

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the foundational framework for the research on Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and vocabulary learning. It also includes the research background, questions, purposes, significance, scope, and conceptual framework.

A. Research Background

This study investigates the influence of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) on vocabulary acquisition among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at MAN 2, Kabupaten Bandung, Indonesia. The research aims to understand how SRL strategies used by these students contribute to effective vocabulary mastery and to provide practical recommendations for improving EFL instruction in vocabulary learning.

All linguistic systems are fundamentally composed of words. Historically, language originates through the development of words, and this process is mirrored in the way individuals acquire their first language as well as any additional languages they learn (Thornbury, 2002, p.1). Vocabulary mastery serves as a critical foundation for language proficiency, empowering learners to communicate with precision and comprehend a wide range of written and spoken materials. In an increasingly interconnected world, English proficiency has become vital, particularly in academic and professional domains. A well-developed vocabulary is essential for achieving communicative competence, as it enables learners to construct meaningful expressions and navigate diverse linguistic contexts. For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, acquiring a substantial vocabulary is a prerequisite for academic excellence and a pathway to expanded opportunities in a globalized environment.

Despite its significance, many students of MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung find it challenging to learn English vocabulary. Students often struggle to remember new words or use them effectively in communication or real-life contexts, which hinders their language development, even if they are enrolled in the language and culture program at MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung. This issue

is especially noticeable where students are expected to build strong English skills. Informal interviews at MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung show mixed levels of student engagement in vocabulary learning. While some students actively use various strategies to learn and apply new words, others depend on memorization or passive methods, leading to limited improvement. This gap indicates the need for a more structured study of effective vocabulary learning strategies.

In terms of an effective vocabulary learning strategy, it requires active engagement, such as understanding word meanings, connecting new terms to prior knowledge, and applying them in various contexts (Schmitt, 2008). However, many learners resort to passive strategies like rote memorization, which yield limited long-term retention and application. Observations in EFL classrooms indicate that students who employ active strategies, such as contextual guessing, mnemonic devices, and regular practice, tend to achieve better outcomes (Nadhif & Rohmatika, 2020; An et al., 2021). This variation in learning approaches highlights strategies' crucial role in vocabulary mastery and the need for learners to adopt more effective methods.

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) has emerged as a promising framework to address these challenges. SRL refers to learners' ability to proactively manage their learning processes through planning, monitoring, and evaluating their progress. It encompasses three key dimensions: motivation, metacognition, and behavior (Zimmerman & Schunk, 1989, p.4). Research has shown that students who employ SRL strategies, such as setting learning goals, monitoring their progress, and adapting their methods, are more likely to achieve better outcomes in language acquisition (An et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2020; Kainta & Rombot, 2020). In the context of vocabulary learning, SRL empowers students to take ownership of their vocabulary development, which enables them to track their progress and adjust their strategies for optimal results.

This study addresses three critical research gaps in the literature on self-regulated learning (SRL) and EFL vocabulary acquisition: First, while SRL's importance in general English language learning is well-documented (Nadhif & Rohmatika, 2020b; Yeni et al., 2021; Sharizan et al., 2022), its specific role in

vocabulary mastery among EFL learners remains understudied. Second, existing research has largely overlooked the technological devices used and the mechanism of how SRL is measured in the EFL classroom (Wang et al. 2021; An et al. 2020). Third, there is a lack of systematic investigation into the SRL strategies employed by students at institutions like MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung, despite English proficiency being crucial for their academic and professional futures.

This research centers on EFL learners at MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung to investigate how SRL influences vocabulary acquisition. The outcomes are expected to contribute to the broader discourse on SRL in language learning and offer useful insights for educators at MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung and other institutions. The ultimate goal is to empower students with strategies that boost their vocabulary skills and English language competence.

B. Research Questions

This research addresses several research questions:

1. What SRL strategies are used by the students in MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung to master vocabulary?
2. How do these Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) strategies aid students' vocabulary mastery based on their perceptions in MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung?

C. Research Purposes

This study aims to investigate the role of SRL strategies on English vocabulary mastery among EFL learners at MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung. The study aims to uncover the precise SRL strategies that students employ to improve their vocabulary capacities and investigate how these strategies contribute to their success in vocabulary learning.

D. Research Significances

The study expects to gain an output that relies on theoretical and practical significance by exploring the EFL students' SRL in mastering vocabulary. Furthermore, the embodiment of the research is hoped to

contribute meaningfully to these certain significances and provide actionable insights that can be directly applied to real-world situations.

1. Theoretical Significances

The SRL has emerged crucially in the present English educational study that stresses the autonomy of students to control their learning process independently. It encompasses a range of cognitive, motivational, metacognitive, and behavioral strategies employed that enable students to effectively plan their learning, execute ways of learning, and reflect the knowledge they had. Considering its significant influence on both academic achievement and lifelong learning, it is crucial to look into SRL in certain learning environments. It is theoretically significant to examine the self-regulated learning (SRL) mechanisms used by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students to grasp vocabulary.

Firstly, the prior studies add meaningfully to the growing body of SRL theory by providing useful insights into how self-regulated learning strategies manifest in the context of vocabulary development among EFL learners. This investigation has the potential to reveal different SRL techniques that these learners developed for efficient vocabulary acquisition.

Second, it improves the area of knowledge regarding vocabulary acquisition processes in English learning by investigating the cognitive, motivational, metacognitive, and behavioral systems involved and developing effective SRL strategies for mastering.

Last, this study connects SRL and vocabulary learning studies which offer a more comprehensive perspective of vocabulary acquisition by investigating how it works. In addition, it also emphasizes the value of learner independence in English learning,

allowing students to take control of their vocabulary growth with a personalized approach.

2. Practical Significances

This study serves as crucial for understanding the essential part of SRL strategies in developing vocabulary mastery in EFL learners, particularly in the setting of MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung. The students as EFL learners gain considerable benefit from learning SRL skills that enable them to take control of their learning, especially as academic demands for vocabulary capability increase.

This study would assist students in understanding how to employ self-regulated learning techniques to increase their vocabulary knowledge. By investigating the importance of various methods, such as goal planning, self-monitoring, and assessment, students may develop a better knowledge of how they learn. This understanding enables individuals to take control of their vocabulary development, resulting in more effective and long-lasting learning results. Finally, the research intends to give practical insights that students at MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung may use to improve their vocabulary and general language ability.

Furthermore, the notion of how the role of SRL strategies is taken into account will benefit teachers in developing approaches that improve student's vocabulary mastery skills. This circumstance is strengthened by determining how vocabulary transfer occurs through the utilization of information processing theory. Also, through this notion, it will engage the students' English learning autonomy which would lead to reciprocal effects and cyclical growth.

This study demonstrates that understanding the roles of SRL strategies enables schools to design programs that encourage self-directed language learning. Policy changes can then empower students to take greater control of their learning, particularly in

building vocabulary. Moreover, the research highlights the importance of incorporating self-regulation strategies into language learning, resulting in enhanced and more supportive learning environments for students at MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung.

E. Research Scope

This study explores the roles of SRL strategies in enhancing EFL learners' vocabulary mastery at MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung. It focuses on motivational enhancement, metacognitive development, and behavioral regulation as the key elements of SRL (Zimmerman & Schunk, 1989, p.4) and the cognitive area.

The study is limited to SRL in the context of vocabulary mastery learning in EFL senior high school students. Then, the data captured is exclusively gained from students at the particular school. This approach allows the researcher to grasp a more nuanced understanding of the research notion.

The study is limited in terms of specific learner participants. While the title specifies MAN 2 Kabupaten Bandung, the researcher could further focus on 12th-grade students in the language and culture science major or *Ilmu Budaya Bahasa (IBB)*. In addition, the population is also merely taken from those who have high-rate English proficiency and SRL strategies.

F. Conceptual Framework

This study examines the impact of SRL strategies on MAN 2 Bandung learners' vocabulary mastery, based on the participants' perceptions. It focuses on how SRL strategies influence students' vocabulary mastery, divided into three components: motivation, metacognition, and behavior. The study is grounded in Zimmerman's cyclical model of self-regulated learning (see *Figure 1*), which comprises three phases: forethought, performance, and reflection (Zimmerman, 2000; Schunk & Greene, 2018, p. 25). These phases provide a framework to understand how SRL strategies contribute to the student's vocabulary mastery.

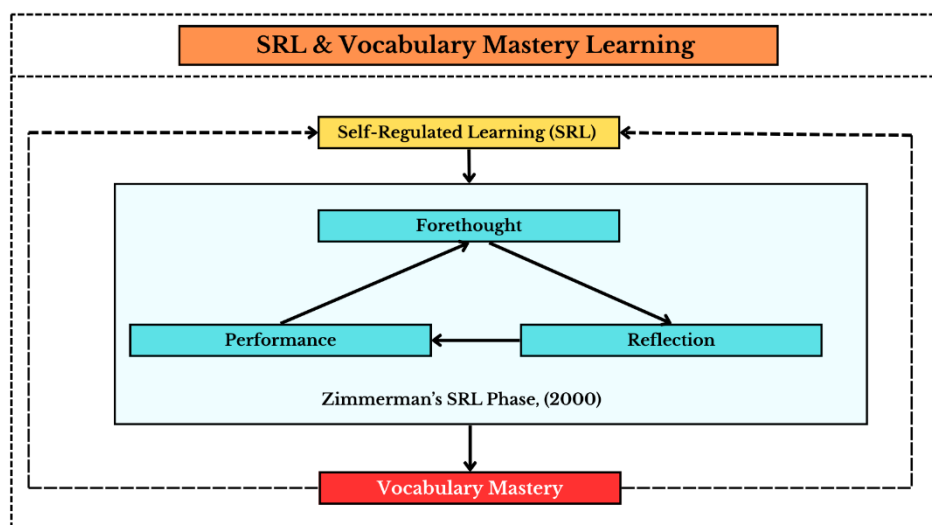


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework Diagram Representation

This framework depicts vocabulary mastering as an active, cyclical process guided by Zimmerman's Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) model and facilitated by Vocabulary Learning Strategies. The diagram's circular structure emphasizes the iterative nature of learning, in which students move through three interconnected stages: forethought (goal setting, strategy selection), performance (applying strategies such as mnemonics or social interaction), and reflection (evaluating outcomes and adjusting methods). Each step flows into the next, resulting in a dynamic feedback loop that prevents passive learning. This cycle ends in vocabulary mastery that highlights the need for ongoing self-monitoring and approach modification to learn effectively.

G. Previous Study

Many studies have been conducted concerning the role of SRL in students' learning efforts. These studies are grounded in numerous prior studies that synchronize with English vocabulary mastery through the utilization of SRL.

Sharizan et al.'s (2022) study, titled "Self-Efficacy And Self-Regulated Learning For English Content Courses In Online Learning," aims to determine how SRL strategies and self-efficacy influenced student outcomes in a digital

environment. By utilizing a descriptive quantitative research design, they found that the students who effectively employed SRL strategies achieved higher grades and demonstrated greater engagement in online learning. While Sharizan et al. focused on the impact of SRL and self-efficacy on overall online course performance, including various aspects of English learning, the current study specifically examines the process of SRL within the focused context of EFL vocabulary learning. The current study aims to understand how students utilize SRL strategies when learning vocabulary, rather than measuring the overall effect of SRL on their course grades.

In addition, Nadhif & Rohmatika's (2020b) research, titled "The Role of Self-Regulated Learning on Students' English Achievement," explored the measurement of SRL on the overall English achievement of first-grade senior high school students. Seeking the significant influences of SRL on English achievement, this study utilized a quantitative causal-comparative research design. Through their examination, they found that SRL significantly influences the pupil's English learning achievement, leading to greater engagement in the course. While Nadhif & Rohmatika (2020b) focused on the impact of SRL on overall English achievement, measured through general performance in English courses, the current study concentrates on the specific SRL strategies, especially motivation, metacognitive, and behavior, that students employed within the focused context of vocabulary learning.

Besides, An et al. (2020) highlighted the role of technology in facilitating SRL and pointed out that customized approaches could improve students' English learning results. Their study, entitled "Profiling Chinese EFL Students' Technology-Based Self-Regulated English Learning Strategies," measures the correlation between technology-based SRL strategies with the EFL students' English achievement through correlational quantitative analysis. Although the study seeks the correlation between EFL students' technology-based SRL strategies and English achievement, the main intent of this research is to validate and develop the multidimensional scale, Technology-Based Self-Regulated English Learning Strategies Scale (TSELSS) which specializes in the idea of this research. While An

et al. (2020) focused on measuring the correlation between technology-based SRL and general English achievement, and primarily on validating a measurement scale (TSELSS), the current study focuses on exploring the specific ways students utilize a broader range of SRL strategies (not just technology-based ones) within the focused context of vocabulary mastery learning. Although both studies acknowledge the importance of SRL, the current study delves deeper into the process of how students self-regulate their vocabulary learning, especially examining the specific motivational, metacognitive, and behavioral strategies they employ, which may or may not involve technology.

Furthermore, Yeni et al. (2021), which is entitled “Students’ Self-Regulated Learning in English Classroom,” explore the English students’ SRL and the factors that bolster it. Through the quantitative survey method implementation, they found that the students’ SRL is at enough level, not easy to achieve, and most of them show well-being in English achievement backed with several factors: supportive environment, the assistance of technology, high confidence, and the willingness to become an independent learner.

Additionally, Wang et al. (2021)’s research entitled “Facilitating English Grammar Learning by a Personalized Mobile-Assisted System with a Self-Regulated Learning Mechanism” utilized a quasi-experimental design to examine the effectiveness of a personalized mobile-assisted system, which featured an SRL mechanism in aiding students’ grammar learning. In their research, their findings demonstrated that the system positively impacted students’ grammar test scores regardless of gender, which suggests its value as an assistance to traditional English grammar classroom instruction. While Wang et al. (2021) focused on the effectiveness of a specific technology-based intervention on grammar learning outcomes, the current study focuses on exploring the SRL strategies themselves that students employ in the context of vocabulary acquisition, regardless of a specific technological intervention.

However, while these studies provide valuable insights into the study, they also highlight a crucial gap that this research aims to address. While previous studies have explored the direct impact of various factors on English learning

outcomes (e.g., technology on grammar, SRL on English achievement), this research focuses on how students acquire those outcomes by examining the SRL strategies used in EFL vocabulary learning. This research is not primarily focused on measuring students' vocabulary achievement, but rather on understanding the use of SRL strategies in vocabulary mastery in the context of EFL.

