for participation was at least six months of homeschooling experience. The decision to restrict the homeschooling experience to a six-month period stemmed from two reasons. First of all, as Griffith (2010) noted, it takes several months for individuals to transition from a traditional education setting. Secondly, the chosen duration allowed families ample time to establish and reflect on their distinctive homeschooling approach. These initial participants were asked to provide contact details of those homeschooling families who would fit the study's criteria and would be interested in taking part in an interview. As a result, snowball sampling enabled me to reach out to and recruit more participants for the study, bringing the total sample size to eleven Hungarian families enrolled in homeschooling education. These eleven households represented a total of 34 school-aged homeschooled children.

Potential families were invited to participate in the study, which included all family members but particularly focused on the homeschooling member of the families and their homeschooled, school-aged children. Six people either did not respond (3), did not want to participate (1), stopped homeschooling (1), or were unable to participate in the time available (1). The pilot interviews took place from January to February, while the main interviews lasted from June to October 2020 at a venue suitable to the participants. The interviews were conducted mainly in participants' homes, restaurants, and parks in January and February. However, virtual interviews were conducted due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the coming months. Face-to-face interviews were replaced with phone or video interviews over Skype or Zoom. The pandemic did not affect only the public sector of education but homeschooling families as well. The interview process was paused from March till June because participants started to withdraw due to lack of time before the first interviews. Even homeschooling families had to adapt and readjust to the new circumstances and the world being shut down around them, whilst the recruiting has been put in place to continue data collection. The pilot interviews were transcribed and analysed during these months, and additional interviews were scheduled in advance. The length of the interviews with the homeschooling parents varied between 50 and 120 minutes, while the interviews with the students lasted between 35 to 50

minutes on average, except for one interview with a 17-year-old homeschooled girl that lasted for more than an hour.

6.2.1.1 Homeschooling parents

The pilot and main study participants were parents who educate their children at home. In order to obtain a wide variety of data, the strategy was to select interviewees with different backgrounds and experiences who had children of varying ages, from infants to adults. It was considered necessary because parental involvement in children's academic life tends to depend on their age (Gross et al., 2020). Altogether 11 Hungarian homeschooling parents participated in this study voluntarily (see Table 24), whose age, marital status, profession, the number of children, and years of homeschooling experience vary considerably. The following section provides a detailed description of the interviewed homeschooling families, including demographic information, family size, years of homeschooling experience, and parents' educational attainment.

Out of 11 participants, one was male, and ten were female. A potential weakness of this study might be the unequal number of male and female participants. However, it is important to note that the study is not gender-related. In most cases, the mothers were the prominent home educators and the ones participating in the interviews. Family members individually chose the participating members, meaning that not necessarily both parents and all their children were included in the study. However, when it comes to extra support on a certain subject, fathers and other extended family members are ready to help.

Table 24

Profiles of the Participating Homeschooling Parents

Pseudonyms	Age	Homeschooling experience (years)	Number of children	Number of school-aged children
Anna (P)	51	13	1	1
Kitti	39	11	6	5
Mónika	36	10	6	3
Márti	49	7	3	3
Linda	49	14	4	4
Zita	46	6	6	4
Zsóka	45	13	4	3
Orsolya	41	11	3	2
Katalin	43	14	5	4
Péter	42	Almost 1	2	2
Lilla	45	12	4	3

Note. Letter P indicates the pilot study participant.

The interviewees' homeschooling experience and the number of children vary greatly. The families consisted of one to six children and were homeschooling one to five children during the interviews. The participants in this study had children in the age range of a few months (youngest child) and 26 years of age (eldest child). They were recruited from several counties in various parts of Hungary, most living in Pest County. The participants' homeschooling experience ranged from eight months to 14 years.

The participants' educational background is almost congruent as all the participants – except Péter – had attended college or university. The highest academic degree attained by each participant breaks down as follows: Five participants hold a teaching degree, and four are, in fact, certified English language teachers. Zita is a civil engineer, and Katalin earned a degree in special education and works as a social worker. Zsóka attended the Dharma Gate Buddhist College. Márti earned a psychology and pedagogy degree. Lilla holds an engineering manager degree and is currently trying to earn a teaching degree.

Regarding the total number of children, one has only one child, six families have 2 to 4 children, and four families have five or more children. Altogether, the eleven families have 44 children. It is important to emphasise that not all children were school-aged at the time of the interviews. Some parents pointed out that they consciously taught their children from an early age and considered even their babies homeschoolers. Nevertheless, some parents maintain the opposite and refuse to call their babies homeschoolers, as they do not teach their toddlers intentionally. Many participants chose to homeschool when their kids were in kindergarten and consciously started to incorporate learning into their everyday lives. For some participants, homeschooling began when their children reached school age. However, even for these families, their educational backgrounds are entirely different. Some of the families have never attended and received any formal schooling. Many had only a few months or years of formal schooling experience before deciding to homeschool their children, while some participants have diverse educational backgrounds, meaning they discontinued homeschooling at some point, switched to formal schooling, and then went back to homeschooling again. These points make it harder to determine the exact length of the participants' homeschooling experience. However, it is important to note that all the participants were homeschooling their children at the time of the interviews.

6.2.1.2 Homeschooled learners

Twelve homeschooled learners participated in interviews lasting between 35 and 90 minutes. Table 25 depicts the basic demographic information of child participants. The

sample included an equal number of boys (N = 6) and girls (N = 6). The students were divided into two groups: the younger group in the age range of 12-15 years (five participants, three boys, two girls) and an older group in the age range of 16-19 years (seven participants; three boys, four girls). The following sections will use "younger participants" and "older participants" when referring to a specific group.

Table 25

Profiles of the Participating Homeschooled Learners

Pseudonyms	Age	Interview with parents?	Number of homeschooling experience (in years)	School experience	Languages
Rita (P)	16	No	7	Yes	English,
Zsuzsi(P)	18	No	6	Yes	English, French, German, Hungarian
Brigi	17	No	17	No	English, German
Csaba	17	Yes	4	Yes	English, Italian, German
Eszter	18	Yes	4	Yes	English, Italian, German
Attila	13	Yes	7	No	English
Anita	13	Yes	7	No	English, Russian
Anett	12	Yes	6	No	English, Russian
András	14	Yes	8	No	English, Russian
Gábor	17	Yes	11	No	English
Ádám	16	Yes	10	No	English
Gergő	14	Yes	8	No	English

Note. Letters P indicate the pilot study participants.

The participants represent a total of six homeschooling families. Among them, three participants' parents expressed their wish not to participate directly; however, they allowed their children to take part in the study. The parents of the remaining participants were actively involved and interviewed on separate occasions. At the time of the interviews, all participants had at least four years of homeschool experience. Eight of these students have almost no experience with the public education system except for their end-of-term school exams. All the participants were learning English as a foreign language at home, but the age of onset, the methods, the strategies, and the intensity of language instruction differed.

6.2.2 Methods of data collection for study 3

The purpose of the interviews depends on whose perspective we are taking, either that of the homeschooling parents or their children. Therefore, two interview guides were developed: a homeschooling parent and a homeschooled student interview guide. The interview guides involved the same questions and followed the same logic but from the different perspectives of those involved in the language learning process. The questions asked

of homeschooling parents and their children complement each other, as the main objective of the analysis was to compare the parents' perspectives (who chose homeschooling) with those of their children (who take part in and are the „targets" of the homeschooling process). In the upcoming chapters, I will provide detailed information on the interview guides used in my study, the piloting and refinement process, as well as the ethical considerations. The interview guides that were carefully developed to capture the necessary data are presented in Chapter 6.2.2.1. The piloting phase is covered in detail in Chapter 6.2.2.2. Finally, in Chapter 6.2.2.3, I will discuss the ethical considerations that guided my research.

6.2.2.1 Instruments

Homeschooling families who met the inclusion criteria and gave their permission to be part of the study were recruited and interviewed using an interview guide. The designed interview protocol was determined by the overall aims of the study and was developed over time. Semi-structured interview protocols with 15 questions and probes were used to elicit information about the participants' subjective experiences. Since the interviews were conducted in Hungarian, the language of the questions was also attuned to the Hungarian context. During the interview, prompts and probes were inserted to clarify certain concepts or issues to facilitate better data gathering. The interview protocol with the participating parents and their children was piloted as described below in Chapter 6.2.2.2.

The information gathered from the interviews was used to report on homeschooling students' self-regulated processes and to infer their motivation. During the interviews, particular attention has been paid to individual differences, so the various ways interviewees prefer to operate when striving to reach a goal. Individual characteristic features, any odd learning behaviour and remarks, the steps students took to learn the language, ways they changed their learning strategies throughout the years, methods of learning, the way they approach and process the learning material, as well as the homeschooled child's gender, age, length of homeschooling experience, past schooling experience were taken into account.

As Dörnyei (2007) suggested, the researcher needs to be aware of how much information he shares with the participants, as too much information can influence the results. According to his instructions, a careful balance needs to be achieved. Therefore, the researcher's interest in Hungarian homeschooling and English language learning, in general, was explained; however, the focus on self-regulation was not elaborated on so as not to bias the interviewees' answers. The homeschooling parents' interviews focused on gathering information about a) the homeschooling background, including any formal schooling history,

reasons for homeschooling their children, b) English language teaching and learning at home, focusing mainly on parental and children's roles, responsibilities, c) opinion on the homeschooled child(ren)'s academic achievements and English language skills, d) reflections on their child(ren)'s English language learning strategies, coping and facing challenges, difficulties, success stories, and e) perceived homeschooling advantages and disadvantages on language learning.

The interviews with the homeschooled students primarily addressed the following issues: a) information about their language learning background, such as the number of languages learnt and spoken at home, and any formal school experience, b) language learning motivation, reasons for studying the language, their opinion about the English language in general, and language learning at home, satisfaction with the results obtained, expectation for future use of English, c) language learner motivational self-system (Dörnyei, 2005), d) preferred learning styles at home, daily language learning routines, and e) self-regulated learning, recalling memories about their success, facing and overcoming difficulties in language learning. The interviews ended by asking participants if they had anything to add. Finally, my appreciation for each person's participation was expressed.

The interviews were conducted until data saturation was reached, at which time no new information, concept, or topic arose (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), and the gained information seemed sufficient enough "to make a plausible interpretation" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 39). The saturation was reached with varying numbers of participants from each group; for example, saturation with homeschooled children was reached at the 11th interview. The study protocol specified to approach 10-15 homeschooling parents, but the saturation of themes was reached following ten interviews. Therefore, further recruitment of participants was discontinued. An additional participant from each group was interviewed to confirm the saturation of themes.

6.2.2.2 Procedures and piloting the interview protocol

The following sections detail the procedure and results of the pilot studies undertaken before the main study. The main reasons for conducting the pilot interviews are manifold. First, because of the lack of Hungarian research and the highly restricted nature of potential homeschooling informants, the pilot studies aimed to test whether homeschooling families are approachable and willing to cooperate or not. Second, the pilot interviews helped me to practice my interviewing skills. Third, the pilot interviews helped me uncover potential problems with the designed interview protocol. This means that these pilot interviews' main

aims were to assess the reliability and validity of the proposed instruments for data collection and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the research method.

The interview protocols were piloted to ensure accurate results and conclusions. The pilot study helped me identify the themes or categories that might emerge in the main study and refine the interview questions where necessary. The changes from the pilot study were incorporated into the final interview protocol. The interview underwent a rigorous five-step piloting process:

1. *Preparing the interview protocol:* Once the study objectives have been established, the type of questions to be used were considered. The first version of the interview questions was created based on the preceding 1) literature review, 2) National Core Curriculum analysis, 3) own ideas about the examined topic, and 4) preliminary questionnaire study results. Special attention has been paid to the consistency between the quantitative and qualitative instruments used to make the research more valid and reliable. For this reason, some questions from the developed student questionnaire were used for the homeschooling interviews. First, the content, the wording, and the sequence of questions were established before the actual interviews. Throughout the interview process, prompts and probes were used to elicit more elaborated responses from the interviewees and to clarify certain concepts.
2. *Expert evaluation:* As the next step, the interview guides were sent to an expert in the field for her feedback. My research supervisor helped me improve the questions in two ways: 1) content-wise and 2) methodically. Her evaluations shaped the content and the form of the questions. She was asked to identify problems with the questions and highlight foreseeable problems; for instance, she advised whether the interview questions were relevant and necessary for the topic. In addition, she checked whether the interview guide flew seamlessly from topic to topic, thus following logical order and layout.
3. *Pilot interviews:* Pilot testing was crucial for identifying potential problems with specific interview questions and developing interview skills. The questions were piloted on a small sample of individuals drawn from the target population. Pilot interviews with a homeschooled parent and two homeschooled children were conducted to refine the interview protocols. The pilot interview with the selected homeschooling mother lasted almost 60 minutes, while the children's interviews lasted between 35 and 45 minutes. The interviews took place on separate occasions; therefore, the parents' and the children's answers did not affect each other. This was

considered essential to improve the internal validity of the study. The final analysis sample included the pilot interview participants and the obtained data. The pilot interviews were transcribed in separate files and coded for potential themes according to the research objectives. These pilot interviews provided the opportunity to make question adjustments; for instance, problems with the wording of questions that might lead to biased answers were identified. The questions that respondents did not understand and were not working well for some reasons were fine-tuned and improved by some modifications.

4. *Member checking:* Once the interview transcripts were completed, they were sent out for member checking via e-mail. The interview transcripts were sent to the participants for their review and approval. Interviewees were asked to provide feedback within a specific timeframe. If no response was received within the allowable period, the research process continued, signalling that the interviewees approved and were satisfied with the transcripts. However, most of the participants chose not to check the files.
5. *Peer checking:* A fellow PhD student continuously read and commented on the analysis and provided valuable feedback.

The same procedure as described above was followed for both interview protocols. The final version of the homeschooling parent interview guide is provided in Appendix C, and the homeschooled children's interview guide is in Appendix D of this dissertation.

6.2.2.3 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were given paramount importance in this study to safeguard the rights and well-being of the participants. Before the study, ethical approvals and clearances were obtained from relevant institutions, ensuring compliance with ethical guidelines of Eötvös Loránd University. The initial step involved seeking approval from the *Research Ethics Committee* of ELTE PPK for the intended research. This approval was obtained following to submission of my research proposal.

This step was followed by a comprehensive process of obtaining informed consent, involving both the homeschooled students and their parents. The consent procedure ensured that participants had a clear understanding of the research's purpose, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their unrestricted right to withdraw from the study at any point without facing any consequences (Dörnyei, 2007). Throughout the consent process, potential risks and benefits associated with the involvement in the study were explained to the homeschooled

learner participants and their parents. This allowed them to make informed decisions about their participation.

Permission to tape-record interviews was obtained from the participants before the interviews. All the interviewees were informed about the nature of the study, including why their participation was valued, how the recorded interview would be used, how and to whom the results would be reported, and were assured that the gathered data would be used only for this investigation. Moreover, preserving confidentiality was of utmost importance. To protect their identities, each participant was assigned pseudonyms, and any personally identifiable information was kept strictly confidential.

6.2.3 Methods of data analysis for study 3

The interviews were fully recorded and transcribed immediately after they were conducted. The audiotapes were securely stored and saved online, while the transcripts were stored in separate files to facilitate future analysis and interpretation. The transcripts were identified by pseudonyms and the date the interviews were conducted. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim in Hungarian. Each transcript was re-read several times as whole texts before the next interview was conducted. The relevant sections of the transcripts were translated from Hungarian to English. Additionally, a backward translation was conducted by a certified Hungarian-English translator to validate the accuracy of the translations and ensure no meaning loss.

The analysis of the gathered data was a continuous and cyclical process. Transcripts were coded and analysed using inductive thematic analysis (i.e., themes emerge directly from the data) and the constant comparative method. Constant comparison (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) was used for the data analysis, including the following procedures: 1) the transcripts were analysed section by section, 2) the marked statements were organised into broader themes, 3) based on these themes, the similarities and differences between the interviewees' answers were pointed out, 4) illustrative quotes were selected, 5) a framework was developed through which the results are presented, and 6) the findings were compared with the previous research in the same study area. For triangulation and inter-coder reliability, a second round of analysis was conducted in which the codes were re-evaluated through the lens of self-regulation literature and concepts. The final analysis sheet included five major themes and their corresponding sub-themes.

The results are organised and revolve around different thematic focuses, some of which were directly asked from the interviewees (e.g., managing language learning at home,

motivations and goals of homeschooled children), and others that emerged from the analysis of the interviews (e.g., the identified self-regulation components, intangible aspects of homeschooling related to self-regulation). The emerging themes are shown in Table 26, together with the number of participants who mentioned them.

Table 26

Emerging Themes from the Interview Study

Categories	Themes	Sub-themes	# Interviews (Parents)	# Interviews (Students)
General attitudes toward (foreign language) learning	Formal education criticism/problems	Teacher-centred lessons	9	7
		Stress and anxiety	6	6
		Obsession with facts	5	2
		Big class size	7	7
		Same for everyone	7	7
		Unnecessary material	6	6
		Pressure	6	5
	Definitions of learning	Learning is natural	6	0
		Happens consciously or without conscious awareness	6	2
		Factual vs. experimental learning	8	5
		Learning is dynamic	7	6
Language learning at home	Managing language lessons at home	Lesson planning	11	12
		Time management	11	12
		Multilevel instruction	8	9
		Assessment and progress tracking	8	9
		Parental involvement:	11	12
	Specific language teaching related approaches	No error correction	7	5
		Integrative language learning	9	8
		Language immersion	10	12
		Authentic materials	11	12
		Technology involvement	11	12
		Language learning at an early age	8	9
	Perceived advantages of homeschooling to language learning	Individualised learning	10	12
		Interest-driven learning	10	12

		Child-driven learning	9	11
		Flexibility in curriculum	10	10
		Diversity homeschooling offers	10	10
		Freedom homeschooling offers	11	11
Self-regulation development at home	Empowerment and agency in homeschooling	Purpose-based learning	10	7
		Autonomy awareness	9	8
		Responsibility awareness	8	7
		Decision-making	6	7
		Control	8	6
Self-regulation processes	Self-regulation before learning	Goal setting	3	9
		Past learning experiences	5	10
		Self-beliefs	6	9
		Intrinsic interest	11	10
	Self-regulation while learning	Help-seeking	11	10
		Strategic planning	6	10
		Self-talk	1	9
		Monitoring learning behaviour	4	7
	Self-regulation after learning	Self-evaluation	5	8
		Self-satisfaction/affect	3	7

6.3 Results and discussion for study 3

6.3.1 General attitudes toward (foreign language) learning

General attitudes toward (language) learning have been identified as a major theme discussed further below. It is considered one of the most prominent themes influencing and underlying the participants' beliefs. At the beginning of the interviews, all participants shared their subjective definitions of learning and their opinion about Hungarian education in general. To minimise confusion, the findings from interviews with the homeschooling parents are presented first, followed by the results from interviews with homeschooled learners.

6.3.1.1 Homeschooling parents' views

Multiple participants expressed concern over the fixed views about what counts as learning. "If you ask people what comes to mind when they hear the word learning, the first answer is likely to be school," Zita began her answer. Many participants incorporated phrases like cramming, opening a textbook, sitting down at a desk, homework, grades, oral tests, exams, and the classroom into the common definition of learning. As it turned out, the interview participants held a different view on this issue: Everything is a learning experience.

Therefore, many participants think learning is not limited or confined to the classroom. In fact, they think that the most powerful learning experiences happen outside the classroom by experiencing things, creating and formulating something for yourself. Most participants expressed dissatisfaction with Hungary's education system in three areas: the school environment, teachers' attitudes, and teaching methods. Homeschooling parents perceive Hungarian education as outdated, operating on principles that have remained unchanged for centuries. Many families chose homeschooling primarily because of the negative influences of traditional school settings. Even Knowles (1989) noted that "home schools are often an expression of intense dissatisfaction with public school outcomes" (p. 393). In their comprehensive overview, Kunzman and Gaither (2013) also highlighted that homeschooling families are influenced by a similar combination of factors in their decision-making process. Dissatisfaction with academic instruction and the school environment are among the primary reasons that contribute to their choice. Therefore, it can be inferred that Hungarian homeschooling families share similar reasons with homeschooling families worldwide.

According to participants, the public school environment is unhealthy and ineffective because learning at school is completely forced. Participants believe that a classroom is just an artificially created environment "for the sole purpose of teaching a classroom full of

students with a degree of control" (Anna). The following points summarise the participants' main problems with the school environment:

- The school environment is rigid and distant, with everything predefined.
- In the classroom, students are expected to learn the same subjects, at the same pace, using the same resources.
- Students have only a passive role in the learning process, sitting and listening to the teacher for 45 minutes.
- The teacher is central in determining what students should learn, how to learn it, and even setting the time for processing and learning specific information before written or oral tests.
- Large class size makes language learning and teaching particularly challenging at school, as students rarely have opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge.

All parents voiced their worries regarding schools' focus on imparting outdated and unnecessary curricula to students. The participants think that schools are "centred around standardised tests" (Katalin) and, in addition, "use numbers to grade students and create a class rank" (Orsolya). As a result, from a young age, students associate their self-worth with grades and focus on their rank in the classroom.

However, parents acknowledge that school grades rarely reflect intelligence, as the school system tries to squeeze as many facts as possible into the student's minds. Many participants in this study are convinced that the biggest problem with public education lies in its obsession with facts. That student is given the title of excellent who can cite many facts. Márti presented her opinion on this issue with the help of the below scene in her closing comments:

> There is a book written by Dickens; I cannot remember the title. There is a school scene in it where a little girl whose father works with horses is asked to define a horse, but she cannot define it. The teacher then asks another child, who gives an endless list of facts (number of teeth, taxonomic order etc.). He had never seen a horse in his life, but he could define the animal horse and the poor little girl who deals with horses every day; she just cannot cite how the textbook factually describes a horse. So, which one of them knows more about horses? This is exactly what the education system is not curious about, how educated the child is because a test cannot measure it. (Márti)

Márti took the example from the novel *Hard Times* written by Charles Dickens. The scene described above takes place in 1840s England, but according to study participants is still prevalent in today's education. As the participants highlighted, the quantity of the memorised information - and not the quality - determines academic success. This type of education, so teaching bare facts, is seen as ineffective. The scene described above depicts two types of students who differ in how they have been given education. The first girl is an experiential learner, while the boy is a factual learner. Homeschooling parents believe in more practical

education, like the girl in the above scene. Therefore, the importance of real-world knowledge was highlighted consistently throughout the interviews.

In addition, many participants think that the classroom environment of public education is stressful. According to Linda, students can be divided into three groups, excluding homeschoolers. A few receive a quality education in prestigious private schools. Some are lagging behind, living in extreme poverty dealt with by no more than a few enthusiastic teachers, and there are middle-class intellectuals who try to put their children in a nearby school with the best possible reputation. In these schools, students face heavy workloads and the unbearable weight of expectations. She highlighted the teacher stabbing – a student attacked his teacher because he got a C on his physics test – news from 2019 as an example. She stated:

> I can hardly believe this. It takes a lot more than a jerk teacher. There had to be family pressure on him. I frequently hear parents telling their children: Learn because you will be a street sweeper. Students live in this mental pressure for years. (Linda)

The available literature on parental expectations and academic pressure also highlights that many students face significant pressure at school due to various factors, including academic expectations and the high level of competition. The expectations placed on students by their parents can also contribute to this pressure. Parents often have high aspirations for their children's academic performance and future success, creating a stressful environment for students. This pressure to meet parental expectations can overwhelm students, leading to anxiety, depression and self-doubt (Deng et al., 2022).

The interview participants provided their opinions on whether learning should be taught. During the interviews, participants were asked to elaborate on this issue: *It is the schools' task to teach students how to learn*. The information that the above citation is from the Hungarian National Core Curriculum (2012) has not been disclosed so as not to affect the answers to the following questions. Participants explained that if we define learning as the prime reason for schooling, learning should be taught because learners are forced, and the learning objects and goals are defined externally. Orsolya's and Linda's answers were as follows:

> In school, they teach many things, they answer questions that were not asked, so if the child is not interested, you have to force the teaching and learning as well. You have to teach them to sit down and the ways to learn the material. (Orsolya)

> I know books on learning methodology, but in my opinion, learning methods are needed only when children are forced to do something they do not want to. Because if they want to learn something, they will find their own ways to achieve it. (Linda)

Linda's above opinion on the key role of interest in the learning process is not specific to her but something more general, found in all interviews (see more below). Participants believe that when something interests a child, they will want to learn more and do whatever it takes to reach their goals. One of the ways to achieve this goal - love of learning - is by maintaining the child's motivation, which can be done by engaging them in activities they are interested in. Joy, passion, curiosity, and excitement felt during the learning process remove the stigma of compulsion from learning. Therefore, parents follow Deci and Ryan's (2000) theory and strive to cultivate their children's intrinsic motivation, encouraging them to learn for their own sake based on their inherent interests and enjoyment.

However, the dynamic nature of learning was also frequently emphasised during interviews. Participants believe that "nothing in learning is constant and permanent" (Linda) and described the learning process as a "roller coaster" (Zita) experience. Zita explained, "It is part of the learning process to have ups and downs. Sometimes my children are really motivated to learn, and sometimes they feel less motivated and act accordingly." Therefore, participants acknowledge that learning motivation is not stable, but it is a dynamic notion that constantly changes because of various internal and external forces. These changes can be influenced by evolving circumstances, the child's personality, motivation, and goals. Many participants highlighted that their children experienced a transitional loss of motivation for different reasons but were able to revive their motivation successfully. Sometimes these (re)motives come from the parents, teachers, and friends, or from within the child. Participants believe that over time, children develop an inner need for a high level of language proficiency and take full responsibility for their language learning, leading them to approach language learning more seriously.

In conclusion, the data showed that parents who homeschool their children have a distinctive and strong set of opinions and beliefs about public education. These parents confidently expressed their perspectives, highlighting the reasons behind their choice to homeschool and their satisfaction with the outcomes. Families who choose to homeschool place a high value on the development of autonomy and self-directed learning, which ultimately helps students develop into self-regulated learners who can succeed both academically and personally. Parents' firm belief in homeschooling as an effective educational method and commitment to self-regulated learning signifies the importance of personalised and autonomous learning experiences in achieving successful educational outcomes.

6.3.1.2 Homeschooled students' views

Homeschooling learners – especially those with formal school experience – shared their thoughts on formal language learning and teaching. Based on their experiences, the school setting makes it difficult to achieve true language proficiency. According to Rita, schoolwork alone is insufficient for "attaining a stable and confident language proficiency […] additional effort is required." The participants expressed the belief that incorporating language into their daily lives is the most effective way to learn a language. As Brigi said: "You have to look for people, resources, activities, opportunities actively", but many participants also emphasised that anyone who genuinely loves English will engage with it willingly, without external pressure or influence.

Many student participants highlighted that the biggest problem of the formal schooling environment is its authoritarian manner/style and lack of personal involvement in creating and achieving educational goals, which causes decreased motivation and enjoyment for the child. Those with formal schooling experience think the Hungarian education system makes children hate learning. Tests, grades, homework, parental pressure, competing with others, and negative peer influence were frequently mentioned by participants. These all prevent children from actually enjoying the learning process.

Those participants who experienced the formal schooling environment reported that some of their classmates had not yet learned English. They think that students are exposed to various negative experiences in a classroom setting, which hinder language development. Emotional barriers were the most frequently emphasised consequences echoed by homeschoolers, followed by classroom environment barriers. They think that many students in the formal education system "worry too much about what the others might think of their language knowledge" (Rita), are "too embarrassed to make mistakes" (Brigi), "too scared to use the language" (Brigi), or they "do not feel confident enough to talk to native speakers" (Zsuzsi), or they "feel ashamed for not knowing how to say things" (Rita). Rita shared a memorable classroom story:

> The teacher asked one of my classmates to put the phrase do the washing up into the gerund (-ing form); her answer was, doing the washing uping. Half of the group immediately laughed; the teacher also said it was pathetic. Obviously, it is complete nonsense, but it is hard to experience a sense of success and love English afterwards. (Rita)

These negative comments and experiences children get at school make them question their abilities. Csaba and Rita both emphasised in their interviews that sometimes teachers do not even realise how big of an impact they have on students. Zsuzsi literally stopped learning the

German language because of a teacher's behaviour. Eszter said she had to learn with her dad after school because the teacher had a wrong teaching method. She had to learn everything twice, as if she had no lessons at all. This experience made her less motivated to learn languages. The teachers' and classmates' constant criticism and shaming all impact how students feel and view themselves, thus influencing their self-concept.

Other participants shared a similar point of view: the school setting focuses so much on learning various grammar rules, spelling, and writing with little real-life conversations and interaction with native speakers. Before school, Rita had never learned any grammar. She used workbooks only while she attended school. Using the language helped her vocabulary expand. She thinks her way of language learning – at first, speaking the target language rather than learning the grammar – is much easier and more effective than the other way around. Zsuzsi expressed her view in the following way:

> I do not think it is the teachers' fault, but rather how languages are taught in Hungary in general. Teachers - not necessarily their fault - insist on something they experienced. It would be more useful if, e.g., we watched a movie or analysed it during lessons, something children would enjoy. (Zsuzsi)

Many participants highlighted that there are only limited resources to work on these aspects in the classroom setting. Students are often satisfied with the knowledge acquired at school; they do not feel the need to engage in any language learning outside of school except doing their homework. Zsuzsi highlighted that many school students are "brought up to be taught by teachers," so they expect and wait for the teacher to tell them everything. Rita admitted that she had no intrinsic motivation at school; she cheated or read everything before the lessons. She explained: "It caused me only stress because I knew I was not ready. I cannot tell you how much of a burden homeschooling lifted from my shoulders." (Rita)

This idea was echoed by other participants who believed that the whole language learning experience was tailored to their own needs because of homeschooling. They could use the resources and tools that interested them for as long and as much as they wanted. They think homeschoolers are different from their school counterparts because they do not expect to be taught; they do not expect others to tell them what to do; they simply learn. Rita and Brigi think that they are autonomous mainly because of homeschooling. The following excerpt from the interview with Rita illustrates this: "I think it is a huge advantage of homeschooling that I had to learn alone. I had to figure out the things myself. Nothing was ready-made. I had to work hard for everything."

The results showed that homeschooled students – like their parents – express dissatisfaction with the formal school system in Hungary. The flexibility to actively arrange and govern one's own learning without depending on teachers for guidance was cited as the main benefit of homeschooling by the participants. This increased autonomy fosters a sense of empowerment and self-reliance, leading to a more independent and self-driven approach to education (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Homeschooled participants consistently expressed a higher level of internal motivation, emphasising their intrinsic drive and passion for learning. In contrast, the participants perceived their peers in traditional schools to be more externally motivated, often relying on external factors such as grades, rewards, or approval from others to fuel their motivation. The analysis of responses from homeschooled students and their parents reveals a clear alignment between their educational views and the constructivist theory, as supported by Neuman's findings (2020). To sum up, homeschooling emerges as a transformative alternative that allows children to take control of their own learning. The findings highlight the value of homeschooling as a catalyst for encouraging autonomy, self-regulation, and, ultimately, a positive language learning experience for homeschooled students.

6.3.2 Language learning at home

6.3.2.1 Managing language lessons at home

The homeschooling structure and routine turned out to be different for each homeschooling family. Neuman and Guterman (2016) obtained a similar pattern of results, concluding that homeschoolers are not a homogenous group. Homeschooling practices are commonly categorised into different types based on the level of structure they adhere to. Structured homeschooling follows a specific curriculum with clear guidelines, while unstructured homeschooling, also known as unschooling, has no prescribed curriculum (Kunzman & Gaither, 2013). However, it is crucial to note that different approaches fall somewhere between these two extremes since the amount of structure in homeschooling may be considered a continuum (Neuman, 2020).

In the present study, two types of homeschooling families were included. One type included those who take school exams annually (seven families), while the other type of participants were students of the so-called *Clonlara* program, an American private school that provides distance learning opportunities for its students. Clonlara advisors work closely with families to design an educational plan to fit unique needs and interests. Clonlara students also have to prepare projects and reports related to predetermined topics, i.e., these families are far from being unschoolers. This latter format was represented by four families. Therefore,

following Neuman and Guterman's (2017) classification, both types of families adhere to a defined curriculum. However, in the case of Clonlara students, they typically follow a curriculum that they have personally designed.

Each family follows and uses various teaching and learning approaches and methods. Families with many children reported having joint learning sessions where the family members could learn from each other. Linda's family has a scheduled time for language learning each day. After a joint learning session, the children are free to learn, however, whatever, and wherever. Many participants emphasised that the younger children learn from the older ones and the old can also learn from and inspire the young, while in some families, learning occurs individually. Language lessons are often multi-grade and multi-level and are taught simultaneously in one room, meaning that children from different ages and proficiency levels study together and learn from each other. Some families reported having separate time slots for each subject, while others deal with different subjects simultaneously. These families take a holistic approach and create integrative lessons, so they combine and connect knowledge from multiple subjects, link theory to practice, and use multiple sources (points of view) to actually understand the material. Therefore, they try to create coherence between disparate school subjects, including language learning. Because of the available opportunities, homeschoolers master the knowledge and show improvement faster. In addition, as there is no compulsory, predetermined or fixed academic schedule, homeschooled children have more time to participate actively in many activities.

Parents think that as they support their children's learning, they are fully aware of their needs, interests, strengths and weaknesses, which helps them customise education. Throughout the interviews, participants emphasised that parental attitude towards learning plays a major role in influencing how children relate to the learning process. The traditional parent-child power relationship in the learning process changes. According to Jeffery (2019), each educational relationship has two main components: "the experience dynamic", whether someone has more experience in a particular field than the other, and the "knowledge exchange dynamic", whether one of the members of the relationship tries to teach the other members or they are mutual partners in the learning process. Therefore, most parents have a rather passive role in determining the content of the curriculum, leaving decision-making almost entirely to the children. The findings suggest that the flexibility and freedom of homeschooling encourage engagement and balance between external and self-determined regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Parents think that homeschooling allows them – as well as their children – to create motivating learning situations that make language learning enjoyable.

Homeschooling happens all over the place; that is why homeschoolers consider it a self-directed learning experience. In a student-directed learning environment, students are free to make decisions and actively participate in lesson planning (Perry & Rahim, 2011). Parents empower their children to feel responsible for what they learn, how, and when they learn. As Anna characterised, "What I love about homeschooling is that you are always learning. You are not waiting for summer vacation to begin or end. You are not waiting to be told what to learn. You are fully directing your learning." This freedom paves the way for their lifelong learning, which is seen as important in our era of continuous change and rapid growth. In accordance with these findings, the results of previous studies demonstrated that self-directed learning opportunities encourage self-regulation (Riley, 2013). Deci and Ryan (2000) also argued that choice and opportunities for self-direction enhance the student's intrinsic motivation.

The purpose of empowerment is to encourage children to take responsibility for their learning and development. According to Katalin, "the sooner they realise their responsibility in the learning process, the better their understanding and development of autonomy will be." Therefore, homeschooling parents shift learning responsibility to their children, requiring them to accept a more active role in the learning process. To achieve this, children are allowed to incorporate their own personal spin, like their interests and passion, into the learning experience. Therefore, at home, children become co-creators of their education. Brown (2015, p. 75) created the so-called principle of self-regulation, which states that the mastery of a language depends mainly on the learner and his "ability to proactively take charge of their learning agenda, to make deliberate, goal-directed efforts to succeed, and to achieve a degree of autonomy that will enable them to continue their journey to success beyond the classroom." For these reasons, as Scharle and Szabo (2000, pp. 3-4) emphasised, teachers "need to develop a sense of responsibility and also, encourage learners to take an active part in making decisions about their learning", while learners have to "accept the idea that their own efforts are crucial to progress in learning." The results suggest that because of homeschooling, students are fully aware of their active role in the learning process and their decision-making possibilities.

6.3.2.2 Perceived advantages of homeschooling language learning

Homeschooling parents work hard to activate and develop their children's inherent interest in language learning. They want their children to develop an innate desire to do a particular action or task well and become better at what they do, so they give children all the

tools to improve their language skills. Parents acknowledge that their role in the learning process is "external." They encourage and help their children get involved in the learning process, but the child has to do the learning at the end of the day. Parents know that their extra external support is not as strong as self-motivation, as they can only help their children get motivated from the outside.

Neuman and Guterman (2017, p. 161) conducted an interview study with homeschooling parents and found that "parents' need for control is central in their choice of homeschooling." An excellent point raised by Neuman and Guterman (2017) is the interplay of control and choice. For instance, granting a child more choice could mean reducing the level of control exerted by the parent. The available literature suggests that teachers are reluctant to use learner-centred approaches in teaching mainly because they are afraid of the outcomes and consequences, losing their power and status and risking chaos (Condrat, 2014). However, as Jones (2007, p. 2) explained, a student-centred classroom is not a place where students can do whatever they wish and learn what they want. Rather it is "a place where we consider the needs of the students, as a group and as individuals, and encourage them to participate in the learning process all the time." This latter definition perfectly summarises the participants' answers about their homeschooling practices. The following sections will present and further discuss the intangible aspects of homeschooling in greater detail, as these are believed to influence the students' self-regulated behaviour.

- *Individualised learning homeschooling offers*

The participants unanimously highlighted that each child is unique. Homeschooling allows the learning material and environment to be adapted to these specificities, considering their children's personal learning needs, preferred learning styles, learning progress, interests, and abilities. The participants try to apply differentiated instructions to accommodate these differing needs. This possibility of differentiation is considered an enormous advantage compared to what the school system could offer. Orsolya stated: "Homeschooling allows you to custom fit each aspect of learning to the individual needs of your children."

The participants emphasised that their children have completely different personalities and use this information about their children's personality traits to customise education and match their educational needs. Personality traits are considered to play considerable roles in influencing learning styles, and children use various learning strategies accordingly. The participants think that offering learning strategies are fundamental. However, it is up to the child how he reacts to these. Orsolya gave an English language learning example:

> My daughter only watches movies in English; and she enjoys it. My son has never thought of watching movies in English. He was playing *Minecraft*. It is so interesting that it does not depend on the parent. Parents offer all these opportunities, but it is up to the child whether or not he takes advantage of these opportunities. (Orsolya)

This last interview extract illustrates the fact that children are different and react differently to the same things. Márti, for example, used his son's interest in girls to create an enjoyable English language learning opportunity for him. She gave the following example:

> My son is 17, and what motivates teenage boys...beautiful girls. I am part of many international Facebook groups, and I wrote a message about my intentions to seek penfriends for my son. Somewhat surprisingly, families with only daughter(s) applied. I noticed that, suddenly, my lazy boy seemed interested in chatting with these beautiful girls every evening. He opened the translator and exchanged messages. He seems to gain self-confidence as sometimes he even talks to these girls. (Márti)

The participants recognise the importance of honouring these individual differences. They believe that by taking into consideration individual learning preferences, a more meaningful learning experience can be achieved. The key is to get to know children and note their needs, interests, and aspirations. This individualisation is especially true for language learning. Participants acknowledge that homeschooling makes language learning real. Learning something new in the target language, playing games, listening to music, watching movies, TV series or YouTube videos, and reading articles and blogs are just a few activities homeschooling families do to personalise the target language learning.

- *Child-driven learning*

Parents think that homeschooling has a motivating effect on their children by letting them learn the language the way they want. They posit that children do not have to learn unnecessary things because of homeschooling. They do not have to stress and can follow their passion. Anna commented, "I want to emphasise that it is her choice. My daughter decides what she wants to learn and how. If she needs me, I am there for her." This latter sentiment was frequently echoed by other participants as well.

The interviewees emphasised that the child's interests influence all aspects of the learning process, as homeschooling allows families to learn everything through the interest of their children. It has been highlighted repeatedly throughout the literature that 1) child-driven learning environments enhance and promote the acquisition of self-regulatory skills (Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman, 2000), and 2) learning opportunities that consider children's interests and provide choices boost intrinsic interest (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The basic idea is that if children are interested in a particular topic or subject, they will find all the available resources and find

ways to operate independently. They will look up information from reliable Internet sources and carry out research projects simply because they enjoy discovering more and more. Linda's daughter was interested in astronomy, so they focused on it while learning different school subjects. Anna's daughter started to learn the Korean language because of her interest in Korean pop culture. Her daughter wanted to understand the lyrics and vlogs of her favourite K-pop group, the *BTS*. She grabbed *Duolingo* and started learning the language with the help of this application. This inner motivation got her to study a completely new language. A similar example was echoed by Lilla, who stated, "so the point is that we follow the child's motivation and orientation. When my daughter wanted to be a hairdresser; she watched movies related to hairdressing in both Hungarian and English, searched, and looked up words in several foreign languages." Therefore, homeschoolers take advantage of the benefits of curiosity for learning.

In the view of homeschooling parents, maintaining this intrinsic motivation is much more effective in learning and is considered more powerful than extrinsic motivations such as upcoming exams. These basic findings are consistent with previous research showing that "the most powerful rewards are those that are intrinsically motivated: The behaviour stems from needs, wants, or desires within oneself and is self-rewarding" (Brown & Lee, 2015, p. 73), so no external reward is needed.

- *Purpose-based learning*

The interviewees unanimously think that children need to see the important role English plays in a person's life. As soon as they recognise the importance of language learning, they start to relate to it. They set long-term language learning goals, thus ensuring persistence and continuous development. Zita emphasised that passing school exams is just a superficial goal for them. Long-term goals for the future are seen as much more effective. For Zita's children, a major motivation is to travel abroad. Zita's other son wants to become a professional football player. She strengthens this line of motivation. Linda's son decided to study music abroad in Austria or Germany. Her mum highlighted the importance of knowing German, so he started to take language learning seriously. According to Márti, her older daughter is extremely good at languages because she "is in love with the English language." She is determined, focused and goal-oriented; she wants to be a doctor. She realised that studying English could help her achieve this goal as it would allow her to listen to neurobiology courses from top universities worldwide. Watching these free online courses from top institutions with the latest medical research studies drove her language learning

forward. These neuroscience videos allowed Márti's daughter to learn some medical terms in English.

Another way for the kids to realise the importance of English language knowledge is by gaining a sense of accomplishment. Achievements generate positive feelings, like pride and boost inner motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These are seen to improve one's self-esteem and confidence. An example was highlighted by Márti, who frequently examines the etymology of certain English words and learns the Italian language with her children:

> A couple of years ago, we encountered the word dormant volcano. We started to analyse the phrase: dormire in Italian literally translates to go to sleep; it is the base for the word dormitory, the bedroom of monks in the monastery. Dormitory also means sleeping hall. Therefore, a dormant volcano is described as an inactive, sleeping volcano. (Márti)

Her children felt so much joy after being able to translate this term without knowing its exact meaning. Participants highlighted that they want their children to understand and learn a foreign language with all these links and connections. Therefore, the importance of knowing the English language has been frequently emphasised. Participants highlighted that all their children are interested in learning English because they all acknowledge its importance and see that it is very challenging to cope without English language skills. Because of all this, everyone has a good relationship with English, even those children who have not even started learning English because of their age.

6.3.2.3 Specific language teaching related approaches

This section summarises the language teaching and learning process of the participating families. It deals with all the observable and practical characteristics, in other words, how homeschooling parents and their children manage language learning at home, and it analyses whether the language learning management at home promotes children's self-regulatory behaviour. Perry et al. (2017) emphasised that there are teaching elements that are conducive to self-regulated learning, but not all necessarily activate self-regulation as students are different and "in-person" characteristics influence self-regulation (e.g., temperament, cognitive abilities, gender, cultural background). Although there is general agreement that learning success cannot be achieved without self-regulation, it is still unclear how self-regulation can (and indeed should) be developed. The following section highlights some of the best practices homeschooling parents use to promote the self-regulation development of their children at home.

What is unique is that most participants turned out to have a holistic and natural approach to foreign language acquisition. The term acquisition was purposely used in the previous sentence because participants emphasised that they waited patiently for their children to use the foreign language. They believe that foreign language development should be a subconscious process similar to how people develop their first language as children. Many participants emphasised that they try to teach the foreign language the same way as the mother language: they talk to their children, read them books, and expose them to as much language as possible and as early as possible. Because of the parent's belief that learning happens naturally, they start exposing their children to different languages from a very early age. Parents want children to see the importance of knowing a language because they will also prioritise their development. In line with McClelland et al.'s (2017, p. 281), it can be concluded that "early childhood years provide a sensitive period for the development of self-regulation, which is influenced by both individual and contextual factors", and homeschooling parents seem to acknowledge it.

At least five parents mentioned the following set of language-teaching principles:

- *no error correction*

Homeschooling parents think the school environment plays a safe game, focusing more on what could go wrong instead of what could go right. If students make mistakes, they are penalised. Zita remarked that mistakes and errors are crucial parts of language learning and should be encouraged, not punished: "It is important to have the opportunity to make mistakes, not be conditioned to what I was, that only the perfect is good. You have to start on this idea to let children make mistakes." (Zita). The findings showed that the parents' attitudes toward failure seem to be linked to how their children think and view their learning development. Parents who tend to view mistakes and failures as natural parts of the learning process have children who are much less worried and stressed about negative learning experiences.

To sum up, parents motivate their children to expand their abilities by pointing out the importance of learning various languages, focusing on personal progress, and encouraging them to interpret errors and mistakes as opportunities to learn. Linda even cited Kató Lomb, the famous Hungarian interpreter: "Language is the only thing worth knowing even poorly." They believe that as the child's English language skills develop, he/she will correct the mistakes alone.

- *content and language integrated learning (CLIL)*

Participants stated that everything is connected and linked to everything else and use this idea in their homeschooling process as well. Despite not having separate language lessons, children use the target language as a learning tool to learn content from other subjects. Language learning is combined with, e.g., biology, history, geography, and anything the child is interested in. Participants noted that they want the learning process to take a holistic approach and aim to create an integrative learning environment. Below are a few examples highlighting the homeschooling version of integrative learning:

> A couple of days ago, we talked about Rasputin. At first, we listened to the song Rasputin by Boney M. We translated the English lyrics. We read his biography. Later, we learned that he was the confidant of the Tsar. The royals suffered from haemophilia, so my daughter started to teach us about genetics and inheritance. We talked about Rasputin being poisoned with cyanide, so there was a little chemistry involved as well. It started as a history lesson, but we found many other interesting things. (Lilla)

Participants use as many opportunities as possible to get exposed to the target language. Linda's family listens to English CDs in the car while travelling. Other families play English card games, sing songs, and read books in English. Many parents found international pen pals for their children. Exposure to the target language, be it through music, movies, TV series, or cartoons in their original language with or without subtitles, help children to absorb new words. "My daughter swears that the impact of Monty Python movies on her language skills was priceless, as they improved and deepened her understanding of English," Márti said.

To sum up, homeschooling children use languages as learning tools. Márti's son listens to accounting courses in English, and her daughter specially bought the *Oxford Dictionary of Biology and Oxford Dictionary of Chemistry* to learn English terminology. Linda's daughter found an application where amateur writers can upload their stories. At first, her daughter only read these stories, and then she started to write her own in English. She gets feedback from readers, which she finds highly encouraging. During the pandemic, her daughter translated the first volume of Judit Berg's *Lengemesék* series into English to improve her skills. Therefore, children incorporate their interests into the target language learning. In addition, all participants reported using various computer games and apps for educational purposes, further described below.

- *technology involvement*

As the previous section highlighted, homeschooling families integrate technology into their learning. They use computers, laptops and other handheld devices to assist the learning

process. The gathered data showed that all homeschooling families have Internet access and use it for fun and educational purposes every day. There is an old adage about not mixing business with pleasure; the opposite serves as a primary guide for homeschoolers. They combine learning with enjoyment. Children use various websites, online resources, and educational software and attend online courses.

Parents try to give their children the best possible toolkit and resources for continuous development. For example, András's parents downloaded the *Scratch* programming tool for him. With the help of this application, he learnt a coding language and improved his English language proficiency. *Duolingo* was the most frequently listed language learning tool. Zsóka's seven-year-old son often watches English *How to...* videos on YouTube and follows the instructions. It is a huge sense of achievement for him.

Participants acknowledge many positive language learning benefits of digital devices. They highlighted that these digital tools contribute to their children's (a) academic and (b) social development. They offer unique and diverse opportunities that neither homeschooling parents nor schools could provide. One crucial aspect from the self-regulatory perspective mentioned by most participants is that digital platforms encourage individual learning. They allow children to learn at their own pace and in their own way, along with their own learning paths and styles, without constant parental oversight. Parents acknowledge that technology promotes language learning and takes it to another level as it boosts autonomy development. Thus, language learning is more self-paced, self-directed, and personalised. Some participants use digital devices to connect their children with new people – both native and non-native – from around the globe. Parents believe that this way, their children improve their conversation – written and spoken – skills, and it helps them become confident and competent language users.

In addition, according to participants – both homeschooling parents and homeschooled children – video games are effective language learning tools. They see these games as powerful learning tools which make learning fun. Children learn many English words and phrases, as well as gaming terms. Especially popular among homeschooling children are online, multiplayer, and role-playing strategy games. "Their military terminology is really rich", emphasised Zita. Orsolya's children play the *LOL* (author's comment - League of Legends) video game. According to participants, the success of these activities lies in their ability to foster enjoyment and encourage students' active participation in their learning.

Homeschooled children play many different games in the language they are learning. Lilla stated, "If they want to proceed further in the game, they have no choice but to

understand the given instructions and/or communicate with the game partners." Therefore, children advance through different levels while learning the target language without noticing it. Márti added, "My children find video games engaging, and these games affect their language proficiency and increase their general interest and motivation in language learning."

To sum up, parents recognise the unique role of video games in the language learning process and actively encourage their children to engage with these interactive digital platforms. They acknowledge that video games provide a dynamic and immersive environment where language skills can be developed in a fun and engaging way; therefore, these findings are in line with the findings of studies on the role of video games in enhancing English language learning (Chik, 2012; Peake & Reynolds, 2020). By embracing video games as valuable tools and resources for language learning, homeschooling parents empower their children to take ownership of their education. The parents think that games promote active participation that allows for more self-directed learning, which is crucial to lifelong learning mindset development.

6.3.3 Identified self-regulation processes

This section will highlight the concrete steps (i.e., actual self-regulatory processes) homeschooled students use at home while learning. All the identified self-regulation processes are discussed in three phases, e.g., preconditions for self-regulated learning (forethought phase), self-regulation during language learning (performance phase), reaction to learning (self-reflection phase), in order to give a structure and logical flow to the presentation of the main findings. As it will be emphasised, there are overlaps between some of the themes, which is unsurprising as self-regulation is so complex that it is impossible to separate the different processes as they interact.

6.3.3.1 Forethought phase

The forethought phase is a preparatory phase for self-regulated learning (Zimmermann, 2000). This section will present all those themes identified as essential preconditions for self-regulated learning. The following sections will separately deal with all these processes - cognitive (goal setting, strategic planning) and affective (self-motivational beliefs) - as they frequently recurred in the interviews.

- *Goal setting*

Both parents and their students are aware that language learning is a long process, and without goals, their motivation would wane. Setting learning goals and planning turned out to be crucial for homeschooling families as they organise their whole day, including their learning curriculum. Most homeschooled children had a clear vision of their future and were aware of the importance of learning languages. Long- and short-term language learning goals were both identified in the participants' answers. From a self-regulatory perspective, it is an important finding because goal-setting plays a vital role in proactive academic self-regulation (Zimmerman, 2008). Zimmerman's (2000) self-regulation model, for instance, incorporates goals throughout its phases: goal setting and strategic planning in the forethought phase, goal-directed behaviour and attention in the performance phase, and evaluation and adjustment of goals in the self-reflection phase.

Zsuzsi wants to be a teacher, while Anita wants to pass an advanced English language exam. Attila is determined to improve his language skills because he wants to be a famous football player who usually speak very good English. In addition, he wants to travel around the world and wants to be able to speak with native speakers. Attila also has an American family member who visited his family a couple of years ago. He could not talk to him, so he decided to impress him with his English knowledge. Gergő decided that he would try to learn as many foreign languages as possible on an advanced level. Gábor set a goal for himself: to learn at least three English pronunciations. In order to achieve this goal, he picked activities that could help him. Rita sets daily study goals for herself and investigates them from various points. At the same time, Brigi has a clear goal in mind: "I want to finish the book *Murder in Mesopotamia* written by Agatha Christie." She writes all unknown words into the learning application, *AnkiDroid*, a digital language learning flashcard program. She checks these cards daily, tries to connect unknown words to something, and uses them in sentences or context to memorise them. Eszter has a similar concrete goal: "I watch English movies without subtitles, and my goal is to understand 100% of these movies...now I understand only like 70% of the conversations."

The results suggest that homeschooling families take active steps to achieve their learning goals and carefully plan the learning process. Some examples, taken from the interviews with homeschooling families, follow. If the family members want to start the day with a morning English session, they prepare conversation topics the day before so that they can start with it in the morning. If they want to listen to as much English language as possible, they download movies, games, music, and audiobooks. If they want to get feedback on their

pronunciation, they find a native speaker online. Therefore, homeschoolers shape their environment to make the achievement of their goals more manageable and accessible.

Brigi shared her personal experience that she had throughout the years - going as far back as childhood - with goal setting. She brought her learning journals to the interview and shared countless stories about setting daily and weekly educational goals for learning and constantly failing to achieve them. Throughout her homeschooling years, she kept several learning diaries, noting key learning points, learning methods, complaints, thoughts, worries, related feelings, and behaviour. With time and maturity, she realised that it is not enough to write down these goals; she needs to plan and set priorities to achieve them.

Participants also highlighted that dividing bigger goals into smaller milestones within reach and to which well-defined steps lead is always worthwhile. This way, these continuous experiences of success ensure the flow of the learning process and maintain motivation. "If I focus on one thing like that book [Murder in Mesopotamia - author's comment], it is a lot easier […] one little thing, you do not have to conquer the world; these small things will grow big anyway," Brigi said.

Many participants were aware that language learning is a long process and mastery can only be achieved through continuous practice. According to Zsuzsi, setting unrealistic goals like comparing ourselves to native speakers can often deter us. "If we see only the best in front of us, we will never take the first step," she said. She thinks that the fear of failure has a detrimental effect on language learning, which students have to overcome. She thinks that by focusing on what we lack, these negative thoughts and emotions demotivate students from learning.

A notable contrast emerged from the study. Mezei (2012) conducted interviews with school children of the same age as those in my study and found that the students lacked clear ideas about their future aspirations or further studies. Their immediate focus was on language exams or school leaving exams, with no mention of other goals. However, they recognised the importance of English and expressed a desire to improve their language skills for future – mainly work-related - benefits. The study's findings support the claim that homeschooling students exhibit greater goal orientation than their classmates in formal educational settings. According to Riley (2015), this increased intrinsic motivation in homeschooled students may be due to the individualised, flexible, student-led nature of homeschooling education, as opposed to conventional classrooms where the primary motives, goals, objectives and reward systems are all externally defined.

- *Self-beliefs*

An interesting finding emerged from the analysis: all the interviewees (12/12) reported having the ability to master the language and put in the work necessary for development. They believe in themselves, and because of this high self-efficacy, they believe they can grow, achieve, and be successful. Anita said, "I am really satisfied with my current language knowledge; I will never stop learning." Rita echoed a similar view: she trusts her skills, but "one can never be good enough to calm down completely." Attila highlighted that he believes in himself. Zsuzsi is also satisfied with her English language skills and said: "I cannot really highlight anything I would not be able to say in English." She believed in her knowledge and abilities, so she offered to tutor other homeschooled and school children.

The vast majority of homeschooled students painted a relatively positive picture in terms of their language learning progress. Many participants talked about their past selves and compared them to their present selves. They highlighted that the perceived progress is motivating. Ádám said, "...on several occasions, I could not think of the right word, but it is better than my past self." Brigi and Csaba motivate themselves with the fact that they are much better now than they were a couple of years ago. Even the youngest participant, Anett, has highlighted that the achieved results motivate her to continue. She said she was "completely satisfied" with her current language knowledge and emphasised that her life was much easier because of English.

To sum up, most of the participants were satisfied with their current English language knowledge but were aware of their deficiencies as well. This applies to older homeschooled participants, who can already judge this better than their younger counterparts. Most of them reported (6/12) having great speaking skills but having weaknesses in their grammatical knowledge. The results showed that this perceived lack of knowledge did not make them question their abilities and themselves but rather made them think about possible ways to improve their knowledge and remedy their deficiencies. Brigi highlighted that facing and dealing with your shortcomings can be challenging and painful. She added that the concepts of stepping out of your comfort zone, development, and self-improvement are idealised, as the person might feel that these are pleasant things but involve bitter stages as well. "Self-improvement is essentially a change, and as such, it sometimes hurts," she said.

Therefore, homeschooling seems to influence the belief system of students. Homeschooling students have a very positive self-image. Their perception of their capabilities and abilities significantly impacts their language learning accomplishments. A similar conclusion was drawn by Taylor (1986), one of the first researchers to investigate self-

expectancy beliefs in homeschooled children. His findings indicated that homeschooled children had significantly higher self-concepts ($p < .001$) compared to conventionally schooled children, both on the global scale and across all six subscales of the *Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale*. This difference may be attributed to higher levels of achievement and mastery, the independent nature of homeschooling, and the one-on-one tutoring environment provided at home.

- *Intrinsic interest*

Before moving to the actual learning phase, it is important to highlight the positive attitude of homeschooled participants toward language learning. Homeschoolers – students and their parents – see the value of language learning and start to deal with it from an early age. Even Zimmerman's (2000) model highlighted that task interest and value are essential preconditions of successful self-regulation. It is considered critical in directing self-regulation and predicting the willingness to use conscious, strategic actions to achieve certain learning goals (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2008; Efklides, 2011). Therefore, the role of motivation in self-regulation is indisputable.

The present study's results show a general consensus among the interviewees on the relevance of the English language. The participants see its potential importance for numerous personal and professional aspects of their life. The answers suggest that most homeschooled participants are intrinsically motivated to learn languages and have various internal drives. The following examples highlight the main reasons for language learning:

> I have always loved the English language...the learning went well, which is why I want to be better and do it well. (Zsuzsi)

> Because it is useful if you can communicate in other languages, and it is good to communicate in a language other than your mother tongue. It feels good to understand and be understood by others. (Ádám)

> I really like it; I use it for everything. I write novels. I like to read in English. I am very interested in English. It is very useful, and I enjoy dealing with it. (Rita)

> Because meeting new people is fun! The whole world opened up to me. I learn a lot about different cultures and meet new people… I have friends from the Far East to the Middle East, even from the Southern Hemisphere. (Csaba)

> I love it because I can expand my knowledge. (Eszter)

> If you want to live a better life, you have to move and develop. You need to know English. I think it will be a basic thing in the future. (Brigi)

The data also showed that one of the greatest advantages homeschooled students see in homeschooling is that it is entirely children-driven so that they can tailor the whole learning process to their own needs. “Homeschooling gave me many opportunities. I am interested in brain science and hormone household. I watch many videos and listen to various lectures in English. I learn new phrases and sentences this way, so I frequently combine these two,” said Rita in her interview. Homeschooling students reported finding activities they love passionately and combining them with language learning. This is considered necessary not only because of enjoyment felt during learning (which is highly motivating) but also because this is an essential precondition for overcoming those low moments when language learning does not yet cause joy – on the contrary, it involves anxiety, pain, stress, discomfort, and frustration.

Even though all the participants highlighted dealing with English almost every day, watching movies, playing games, and reading books in English from a young age for many years were reinforced by parents. Homeschooled students recollected this memory from their earlier years. The data suggest that intrinsic interest in language learning developed only after: 1) maturity, 2) experiences of success, and 3) finding an activity for which the knowledge of the particular language was essential.

Ageing helped participants reach the point where the learning process was no longer mandatory (I must…) but began to interest them in its depths (I want…). The results suggest that intrinsic interest in language learning developed only later in older learners over 14. Despite their awareness of the relevance of foreign language learning, younger homeschooling students do not seem to give it the necessary attention and priority over other learning-related activities. One of the youngest participants, Attila, a 13-year-old homeschooled boy, summed up this finding best: “I learn it [English language - author’s comment] because I have to, but I know it is important.” András (14) characterised his relationship to language learning the following way: “I may be in great need of English at some point in my life, not just abroad. It is not a priority in my life right now, but it still means a lot to me.” Gergő (14) shared a similar view: “I do not really have explicit plans with it [English language - author’s comment], but since it can still be useful, I am learning it.”

Homeschooled students became active agents in their language learning process mainly because of their interest in learning. According to the participants, their internal motivation increased due to their various language learning experiences (for more details, see the next section below). As Zsuzsi emphasised, after experiencing growing success, she

"could finally see the point of language learning. I started putting more energy into learning and even took a language exam."

The participants unanimously agreed that when they are motivated, they push themselves hard. There are no excuses. Doing some extra work (Zsuzsi wrote all her assignments voluntarily in English), seeking out opportunities to develop English knowledge (Eszter listened to lectures only in English), identifying strengths and weaknesses (Brigi wrote a learning journal about her daily progress), acquiring new knowledge (Ádám – now that he knows English well - feels encouraged to learn other languages), willingness to be autonomous (Rita thinks that it is great when people are not given ready-made answers but are free to work out plans and experiment) were frequently mentioned by the participants during the interviews.

In sum, while some participants felt an intrinsic interest in language learning almost immediately, it developed gradually for many. The participants all recalled that the whole learning experience was challenging in the beginning. After a while, they started using the language for everything. The latter result is consistent with Zeng's (2011, p.ii) previous finding that improvement "marks a transition from learning a language to learning in the language." As the data suggests, motivations seem to be revealed by how the learning process has been carried out. The type of relationship that a student has with learning, the criteria by which he chooses the circumstances of the learning process, the amount of planning and evaluation he engages in, and the effort and persistence he is willing to put forward in achieving a set goal, all provide additional insight into a student's likely motivations, personal needs, characteristic features, his/her past history, experiences, and current lifestyle.

When do they say it was enough for the day? When do they put extra energy into learning? How do they establish priorities? How do they plan their days? All these issues depend on the individual's area of interest. Language learning has a prominent position in this respect compared to other subjects, as the attitude towards language learning is very positive among homeschooling students. As Rita put it, "As long as I enjoy learning English, why would I stop?" They do not need extra external motivation as something they enjoy and incorporate into their daily lives. The results suggest that the participants pay close attention to their learning progress and processes not because of external influences and rewards but because they are intrinsically motivated. Language learning-related activities have never been perceived as a burden for most participants.

- *Learning experiences*

Past language learning experiences – both positive and negative – turned out to influence the interviewees' current language attitude and behavioural decisions. These failure and success stories are a basis for the learners' self-confidence and influence their self-image. Empirical evidence supports the idea that the specific characteristics of a situation can influence an individual's self-regulation (Blume et al., 2021). This implies that different experiences or situations can influence how people regulate their learning behaviour. For example, Horvath et al. (2006) discovered that self-regulation in the classroom varied depending on the nature of the task and the social context in which it was performed. Students' self-regulation behaviours varied depending on whether they were working on easier or more difficult tasks, as well as whether they were working alone or in small groups. These findings emphasise the dynamic nature of self-regulation, which adapts and adjusts in response to the demands and characteristics of the learning situation.

The interviewees shared countless stories about their earlier experiences with the English language. The following success stories demonstrate this idea:

> We went on a music trip to Austria a couple of years ago, and I used my German knowledge. Suddenly I felt that, wow, they understood me. What motivated me to improve my language skills were these, yeah, I can express myself moments. (Brigi)

> I had no problem communicating with native speakers. It was a highly positive experience and was so cool. (Rita)

> I played many computer games, and some of them were not Hungarian. At first, I was annoyed that I could not understand them, so I started practising more. I was motivated to learn new words, search Google for things I did not understand, and stuff like that. I got better and was motivated because I could finally use the language. (Zsuzsi)

> When I talked with Americans, and they said I was good, it gave my language learning a new energy. (Gábor)

According to Brigi, her success stories have been important contributions to her current language learning motivation: "Without these experiences of success, I would not have much motivation today." These success stories motivated her to move forward and further develop her language skills. For Zsuzsi, the experiences of success came primarily from outside of school. She highlighted that she was not motivated in high school by good marks because she did not have to put extra effort into achieving them. She felt a sense of achievement when she could understand a long text or native speakers and could say something she had never said before.

Negative experiences turned out to be as important as success stories. The results showed that over the years, homeschooled students had to overcome many language learning-related obstacles, which otherwise could easily distract them from personal development and the actual language learning process. Previous experiences of failure led to a lack of interest in learning the language. These negative experiences resulted in lower self-confidence and self-doubt. Eszter got a listening task she could not understand, and this single task failure made her question her ability. Brigi constantly misinterpreted and failed to understand native speakers fully. She had trouble believing language success was possible. For Attila talking to native speakers was frightening at first. Eszter did not take English learning seriously for many years. Rita and Zsuzsi failed to understand their video game partners and were frequently kicked out of games by their team members. Csaba's first encounter with a native speaker turned out to be a complete disaster, he wrote down his monologue and read it. They noticed it, of course. This negative experience made him neglect language learning for a long time.

The older participants talked about these negative experiences in the past tense and highlighted that nowadays, there are particularly no influences that could make them question their abilities. The data showed that many participants started consciously regulating their learning after a negative experience. In order to get her motivation back, Brigi started talking to a German family friend daily. Rita and Zsuzsi watched movies only in English, and Csaba paid greater attention to how his messages and e-mails sounded. He actively sought help and used various (online) dictionaries and websites to correct his mistakes.

Moreover, participants allow themselves failures. Even when something negative happens, they do not panic because they know it is a natural part of language learning. Despite these difficulties, they did not lose sight of their goal. They pay attention to these experiences through continuous self-reflection. The interview sample size is too small to draw broad conclusions; however, an exciting point emerged from the data. The interviewees did not blame others for their failures. Hardly any attention is placed on the importance of external factors in their language-related failure stories. They attribute failures to their abilities and explain possible failures by their own lack of effort. However, attribute the achieved success to their own or external factors. 9 out of 12 homeschooled students highlighted that homeschooling positively contributed to their current language learning success. These past experiences influence their current attitudes toward language learning. In general, participants strive for language success and are persistent. They show a high level of commitment needed for constant and consistent practice.

6.3.3.2 Performance phase

This section will deal with - as most people call it - the actual learning process. The analysis revealed that while the participants learn languages differently, several shared experiences and influences were across their narratives.

- *Learning strategies*

According to participants, to develop the right motivation and be able to master the learning material effectively, it is important to find the most suitable learning style and strategies. This was the idea consistently emphasised by the interview participants. Rita's following comment exemplifies the other participants' opinions:

> Try to figure out what kind of learning is best for you. Are you a visual, auditory, tactile learner, or a combination of these? You have to find something that motivates you and connect it to language learning. You have to find something you like in language learning. It is so much easier. You just have to connect it with something positive. (Rita)

The above excerpt has been chosen as it reflects this study's most important points and perspectives. First, it takes time to discover and identify one's learning style. Zsuzsi and Brigi highlighted that they were around 14 years old when they started to consciously pay attention to the features of their learning process and analyse it. Brigi even completed a learning quiz to find out what type of learner she is and changed the way she learns based on the results (60% auditory, 20% visual learner). This finding provides clear support for the malleability of self-regulation. As frequently highlighted in the literature, there are "many transitions and turning points for the development of these skills" (McClelland et al., 2017, p. 280), for most participants age 14 seem to be a similar turning point.

Second, students have distinct learning styles. The students' answers suggest that in-person characteristics and traits affect the choice of various learning strategies. Zsuzsi, Brigi, Rita and Eszter all highlighted that they know they are perfectionists, so they take learning very seriously. Rita emphasised that learning strategies depend on personality: "My sister is very communicative. Some people prefer to learn grammar structures; others practise English by talking to others. We are all different in this regard. You have to figure out your own needs." Brigi, in her answer, characterised herself as an "extrovert" and a "control freak." As she explained, "I have always been like that. I tried, did everything alone, organised everything, followed everything, decided where to look for information, found friends, and controlled everything." Zsuzsi also emphasised that she is doing great because she is diligent; she wrote many essays in English for no particular reason, only because she felt so and

wanted to improve her skills. Eszter said she has always been autonomous and prefers to learn alone to date. Csaba [Eszter's brother – author's comment] said he is much lazier than her sister and thinks his learning strategies are ineffective. He thinks finding something that works for a particular person is important. Because of his sister's advice, Csaba tried to improve his language skills by watching movies in English, but he perceived it as a waste of time. He realised that because of his outgoing personality and interest in other people, having conversations with people from around the world worked so much better for him.

According to participants, one of the benefits of homeschooling, even from a language-learning perspective, is individualisation. Homeschoolers believe that there is no particular language learning method that should fit everyone and be called universally the best. The overwhelming opinion – of both parents and their children – is that the best way to learn the language is to immerse in it completely. Based on the interview data, homeschooling students take the following active steps on their own to further develop their language skills:

- Use songs and music as language-learning tools (all the participants)
- Learn the target language through movies/TV (all the participants)
- Read in the target language (all the participants)
- Write as much as possible in the target language (4 participants)
- Watch YouTube videos on topics they are interested in (all the participants)
- Translate texts (5 participants)
- Find native speakers online (6 participants)
- Use the Internet as a learning resource (all the participants)
- Use language learning mobile applications (all the participants)
- Play video games online (all the participants)
- Practise English with non-native friends and family members (7 participants)
- Self-talk in the target language (5 participants)

Two things are worth noting here. First, the participants mentioned all the above activities, so they were not provided with a list of various activities to choose from. Second, even though these are everyday activities, homeschoolers engage in them to further develop their learning skills, meaning they are fully aware and consciously choose these activities for educational purposes.

The most frequently mentioned language learning techniques were watching movies and online videos, listening to music, reading texts in English, and playing online games. The most frequently used mobile application was *DuoLingo* (9 participants), while several other

language learning applications were used by one or two participants only: *AnkiDroid* (1 participant) is a flashcards maker app, *Wattpad* (2 participants) is a reading and writing app, and *Coursera* (1 participant) is an online educational platform where universities offer courses. *Grammarly* (2 participants), *Pinterest* (1 participant), and *Google translate* (7 participants) are among the most used online resources. The research also found that all homeschooled students use *YouTube* to watch various videos and *Netflix* (8 participants) and *HBO* (7 participants) to watch movies and series in English.

In order to use the target language as much as possible, Zsuzsi chose to write all her assignments and projects in English instead of Hungarian. She reported writing more than 40 pages in English about different topics with the help of the internet and dictionaries. Some participants (5/12) ask native speakers for pronunciation feedback. Attila highlighted that when he travelled to Germany, he tried to speak German all the time and literally avoided those who tried to speak other languages with him. Rita and Zsuzsi are sisters, and they decided to talk to each other in English to improve their language skills. Brigi keeps a diary in which she honestly writes about her feelings and thoughts, often in English. Rita frequently watches movies and TV series featuring British actors and imitates their pronunciation. She uses the new words in sentences and her speech. Sometimes she writes a whole story around new phrases so she puts these into context. She wants to expand her vocabulary and uses *Pinterest* to learn synonyms. In addition, she started to dig deeper into the history of the English language, learning about old grammar and sentence structures. Eszter only watches anatomy and physiology videos in English and consciously checks movie review videos and websites to improve her skills. She also has a long-term penfriend with whom she speaks and writes regularly. Attila watched hundreds of card trick videos in English. At the same time, Anita, Anett and András are siblings and use the *Kreatív Nyelvtanulás* – a method based on sentence translations – to learn the basics of the language. Their mum teaches them from an early age. Gábor, Ádám, and Gergő are brothers, and their situation is unique for two reasons. On the one hand, both of their parents are English teachers. On the other hand, their parents have a family business that produces online English video tutorials for language learners. The boys learn the language through these videos.

The following paragraphs deal exclusively with game-based learning, which plays a central role in the language learning process of homeschooled learners based on their narratives. “Playing computer games is part of my life…” Zsuzsi said. Almost all interviewees mentioned that video games significantly improved their language proficiency. Not only do homeschooled participants enjoy playing these games, but they are fully aware of

the beneficial learning aspects of video games. For most homeschooled learners, various computer games have proved useful in the early stages of their language development. Many of the participants highlighted that these games got them excited about language learning in the first place.

These games gave homeschoolers the vocabulary and the confidence to engage in conversations with native English speakers. Having these conversations with native speakers was a frequently emphasised milestone for many interviewees. Zsuzsi joined different online groups, chats and forums to meet and interact with other game members using the target language. Meeting people from around the world is great for encouraging language learning. Csaba especially highlighted that other language learners have a motivating effect on him:

> It may sound a little evil, but talking to other language learners motivates me. Hearing that they are so much worse than I am, gives me a boost […]I can see the progress and that I am not on their level anymore. I am much better. These little positive experiences gave me a new impetus and energy […] slowly, I started believing that I am good. (Csaba)

In addition, these peers are seen to provide encouragement, support, and a sense of belonging when motivation declines.

One of the most prominent findings is that homeschoolers acknowledge that everyone learns differently, and it is important to find those study methods that work best for a particular student. Brigi filled out a test to determine what type of learner she is. After receiving the result – she turned out to be a half visual, half auditory learner – she started to pay close attention to her methods and analysed the learning progress. The test results turned out to be accurate. She still pays attention to using appropriate learning techniques (i.e., watching Youtube videos, drawing diagrams and pictures). However, she highlighted that she still cannot confidently say she knows how she learns. She varies her learning strategies depending on the given learning situation, believing that learning keeps changing with time. Their firsthand accounts highlight the idea that learning is not confined to a specific time or place but is a continual and transformational activity that unfolds throughout life and is in line with constructivism (see Chapter 2.1.2).

- *Help-seeking*

The data showed that homeschooled learners have high confidence in their language abilities and comfort in discussing their problems and weaknesses. They were eager to share personal experiences about their efforts to seek assistance to overcome these. Conscious academic help-seeking turned out to be an important self-regulatory strategy for

homeschooled students as examples of parents' and children's beliefs and attitudes towards seeking help and actual help-seeking behaviour emerged from the data. Homeschooled participants who do not understand or know something seek appropriate help for their learning problems.

With regard to the sources of support, younger homeschooled children seek more help from parents, siblings and close friends rather than trying to solve the problems on their own. Therefore, seeking help from family members was preferred over self-help by younger homeschooled children. Attila (13) even said that when his father had no time to help him with the new material, he neglected language learning and focused on something he could understand. He failed to seek help from other resources, so he gave up trying. However, later in the interview, he admitted, "I am not really independent in language learning, as I am always waiting for someone's help." The results demonstrated that as the conscious use of self-regulated learning strategies develops with maturity (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990), younger students need more help regulating their learning process (Pelikan et al., 2021).

Language learning is a subject for most families that requires mentoring. Parents are not trying to instruct their children, they are not the ones telling children where to go, but they are just being told where children want to go. In this latter case, when the child directs the learning, the parent has a limited but important role. The necessity of support and presence is key. Anna sees her role the following way: "What I can do in the latter case is that I can list all the things I can and I cannot help him with. Then I list everything I can think of related to his direction." They try to keep their motivation awake by doing so. Participants encourage their children not to give up. Márti, for example, encouraged his thirteen-year-old son to rewatch his favourite documentaries in English, which vastly improved his language skills. This positive encouragement inspires children to do better and gives them confidence.

Children also learn a lot by just observing adult behaviour. Participants acknowledge that children learn many new skills through watching their parents. They use this modelling in education as well. As Zita highlighted, children watch and learn from their parents every day. She pays special attention to what she says and does in front of her children. Sometimes she intentionally models things she wants her children to follow.

> I show them [participants' children - author's comment] for example, let's say I need to create a website. I sit down; search for sources, videos, tutorials, and books; ask others for help; become better as I progress; and finally, create the website. I gain more and more experience during the process, and it becomes a model for the children. (Zita)

For older homeschooled students seeking help from web-based data sources such as Google, Wikipedia®, different social networks, and YouTube channels was more common. A description of Brigi's experience illustrates this: "When I do not understand something, I often listen to several videos on that particular topic, told by at least three people differently, and I try to understand it by connecting all the information." Eszter, who watches movies without subtitles, shared a similar story. Instead of asking others for help, she rewatches those parts of a movie where she encounters the unknown word and tries to guess its meaning.

Zsuzsi summarised their first-year homeschooling experience the following way: "My father helped me with my English. My mum never felt comfortable helping us with language learning. My dad explained me the grammar rules. He consulted the school and my teachers and helped me prepare for exams." She thinks that right now, she can solve all her problems alone. Therefore, the data suggest that the need for help decreases as the child gets older. This finding is supported by what Csaba said:

> At first, writing messages in English was hard. I rushed to my sister and parents and asked them what to write and how to answer certain messages. Now I sit down, write by myself, use the translator, and rely solely on my skills rather than my parents' help. I translate my sentences and use back-translation, too. (Csaba)

Converging evidence from previous studies and my research indicates that the older the participants, the more technology-based and independent the learning process. Janis-Norton (2013) reported that self-reliance naturally and gradually develops as students get older. She emphasised that "environment is by far the most influential factor in determining how self-reliant a child or teen will be." The homeschooled participants' answers suggest that they are more than aware of their help-seeking options and could easily answer questions such as where to find help, whom to turn to, and how to seek help from. Most homeschooling students think that homeschooling positively influences their learning, and compared to their traditional school counterparts, they consider themselves much more independent and autonomous; a finding that was also statistically supported by Riley's (2015) research. Homeschooled learners and their parents actively seek new tools and technologies to help solve many of their language learning problems and meet their learning needs.

- *Monitoring learning behaviour*

Monitoring language learning progress was emphasised by several of the interviewees. As they stated, it is not enough to focus on success stories; sometimes, we have to realise our shortcomings, review our needs, and find the right people to help. Brigi echoed this:

> I planned to talk to my friend from England, yet I failed to express myself in English. I did not tell myself that I was stupid, but I tried to think about it and described how I felt at the time (nervous, anxious, stressed etc.). Monitoring my behaviour helped raise awareness of what has weakened my abilities and what I need to pay attention to be better next time. (Brigi)

She highlighted that as she grew older, she changed her behaviour and introduced new learning habits while replacing old, inefficient ones. Her answer summarised two frequently emphasised points. First, mistakes are natural parts of the language learning process. Second, homeschooling students seem to have a strong internal locus of control (Rotter, 1954). They posit that their achievements are the results of their own actions. They praise and blame themselves and their abilities for their learning success and failures and take responsibility for their actions. They do not blame external factors such as teachers or books for mistakes.

Many participants employ daily routines and habits because they work and are satisfied with the progress and results:

> I often get distracted, so a couple of months ago, I started to do the more exciting things first to absorb the information more easily. (András)

> I misspelt too many words. I used to read quietly, but I realised it was not that effective. So nowadays, I read texts aloud and listen to how my pronunciation sounds. (Rita)

> I use the language every day. I also think in English, I create opportunities for myself. I only use the Internet in English, rarely in Hungarian, only if I want to watch the news. I also realised that reading in English and watching videos are passive ways of learning the language, so I started to write down the new words. (Brigi)

The above-selected interview excerpts all highlight that homeschooling students regulate their learning by engaging in self-recording, self-observation, and self-experimentation to modify and improve their learning strategies if necessary.

- *Self-talk*

This study's interesting and surprising finding is that homeschooled learners frequently engage in self-talk. Participants use self-talk for multiple reasons. First, these internal dialogues are great ways to improve English skills. Brigi uses internal dialogues to use new words and phrases in sentences. She creates short stories or conversations in her head. Second, some interviewees also emphasised self-talk's motivating or demotivating influence (6/12). With self-talk, participants manage their learning progress. Zsuzsi uses self-talk for self-reflection, whether she is on the right way. She often asks herself questions like: Why do you feel nervous? Why do you find it hard to concentrate? She goes deeper than just

giving some superficial answer. She instead asks questions that might prompt action: "But what can you do to change the situation and be better?" Participants frequently use positive self-talk because it has a motivating effect on them. Eszter often tells herself to go on, that she is doing great or that she should try again. Rita explained that her self-talk encourages her to improve, to be better. She added that positive self-talk makes her feel better even after something negative happens: "This helps me look on the bright side, I guess." Anett often tells herself to focus in case her mind starts to wander. Ádám shared the following story, after which he used self-talk to motivate himself:

> Someone asked me where Hungary was, and I said between Romania and Australia instead of Austria. I realised it only later […] I felt so stupid…but then I told myself that I would do better next time, and I felt better. (Ádám)

To summarise, the findings of this study show that homeschooled learners frequently engage in self-talk mainly to regulate their emotions, thoughts, and behaviour. This finding is in line with Pintrich (2000), who considers it a self-regulatory strategy and identifies self-talk as part of behavioural and motivational control and regulation. Self-talk plays a vital role in overcoming the experiences negatively perceived by the participants. The data suggest that positive self-talk improves the self-esteem and self-image of the participants and builds their self-confidence. In addition, it replaces negative thoughts and emotions with more positive ones.

6.3.3.3 Self-reflection phase

Self-reflection is the last phase of the self-regulation cycle, according to Zimmerman (2000). It involves the evaluation of the learning process, such as to see what caused the success or failure of the learning process. Brigi and Rita both emphasised that knowing yourself is very important and "it is a long process until you realise how you learn." Rita thinks, "changing just a small thing can make a huge difference." Participants think that change begins with self-knowledge and starts from our failures. Brigi emphasised that many people want negative situations to be over – like being unable to express themselves, feeling stupid, demotivation, and shame – without actually analysing the causes and reasons. She thinks that from these "down" moments, we can learn what it takes to succeed next time. Gergő echoed a similar sentiment: negative experiences boost him because he knows he has to learn and is still getting closer to his goal.

By self-reflecting, participants measure their self-satisfaction level, whether they are happy with the results or not:

> I think I speak well. I fully understand complicated YouTube videos and am easily conversing with foreigners. Unfortunately, my spelling skills are not the best, and my pronunciation quality is poor. I am happy with it, but there is room for improvement. (Gábor)
>
> I do not like the feeling when my knowledge is incomplete, and I instinctively try to compensate. (Gergő)
>
> Regularly, I look back at how hard it was to write the message then and how quickly I can put it all together now. I am really satisfied with my progress. (Csaba)

Participants also reflect on the results of their learning process, which involves the participants' judgments of their current performance. They frequently reflect on the task (language learning) and their learning context (homeschooling environment). By constantly reflecting on the learning process, homeschooling families try to learn more about themselves and what pushes them forward and holds them back.

6.3.4 How can the homeschooling experience be used by homeschooling parents to enhance their children's self-regulation? (RQ3.1)

Research question 3.1 aimed to explore the relationship between the home environment and the language teaching and learning experiences of homeschooled children from homeschooling parents' perspectives. One of the most important findings of the parent interviews is that a conducive environment alone does not guarantee fast and effective language learning. The availability of different resources is not enough to ensure adequate language learning, but targeted efforts need to be made to enhance the children's intrinsic motivation to learn languages. Addressing motivating factors for language learning, making the learning completely student-driven and personalised, and pointing out the importance and usefulness of foreign languages are strategies homeschooled parents highlighted using to make the learning process more meaningful. Therefore, the parents acknowledge that homeschooling alone cannot guarantee language learning success.

In order to fully understand and comprehend the homeschooling experience, it is important to delve into the fundamental meaning of the word "learning." The interview data indicate that the homeschooling practice of homeschooling families is linked to a broader aspect of the parents' worldview, i.e., the perception of education and learning in particular. These views were found to form the foundation of the parents' descriptions of their homeschooling experience. It turned out that homeschooling is not only about a choice of where education occurs but is related to the parents' differing perceptions of the nature of the

traditional educational process. This finding is considered crucial – even from a self-regulation perspective – because the participants think the school system conditions hamper learning.

It is interesting to note the participants in this study did not mention their intentions to control the learning process. On the contrary, each participant highlighted the child-driven nature of homeschooling as one of its main advantages. This contrast might be attributed to the fact that participants in the present study take a holistic approach to homeschooling education based on their answers. Neuman and Aviram (2003) distinguish between two approaches to studying homeschooling: the pedagogical approach and the holistic approach. The pedagogical approach emphasises the educational dimension of homeschooling, while the holistic approach considers how homeschooling influences various aspects of individuals' lives. The data showed that the participating parents chose homeschooling not only for educational reasons but because of their belief that homeschooling offers life-changing opportunities (i.e., better familial relations, self-fulfilment options, taking responsibility for future, focusing on a future career, achieving set goals, and developing intrinsic interest in learning). The results of the data analysis showed that homeschooling parents consciously use certain aspects of homeschooling (individualisation, child-driven learning, purpose-based learning) to motivate their children.

The participants emphasised that even though they are the parents and should teach their children, they are not in control. For homeschooling parents, the learning process relies on mutual partnership; the parents are not the ones directing it. Many families describe learning as an activity involving the whole family, meaning parents are co-participants in the learning process. However, most parents have a rather passive role in determining the content of the curriculum, leaving decision-making almost entirely to the children; this is especially true for those participants who follow the Clonlara homeschool program.

From a self-regulatory perspective, an important finding is that homeschooling encourages learner autonomy from the very beginning. This finding is in line with the results reported by Riley (2015) and Jackson (2016), which state that homeschooled students at home experience more autonomy than their peers who attend school. Because children have to make their own decisions concerning their learning process, homeschooling helps them realise their responsibility for their learning and development, increasing their motivation.

The results showed that homeschooling offers a unique opportunity for children to develop self-regulation abilities as they have the opportunity to control their schedules and take ownership of their learning process. This autonomy enables kids to develop critical self-

regulation skills such as goal setting, time management, and arranging their study materials. The participating homeschooled students seem to be fully aware of their decision-making possibilities and the autonomy homeschooling offers in learning and can decide about the following issues, listed from simpler to more complex points:

- to choose where to learn (select a place for learning)
- to choose when to learn (choosing the best time for studying)
- to decide what to learn (choosing the topic of learning, creating daily plans, setting priorities)
- to choose how to learn (learning resources, learning strategies, whom to work with)
- to decide when to get extra help and support
- to choose which skills/areas of their knowledge they would like to improve
- to evaluate their learning (deciding when to stop learning, satisfaction with the results, judging own skills)

The results showed that homeschooling enables, supports, moreover demands students to take responsibility for their learning. Since they are free to plan their days, decide what to study, how to study and to what extent, and do not have to worry about school exams and grades constantly, and so monitoring their development and reflecting on it is even more important. Therefore, homeschooling necessitates advanced self-regulatory abilities and requires evaluating the effectiveness of the different components of self-regulation present before, after, and during the learning process.

In addition, as the participants emphasised, the home environment is seen as a safe background, which gives children a sense of security to be autonomous. The parents play a pivotal role in creating this safe environment where children are free to explore. If there is a problem, the child will have someone to turn to, someone that cares. This type of security is seen as important, and it gives children enough self-confidence to head off in the direction they want to go and explore the things they are interested in. As homeschooling is children-driven and interest-driven, children learn a great deal of new information alone. Anna's answer perfectly sums up their approach to learning: "If the kid really wants to learn or enjoys that lesson, if the child is interested, you do not need to teach him anything; he will do the learning himself."

Almost all participants consider it important for their children to view learning not as a burden and not as a mere duty but as something that accompanies them throughout their daily experiences. Orsolya's answer illustrates the previous idea: "We force too much on children and people in general, and it is as if they "smell" learning, and then they do not feel like doing it anymore, they feel that learning is a burden." Zita emphasised, "I make my children very, very much aware that you learn neither for marks nor for the sake of school. You do it for

yourself." To sum up, participants maintain that children develop an inner need for a high level of language proficiency and take full responsibility for language learning over time. From that point on, they will take language learning more seriously.

6.3.5 How do Hungarian homeschooling parents integrate the development of self-regulated learning strategies into language teaching? (RQ3.2)

The data suggests that in natural environments (such as the home environment), the development of self-regulation skills is a natural part of the interaction with parents and other family members. This finding aligns with Bembenutty (2013), who stated that self-regulated learning is shaped through social interactions with other agents of the learning process. While learning at home, parents turned out as the most influential people who reinforced self-regulated learning experiences, offered help and feedback, and helped students overcome difficult times. In a way, they encourage and motivate their children to meet their goals and master the chosen and set learning material.

Over 50 years ago, Baumrind (1971) was among the first researchers to link parenting styles with self-regulation abilities. Since then, numerous researchers have argued that authoritative parenting styles positively influence self-regulation development. The results align with Piotrowski et al. (2013), who concluded that children of authoritative parents show well-developed self-regulation abilities, while children of parents who exert firm control or no control have poor self-regulation skills. Homeschooling parents use non-threatening evaluation practices. They are not grading the students but provide detailed feedback. They try to create low-anxiety situations and pay little or no attention to correcting errors or to conscious learning of various English grammar rules. They believe constant vocabulary expansion and regular active language usage are more important. Parents believe that homeschooling allows them – and their children – to create motivating learning situations that make language learning enjoyable.

The findings suggest that homeschooling parents and the homeschooling experience can, directly and indirectly, promote and activate self-regulated learning in children, a conclusion Dignath and Veenman (2021) also drew based on their systematic review of 17 classroom observation studies. They concluded that in a traditional school setting, teachers promote self-regulation through indirect interventions more often than with the help of direct instructions. The present results seem to be in line with their findings, as it turned out homeschooling parents mainly promote self-regulation indirectly.

Parents incorporate activities into homeschooling that positively impact the children's self-regulation. They encourage self-regulation by promoting personal initiatives, offering relevant goals and help, and pointing out possible ways to solve a problem, which all promote the child's sense of autonomy and control over their learning process. A carefully designed learning environment can foster the students' self-regulation, as it greatly impacts the learning process (Zimmerman, 1989). Generally, a learning environment should be stress and anxiety free, student-centred, and authentic, where the learners are offered plenty of opportunities to practice self-regulation (Paris & Winograd, 1999). Homeschooling seems to be an environment that fulfils each requirement of Paris and Winograd's (1999) definition.

Throughout the interviews, participants emphasised that parental attitude towards learning plays a major role in influencing how children relate to the learning process. Children learn a lot by just observing adult behaviour. Participants acknowledge that through watching their parents, children learn a lot of new skills. Homeschooling parents model self-regulated behaviour themselves – make independent decisions, search for information online, seek help when needed, look for appropriate learning tools, ask and give feedback, and share best practices and experiences for effective learning. The importance of parental modelling - especially during early childhood - is frequently emphasised in self-regulation literature up to date. This was one of the earliest findings that researchers agreed on. As highlighted in Chapter 2.1.4, modelling is an essential part of Schunk and Zimmerman's (1997) four-phase model of self-regulation development. According to their model, students first observe the behaviour of the people around them (e.g., parents, siblings, friends, teachers) and, as a next step, start to imitate what they have observed. Therefore, the parents think that for students to develop self-regulatory strategies, they need to be made aware of them and use them in an initially guided and structured manner.

As mentors, parents offer advice, tips and tricks, focusing on how to do and achieve certain things. Parents assist their children in using and trying a wide range of learning resources and tools to find the most suitable ones. They encourage and motivate their children to take responsibility for their learning and development. Some parents just point out some possible ways as to which direction to go. However, parents get involved only when the child asks for it or if something goes wrong. Many participants emphasised that they are far from being "helicopter parents." These helicopter parents are overcontrolling and overprotecting their children, which might cause problems in their autonomous development. According to participants, removing all the obstacles from their children's path, making decisions and solving all their problems hinder the child's self-regulatory abilities. Children may miss many

important life lessons without facing challenges and failures, taking responsibility for actions and accepting the consequences.

The data suggest that self-regulation can be fostered, which aligns with self-regulatory research findings (Zimmerman, 2000). The results showed that homeschooling parents can actively promote self-regulation development in their children through direct and intentional strategies and practices. At the same time, self-regulation can also develop naturally and unconsciously within the homeschooling setting, influenced by the behaviours and examples set by parents and people around the child.

6.3.6 What components of the self-regulated learning process can be identified in Hungarian homeschooled learners' language learning? (RQ4.1)

Although the primary focus of the first set of research questions has been on what homeschooling parents do to promote self-regulated learning, the analysis will end with a summary of how the homeschooling experience and the best practices highlighted by their parents influence homeschooled children. The broad focus of the interview questions was to capture the self-regulated language learning process in the home environment from the perspective of homeschooled learners.

Interviewees were not asked directly about self-regulation; instead, they were asked to talk about their language learning process, past experiences, present practices, and future plans. Success stories and coping with difficult situations also provided useful information. The term self-regulation was intentionally left out to not influence the participants' answers. This decision was especially important for the research, as the focus was not on how much knowledge and theory students had about effective learning and self-regulation but on actual practice and the real influence of the home environment on self-regulation.

One of the most prominent themes in the interviews with homeschooled students was that students do not consider their language development a real learning experience. Zsuzsi stated that English language learning was an "exception" for her. She characterised her experience the following way: "So it was not a sitting down with a book type of learning. It just became part of my life. I read books, listened to videos, watched movies, and played lots of online games." She thinks that these activities gave her enough motivation to be better. However, as further analysis of the data showed, homeschooling students are fully aware of the educational potential of these activities and so consciously engage in them.

The data allowed us to create learner profiles containing the overall picture of the language-learning trajectory of each participant. This issue was taken into account when

interpreting the findings. Each interviewed student has a unique list of learning experiences. Therefore, their learning trajectories vary considerably. They all agree that language learning is a complex, long-term experience made up of ups and downs and lots of challenges. The participants reported changing their learning styles, goals, methods, tools, and resources, as well as their interests, characteristic features, motivation, autonomy, and responsibility level for learning kept changing.

The data revealed that the homeschooled participants of this study have a highly positive attitude toward learning languages, and language learning plays a prominent role in their lives. As a result, they consciously regulate their learning. Homeschooled students showed intrinsic motivation and a genuine interest in learning languages. They viewed language learning as personally and professionally relevant, and many combined it with activities they were passionate about. All interviewees expressed a strong belief in their ability to master the language and were willing to put in the necessary effort for their development. They displayed high self-efficacy and a positive perception of their language learning progress.

The findings indicate that a child's self-regulated behaviour exhibits characteristics unique to that particular person. As the interview data showed, individual differences like age, biological sex, and personality traits affect how the interviewees self-regulate their language learning. Students unconsciously leave evidence of their character through their actions while learning. A large number of individual characteristic features have relevance for and are drivers of conscious self-regulation processes. Age has been found to be one of these features. The data suggest that conscious self-regulation increases as students get older. These findings align with the results of research conducted by Zimmerman (2008) or McClelland et al. (2017), for instance, as all these studies consistently indicate that older students tend to employ more self-regulated learning strategies during the learning process. This could be for several reasons, as the older the students get, the more likely they are to see the value in knowing languages other than their mother tongue. The findings also suggest that older homeschooled students have a very positive learning attitude toward languages and demonstrate the use of various self-regulation strategies with strong intrinsic motivation, commitment, and determination. An autonomy-supportive environment, characterised by the opportunity for students to exercise control, make choices, and take ownership of their learning, has been found to enhance intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The sex of the participants is another one of these features. Even though the gender distribution in this study was equal, the female participants turned out to engage in self-

regulated learning behaviour more than the male participants. Multiple studies examining gender differences in self-regulated learning have consistently reported that girls tend to exhibit higher levels of self-regulation compared to boys. They tend to engage in more self-monitoring, goal setting, planning, and structuring of their study habits (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). Xu and Corno (2006) also observed that girls show better behaviour regulation in their learning processes. This may be due to how women and men are socialised into reacting to various learning-related processes, like planning, responding to difficulties, and getting help. Female participants are more likely to ask others for help, plan the learning process, and analyse their progress.

Moreover, the findings suggest that students with certain personality features are more likely to value language learning and engage in actions (specific self-regulation processes) that support the goal of attaining a high level of language proficiency. Some personality traits important in determining self-regulatory behaviour and habits are optimism, introversion, being extroverted, worried, perfectionism, being laid-back, and controlling. Thus, the interview data uncovered that self-regulated behaviour reflects personality. However, it is important to recognise that successful self-regulation is not limited to specific personality traits or a particular set of characteristics. Each person's unique combination of traits and strengths can contribute to effective self-regulation in various ways (Hoyle, 2010). The available literature also suggests that individual differences impact the effectiveness of self-regulation and influence how people approach the regulation of their behaviour. Hoyle and Moshontz (2018) offered a detailed overview of the most important individual differences pertinent to self-regulation and emphasised that two individuals equally skilled at self-regulation may adopt distinct approaches when it comes to setting and pursuing goals. Therefore, successful self-regulation is attainable through a multitude of paths, making it a dynamic and inclusive process that accommodates different personality types and traits.

The data further revealed that students predominantly employed conscious self-regulation strategies in response to challenges (i.e., upcoming exams), failures (i.e., failing to express themselves), and experiences of shame (i.e., being made fun of). Hence, it became evident that self-regulation is prompted by necessity. These instances motivated them to prove themselves and others wrong, leading them to pay closer attention to their learning process. Additionally, self-regulated preconditions, such as long and short-term goals, were found to be commonly present in students, activating self-regulation when necessary or when positive events occurred, driving their desire for improvement.

Homeschoolers believe that there is no universally best language learning method, and immersion is considered the most effective approach. Participants actively integrated language learning into their daily activities and hobbies. They found ways to combine their interests and passions with language learning, making it a natural and integrated part of their lives. This integration further enhanced their motivation and engagement in the learning process. The participants demonstrated a high level of self-awareness regarding their language learning abilities and the importance of self-regulation. They recognised their strengths and weaknesses, which allowed them to set realistic goals and make informed decisions.

The results also uncovered that not only individual differences but individual experiences play a crucial role in shaping self-regulation. The results showed that past events and experiences affect students' self-regulatory behaviour. Almost all interviewees shared a positive and negative story that changed or shaped their learning process, meaning they became aware of the importance of self-regulation because of a particular situation or event. For example, suppose the child has negative experiences with native speakers (being bullied by others, being made fun of for their pronunciation). In that case, he or she will modify his learning process to avoid feeling ashamed and being the object of ridicule. These experiences subsequently influence the long-term self-regulatory achievements and setbacks of students. Because of these events, they started consciously controlling how they learn, making language learning more efficient and effective. Therefore, students refine their learning process as they learn from the mistakes that led them to some demotivating experiences. Moreover, experiencing hard times, upcoming exams, and assignments all activate self-regulatory behaviour. The method of the learning process is modified for success. The child may devote more time and energy, find a language teacher, ask for help, and watch movies, so the whole learning process will evolve to meet the motives and demands of the learning process. Thus, the findings support the theory that self-regulation is a learned, dynamic behaviour (Zimmerman & Moylan, 2009).

6.3.7 How does the home environment influence Hungarian homeschooling learners' self-regulated English language learning? (RQ4.2)

The last research question examined the situation-specific aspects of self-regulation, therefore, aimed to identify the links between the home environment and self-regulated language learning. As Wolters et al. (2005) highlighted, implicit and unintentional learning is not self-regulated as explicitly as formal school learning. Therefore, an issue worth exploring - as it could be interpreted as a weak point of this study - is the nature of homeschooling

education. Even though homeschooling happens at home, outside the formal school setting, it is not an example of informal education. Homeschooling is just an alternative to formal schooling. Students have to pass annual exams and report on progress; therefore, it is structured, planned, and facilitated, but the learning is not constantly evaluated. Therefore, homeschooling is a good example of non-formal education, as it involves actual academic learning, individualisation, and support from tutors or other homeschooling family members.

From a self-regulatory point of view, the home environment – the context in which the participants learn the given language – turned out to be challenging. So many things demand the children's attention, so many opportunities prevent them from committing to learning, and it is hard to stay focused. They have to manage time, decide which aids to use, and seek help when needed; they also have to maintain their attention, control all their internal and external distractors, and ensure they proceed. The study environment at home includes many distractions. Various technological distractions include television, mobile phones, video games, and radio. Other family members and siblings moving around, talking, laughing, and playing might act as distractions as well. As the participants study alone almost daily and plan each detail of the learning process, mind wandering, procrastination, negative thoughts, loss of motivation, self-confidence, and self-esteem deficiencies may prevent homeschooled participants from getting things done. There are no teachers to guide the lessons, check their understanding, or help them with unknown words, phrases, and grammar structures; it is up to the students to take up these roles. Homeschooled parents and children rarely mentioned any language learning-related rules established within their home, except that some families sit down daily, at a given time, for at least an hour to learn new grammar structures, sentences, and some families have a specific time every day dedicated to language use. During this time, the family members engage in conversations in a language other than Hungarian.

The homeschooling environment turned out to have multiple levels of influence on language learning. Some homeschooling factors directly and independently influence the targeted learning behaviour (self-regulated learning) and learning outcomes and act as modifying conditions. These include some *economic and financial factors* which refer to the homeschooling family's material circumstances, such as having diverse resources for language learning and the option to hire a language teacher. Access to age-appropriate books, online language learning platforms, educational games, technological devices, and language-rich environments facilitates independent learning and self-regulation. *Social factors*, such as family relationships, roles and responsibilities of the family members, friendships, native speaker encounters, and teacher personality, seem to influence learning behaviours. Parents

who provide guidance, encouragement, and resources for language learning create an environment conducive to self-regulation. They can help establish routines, set goals, and monitor progress, fostering the development of self-regulatory behaviours. *Organisational factors* reflect the learning environment at home; for example, learning autonomy and control, increased responsibilities, stress-free environment. The level of autonomy and responsibility granted to homeschooling students within the home environment affects their self-regulated learning. Giving learners the freedom to make choices, manage their time, and set their learning pace encourages self-regulation and fosters a sense of ownership in their language learning. Of course, all these factors vary and appear in many combinations.

Social-organisational factors, in turn, may influence self-regulation through *personal factors*, within student characteristics, which activate the processes that give birth to self-regulation. These include *psychological influences* like motivation, attitude towards learning, belief system, and *individual characteristic features* of the child. These all seem to predict the self-regulated learning behaviour of the children. For example, as the data suggest, homeschooled learners with a high level of self-efficacy beliefs and driven by intrinsic motivation seem to apply more self-regulation processes in their learning.

It can be concluded from the results that the homeschooling environment offers adequate:

- **support for self-regulation:** involvement of parents, siblings, other homeschooling families, modelling, continuous (self) assessment, feedback, help-seeking, individualisation, diversity, being children-led
- **activities for self-regulation:** authentic language exposure (watching movies, listening to music, foreign language workshops, presentations, classes), keeping in contact with native speakers, field trips where the foreign language can be used, writing reflective journals, preparing daily\weekly learning plans,
- **resources for self-regulation:** language books, Internet-based resources, language learning apps, rich media (mobile phone and notebook), and video games.

The data also suggests that social-contextual factors (e.g., support of the parents, family relationship, help) are more closely associated with self-regulation levels than the physical features of the home environment (e.g., educational resources at home) in young homeschooled students. However, in older homeschooled participants, individual and personal features affect self-regulated language learning more. With maturity, students seem to develop an inner need to regulate their learning. This finding aligns with the reported

conclusion in Mezei's (2008) study that conscious self-regulation develops continuously and is a matter of the learner's maturity.

6.4 Conclusions from study 3

Most of the studies conducted up to date have focused on self-regulation from a static perspective and examined it only in relation to various learning processes, like homework completion (Cadime et al., 2018) and classroom learning (Mezei, 2012), therefore focusing on a single scene during the learning process without considering its dynamic nature. One of the special features of the present study is that it focused on homeschooling students' self-regulation holistically, and it tried to capture the long-term language learning experiences of homeschooling students.

Homeschooling includes a high level of language learning resources and incorporates activities which help the development of self-regulation processes. In addition, it is designed to be student-led but still rich in learning support. Homeschooling offers personalised support for student learning. There are no pre-defined topics and processes in homeschooling, no restrictions on the resources they want to use, and no limit on where to learn, when and how. Homeschoolers explore topics and issues that stimulate their interest. As a result, children are actively engaged in the learning process and have a strong desire to gain more knowledge. This latter issue, active participation, is key in homeschooled learners' self-regulated behaviour. Several works in the literature state how we view our role and influence in a given situation can add to our behaviour (Bandura,1997, 2006). Homeschooled participants are fully aware of their active role, and the homeschooling experience (re)shapes their learning process.

The data showed that both social-contextual factors and individual factors matter in self-regulated behaviour. As emphasised by Hoyle and Moshontz (2018, p. 25) "the process and individual-difference perspectives must be integrated with a yet-to-be-articulated perspective on the role of environment, including other people, to provide a full account of effective self-regulation." Among the contextual variables, the influence of people in the child's immediate environment stands out, i.e., parents, siblings, friends, and rarely teachers. These people seem to have a major influence on the homeschooled learners' motivation towards language learning, including self-regulated behaviour, and play a role in generating stimulating environments. People around homeschooled children play an essential role in all respects, including encouraging self-regulatory strategies, modelling self-regulatory behaviour, strengthening motivation, developing self-esteem, challenging them to invest

effort and energy in learning, and instilling the love of learning in general. Therefore, the findings suggest that the social environment around the participating learners shapes their views and perceptions of the learning process. The current research results confirm and complement the findings of previous qualitative and quantitative studies. According to Pintrich (2000), most self-regulated learning research is based "on the social cognitive assumption that how students construct their own cognition, motivation, behaviour and perceptions of the environment is central to understanding their academic performance and achievement" (p .493). The results support his view because, as it turned out, participants actively shape their learning environment and are shaped by it too.

7 Comparing and contrasting the results of the three studies

Out-of-school learning contexts received increased attention and appreciation recently "not only in terms of the time learners spend learning, practicing and of course using the language in non-formal learning environments, but also in the ways in which educators can prepare learners for, as well as guide them in such learning" (Reinders & White, 2011, p. 1). A similar conclusion was reached by Jarvis (2006) who also highlighted that "the nature and status of knowledge has changed, so teaching has changed" (p. 11). As a consequence, "teachers are faced with playing new roles requiring many more and sometimes different skills" (pp. 13-14).

In Hungary, the home environment is integral to the learning process as it serves as a fundamental setting where students engage in various academic activities. It is within the confines of their homes that students diligently tackle their assigned homework, allowing them to reinforce their understanding of concepts learned in school and develop independent study habits. The present dissertation aimed to examine self-regulation in an environment that has never been dealt with before and tried to analyse the role and influence of the home learning environment on students' self-regulated language learning behaviour and vice versa. Thus, the dissertation aimed to uncover the possible links between the home environment, self-regulation, and language learning and examined whether there are any perceived differences between self-regulatory strategies used in the chosen educational contexts: the home environment among homeschooled and traditional school students. The whole study was led by the idea that social and contextual circumstances contribute to language learners' self-regulated language learning behaviour.

This study benefited greatly from the document analysis of the Hungarian National Core Curriculum. I have obtained valuable information on official guidelines and expectations laid down by the educational system through my examination of the curriculum. The analysis thus made it possible to understand the context of homeschooling in Hungary and the educational objectives established for all Hungarian students. It enabled us to identify the key areas related to self-regulated learning and determine the extent to which self-regulation is integrated into the curriculum.

The analyses have shown a strong role for self-regulation in the NCC documents, dating back to the first version in 1995. Over time, there was a growing emphasis on self-regulation and related concepts and strategies in the curriculum, indicating increasing recognition by the creators of the NCC. Notably, the most recent edition of NCC recognised

the importance of the interaction between the school and home environment, emphasising parental involvement. The document acknowledged the changing technology landscape as well as the necessity to make the most of the home environment as schools' roles (may) change. It emphasised the importance of homework and other independent projects that students completed outside of school, as well as the use of technology in learning. Additionally, the curriculum prioritised education for lifelong learning. This knowledge was crucial in my subsequent studies with homeschooled children, their parents, and school students, as it helped identify potential gaps or inconsistencies between the mandatory curriculum and the self-regulatory practices identified in the home environment.

Two schools of thought exist on self-regulation: one argues that self-regulation is a fixed, inborn capacity of the individual that changes little over time, while the other suggests that people develop self-regulation over time with practice (see Chapter 2.1.4 for details). The results support the latter view, so the dynamic nature of self-regulation. While people are born with many fixed traits, self-regulation is not one of these. The literature agrees that there is a certain amount of self-regulation even in babies (for an overview, see Rosanbalm & Murray, 2017), but this "brought material" can be modified and amplified by environmental factors, such as what they learn from their parents about self-regulation.

From the results, it is clear that the student's method of operation - the actual learning process - needs to be examined with caution. The method of operation can stay the same because it works, but it also continually evolves, grows, and changes over time. The interviewees themselves highlighted that the way they learn has evolved and changed a lot in their language learning, while the questionnaire study results also indicated that students apply various self-regulatory strategies based on the motifs, beliefs and values they attach to specific tasks. As students do homework assignments without teacher supervision and guidance, they regulate homework completion and choose their own task-related strategies (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011).

The present research is unique because it explored the role of the home environment in self-regulated learning from two perspectives. The second study focused on self-regulated learning while students complete their homework assignments, a compulsory activity. The third study concentrated on the self-regulation of homeschooled children who freely plan and direct the whole learning process. The results showed that, while doing homework, momentary, task-related self-regulation during learning was dominant among younger students. From these results, it is clear that: 1) an individual's momentary self-regulation is affected by the characteristics of the experience (Blume et al., 2021), and 2) various "in-

person" characteristics and contextual features activate self-regulation. The data showed that the most likely type of students to use task-related self-regulatory strategies at home while completing their homework are students between 12-15, who fear the negative consequences of not doing their homework, are highly motivated to avoid shame and guilt (introjected motivated) and value homework as a task that would improve their learning. Therefore, a reactive type of self-regulation could be identified when completing homework, which happens spontaneously and usually ends quickly.

Increased self-efficacy beliefs – significantly different in older learners – negatively predicted task-related self-regulatory strategy use. Meaning, that even if students believe in their abilities, these – older – students reported using fewer strategies, which might be caused by the fact that they do not value homework as a task that would enhance their language learning. Although task-related self-regulation is higher among younger students, it is evident that older learners attach more value and are more aware of the role of the home environment in the learning process. This latter result was also reflected among homeschooled students. In fact, it was revealed that as age and experience increase, students adopt more conscious self-regulation strategies at home.

When taking into account the homeschooling experience, self-regulation is more instrumental in nature, goal-oriented, premeditated, and longer-lasting, making immediate success is not always their goal. In the interview study, motives for self-regulating learning include but are not limited to achieving personally important goals, searching for an answer to a question and reacting to negative and positive learning experiences, and completing a personally important task.

The results suggest that self-regulated learning can take many forms and demonstrate that students often engage in self-regulated learning in response to individual and circumstantial needs. A shared finding is that both – homeschooled and school students – reported higher usage of self-regulation tasks when faced with difficulties because of a sudden situation or due to a specific event or occasion, e.g., homework assignments, fear of upcoming exams, as an answer to some positive and negative experience. Therefore, the data pinpointed that most of the self-regulatory strategies in participants activate if the opportunity or necessity occurs in their routine of daily life.

The results imply that as students age and gain more and more learning experience, they learn new ways to help them with the learning process. Hence, the method of operation is very dynamic and keeps changing. For instance, a student sitting still while learning may change and start moving around. Similarly, a student may change from studying right after

school to learning at night or may decide to make notes for studying rather than learning directly from textbooks. Alternatively, as the data showed, students may consciously engage in activities other than homework assignments to improve their language proficiency. Therefore, students modify their learning as they gain experience too.

The home environment is reported to contribute to learners' developing self-regulation skills and significantly affect learning and performance. The interview study allowed me to collect concrete information about the opportunities the home environment offers for self-regulation, as reported by homeschooling students themselves. The biggest advantage of the home environment – according to homeschooled participants – is that students are able to use the English language in a free and unsanctioned manner, consciously create opportunities for language development, use the language to learn about other topics, and be creative with the target language. Moreover, in the home environment, the student is in control.

The dissertation found that several circumstances influence self-regulated learning, out of which individual characteristics, learning characteristics and environmental features were the most influential. When talking about environmental features, we talk not only about its contextual (e.g., location, resources at home, available books and other educational material, space to learn) but also about social (e.g., parents-child-sibling interactions, size and structure of the family, the milieu of the family, friend and peer influence) components, which, if favourable, provide the support necessary for self-regulation development which in turn influences their education. However, the individual factors (e.g., motives, beliefs, traits, characteristic features, personality, demographic information – age, gender) the students bring into the environment and their learning experiences cannot be neglected from the interpretation of the data. The results showed that there is a very complex interplay of these influences and that an individual perspective has to be taken when dealing with self-regulated learning.

Self-regulation in this study turned out to be highly individualistic, meaning that even if the same conditions are given or created or the same intervention is used, students may benefit from these to various degrees. Even Perry et al. (2018) emphasised that teaching elements are conducive to self-regulated learning, but not all necessarily activate self-regulation, as students are different. Although the results showed that most respondents use almost no self-regulatory strategies when doing their homework, this would presumably be very different if other aspects of learning were examined. It is clear from the data that there is also a varied tendency to use self-regulatory strategies when doing different tasks and dealing with different subjects.

The results showed that personal and social-contextual factors are often so closely intertwined that it is hard to determine their origin. For example, as the - questionnaire study showed - responsibility for learning can originate from the child's own motivation. However, it may be as well influenced by the social context of learning, i.e., teachers' motivation. Therefore, when trying to classify students on a self-regulation continuum, it has to be based on: personal factors (in-person characteristics) and situational factors (external influences that affect behaviour), and a combination of both personal and situational elements. One end of the continuum represents fully organised students, and the other end represents disorganised students. The learning process of an organised student shows signs of some planning and displays that the student is in control of his/her actions. While the learning process of a disorganised student tends to show evidence of little or no planning, it shows that the action was just random. It displays a simple structure and haphazard behaviour. Therefore, it seems that students – because of their unique personal features (i.e., attitudes, motivations, feelings, and thoughts) and social-contextual features (i.e., the nature of the task, people present, help offered by others, available resources) – move on the above-described scale continuously because the intensity and duration of their self-regulated behaviour keep changing.

The studies showed that self-regulation extends beyond the actual process of studying, therefore, supports Pintrich's (2000) cyclical model of self-regulated learning. When studying self-regulation, a holistic view of a particular individual has to be considered, representing the individual's totality of learning-related behaviour. These results reflect those of Jarvis (2006, p. 206), who also found that "it is the person, the whole person, who learns all the time." The data suggest that students are likely to learn in a particular or similar pattern. Basically, all participants have a unique way of learning that encompasses the habits, techniques, and peculiarities of their behaviour. A student's learning process involves prior preparation, careful planning, monitoring, and evaluating progress on several levels: emotional, cognitive, and behavioural. The preparation contains all the processes that prepare students for active learning, such as environmental structuring, reducing distractions, and setting learning outcomes. The chosen methods and strategies while learning are all unique to the individuals. Moreover, doing a follow-up and follow-through are essential parts of the self-regulation process, which occur during or after learning. Self-regulation involves the student's pre-learning behaviour (preparing and leading up to the learning process), the actual learning (strategies, manners, procedure and methods of learning certain subjects), and post-learning behaviour (reflection, evaluation of the whole process). It is in these prior and post-learning

arrangements and responses, quite as much as in the technique of the actual learning process, that self-regulation is found.

8 Conclusion

8.1 Summary of the most important findings

Many factors contribute to success at school in which cognitive abilities play an explicit but only partial role. The entire education system is designed to favour students who can easily memorise and repeat written or spoken texts and understand school material proficiently. Most classes, including foreign language classes, mainly focus on these two areas of skills. Nevertheless, what is the key to success in education? It is widely accepted that the answer is self-regulation: the motivation of learners, the quantity and quality of time spent on learning, perseverance, and the ability of students to consciously plan, organise, control and evaluate their own work (Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman, 2008).

Students who can successfully self-regulate their learning have long fascinated researchers, who have sought answers to whether some students are more likely to engage in self-regulated learning than others and whether certain characteristics are unique to these students. The present study investigated how the chosen language learning context, the home environment, influenced the self-regulation of English language learners in the Hungarian context and examined whether there are any perceived differences in the self-regulatory strategy use between students who learn at home only after their lessons and homeschooling students who study at home.

Three separate studies were conducted — the first examined the Hungarian National Curricula Documents, the second targeted Hungarian language learning who learn the English language at home (this study drew 123 responses), the third study involved homeschooling families (11 homeschooling parents and 12 homeschooled students). The results showed that although the National Curriculum is very progressive and forward-looking regarding self-regulation development (Study 1), students do not consciously use self-regulatory strategies while working on their homework assignments at home. However, the results showed that students value the home environment as a useful context for their language learning development (Study 2). The interviews with homeschooled students and their parents suggest that the home environment can promote or hinder self-regulation, just as learners can shape their learning environment (Study 3), to achieve their goals.

What are the main findings of the dissertation? One cannot separate contextual and personal factors when trying to understand self-regulation. Self-regulation does not depend on contextual *or* personal factors; contextual *and* personal factors need careful examination. In self-regulatory research, one cannot understand the contextual influence without considering the personal factors. Similarly, one cannot focus only on intrapersonal influences without analysing relevant social features, as the boundaries of personal and contextual features are blurry. Csapó (2005, p. 30) is completely right in stating that students "will need knowledge in adulthood that does not exist today. They will use tools that have not yet been invented. They will express themselves in terms that are unknown today." Therefore, it is vital to prepare students for lifelong learning, focusing on their role in language learning, which is essential to adapt to the changing needs of the labour market (Jarvis, 2006).

To conclude, it should be mentioned that I do not believe that the home environment is the best setting for self-regulation practice, nor is it the only setting for learners to practice their self-regulation abilities. It only implies that the home environment is an inseparable part of students learning, affecting each aspect of the learning process. When teachers try to find a reason for learning behaviour, evaluate children's academic ability, performance and behaviour, and find an answer to sudden behaviour change, many answers can be found at home. Even the newest NCC document (2020) highlights that teachers should use the home environment in their teaching practice to show students that learning is not confined to the classroom and should work with the parents to improve children's academic achievement.

8.2 Limitations

A key strength of the present research is also its weakness. While the questionnaire study focused on self-regulation during the completion of a specific activity (homework), the interview research addressed the topic in a broader sense. I considered it essential to focus on a specific activity because homework is one of the primary forms of learning in the Hungarian context, about which all the interviewees can give meaningful statements and comparative experiences. When anyone hears the word learning, homework assignments immediately come to mind. At the start of the research, I assumed that I could collect similar data from homeschooled students, for whom learning is a homework assignment, as they prepare for exams independently at home. Thus, comparing questionnaire and interview data was challenging because self-regulation had a definite beginning and an end for homework completion in the questionnaire study; such an activity could not be identified among homeschooled students. In their case, self-regulation is not focused on one activity but on the

whole language learning experience. This might be interpreted as a possible weakness. The fact that these two experiences were compared shed light on some new findings that could be overlooked and pinpointed that self-regulation research is a complex process. The interview study dealt with higher-order self-regulation, while only specific task-related self-regulation was used in the questionnaire study. However, as both of these experiences happen at home, it is possible to examine the home environments' influence, which was among the principal foci of the present research.

In addition, all three studies have their own specific limitations. First, document analysis has inherent weaknesses. As Carley (1993, p. 83) emphasised, "determining what information is irrelevant is in itself a choice that must be made by the researcher." The main limitation is the complex nature of self-regulated learning, which means that the analysis might have missed some important points. The diversity of conceptual understanding can cause "confusion when trying to understand research results [...] as well as contribute to inconsistencies in the results" (Collett, 2014, p. 432). In order to eliminate this limitation, 1) the study sought to gain a deep understanding of the topic, and 2) another independent researcher was involved in the data analysis.

One of the main limitations of the questionnaire study is that it focused mainly on homework completion, so the findings are limited in scope and depth. Also, the sample may not be reflective of the many students who similarly face homework completion and, for a myriad of reasons, approach these differently. Teachers assign various homework for their students, and it is possible that 1) some teachers pay more attention to homework selection, 2) certain schools place more importance on homework completion, and 3) some students are more inclined to do their homework assignments. For these reasons and due to the relatively small sample size, the findings cannot be generalised beyond the participants.

Lastly, the interview study has several limitations as well. First, it has limitations connected to methods selection and study design. The findings are solely based on the personal narratives of the participants. The participating families were asked to share their homeschooling experience, but no additional observations were made to increase the trustworthiness of the findings. Thus, the study is limited by its retrospective nature; therefore, the participants' ability to verbalise and recall their homeschooling experience correctly. The participants may have consciously or unconsciously presented themselves in the best possible light, so the findings might not accurately reflect reality. Future research should be complemented by other methods, especially observation, which might give credibility to the results and validate the interview findings.

8.3 Implications

Despite the limitations discussed previously, the current study contributes to the field of education in three significant ways. The following sub-chapters will highlight specific implications in the areas of pedagogy, theory, and methodology. Therefore, the research contributes to the theoretical understanding of self-regulated language learning, informs pedagogical practices, and guides methodological choices for future studies in the field.

8.3.1 Pedagogical implications

The study examined self-regulated learning behaviour in an underresearched learning environment, the home context. Therefore, the findings of this study have important practical implications for teachers and parents wishing to implement self-regulated learning.

The national core curriculum analysis study contributes to the pedagogical implications by providing insights into self-regulated learning within the educational system. The findings can inform curriculum developers, policymakers, schools, and teachers in designing and revising curriculum frameworks that foster self-regulated learning skills. For example, incorporating explicit and direct instruction on self-regulation, creating supportive learning environments, and integrating self-assessment and reflection activities.

The research showed that providing students with opportunities to learn outside the school setting helps the development of self-regulation skills. A carefully given and chosen homework might facilitate these skills in students. The data showed that younger students value homework more than their older peers. However, they engage in self-regulated learning mainly because they fear the negative consequences of not doing these tasks. In contrast, older students do not value homework as a task that would help their learning development. Therefore, a more carefully planned homework selection is needed for older learners, as they already believe in themselves and value the home environment but not their homework.

An important finding that teachers should implement is that older students are aware of the fact that their language learning depends on what they do outside the school setting, so they should reinforce this line of motivation by giving them tasks which would enhance the conscious (self -) regulation of their learning. Educators can tailor assignments that promote self-regulation by understanding how Hungarian English language learners engage in self-regulated learning while completing homework. This may involve providing clear instructions, offering choices, scaffolding self-regulation skills, and fostering (meta)cognitive awareness in homework-related tasks. In addition, the results pinpointed the importance of individualised instruction, i.e., recognising the diverse needs, preferences, and learning styles

of students. Teachers can implement strategies such as differentiation, personalised goal-setting, and student-driven learning tasks to promote self-regulated learning in their students.

The interview study with Hungarian homeschooling families shed light on the experiences of homeschooling families and their approaches to supporting self-regulated learning. Educators can learn from these experiences and adapt strategies for supporting self-regulation in other educational settings. This can include promoting parental involvement, creating opportunities for self-directed learning, and fostering a positive and nurturing learning environment at home. From a self-regulation perspective, students could benefit from a learning environment similar to the home environment. Therefore, teachers should try to create an atmosphere that allows students to 1) incorporate their personal spin in the learning process, 2) involve students in lesson planning and lesson preparation, 3) ask for help, 4) believe in their skill, 5) work independently as well as in groups, and 6) evaluate their own and the work of others. Of course, not each student will benefit from and recognise the benefits of such an atmosphere, but it might signal that the teacher is open to such involvement; in fact, active student participation is more than desired.

8.3.2 Theoretical implications

By conducting a mixed-method research design that incorporates multiple studies examining self-regulated learning at home context, the research contributes to a comprehensive understanding of this relationship. This broadens existing theoretical frameworks by integrating various perspectives and shedding light on the complexities of self-regulated learning in different contexts.

The present study offers new insight into self-regulation integration by analysing the influence of the home environment on self-regulatory learning behaviour and exploits the named environment's potential for self-regulation development among school students and homeschooled learners. The questionnaire study exploring self-regulated learning strategies of Hungarian English language learners during homework assignments generated context-specific findings that enriched the existing theoretical understanding of self-regulated learning. The results showed that the examination of the application of self-regulated learning strategies in specific learning situations might inform and refine existing theories.

While self-regulatory qualitative studies have been conducted in Hungary (Mezei, 2008), no study has been found studying Hungarian homeschooling students' self-regulated learning behaviour. The interview study with Hungarian homeschooling families delves into the experiences and perspectives of homeschooling families, adding depth to the theoretical

understanding of the influence of home environments on self-regulated learning. The study highlighted the potential and importance of considering home-based learning environments in self-regulation development, as the home-learning experiences: 1) provide opportunities for individuals to develop autonomy and independence in their learning, 2) offer the flexibility to tailor educational experiences to individual needs and preferences. Therefore, an important theoretical implication of this research is that harnessing the potential of home-learning experiences can empower individuals to become self-regulated learners.

In summary, the present research offers several theoretical implications by contributing to a comprehensive understanding of self-regulated learning in the home environment. It is built on existing self-regulation theories, enriches theory with context-specific findings, explores the dynamics of homeschooling, and examines the interaction of various factors and influences on self-regulated learning.

8.3.3 Methodological implication

The research demonstrates the potential benefits of combining qualitative and quantitative data to understand the topic comprehensively. The inclusion of the Hungarian National Core Curriculum analysis in the research methodology offered insights into the broader educational context. It provided a foundation for understanding the self-regulated learning framework within which Hungarian English language learners operate. In contrast, the questionnaire study examining self-regulated learning strategies during homework assignments offered a systematic and quantitative method for collecting data. This methodological approach can be adopted in similar studies involving language learners or other subject areas to explore the relationship between self-regulated learning and homework completion.

Another important methodological contribution of this study is that it shows how useful the chosen qualitative interview research method turned out to be, as it helped me examine the dynamic nature of self-regulation because the participants shared their personal language learning experiences from early childhood up to the present. These narratives of their language learning experience within the home setting helped identify both positive and negative influences of homeschooling on participants' learning behaviour.

To sum up, the current study also expanded the methodological repertoire available for future studies in similar contexts. Overall, the mixed-method research design and the inclusion of various data collection methods offered several methodological implications,

showcasing the potential benefits of employing different approaches to investigate the influence of home environments on self-regulated learning and vice versa.

8.4 Future research directions

The study findings have generated several questions that could be addressed in future studies. The need for more 1) longitudinal investigation of self-regulation and 2) task-specific and task-related self-regulation has clearly emerged.

A longitudinal study would shed further light on the development and stability of self-regulation over time, as well as a deeper understanding of how various environments impact and influence the self-regulation of language learners. Future studies are needed to further explore the overall learning experience at home, including actual learning as well as other formal or less formal tasks that learners consciously or intentionally choose to improve their language proficiency (i.e., playing video games, watching movies, talking to native speakers). Therefore, there is a clear need for more qualitative and quantitative research to explore the relationship between various language learning experiences and self-regulation development.

Another potentially interesting issue would be exploring how coursebooks - still considered to be the primary sources of language teaching and learning in Hungary (Albert et al., 2018) - incorporate the development of self-regulation. In an English language classroom, students are told what to do directly by their teacher and indirectly by their course book, especially at home (Dam, 2012). A document analysis on those course books which are used most frequently in Hungarian English classes at the lower and upper secondary school level would shed light on whether there are tasks that specifically and directly try to enhance self-regulation in students, examine whether there are any tips, ideas highlighted as how to be more effective when learning languages. To sum up, a coursebook analysis could investigate the manifestation of self-regulation in the learning aids students use in class and at home.

Future research could include observations of actual student behaviour at home – both traditional school students and homeschooled students - to complement the interview study and questionnaire study findings, i.e., students really do what they say they do and so to examine the accuracy of the picture presented in them (Friedman, 2012). As Whitebread et al. (2009) highlighted, the main efficiency of observation lies in the fact that observation data comes from the actual learning environment and captures the relevant conditions rather than the participants recalling all the events. According to Boekaerts and Corno (2005), observation is one of the most reliable methods to measure self-regulation as it helps the researcher to become familiar with the social context of the classroom and record all the

social processes (such as teachers' and peers' facilitation) involved in the development of self-regulatory behaviour. The focus of future observational studies could be: 1) on how self-regulation appears in the classes (if at all), 2) how students regulate their learning at home, and 3) how self-regulation changes when students face and deal with various tasks and engage in activities.

Last but not least, a further research direction could be the analysis of the framework curricula, as the "principles, objectives, development tasks and literacy content of foreign language education formulated in the NCC are embodied in the framework curricula, which are documents that are elaborated in several versions according to the specificities of the training phase" (NCC 2012: 13). The results suggest that self-regulation is addressed through the documents, so the problem is not in the content but in the practice of language teaching. It would, therefore, be important to look at the issue from a practical approach, i.e., how teachers apply what is said in the NCC and to what extent and how they incorporate it into their language lessons so that theory and practice can be compared. Therefore, an observation study could be useful to examine how the guidelines and goals of the NCC documents, which are highly focused on self-regulation, are implemented and promoted in and out of the classroom setting. Knowing more about what determines the promotion of self-regulated learning would help determine which teacher characteristics should be addressed when training teachers. Such understanding would also offer explicit and implicit instructional intervention and support opportunities. Overall, much remains to be done in developing our understanding of self-regulation development and, in turn, developing effective pedagogical interventions.

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Appendices

Appendix A - The Overview of the Research Design

Research questions	Methods of data collection	Methods of data analysis
RQ1: What does the Hungarian National Core Curriculum say about self-regulated learning?	**Documents** (National Core Curricula)	**Document analysis**
RQ2: What characterises Hungarian primary and secondary school students' self-regulatory strategy use while learning the English language at home? RQ2.1: How do language learning experiences at home and self-regulation processes relate to each other in Hungarian school students? RQ2.2: What components of the self-regulated learning process can be identified in school children's language learning at home while completing their homework assignments?	**Questionnaire study** with **Hungarian EFL learners** aged 12 to 19	**Statistical analyses:** descriptive analyses, correlation, t-tests and regression analysis
RQ3: What are the views of homeschooling parents in Hungary on developing their children's self-regulatory skills while learning languages at home? RQ3.1: How can the homeschooling experience be used by homeschooling parents to enhance their children's self-regulation? RQ3.2: How do Hungarian homeschooling parents integrate the development of self-regulated learning strategies into language teaching?	**Semi-structured interviews** with **homeschooling parents**	**Content analysis** of the interviews (**Constant Comparative Method**)
RQ4: What characterises Hungarian homeschoolers' self-regulatory strategy use in English language learning? RQ4.1: What components of the self-regulated learning process can be identified in Hungarian homeschooled children's language learning? RQ4.2: How does the home environment influence Hungarian homeschooling children's self-regulated English language learning**?**	**Semi-structured interviews** with **homeschooled learners**	**Content analysis** of the interviews (**Constant Comparative Method**)

Appendix B - Students' Questionnaire (Translated from Hungarian to English)

Dear Student!

I am Melinda Mikusová, a doctoral student of the Language Pedagogy Programme of the ELTE Doctoral School of Education. I would like to ask for your help with my research. Please answer the following questions about English language learning. The questionnaire consists of several parts and takes 10-15 minutes to complete. In the first part, I want to know your motivation for learning English. In the second part, I want to know your opinion about English homework, and in the third part, I want to ask you about your activities while doing English homework.

This questionnaire is not a test, so there are NO GOOD OR BAD ANSWERS. I am interested in YOUR personal opinion. Please answer honestly, as this will ensure the success of our research. It is important for you to know that participation in the survey is voluntary and completely anonymous. Completion may be discontinued at any time without justification. I would like to assure you that I will not show your answers to anyone. The data obtained from the survey will be summarised in a table without names and will be subjected to statistical analysis, from which the identity of the participants cannot be established. All information collected will be kept strictly confidential.

If you have any questions or feedback, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you very much for your help!

Why are you learning English?

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 - 5, with 1 being not true at all and 5 being absolutely true.

For the 'high' I feel when learning English. (S1, S2)
Because learning English opens up a whole new world. (S1, S2)
For the pleasure, I experience when surpassing myself in my English language studies. (S1, S2)
For the satisfaction, I feel when I am facing challenges in the foreign language learning process. (S1, S2)
Because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language. (S1, S2)
Because I think it is good for my personal development. (S1)
Because I see myself in the future as a person who can speak the English language. (S1, S2)
Because it helps me to reach my future goals. (S1)
Because I think it is good to speak a foreign language. (S1, S2)
To show myself that I am an intelligent person. (S1, S2)
Because I want to show myself that I can succeed in my English studies. (S1, S2)
Because I would feel ashamed if I couldn't speak the language. (S1, S2)
Because if I succeeded in learning English, I would feel successful. (S1, S2)
Because it makes me look cool. (S1, S2)
In order to get a more prestigious job later. (S1, S2)
In order to have a better salary later. (S1)
Because I want to have "good life" later. (S1)
Only because it is part of my timetable. (R, S1, S2)
I don't think learning English will give me any advantage in the future. (R, S2)
Because if I learn the language really well, I can earn more money than those who do not speak English. (R, S2)

Because I think that in the future my knowledge of English will make it easier to find a job. (R, S2)
So that I can work abroad in the future. (R, S2)
Because my English language knowledge will be an advantage when looking for a job in the future. (R, S2)

Note. R = item was reverse scored; S1 = used in the pilot study; S2 = used in the main study

When learning English, whose responsibility is it to:

		Not at all	**A little**	**Some**	**Mainly**	**Completely**
Make sure you **make progress during English lessons**	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Make sure you **make progress outside of class**	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Stimulate your **interest** in learning English	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Identify your **weaknesses** in English	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Make you **work harder**	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Decide the objectives of your English lessons	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Decide **what you should learn** next **in your English lessons**	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Choose **what activities** to use to learn English **in your English lessons**	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Pass exams **successfully**	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Evaluate your learning process	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Get good marks	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					
Decide **what** you **learn outside class**	Yours					
	Your English teacher's					

My English homework

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 - 5, with 1 being not true at all and 5 being absolutely true.

Our English teacher often sets interesting homework assignments. (S1, S2)
Our English teacher knows what homework to set to help us understand the material covered in the lesson. (S1, S2)
Our English homework assignments are always well integrated into the lessons. (S1, S2)
Our English teacher almost always chooses homework assignments really well. (S1, S2)
I sometimes have the feeling that our English teacher only sets homework because it's expected of him/her. (R, S1, S2)
I am doing my English homework to the best of my ability. (S1, S2)
I often copy English homework from others. (R, S1)
I am doing my English homework because I want to, not because I have to. (S1, S2)
I always try to finish my English homework. (S1, S2)
I do my best on my English homework. (S1, S2)
I often do my English homework just before the lesson. (R, S1, S2)
I don't learn much from our English homework. (R, S1, S2)
Our English homework is of little use to me. (R, S1, S2)
English homework helps me understand the material covered in the lesson better. (S1, S2)
I always learn something from doing English homework. (S1, S2)
It makes barely any difference to me whether I do my English homework or not. (R, S1, S2)
Our English teacher checks to ensure we have all done the homework. (S1, S2)
If someone has not done their English homework, there will be negative consequences. (S1, S2)
If we have not done our English homework, we get into trouble with our teacher. (S1, S2)
Our English teacher insists that we do our homework properly. (S1, S2)
Our English teacher gets really angry if we have not done our homework. (S1)
If I make an effort, I can do all my English homework. (S1)
I always find a way to do my English homework correctly if I want to. (S1, S2)
I often feel completely lost in my English homework. (R, S1)
If I don't understand something in English, I know where to look it up. (S1, S2)
If I have difficult English homework, I know where to look to find the correct answer. (S1, S2)
Whether or not I do my English homework, I don't understand a thing in the lesson anyway. (R, S1)
I try to find opportunities to use English outside the classroom as much as possible. (S2)
I think it is important to engage in English learning outside of school. (S2)
The success of my language learning depends on how much I practice English outside the classroom. (S2)
I know that the amount of time I spend using English outside of school greatly impacts my learning. (S2)

Note. R = item was reverse scored; S1 = used in the pilot study; S2 = used in the main study

Solving my English homework

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 - 5, with 1 being not true at all and 5 being absolutely true.

Before I start my schoolwork, I read the instructions carefully. (S1, S2)
Before I start my schoolwork, I ask myself: 'What do I already know about it?' (S1, S2)
Before I start my schoolwork, I ask myself: 'Do I know what kind of a task this is?' (S1, S2)
If I get a task similar to one I have already done, I ask myself: 'How did I approach it last time? Was that a good approach?' (S1, S2)
Before I start my schoolwork, I ask myself: 'Will I succeed?' (S1, S2)

Before I start my schoolwork, I decide what to do first and what later. (S1, S2)
If I find my schoolwork difficult, I allow more time for it. (S1, S2)
Before I start my schoolwork, I think about how much time I will need. (S1, S2)
During my schoolwork, I motivate myself to keep working. (S1, S2)
During my schoolwork, I say to myself: 'Just a little more and it is finished!' (S1, S2)
During my schoolwork, I say to myself: 'You can do it, just keep on working!' (S1, S2)
During my schoolwork, I think about reasons why it is important to complete this schoolwork. (S1, S2)
During my schoolwork, I ask myself: 'Is it working well in this way? (S1, S2)
If I notice something isn't working out, I try a different approach. (S1, S2)
During my schoolwork, I ask myself: 'Do I still understand everything?' (S1, S2)
During my schoolwork, I ask myself: 'What do I have to practice some more?' (S1, S2)
During my schoolwork, I think about which parts are difficult. (S1, S2)
After finishing my schoolwork, I ask myself: 'Have I done it the right way?' (S1, S2)
After finishing my schoolwork, I ask myself: 'Will I use a similar approach next time?' (S1, S2)
After finishing my schoolwork, I ask myself: 'Did that way of doing it worked well?' (S1, S2)
After finishing my schoolwork, I ask myself: 'How did I feel about it? (S1, S2)

Biographical questions

How old are you?
Are you male or female?
How long have you been learning English?
What grade are you in?
The number of English lessons per week:
Your English grade:
Do you have a private English teacher?
On average, how much time do you spend a day completing your homework?
How much time do you spend a day completing your English homework?

Appendix C - The Interview Guide Used for Homeschooling Parents (Translated from Hungarian to English)

Background questions:

1. How old are you?
2. What is your marital status?
3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
4. What do you do for living?
5. How many kids are in your family? How many are homeschooled?
6. Do you speak any foreign languages?
7. How long have you been homeschooling?
8. How many children do you study at home with? Their Gender/Age?

Interview questions:

1. Why did you decide to homeschool your children?
2. Tell me a little bit about what homeschooling looks like in your family. Please describe your typical homeschooling day.
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being homeschooled?
    a. Support questions: *How does the homeschooling experience influence your child(ren)'s education?*
4. Please describe your language learning experience at home.
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of learning languages at home?
    a. Support questions: *How does the homeschooling experience influence your language learning? How is it different from the school experience?*
6. How has your language teaching approach changed since you began homeschooling?
7. How would you describe your language achievements at home?
8. How do you teach/learn English?
   If mom teaches English at home:
   How would you describe yourself as an English teacher?
   What kind of tasks do you bring to each lesson? On what basis do you decide on the nature of the task? How do you maintain your child's interest?

   If English is taught by someone else/children attend extra lessons:
   You teach other subjects to your child, why did you choose another person to teach languages? What aspects or criteria did you pay attention to when choosing a teacher?
9. In your opinion, what role do English teachers play in language learning?
    a. Support questions: *What is the main task of an English teacher? To what extent can you implement these while teaching English? What are the problems with teaching English in schools?*
10. In your opinion, what is the responsibility of students learning English in their studies?
    a. Support questions: *What are the language learning processes for which the student is responsible? How would you describe students' extracurricular responsibilities in learning English?*
11. How would you describe your children's English learning?
    a. Support questions: *How much do they like learning English? Why do they study English? How important is learning English to them? If you have more children-> What differences are there between children learning English? How/where/when/with*

whom/what do they study? How do you know this? What/who do you get your information from?

12. How independent do you think your children are in learning English?
    a. Support questions: *To what extent would your answer change if we only focused on the other subjects? How would you describe independence? What does self-study mean to you? How can the independent learning of English learners be improved?*
13. What do your children do when they have difficulties learning a language? What is the biggest challenge for them/you in language learning?
14. What do you think learning to learn means?
    a. Support questions: *Whose responsibility is it to develop the learning of learners? What does this mean for language learning? Should language learning be taught?*
15. What English learning problems do your children most often come to you with?
    a. Support questions: *Have you ever been asked for help, advice, or tips to help them learn more effectively? What made you recommend these learning ideas/tips? Whose responsibility is it to improve students' English learning?*

Thank you for the interview. Also, feel free to ask me any further questions and add some extra comments and information.

Appendix D - The Interview Guide Used for Homeschooling Students (Translated from Hungarian to English)

Background questions:

1. Please introduce yourself briefly!
    a. Support questions: *How old are you? What grade are you in? How many siblings do you have? Did you attend public school?*
2. How long have you been studying at home?
3. What languages do you speak?
4. How long have you been studying English?
5. Do your parents/siblings speak a foreign language? In what languages? What do they use it for?
6. Have you been abroad for a longer time? How did this affect your relationship with the English language?

Interview questions:

2. Please describe your typical homeschooling day.
3. How do you learn languages at home?
    a. Support questions: *Who teaches English? How do you learn it? Do you go to private lessons? If so, what do you think of them? Why do you go to private lessons?*
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being homeschooled?
    a. Support question: *How does the homeschooling experience influence your education?*
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of learning languages at home?
    a. Support questions: *How does the homeschooling experience influence your language learning? Do you think your language learning experience is different from students' experience at school? How is it different?*
6. What role does the English language play in your life?
    a. Support questions: *Why do you study English? How important is learning English to you? What motivates you to invest a lot of energy in learning English? What are your goals?*
7. How would you describe yourself as an English language learner?
    a. Support questions: *How well do you think you speak the language? How satisfied are you with your current language skills?*
8. What kind of language user do you imagine yourself to be in the future? How do you plan to achieve goals?
9. Where do you encounter the English language in your life?
    a. Support question: *When and how do you use English in your life?*
10. How do you learn English?
    a. Support questions: *How do you manage your learning? How do you plan your day? How do you start it? How do you end it? How do you feel when you learn English? When do you feel that you have worked well? How much time do you spend learning English? When do you study English? How do you allocate your time? What aids do you use for language learning? Where do you seek help?*
11. How would you describe your language learning?
    a. Support questions: *Do you know your learning styles/preferences? How independent are you?*
12. When and how do you improve your English knowledge?

13. How has your language learning approach changed since you began your homeschooling experience?
14. Which part of your English language skills should you improve the most?
    a. Support questions: *What are your strengths and weaknesses? What areas need improvement?*
15. If one of your friends asked you for advice on how to improve his English as much as possible, what would you suggest?
16. Now, I would like you to think about your language learning experiences. Can you share some concrete experiences?
    a. Support questions: *What successes have you had? What kind of failure stories do you have? To what extent and how did these influence your English learning? Why do you think these things happened? Where/when do you feel insecure? What causes this?*
17. You have been homeschooled for … years now. Can you recall a time from your homeschooling experience when you felt down? How did you react?
18. What do you do if you encounter difficulties while learning a language?
    a. Support questions: *What causes you the greatest difficulty while learning English? Can you highlight specific examples? When/How often do you encounter this difficulty? Why did you highlight this? How did this affect your language learning? How do you try to overcome the difficulties in the English language? How do you know if you have successfully overcome the given difficulty?*
19. Overall, how would you describe your homeschooling experience? What is your favourite part of being homeschooled, and why? Is it worth it?

Thank you for the interview. Also, feel free to ask me any further questions and add some extra comments and information.