Tarbiat Modares University

Does EFL Students' Self-Efficacy in English Language Skills Matter their Self-Regulated Language Learning Strategy Use?

Thao Quoc Tran*[1] iD , Tham My Duong[2] iD , & Sam Hoai T. Le[3]

Abstract

Learners' self-efficacy (SE) is one of the vital driving forces for academic learning in general and English language learning in specific. Furthermore, learners' SE can influence their self-regulated language learning (SRLL) strategy use both positively and negatively. This study, which adapted the post-positivist perspective for the research design, aims at finding out EFL students' SE in English language skills, SRLL strategy use, and their relationship between the two mentioned variables. A cohort of 240 EFL students from a Vietnam-based high school partook in responding to the closed-ended questionnaire. The software SPSS was employed to process the gleaned data from questionnaires in terms of descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation. The findings were that high school EFL students' SE in English language skills positively influenced their SRLL strategy use. They had a high level of SE in English language skills, resulting in the high frequency of SRLL strategy use. Pedagogical implications in relation to students' SE in English language skills and SRLL strategy use are suggested in an attempt to leverage the quality of English language teaching and learning in the research context and other similar EFL ones.

Keywords: EFL, language skill, post-positivism, self-efficacy, self-regulation

_____

[1] Corresponding Author: Ph.D. HUTECH University, 475A Dien Bien Phu, Ward 25, Binh Thanh Dist. Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam;
Email: Tranquocthaobmtc@yahoo.com & tq.thao@hutech.edu.vn;
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000000180638853
[2]Ph.D. Ho Chi Minh City University of Economics and Finance, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam;
Email: thamdm@uef.edu.vn; ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1152-485X,
[3]MA Nguyen Khuyen high school, Ba Ria – Vung Tau, Vietnam;
Email: haisamthd1982@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Scholars and researchers (e.g., Bandura, 1997, 2004; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Pajares et al., 2007; Maghsoudi et al., 2022; Salili & Lai, 2003; Tran & Hoang, 2020) have confirmed that self-efficacy (SE) affects different aspects from psychology, emotion, and behavior. Bandura (2004) postulates that SE is projected to affect students' efforts, patience, and accomplishment if they have positive outcome expectancies and value the activity. Likewise, Pajares et al. (2007) assert that SE predicts students' learning achievement at different levels. Nevertheless, learners with low SE tend to avoid getting engaged in activities about which they are not confident (e.g., Bandura, 1997; Jackson, 2002). Moreover, SE is believed to have great effects on the system of self-regulated strategies (e.g., Boekaerts & Cascallar, 2006; Zimmerman, 2000). As regards the field of ESL/EFL, researchers (e.g., Diseth, 2011; Magogwe & Oliver, 2007; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990; Yusuf, 2011) believe that a certain correlation between SE and self-regulated language learning (SRLL) strategy can be observed.

Self-regulation (SR) has been identified as one of the crucial aspects for comprehending second/foreign language learners' individual differences (Dornyei & Ryan, 2015). The ability of learners to self-regulate is important for language acquisition/learning success (e.g., Ching, 2002; Dornyei & Ryan, 2015; Nguyen & Tran, 2021). Researchers have been pushing for greater research linking learners' SE and SR in language acquisition/learning because learners' SR is frequently connected with their SE (Yusuf, 2011). Several research has looked at how SR and SE interact in the reality of learning EFL.

Within the context of Vietnam, research on SE in English language learning and SRLL strategy use has attracted many researchers' attention. For example, studies conducted by Phan and Locke (2015), Truong and Wang (2019), and Tran and Nguyen (2020) investigated different aspects of teachers' and students' SE in English language teaching and learning and its relation to SRLL strategies for discrete English language skills. It is noticed that there is a scarcity of research on the relationship between high school EFL students' SE in English language skills and SRLL strategy use in Vietnam. To address this lacuna, this study aims at scrutinizing EFL students' SE in English language skills, SRLL strategy use, and their relationship between the two mentioned variables at a context of a Vietnam-based high school. This study aims to address the following research questions:

1. What is high school EFL students' level of SE in English language skills?
2. To what extent do high school EFL students employ SRLL strategies?
3. What is the relationship between high school EFL students' SE in English language skills and their SRLL strategy use?

Since this study attempts to address a relatively new area of English language research in Vietnam, it is hoped that it would provide useful insight into the relationship between EFL students' SE in English language skills and SRLL strategy use. Additionally, the findings of this study may contribute to the body of literature on SE and SRLL strategy so that researchers could gain a better understanding of EFL students' SE and SRLL strategy in the context of Vietnam. What is more, teachers and students in similar EFL contexts may benefit from the findings of this study in enhancing students' awareness of SE and SRLL strategy so that the quality of English language teaching and learning can be leveraged at a higher level.

2. Literature Review

SE is a key notion in Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, which underscores the importance of observational learning, social experience, and reciprocal determinism in the development of a personality. Bong (2004) refers SE to one's perceived efficacy, belief, or expectation. Likewise, Bandura and Hall (2022) define SE as one's beliefs in his/her abilities to perform an activity. SE is believed to determine what one does with his/her knowledge and skills (Bandura, 1997; Derakhshan, 2022; Pajares, 2003) and can mobilize motivation, intellectual resources, and behavioral efforts (Schein & Schein, 2018). In the field of education, Schunk and DiBenedetto (2014) view SE as a critical component of SR that is influenced by classroom characteristics, while Pintrich and Schunk (1996) assert that SE judgments are formed by students for specific classroom duties, and the beliefs fluctuate depending on the assignments or classroom elements.

The term SR can be used interchangeably with other terms as a result of the diverse academic notions surrounding self-regulated learning. SR is a process in which a learner uses his or her initiative to determine his or her own requirements, set goals, investigate applicable learning formats, and evaluate the process of learning. SR helps learners initiate a task, define goals, and attempt to achieve those goals physically and socially (Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997). The term SRLL

has become a vital aspect of English language teaching. Pintrich (2000) delineates SRLL as a process in which learners attempt to achieve their learning goals by setting a plan, monitoring, regulating, and controlling their cognition, motivation, and behavior. In the same vein, Zumbrunn et al. (2011) view SRLL as a process in which learners attempt to achieve their learning goals by managing their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions. SRLL strategies have been described to help improve learners' English language skills (e.g., Lavelle & Bushrow, 2007; Lavelle & Guarino, 2003; Tran & Duong, 2013; Tran & Nguyen, 2020). Different categories of SRLL have been classified by researchers (e.g., Lee, 2002; Wang & Pape, 2005). Within the scope of this study, SRLL strategies are classified into ten groups:

(1) Self-evaluation (activities for assessing autonomous learning);

(2) Organization and transformation (activities for organizing and transforming what students have learned);

(3) Rehearsal and memorization (activities for doing rehearsal and memorizing what students have learned);

(4) Seeking social assistance (activities for seeking social assistance from teacher and friends);

(5) Persistence when faced with challenges (activities for coping with difficulties in English language learning);

(6) Seeking opportunities to practice English (activities for seeking opportunities to practice English language skills);

(7) Keeping and monitoring records (activities for keeping and monitoring what students have learned);

(8) Review of records (activities for reviewing what students have learned);

(9) Self-consequences (activities for rewarding students themselves); and

(10) Goal setting and planning (activities for setting a goal and making plans for language learning).

SE and SR are intertwined conceptions, with SE considered a subcomponent of SR. Learners with great SRLL are often highly efficacious (Luszczynska et al., 2005). SE and SR are crucial processes that determine learners' learning and accomplishment (Bandura, 1997). SE has a great influence on the system of self-regulated strategies (Zimmerman, 2000). Schunk (1990) points out that learners

with low SE expectations would avoid or give up what they are asked to do if they face challenges. Whereas, learners with a high level of SE employ more SRLL strategies (Bai et al., 2014). Therefore, the influence can take place positively or negatively (Liem et al., 2008).

The research on SE and SR has been a great concern for many researchers. Internationally, Wang and Pape (2005) did a study to explore ESL fifth-graders' SE beliefs and use of SRLL. Structured interviews were conducted with four students and their parents. The findings showed that there was a relationship between SE, SRLL strategies, and their English language proficiency.

Tosuncuoglu (2019) looked at the relationship between motivation and SRLL in university-level EFL students. The study's major goal was to look at college students in Turkey regarding motivational factors including goal setting, SE, intrinsic motivation, exam pressure, and SRLL. The research involved 233 college students in answering the questionnaires. The findings revealed that the correlation analysis revealed a moderate amount of relationship between SE and the use of cognitive strategies. Lee et al. (2020) investigated the links between EFL students' SE and SRLL practices in a college setting. One hundred seventeen college students enrolled in an English language course at a Midwestern institution took part in this study. The use of self-regulated learning practices by college students was significantly predicted by their SE, according to the results of a simple linear regression analysis. Furthermore, the findings of a one-way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference in the use of self-regulated learning strategies among ELL college students with high and low SE.

In the context of Vietnam, Tran and Nguyen (2020) investigated English major students' use of SRLL strategies at a university in Bac Lieu. A cohort of 100 freshmen took part in answering the questionnaires. They found that students sometimes employed SRLL strategies, and they employed SRLL strategies for keeping and monitoring records and seeking social assistance more often than for other purposes. Duong and Nguyen (2021) carried out a study to explore English major students' perceptions of learner autonomy and their SRLL strategy use at a Ho Chi Minh City-based university. One hundred and thirty students were answering the questionnaires, and ten out of 130 were invited for interviews.

The findings revealed that the role of learner autonomy was recognized by students, and they used different types of SRLL for their learning purposes. In brief,

it is noticed that there has been a rising concern on the SE and SRLL strategy use, but the research focus is mainly the discrete SE, SRLL strategy use, and a combination of SE, SRLL strategy use, and other constructs such as learner autonomy, and motivation. It is also observed that different types of learners from high school to tertiary level have been involved in those studies. Nevertheless, there is a scarcity of research on the relationship between SE and SRLL strategy use by high school students in the context of Vietnam. To that void, this study aims to unpack high school students' SE in English language learning and their SRLL strategy use, then examine the relationship between two research variables.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Setting and Participants

This quantitative study adopted a post-positivist perspective employing the quantitative method to explore the participants' SE in English language skills and their SRLL strategy use (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It was conducted in the context of a high school in Vietnam, in which students learned English as a compulsory subject. Students had three English lessons weekly, each lasting 45 minutes. Besides, students had extra-curricular English activities periodically, for example, English-speaking activities.

A total of 240 eleventh-grade students were recruited based on convenience sampling to take part in this study. Of the total, 89 (37.08%) students were males, and 151 (62.92%) students were females. The average age of these students ranged from 16 to 17. The number of students who spent less than one hour self-learning was 115 (47.92%) students. Meanwhile, 98 (40.83%) students spent from one to three hours self-learning, and 23 (9.58%) students allocated to their self-study from four to five hours to learning English on their own. Especially 4 (1.67%) students allotted over five hours to self-studying English.

3.2. Research Instrument

A closed-ended questionnaire adapted from Wang and Pape's (2005) study was employed for data collection. The questionnaire consists of two sections: Section I asks for respondents' background information; Section II (the main content of the questionnaire) seeks answers for students' SE in English language skills and their

SRLL strategy use. The questionnaire content has two parts: Part A includes 19 items using a five-point Likert scale (from Totally unable to do to Totally able to do) which were divided into four groups: SE in English listening skill (6 items), speaking skill (4 items), reading skill (4 items), and writing skill (4 items), while Part B consists of 44 items using a five-point Likert scale (from never to always) which were divided into 11 groups: Self-evaluation (4 items), Organization and transformation (15 items), Rehearsal and memorization (6 items), Seeking social assistance (2 items), Persistence when faced with challenges (4 items), Seeking opportunities to practice English (5 items), Keeping and monitoring records (2 items), Review of records (2 items), Self-consequences (2 items), and Goal setting and planning (2 items). To assure that respondents did not have language barriers in responding to the questionnaire, the questionnaire was translated into the respondents' mother tongue. The Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire was .87 for SE in English language skills (19 items) and .94 for SRLL strategy use (44 items), which indicates that the questionnaire was reliable.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Prior to the official data collection, the pilot study was conducted to try out the questionnaire with ten students who shared similar characteristics with those answering the official questionnaire. After the revision and modification of the questionnaire, copies of the questionnaire were administered to students in person. Instructions and explanations were given to students before they responded to the questionnaire. Students allocated approximately 25-30 minutes to respond to all the items in the questionnaire. The number of valid copies of the questionnaire for data analysis was 240.

Regarding data analysis, the software SPSS (version 24) was utilized to process the data gleaned from the questionnaire in terms of descriptive statistics (Mean = M; Standard deviation = SD) and Pearson correlation. The interval mean score was understood as 1.00-1.80 (Totally unable to do / Never), 1.81-2.60 (Unable to do / Seldom), 2.61-3.40 (Possibly able to do / sometimes), 3.41-4.20(Able to do / Often), and 4.21-5.00 (Totally able to do well / Always) (Kan, 2009). The intra-rating was applied to ensure the validity and reliability of the data analysis. The convergent results for intra-rating were set at 90%.

4. Results

4.1. EFL Students' SE in English Language Skills

The results in Table 1 reveal that the total mean score of EFL students' SE in English language skills was 3.74 out of 5 ($SD = .75$). Specifically, EFL students' SE in English listening skill ($M = 3.70$, $SD = .73$), speaking skill ($M = 3.79$, $SD = .72$), reading skill ($M = 3.69$, $SD = .74$) and writing skill ($M = 3.76$, $SD = .64$) was at a high level. This can be interpreted that EFL students believed that they had adequate English language skills to learn English.

Table 1
SE in English Language Skills

No.	SE in English Language Skills	N = 240	
		M	SD
1	Listening skill	3.70	.73
2	Speaking skill	3.79	.72
3	Reading skill	3.69	.74
4	Writing skill	3.76	.64
	Average	3.74	.75

As seen in Table 2, EFL students were able to understand "what [their] teachers [talked] in English" (item A6: $M = 4.00$, $SD = .72$), "English songs" (item A5: $M = 3.78$, $SD = .75$), "some TV programs in English" (item A1: $M = 3.67$, $SD = .73$), and "the main ideas of listening texts" (item A3: $M = 3.66$, $SD = .71$). Additionally, they could understand "films in English without Vietnamese subtitles" (item A4: $M = 3.54$, $SD = .75$) and "YouTube clips in English" (item A2: $M = 3.52$, $SD = .77$). Regarding SE for speaking, EFL students were able to "talk in English about daily topics with others" (item A7: $M = 3.89$, $SD = .67$), "give a presentation in English" (item A11: $M = 3.83$, $SD = .68$), and "give directions in English" (item A8: $M = 3.79$, $SD = .70$). What is more, they could "discuss issues in English with classmates" (item A10: $M = 3.77$, $SD = .77$) and "tell a story in English" (item A9: $M = 3.65$, $SD = .81$). Regarding SE for speaking, EFL students could read "the reading passages in the textbooks" (item A12: $M = 3.79$, $SD = .75$), "short novels in English" (item A14: $M = 3.72$, $SD = .69$), "extra learning materials in English" (item A15: $M = 3.69$, $SD = .69$) and "short articles in English" (item A13: $M = 3.54$, $SD = .79$). As for SE in English writing skill in Table 4, EFL students believed that

they could write diaries (item A18: M = 3.88, SD = .71), short messages (item A16: M = 3.86, SD = .67), short essays (item A17: M = 3.53, SD = .71) and simple descriptions (item A19: M = 3.80, SD = .70) in English.

Table 2
SE in English Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing Skills

No.	SE in English Listening Skill	N = 240	
		M	SD
A1	I can understand some TV programs in English.	3.67	.73
A2	I can understand YouTube clips in English.	3.52	.77
A3	I can understand the main ideas of listening texts.	3.66	.71
A4	I can understand films in English without Vietnamese subtitles.	3.54	.75
A5	I can understand English songs.	3.78	.75
A6	I can understand what my teachers talk in English.	4.00	.72
	SE in English Speaking Skill		
A7	I can talk in English about daily topics with others.	3.89	.67
A8	I can give directions in English.	3.79	.70
A9	I can tell a short story in English.	3.65	.81
A10	I can discuss issues in English with classmates.	3.77	.77
A11	I can give a presentation in English.	3.83	.68
	SE in English Reading Skill		
A12	I can read the reading passages in the textbooks.	3.79	.75
A13	I can read short articles in English.	3.54	.79
A14	I can read short novels in English.	3.72	.69
A15	I can read extra learning materials in English.	3.69	.69
	SE in English Writing Skill		
A16	I can write short messages in English.	3.84	.67
A17	I can write short essays in English.	3.53	.71
A18	I can write diaries in English.	3.88	.71
A19	I can write simple descriptions in English.	3.80	.70

4.2. EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use

The total mean score (see Table 3) of EFL students' SRLL use was 3.84 out of 5 (SD=.75). This means that EFL students often deployed SRLL in English language learning. Of 11 SRLL categories, EFL students employed SRLL strategies for Persistence when faced with challenges most often (Group 5: M = 3.94, SD = .75), followed by SRLL strategies for Reviewing records (Group 8: M = 3.89, SD = .75), Self-consequences (Group 9: M = 3.87, SD = .78), Goal setting and planning (Group 10: M = 3.87, SD = .78), Self-evaluation (Group 1: M = 3.86, SD = .72), Seeking

social assistance (Group 4: *M* = 3.86, *SD* = .76), and Self-consequences (Group 9: *M* = 3.86, *SD* = .77). They also often utilized SRLL strategies for Seeking opportunities to practice English (Group 6: *M* = 3.82, *SD* = .74), Rehearsal and memorization (Group 3: *M* = 3.80, *SD* = .76), Organization and transformation (Group 2: *M* = 3.78, SD = .76), and Record keeping and monitoring (Group 7: *M* = 3.77, *SD* = .80).

Table 3
EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use

No.	EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use	N = 240	
		M	SD
1	Self-evaluation	3.86	.72
2	Organization and transformation	3.78	.76
3	Rehearsal and memorization	3.80	.76
4	Seeking social assistance	3.86	.76
5	Persistence when faced with challenges	3.94	.75
6	Seeking opportunities to practice English	3.82	.74
7	Keeping and monitoring records	3.77	.80
8	Review of records	3.89	.75
9	Self-consequences	3.86	.77
10	Goal setting and planning	3.87	.78
	Average	3.84	.75

Table 4 shows that EFL students often "[reviewed their] English homework before submitting it" (item B1: *M* = 4.04, *SD* = .72), "[changed their] reading speed according to the reading texts' difficulty" (item B3: *M* = 3.82, *SD* = .69), and "[checked their] work when [they finished] it" (item B2: *M* = 3.75, *SD* = .71). Moreover, they "[checked their] work again and again to see if [they] should revise it" (item B4: *M* = 3.86, *SD* = .76).

Table 4
EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Self-evaluation

No.	EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Self-evaluation	N = 240	
		M	SD
B1	I review my English homework before submitting it.	4.04	.72
B2	I check my work when I finish it.	3.75	.71
B3	I change my reading speed according to the reading texts' difficulty.	3.82	.69
B4	I check my work again and again to see if I should revise it.	3.86	.76

In terms of SRLL strategies for Organization and transformation (Table 5), EFL students reported that they often "[analysed] new words to remember them" (item B9: *M* = 3.86, *SD* = .73), "[memorized] new words by recalling where [they] have

learned them" (item B14: *M* = 3.86, *SD* = .75), "[recited] similar words altogether" (item B12: *M* = 3.75, *SD* = .72), and "[figured] out how to pronounce the new words to remember them" (item B10: *M* = 3.72, *SD* = .78). In order to learn grammar, they often "[summarized] the grammatical structures in a chart/table" (item B11: *M* = 3.63, *SD* = .78) and "[compared] the similarities/differences in terms of grammar between English and Vietnamese" (item B13: *M* = 3.52, *SD* = .97). As for English language skills, they often "[outlined" what [they] should write" (item B5: *M* = 3.72, *SD* = .75) and "[thought] about what to write in Vietnamese before [they wrote] it in English" (item B19: *M* = 3.88, *SD* = .75). They often "[outlined] the main ideas of each paragraph of a reading text when reading it" (item B7: *M* = 3.80, *SD* = .73), "[wrote] the theme of a reading text when reading it" (item B8: *M* = 3.78, *SD* = .68), "[outlined] the main content of a reading text after reading it" (item B6: *M* = 3.68, *SD* = .73), and "[tried] to translate what [they were] reading into Vietnamese to understand it" (item B17: *M* = 3.86, *SD* = .74), and "[highlighted] the main of a reading text while reading it" (item B18: *M* = 3.95, *SD* = .74). Additionally, they often "[figured] out how to speak something in English in [their] mind before [they spoke] it out loud" (item B15: *M* = 3.94, *SD* = .74), and "when [they listened] to English, [they tried] to translate it into Vietnamese to understand it" when listening to English (B16: *M* = 3.87, *SD* = .74).

Table 5
EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Organization and Transformation

No.	EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Organization and Transformation	N = 240	
		M	D
B5	I outline what I should write.	3.72	.75
B6	I outline the main content of a reading text after reading it.	3.68	.73
B7	I outline the main ideas of each paragraph of a reading text when reading it.	3.80	.73
B8	I write the theme of a reading text when reading it.	3.78	.68
B9	I analyse new words to remember them.	3.86	.73
B10	I figure out how to pronounce the new words to remember them.	3.72	.78
B11	I summarize the grammatical structures in a chart/table.	3.63	.78
B12	I recite similar words altogether.	3.75	.72
B13	I compare the similarities/differences in terms of grammar between English and Vietnamese.	3.52	.97
B14	I memorize new words by recalling where I have learned them.	3.86	.75
B15	I figure out what to speak in English in my mind before I speak it out loud.	3.94	.74
B16	When listening to English, I try to translate it into Vietnamese to understand it.	3.87	.74
B17	I try to translate what I am reading into Vietnamese to understand it.	3.86	.74
B18	I highlight the main of a reading text while reading it.	3.95	.75
B19	I think about what to write in Vietnamese before I write it in English.	3.88	.75

The results in Table 6 reveal that to rehearse and memorize what they have learned, EFL students often "[made] sentences using [new words]" (item B21: *M* = 3.80, *SD* = .78), "[learned] new words by heart by writing them many times" (item B23: *M* = 3.85, *SD* = .80) and "by reading them aloud many times" (item B24: *M* = 3.91, *SD* = .73), and "[learned] grammar by heart by making sentences" (item B25: *M* = 3.86, *SD* = .73). Plus, they often "[rehearsed] what [they would] speak in English many times" (item B20: *M* = 3.64, *SD* = .75) and "[reviewed] what [they] have learned several times to memorize them" (item B22: *M* = 3.78, *SD* = .75). So as to seek social assistance, EFL students often "[sough] for [their] classmates" (item 22, *M* = 4.00, *SD* = .78) and "[their] teachers' advice" (item B26, *M* = 3.72, *SD* = .73) whenever they had problems with their English learning.

Table 6
EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Rehearsal and Memorization and Seeking Social Assistance

No.	EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Rehearsal and Memorization	N = 240	
		M	D
B20	I rehearse what I will speak in English many times.	3.64	.75
B21	To remember new words, I make sentences using them.	3.80	.78
B22	I review what I have learned several times to memorize them.	3.78	.75
B23	I learn new words by heart by writing them many times.	3.85	.80
B24	I learn new words by heart by reading them aloud many times.	3.91	.73
B25	I learn grammar by heart by making sentences.	3.86	.73
	EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Seeking Social Assistance		
B26	I seek my teachers' advice whenever I have problems with my English learning.	3.72	.73
B27	I seek my classmates' advice whenever I have problems with my English learning.	4.00	.78

As shown in Table 7, when EFL students encountered difficulties in their English learning, they often employed different SRLL strategies. Specifically, they often "[searched] for relevant documents when [they faced] difficulties in [their] English learning" (item B30: *M* = 4.04, *SD* = .71), "[read] a reading text again and again when [they did not] understand it for the first time" (item B29: *M* = 4.00, *SD* = .78), "still [read] what [they were] reading despite of difficulties in understanding it" (item B28: *M* = 3.77, *SD* = .74), and "[listened] to English recordings again and again when [they did not] understand them for the first time" (item B31: *M* = 3.95,

SD = .76). As regards strategies for Seeking opportunities to practice English, EFL students often deployed SRLL strategies for seeking opportunities to practice English by setting time "to improve [their] pronunciation by listening to native English-speaking broadcasts" (item B32: *M* = 4.00, *SD* = .77), "finding opportunities to practice [their] oral English (item B34: *M* = 3.92, *SD* = .71), "watching English TV programs to improve [their] listening skill" (item B35: *M* = 3.89, *SD* = .71), "listening to English radio programs to improve [their] listening skill" (item B35: *M* = 3.80, *SD* = .73) and "[looking] for chance to communicate in English with foreigners" (item B33: *M* = 3.80, *SD* = .70).

Table 7
EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Persistence When Faced with Challenges and Seeking Opportunities to Practice English

No.	EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Persistence When Faced with Challenges	N = 240	
		M	SD
B28	I still read what I am reading despite difficulties in understanding it.	3.77	.74
B29	I read a reading text again and again when I don't understand it for the first time.	4.00	.78
B30	I search for relevant documents when I face difficulties in my English learning.	4.04	.71
B31	I listen to English recordings again and again when I don't understand them for the first time.	3.95	.76
	EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Seeking Opportunities to Practice English		
B32	I try to set time to improve my pronunciation by listening to native English-speaking broadcasts.	4.00	.77
B33	I try to look for a chance to communicate in English with foreigners.	3.80	.70
B34	I try to set time for finding opportunities to practice my oral English.	3.92	.71
B35	I try to set time for watching English TV programs to improve my listening skill.	3.89	.72
B36	I try to set time for listening to English radio programs to improve my listening skill.	3.80	.73

The results in Table 8 indicate that EFL students often utilized SRLL strategies for keeping and monitoring records by taking notes of "mistakes during [their] English learning" (item 37: *M* = 3.62, *SD* = .80) and "what [they] have learned" (item B38: *M* = 3.92, *SD* = .80). They also often employed SRLL strategies for reviewing records by reviewing what they have learned before the new lessons (item B39: *M* = 3.78, *SD* = .75) and before examinations (item B40: *M* = 4.01, *SD* = .74). Regarding the SRLL strategy use for self-consequences, they often "[rewarded themselves] if [they made] a progress during [their] English learning process" (item

B41: $M = 3.75$, $SD = .77$) and "[had] a short break if [they were] tired during [their] English learning" (item B42: $M = 3.98$, $SD = .78$). As for SRLL strategies for Goal setting and planning, EFL students often "[set] a goal to learn English" (item B44: $M = 3.95$, $SD = .76$) and "[made] a study plan in the process of learning English" (item B43: $M = 3.78$, $SD = .76$).

Table 8
EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Keeping and Monitoring Records; Reviewing Records; Self-consequences

No	EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Keeping and Monitoring Records	N = 240	
		M	SD
B37	I take notes of mistakes during my English learning.	3.62	.80
B38	I take notes of what I have learned.	3.92	.80
	EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Reviewing Records		
B39	I review what I have learned before the new lessons.	3.78	.75
B40	I review what I have learned before examinations.	4.01	.74
	EFL Students' SRLL Strategy Use for Self-consequences		
B41	I reward myself if I make a progress during my English learning process.	3.75	.77
B42	I take a short break if I am I am tired during my English learning process.	3.98	.78
	EFL students' SRLL strategy use for Goal setting and planning		
B43	I have a plan for my English learning.	3.78	.76
B44	I set a goal to learn English.	3.95	.76

4.3. Correlation between EFL Students' SE in English Language Skills and their SRLL Strategy Use

The results in Table 9 unravels that there is a positive correlation between EFL students' SE in English language skills and their SRLL strategy use ($r = .394$, $p = .000$). To put it simply, the higher level EFL students' SE in English language skills was, the more often they deployed their SRLL strategies.

Table 9
The Correlation between EFL Students' SE in English Language Skills and their SRLL Strategy Use

		SRLL Strategy Use
SE in English Language Skills	Person Correlation	.349(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N.240	

**p<.01

5. Discussion

This research yielded some significant results. Research participants had a high level of SE in English language skills as they were confident in their ability to listen, speak, read, and write in English. One possible explanation is that the participants had a lot of opportunities to practice their abilities both in and outside of class. Furthermore, most of the participants in this study (91.42%) spent at least one hour every day practicing their English language skills. The students in this study may have frequent writing practice which can contribute to a high level of SE in English language skills and may have a favorable impact on their self-practice of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Additionally, participants' high level of SE beliefs in four English language skills may indicate that they could have good English training and experience. As a result, they were confident in their English learning proficiency. This is backed up by the theory of Bandura (1997) and Pajares et al. (2007), which indicates that people with a high level of SE believe they can do well, and that self-confidence is a useful predictor of academic achievement.

Another finding revealed that participants often utilized SRLL strategies to improve their language skills. This finding could be explained that the participants had a high level of SE in English language skills, which could motivate them to enhance their English language skills by deploying SRLL strategies. This is supported by Bandura (1997) and Pajares (2003) who have asserted that students' SE can influence their motivation and behaviors. Another plausible reason may be that students in this study could be aware of the importance of the English language as the English language was a compulsory subject, which could contribute to their cognition. Learning is impacted by contexts, according to Salili and Lai (2003), one

of which is social learning caused by each student's culture, social rules, and parents' expectations. This finding is not aligned with that of Tran and Hoang's (2020) research which found learners used SRLL strategies moderately. The participants in this study employed used SRLL strategies more that those in Tran and Hoang's (2020) study. This is because participants in Tran and Hoang's (2020) study may not have much knowledge of how to use SRLL strategies and get engaged in using SRLL.

In terms of eleven categories of SRLL strategies, it appears that participants wanted to improve their English language skills by checking their homework before turning it in, asking classmates for clarification, reading an English article several times, searching related documents, setting time for listening to American or British broadcasts, and reviewing lessons before examinations at a high frequency. It may imply that students wanted to use practical and meaningful SRLL strategies for improving their English language. As discussed above, this finding was not in alignment with that of the study conducted by Tran and Hoang (2020). Participants in this study employed strategies more often than those in Tran and Hoang's (2020) study. A further explanation can be that those in this study had a high level of SE in English language skills and may be motivated to deploy SRLL to improve their English language skills.

Within this study, participants' SE in English language skills was positively correlated with their SRLL strategy use. It could be understood that SE could be a positive driving-force in empowering students' ability to use SRLL strategies. The more students believed in their English language skills, the more they tended to employ their SRLL strategies. This finding is backed up by the theory of Pintrich (1999) which asserts that SE can improve SR behaviors, and that of Bai et al. (2014) which underscores that the higher the level of students' SE is, the more often they use SRLL strategies. This finding is corroborated with that of Wang and Pape's (2005) study which underscored the relationship between SE in English language skills and SRLL strategy use. Moreover, this finding is supported by that of Lee et al. (2020) which has revealed that students' SE could predict the extent to which students used the SRLL strategy. As such, it can further claim that the extent to which EFL students' level of SE in English language skills could affect the frequency of their SRLL strategy use positively.

6. Conclusion

This study has confirmed that high school EFL students' SE in English language skills plays a vital role in shaping their deployment of SRLL strategies. Those who have a high level of SE in English language skills tend to employ SRLL strategies to improve their English language skills more often. Such a conclusion can contribute to a further understanding of the relationship between students' SE in English language skills and their SRLL strategy use in a high school EFL context, which features some discrete characteristics.

Some pedagogical implications are recommended. Firstly, students' awareness of the importance of SE should be leveraged. That means students should be given learning opportunities to accomplish their learning tasks in accordance with their learning competency so that they can aware of and confident in their English language proficiency. Students' SE belief in their ability can be seen as one of the most important factors for successful and effective English language learning. SE can be sourced from performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states (Bandura, 1997), so the sources of students' SE should be identified, intervened, and nurtured for SE development. Secondly, SE and SRLL can have a significant impact on students' academic achievement (Bandura, 1997; Thompson et al., 2022).

It is advisable that teachers should instruct students clearly on how to use SRLL strategies (e.g., Persistence when faced with challenges, Seeking social assistance, Goal setting and planning, Self-evaluation, etc.) to improve their English language skills. Teachers should also provide students with different extra-learning materials and activities appropriate for students' interests, language levels, and culture so that students will be able to apply their SRLL strategies to doing extra-learning materials and activities. It is vital that teachers should monitor and check whether students can apply their SRLL strategies efficiently. In some cases, teachers can re-enforce or adjust the ways students deploy their SRLL strategies more effectively by giving them clear instructions on how SRLL strategies can be employed in specific cases, e.g., how to set goals and make plans for improving language skills, how to monitor and check language learning activities. Teachers can also provide students with rubrics or checklists for SRLL strategy use to help them regulate, monitor, and evaluate their own language learning.

There are still some limitations to this research. The study employed a

quantitative method, and the participants were from a single high school in Vietnam. Although this study is significant to report current levels of SE and SRLL strategy use, the small sample size can be problematic. Therefore, further studies should recruit students from a variety of areas and employ a random sample approach to ensure a better fit between research participants and the target audience, as well as a combination of different methods for more trustworthy and accurate results.

References

Bai, R., Hu, G., & Gu, P. Y. (2014). The relationship between use of writing strategies and English proficiency in Singapore primary schools. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, *23*(3), 355–365. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-013-0110-0

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W. H. Freeman.

Bandura, A. (2004). Health promotion by social cognitive means. *Health Education & Behavior*, *31*(2), 143–164. https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198104263660/

Bandura, A., & Hall, P. (2022). Albert Bandura and social learning theory. In S. Macblain, *Learning theories for early years practice* (2nd ed.) (pp. 78–81). Sage Publications.

Boekaerts, M., & Cascallar, E. (2006). How far have we moved toward the integration of theory and practice in self-regulation? *Educational Psychology Review*, *18*(3), 199–210. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10648-006-9013-4

Bong, M. (2004). Academic motivation in self-efficacy, task value, achievement goal orientations, and attribution beliefs. *Journal of Educational Research Washington, 97*(6), 287–298. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-006-9013-4

Ching, L. C. (2002). Strategy and self-regulation instruction as contributors to improving students' cognitive model in an ESL program. *English for Specific Purposes*, *21*(3), 261–289. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(01)00008-4

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*. SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Derakhshan, A. (2022). Revisiting research on positive psychology in second and foreign language education: Trends and directions. *Language Related Research, 13*(5), 1–43. https://doi.org/10.52547/LRR.13.5.1

Diseth, Å. (2011). Self-efficacy, goal orientations and learning strategies as mediators between preceding and subsequent academic achievement. *Learning and Individual Differences*, *21*(2), 191–195. https://doi.org/10.1016/ j.lindif.2011.01.003

Dornyei, Z., & Ryan, S. (2015). *The psychology of the language learner revisited*. Routledge.

Duong, T. M., & Nguyen, H. D. T. C. (2021). *The role of learner autonomy and the use of self-regulated learning strategies: University students' voice*. Proceedings of the 9th OpenTESOL International Conference 2021 (pp. 255–276).

Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Motivational beliefs, values, and goals. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *53*(1), 109–132. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.53.100901.135153

Jackson, J. W. (2002). Enhancing self-efficacy and learning performance. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, *70*(3), 243–254. https://doi.org/10.1080/ 00220970209599508

Kan, A. (2009). Statistical procedures on measurement results. In the H. Atilgan (Ed.), *Assessment and Evaluation in Education* (pp. 397–456). Ani Publications.

Lavelle, E., & Guarino, A. J. (2003). A multidimensional approach to understanding college writing processes. *Educational Psychology*, *23*(3), 295–305. https://doi.org/10.1080/0144341032000060138

Lavelle, E., & Bushrow, K. (2007). Writing approaches of graduate students. *Educational Psychology*, *27*(6), 807–822. https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410701366001

Lee, D., Allen, M., Cheng, L., Watson, S., & Watson, W. (2020). Exploring Relationships Between Self- Efficacy and Self-Regulated Learning Strategies of English Language Learners in a College Setting. *Journal of International Students, 11*(3), 567–585. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v11i3.2145

Lee, I. S. (2002). Gender differences in self-regulated on-line learning strategies within Korea's university context. *Educational Technology Research and*

*Developmen*t, 50, 101–111. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02504967

Liem, A. D., Lau, S., & Nie, Y. (2008). The role of self-efficacy, task value, and achievement goals in predicting learning strategies, task disengagement, peer relationship, and achievement outcome. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *33*(4), 486–512. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2007.08.001

Luszczynska, A., Gutierrez-Dona, B., & Schwarzer, R. (2005). General self-efficacy in various domains of human functioning: Evidence from five countries. *International Journal of Psychology*, *40*, 80–89. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00207590444000041

Magogwe, J. M., & Oliver, R. (2007). The relationship between language learning strategies, proficiency, age and self-efficacy beliefs: A study of language learners in Botswana. *System*, *35*(3), 338–352. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/</u>j.system.2007. 01.003

Maghsoudi, M., Khomijani-Farahani, A., & Jalali, M. (2022). The relationship between self-regulation skills and additional language learning among Iranian monolinguals and bilinguals. *Language Related Research, 13*(1), 425– 458. https://doi.org/10.52547/LRR.13.1.14

Ngo, V. L. (2019). Self-regulated learning and its relation to Vietnamese EFL learners' L2 listening achievement. *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies, 35*(4), 60–75. https://doi.org/10.25073/2525- 2445/vnufs.4395.

Nguyen, T. M., & Tran, T. Q. (2021). Self-regulation strategies for improving speaking skills among English-majored students. *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Science, Technology and Society Studies (STS) 2021 at HUTECH University* (pp. 740–749).

Pajares, F. (2003). Self-efficacy beliefs, motivation and achievement in writing: A review of the literature. *Reading & Writing Quarterly, 19*, 139–158. https://doi.org/10.1080/10573560308222

Pajares, F., Johnson, M. J., & Usher, E. L. (2007). Sources of writing self-efficacy beliefs of elementary, middle, and high school students. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *24*(1), 104–120.

Phan, N. T. T., & Locke T. (2015). Sources of self-efficacy of Vietnamese EFL teachers: A qualitative study. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 52*, 73–82.

Pintrich, P. R. (1999). The role of motivation in promoting and sustaining self-regulated learning. *International Journal of Educational Research, 31*(6), 459–470. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0883-0355(99)00015-4

Pintrich, P. R., (2000). The role of goal orientation in self-regulated learning. In M. Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (Eds.). *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 451–502). Academic Press.

Pintrich, P. R., & Schunk, D. H. (1996). *Motivation in education: Theory, research, and applications*. Merrill.

Salili, F., & Lai, M. K. (2003). Learning and motivation of Chinese students in Hong Kong: A longitudinal study of contextual influences on students' achievement orientation and performance. *Psychology in the Schools*, *40*(1), 51–70. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.10069

Schein, E. H., & Schein, P. A. (2018). *Humble leadership: The power of relationships, openness, and trust*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Schunk, D. H. (1990). Goal setting and self-efficacy during self-regulated learning. *Educational Psychologist, 25*(1), 71–86. https://doi.org/10.1207/ s15326985ep2501_6

Schunk, D. H., & DiBenedetto, M. K. (2014). Academic self-efficacy. In M. J. Furlong, R. Gilman, & E. S. Huebner (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology in schools* (pp. 115–130). Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Thompson, G., Aizawa, I., Curle, S., & Rose, H. (2022). Exploring the role of self-efficacy beliefs and learner success in English medium instruction. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 25*(1), 196–209. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2019.1651819

Tosuncuoglu, I. (2019). The interconnection of motivation and self regulated learning among University level EFL students. *English Language Teaching, 12*(4), 105–114. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v12n4p105

Tran, T. Q., & Duong, T. M. (2013). The attitudes towards English language learning and use of self-regulated learning strategies among college non-English majors. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, *3*(7), 1–8.

Tran, T. Q., & Hoang, N. C. L. (2020). The use of self-regulated language learning strategies among Vietnamese English-majored freshmen: A case study. *VNU*

79

Journal of Science: Education Research, 36(1), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.25073/ 2588-1159/vnuer.4331

Tran, T. Q., & Nguyen, H. N. K. (2020). Insights into tertiary English-majored students' writing self-efficacy. *TNU Journal of Science and Technology, 225*(10), 47–54. https://doi.org/10.34238/tnu-jst.2020.10.3273

Tran, T. Q., & Tran, T. N. P. (2021). Vietnamese EFL high school students' use of self-regulated language learning strategies for project-based learning. *International Journal of Instruction, 14*(1), 459–474. https://doi.org/10.29333/ iji.2021.14127a

Truong T. N. N., & Wang, C. (2019). Understanding Vietnamese college students' self-efficacy beliefs in learning English as a foreign language. *System, 84*, 123–132. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.06.007

Wang, C., & Pape, S. J. (2005). Self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulated learning strategies in learning English as a second language: Four case studies. *The CATESOL Journal*, *17*(1), 76–90.

Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). Self-efficacy: An essential motive to learn. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *25*(1), 82–91. https://doi.org/ 10.1006/ceps.1999.1016

Zimmerman, B. J., & Martinez-Pons, M. (1990). Student differences in self-regulated learning: Relating grade, sex, and giftedness to self-efficacy and strategy use. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 82*(1), 51–59. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.82.1.51

Zimmerman, B. J., & Risemberg, R. (1997). Becoming a self-regulated writer: A social cognitive perspective. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *22*(1), 73–101. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1997.0919

Zumbrunn, S., Tadlock, J., & Roberts, E. D. (2011). Encouraging Self-Regulated Learning in the Classroom: A Review of the Literature. *Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium (MERC)*. Virginia Commonwealth University.

Yusuf, M. (2011). The impact of self-efficacy, achievement motivation, and self-regulated learning strategieson students' academic achievement. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *15*, 2623–2626. https://doi.org/10.1016/ j.sbspro.2011.04.158

About the Authors

Thao Quoc Tran currently a lecturer of English language at the Faculty of English language, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology (HUTECH University), Vietnam. His research areas are discourse analysis, English language skills, teacher professional development, and instructional design model.

Tham My Duong is currently a lecturer of English language at the Faculty of English at Ho Chi Minh City University of Economics and Finance (UEF), Vietnam. She has worked with EFL students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels in Vietnam and abroad. Her academic areas of interest predominantly lie in content and language integrated learning (CLIL), English language teaching (ELT), discourse analysis, language skills, language learning strategies, learner autonomy, project-based learning (PBL), and task-based language teaching (TBLT).

Sam Hai T. Le is currently a teacher of English at Nguyen Khuyen High school in Vung Tau City, Vietnam. She is interested in doing research on English language skills and teaching methodology.