

Self-Regulated Learning in Writing of EFL Learners

Ariyanti

Teaching English Department, University of Widya Gama Mahakam, Samarinda, Indonesia

e-mail: ariyanti.muflihin@gmail.com

RindaFitriana

Teaching English Department, University of Widya Gama Mahakam, Samarinda, Indonesia

e-mail: rindming@gmail.com

WidiSyahitia Pane

Teaching English Department, University of Widya Gama Mahakam, Samarinda, Indonesia

e-mail: widi.pane@gmail.com

Abstract:

This research was aimed to investigate EFL students' Self-Regulated Learning in writing. Self-Regulated Learning itself means the method that enable students to take control in understanding of knowledge from the lecturer by conducting their own way in learning. The design of this study was quantitative with survey design to measure students' academic self-regulation and self-regulation in writing class context. The population of this study was third semester students of English Department of University of Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda, Indonesia, which consist of two classes with totally 37 students, who have studied English writing. Questionnaire was applied to measured two aspects; students' academic self-regulation (77 items) and self-regulation concerning English writing subject (14 items), using Likert Scales. The result showed that 70% of students were able to motivate themselves to learn writing, doing some efforts to engage the class, willing to rehearse, elaborate and organize the lesson material by themselves, meanwhile 19% students had better self-regulation that make them conducted better effort to learn writing and accomplished better as well and 11% of them still struggle to

survive in writing class. It proved by the mean of three indicator; *Learning Activeness* (3.18), *Willingness to respond lecturer's suggestion* (3.12), and *Willingness to broaden writing skill* (3.27). To sum up, it can be considered that students had good enough self-regulation in writing.

Keywords: *Self-Regulating Learning, Academic Self-Regulating Learning, Writing*

1. Introduction

Self-Regulated Learning is a learning method where students have to push themselves to have their own ways in paving their understanding towards materials given by lecturers in classroom. In this case, the students can be more active to participate in learning process in terms of cognitive, self-efficacy, and behavior (Zimmerman, 1986). To go further, the students must have efforts to seek for information, rehearsing, and self-consequating (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1986). Particularly, the students are expected to obtain as much information as they can, get practice continuously, and apply reward and punishment towards their performance with their own method. In many ways, self-consequating can be applied by promising to the students themselves to give reward whenever they gain satisfied achievement and give punishment to themselves by the time their performance toward certain learning does not meet their expectation.

Above explanation is in line with three elements exist in Self-Regulated Learning i.e. strategies of students' Self-Regulated Learning, performance skill perception, and commitment of the students to achieve goals set in learning. Goals can be assumed as grade, in future job opportunities, or any other aspect regarding with the learners need (Bandura, 1986). To gain their goals, the students need to be serious in following the process and obey regulations they have made (Altun & Erden, 2013). In other words, the students must be ready whenever they have to change their learning habits or behavior and follow rules they have made by themselves in order to achieve expected learning outcomes.

Furthermore, self-efficacy is core aspects which affect the students in Self-Regulated Learning process. It is a must for the students to build self-efficacy (Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons., 1992) because it is related to self-regulation effectivity (Schunk & Ertmer, 2000). The higher self-efficacy the students build, the more successful they are on learning achievement (Malpass, Neil, & Hocevar, 1999). In conclusion, in Self-Regulated Learning, self-efficacy is important because it is about the students' personal beliefs whether they are capable enough to attain learning accomplishment (Pajares, 1996).

There were several studies related to Self-Regulated Learning which have been done by some researchers. One of them is Altun & Erden (2013) where in their research, they focus on self-regulation strategies and self-efficacy perception of students in learning Mathematics. They found that metacognitive self-regulation, regulation of time and study environment, help-seeking, and self-efficacy perception give

significant impact towards Mathematics learning achievement. Self-regulation strategies and self-efficacy also conducted by Ozan et al. (2012), whose research found that according to different faculties and gender, the self-regulation strategies and self-efficacy were high. Other researchers who also conducted the research about self-regulated learning is Hladík, Hrbáková, & Vávrová (2012), where in their study the result showed that self-regulated learning contributed to multicultural competences. In other words, the aspects of self-regulation of the students increase when their competences of multicultural aspects increase as well.

Moreover, in the same way, several researchers conducted similar area of teaching which is self-regulation and its connection to essay composition. Magno (2009) and Nami, Enayati, & Ashouri (2012) explored that there is significant correlation between self-regulation in students' strategies in learning writing. Meanwhile, Hallberg & Olsson (2017) found that between Self-Regulated Learning and students' writing especially in thesis writing, there is correlation existed even though the result of correlation is not as significant as what the researcher expected.

Still related to students' writing ability, this research attempts to investigate Self-Regulated Learning by students in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL), specifically to college level at University of Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda, Indonesia. Even though in similar area of research, the researchers focus on phases and areas for Self-Regulated learning especially in writing classes. In this case, the researchers rely on a theory from Zimmerman & Moylan (2009) and Pintrich (2000) who point out phases of Self-Regulated Learning including forethought, planning, and activating, monitoring, control, and reaction and reflection, and also areas for Self-Regulated Learning including cognition, motivation, behavior, and context.

In spite of the fact that several research have been done especially regarding with Self-Regulated Learning and Students' Writing, this research, specifically chosen based on an assumption of writing challenges that EFL students in university level still face (Ariyanti, 2017). It is because rules that students have to follow in writing composition is sort of steps which are started from choosing an appropriate topic, pre-writing, drafting, revising and editing, until it is ready to submit as final draft (Gibbons, 2002). Those obligations in writing bring students to use a set of self-regulation in learning.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Concept of Self-Regulated Learning

There are many theories explain about self-regulation, one of them is Zimmerman (2000) who points out that self-regulation is an individual efforts to accommodate thoughts, feelings, and actions towards goals that have been set previously. In order to achieve those goals, learners should have certain strategies which include actions and process in terms of gaining information as much as possible they need (Zimmerman, 1989). Specifically, goals in academic context can be grades, social honor, and job opportunities (Zimmerman et al., 1992). Another concept of self-regulated learning comes from Panadero & Alonso-Tapia (2014) where in this case,

they argue that self-regulation is related to students' management of "cognition, behavior, emotion, and motivation" toward goals they would like to achieve. Regarding with the definition that proposed by Panadero & Alonso-Tapia (2014), Vermunt & Donche (2017) point out that there are two strategies in self-regulated learning namely cognitive and regulation strategies. In cognitive strategies, it is related to an ability to understand materials of learning, including the process of gaining the understanding point towards the learning materials. In addition, learning pattern contributes to the successfulness of achieving goals. Meanwhile, in regulation strategies, this strategy is concerning with phases in self-regulated learning by students which include premeditation or planning, performance, as well as evaluation and reflection.

Moreover, according to Wolters, Pintrich, & Karabenick (2003), there are four basic assumptions in self-regulated learning. The first assumption is constructive assumption. It means that students, in learning, is active learners who determine their own goals and strategies in learning. In addition, the students also should not be passive towards materials they obtain from their teachers, but rather to be more active in order to get full understanding towards the materials. The second assumption is control assumption, where in this case, students do not only act as learners, but also as controllers toward their motivation and behavior when learning. Moreover, they also must monitor the condition happened on their environment, because what happen in the world towards their environment will give significant influence to their learning achievement. The third assumption is criterion assumption. It means that it is a must for students to set criteria of successfulness in achieving their learning goals. This assumption can help them to determine what to do next to meet the criteria. The last assumption is regarding with balancer between self-personality and classroom setting: It assumes that, again, students are not only placed as "only" learners, but they need to have balance situation between their personalities and abilities in learning and classroom environment. The case is that there are so many students get influenced by their classmates and surrounding environment at schools, whereas they cannot leave aside that they have learning goals to achieve.

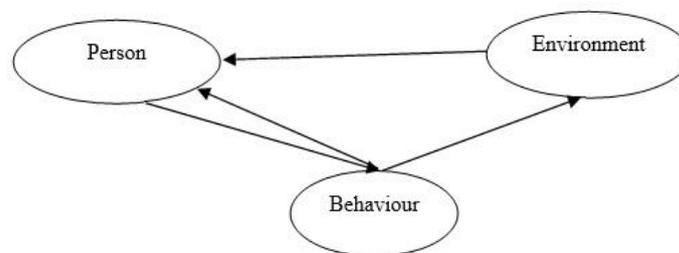
Furthermore, self-regulated learning has correlation to learners' characteristics and achievement of their performance (Pintrich, 2000). However, even though the definition of self-regulated learning seems to be very simple, but the matter of fact, varied processes until the application in learning process is not easy or even can be called as a complex set of learning. In this case, cognition, motivation, and behavior are the most important points in terms of areas of regulations. Those areas of regulations are connected to phases as proposed by Pintrich (2000), they are forethought, planning, and activating, monitoring, control, and reaction and reflection. Without too many differences, Zimmerman & Moylan (2009) point out that there are three phases in self-regulated learning i.e. planning, performance, and evaluation and reflection. Specifically, Zimmerman & Moylan (2009) explain that in planning phase, students should set what learning goals they would like to achieve. After the students have set their goals, they need to continue the process by setting

learning strategies. It is because by following their learning strategies, they can manage their behavior to achieve their goals. In performance phase, students need to do several controlling actions such as time management, environmental influence, and self-ability. After all, they can evaluate their performance and state what strategies they can do in the future in order to meet learning goals.

2.2 Models of Self-Regulated Learning

There are several models of self-regulated learning that have been developed by experts. The first model is being developed by Zimmerman (1989) which is known as Triadic Analysis of Self-Regulated Learning. This model presents connection among three elements, i.e. individual, environment, and behavior as on below figure:

Figure 1. Triadic Analysis of Self-Regulated Learning

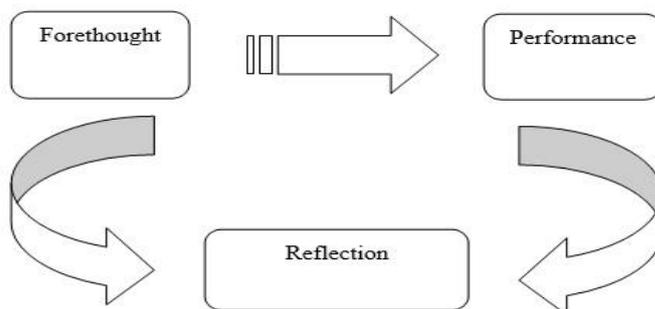


Adapted from Zimmerman (1989)

Above figure means there is correlation between those three elements, where it is indicated by arrow signs above. To discuss further, in learning, a person is influenced by environment. Therefore, a person or a student should control the condition of environment because it affects student too much. The next term regarding with behavior, students need to pay attention to their attitude or behavior when learning, because their attitude towards learning will give significant effect to the result in case of attaining learning goals. However, students' behavior also as a result of environment's shaping. Therefore, building balance position and portion of personality, behavior, and environment can help students to achieve their learning goals.

The second model of self-regulated learning is Cyclical Phases of Self-Regulated Learning which explain about the connection between cognitive and motivation of learners as below figure:

Figure 2. Cyclical Phases of Self-Regulated Learning

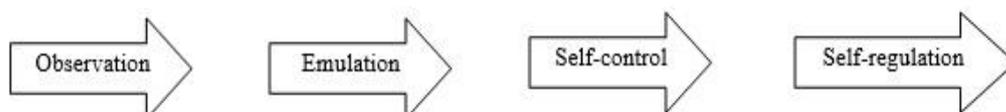


Adapted from Zimmerman (2000)

Above model contains three aspects in self-regulated learning. The first is forethought, where in this aspect students should make planning and set their learning goals. In addition, they can also make sort of criteria of achieving goals. Meaning that they can determine, to what extend they can declare whether they meet the criteria of a successful learning. The second aspect is related to performance. Students apply the learning strategies they have planned on previous stage. The last aspect is reflection, students can evaluate their performance and make new strategies towards the next learning in the future.

The last model is Multi-Level Model of Self-Regulated Learning which explains how learners acquire self-regulation in learning (see figure 3):

Figure 3: Multi-Level Model of Self-Regulated Learning



Adapted from Zimmerman (2000)

Above figure shows four contained elements in self-regulated learning. Firstly, in observation, students should experience to have an observation to a proper model. Secondly, in emulation, what students do is imitating styles of model's competence. Thirdly, in self-control, students act as a personality to control themselves in learning. Lastly, in self-regulation, students force themselves in applying their self-regulation learning strategies by also considering their personal ability and the condition of environment.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Population and Sample

Quantitative approach with survey design was applied in this research to measure students' academic self-regulation and their self-regulation in writing class context, considering the number of research subjects and the focus of the study. This study

focuses on how much students have ability in managing themselves to do the learning process in general. In addition, this research is analyzed by obtaining numerical data by using certain criteria to measure self-regulated learning done by students (Cresswell, 2003).

The target population of this study was students of third semester English Department of University of Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda, Indonesia, which consist of two classes with totally thirty seven students, who have studied English writing. In this case, the two classes students from the third semester have experienced Writing subject since they were in second semester. The matter of fact, their writing production was not as good as what Writing lecturer expected. Specifically, the lecturer has given feedback toward their essay tasks in written form. In addition, the lecturer also gave the students opportunities to ask and clarify regarding with the lecturer's comments on their essay. Therefore, the researchers are eager to investigate further about self-regulation they believe and do in learning especially in Writing subject. Since the number of target population is less than 100, the researcher took all of them (37 students) as the samples.

3.2 Instruments

As the research instruments, the researchers employed a questionnaire which adapted from Wolters et al. (2003) and Williams & Deci (1996). This study measured two aspects; students' academic self-regulation (77 items) and their self-regulation concerning English writing subject (14 items), using Likert Scales.

3.2 Data Analysis Procedures

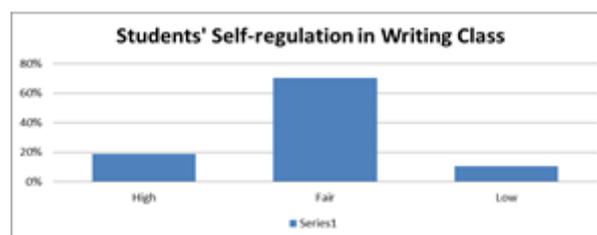
Having administered the questionnaires to the samples, the researchers tabulate the data and conducted the analysis through frequency distribution analysis. The researchers also analyzed the mean of each indicator for each item of questionnaire.

4. Findings

4.1. Students' Self-regulation in Writing Class

Concerning with writing class, most of students have good enough self-regulation, as it shown in the bar chart below:

Figure 1. Students' Self-Regulation in Writing Class



About 70% students are somewhat able to motivate themselves to learn writing, do some efforts to engage in writing class, and willingly rehearse, elaborate and organize the lesson material by themselves. 19% students have better self-regulation that make them conducted better effort to learn writing and accomplished better as

well. Although, 11% of them still struggle to survive in writing class. Students' self-regulation in writing class was measured through three indicators which can be seen in the following table;

Table: 1 Indicators of self-regulation in writing class

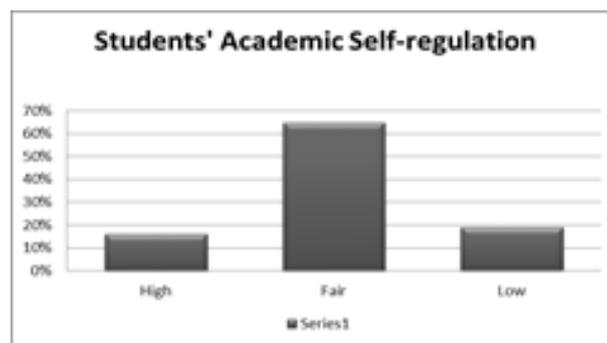
Indicators of self-regulation in writing class	Mean
Learning Activeness	3.18
Willingness to respond lecturer's suggestion	3.12
Willingness to broaden writing skill	3.27

In detail, to a certain degree, students are willing to be active in writing class since they are aware of its importance in learning process which represented in the average scale; 3.18. Moreover, students' self-regulation in writing class was also measured through their willingness to accept the lecturer's suggestion or feedback for improvement on their writing. It can be said that, to some degree, students have done great effort to engage in writing class and perform better. In addition, students' willingness to broaden their writing skill shows that they have good enough self-regulation to improve their writing skill.

4.2. Students' Academic Self-regulation

Overall, students' academic self-regulation can be considered in fair category, with range of score 49 to 67. About 24 students (65%) had fair academic self-regulation. Meanwhile, only 6% students had high self-regulation in academic context, which was lower than those whose low self-regulation, about 19% students. The following graph will describe the trend.

Figure 2. Students' Academic Self-Regulation



In more detail explanation, the following table shows students' self-regulation in three aspect, they are academic cognition, academic motivation, and academic behavior.

Table: 2 Indicators of academic self-regulation

Indicators of academic self-regulation	Mean
Academic Cognition	3.18
Rehearsal strategies	3.32
Organization strategies	3.16
Metacognitive self-regulation	3.09
Academic Motivation	3.49
Mastery self-talk	3.60
Relevance enhancement	3.38
Situational interest enhancement	3.37
Performance/relative ability self-talk	3.51
Extrinsic self-talk	3.68
Environment structuring	3.35
Self-consequating	3.56
Academic behavior	3.27
Effort regulation	3.09
Regulating time and study environment	3.23
General intention to seek needed help	3.48
Overall average	3.31

From the table above, it can be seen that students somewhat possess good enough academic cognition, shown from the scale, in average they scored 3.18. However, concerning the average score for academic motivation, which almost reached scale 4, i.e.; 3.49, it can be said that students are able to encourage themselves to learn something. In other words, they are academically self-motivated. Focusing on the indicators, it is clearly seen that students self-motivated through self-talk and self-consequating. Related to their academic behavior, it can be said that students somewhat know and are aware to do some efforts to learn, especially when they have difficulties during learning process, they obviously seek for help. In brief, to some extents, students have good enough management relating to their effort engaging in academic activities and accomplishing the learning objectives.

5. Discussion

According to the findings, it indicates that most of students applied what so called by self-regulated learning because they are active in learning class as stated on Zimmerman's theory (Zimmerman, 1989). The students behave positively such as motivate themselves in learning writing where it is in line with Friedrich et al. (2013) who said that Self-regulation is one of effective strategies for learning in any condition. In addition to their behavior in learning Writing, they are willing to accept feedback from their lecturer and react to the lecturer's comments on their essay by asking for clarification to the lecturer's notes. Furthermore, the students always obey the instruction from the lecturer to do drafting, revising and editing. To conclude, the students are aware of the importance of acting positively towards Writing lecture as well as the process to achieve a good essay by following the rules in writing which is instructed by the lecturer.

Moreover, the findings also show that the students have behavior, emotion, and motivation controls. What is meant by those three types of controls is how the students can control what they are doing during the lecture, stability of the students' emotion when doing any assignment Boekaerts & Corno (2005), and keep maintaining their interest in learning (Pintrich, 2000). When learning, they show feeling of happiness even though when the lecturer gave writing assignment. It becomes an important point in learning process because the students can do what they want to do such as pretending to be sick or give ignorance response towards the lecturer's instruction (Elliot & Covington, 2001). In short, the students reveal positive attitude in terms of action, emotion, and also motivation towards the learning.

Furthermore, above findings showed that the students get advantages of applying the self-regulated learning during the process of studying. It is relevant with a study done by Altun & Erden (2013), where in their study, they found that efforts done by students such as asking for help, being confident, and believe on their own potency help students to get better achievement. In addition, to have positive feeling, mood, thought, and belief is important and should never be ignored. As Hammann (2005) said that feeling and belief play their roles in influencing students' behavior. Since human changes, bad or good feeling and belief will affect whether become positive or negative the students' behavior is. Therefore, controlling action is important in order to maintain students' emotion in learning as explained previously.

6. Conclusion

According to the findings of the study that had been conducted to third students of third semester English Department of University of Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda, the result showed that students had good enough self-regulation in writing; 70% students have fair self-regulated Learning, 19% students were high, and 11% were low. Meanwhile in academic self-regulation, it was considered as fair category which the range of score was 49 to 67; 24 students (65%) had fair academic self-regulation. Meanwhile 6% students had high self-regulation in academic context, and about 19% of students were lower than those whose low self-regulation. Above all findings that have been figured out in this article, the researchers may suggest that for students, to enhance their Self-Regulated Learning in writing by motivating themselves to learn more actively, respond lecturer's suggestion and broaden their skill in writing. The students are also suggested to develop their academic Self-Regulated Learning by possessing the good Academic Cognition, Academic Motivation, Academic Behavior. Lastly, for lecturer, to motivate their students to learn more by doing Self-Regulated Learning method by monitoring students' progress in learning and helping students when they need some help in doing writing by applying Self-Regulated Learning.

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