



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Creating Self-Regulated Learners in the Classroom

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Abstract

The shift from behaviorism to cognitivism in educational psychology has placed an increasing responsibility on learners for their own learning. Self-regulated learning has become a frequent area of educational research. Students are Self-regulated when they are metacognitively, motivationally and behaviorally active participants in their own learning process. Active engagements in the learning process enhance the academic performance of learners. Compared with low achieving students high achievers more frequently set specific learning goals, use variety of learning strategies, self monitor and adapt their effort systematically. This paper highlights the theoretical framework of self regulated learning and role of teachers in creating self regulated learners in the classroom.

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INTRODUCTION

Self-regulated learning is a process that assists students in managing their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions in order to successfully navigate their learning experiences. This process occurs when a student's purposeful actions and processes are directed towards the acquisition of information or skills. Self-regulated learners can plan, set their learning goals, organize, self-monitor and self-evaluate during the acquisition of knowledge. These processes make them to be self-aware and knowledgeable in their approach to learning.

Learning and attainment are best understood when we acknowledge the interactions between affective and cognitive processes. Self-regulation also includes meta-cognitive skills-that is, understanding one's own cognitive skills, including memory, attention and problem solving. This enables learners to make the best use of their knowledge and skills. In order for meta-cognitive strategies to be effective, students need to show a willingness to learn and to practice. Setting realistic goals and monitoring progress towards these goals involves self-efficacy – believes in one's ability to organize and carry out the actions required to achieve one's goals (Bandura, 1997). Self regulated learning suggests activities and thinking processes that learners can engage in and which are agreeable to change, rather than fixed traits that individuals either possess or lack. Self-regulation focuses on how learners actively manage their feelings and motivations to learn. Self-regulation improves with practice and learners sketch on previous experience to build a repertoire of beliefs and strategies that enhance learning. The development of SRL among the younger generations helps them to set goals for learning, concentrate on instruction, use effective strategies to organize ideas, use resources effectively, monitor performance, manage time effectively, hold positive beliefs about one's own capabilities. So how to foster students to be self-regulated learners should be the main target of the whole society.

Zimmerman's self-regulated learning theory is one of the most common theories in this field of research. In this model, self-regulation is composed of three cyclical phases: forethought phase, performance phase, and self reflection phase.

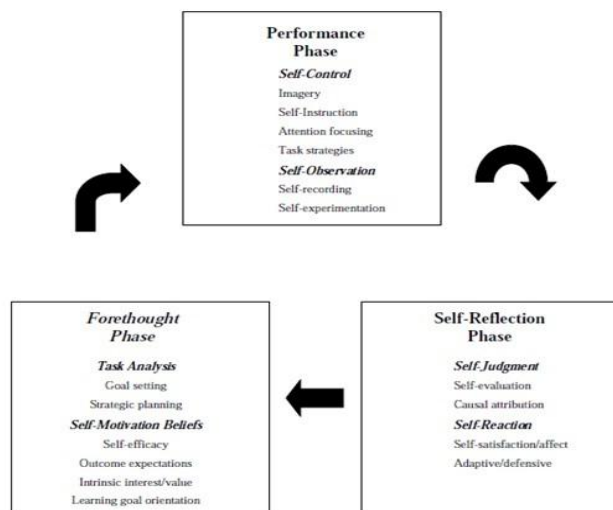


Figure 1. Zimmerman's Model of Self-Regulated Learning. Adapted from "Becoming a Self-Regulated Learner: An Overview," by B. J. Zimmerman, 2002, *Theory Into Practice*, 41, P. 67.

Forethought phase

The forethought phase refers to processes and beliefs that occur before efforts to learn. In this phase, there are two major classes: task analysis and self-motivation. Task analysis includes goal setting and strategic planning. The students create specific goals for themselves and then plan to use appropriate strategies to maximize success in the learning task. Self motivation includes outcome expectation, self efficacy, intrinsic interest and learning goal orientation. Outcome expectations are the personal consequence of learning. Self-efficacy is the beliefs that students believe they have capability to learn. When students have self-efficacious about learning, they will expect to use the knowledge to achieve their goals. Intrinsic interest refers to the students' valuing of the task skills from their own side. Learning goal orientation refers to valuing the process of learning for its own merits.

Performance phase

The performance phase refers to processes that occur during behavioral implementation. In this phase, there are two major classes: self-control and self-observation. Self-control means the supervision of the concrete methods and strategies that are selected during the forethought phase. The key types of self-control involve imagery, self-instruction, and attention focusing and task strategies. Self-observation means self-recording individual events or use self-experimentation to find out the cause of the events.

Self-reflection phase

Self-reflection refers to processes that occur after each learning effort. Here there are two major classes: self-judgment and self-reaction. Self-judgment includes self-evaluation and casual attribution. Self-evaluation means students compare their self-observed performances against some standard such as their prior performance, other person's performance, or an absolute standard of performance. One form of self-reaction involves self-satisfaction and positive effects. Increases in self-satisfaction can enhance students' motivation, but decreases in self-satisfaction will undermine their further efforts to learn. The other form of self-reaction is adaptive/defensive response. Defensive response means students make effort to protect their self-esteem by withdrawing or avoiding opportunities to learn and perform to the contrary, adaptive reaction means students can adjust themselves to expand the effectiveness of their methods of learning.

Zimmerman's model indicates that environmental factors have functioning with two directions - students' personal and behavioral characteristics. The interaction with context lead to the cyclical development and adaptation of students' self-regulated learning.

Role of Teachers in Creating Self Regulated Learners in the Classroom

Recent researches show that self-regulatory processes are teachable and can lead to increases in students' motivation and achievement (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998., Lee , McInerney& Liem, 2010., Boekaerts & Corno., 2005). Creating SRL environment in the classrooms for the complex and varied range of backgrounds, skills, and personalities that many students encompass poses challenges to even the most experienced teachers. A great deal of

literature shows a variety of effective instructional strategies such as direct instruction and modeling, guided and independent practice, social support and feedback, and reflective practices for promoting self-regulation in the classroom (Zumbrunn, Tadlock & Roberts., 2011). So teachers have to give proper training to their students and motivate them to use these learning strategies fruitfully.

Firstly, teachers require an understanding about their own thinking to become more effective in nurturing the thinking of their students. When new teachers acquire an understanding of the nature of learning, they began to build up a tendency to reflect upon their own experiences. If they possess the readiness to question their own assumptions and viewpoints, they will be more prepared to create learning environments that will enable students to learn the lessons effectively. Deeper understanding of the cognitive and motivational characteristics of learning can help teachers to design better instruction.

The second important task of effective teachers is to help students to get more useful strategies in their learning process. For example, in the process of planning, firstly, teachers need to provide direct explanation about self-regulated learning, multiple curriculum opportunities to foster self-regulated learning and some models of self-regulated learners. This explanation helps the students to understand and begin to use those processes as their own. That makes the students interested in self-regulated learning, aspires to learn and use effective strategies for their own education. Secondly, teachers should offer explicit instruction about learning strategies. They should give an idea about the important learning strategies, how they operate, when they should be applied, why they are selected, and so on. When students are given some information about the meaning and utilization of the strategies, they will know clearly about the significance of the strategies and how to employ, monitor, and evaluate the strategies. Those direct instructions about cognitive, metacognitive, and motivational strategies can facilitate students to understand and use the strategies effectively. Scaffolding and intervention should be applied between teachers and students.

Guided practice and independent practices are the third important task of teachers which can help to improve SRL and motivation. During guided practices, the responsibility of implementing the learning strategy shifts from teacher to student. In a study of reading achievement, Vidal-Abarca, Mana, and Gil (2010) examined whether guided practice of SRL strategies could improve fifth grade students' test scores. Findings showed that guided practice of SRL strategies increased reading skill, improved motivation to read, and improved task engagement. Student-teacher interaction can help the students in setting learning goals, monitoring their strategy use and progress to promote student thinking and learning. Independent practice should naturally follow guided practice. During this process students are given opportunities to practice their own strategy and make some modifications through self evaluation, which can ultimately reinforce the self-sufficiency skills.

To create a supportive learning environment in the classroom is the next important task of teachers. Teachers should create an open-ended environment to booster students' self-regulated learning. That environment give many opportunities for the students to set challenging learning goals, make effective and suitable plan, use the strategies effectively, have volitional control, participate in assessment, engage in more complex tasks, and seek help from peers and teachers etc... to enhance the students self-regulated learning skills.

Conclusion

Self-regulated learning is indeed presumed to play an important role in the development of lifelong learning competencies. It helps the students create better learning habits, strengthen their study skills, apply learning strategies to enhance academic outcomes, monitor their performance and evaluate their academic progress. To create self regulated learners in the classroom is the important task of every teacher. So teachers should be familiar with the factors that influence a learner's ability to self-regulate and the strategies they can use to promote self-regulated learning (SRL) in their classrooms.

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