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Developing Productive Skills in Romanian EFL Education Through Autonomous Learning Strategies

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges faced by Romanian students in tertiary education in acquiring English as a Foreign Language (EFL), by placing greater emphasis on the development of productive skills, such as speaking and writing. As opposed to the practice of receptive skills (reading and listening), which primarily focus on the comprehension of the language, productive skills require a higher degree of linguistic mastery and proficiency, as they demand the active generation of the language. According to the questionnaire-based survey results, speaking was perceived as the most difficult skill to master within the realm of language production, underscoring the necessity of a strong command of vocabulary, fluency, and the cognitive ability to articulate thoughts into words in order to successfully tackle the complex nature of real-time language production. The research further investigates students' most employed strategies to enhance speaking skills, with a particular focus on the learning methods that foster autonomy in foreign language acquisition. The findings highlight the effectiveness of certain language learning techniques for bridging gaps in speaking and writing practice, by also emphasizing the need to incorporate autonomous learning approaches within the traditional classroom setting.

Keywords: language proficiency; self-directed learning; speaking; vocabulary; writing