



RESEARCH PAPER

Learners' Self-Regulation and Achievement: Implications for Foreign Language Learners

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ABSTRACT

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Self-regulated learning (SRL) research shows that the progress of autonomous learners increases by integrating foreign language teaching strategies of SRL. This work examines usage of SRL as described by students and throws light on its three main components which are - direction, presentation, and assessment that influence the prediction of foreign language achievement. The interviews conducted with teachers (n=57) show that teachers do not bother to think about SRL during teaching in classroom. The quantitative data (n=225) was gathered through two different methods that are five-point Likert scale questionnaire and the English achievement exam taken by University. The quantitative analyses highlight that participants' SRL level is moderate to low. The foreign language achievement can be forecasted through SRL as language achievement and SRL have important relationship. The conclusion emphasizes that SRL is of great importance in foreign language teaching and teachers should promote SRL implementation in language teaching

Introduction

The understanding and role of SRL in promoting independent and lifelong process of learning have increased in past decades (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1994; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). SRL is ordinarily defined as a process, dynamic in nature, by the help of which learners execute appropriate strategies and make important decisions throughout the learning process. Through SRL students establish aims, monitor, and control their motivation, cognition and behavior (Pintrich, 2000). According to Sinclair (2000), for regulation and initiation of student learning behaviors, a student must be aware of process of the learning and

its outcome, how to take learned choice, and to get practice in performing and administrating the process of learning. For choosing proper cognitive and metacognitive techniques and to assess learning outcomes, the participants of this research used self-regulated strategies. The students are more live, creative and independent by consistent use of self-regulation and it's cognitive, behavior, sentimental and social features. The students can make their goals of learning, employ successful learning techniques, see their progress, and develop a more creative environment for teaching (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001).

Due to its role in studies, SRL is now impetus in numerous educational fields and English language teaching requires more research on the role of SRL. This research especially conducted from traditional viewpoint which is teacher centered. Through these approaches there will be a great change in curriculum development, teacher education, and classroom implications. SRL is one of the most important areas of research in foreign language learning (FLL) contexts which plays pivot role in learning foreign language. This research endeavors to show case importance of SRL in target language acquirement by examining role of SRL in attainment of target language (which happens to be English). This study aims to focus on SRL techniques used by undergraduate language students and finds relationship between self-regulation components. The implications of this research can be highly commendable for in-depth situational analysis of self-regulated learners.

SRL Importance

There are different SRL frameworks in literature (Pintrich & Garcia, 1991; Zimmerman, 2000; Oxford, 2011). The primary components of different SRL models are: (1) preparation (2) execution and monitoring (3) assessment of the learned outcome (Hofmann, Ziegler, & Astleitner, 2003). In contrast, model proposed by Winne and Hadwin (1998), comprise of four parts: (1) determining the duty; (2) preparation of task (3) performing study ways and strategies; and (4) adjusting study plans for next step. The parts which are discussed in cycle of Zimmerman's (1998) model have similarity with Winne and Hadwin (1998) model. According to Zimmerman's model, first of all, students assess and observe the educational condition. Then, students lay down the educational aims and plan suitable strategies. After applying these strategies, students observe progress themselves and also try to complete their learning goals.

The globally recognized model of Boekaerts (1997) has two components, I) cognitive and ii) motivational (self-regulations), first component has three levels: Domain-Special facts, technique Usage, and aims. Cognitive component in this model encompasses behavioral as well as cognitive characteristics of SRL while motivational module consists of common, motivational, and emotional qualities. According to this model all aspects of SRL are interconnected to motivational and cognitive strategies and they make cohesive effect on gaining results of students (Boekaerts, 1997).

SRL in Foreign Language Learning

Self-regulation is an integral part of all academic and psychological studies. Over the last few decades, self-regulation researchers have focused on the foreign language learning. Different studies show the effectiveness of the SRL in achieving the desired results in foreign languages (Andrade & Evans, 2013; Oxford, 2011; Sinclair, 2000; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). It is essential to maintain strong motivation and sustainability, as the language development is often required consistent efforts because of the changing nature of the language (Shahbaz & Liu, 2012). SRL requires language learners to be active in and out of classroom and active in extracurricular and academic actions. In order to regulate self-regulation in students, they need help with planning, goals, maturity, knowledge, follow-up, evaluation, and endurance during process of planning (Sinclair, 2000, Oxford, 1990) to learn how to manage themselves and make their own decisions and how to sustain their own decisions.

There is a mass of research on SRL but it has been partially put into practice until now (Kuo, 2010) as very few studies have been undertaken in L2 contexts (Andrade & Evans, 2013) especially in developing countries like Pakistan. This encouraged the researchers to commence research and undertake a preliminary study on SRL in L2 context. This study discusses SRL and how it relates to foreign language achievement.

The study uses an explorative design and attempts to identify the importance of foreign language learning as a self-control tool by examining the connection with foreign language proficiency. The objectives are (1) to verify the intensity of self-discipline for foreign language students, (2) the connection between their own control method; and (3) the bearing of self-control strategies on learning outcomes of students. The focused research questions of this study are as following:

- How much do learners of English benefit from self-regulation?
- How are different SRL components related?
- Which SRL component/s can envisage outcomes in learning of target language?

Material and Methods

In the process of preparing and delivering the lesson, students are actively supervised to control themselves by teachers. Students are not usually able to see their inner capabilities for learning a language, so by the help of teachers, coaching, and communication students get their aims and potentials. Teachers provide guidance in the academic procedure and offer a beneficial response on educational results (Boekaerts, 1997). Before exploring SRL of students, fifty-one members of

the institution took part in semi-structured interviews. The aims to carry out interviews were to recognize the theoretical and literary learning tools.

The enquiries in the questionnaire include: (1) explanations of successful teacher language learning, (2) the ideas and skills students required, (3) to find out if the teachers know about SRL, and (4) teachers' integration of SRL in the classroom. The interviews of 10 to 15 minutes were audio-recorded and then transcribed. The record of teacher's interviews was collected and analyzed by using grounded theory method (Center, 1995). This method does not divide the qualitative data into *a priori* categories rather it analyzes data into new themes. The growing themes were drawn out and analyzed descriptively after proof reading.

By the analysis of interviews, researchers come to know that a successful language learner can study without help (95.2%), on a regular basis (89.3%), and knowingly (87.3%) and this criterion is determined by their instructors. On the other hand, for determining SRL, the regular class attendance (81.2%), class work during lessons (55.9%), and customary revision of daily lessons (51.9%) were the common ideas presented by the most teachers. Instructors passed the skills that learners cannot do without, and few instructors among them (7.8%) talked about classroom integration of SRL techniques whereas fewer still (3.9%) believed that they raised self-regulation of students.

In teacher's responses, there are other expressions of self-control rather than use of the term 'self-control'. Additionally, interviews show that there are large number of teachers who are well-known with SRL (75.4%), but don't use yet (92.1%) in the classroom. When reasons are asked, teachers said the official curriculum does not give too much teaching time. Overall, interviews highlight that most teachers want students to become self-sufficient and need to use very few resources to help them.

Participants and Context

The study was carried out at a major public sector university of Punjab, Pakistan that offers English language classes to students attending undergraduate and postgraduate courses. The university also offers various language courses to students from other departments based on their proficiency level. At the beginning of educational year, the department takes the placement test of students. According to the result, they place the students at different classes at different aptitude levels of A2 or B2. The placement test and proficiency level of the students depend on descriptor in the Common European Framework of Reference developed by CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001). The students who are good in foreign language get A1 and A2 aptitude levels of language. On the other hand, B1 and B2 are for average language users.

The researchers have benefitted from the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), which is customized to provide students with language and academic competencies for designing courses/curriculum and developing tasks as well as

strategies of assessment for producing autonomous students. Nevertheless, when instructors are told to encourage good learners to improve their education, they complain that neither the curriculum contains any clear-cut approach to SRL nor is it found in the instructional in-service teachers' training. The school also offers occasional seminars that provide language resources in a timely manner. The curriculum and syllabi do not deal with strategic studies in time, function, or teacher feedback. Through instruction, teachers convey language items. Students are required to complete assignments, which do not include language instruction techniques.

The purposive sampling method (Patton, 2002) was used for sampling and conducted by the participants who met some specific features in order to fulfill requirements of this study. The study was conducted with undergraduates and Level A2 was used as a sample of the study ($n = 225$). In order to understand the English language, researchers selected students who understood English and easily understood questionnaire. They were not trained in any other educational institute to translate the English language into any other subject area, so that the results are only relevant to the school learning context. The major subjects of students were engineering ($n = 123$) and chemistry ($n = 102$). The participants ages were different from each other ranging from 17 to 21; 85 were female participants and 137 were male participants of the research.

The data is collected from two sources. First source is student language test scores which were obtained from students at the time of admission test. The assessment test was prepared by testing unit of the University. The all A2 students of the Institute who study English took test which had five parts. The test was delivered with writing skills (21%), speech communication (17%), listening ability (19%), reading (19%) and grammar and vocabulary (24%). This includes questions such as skills and queries given in the syllabus such as the main idea, reading or listening to details, or writing about things or people in or in an interview, vocabulary and structure.

Questionnaire was the second source of data collection, after two weeks of achievement exam, it was conducted to avoid any effect on student's perception, in particular the improvement of the student's English progress. For finding learners' self-reported SRL, questionnaire was used. This questionnaire was adopted from previous SRL models. In order to use the appropriate version rather than from the relay list, we adopted a unique method to finalize questionnaire. Griffiths and Oxford (2014) stressed about suitability of the tool and pointed out that researchers fail to appropriately yield valid data for research because the tool of the study was not specially meant for it. Therefore, researchers considered the previous situations to be complementary to the needs and behaviors, cultural aspects, or the needs of the current research situations. The survey questionnaire was developed following number of stages. The first step was analyzing of the SRL models and frameworks.

Second, there have been frequent filtered versions and arrangements of SRL which were obtained. The opinion poll used most often depends upon Self-regulated learning version of the Boekaerts (1997) and the Oxford Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). These include a wide range of learning models and training methods that have been developed and adopted and learning strategies were analyzed (Belize & Stefan, 2011; Winne & Hadwin, 1998; Zimmerman, 1998; Penny & D. Groot, 1990).

Based on the purposes of this research, new ideas are organized into three categories: facilitation, presentation, and assessment. The second consequences of new ideas were needed. Introductory language courses for language learners are designed to accommodate unfamiliar guests, so avoiding complicated concepts. Participants will be more aware and responsive to the items in the opinion poll.

After this step, the next step is investigation of the features of the theme and removing the complexities such as attributions, both retrospective and prospective, as conceived in Boekaerts' (1997) model. Finally, the preferred aspects were moved to sentences using fundamental structures. After proof reading of the items of questionnaire, expert teachers found some mistakes and four vague statements from the questionnaire were removed. The final questionnaire has two sections where the first section of the opinion poll includes questions involving demographic information. The second part included 43 items on a 5-point Likert-scale from agree=1 to strongly disagree=5. There were three sections of phrases (presentation, recital and assessment) and five stages including internal and external directions, cognitive techniques, verbal understandings, and evaluation. The design of the opinion poll, directions to the participants, number of items and sources of items are given in Table 1.

The first part includes items (n=14), to identify the motivation position of internal and external motives. The foreign language output verified by the help of SRL literature review (Bonni, Cortana, Smith-Dedee & Fiery, 2008) and determine that the student's initial motivation to set ultimate aims (Zimmerman, 1998; Winne & Hadwin, 1998, Beishuizen & Steffens, 2011). Researchers often stress the division between self-related goals and goals demarcated by others. Students will meet the goals that are based on outer expectations, steps, and standards which are placed by others. This informational sequence discourages reflexive thinking and stimulus. The students have the opportunity to develop self-sustaining learning goals, such as those laid down by instructors, institutions, parents, etc., which like more to investigate and evaluate the work process. The process of learning is presented in the model by Boekaerts (1997).

Table 1
The design of the questionnaire

	Sub-scales	Ideas of the items
1) Orientation (14 items)	a. Internal orientation Beishuizen & Steffens, 2011; Zimmerman, 1998 b. Outer layout (Beishuizen Steffens, 2011; Zimmerman, 1998	To know about personal goals communicating with others Desire of achieving English (technology) Future work Requirement & community needs the needs of school/teacher
2) Performance (21 items)	a. Strategies (Boekaerts, 1997; Oxford, 1990) b. method controversy (Boekaerts, 1997; Oxford, 1990)	of The ability to determine what you will be studying, planning ability, usage of study materials, skills, task understanding Ability Extracurricular activity ability assets meditation. Dealing with troubles of shifting study abilities give and take support from surroundings perseverance
3) Assessment (8 items)	Reflection (Boekaerts, 1997)	Reflection of study result Reflection of study presentation

The second module tracks different strategies regarding performance (n=21) and has two sub-steps-which include different cognitive approaches (n=8) and meta-cognitive techniques (n=13). Strategy is a technique which students use for working on learning devices like mapping, including taking notes, analyzing, summarizing and cramming (Oxford, 1990). Cognitive strategies include body magnification, association and exercises (Pintrich & De Groot1990). Elaboration means to create a link between presented knowledge and fresh information, and that institutional models enable students to acquire the knowledge they need to learn. On the other hand, rehearsal strategies are used for new learned lessons that are remembering or repeating. Under performance, second sub-scale has items related to meta-cognitive strategies. This strategy consists of an important category in SRL degrees (Anderson, 2003). According to different scholars (i.e. Anderson,2003), SRL correlates with learning outcome of language (Goh, 2008).

Conscious use of metacognitive strategies using knowledge about cognition, control, and regulating this knowledge for preferred purpose is also a big task (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). For getting benefits of metacognitive strategies, student must be aware of metacognitive knowledge. By using metacognitive knowledge and strategies students can better plan their learning,

solve problems, and can take appropriate decisions to test new approaches to learning. They can develop strategies for language learning, easily complete their work, and move information into fresh learning context and then apply new ways of learning. This knowledge will automate students in fresh learning environments (Anderson, 2003; Goh, 2008). During learning, students can perform well by the help of metacognition and learn written text better (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001) and have better preservation than before. For evaluation of strategies, the last component consists of eight items and involves reflection of the learning results. The evaluation of the results is with reference to the targeted goals. If teacher is dissatisfied from the results of students than he/she can change the strategy which is being used during the learning process (Boekaerts, 1999; Pintrich, 2000). For better results the evaluation strategy must be efficient. The change of strategy after monitoring results is beneficial for students and also prove helpful in further learning experiences. It will beneficial for them in becoming self-regulated.

Results and Discussion

The data gathered from questionnaire was inserted in SPSS 21 (Mean=71.95, Standard Deviation=13.476). The Statistical analysis is an initial step by using the Alpha Coefficient by Cronbach through which internal stability index is calculated. The results indicate that the chosen data set is suitable for later numerical analysis ($\alpha = 0.75$). The approximate probabilities of each part and sub-degrees are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Self-regulated questionnaire for reliability

Components and Subscales	No. of items	Mean	SD	Alpha
Orientation:	14	24.9	5.1	0.87
External orientation	7	13.9	3.4	0.62
Internal orientation	7	11.9	4.5	0.81
Performance:	21	41.8	7.1	0.73
Cognitive strategies	8	14.8	4.1	0.76
Metacognitive strategies	13	18.6	5.2	0.96
Evaluation	8	11.3	4.3	0.67
Complete Scale	43	21.9	3.7	0.78

Before starting the numerical analyses with the help of reliability test to get appropriate degree from questionnaire, factor analysis was done. For finding out the suitability of data set for the analysis Bartlett's Test were conducted. The finding represents a factor analysis of the data sets. The next step of the analysis is to find out where the necessary points are, and Initial Eigen value analysis was held in this research. The study results summarize five general items, total 30 objects whose value is larger than 1 Eigen, and a total of 66.16% reported. According to Kaiser's Criterion

(Kalayci, 2010), the objects whose value is less than 1 was eliminated from the findings of the research because value 1 did not have any significant bond with any other aspect.

How much students use self-regulatory strategies

The principle for guiding students to identify their own self-regulatory strategies is that in the syllabus SRL parts are analyzed in a good way. The items in each of the settings are changed by different variants in the accounting collection before descriptive analysis. General scores indicate that students use SRL strategies commonly to below median threshold (Median = 2.6). The outcome is comparison of results of each grade, with the result that the students use in learning goals.

Relationship between SRL components

To address the possible connection of each component of SRL and its success Spearman's Ranked Correlation Coefficient, was carried out by following the suggestion of Dörnyei and Taguchi (2009) that he used to follow a non-parametric statistical analysis to analyze the Likert scale. To have a shared direction with the results you get, 27 objects were reprogrammed into different variables before additional analysis. Accordingly, information in the new groups (strongly agree = 5 and strongly disagree = 1), with a high (4-5) number indicating that participants use strategy and a small number (1-2), show that has little or no benefit. Three items form (items six, eleven and twenty-three) reversed. First of all three parts of SRL and its success scores were computed (table 3). The results of the research show that there is a high degree of positive association between the orientation ($\rho = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$) and negative interactions with evaluation ($\rho = 0.388$, $p < 0.01$). The analysis shows a positive relationship between performance and evaluation (and $\rho = .057$, $p < 0.01$). Assessment and terminology are of great value in terms of language effectiveness and are not important in terms of performance or verbal adjustment. In this study the next step is to mark the relationship between both stages and the relationship between both levels and between the two stages (Table 3).

Table 3
Achievement and SRL Components Relationship

Components	1	2	3	4
Achievement	1			
Orientation	.15*	1		
Performance	-.085	-.046	1	
Evaluation	-.388**	.057	.277**	1

Relationship of language achievement and self-regulation

components

Various regressions were executed to explore reply of the third problem of this research i.e. which component(s) of SRL can envisage outcomes in learning of target language? The data set of this research is suitable for multiple regression analysis as confirmed by ANOVA result. Initially, the three main parts were retreated upon achievement. Table 5 demonstrates results that indicate two variables have substantial influence in foreseeing accomplishments of learners. Calculations highlight a strong but negative connection with success ($\beta = -.46, p < .05$) while there is slightly positive association of orientation ($\beta = .15, p < .05$). Conversely, the remaining component has no association with the other components. The findings demonstrate that the language learners seldom utilized cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Evaluation is the predictor of achievement and employed frequently than other two components.

Table 4
Regression Test Results

Subscales	B	Beta	Significance	R	R2	Adjusted R2
Orientation	3.83	.15	.05*	.141	.015	.010
Performance	-.88	-.03	.80			
Evaluation	-6.47	-.46	.00*	.393	.157	.151

Table 5
Stepwise Regression test

Components	B	Beta	Significance	R	R2	Adjusted R2
Evaluation	-6.5	-.45	.00*	.373	.157	.140
Evaluation & performance	4.51	.13	.04*	.416	.181	.169

The results of standardized regression coefficient point out that evaluation and orientation add considerably to the prediction of achievement. The rates lower than 30% to be less strong predictors (Dörnyei, 2002). The overall power of orientation is affected by lower external and higher internal levels of motivation which predicts achievement.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to pinpoint the role of self-regulation in second/foreign language learning for Pakistani learners. First question deals with usage of SRL strategies or techniques by the participants of this research. Analysis of the data shows that self-regulation is employed by learners in a limited way. Self-reported data illustrate that self-regulation is not used in an effective manner. Teachers and learners can focus on this aspect and enhance self-regulation practices of learners to improve achievement in English language learning and teaching.

The second question of the study deals with relationship among different components of SRL. Correlation analyses highlight that there are complex relationships among various components of SRL. Orientation has a positive and significant relationship with achievement; however, it demonstrates a negative correlation with performance and evaluation. On the other hand, performance and evaluation exhibit strong and significant interaction. Teachers and learners need to be conscious of the fact that different components of SRL play various roles in target language learning and focusing on any individual component of SRL might not produced desired for learners and teachers.

Regression analyses were employed to answer question three postured for this study. Analyses of the result spotlight the role of various components. Evaluation emerges as the strongest predictor of achievement and a good number of participants reported to use it more frequently compared to other components. Orientation can also account for a great deal of effort exerted by language learners. Evaluation and orientation can serve as major predictors of success for this group of learners. Performance component is less employed by participants of this research and it fails to emerge as a strong predictor, in the data, of achievement in target language learning. Students and ESL/EFL teachers can focus on these components and work on the comparatively ignore factor of performance.

Diverse nature of responsibilities makes English teachers Neolithic and ultimate lifelong learners. Current research is descriptive in nature and provides details of existing situation. More concrete studies are needed about self-regulation that explore short and long-term effects of SRL from different perspective on the students' language skills. Investigators, researchers and educators can take help from these tests; develop teaching programs and teaching strategies. Finally, teachers and students get more insight details of applications in the classroom.

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