

## **AN INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION ON SELF-REGULATED STRATEGIES AND SELF-EFFICACY AMONG ENGLISH LEARNERS IN UZBEKISTAN**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This paper explores the role of self-efficacy and self-regulated learning strategies among English language learners in Uzbekistan. The research compares two groups of undergraduate students—those majoring in English at the Uzbek State World Languages University (USWLU) and those studying English as a supplementary subject at the Tashkent University of Information Technologies (TUIT). Using both a structured questionnaire and interviews, the study analyzes how learners apply self-regulated strategies in developing skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Results show that while both groups actively use self-study methods, English majors demonstrate higher levels of self-efficacy and employ more advanced strategies. The findings suggest that integrating self-efficacy training into language education can significantly improve learner outcomes. The paper also highlights the influence of motivation, goal-setting, and technology in fostering language acquisition among Uzbek students.*

**Keywords:** *foreign language, reading, speaking, implementation techniques, listening, self-efficacy, exchange, native language, competence, language acquisition.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The impact of self-efficacy is one of the most important factors to adopt and to become fluent in new language. As we know, learning English language should include listening, reading, writing and speaking comprehensions besides grammar and vocabulary in the same time. And self-study has a great role in learning language. There are many researches which investigated this issue among Uzbek students. Those surveys and researches were discussed and analyzed, however there are still many problems which researchers should do surveys and discuss. I reviewed many researches about self-efficacy among Uzbek EFL teachers and college students. An information was attracted me. The interesting thing is that there is imbalance in self-efficacy and self-study between English language learners as a specific subject in University and English language learners as a supplementary subject.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Recent Researches**

More recent research has examined language learning strategies in more context-sensitive situations rather than in general categories. That is, for example, when students are learning academic writing, they are likely to use a different set of strategies than if they were learning everyday conversation. The terms cognitive and metacognitive strategies remain common in strategic research, but others related to the management of one's own emotional state or the social environment of students have been studied under the general term self-regulation. Some researchers believed that there are controversial ideas about self – efficacy in learning English however most of the researches wrote that self-efficacy is the main role in learning new language. I also think that there is a controversial issue in learning English by self-efficacy in Uzbekistan. Because there is no exact definition of this strategy in Uzbek language. Ernesto Macaro, researcher in this field, argued about this problem. He wrote in his research that there are some questions that are not answered and still need to be discussed. I adopted these questions too. Because Uzbek and English language is two very different languages and at the same time English language is very common among Uzbek learners. Even the sentence structure is not the same besides very different language root. So the question is how are they adopted the language very fast. And how does the self- efficacy have a role in this system. I am going to discuss benefits of using self-efficacy in common language according to my own interest and experience. Besides, I am going to write here the some of the questions which were given by Ernesto Macaro as those are interesting to all English teachers.

According to Ernesto Macaro, there is no consensus on the following questions:

1. Whether strategies are implemented inside or outside of brain;
2. Whether they are integral or additional language processing

I chose those two questions which are interesting for me as Uzbek learner and an English teacher. I will try to explain my review in main part as well.

### **Investigation**

I made a very interesting survey about self-efficacy and self-regulated Learning Strategies. Before giving the results, I am going to write about some issues which I mentioned above.

Question 1: How do Uzbek learners adopt English language fast, in spite of its very different grammatical structure and pronunciation from Uzbek language?

Even if it is so unusual and as this paper is not so academic, I am going to write my personal opinion first. Before this survey I thought that it depends on the Uzbekistan's geographical situation and language root. Because in Uzbek language there are more letters than English. Besides, Uzbekistan is situated in the Middle of Asia. For this reason, the country is mostly the host for many other countries and nations. So, I thought to pronounce new language is easy. May be this is also a reason. But as far as I learned deeply in this course, I found the main and important factor as learning strategies and self-study. After the survey, I found interesting fact as Uzbek learners are very eager beaver to use self-study in learning English.

Question 2 by Ernesto Macaro: Are strategies implemented inside or outside of brain?

As an English teacher, I am sure that this question and answer play the main role in learning English. According to my survey, I believed that the students have 2 types according to their level. And this question's answers can be different. If the strategies are implemented inside the brain, students can perform their knowledge completely. If the strategies are implemented outside of the brain, it takes time to perform their knowledge as well. Why? It is logically simple scheme. The first one is "brain => perform". The second one is "analyzation => adaptation => perform".

In some researches, there is some information according to this issue. For example: some researchers wrote that the teacher should be qualified with certificate of psychological knowledge besides their diploma as an English teacher or they should add one more psychologist to the classroom as an assistant teacher. I don't agree with these issues as most of researches. I believe that the learning new language by using self-efficacy strategies as common as other subjects in schools and universities. Even learning English as exploring new culture and the whole new world is more interesting with self-efficacy strategies.

Question 3 by Ernesto Macaro: Are self-efficacy strategies integral or additional language processing?

As far as I know the language learning system in Uzbekistan, self-efficacy is additional language process. Students learn according to the rules and use the exact books which are chosen for them by the educational system. They are asked the exact assignments which are not enough for being professional without additional self – study. As this is about undergraduate students, high school students and middle school students also have these kind of problem in their educations. But I believe that self-efficacy should be the main and important part of learning language.

### **Investigation and data information with discussion**

I took the result of my survey which is filled by 80 undergraduate students in two different universities. The Universities are Uzbek State World Languages University (USWLU) and Tashkent University of Information Technologies (TUIT).

USWLU students' major is English. Even if their faculties are different as pedagogy, philology, translator or journalism, their main study is English language.

Likewise, TIUT students also need to study English as important as their major subject. Because, student can understand and express his or her knowledge in English to learn more and become perfect expert in information technology's field.

I try to compare between two university students' using the strategies of self-efficacy in their study. There is no big difference between two Universities' students' knowledge in general English. But USWLU students have more opportunities and time to focus on English study in specific way. Our questionnaire's questions are close to general English, so there may not be clear difference between student's answers. That's why I decided to take interviews from two students from each University. I will add the interview as clear as possible. According to destination and time difference, I had the chance to make two interviews from 2 students only. The next reason for these interviews is my own interest on this topic. Besides, I had a great longing to make interview and to create my own questionnaire about this topic. It must be unperfect questionnaire, but I felt as a language explorer as well).

### **Interviews**

#### **Interview with Sevinch Abdisattarova (21 years old, USWLU student).**

Information about the student: She is studying in her 5<sup>th</sup> semester and she has overall 8 score in IELTS. She has been studying English for 7 years all as an independent learner. She studied French at school as 3<sup>rd</sup> language besides Russian as 2<sup>nd</sup> language.

1. Do you know about self-efficacy in learning new language?

- Self-efficacy is self-confidence in short term. In learning, this word has some psychological background and I think it is linked with self-study.

2. Do you have your own strategies in learning language?

- As far as I am independent learner that means I always study myself by watching videos or reading books without any teacher, I always follow to my own strategies.

3. Do you need some time to be prepared to do your homework?

- Actually, whenever I have time, I suddenly decide to do my homework and do it.

4. What do you do, if you don't understand a word or meaning of a sentence in text?

- When I started to learn English, I used dictionaries and grammar books. But I try to understand by context nowadays, if there is any terminology which is very difficult and new for me, I use monolingual dictionary.

5. What do you do to memorize new phrase or word in reading?

- I mark it and find the correct pronunciation of the word. I try to make any funny or weird sentence not to forget it. Then I can remember it easily.

6. What do you do to practice English?

- I have no chance to speak to native English people. So, I always try to record my voice and listen it to know if it looks like natives' or not. Another way is speaking with my friends and teachers in English. In reading, writing and listening practice, I do self-study. I can check my mistakes by answers or rules in writing.

7. How much percent do you understand if you listen informal and formal listening task?

- I can understand 100% of the meaning in conversation and formal listening.

But there are some expressions which I don't understand the exact meaning in. But I rely on the context.

8. Can you discuss any topic in English?

- I think, I can. But sometimes it depends on topic's terminology. I can explain my opinion about any topic generally and can understand.

9. What is your weakness in writing?

- There many sources for learning writing in the internet. So I think learning writing is easy. It has exact rules and frame. Writing is easy for me.

10. Do you have listening, reading, writing and speaking exams during your study in the University program?

- As a future philologist, we are learning subjects in English and focusing on the subjects on exploring language roots and backgrounds. As you know, at least IELTS 5.5 score is required for being the student in our university. So, we don't use time for learning English. If we need to learn English more, we need to do self-study by ourselves.

### **Interview with Javokhir Sultonov (22 years old, TUIT student).**

Information about the student: He is studying in her 5<sup>th</sup> semester and he has overall 5.5 score in IELTS. He has been studying English for 4 years all as an independent learner. He studied Deutsch at school as 3<sup>rd</sup> language besides Russian as 2<sup>nd</sup> language.

1. Do you know about self-efficacy in learning new language?

- I know the meaning of the word. To be honest with you, I know nothing about terminology.

2. Do you have your own strategies in learning language?

- Of course. I think everybody has their own strategies in learning language.

3. Do you need some time to be prepared to do your homework?

- I don't need any time for being ready to do homework. I should do them and I do

4. What do you do, if you don't understand a word or meaning of a sentence in text?

- If I don't understand the word, I try to find the meaning by context. If I still cannot understand, I use online dictionary.

5. What do you do to memorize new phrase or word in reading?

- I repeat them 5-10 times, and I write them down on my notebook. I use them on my social account profiles with emotionally touchable pictures.

6. What do you do to practice English?

- I always speak with my friends however it lasts after 10-15 minutes.

7. How much percent do you understand if you listen informal and formal listening task?

- I can understand 50 % of formal and more than 50% of informal speaking.

8. Can you discuss any topic in English?

- I can discuss topics. But it is limited. Sometimes it is difficult to express my opinions in speaking, even if I have some ideas I think in Uzbek language in my mind. So, it takes time to translate and find the same Uzbek word in English.

9. What is your weakness in writing?

- I can write messages and letters and everything in English. Sometimes if formal writing is required, I do some mistakes.

10. Do you have listening, reading, writing and speaking exams during your study in the University program?

- We have English courses which teach us LRWS. But most of the students try to learn English independently. Because how fast we become fluent in English, we will have success in our study and work. We cannot find all information in Uzbek or even in Russian language. English is important in our future job.

### **Own comment to two interviews.**

We can see two different situations in two interviews, however students are almost the same age and in the same degree. In the first interview the student is more fluent as she is studying in English education field. And her learning strategies are also stronger than the second student. In the second interview, we can see the student has some difficulties in English as his major is different from English language education. Moreover, students have self-confidence in learning language. I cannot

make any decision according to two interviews with random students. There will be more tasks and rules if I try to explore this issue by interview.

### **Survey results**

Let's see the result of questionnaire which is academic for my term paper. I gathered all positive answers and wrote them as "agree" and did the same with negative answers as "disagree". I didn't mention neutral answers, because I focused on if the opinion was negative or positive to the question. And I divided the answers into two parts and tried to compare two different university students' results.

#### **Self – regulated learning strategies.**

**Participants: 40 students from USWLU and 40 students from TUIT**

Table 1.

	Category 1	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT students
	1: Self- evaluation	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
1	I check my English homework before turning it in.	18%	82%	12%	88%
2	I proofread my English homework before turning it in.	40%	60%	46%	54%
3	I adjust my reading speed according to the difficulty of the article.	60%	40%	86%	14%
4	When I finish my English composition, I have a rest and then read it again to check whether it should be revised.	70%	30%	78%	22%

Both groups of students mostly disagree to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> questions which asked about checking and proofreading before starting their homework. In contrast, most students in two groups agree with checking their assignments after finishing and they slow down their speed according to difficulty of the article.

Table 2.

	Category 2	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT students
	2:Organization and transformation	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
5	I write an outline before writing English compositions.	60%	40%	50%	50%
6	I use Uzbek phrases which are similar to English words in pronunciation to memorize the pronunciation of these words.	60%	40%	90%	10%
7	I make a chart to summarize the grammatical points learned.	50%	50%	74%	26%
8	I compare the similarities and differences between English and Uzbek.	20%	80%	60%	30%
9	I translate what I have read in English into Uzbek to help me understand it.	70%	30%	90%	10%
10	I underline key points during my English reading.	90%	10%	80%	20%

The most important thing about table 2 is questions 6,8,9. There is a wide disparity in question 6 between groups. 90% of nonmajor English students use similar Uzbek phrases to memorize English words while only 60% of English major students use this strategy. In the same time 20% of English major students compare two languages and there is the same issue with 60% of students in nonmajor field. Most of the two group's students translate into Uzbek language when it is nessesary.

Table 3

	Category 3	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT students
	3: Rehearsal and memorization	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
11	I recite English texts in the process of studying English.	70%	10%	80%	10%
12	I review the cards of new words in order to memorize them.	10%	60%	30%	50%
13	I read texts I have learned again and again in order to recite them.	60%	20%	70%	10%
14	I write new words many times in order to memorize the spellings.	10%	80%	25%	60%
15	I read new words repeatedly in order to memorize them.	65%	20%	70%	10%

In this category, students mostly agree with reciting the texts and repeating the reading for memorizing. We can guess that the strategy of repeating new words or text is still popular among Uzbek language learners.

Table 4.

	Category 4	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT students
	4: Seeking social assistance	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
16	I consult teachers when I encounter difficulties in the process of studying English.	10%	90%	30%	70%
17	If I cannot follow someone's English, I let him/her speak slowly.	70%	20%	80%	10%
18	I ask classmates when I have questions in my English study.	80%	10%	80%	10%

The interesting fact that the students prefer to ask the questions from each other to teacher. Firstly, it may be because of many sources on the internet about learning English and they can find any answers from internet. Secondly, if they have any

difficulties to adopt strategies, they prefer to ask their friends as their friends are also learners at the same time.

Table 5.

	Category 5	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT students
	5: Persistence when faced with challenges	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
19	I keep reading when I encounter difficulties in English reading.	80%	10%	80%	10%
20	I read an English article several times if I don't understand it the first time.	80%	10%	80%	10%
21	I search related documents when I have difficulties in studying English.	80%	10%	80%	10%
22	I listen to tape-recorded English several times if I cannot understand it the first time.	80%	10%	80%	10%

They showed the same result in this category. Their strategy is keeping continuing to do the same thing if they cannot take the expected result.

Table 6.

	Category 6	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT students
	6: Seeking opportunities to practice English	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
23	I listen to American or British broadcasts to improve my pronunciation.	100%		100%	
24	I use sentence patterns just learned to make new sentences for practice.	100%		100%	
25	I send emails to friends in English on my initiative.	100%		100%	
26	I try my best to find opportunities to practice my oral English.	100%		100%	
27	I watch English TV programs on my initiative.	100%		100%	
28	I use words just learned to make new sentences on my initiative.	100%		100%	

Of course, I tried to write more generally, all of the students showed the “strongly agree” results.

Table 7

	Category 7	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT students
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	7: Record keeping and monitoring	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
29	I write down the mistakes I often make in the process of studying English.	100%		100%	
30	I take notes in English classes.	100%		100%	

**Table 8**

	Category 8	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT students
	8: Self – consequence	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
31	I reward myself when I make progress in studying English.	100%		100%	
32	I have a break when I am tired during my English study.	100%		100%	

**Table 9**

	Category 9	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT students
	9: Goal setting and planning	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
33	I set a goal to study English.	100%		100%	
34	I make a study plan in the process of studying English.	100%		100%	
35	When a friend wants to play with me but I have not finished my homework yet, I do not play until I finish my homework.	100%		100%	
36	I find a quiet place when the environment is disturbing.	100%		100%	

**Table 10**

	Category 10	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT students
	10: Review of records	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
37	I review English texts I have learned.	100%		100%	
38	I review my notes of English class before examinations.	100%		100%	

**Table 11**

	Category 11	USWLU students	USWLU students	TUIT students	TUIT
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	11: Interpretation guessing	agree	disagree	agree	dis agree
39	I guess the meaning of new words by considering their contexts.	100%		100%	
40	I guess what people mean by reading their expressions and movements when watching an English movie.	100%		100%	
41	I use the title of an English article to help understand that article.	100%		100%	
42	When somebody speaks English, I guess what he/she will say according to what he/she has said.	100%		100%	
43	When I talk with somebody in English, I pay attention to his/her expressions to check if he/she can follow me.	100%		100%	
44	I use my background knowledge to comprehend English articles.	100%		100%	

Two groups of students showed 100% “agree” results in the same time in all tables of 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 categories. They adopt all those strategies as useful method in learning and they are using them as well.

### **Self – efficacy**

The most interesting thing is in self-efficacy questionnaire is the results. All of the students in both groups gave positive responses to all questions. They answered all Listening questions with “agree”. They can understand English stories and radio news and songs as well. Answers in speaking and writing parts show us that they can explain their opinions in different types of conversations. If we compare their answers with their strategies which are chosen below, there is an exact answer for this matter. They are fluent in a good way as they are using very useful strategies for learning.

I noticed a fact that USWLU students spend more than 20 hours for learning language and that is the most important factor that their self-efficacy results are very high. Besides USWLU university requires at least 5.5 scored IELTS certificate in its application for studying there. During the study, students can work on their level and their English fluency increase in a rapid rate. On the other hand, TUIT students should pass the test which includes reading and grammar in their entrance exam. They spend more than 5 hours or less for their English learning once after they take IELTS certificate.

## **CONCLUSION**

As a conclusion, I can say that the level of self-efficacy is very important to students productivity in learning second language. That is interesting to feel proud of themselves and to set the goals and reached to their aims for students. As a learner, I still motivational videos and stories to be energized, I recommend to Uzbek students too. Because they don't have much more chances to be in native English countries, however it is easy to adopt another language by the help of modern technologies as internet and online chatting apps. When I reviewed some researches about the impact in Uzbekistan high schools, I faced to many cases which were solved by the help of teachers. In contrast, undergraduate students prefer to do self-study instead. And they have already started to be motivated and to give motivation to other learners as their family and friends. I am going to mention that the level of self- efficacy gives self-confidence to the students which is very helpful to set future goals and to leave their comfort zones. As a teacher, we should pay more attention to the students how they develop their self-efficacy level and this should be the main part in educational system.

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