

ABSTRACT

The demonstrated improvement in English vocabulary mastery among senior high school students signifies a shift in learner identity. These students are increasingly asserting themselves not as passive educational consumers but as active agents and directors of their learning processes. This research investigates the performance and strategies of such high-achieving students at MAN 2 Bandung Regency, analyzing the mechanisms of self-regulated learning that facilitate their advanced lexical command.

This study adopted a qualitative multiple-case study methodology (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 1994), selected for its capacity to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context where the boundaries between the phenomenon (SRL strategy use) and the context (the classroom) are blurred. The case consisted of 12th-grade students in the language and culture program at MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung. Through an inductive analysis of their experiences, the research examined the specific deployment and function of SRL strategies (motivational, metacognitive, behavioral, and lexical cognitive) across all phases of Zimmerman's cyclical model to understand their role in vocabulary learning.

The study revealed that students at MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung employed self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies across all phases of vocabulary learning. In the forethought phase, they set manageable goals, selected techniques such as note-taking, translation, and contextual practice, and maintained motivation through intrinsic enjoyment and extrinsic aims. During performance, they demonstrated self-control by focusing on challenging words, managing distractions, and choosing between peer or independent study, while applying strategies including contextual inference, synonym analysis, storytelling, repetition, and recall, supported by progress tracking and experimentation. In the reflection phase, they evaluated progress, identified weaknesses, and adjusted goals through adaptive responses such as grammar practice or collaboration. Overall, students' vocabulary mastery was shaped by the interplay of motivational, metacognitive, behavioral, cognitive, and newly identified environmental aspects. While motivation and regulation enabled meaningful learning, environmental constraints, particularly limited peer interaction and authentic exposure, restricted practice opportunities, highlighting the contextual nature of their SRL practices.

This study suggests that students strengthen self-monitoring through tools like journals, portfolios, and peer feedback while gradually shifting from rote memorization to deeper strategies such as semantic mapping and contextual storytelling to achieve sustained vocabulary mastery. Teachers are encouraged to scaffold SRL across goal-setting, monitoring, and reflection, integrate explicit deep learning strategies, and foster collaborative yet accountable tasks supported by autonomy-oriented feedback. For future studies, longitudinal designs, broader samples, and further exploration of extrinsic motivators such as rewards and punishments are recommended to capture the dynamic interplay of motivation, SRL, and vocabulary learning across diverse contexts.

Keywords: Self-Regulated Learning (SRL), vocabulary mastery, motivation, metacognition, behavior, case study



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UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
SUNAN GUNUNG DJATI
BANDUNG