

## 新 LLC スピーキング・プログラム導入 1 年後の考察

クラディス・クリストファー、イーズ・ジェレミー、フェルプス・クリストファー\*

国際交流センター LLC  
(2025 年 7 月 28 日受理)

Reflecting on the New LLC Speaking Program: One Year on  
by  
Christopher Cladis, Jeremy Eades, Christopher Phelps  
International Centre, LLC

### Abstract

As part of its activities to support the autonomy and English studies of students at Osaka Institute of Technology, the Language Learning Center operates a Speaking Program that may be used by students in its Consultation Room service to practice English conversation. In the Autumn Semester of 2024, the Language Learning Center introduced a new Speaking Program, replacing the old program. This article reflects on the design and implementation of both the old and new programs, with reference to self-determination theory and autonomy-supportive teaching (Reeve, 2016); concepts which guided the development of the new Speaking Program. Positive aspects, issues, and challenges of both are considered, and future steps to improve the new Speaking Program are also discussed. It is hoped that these steps will continue to help support student autonomy and English language learning at Osaka Institute of Technology.

キーワード ; 自律性支援, 自己決定理論, 自律学習, 英語学習, 言語自律学習

**Keyword ;** Autonomy-supportive Teaching, Self-determination Theory, Learner Autonomy, English Language Learning, Self-access Language Learning

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Language Learning Center

The Language Learning Center (LLC) at Osaka Institute of Technology (OIT) was established in 2012 through a partnership with Kanda University of International Studies. As a self-access learning center (SALC), the LLC provides both self-directed and structured language learning opportunities for students across the university. Its mission is to foster a community of autonomous, critically reflective, and confident second language learners prepared to succeed in a global and competitive professional environment. It is managed by the International Center of OIT and is staffed by three full-time faculty members, one office manager, and 16 trained student staff.

To support its mission, the LLC offers a range of services, including one-on-one Consultation Room sessions (see section 1.2), a Speaking Program (offered through the Consultation Room), a Free Conversation service (a lunchtime English conversation session hosted by a lecturer and a member of the student staff), learning advising, and test preparation support. The LLC also offers non-credit elective courses, such as a course on study abroad preparation and another on research poster presentations. In addition, the LLC hosts four annual parties to welcome new users, foster a sense of community, and encourage students to explore the center in a relaxed, social setting. Through the LLC, OIT students also have access to a wide selection of English learning materials, such as graded readers, grammar textbooks, and English-language comics.

Many of these services are designed to promote learner autonomy and motivation by offering students meaningful choices, encouraging engagement, and helping them build confidence in their language skills. The Speaking Program, which is the focus of this article, is a key example of this approach and reflects the LLC's broader efforts to provide learner-centered, autonomy-supportive resources.

### 1.2 Consultation Room

The Consultation Room is one of the core services offered by the LLC, providing students with the opportunity to engage in one-on-one sessions with an English-speaking faculty member. Each session lasts 15

minutes and is currently reserved in advance through the LLC's online booking system. Depending on the semester, approximately 45 to 55 sessions are available each week, offering students flexible access to personalized language support.

The content of Consultation Room sessions varies according to the individual student's needs and preferences. However, most commonly, students use this service to practice speaking English through the Speaking Program. In addition to practicing conversation in this way, students may choose to engage in free talk (speaking on a topic of their choice), receive support for academic presentations (including script checks, slide review, pronunciation, and rehearsal), get feedback on academic writing or research articles, or prepare for tests such as TOEIC, IELTS or TOEFL. Students are also encouraged to bring in any other English-related goals or concerns, making the Consultation Room a highly adaptable and learner-driven space.

## 2. Self-determination Theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a theory of motivation comprising six mini-theories. The central premise behind SDT is that psychological growth is innate to human beings, but for this growth to occur, basic psychological needs (BPNs) must be satisfied (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Conversely, if these BPNs are frustrated, motivation and well-being are damaged. Within SDT, there are two main motivational constructs for intentional behaviors; intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Intrinsic motivation is a motivational construct whereby behaviors are engaged in out of enjoyment, whereas extrinsic motivation involves behaviors done for other reasons (Ryan & Deci, 2020). There are four kinds of extrinsic motivation represented by different regulation styles (Deci & Ryan, 2000). These regulations range from more to less autonomous. The most controlled of these regulatory styles is external regulation, which represents behaviors controlled by rewards or the avoidance of punishment (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Introjection is a slightly less controlled regulation which regulates behavior through internal rewards such as positive or negative affect related to success or failure (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Identified regulation relates to behaviors well internalized and represents highly

autonomous self-regulated behaviors, while integrated regulation relates to fully internalized, endorsed and autonomous behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). These regulations can be internalized, and thus more integrated with an individual's personal values, through BPN satisfaction. Additionally, BPN satisfaction can also support an individual's intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

There are three BPNs in SDT that must be satisfied for internalization to occur and intrinsic motivation to be supported: autonomy, competence and relatedness. Autonomy is the feeling that one is in control of their behavior, and that the behavior is aligned with their values. Competence is the feeling of mastery over a behavior, and that growth is possible. Relatedness is the feeling that one is in warm and respectful relationships (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Of these three BPNs, autonomy plays a crucial role as it regulates how endorsed a behavior is perceived to be, and allows for self-regulated extrinsic motivation. Moreover, BPN theory proposes that satisfying autonomy-based needs also satisfies other BPNs (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Thus, autonomy-supportive teaching has been put forth as an approach to support students' autonomy and self-regulated extrinsic motivation (Reeve, 2016).

### 3. Autonomy-supportive Teaching

Autonomy-supportive teaching (Reeve, 2016) takes the principles of SDT and applies them to teaching. Reeve (2016) states that its principal aim is to support students' BPN of autonomy to foster autonomous motivation. Moreover, it seeks to create relationships where students and teachers are in sync (Reeve, 2016) and able to influence the behavior of one another in a transactional manner, so that students are eventually able to motivate themselves. As such, Reeve (2016) suggests six instructional behaviors inside and outside the classroom — taking the students' perspective, supporting BPNs and vitalizing these, explaining rationales when making requests, acknowledging and accepting students' negative affect, relying on informational language devoid of pressure, and displaying patience.

Over the last ten years, SDT has increasingly been linked to self-access language learning (SALL) due to similarities between the BPN of autonomy and learner

autonomy, as defined by Dam et al. (1990); a concept central to SALL. The overlap between these concepts makes SDT a useful tool when attempting to motivate students in SALCs. Therefore, autonomy-supportive teaching, being grounded in SDT, aligns well with SALL and SALCs, of which the LLC is representative. Indeed, several aspects of this approach, including its goals, as well as the practical and actionable behaviors it purports, were considered during the design of the new LLC Speaking Program.

## 4. Old LLC Speaking Program

### 4.1 History

Before the Speaking Program was implemented in the second semester of the 2015 academic year, most students used the Consultation Room for free talk. While this format allowed for open-ended engagement, it often resulted in unfocused sessions, as students struggled to select clear or relevant topics and lacked continuity between appointments. As a result, it became clear that a more structured approach was needed, one that could scaffold the development of students' speaking skills across multiple sessions while still accommodating a wide range of interests and goals. This observation was described by Worth et al. (2017), who reported that students defaulted to "free talk" when unable to select specific topics, which placed an additional burden on teachers to guide the session and limited opportunities to develop learner autonomy. The original Speaking Program was developed in response to these concerns and became a central part of many Consultation Room sessions.

This Speaking Program consisted of four levels—SA1, SA2, SB1, and SB2—loosely aligned with CEFR proficiency bands and designed to provide structured speaking practice across a wide range of topics (See Table 1). Students completed a level check in their first session, which the teacher used to determine their level placement. Each level contained ten lessons, with the exception of SB2, which had eight. Lessons in the first three levels focused on specific grammar points and thematic vocabulary sets, with topics such as hobbies, future goals, travel, and food. In SB2, the structure became more open-ended, encouraging students to contribute more to the session by, for example, explaining the rules of a favorite

game, introducing their university research, or discussing a TED Talk they had watched.

To advance through the levels, students were required to pass an assessment activity that reviewed target grammar and vocabulary as well as communicative performance. This system was designed to scaffold learners as they develop fluency and confidence, while also providing a sense of progression.

Table 1 - Old LLC Speaking Program Topics

Level and Topics	
SA1	SA2
1.1 Talking About Daily Routines	2.1 Comparisons
1.2 Talking About Families	2.2 Recommendations
1.3 Talking About Hobbies	2.3 Abilities
1.4 Talking About Food	2.4 Explaining Artifacts: Events
1.5 Invitations	2.5 Likes and Dislikes
1.6 What Did You Do?	2.6 Graded Reader
1.7 What Are You Going to Do?	2.7 My Hometown
1.8 Describing Your Friends	2.8 Future Plans
1.9 Have You Ever...?	2.9 The Greatest
1.10 Video Games	2.10 Planning Activities

SB1	SB2
1.1 My School Days	2.1 Talking About a TEDTalk
1.2 Restaurant Role Play	2.2 Describing a Story
1.3 Graded Reader	2.3 Considering a Proposal
1.4 Person I Admire	2.4 Introducing Your Research
1.5 Future Plans	2.5 Explaining Something Technical
1.6 Describing a Trip	2.6 Describing a Manga Series
1.7 Giving Instructions for a Game	2.7 Sharing Your Research Implications
1.8 Introductions	2.8 Summarising a News Story
1.9 Describing Things	
1.10 Movie Review	

**4.2 Issues with the Old Program**

While the original program became quite popular, serving as a useful foundation and offering a clear path for improvement, several limitations became apparent over time. First, the materials had grown outdated in both design and content. Some topics felt too culturally specific to the UK or US, which occasionally limited student engagement and relevance.

The program’s strong emphasis on grammar, at times, created an overly instructional tone. This focus often came at the expense of authentic communication. From the perspective of SDT, this approach may have frustrated students’ autonomy-based needs by reducing their sense of ownership over the learning process.

Furthermore, this lesson structure may have harmed the BPN of competence of students looking to improve their speaking skills by focusing more on grammar accuracy than on communicative growth.

Another key concern was the level of structure imposed by the lesson numbering and assessment system. Although intended to provide clarity and a sense of progression, this rigidity may have limited student autonomy. Learners had little freedom to choose their own path through the material or to revisit topics based on personal interest or need. Moreover, the order of the activities was based primarily on grammatical difficulty rather than personal relevance, further limiting meaningful communication. At times, the flow of the program could feel more like a course than a flexible tool for language development. These aspects may have frustrated students' autonomy-based needs and harmed their intrinsic motivation by limiting opportunities for self-expression and choice.

Taken together, the program's strong emphasis on grammar, the level check, and the structured progression system positioned the teacher as an evaluator rather than a partner. This dynamic may have created unequal teacher-student relationships and potentially frustrated students' relatedness-based needs. Furthermore, these relationships could feel controlling rather than autonomy-supportive, potentially limiting the sense of collaboration that helps foster self-regulated extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and confidence.

These issues highlighted the need for an updated program that would modernize the content, better reflect student interests, and, most importantly, offer more choice, flexibility, and support for autonomous learning - values central to both SALC philosophy and SDT. The resulting overhaul led to the development of the new LLC Speaking Program.

## 5. New LLC Speaking Program

### 5.1 Design and Implementation

The design of the new program was based on a similar one created by one of the authors at a SALC in the Kansai region (Phelps, 2024), which was itself adapted from another program used at a SALC at a university in Osaka. It consists of three levels (1, 2, 3), each containing ten worksheets and a separate set of ten roleplay

worksheets, totaling 40 worksheets. The worksheets focus on communicative topics, many of which were adapted from those used in the previous iteration of the LLC Speaking Program (see Table 1). Topics include *Self-introduction*, *Hobbies* and *Trips* in Level 1, *After University*, *Music* and *Social Media* in Level 2, *Environment*, *Future Goals* and *My Research*, in Level 3 and *Directions*, *Getting Sick* and *Q&A Sessions* in the roleplay level (see Fig. 1). These topics were reordered so that those personally meaningful to students appear earlier, in an attempt to satisfy autonomy-based needs. Moreover, being communicative in nature, the topics create opportunities for the teacher and student to get to know each other, satisfying relatedness-based needs. Finally, culturally specific topics that might confuse or disengage students were removed.

The structure of the new program also aims to satisfy BPNs. While the original program began with a level check test, in the new program this was removed. Doing so means students have more control over which level worksheets they select, and when they progress to higher levels. Students who are not interested in specific topics are also no longer compelled to complete them as they are allowed to select any worksheet in the program. These steps attempt to satisfy the BPN of autonomy by encouraging students to take control of their learning. Levels 1 to 3 scaffold language demands by gradually asking more of the student, both within and between the levels. This approach is facilitated by looking at previously explored topics in more detail in later levels, while also covering more academic topics in Level 3. Additionally, the number of questions gradually reduces within each level and more significantly decreases between levels, progressively requiring students to speak in longer turns. These steps were taken to support competence-based needs and to encourage a feeling of development between levels.

To promote English speaking, each worksheet predominantly focuses on questions and answers, while retaining some of the features of the original Speaking Program, such as a box of keywords which students may look up. These sections were kept allowing some opportunity for grammar or writing practice while emphasizing English conversation. The central focus of the worksheets, the questions, aim to reproduce natural

conversation. Additionally, each topic in Levels 1 and 2, and the roleplay level include a box recommending a grammar unit in Raymond Murphy's Basic Grammar in Use (Murphy, 2016), many of which were also recommended in the old Speaking Program. Level 3, which imitates the speaking test section of the IELTS test, does not include grammar unit recommendations, but rather recommends LLC services which may be relevant to improving one's competency in that particular worksheet's topic. These measures support students' autonomy by allowing them to learn in ways they feel most beneficial, a key aspect of supporting motivation in SDT. Moreover, it provides opportunities for relatedness-based need satisfaction in the moment and in the future; students can talk to the LLC teachers in a more natural manner, forming warm, respectful relationships and equipping students with the skills necessary to engage in casual conversations and make friends with other English speakers. Furthermore, the worksheets also promote increased student talking time which enables them to participate in meaningful conversation, rather than simply reply with rote answers.

The new Speaking Program was rolled out in the Autumn 2024 semester. During this transition period, as several students were still midway through the old program, they were given the option to use either program, though they were informed that the original program would be discontinued in the 2025-2026 academic year. New students were encouraged to use the new Speaking Program, though they, too, had the option of starting the original program.

Since the rollout, worksheets have been displayed in each room where Consultation Room sessions are held and next to the LLC counter. Prior to a session, students are either provided with a worksheet or can take one themselves, allowing them to prepare in advance if they wish. Preparation usually includes looking up keywords, writing the answers to the questions, and preparing two to three questions to ask the teacher. This stage is not framed as homework, instead it is the student's choice and something they can do if they feel it is helpful. Likewise, completing the grammar unit is not required, and is only offered to students to remind them that it is an option if they want to work on their English grammar competency. Such decisions reflect the reimagining of the program into one which is more in tune with students' autonomy-based needs. During a session, the teacher usually begins by checking whether the student has any questions about the keywords, and then asks if the student requires any confirmation on them. They then go over the questions on the worksheet with the student, in a manner that resembles authentic conversation, but which does not go beyond the particular student's ability. Once again, this step aims to support students' motivation by supporting the competence-based needs, and aims to create more in sync relationships between the teacher and student.

Figure 1 - New LLC Speaking Program Topics



5.2 Reflection

Though it is difficult to compare the programs as many users of the old Speaking Program have now graduated from the university, anecdotally speaking, the change appears to be positive. Several users of the old program chose to switch over to the new program during a transition period lasting one semester when students could choose either program. From the teachers' perspectives, this may have been for numerous reasons to which we have already alluded.

The previous iteration of the program retained its design for nearly a decade across different document formats, maintaining a formal, businesslike appearance. The new Speaking Program worksheets, which students can find in a colorful display out in the open, may be seen as attractive and friendly, stoking intrinsic motivation. Likewise, the new layout's focus on conversation has resulted in an increase in student speaking time, which may satisfy their competence-based needs.

The removal of the initial level check and end-of-level assessments in favor of a simple initial self-introduction lesson gives the student and teacher time to get to know each other on a personal level, creating opportunities for relatedness-based needs satisfaction. Additionally, the flat structure of the levels gives students the autonomy to choose lessons that appeal to them most, while still allowing less autonomous users to select the sheets in order without putting pressure on them. Later levels challenge students to produce more language and communicate about more complex topics, while maintaining an open and casual discussion format.

While the changes made to the Speaking Program format align with SDT and autonomy-supportive teaching to promote autonomous learning and in sync relationships, some practical considerations remain. Despite a previous study conducted by the LLC (Tachibana et al., 2025), finding that students at OIT wish to practice speaking English, our experience with the new Speaking Program tells us students are occasionally disoriented by its autonomy-supportive teaching style. This is especially the case with students seeking to improve TOEIC scores. Their expectations of what English language practice 'should' look like, based on their experiences in secondary education, may also influence this disorientation. While this clearly points to the need for a regular and dedicated service or advising service focused on TOEIC, it also raises the question of whether the reduced focus on grammar in the new program is appropriate given the expectations of these students. On the other hand, in the teachers' experience, students are not always interested in the grammar units recommended on the worksheets, and even when participating in the old program would often stop requesting the additional grammar practice once they learned it was not required. As a potential solution, we are considering an optional review lesson to bridge the gap

between such expectations. These lessons would focus on the students' ability to speak accurately on previous topics in a level. They may also serve as stepping stones between extrinsic motivation through introjected regulation and self-regulated extrinsic motivation, offering an alternative to the review tests of the original program, which students may have experienced as controlling. Another way we may evolve the program relates to additional topics. Given the success of worksheets such as the presentation Q&A roleplay lesson, which are immediately relevant to students' lives, we are considering further changes to the program to respond to students' needs.

How students navigate the process leading up to the first lesson may also necessitate consideration. In the old Speaking Program, students needed to physically go to the LLC and make an appointment. This usually required them to interact with staff, who would answer any questions and assist them in signing up for the level check, after which the teacher would explain the system and give them their first lesson sheet along with the grammar practice. With the new program, and particularly with the introduction of the online reservation system from Spring 2025, that level of one-to-one interaction is no longer a given. Students may find the reservation link on social media, on handouts or posters and arrive at their first reservation with little idea of what is expected of them. This may lead to confusion or discomfort, reducing the likelihood of students returning for a second lesson if their first was uncomfortable. To counter this, we aim to advertise the Speaking Program more broadly to the student body and provide easier access to the first lesson materials. Having a link to a PDF of the first lessons stored on student-accessible online servers will give them the opportunity to evaluate the new Speaking Program and promote greater autonomy moving forward. In collaboration with the OIT English Department, we have also updated an initiative for first- and second-year students to receive extra credit for using specific LLC services so that it also includes the Speaking Program. Through continued efforts and improvements, we hope the LLC Speaking Program will continue to grow as an accessible, autonomy-supportive resource that empowers students to meet their English language learning goals at OIT.

## References

- 1) Reeve, J. (2016). Autonomy-supportive teaching: What it is, how to do it. In Liu, W. C., Wang, J. C. K., & Ryan, R. M. (Eds.). *Building autonomous learners: Perspectives from research and practice using self-determination theory*. New York, NY: Springer.
- 2) Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. Guilford publications.
- 3) Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2020). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from a self-determination theory perspective: Definitions, theory, practices, and future directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 61, 101860.
- 4) Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4).
- 5) Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). *Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions*. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54–67.
- 6) Dam, L., Eriksson, R., Little, D., Miliander, J. and Trebbi, T. (1990). Towards a definition of autonomy. In T. Trebbi (Ed.) *Third Nordic workshop on developing autonomous learning in the FL classroom, Bergen, August 11-14, 1989: Report*. Bergen, Norway: Institutt for Praktisk Pedagogikk, Universitet i Bergen.
- 7) Worth, A., Fischer, D., Fritz, E., & Moore, A. R. (2017). CEFR-J based speaking program for a self-access learning center. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 8(1).
- 8) Phelps, C. (2024). Incorporating autonomy-supportive teaching into an English conversation programme in a self-access language learning environment. *Kyoto Sangyo University Forum of Higher Education Research*, 14.
- 9) Murphy, R., Smalzer, W. R., Watanabe, M., & Tashima, Y. (2016). *Murphy's basic grammar in use (Beginner edition)*. (3rd Ed.). Singapore: Cambridge University Press.
- 10) Tachibana, M., Kitagawa, A., Cladis, C., & Muraoka, M. (2025). Tendencies for learning English among engineering students and design of various educational programs for development of global human resources. *Memoirs of Osaka Institute of Technology*, 69(2).