

Self-Regulated Learning Strategies of Indonesian Diaspora Students in a Malaysian Community Learning Center: A Mixed-Methods Study

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Abstract: Self-regulated learning (SRL) is important for language learners, particularly in educational environments where instructional support and learning conditions are not always stable. This study investigated SRL levels among Indonesian diaspora junior high school students learning English at a Community Learning Center (CLC) in Malaysia and explored how learners with different SRL levels regulated their English learning. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was employed. Quantitative data were collected from 32 students using the Self-Regulated Foreign Language Learning Strategies Questionnaire (SRFLLSQ), followed by semi-structured interviews with two students representing high and moderate SRL levels. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The results showed an overall SRL mean of 3.47, categorized as high, with 16 students classified as high and 16 as moderate, and none as low. Motivational strategies obtained the highest mean (3.69), while Meta-affective strategies obtained the lowest (3.35). Qualitative findings showed that the high SRL participant regulated learning more systematically through goal setting, planning, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and active use of learning resources, whereas the moderate SRL participant used similar strategies less consistently and relied more on short-term planning and external support. Both participants also reported adapting to changing teachers and teaching approaches at the CLC. These findings suggest that SRL may function as an important adaptive mechanism for maintaining English learning in a dynamic non-formal educational environment.

Keywords: self-regulated learning, Indonesian diaspora students, Community Learning Center, English learning, self-regulated learning strategies.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to learn English effectively has become increasingly important in contemporary educational and multicultural contexts. For Indonesian diaspora learners, English may support both academic learning and participation in multicultural environments. However, some Indonesian diaspora learners study in non-formal educational settings where instructional conditions are not always stable. Such conditions may require learners to take greater responsibility for managing their own learning.

One concept particularly relevant to this situation is self-regulated learning (SRL). SRL refers to learners' ability to manage their learning through processes such as planning, monitoring, and reflecting on their progress. Panadero (2017) conceptualizes SRL as a cyclical process involving forethought, performance, and self-reflection. In language learning, self-regulation enables learners to establish learning goals, select strategies, monitor their understanding, and evaluate their progress. Previous research has highlighted the importance of self-regulation for learners who need to manage their learning more independently (Habók & Magyar, 2018; Panadero, 2017).

In foreign language learning, SRL can be understood through the strategies learners use to regulate different aspects of learning. Habók et al. (2022) explain that language learning strategies involve the regulation of cognition, emotions, motivation, and social interaction. Similarly, Oxford (2017) Strategic Self-Regulation (S²R) Model places self-regulation at the center of language learning strategies and identifies Cognitive, Affective, Motivational, and Social domains together with metastrategies that regulate their use. Teng (2022) further emphasizes the regulation of cognitive, motivational, behavioral, and contextual processes in self-regulated language learning. Thus, language learning strategies can be viewed as concrete manifestations of self-regulation in language learning.

The relevance of SRL becomes particularly important in flexible or less structured educational environments. Dignath & Büttner (2018) highlighted the

importance of self-regulation when teacher guidance is reduced, while Viberg & Kukulska-Hulme (2022) emphasized learner self-regulation in flexible learning environments where teacher support and learning schedules may vary. Lyu (2024) similarly found the relevance of self-regulated learning in community-supported language learning contexts. Thomas et al. (2024) further highlighted the value of qualitative and context-sensitive research for understanding how learners use language learning strategies across different educational contexts.

This issue is particularly relevant to Indonesian diaspora learners, who may experience educational disruptions related to mobility, legal status, socioeconomic conditions, limited educational access, and changing learning environments. Community Learning Centers (CLCs) provide an important educational setting for Indonesian diaspora children who have limited access to formal schooling (Asian Development Bank, 2021; UNESCO, 2016). CLCs operate outside the formal school system and provide community-based educational opportunities, including literacy, language learning, and basic skills (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2017). However, learning conditions may differ from those in formal schools because teaching schedules can depend on teacher availability and different instructors may use different approaches. These conditions may require students to manage their study time, practice independently, and maintain engagement despite changes in instructional support.

Previous studies have established the importance of SRL in EFL learning. Habók & Magyar (2018) examined language learning strategies among secondary school and university students, while Habók et al. (2022) investigated English language learning strategies, language achievement, and attitudes. Umamah & Cahyono (2020) also examined self-regulated writing strategies among Indonesian university students. These studies demonstrate the multidimensional nature of language learning strategies and the relevance of self-regulation to EFL learning.

However, much existing research has focused on formal schools, universities, or technology-mediated learning environments. Research examining SRL in non-formal educational settings remains limited, particularly in CLCs characterized by

changing teachers, irregular instructional schedules, and limited learning resources. Research focusing specifically on Indonesian diaspora learners in CLCs is also scarce. Consequently, limited attention has been given to how learners with different SRL levels regulate their English learning in such dynamic educational contexts.

The present study addresses this gap by examining the levels of SRL among Indonesian diaspora junior high school students learning English at a CLC in Malaysia and exploring how learners with different SRL levels regulate their English learning. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was employed, combining quantitative measurement of SRL levels with qualitative exploration of learners' strategy use. Accordingly, this study addresses the following research questions: 1) What are the levels of self-regulated learning (SRL) among Indonesian diaspora learners in learning English at a Community Learning Center (CLC) in Malaysia? 2) How do learners with different SRL levels regulate their English learning at the CLC?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-Regulated Learning in Language Learning

Self-regulated learning describes how learners actively manage their learning through planning, monitoring, and reflection. Panadero (2017) reviewed major SRL models and described SRL as a cyclical process involving forethought, performance, and self-reflection. In this process, learners establish goals and prepare for learning, regulate their performance during learning, and reflect on their learning outcomes. The framework therefore emphasizes learners as active participants in their own learning processes.

In language learning, Oxford (2017) Strategic Self-Regulation (S²R) Model provides a more specific perspective on how learners regulate language learning. The model focuses on Cognitive, Affective, Motivational, and Social aspects of language learning together with metastrategies that guide the use of strategies. Importantly, the strategies are flexible and context-dependent. A particular learning activity may serve

different regulatory functions depending on the learner, learning goal, and learning situation.

Habók et al. (2022) further conceptualize SRL in foreign language learning through the strategies learners use to manage their learning activities, cognition, emotions, motivation, and social interaction. Teng (2022) similarly views self-regulated language learning as the active regulation of cognitive, motivational, behavioral, and contextual processes. Based on these theoretical perspectives, Habók & Magyar (2018), followed by Habók et al. (2022), developed the Self-Regulated Foreign Language Learning Strategy Questionnaire (SRFLLSQ), which organizes SRL into eight strategy categories.

The eight categories used in the present study are Metacognitive, Cognitive, Meta-affective, Affective, Meta-social, Social, Metamotivational, and Motivational strategies. Metacognitive strategies concern planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning. Cognitive strategies refer to techniques for processing and understanding language materials. Meta-affective strategies involve awareness and regulation of emotions, while affective strategies concern the management of anxiety, confidence, and enjoyment. Meta-social strategies involve planning and monitoring social learning interactions, whereas social strategies involve using interaction with others to support learning. Metamotivational strategies concern planning and regulating motivation, while motivational strategies concern maintaining confidence, persistence, and positive beliefs toward English learning.

Although these categories are analytically distinguished, their functions may overlap. For example, asking a peer for help may constitute a social strategy but may also support cognitive regulation when the purpose is to understand difficult material. Similarly, maintaining confidence may involve both affective and motivational regulation. This overlap is consistent with Oxford (2017) view that language learning strategies are flexible and context dependent.

Indonesian Diaspora Learners

Indonesian diaspora learners are children whose parents work or reside abroad and who may experience limited access to formal schooling. The thesis explains that these learners may experience disruptions in schooling because of mobility, legal status, and socioeconomic challenges (Asian Development Bank, 2021). Because of these barriers, many Indonesian diaspora students rely on community-based institutions such as CLCs to continue their education (UNESCO, 2016).

Indonesian diaspora learners may also experience particular challenges in learning English, including limited daily exposure to English, varied instructional quality, and changing learning conditions. In such environments, students may depend on self-directed practices such as repetition, independent review, and peer support to sustain their learning progress. These characteristics make Indonesian diaspora students a relevant population for examining self-regulated learning in non-formal educational settings.

In the present study, Indonesian diaspora learners specifically refer to junior high school students of Indonesian background who learn English at a Community Learning Center in Malaysia. This definition is consistent with the scope of the study, which focuses on students in the junior high school level rather than comparing learners according to their grade levels.

Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education refers to organized learning activities that take place outside the formal education system but are intentionally designed to support learning and educational development. Unlike informal learning, which occurs naturally through everyday experiences, non-formal education is structured and can be delivered through community-based institutions, training programs, or alternative educational settings (UNESCO, 2015). In the context of the present study, non-formal education refers specifically to the learning environment provided by the Community Learning Center.

The characteristics of non-formal education are relevant to SRL because learning may take place under conditions that are less fixed than those found in

conventional formal education. Learners may therefore need to assume greater responsibility for organizing their study time, maintaining their engagement, and continuing learning when instructional support is not always consistent. These characteristics make SRL particularly relevant to Indonesian diaspora learners in dynamic learning environments.

Community Learning Centers (CLCs)

Community Learning Centers (CLCs) are learning institutions that operate outside the formal school system and are managed within the community. They are designed to provide educational access for learners who have limited opportunities in formal schooling. According to the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (2017), CLCs commonly offer programs such as literacy education, language learning, and basic skills for learners from diverse backgrounds. For Indonesian diaspora children living abroad, CLCs can become an important place to continue education when access to formal schools is limited (UNESCO, 2016).

In Malaysia, Indonesian diaspora learners may experience educational challenges related to limited access to formal schooling, changing learning environments, and limited educational resources. Most are of elementary or junior high school age and often continue their education through CLCs. Previous reports have identified educational challenges among migrant children in Southeast Asia, including interrupted schooling, limited access to educational resources, language barriers, and changing learning environments (UNESCO, 2015; UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2017). These conditions may influence how learners regulate their learning and adapt to different instructional situations.

Learning activities in CLCs do not always operate according to fixed or regular arrangements. English classes may depend on teacher availability, learning schedules may change, and teaching approaches may differ across sessions because different instructors may be involved. Although this flexibility enables CLCs to respond to local

conditions, it may result in varying instructional conditions (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2017).

These conditions require students to take greater responsibility for their learning. They may need to manage their study time, practice independently, and remain engaged even when English lessons are not conducted regularly. In this situation, SRL plays an important role in helping students maintain continuity in English learning despite changes in teachers and learning schedules. The thesis therefore positions self-regulated learning as an important element of learning continuity in non-formal CLC settings.

METHOD

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. The quantitative phase was conducted first to identify students' levels of self-regulated learning (SRL), followed by a qualitative phase to explore how students with different SRL levels regulated their English learning. The qualitative participants were selected based on the results of the quantitative phase.

The study was conducted at a Community Learning Center (CLC) in Selangor, Malaysia, which provides non-formal education for Indonesian diaspora students. The quantitative population consisted of 33 Indonesian junior high school students. Total sampling was used, although only 32 students completed the questionnaire and were included in the quantitative analysis.

For the qualitative phase, participants were selected purposively based on their SRL levels. Since no student was categorized as having low SRL, two students, representing moderate and high SRL levels, were selected for the interview. The CLC provided a relevant context because English instruction involved changing teaching schedules, rotating teachers, and varying instructional support.

Quantitative data were collected using the Self-Regulated Foreign Language Learning Strategies Questionnaire (SRFLLSQ) adopted from Habók et al. (2022). The questionnaire consisted of 52 items covering eight SRL strategy categories:

Metacognitive, Cognitive, Meta-affective, Affective, Meta-social, Social, Metamotivational, and Motivational strategies. The questionnaire was translated into Bahasa Indonesia and administered using a five-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree (1)* to *Strongly Agree (5)*. Its internal consistency was acceptable, with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.813 based on 20 pilot responses.

Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with the two selected students. The interview questions were adapted from previous SRL studies and focused on how students planned, monitored, and managed their English learning, particularly under changing schedules, rotating teachers, and limited instructional support. The interviews were conducted using Indonesian, Malaysian, and English to facilitate participants' expression of their learning experiences.

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 27 through descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution. Students' SRL levels were classified as low (1.00–2.44), moderate (2.45–3.44), and high (3.45–5.00) based on Oxford (1990) interpretation. The classification was used to describe students' SRL levels and select participants for the qualitative phase.

The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis based on Braun & Clarke (2006). A deductive approach was applied using the eight SRL strategy categories as the analytical framework. The interview recordings were transcribed, manually coded, reviewed, and organized according to the predefined categories. Member checking and repeated comparison with the original recordings were conducted to strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

What are the levels of self-regulated learning (SRL) among Indonesian diaspora in learning English at a Community Learning Center (CLC) in Malaysia?

The quantitative findings showed that the overall mean score of students' self-regulated learning (SRL) was 3.47 (SD = 0.30), which was categorized as high based on Oxford (1990) classification. The individual scores ranged from 2.90 to 4.10. Of the 32 valid respondents, 16 students were categorized as having high SRL and 16 as having moderate SRL, while no students were categorized as having low SRL.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Students' SRL Levels

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	SRL Level
Motivational	32	2.75	5.00	3.69	0.64	High
Metamotivational	32	2.25	4.50	3.59	0.55	High
Metacognitive	32	2.50	4.25	3.51	0.46	High
Affective	32	2.38	4.50	3.46	0.47	High
MetaSocial	32	2.63	4.25	3.41	0.47	Moderate
Cognitive	32	2.67	4.33	3.40	0.40	Moderate
Social	32	2.67	4.00	3.38	0.36	Moderate
MetaAffective	32	2.75	4.00	3.35	0.31	Moderate
Overall_SRL	32	2.92	4.10	3.47	0.30	High
Valid N (listwise)	32					

The results show that Motivational strategies had the highest mean score ($M = 3.69$), followed by Metamotivational, Metacognitive, and Affective strategies. In contrast, Meta-affective strategies had the lowest mean score ($M = 3.35$). The remaining strategies Meta-social, Cognitive, Social, and Meta-affective were categorized as moderate.

The relatively high overall SRL suggests that the students were generally able to manage their English learning. However, the overall mean was only slightly above the high category threshold of 3.45, indicating that their SRL remained relatively close to the moderate level. The absence of students in the low category may partly reflect the persistence required to remain in a non-formal learning environment with irregular schedules and changing teachers.

How do learners with different SRL levels regulate their English learning at the CLC?

The highest score for Motivational strategies indicates that maintaining motivation was a prominent aspect of students' SRL. The qualitative findings showed that both participants used motivational strategies, although their approaches differed. P1 connected his motivation with his parents' sacrifices:

"I remember my parents who worked hard to pay for my education at the boarding school. That makes me more motivated to continue learning English."

He also used occasional self-rewards and gained confidence through practice and encouragement from teachers and friends. P2 similarly used self-talk and occasional rewards, but her confidence depended more on task difficulty and external support.

The relatively high use of motivational strategies may be meaningful in the CLC context. Students frequently encountered changing teachers and different teaching styles, which required them to adapt to varying instructional conditions. Under these circumstances, personal motivation and self-management may have become important resources for maintaining continuity in English learning.

In contrast, Meta-affective strategies obtained the lowest mean score ($M = 3.35$). Although students generally demonstrated strong motivation to learn English, the qualitative findings showed that regulating negative emotions remained challenging. P1 attempted to calm himself and focus on his learning goals when experiencing difficulties, whereas P2 tended to remain silent or avoid participation when feeling unsure. The participants also reported nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence when using English.

This contrast between the highest Motivational score and the lowest Meta-affective score suggests that being motivated to learn English did not necessarily mean that students were equally capable of regulating negative emotions. Students could

maintain learning goals and persistence while still experiencing difficulties managing nervousness or fear of making mistakes. Thus, emotional regulation appeared to be a more challenging aspect of SRL than maintaining motivation or organizing learning activities.

The qualitative comparison between P1 and P2 further demonstrated differences in how strategies were applied. P1, representing the high SRL group, generally demonstrated more systematic planning, monitoring, cognitive processing, emotional regulation, and strategic social interaction. He created personal learning routines, monitored his understanding, and adapted his learning strategies. P2, representing the moderate-SRL group, also used SRL strategies but relied more on rote learning, passive emotional coping, less planned social interaction, and external support.

For example, P1 used self-questioning to monitor his understanding:

“I usually make my own questions about the material that I have studied. If I can answer them without looking at my notes, it means I understand.”

In contrast, P2 mainly relied on test scores to determine whether she understood the material. This difference suggests that the distinction between the high- and moderate-SRL learners was not simply the presence or absence of particular strategies, but the consistency and systematic nature of their strategy use. However, P1’s systematic learning habits should not be attributed entirely to individual SRL because he also studied in an Islamic boarding-school environment characterized by structured routines and discipline.

The CLC context further helps explain these differences. Both participants reported that teachers changed because instruction involved volunteers, university practicum students, and temporary teaching activities. Consequently, teaching styles also varied. P1 stated:

“The teachers sometimes change. Some are university practicum students, and some are volunteers. Because of that, the teaching styles are also

different. Some teaching styles help me understand the lesson, but some make me confused.”

P2 similarly reported feeling confused when teachers changed because she had become accustomed to the previous teacher’s teaching style.

This learning environment differs from regular school settings, where students generally experience more stable classroom structures and consistent teacher guidance. Therefore, the findings suggest that SRL may function as an adaptive mechanism that helps Indonesian diaspora students maintain learning engagement in a dynamic non-formal educational environment. Importantly, this comparison concerns the learning contexts, rather than a direct statistical comparison between CLC and regular-school students.

Overall, the integrated findings indicate that Indonesian diaspora students at the CLC demonstrated moderate and high SRL, with motivation emerging as their strongest area and emotional regulation as a comparatively weaker area. The high-SRL participant showed more systematic and independent strategy use than the moderate-SRL participant, while both participants adapted their learning to the changing conditions of the CLC. These findings highlight the role of SRL in supporting English-learning continuity within a non-formal and dynamic educational environment.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study examined self-regulated learning (SRL) among Indonesian diaspora students learning English at a Community Learning Center (CLC) in Malaysia. The findings showed that students demonstrated moderate and high SRL, with Motivational strategies being the most frequently used and Meta-affective strategies the least. Learners with high and moderate SRL differed mainly in the consistency and systematic use of learning strategies, particularly in planning, monitoring, emotional regulation, and independent learning. These findings suggest that SRL plays an important role in helping Indonesian diaspora students maintain English learning in the dynamic and non-formal CLC environment. Future studies should involve larger

samples and multiple CLCs to provide broader insights into SRL among Indonesian diaspora learners.

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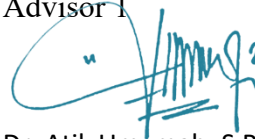
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