

STUDENT-ADOPTED SELF-REGULATING STRATEGIES OF SEEKING HELP OR INFORMATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN LITHUANIA

Nijolė Burkšaitienė

Faculty of Philology, Institute for Literary, Cultural and Translation Studies
Vilnius University

Universiteto g. 5, LT-01513, Vilnius, Lithuania

&

Institute of Humanities, Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania

E-mail address: n.burksaitiene@mruni.eu

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3806-3392>

ABSTRACT

Aim. The present study aims at establishing self-regulating strategies used by Lithuanian undergraduate students when they are unable to accomplish their academic assignments due to a lack of necessary information. By establishing data-based evidence regarding student choices of seeking help or information made under the circumstances preventing them from fulfilling academic tasks, the study addresses the existing research gap in the field.

Methods. The present research is part of larger mixed-method research ($n = 309$) conducted at four universities in Lithuania. The data for this study was collected from two university students' ($n = 140$) responses to the open-ended question "What strategies do you use if / when you do not have all the necessary information for accomplishing your academic assignments?". To analyse the data, qualitative methodology was chosen, and the inductive (bottom-up) content analysis was used.

Results. Content analysis revealed four major categories (covering five subcategories) of student-adopted self-regulating strategies, such as using a combination of different strategies of seeking help or information, relying exclusively on the strategy of Internet search, using the strategy of seeking help from different stakeholders, and taking no action.

Conclusions. It can be concluded that most students sought help proactively, i.e., they used up to three self-regulating strategies to solve the problem of lack of information necessary for their studies. On the other hand, it was concluded that the stu-

dents who used only one strategy or did not take any action should be encouraged to seek different forms of help or sources of information, which could foster their self-regulated learning. The findings also call for research into the use of Generative AI in undergraduate studies.

Cognitive value. This study contributes to research by providing evidence from a Lithuanian case on student-adopted strategies of seeking help or information relevant for the development of students' self-regulated learning.

Keywords: self-regulated learning, self-regulating strategies, seeking help or information, academic assignments, undergraduate students, higher education

INTRODUCTION

Self-regulated learning and performance are defined as “the processes whereby learners personally activate and sustain cognition, affects and behaviour that are systematically oriented toward the attainment of personal goals” (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011, p. 1). In recent decades, the interest in self-regulated learning and its educational impact has been growing at all levels of education (Abar & Loken, 2010; Backers et al., 2024; Beaumont et al., 2016; Cassidy, 2011; Chen, 2002; Gonida et al., 2019; Porter & Peters-Burton, 2021; Spruce & Bol, 2015; van der Veen & Peetsma, 2009; Vosniadou et al., 2020; Zeidner & Stoeger, 2019; among others). Research findings demonstrate that high achievements are predetermined by a high level of self-regulated learning. This can be reached if students are motivated, engaged in the process of learning, and use learning strategies and self-regulation processes, such as goal setting, time management and seeking help or information (Newman, 2002; Pintrich, 1999; Zimmerman, 2002). It has been established that self-regulation can be promoted by raising students' motivation and awareness of themselves as learners (Pintrich, 1999; Zimmerman, 2002, 2015) as well as by integrating some methods of learning aimed at supporting students' self-regulation. The latter includes think-aloud protocols (Vandeveldt et al., 2015), reflection journals (Klenowski & Lunt, 2008), self-assessment tasks (Ernst et al., 2026; Kostons et al., 2012; Zamora et al., 2018), peer- and teacher-provided feedback (Burkšaitienė, 2012, 2022; Filius et al., 2018; Fletcher, 2018; Gan et al., 2021; Khuder, 2025; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Ruegg, 2018; Yang, 2016; Yang & Carless, 2013), to mention just a few.

In recent decades, research into self-regulated learning in higher education has been growing, however, Lithuanian students' self-regulation of learning has been little investigated (Burkšaitienė, 2013; Horlenko, 2025). The present study attempts to contribute to the literature by analysing undergraduate students' use of self-regulating strategies while they face the problem of lack of information necessary for learning. This study is part of larger mixed-method research conducted at four universities in Lithuania with the participation of 309 third- and fourth-year undergraduate students from different

fields of study (including technological sciences, social sciences and humanities). The mixed-method research was guided by the main research question: “Which processes of self-regulation do students use in their studies?”. To answer this question, an online survey consisting of 60 close-ended and four open-ended questions was conducted (Burkšaitienė et al., 2021).

The present study reports only on the results of the analysis of the students’ responses to one of the open-ended questions, i.e., “What strategies do you use if / when you do not have all the necessary information for accomplishing your academic assignments?”. The data was collected from the responses provided by 140 students enrolled in the study programmes of social sciences and humanities at two universities. To analyse the data, a qualitative approach was chosen, and inductive (bottom-up) content analysis was carried out. To ensure the reliability and validity of the findings, the analysis of students’ responses was conducted by two independent researchers whose findings were compared, discussed and final decisions agreed upon.

This article begins by introducing a literature overview. The research methodology is then presented, and research limitation is described. Finally, the findings are discussed and recommendations provided. The present study contributes to the research literature and calls for further research.

LITERATURE OVERVIEW

During recent decades, interest in self-regulated learning has been increasing. It has been analysed from diverse contextual, motivational and cognitive perspectives (Zeidner & Stoecker, 2019). A literature overview demonstrates that research has been conducted in all educational environments – starting from primary and secondary education and finishing with higher education. For example, upper primary school pupils’ (those at risk of failure) engagement in self-regulated learning was investigated by Sabrina Vandavelde and colleagues (2015), primary school children’s ability of seeking help was explored by Anna Fletcher (2018), and the development of young learners’ self-regulated learning behaviour was studied by Ineke van der Veen and Thea Peetsma (2009). Additionally the links between high-school students’ self-regulation profiles and their goal orientation were researched (Abar & Loken, 2010), the impact of self-assessment and task-selection skills on secondary school students’ self-regulated learning was analysed (Kostons et al., 2012), the influence of self-assessment on secondary school students’ self-regulation of learning was investigated (Zamora et al., 2018), and talented adolescents’ views on how they see the process of seeking help and their intentions to seek it were investigated (Gonida et al., 2019), among many others.

Since teachers play a pivotal role in promoting students’ self-regulated learning, it is not surprising that there is an extensive body of research centred on future teach-

ers', student teachers' and teachers' role in this process, as well as on the development of their competence to support students (Backers et al., 2024; Callan & Shim, 2019; Ernst et al., 2026; Fletcher, 2018; Greene, 2021; Porter & Peters-Burton, 2021; Vosniadou et al., 2020, among others). It has been reported that when teachers are not fully aware of the complexity of self-regulated learning, they may find it difficult to identify gaps in their students' self-regulation (Callan & Shim, 2019). Therefore, teachers' competence should be developed, and special training provided to both pre-service and in-service teachers can be beneficial. It can deepen their knowledge and understanding of self-regulated learning as well as enable them to foster their students' capability to self-regulate learning in real learning environments (Backers et al., 2024; Greene, 2021; Porter & Peters-Burton, 2021; Vosniadou et al., 2020).

As has already been mentioned, research findings show that self-regulated learning is important for students' academic success (Schunk, 2005; Zimmerman, 2002; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011; among others). It has been reported that the transition period from school to university can be challenging for some students. The challenge can be caused by the gap between the level of self-regulated learning they developed at school and the level of self-regulation required in higher education (Beaumont et al., 2016; Leese, 2010). To support such students, the gap can be closed by making some changes in university curricula so that students are gradually directed towards a higher level of self-regulation (Beaumont et al., 2016). Also, special programmes aimed at promoting self-regulation can be designed and introduced during the first semesters at the university. Such programmes have proved to have promoted university students' use of self-regulating strategies, have raised their motivation and fostered academic performance (Theobald, 2021), as well as depending their knowledge of self-regulation and developed self-efficacy (Bernardo et al., 2025).

Research evidence illustrates that at all levels of education, students' self-regulated learning can be fostered by integrating some methods of learning specifically aimed at raising their self-regulation. Such methods support students' learning, increase their confidence, develop their critical thinking, foster engagement, and direct students towards further improvement. They include think-aloud protocols (Vandeveldt et al., 2015), reflection journals (Klenowski & Lunt, 2008), self-assessment (Ernst et al., 2026; Kostons et al., 2012; Zamora et al., 2018) and peer- and teacher-provided feedback (Burkšaitienė, 2012, 2022; Filius et al., 2018; Gan et al., 2021; Khuder, 2025; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Ruegg, 2018; Yang, 2016; Yang & Carless, 2013), among others. In this context, feedback stands out as the method which produces multiple effects. To illustrate, David Nicol and Debra Macfarlane-Dick (2006) analysed the use of formative assessment for self-regulated learning, created a model of self-regulated learning and defined principles of good feedback. The authors stressed that when students have the capacity to self-assess their own learning and to use feedback, they become proactive, self-regulated learners. In another example, Renée Filius and colleagues (2018) conducted a small-scale study in which peer feedback was used by inter-

national students enrolled in online courses. The students were pre-taught how to rate peer feedback and then practised rating it. It was found that the dialogues arising between the peers while discussing feedback promoted students' deep learning. Along similar lines, Nijolė Burkšaitienė's (2022) findings demonstrated that, while providing feedback, undergraduate translation students not only identified gaps in their peers' oral performance but also presented some recommendations on how some of those problems could be solved. It was concluded that peer feedback supported peers' learning and directed it towards future improvement. Similarly, Baraa Khuder's (2025) longitudinal research results showed that teaching undergraduate STEM students to seek feedback in a course of academic writing not only fostered their engagement in asking their peers for feedback but also enabled them to identify gaps in their writing and promoted their skills of setting priorities.

On the other hand, research also shows that lack of students' understanding of feedback can hinder their self-regulation. In their investigation, Zhengdong Gan and colleagues (2021) analysed Chinese students' use of feedback for self-regulation of learning in a course of academic English. It was established that the students did not seek feedback proactively and preferred to receive teacher-generated prescriptive feedback. The authors suggested deepening the study participants' understanding of feedback, which could make them more self-regulated learners of academic English.

The most recent research has been focused on the interaction of multiple factors and self-regulated learning. To illustrate, Min Doo and colleagues (2023) investigated Korean students' experiences of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic and explored the relationship between students' motivation, self-regulation and decision-making processes. It was concluded that self-regulation made the biggest impact on the study participants' engagement in online learning. In the study carried out by Mohammad Nakhostin-Khayyat and colleagues (2024), the interplay between self-regulation, cognitive flexibility and resilience of Iranian students was investigated. It was found that self-regulation made a positive impact on the study participants' resilience. As students' self-regulation, cognitive flexibility and resilience are intertwined, the authors recommended developing them in an integrated manner.

SEEKING HELP OR INFORMATION IN ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENTS

According to research literature, seeking help or information can be seen as a process of self-regulation (Pintrich, 1999; Zimmerman, 2002), as a type of behaviour and a strategy of self-regulated learning (Gonida et al., 2019; Karabenick, 2003; Kozanitis et al., 2007; Newman, 2002; Makara & Kuusinen, 2023). Students usually seek help or information when they face an academic problem or aim at some learning goals. In academic learning environments, seeking help falls into three

major types (Makara & Kuusinen, 2023). The adaptive (or instrumental) type means that students ask for help in order to accomplish some academic tasks on their own rather than to receive a quick correct answer (Newman, 2002; Makara & Kuusinen, 2023). In this case, students take the initiative to seek help and usually ask for clarification, for a hint or an explanation of something that they do not fully understand. Contrary to the adaptive type, students are said to adopt the expedient (or executive) type of seeking help if their main goal is to receive a quick correct answer without trying to look deeper into the problem. The third type, i.e., the avoidant type of seeking help, refers to students' behaviour of not asking for support when they need it (Makara & Kuusinen, 2023). According to research, seeking help becomes an important adaptive strategy only if students ask for it proactively, i.e., if they ask for support in order to understand what they are learning (Karabenick, 2003; Makara & Kuusinen, 2023).

The most recent research has been focused on students' views of themselves as help seekers, their perceptions of teacher-provided help, their views regarding benefits and costs of seeking help, the links between the process of seeking help, students' motivation to learn and their learning goals, as well as on the role of high school in developing students' behaviour of seeking help (Gonida et al., 2019; Karabenick, 2003; Karabenick & Gonida, 2018; Kozanitis et al., 2007; Richards, 2022). For instance, Eleftheria Gonida and colleagues (2019) analysed Greek adolescent students' views of seeking help and their intentions to seek it in relation to their motivation. The findings demonstrated that only a small number of the study participants demonstrated an adaptive type of help-seeking, whereas most of them viewed it as a threat, which hindered their self-regulation. In higher education contexts, Stuart Karabenick (2003) analysed American undergraduate students' goals of seeking help, the student-perceived degree of threat of seeking help, the students' intention to ask for help and their preferences regarding the source of help. The results showed that the number of students demonstrating the adaptive type of seeking help was smaller than the number of students who sought help in an avoiding manner. It was also reported that the students who sought help in an adaptive manner were highly motivated, their goals were instrumental, and they preferred their teachers' (i.e., formal) support. On the other hand, it was established that these students' perceived a degree of threat regarding help-seeking was low. By contrast, the students whose goals of asking for support viewed it as a threat and preferred to avoid seeking it. In another study conducted in higher education, Anastassis Kozanitis and colleagues (2007) explored Canadian undergraduate students' views of their teachers' help and the teachers' reactions to their students' questions. The authors emphasised that the teachers' positive reactions to their students' questions were relevant both for the development of student-adopted type of seeking help and for students' motivation. It was also reported that motivational elements (such as students' learning goals, self-perceptions and task value) influenced the student-adopted type of seeking help.

Even though investigations into students' use of self-regulation have been extensive in many countries across the globe, in Lithuania, this field has been little researched (Burkšaitienė, 2013; Horlenko, 2025). To the best of our knowledge, no research exploring self-regulating strategies of seeking help or information adopted by undergraduate students has yet been conducted. The present study is one of the first attempts to narrow this gap by presenting a Lithuanian case and proposing directions for further research.

METHODOLOGY

The present research is based on the theory of self-regulated learning. According to this theory, self-regulated learning is a process which promotes active engagement in learning by fostering goal setting, self-monitoring, and reflection, which leads to academic success (Zimmerman, 2002, 2015). This theory is important for the present study since it emphasises that choosing effective self-regulating strategies can improve students' performance and support them in reaching their academic goals, which is a prerequisite leading to high learning outcomes in higher education (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Zimmerman, 2002).

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND PARTICIPANTS

The present study reports on the results of the analysis of 140 undergraduate students' responses to the open-ended question: "What strategies do you use if / when you do not have all the necessary information for accomplishing your academic assignments?" At the time of this research, the students were in their third and fourth years of studies in the field of Social Sciences ($n = 89$) and Humanities ($n = 51$) at two universities; 97 of them were female students, and 43 were male students, their age ranging from 22 to 25.

To analyse the data, a qualitative approach was chosen, and inductive (bottom-up) content analysis was carried out. This type of analysis was chosen since "it is used in cases where there are no previous studies dealing with the phenomenon or when it is fragmented" and because it helps to identify categories that present a clear description of the phenomenon (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007, p. 107).

The data was analysed according to the procedure detailed by Elo and Kyngäs (2007). During the first stage, all responses were read several times and units of analysis were selected. The second stage covered three processes: (a) open coding, i.e., formulating the headings that reflected student-adopted strategies when they did not have enough information necessary for their studies, (b) identifying initial categories and grouping them under more general headings, and (c) abstracting, i.e., identifying

each category and subcategories, and grouping them. During the last stage, extracts from the students’ responses illustrating each category and subcategory were selected.

To ensure reliability and validity of the results, inductive content analysis was conducted by two independent experts, who discussed their findings and made agreed decisions.

The research was carried out in line with the requirements of ethics. The questionnaire did not collect any personal data that could potentially identify the respondents. The respondents were provided with information regarding the research purpose, the amount of time required to complete the survey and were informed that their responses would be used exclusively for the purposes of research. Students’ participation in the survey was anonymous and voluntary.

The sample size of this study could be recognised as its main limitation, not allowing for wide-scale generalisations. Despite this, the results are relevant since they contribute to the knowledge in the field by providing evidence regarding Lithuanian undergraduate students’ choices of self-regulating strategies if / when they face the problem of lack of information necessary for their studies.

RESULTS

The inductive analysis revealed four categories of strategies (covering five subcategories) of seeking help or information used by the students: (a) combining different strategies, (b) using exclusively the strategy of searching the Internet, (c) seeking help from different stakeholders, and (d) taking no action (Table 1). The identified categories and subcategories (that fall under categories 1 and 3) are supported by the most characteristic extracts from the students’ (S) responses.

Table 1
Lack of Information to Accomplish Academic Assignments: Strategies Used by Students

Category	Subcategories
1. Combining different strategies (n = 59)	1.1. Using library resources, searching the Internet, seeking help from stakeholders within the university (n = 41) 1.2. Seeking help from stakeholders within the university and outside it, searching the Internet (n = 12) 1.3. Seeking help from stakeholders within the university, searching the Internet (n = 6)
2. Using the strategy of searching the Internet (n = 56)	
3. Seeking help from different stakeholders (n = 21)	3.1. Seeking help from stakeholders within the university (n = 16) 3.2. Seeking help from stakeholders within the university and outside it (n = 5)
4. Taking no action (n = 4)	

Source. Own research.

Category 1: Combining Different Strategies

The first category of student-adopted strategies of seeking help or information covers the biggest number of students' responses ($n = 59$), demonstrating that they used some combinations of strategies if/ when they did not have enough information to accomplish their academic assignments. This category falls into three subcategories. *Subcategory 1.1* shows that 41 students combined two or three strategies, i.e., they searched their university library resources, searched the Internet, and/or sought help from members of their university community (i.e., from their university teachers and/or peers):

- “I look for books on that subject in the library or search for online articles.” (S 10)
- “<...> I look through everything in the syllabus, and then I ask my peers or look for it [information] on the Internet.” (S 11)
- “[I] Ask my group mates about what they use. Try to look up information online by adding different keywords to the search bar.” (S 97)
- “<...> I can always ask my professor or group mates. There is a plethora of sources, e.g., Google Scholar helps a lot.” (S 13)
- “First of all, I try to contact the teacher <...> Then I start looking for information in the university online databases.” (S 77)
- “I ask the lecturer, I google the issue differently (using a different language or word combination).” (S 48)
- “<...> I use the Internet, e.g., Google Scholar or other websites like academia.edu, or I just ask the lecturer.” (S 99)

Subcategory 1.2 illustrates that 12 students also combined two or three strategies. However, their strategy combinations differed from those that fall under *subcategory 1.1* in that these students sought help or information not only from some members within their university community (i.e., from their university teachers and/or peers), but also from some people outside it (e.g., from their colleagues at work), and/or searched the Internet:

- “I know that I can always ask my group colleagues for help; sometimes by working together we clarify some things on the Internet. Sometimes I talk to my colleagues at work (I have a job in a related field). Moreover, all the university tutors are always willing to help.” (S 122)
- “I check the sources provided by the instructor, which is usually sufficient for the task; however, if it's not, I either use Google/YouTube or I confide in my peers or talk to my colleagues at work.” (S 55)

Subcategory 1.3 shows that six students combined two strategies, i.e., they sought help from some members within their university community (i.e., from their university teachers and/or peers) and searched the Internet:

- “The Internet and study buddies are the answer!” (S 15)
- “I talk to the lecturer and search the Internet.” (S 64)

Category 2: Using the Strategy of Searching the Internet

The second category emerged from the responses provided by 56 students. These students stated that if / when they could not accomplish their academic assignments because they did not have enough information, they relied exclusively on an Internet search. Also, these students reported that while searching the Internet, they used/tried to use reliable sources, such as online dictionaries, open access resources (e.g., research articles, e-books), and/or video tutorials. This can be illustrated by the following extracts from their responses:

- “It depends on the task. Usually, I do more “digging” on the Internet and try to read some relevant articles for some ideas, and it usually helps. If I must deal with translations <...>, I usually rely heavily on online dictionaries <...>”. (S 44)
- “Mostly I explore the web answers to my questions with explanations (because I need to understand, not just to know the answer), and I also try to search for information in e-books if I have that possibility.” (S 41)
- “I always check official journal sites for articles that might be useful for my assignments.” (S 93)
- “If I lack information, I go to trustworthy sites where it is provided.” (S 28)
- “I search for tutorials on YouTube.” (S 114)

Category 3: Seeking Help from Different Stakeholders

This category comprises two subcategories that cover 21 responses demonstrating that the students sought help or information from different stakeholders, including some members within their university community (*subcategory 3.1*, $n = 16$) and some people outside it (*subcategory 3.2*, $n = 5$). More specifically, *subcategory 3.1* covers three types of student preferences regarding the source of support. The first one includes five students’ preference of seeking support from their university professors who were the teachers of a specific module. This can be illustrated by the following responses:

- “Course instructors are more than willing to help in doing the assignments, so if I struggle with any, I can always ask them for help <...>”. (S 4)
- “Usually, I talk to the professor of the [study] subject. [They] recommend some extra literature, sometimes they lend me the books necessary for the task.” (S1)
- “I usually consult professors (of the specific module), ask them to give me some advice on where to look for the necessary information.” (S 54)

Under similar circumstances, six other respondents preferred to seek help from either their university professors or their peers, whereas the remaining five students from this group preferred to talk solely to their peers:

- “Usually, I just reach out to my peers or the professor directly via email.” (S 6)
- “[I] try to contact my course mates. If nobody knows where to find it [information], we send an email to our lecturer.” (S 35)

- “I ask my friends from the group to help me.” (S 45)
- “[I] ask peer community for help.” (S 69)

Subcategory 3.2 covers five students’ responses providing evidence that if / when they did not have enough information to accomplish their academic assignments, they sought help not only from their university teachers and/or peers, but also from some people outside the university. The latter included students’ colleagues at work, family members or some experts from their Facebook communities:

- “I consult either the teacher, my colleagues at work or my fellow students”. (S 66)
- “[I] talk to people, ask them questions. “People” can be family, lecturers, university staff or others who know the subject or have a reasoned opinion. [I] communicate with others. Communication is key.” (S 19)
- “[I] ask for help in Facebook community group or look for people who might help me to solve the problem and fulfil the task.”(S 89)

Category 4: Taking no Action

The research revealed that four students did not take any action if / when they did not have enough information to accomplish their academic assignments. As these students did not provide any explanations regarding their choice, their reasons remain unclear. They simply stated:

- “I don’t do anything. Just leave [the task] as it is.” (S 33)
- “I simply don’t do anything <...>” (S 3, S 100, S 86)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present research aimed at establishing 140 Lithuanian undergraduate students’ self-regulating strategies of seeking help or information that they adopted if / when they faced the problem of lack of information, which prevented them from accomplishing their academic assignments. The research results show that 97% of the study participants (n = 136) used one to three self-regulating strategies to solve this problem. This is in line with the premise that to be self-regulated, learners have to be active participants and be able to seek help or information when they need it for learning purposes (Pintrich, 1999; Zimmerman, 2002).

Since the Internet provides easy access to a huge amount of information, it is not surprising that 115 study participants (85% of the total of 136) used the strategy of searching the Internet if / when they faced the problem of a lack of information necessary for their studies. It was established that this strategy was used in two ways. On the one hand, 59 students combined it with other strategies. That is, they conducted literature

searches in their university libraries, searched for different open online resources and sought help from different stakeholders. The latter included both formal (academic) support providers (i.e., their university professors) and informal support providers (i.e., their peers, family members and colleagues at work). This leads to the conclusion that the students were aware of the benefits of multiple self-regulating strategies and used them when it was necessary for learning. It is also worth mentioning that while searching the Internet for academic purposes, the students used/tried to use reliable sources, suggesting that they were aware of the negative consequences that the use of unreliable sources can have for their studies.

On the one hand, it was found that 56 students relied solely on the strategy of searching the Internet. As these students did not explain why they used this strategy exclusively, some questions remain unanswered. It is not clear if they had ever used some other self-regulating strategies, what their experience of using other strategies was or if they had always relied solely on the Internet search. Thus, further research could focus on the reasons of such a preference. Besides, these students could be recommended to apply more self-regulating strategies, which would make them more self-regulated.

The finding that 21 students (15% of the total of 136 study participants) relied solely on the help provided by different stakeholders if / when they lacked information is worth mentioning for two reasons. First, it was found that the students who sought help within their university by directly addressing their professors stated that the latter were open and (always) willing to help, which suggests positive student-teacher relationships. Second, it was established that some students sought help exclusively from people outside their university, including their colleagues at work, family members or members of their Facebook community. The latter finding is in line with Matt Bower and Jodie Torrington (2020), who noted that Facebook, as a technology of social networking systems, allows its users to create learner communities of practice that enable their members to share expertise, which supports learning. Besides, this finding indirectly supports the results of Oleksandra Valtchuk and Barbara Class (2021), who reported that participation in a Facebook community of practice was viewed by their students as a positive learning experience.

It was also established that only four study participants (3% of the total of 136) did not seek help or information if / when they could not accomplish their academic assignments due to a lack of information. This finding is promising as it allows us to conclude that only a tiny minority of the study participants behaved in a manner, according to Kara Makara and Colleen Kuusinen (2023), that can be called avoidant.

Finally, it was surprising that no students mentioned that they used or did not use Generative AI tools if / when they could not accomplish their assignments due to lack of information. This calls for a future investigation focused specifically on the use of Generative AI tools in undergraduate studies.

The findings of the present study contribute to the literature in the field by providing evidence regarding self-regulating strategies that Lithuanian undergraduate students adopted when they could not accomplish their academic assignments. As this study

is one of the first in the field conducted in Lithuania, future wide-scale research into undergraduate and graduate students' self-regulation could be carried out, which could allow for wide generalisations.

REFERENCES

- Abar, B., & Loken, E. (2010). Self-regulated learning and self-directed study in a pre-college sample. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 20(1), 25–29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2009.09.002>
- Backers, L., De Smedt, F., & van Keer, H. (2024). Teachers as agents of self-regulated learning (SRL): Studying the relations between teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and SRL implementation across educational levels. *Unterrichtswissenschaft*, 52, 15–38. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42010-023-00190-1>
- Beaumont, C., Moscrop, C., & Canning, S. (2016). Easing the transition from school to HE: Scaffolding the development of self-regulated learning through a dialogic approach to feedback. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 40(3), 331–350. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2014.953460>
- Bernardo, A. B., Cervero, A., Galve-González, C., & Tuero, E. (2025). Effectiveness of the PEA self-regulation programme in improving academic self-regulation skills and self-efficiency expectations. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 63(3), 750–765. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2025.2507743>
- Blume, F., Irmner, A., Dirk, J., & Schmiedek, F. (2022). Day-to-day variation in students' academic success: The role of self-regulation, working memory, and achievement goals. *Developmental Science*, 25(6), Article e13301. <https://doi.org/10.1111/desc.13301>
- Bower, M., & Torrington, J. (2020). *Typology of free Web-based learning technologies*. Educause Digital Library. <https://library.educase.edu/resources/2020/4/typology-of-free-web-based-learning-technologies>
- Burkšaitienė, N. (2012). Peer feedback for fostering students' metacognitive skills of thinking about learning in a course of English for law. *Societal Studies*, 4(4), 1341–1355.
- Burkšaitienė, N. (2013). Project-based learning for the enhancement of self-regulated learning in a course of ESP. *Radoša Personība / Creative Personality*, XI, 164–172.
- Burkšaitienė, N. (2022). Translation students' peer feedback for learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP): Findings from a case study in Lithuania. *Journal of Education Culture and Society*, 13(1), 173–187. <https://doi.org/10.15503/jecs2022.1.173.187>
- Burkšaitienė, N., Leščinskij, R., Suchanova, J., & Šliogerienė, J. (2021). Self-directedness for sustainable learning in university studies: Lithuanian students' perspective. *Sustainability*, 13(16), Article 9467. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13169467>
- Callan, G. L., & Shim, S. S. (2019). How teachers define and identify self-regulated learning. *The Teacher Educator*, 54(3), 295–312. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2019.1609640>
- Cassidy, S. (2011). Self-regulated learning in higher education: Identifying key component processes. *Studies in Higher Education*, 36(8), 989–1000. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2010.503269>
- Chen, C. C. (2002). Self-regulated learning strategies and achievement in an Introduction to Information Systems Course. *Information Technology, Learning, and Performance Journal*, 20(1), 11–23. <https://www.learntechlib.org/p/95111/>
- Doo, M. Y., Bonk, C. J., & Heo, H. (2023). Examinations of the relationships between self-efficacy, self-regulation, teaching, cognitive presences, and learning engagement during COVID-19. *Education Technology Research and Development*, 71, 481–504. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-023-10187-3>
- Elo, S., & Kyngäs, H. (2007). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 62(1), 107–115. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04569.x>
- Ernst, H. M., Wittwer, J., & Voss, T. (2026). When accuracy does not make a difference—The relationship between future teachers' self-assessment accuracy, quality of learning material and subsequent topical interest. *Unterrichtswissenschaft*, 54, 115–135. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42010-025-00233-9>
- Filius, R. M., de Kleijn, R. A. M., Uijl, S. G., Prins, F. J., van Rijen, H. V. M., & Grobbee, D. E. (2018). Strengthening dialogic peer feedback aiming for deep learning in SPOCs. *Computers & Education*, 125, 86–100. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2018.06.004>

- Fletcher, A. K. (2018). Help seeking: Agentic learners initiating feedback. *Educational Review*, 70(4), 389–408. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2017.1340871>
- Gan, Z., Hu, G., Wang, W., Nang, H., & An, Z. (2021). Feedback behaviour and preference in university academic English courses: Associations with English language self-efficacy. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 46(5), 740–755. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2020.1810628>
- Gonida, E. N., Karabenick, S. A., Stamovlasis, D., Metallidou, P., & Greece, the C. (2019). Help seeking as a self-regulated learning strategy and achievement goals: The case of academically talented adolescents. *High Ability Studies*, 30(1–2), 147–166. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13598139.2018.1535244>
- Greene, J. A. (2021). Teacher support for metacognition and self-regulated learning: A compelling story and a prototypical model. *Metacognition and Learning*, 16, 651–666. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-021-09283-7>
- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81–112. <https://doi.org/10.3102/003465430298487>
- Horlenko, K. (2025). *In teachers' view: Exploring teacher professional vision for student self-regulated learning in the classroom* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Vytautas Magnus University.
- Karabenick, S. A. (2003). Seeking help in large college classes: A person-centered approach. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 28(1), 37–58. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-476X\(02\)00012-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-476X(02)00012-7)
- Karabenick, S. A., & Gonida, E. N. (2018). Academic help seeking as a self-regulated learning strategy: Current issues, future directions. In D. H. Schunk & J. A. Greene (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation of learning and performance* (2nd ed., pp. 421–433). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315697048-27>
- Khuder, B. (2025). Feedback-seeking behaviour as a self-regulation strategy in higher education: A pedagogical approach. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 50(6), 861–875. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2025.2476621>
- Klenowski, V., & Lunt, I. (2008). Enhancing learning at doctoral level through the use of reflection? *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 33(2), 203–217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602930701292795>
- Kostons, D., van Gog, T., & Paas, F. (2012). Training self-assessment and task-selection skills: A cognitive approach to improving self-regulated learning. *Learning and Instruction*, 22(2), 121–132. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2011.08.004>
- Kozanitis, A., Desbiens, J. F., & Chouinard, R. (2007). Perception of teacher support and reaction towards questioning: Its relation to instrumental help-seeking and motivation to learn. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 19(3), 238–250. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ901297>
- Leese, M. (2010). Bridging the gap: Supporting student transitions into higher education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 34(2), 239–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03098771003695494>
- Makara, K. A., & Kuusinen, C. (2023). Academic help seeking as a process of seeking formative feedback on learning. In T. Urdan & E. N. Gonida (Eds.), *Remembering the life, work, and influence of Stuart Karabenick: a legacy of research on self-regulation, help-seeking, teacher motivation, and more* (pp. 69–90). Advances in Motivation and Achievement (Vol. 22). Emerald. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0749-742320230000022006>
- Nakhostin-Khayyat, M., Borjali, M., Zeinali, M., Fardi, D., & Montazeri, A. (2024). The relationship between self-regulation, cognitive flexibility, and resilience among students: A structural equation modeling. *BMC Psychology*, 12(1), Article 337. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-01843-1>
- Newman, R. S. (2002). How self-regulated learners cope with academic difficulty: The role of adaptive help seeking. *Theory into Practice*, 41(2), 132–138. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4102_10
- Nicol, D. J., & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education* 31(2), 199–218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070600572090>
- Pintrich, P. R. (1999). The role of motivation in promoting and sustaining self-regulated learning. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 31(6), 459–470. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-0355\(99\)00015-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-0355(99)00015-4)
- Porter, A. N., & Peters-Burton, E. E. (2021). Investigating teacher development of self-regulated learning skills in secondary science students. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 105, Article 103403. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103403>
- Ruegg, R. (2018). The effect of peer and teacher feedback on changes in EFL students' writing self-efficacy. *The Language Learning Journal*, 46(2), 87–102. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2014.958190>

- Richards, B. N. (2022). Help-seeking behaviors as cultural capital: Cultural guides and the transition from high school to college among low-income first generation students. *Social Problems*, 69(1), 241–260. <https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spaa023>
- Schunk, D. H. (2005). Self-regulated learning: The educational legacy of Paul Pintrich. *Educational Psychologist*, 40(2), 85–94. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep4002_3
- Schunk, D. H., & Greene, J. A. (Eds.). (2018). *Handbook of self-regulation of learning and performance* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315697048>
- Spruce, R., & Bol, L. (2015). Teacher beliefs, knowledge, and practice of self-regulated learning. *Metacognition and Learning*, 10(2), 245–277. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-014-9124-0>
- Theobald, M. (2021). Self-regulated learning training programs enhance university students' academic performance, self-regulated learning strategies, and motivation: A meta-analysis. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 66, Article 101976. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2021.101976>
- Valtchuk, O., & Class, B. (2021). 'It really suits the objectives of the master's': How a student Facebook group chat contributes to situated learning in an interpreter training programme. *The Interpreter and Translatory Trainer*, 15(3), 378–394. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2021.1885231>
- Vandeveldel, S., van Keer, H., Schellings, G., & van Hout-Wolters, B. (2015). Using think-aloud protocol analysis to gain in-depth insights into upper primary school children's self-regulated learning. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 43, 11–30. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2015.08.027>
- Van der Veen, I., & Peetsma, T. (2009). The development of self-regulated learning behaviour of the first-year students in the lowest level of secondary school in the Netherlands. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 19(1), 34–46. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2008.03.001>
- Vosniadou, S., Lawson, M. J., Wyra, M., van Deur, P., Jeffries, D., & Gusti Ngurah, D. (2020). Pre-service teachers' beliefs about learning and teaching and about the self-regulation of learning: A conceptual change perspective. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 99, Article 101495. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2019.101495>
- Yang, Y.-F. (2016). Transforming and constructing academic knowledge through online peer feedback in summary writing. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 29(4), 683–702. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2015.1016440>
- Yang, M., & Carless, D. (2013). The feedback triangle and the enhancement of dialogic feedback processes. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 18(3), 285–297. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2012.719154>
- Zamora, Á., Suárez, J. M., & Ardura, D. (2018). Error detection and self-assessment as mechanisms to promote self-regulation of learning among secondary education students. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 111(2), 175–185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2016.1225657>
- Zeidner, M., & Stoeger, H. (2019). Self-Regulated Learning (SRL): A guide for the perplexed. *High Ability Studies*, 30(1–2), 9–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13598139.2019.1589369>
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2002). Achieving academic excellence: A self-regulatory perspective. In M. Ferrari (Ed.), *The pursuit of excellence through education* (pp. 85–110). Erlbaum. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781410604088-6/achieving-academic-excellence-self-regulatory-perspective-barry-zimmerman>
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2015). Self-regulated learning: Theories, measures, and outcomes. In J. D. Wright (Ed.), *International encyclopaedia of the social & behavioral sciences* (pp. 541–546, 2nd ed.). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.26060-1>
- Zimmerman, B. J., & Schunk, D. H. (Eds.). (2011). *Handbook of self-regulation of learning and performance*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203839010>
- Zimmerman, B., & Schunk, D. H. (2004). Self-regulating intellectual processes and outcomes: A social cognitive perspective. In D. Y. Dai & R. J. Steinberg (Eds.), *Motivation, emotion and cognition: Integrative perspectives on intellectual functioning and development* (pp. 323–349). Erlbaum. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781410610515-22/self-regulating-intellectual-processes-outcomes-social-cognitive-perspective-barry-zimmerman-dale-schunk>

