



INCORPORATING THE “DIZI GUI” INTO EFL CLASSROOMS FOR YOUNG LEARNERS: A STUDY ON SELF-REGULATION IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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Abstract:

It is important to foster EFL young learners' self-regulation in learning. This descriptive study investigates the effects of incorporating the Dizi Gui (Standards for being a good pupil and child) on EFL young learners' self-regulation and discovers young learners' attitudes towards the incorporation. A 51-item questionnaire was administered to 100 young learners at a center for foreign languages in a central city of Mekong Delta, and 6 of them participated in the semi-structured interviews. The quantitative data from the questionnaire were analyzed in terms of mean, while qualitative data from interviews were analyzed by the thematic analysis approach. Given the questionnaire mean score obtained of $M=3.52$, the results show that young learners self-regulate at an under-average level of frequency in their learning process. Interviewees expressed their agreements, preferences, and dislikes towards the incorporating of the Dizi Gui, as well as suggested more involving classroom activities. On the obtained findings, pedagogical implications are addressed, and suggestions for further research are presented.

Keywords: self-regulation, learning strategies, the Dizi Gui, young learners, second language acquisition

1. Introduction

1.1. Contextual background

1.1.1. The roles of ethical standards in ancient education

The great achievements of education in the Ly - Tran dynasties remain intact in the current comprehensive renovation of Vietnamese education, particularly in the aspect of Buddhist ethics associated with contemporary social ethics standards. In the spirit of integrating Zen - Purity - Secret practices, combining Confucianism - Buddhism - Tao and the development orientation of full compassion - wisdom - courage; encouraging the promotion of internal strength and the spirit of self-study; focusing on training and

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utilizing talents; promoting individual roles to the community in a sense of responsibility for the common life..., education in the Ly - Tran dynasties has resulted in extremely good achievements in all aspects, solving the country's problems, positively affecting to this day, in order to bring the Vietnamese nation and people to prosperity, strength, progress and sustainability (Dang, 2021).

1.1.2 The needs of teaching ethical standards in modern education

"Education is an art, and art is also an education. A year's plan starts with spring; a day's plan starts with early morning, the knowledge and character of adolescence are engraved into the development of adulthood, and good education can penetrate a lifetime." (Qiu & Qiu, 2019). That is the reason why Vietnamese people from ancient times to this modern society consider ethical behaviors as the educational background and regard them as human standards. The agreement on these standards is a precious heritage passed down from generation to generation in the nation's culture, from the time of the Hung Kings to today's modern society. Students are trained to become good citizens in the national education system, in addition to gaining knowledge. Obviously, even the word "Nhân" is respected and preceded by the word "Danh" and means successfully both personal and reputational development.

Hiếu and Trung co-create the rules of human behaviors in family and social relationships. Hiếu is a Confucian ethical category (Tri Buu, 2013). Schools, in addition to training successful learners, must also train students to become human beings. To accomplish this, the school must prioritize the education of filial piety for both students and pupils (Hải, 2018). Son (2006)'s research works on Family Etiquette highlighted the basic elements of family ethics such as: family etiquette and etiquette in the ancient view of filial piety of the Vietnamese nation, which emphasized the fundamental ethical standards in family relationships, demonstrated the critical role of filial piety in the development of individuals in the long-term development of the nation. Consequently, loyalty and filial piety are not only understood within the context of family education but are also essential characteristics of a disciplined citizen in society.

When it comes to practical education, in the light of Chỉ thị số 11/CT-TTg, ngày 29/3/2017 của Thủ tướng Chính phủ về việc đẩy mạnh giáo dục đạo đức, lối sống trong gia đình (Directive No. 11/CT-TTg, dated March 29, 2017 of the Prime Minister on promoting moral education and lifestyle in the family), the Ministry of Education and Training is responsible for behavior change education on family building and in educational institutions under the national education system (item 3). Accordingly, it is essential to integrate ethical standards of education into training curricula in schools and educational institutions, in addition to investing in students' academic knowledge. One of the major issues that arises, however, is how to incorporate the moral education program in Vietnamese textbooks into the curricula of foreign language sectors.

1.1.3 The ethical standards in training learning strategies

Uncle Ho was well-known in the educational aspect for his successful encouragement of discipline and personal development as ethical standards among teenagers. Specifically, in the "Five things Uncle Ho taught children", uniting well, and keeping discipline well are promoted and reminded among students at all levels of public-school systems. In addition to keeping discipline, *the ability to self-regulate* is one of the guidelines in human training. Those who consider self-regulation as one of their learning strategies are expected to have better achievements.

These days, self-regulation is important for the study of moral reasoning because all people self-regulate the selection of ends and means within a framework of moral ideals and norms (Bandura, 1991; Carver and Scheier, 1998; Treviño et al., 2006). Simultaneously, a person's self-regulatory attributes influence which moral issues they attend to and care about.

When it comes to the teaching and learning aspect, the Chinese saying, which goes "*Give a man a fish and feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and feed him for a lifetime*", can be referenced to how the classroom should operate. Within language classroom settings, the teacher provides learners with learning strategies that they can use to acquire a language at any time. In addition, Norman (1980, p.97) also claimed that "*it's strange that we expect students to learn yet seldom teach them how to learn*" and suggested that students should be taught how to learn. However, national public-school systems, private sectors, and centers for foreign languages in Vietnam have not paid much attention to the training of learning strategies in general and self-regulation for students of all levels. Therefore, a curriculum which infuses the materials to teach learning strategies in second language acquisition to both promote students' language ability and self-control in dealing with problems happening during their learning process is extremely exigent.

At the institute level, the center for foreign languages, where I have been teaching, was legally established to contribute to training and improving foreign language capacity for intellectual human resources, serving international integration for the Mekong Delta. For that mission, students at my center are expected to perform more beyond English proficiency. Thus, what would make them outstanding should be their ability to adapt, control and self-regulate their learning activities and behaviors on their journey of conquering higher English levels and overcoming the challenges in their life.

1.2. Theoretical background

As widely applied in Western and Eastern education, the standard of Confucian ethics that the Dizi Gui teachings advocated is not only conducive to building a socialist harmonious society, but also identical to the moral demands of the core socialist values. Therefore, there has been some research carried out for the application and adaptation of the Dizi Gui in business (e.g., Wang, 2009; Shi, 2010; Winckler, 2014; Zhang & Teng, 2015) and in education for primary schools, colleges and universities in China, Indonesia, and Malaysia (e.g., Hong, 2013; Jeong 2006; Zhang, 2019; Liu, 2019; Wijaya, 2020; Yao & Wong,

2021). However, there has been no research done to test the effectiveness of the Dizi Gui teachings in the educational context of all levels in Vietnam.

Recognized as an essential component of 21st century skills, self-regulation has been extensively researched in the field of education psychology for many decades. Askin Tekkol and Demirle (2018) stated that “*learning how to learn is among the fundamental skills of lifelong learning*”. However, it is an area of study in which the theoretical principles that underpin the research have not been sufficiently applied to the fields of second language acquisition (SLA), applied linguistics, or foreign language education (Teng & Zhang, 2022). Self-regulation research, however, has mostly focused on the relationship between self-regulation and other determinants, as well as the impact of self-regulation on academic achievement. Conversely, the results were mixed and inconsistent. Self-regulation had a beneficial effect on academic achievement in some studies (e.g., Camahalan, 2006; Cekolin, 2001; Douglas, 2006; Erdogan, 2011; Staudt, 1995), but not in others (e.g., Heo, 1998; Lewis, 2006). Until recently, Erdogan (2018) published a descriptive study that found medium positive correlations between self-regulation and language learning strategies, as well as evidence for changes in both student self-regulation and language learning strategies as a function of achievement and grade level. However, one of the study's limitations was that the students did not receive any explicit language strategy use instruction or self-regulation training. Cohen & Weaver (1998) and Dreyer & Nel (2003) also found that such training has a beneficial and significant impact not just on the frequency with which individuals who apply to learn strategies, but also on other learning outcomes. Their study was aligned with what Zimmerman (1990) had proposed that instruction in self-regulated learning, whether direct or indirect, could improve achievement.

Inspired by those perspectives, I conducted this study to figure out whether explicit training on self-regulation should be intervened. Thus, I hypothesize that the infusing of the Dizi Gui as an intervention will affect young learners' self-regulation in second language acquisition in the context of EFL classroom settings.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Young learners

The definition of the age group considered to be young learners varies to a great extent. Erikson (1950) and Ellis (2014), in compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, clarified the term “young learners” as people under 18 years old. The European Union member states agreed that pre-school children from 3 to 6 are called ‘very young learners’, and primary school pupils from 7 to 12 are called ‘young learners’. Young learners, especially at the primary level, have little experience in learning a new language. Moreover, certain differences are recognized in the cognitive, metacognitive, and self-regulatory development of children across the broad age group of primary school pupils (Gósy, 1999). In certain contexts, learners up to the age of 14 can be included in the ‘young learners’ group (Nikolov & Mihaljevič Djigunovič, 2011). Cambridge

Language Assessment defines young learners as primary and lower-secondary schoolers, aged from 5 or 6 to 14 years old.

Regardless of differing perspectives, most scholars agree that the term "young learners" should be thoroughly considered in terms of the education system, culture, environment, sex, maturity, physiological development, and parental expectations (Ellis, 2014; Erikson, 1950; Nunan, 2010; Phillips, 1993; Pinter, 2006, 2017). In the current study, children aged 5 to 14 are classified as young learners and currently attend primary and secondary schools.

2.2. The Dizi Gui

2.2.1. The Dizi Gui and its outline

The original title of "Dizi Gui" (Đệ Tử Quy) is called "Training Mongolian" (Huấn Mông Văn), a work of the scholar known by name of Li Yuxiu (Lý Dục Tú) during the Qing Dynasty, reigned by the Emperor Kangxi (1661-1722). The Chinese word *ti* 弟 (usually pronounced *di*) in 弟子規 (Dizi Gui) means respect for both older brothers and elder persons (see [2]). In Vietnamese, "Đệ" means "brothers" or "pupils", "Tử" means "children", and "Quy" means "standards" or "regulations". Therefore, Đệ Tử Quy is also known as "Standards for being a good pupil and child".

The core outline of this publication (Dizi Gui, 2003; Winckler, 2014) is as follows:

Table 2.1: The core outline of the Dizi Gui

Chapter	Sino-Vietnamese	Interpretations
1	入则孝 (Nhập tắc hiếu)	On being filial at home
2	出则悌 (Xuất tắc đễ)	On practicing true brotherhood
3	谨 (Cẩn nhi tín)	On being careful and honest
4	泛爱众 (Phiếm ái chúng)	On cherishing all living being
5	親 (Nhi thân nhơn)	On drawing near to goodhearted people
6	余力学文 (Hành hữu dư lực, tắc dĩ học văn)	On studying whenever we can

2.2.2. The Dizi Gui teachings

The Dizi Gui is based on the teachings of Confucius, which outlined the etiquette and norms that young people should follow when dealing with people, matters, and objects in daily life, at home and away. The source for its main outline is from "Analects of Confucius", Book 1, Chapter 6, where Confucius said:

"A young man should be a good son at home and an obedient young man abroad, sparing of speech but trustworthy in what he says, and should love the multitude at large but cultivate the friendship of his fellow men. If he has any energy to spare from such action, let him devote it to making himself cultivated."

The Dizi Gui benefits everyone, not just Chinese people, regardless of ethnicity or religious faith. That is because the moral precepts and standards presented in the Dizi Gui are universally applicable and, were not founded on any religious doctrine, and thus,

are compatible with any religion and are acceptable in any academic institute. The Dizi Gui is a Mongolian textbook used by children who have just started school, but *"it embodies a richer thought of moral education, which is worthy of the careful taste of contemporary college students and in-depth study of the rich ideas contained therein"* (Zhang, 2019).

As in its outline, teachings in the Dizi Gui not only revolve around filial piety and family treatment standards, but it also aims at encouraging polite and courteous attitudes in relationships with brothers and sisters, friends, and colleagues in society. Here are some excerpts from the Dizi Gui teachings:

*"When talking to others, be patient,
Then you won't be troubled by anger."*

*"If you're angry when told of your faults,
And happy when praise comes your way,
Harmful friends will draw near you,
And wholesome friends will stay away."*

*"Whatever it is that you say,
You should speak so that you can be trusted.
Talk only about what you're sure of;
Avoid cunning or flowery words."*

Furthermore, the Dizi Gui inspires everyone to learn to believe in good things and improve the flawed ones:

*"When you see good points of others,
You should strive to imitate them.
Though you don't match up to them now,
Persevere and one day you'll catch up."*

*"If you can reform your offenses,
Your faults will all disappear.
But trying to cover them over
Makes your offenses more severe."*

2.3. Learning strategies in second language acquisition

In the late 1970s, learning strategies became popular in the field of language education. Many authors have attempted to define and categorize them since then. Rubin (1975) defined learning strategies as *"the techniques and devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge"* (p. 43). Learning strategies were later defined by Oxford (1990) as *"specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations"* (p. 8).

In the early 1980s, there was no theory to guide the studies or investigations into the nature of learning strategies in second language acquisition. Gradually, some descriptive studies about the effects of learning strategies used by effective second language learners on reading comprehension and problem-solving were conducted (O'malley et al., 1990). In the late 1980s, papers appeared in which learning strategies were integrated within the cognitive theory (e.g., Garner, 1987; Rabinowitz and Chi, 1987; Mayer, 1988).

The idea that certain learning techniques or strategies can help with second language acquisition is relatively new, having only been published in the scientific literature for a little over 20 years. The implication that Rubin (1975) and Stern (1976) both proposed that a "good language learner" might be doing something exceptional or unusual that we might all learn from. This view contrasted significantly with the assumption that some people simply had an "ear" for language or that certain people were born with the ability to acquire languages. Consequently, an idea was initiated that learning strategies were not just for the gifted, but they could be learnt by anyone who had not discovered them on their own yet.

2.4. Replacing learning strategies with self-regulation

Self-regulation can be seen as the collaboration of several interconnected and integrated microprocesses, each of which can be further subdivided into a myriad of things. Learning strategy use can be seen as one dynamic component of self-regulated learning when seen from this multidimensional perspective.

Other perspectives on self-regulation have been presented in recent second-language research (e.g., Bown, 2009; Goh, 2010; Lai & Gu, 2011; Lewis & Vialleton, 2011; Rose, 2010; Tsuda & Nakata, 2012). Researchers also pointed out that, as evidenced by second language strategy scholars, there is no direct link between using a particular strategy and learning achievement. When one learner applies the same behavior to a certain task in a specific setting, they may succeed, but not in other situations. According to Tseng et al. (2006, p.95), *"the most important aspect of strategic learning is not the exact nature of the specific techniques that students employ, but rather the fact that they choose to exert creative effort in trying to improve their own learning"*.

The concept of self-regulation can be used to understand strategic learning. The new approach to learning strategies (Tseng et al., 2006) emphasized a contrast between self-regulated learners who use strategic learning and their peers who do not, in keeping with present theories of self-regulation in educational psychology. Rather than focusing on the outcomes of learning strategies, this new conceptual framework emphasized learners' innate self-regulatory capacities that allow them to choose and utilize certain language learning strategies. Tseng et al. (2006, p. 81) remarked that *"it is not what learners do that makes them strategic learners, but rather the fact that they put creative effort into trying to better their own learning"*. The degree of creative effort can be influenced by a variety of learner characteristics, including the language learner's age.

Although the conceptual shift did not provide a definitive answer to the question of what learning strategies or self-regulatory systems are, it did extend the scope. "*Self-regulation relates to how active individuals are in their own learning; it is a more dynamic term than learning strategy*" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 191). Learners' strategic efforts to govern their own achievement are highlighted by self-regulation through distinct beliefs and procedures (Zimmerman & Rinseberg, 1997, p. 105). Self-regulation, according to Dörnyei (2005, p. 191), is a "*process-oriented construct*" that views language acquisition from a new perspective:

"The notion of self-regulation is a multidimensional construct, including cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, behavioral, and environmental processes that learners can apply to enhance academic achievement. Thus, we face a rather blurry situation, not unlike what we did in the study of learning strategies, namely that a particular concept overarches virtually all the main aspects of psychology. However, because in this case, we have a process-oriented construct on our hands, it may be sufficient to identify the core dynamic energizer of the process, which is more manageable than defining the outcome."

In recent literature, the emphasis has shifted from conceptualizing learning strategies to the most important issue of distinguishing strategic learning from 'ordinary' learning. Weinstein et al. (2000) defined strategic learning as having three critical characteristics: being goal-oriented, intentionally invoked, and effortful. Dörnyei (2005, p. 164), on the other hand, claims that these characteristics can be applied to "*hard and focused learning*" in general. Furthermore, he adds, if these are the characteristics of strategic learning, we can equate 'strategic' with 'motivated,' because these are also key characteristics of motivation. Cohen (1998) defined another important aspect of learning strategies. He contends that the element of choice is an essential feature of learning strategy use because these strategies are voluntarily employed by the learner. However, the choice is insufficient to distinguish strategic from non-strategic behavior because learners make numerous choices during the learning process that are not strategic (Dörnyei, 2005).

Strategic learning can be discussed in terms of self-regulation. The new approach of learning strategies (Tseng et al., 2006) distinguishes between self-regulated learners who use strategic learning and their peers who do not, in line with contemporary theories of self-regulation in educational psychology. Rather than focusing on the outcomes of learning strategies, this new conceptual framework emphasizes learners' innate self-regulatory capacities that help them choose and employ certain language learning strategies. To wrap up, Tseng et al. (2006, p. 81) defined that what makes learners strategic learners is not what they do, "*but rather the fact that they put creative effort into trying to improve their own learning*".

2.5. What is self-regulation?

Depending on the theoretical perspectives under which it has been investigated, the idea of self-regulation has been given several various definitions in the literature. Self-regulation, which is sometimes interpreted to mean that people follow their own goals, is an essential feature in Bandura's Social Learning Theory, and Zimmerman (2000, p.14) also defined it as "*self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned and cyclically adapted to the attainment of personal goals*". Self-regulation can also refer to the ability to comply with a request, initiate and/or cease behavior in response to situational demands, modulate the intensity, frequency, and duration of verbal and motor act in social and educational settings, postpone acting on a desired object or goal, generate socially approved behavior in the absence of external monitoring, modulate emotional reactivity, and so on. (e.g., Fonagy & Target, 2002; Kopp, 1992; Thompson, 1994; Vaughn et al., 1984; as cited in Berger et al., 2007).

Self-regulation, in a larger perspective, refers to the ability to monitor and modulate cognition, emotion, and behavior to achieve one's goal and/or adapt to the cognitive and social demands of situations. When discussing emotional regulation, one usually refers to the intensity and temporal characteristics of the emotional response (Thompson, 1994), and one of the recently proposed working definitions is that it refers to "*the process of initiating, avoiding, inhibiting, maintaining, or modulating the occurrence, form, intensity, or duration of internal feeling states, emotion-related physiological, attentional processes, motivational states, and/or the behavioral concomitants of emotion in the service of accomplishing affect-related biological or social adaptation or achieving individual goals*" (Eisenberg and Spinrad, 2004).

Self-regulation and self-regulated learning are terms used to describe the "*many processes by which the human psyche exercises control over its functions, states, and inner processes*" in the broader field of educational psychology (Vohs & Baumeister, 2004, p. 1). The concept of self-regulation used in second language acquisition is derived from this field, and recent interest in learning strategies has revealed a new way to discuss second language learning in relation to self-regulation. The concepts of regulation and self-regulation, however, cause misunderstanding. To distinguish between the two constructions, Brownlee et al. (2000) proposed that we need to know whether the goal originated in the external or internal world (i.e., the social environment versus the self-system), as well as whether the person regards the goal's origin as internal or external. Thus, a person is self-regulating when he or she sets a goal or defines a relevant procedure; otherwise, his or her conduct is externally or "*other regulated*."

Another essential item is metacognition, which is typically conceptualized as a language-learning strategy in strategy research. However, a group of international strategy experts strongly agree that "*overall metacognitive control must be present for a mental action to be 'strategic' and that metacognitive strategies are the overarching strategies determining the cognitive strategies the learner will deploy*" (Cohen, 2007, p. 32). This view does not only highlight the significance of metacognition but provides evidence for discussing it as an individual factor in self-regulated learning. As can be seen, the distinction between self-

regulation and metacognition is also somewhat unclear from the literature. Metacognition is commonly construed as the awareness individuals have of their personal resources in relation to the demands of tasks, along with the knowledge they possess of how to regulate their engagement in tasks to optimize goal-related processes and outcomes. According to Demetriou (2000), self-regulation may be viewed as the more comprehensive term, embracing both metacognitive knowledge and skills, as well as motivational, emotional, and behavioral monitoring and control processes.

Self-regulation, besides the cognitive and metacognitive components, includes motivational self-regulation. Motivational self-regulation relies on the belief that learners can maintain their motivation and keep on-task while learning. Learners' *"ability to remain in control of their attitudinal/motivational disposition should be seen as an important determinant of self-regulated learning and achievement"* (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 91). Further components of self-regulation include self-motivational beliefs (for example, goal orientation, intrinsic interest, outcome expectations, and self-efficacy), evaluation and self-reflection, and satisfaction with one's effort (Zeidler, Boekaerts, & Pintrich, 2000).

In a recent study, Csizér and Kormos (2012) investigated the connection between language learning autonomy, self-regulation strategies, and motivation. In a large-sample study (n=670) they examined language learning in three age groups: secondary school learners, university students, and adult language learners. They found that although the participants appeared to be motivated to learn English, their level of autonomy and use of self-regulation strategies were lower than their level of motivation, which was explained by the learner-centered nature of Hungarian classes. Moreover, learners' autonomy and self-regulation strategies demonstrated only partial overlap, which indicated that they could be treated as separate constructs.

2.6. How does self-regulation develop?

Kopp (1982, 1989) has described the stages in the development of self-regulation beginning in infancy. In the first months of life, some form of self-regulation can be observed. Neuro-physiological modulatory mechanisms protect an infant from excessive arousal or stimulation at this stage. The orienting of attention is one of the important mechanisms that help infants modulate their level of arousal.

Indeed, Johnson et al. (1991) discovered that within the first four months of life, the probability of disconnecting attention from a central attractor to process an external target increased dramatically. Furthermore, Harman et al. (1997) demonstrated the interaction of attention and soothing in 3- to 6-month-old infants. Infants begin to show the first simple forms of compliance with external control toward the end of their first year of life. They start to respond to warning signals and carry out simple one-step commands (Kopp, 1982) and their own intentions to comply with external requests to control physical actions, communications, and emotional expressions (Bronson, 2000). Kopp refers to this type of monitoring as *"self-control"* rather than *"self-regulation,"* implying that the child still has limited flexibility in adapting acts to meet new situational demands and a limited capacity for the delay and waiting.

Vaughn et al. (1984) investigated two major aspects of self-control in children aged 18 to 30 months: delay/response inhibition in the presence of an appealing toy and compliance with maternal directives in a cleanup task.

Recent studies provided supporting evidence that some preliminary signs of self-control could be found already at the age of 2–2.5 years (Carlson, 2005; Diamond et al., 2005; Hughes and Ensor, 2005).

Furthermore, some studies indicated that developing self-regulation took time. Van der Hurk et al. (1999) discovered that students' self-regulation or self-regulatory learning skills developed significantly only in the third and fourth grades in their longitudinal study with higher education students. Erdogan (2011) provided additional evidence for the gradual development of self-regulation in learning, revealing that senior students' self-regulation in learning (SRL) levels were significantly higher than those in their initial years of tertiary education.

2.7. Dörnyei's (2005) model of self-regulation

'Self-regulatory mechanisms' are equivalent to 'learning strategies' in that they form a component of self-regulation. Nonetheless, they give researchers more flexibility by shifting the emphasis from strategies to self-regulation, i.e. from the product to the process (Dörnyei, 2005). Based on Kuhl's (1987) and Corno and Kanfer's (1993) taxonomies of action control strategies, Dörnyei's (2005) model of self-regulation consists of five categories of control:

- Commitment control, which helps to preserve or increase the learners' original goal commitment (e.g. keeping in mind favorable expectations or positive incentives and rewards; focusing on what would happen if the original intention failed).
- Metacognitive control, which involves the monitoring and controlling of concentration, and the curtailing of any unnecessary procrastination (e.g. identifying recurring distractions and developing defensive routines; focusing on the first steps to take when getting down to an activity).
- Satiation control, which helps to eliminate boredom and to add extra attraction or interest to the task (e.g. adding a twist to the task; using one's fantasy to liven up the task).
- Emotion control, which concerns the management of disruptive emotional states or moods, and the generation of emotions that will be conducive to implementing one's intentions (e.g. self-encouragement; using relaxation and meditation techniques).
- Environmental control, which helps to eliminate negative environmental influences and to exploit positive environmental influences by making the environment an ally in the pursuit of a difficult goal (e.g. eliminating distractions; asking friends to help and not allowing one to do something).

2.8. The scale on self-regulation in learning

2.8.1. Self-regulated learning skills/strategies (SRL skills/strategies)

Among other studies on learning regulation (Hadwin & Oshige, 2011; Sameroff, 2010), Erdogan & Senemoglu (2016) decided to construct the dimensions of SRL skills/strategies based on the models proposed by two groups of researchers who formed their dimensions based on social cognitive theory. Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons proposed 14 dimensions in their first self-regulated learning skills model (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1986; Zimmerman, 1990). Pintrich and De Groot's second model had three broad dimensions. Table 2.2 shows the dimensions of both models.

Table 2.2: A comparison of dimensions of the two models of self-regulated learning skills

Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986)	Pintrich and De Groot (1990)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluation • Organizing and transforming • Goal setting and planning • Seeking information • Keeping records and self-monitoring • Environmental structuring • Self-consequences • Rehearsing and memorizing • Seeking social assistance (peers, teachers, and adults) • Reviewing records (tests, notes, and textbooks) 	<p style="text-align: center;">Cognitive learning strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearsal • Elaboration • Organization <p style="text-align: center;">Metacognitive learning strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Monitoring • Regulation <p style="text-align: center;">Resource management strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control and management of environment

The present study follows Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) 's dimension, adapted by Erdogan & Senemoglu (2016).

2.8.2. Motivational dimensions

When the motivational dimensions, which are in constant interaction with and considered an essential component of self-regulation, were regarded, the following was decided to be included in this study: self-efficacy, goal orientations, task value, attributions for failure, and anxiety.

a. Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is regarded as one of the most important motivators for self-regulation (Bandura, 1986; Schunk, 1989; Zimmerman, 1990). Perceptions of self-efficacy influence the goals people set, the effort they put in to achieve those goals, and their willingness to persevere in the face of failure (Bandura, 1986). Several studies' findings have revealed a positive relationship between self-efficacy and self-regulated learning. Students with high self-efficacy used self-regulated learning skills more than students with low self-efficacy (Wolters, 1998).

b. Goal orientations

Self-regulation is widely viewed as an organized process of human thought and behavior that entails setting personal goals and directing oneself toward achieving those goals (Vancouver and Day, 2005). It is claimed that students' goal orientations may differ depending on individual needs and capacities, as well as situational factors (Meece et al., 1988). While students with learning goals (or mastery goals) strive to learn something new and improve their competence, students with performance goals (social or ego goals) aim to obtain positive judgments about their competence or avoid negative ones. According to Meece (1994), students with learning goals use self-regulated learning skills more frequently and exhibit greater task persistence than students with performance goals.

c. Task value

The three components of task value (the individual's perception of the importance of the task, their personal interest in the task, and their perception of the utility value of the task for future goals) are believed to be positively related to the use of self-regulated learning skills (Eccles, 1983; Pintrich, 1999; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). Furthermore, Schiefele (1991) observed that students with high interest and value for school subjects tended to have "deep level" rather than "surface level" learning, attempting to relate the material to prior knowledge and devoting a significant amount of time and effort to learning tasks.

d. Attributions for failure

Weiner (1979) proposed that learning-oriented students saw the effort as an attribution for failure and listed the general attributions for failure as effort, ability, task difficulty, and luck. Students who attributed their failure or success to uncontrollable factors (luck, ability, and task difficulty) exhibited no learning tendencies and thus spent less time on task completion and demonstrated less persistence. On the other hand, students who attributed their failures to effort (the control label factor) were willing to accept responsibility for their own learning and believed that it was "lack of effort," not inability, that caused the failure (Licht & Dweck, 1984; Weiner, 1979).

e. Anxiety

Zimmerman (1989) demonstrated how an affective state like anxiety could impair self-regulation and undermine various cognitive and metacognitive learning processes. Pintrich and De Groot (1990) added anxiety as an emotional component to the dimension of student motivation towards academic achievement. They also noted that students with high anxiety revealed less self-regulation and perseverance.

3. Material and Methods

My research aimed to explore the effects of the teachings in Dizi Gui on EFL young learners as well as identify young learners' attitudes towards the incorporating of the

Dizi Gui into EFL classrooms. A descriptive quantitative design was chosen as a suitable approach for the present study, with the Dizi Gui as an independent variable and dependent variable, self-regulation in second language acquisition.

The data collected from the questionnaires was quantitatively analyzed to determine the major findings of the study. However, certain experiences cannot be meaningfully expressed by numbers or described in a statistically aggregated fashion (Berg, 2004). Therefore, to avoid this limitation, qualitative data from semi-structured interviews were used to clarify quantitative data analysis.

3.3. Participants

Convenience sampling technique were employed as young learners at the center have been learning and practicing the teachings in Dizi Gui for about 12 months. 100 male and female young learners aged from 9-14 were invited to participate in this study. Each of them was given an arbitrary number, and there was a table of random numbers. They were asked to fill out a questionnaire consisting of 51 items. The summary of participant demographics is illustrated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Participants for the survey

Variables		N	Percentage
Gender	Male	33	33
	Female	67	67
Age (years)	9	0	0
	10	20	20
	11	26	26
	12	0	0
	13	35	32
	14	19	19
Years of learning English at the center	1	9	9
	2-5	76	76
	6-10	15	15

As can be seen from Table 3.1, the number of female participants is double that of male ones. The distribution of participants regarding age range is not catering to all age levels. No participants aged 9 and 12 were involved and those aged 13 make up the largest proportion. Most participants have attended English classes at the center for more than one year. The proportion of participants with 2-5 years of taking English classes at the center was eight times that of those who have been learning at the center for about one year and five times that of those with 6-10 years. All of the participants have been studying in primary schools in the central of Can Tho so it is not worth considering social-cultural differences among them.

3.4. Research instruments

3.4.1. Questionnaire

To measure the effects of infusing the Dizi Gui on EFL young learners’ self-regulation in second language acquisition, I employed the questionnaire as the one-group post-test only.

First, the questionnaire collected the participant’s background information: age, gender, and years of learning English at the examining center.

Then, the 51-item questionnaire was to collect data on young learners’ self-regulation in the context of EFL classrooms. The participant was to express the level of agreement on 51 statements, which were partly adapted from the teachings in Dizi Gui, the questionnaire to assess self-regulation in vocabulary acquisition in Tseng, Dörnyei & Schmitt (2006) and the scale on self-regulation in learning in Erdogan & Senemoglu (2016). The framework to assess young learners’ self-regulation in second language acquisition is as in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Framework to assess young learners’ self-regulation in second language acquisition

	Categories	Items
Self-regulation	Before study	
	Goal setting and planning	1, 31, 32
	Environmental structuring	7, 34
	During study	
	Organization and transforming	4, 39
	Seeking information	44, 49
	Rehearsing and memorizing	16, 50
	Keeping records and self-monitoring	10, 13, 40
	Seeking peer, teacher, or adult assistance	43, 47
	Reviewing	42, 46
After study		
Self-evaluation	22, 48	
Self-consequences	36, 37	
Categories of control		
Commitment control	5, 12, 26	
Metacognitive control	21, 24	
Satiation control	2, 8, 15, 25, 29	
Emotional control	6, 11, 18, 23, 27	
Environmental control	3, 14, 20, 28, 38	
Motivational factors		
Self-efficacy	17, 19	
Task value	9, 35	
Attributions for failure	41	
Anxiety	30, 33, 45	

I employed the frequency adverbs' seven-point scale (adapted from Azar, 1999). I tweaked the original scale, which went from always (100%) to usually (99% - 90 %) to often (90 % - 75 %) to sometimes (75 % - 25 %) to seldom (25 % -10% to rarely (10 % -1%) to never (0%). I believed it was unlikely that anyone performed self-regulation "always,"

thus I began my measurement with "usually". Furthermore, because we were used to expressing the concept of "above average" or "below average" for frequency, the adverb "sometimes" originally stretches in a very large range of frequency (75 % - 25 %), it might be difficult for a Vietnamese person to tell how often he or she did an action. As a result, I split "sometimes" into two smaller frequency levels: 75% - 50% and 50% - 25 %. Finally, the questionnaire's measurement was still a seven-point scale checklist, but "always" was skipped, and "sometimes" had two levels of frequency, one above average and the other below average, rather than one that ranged from 75% to 25%. Basic information about the students and their sex, age, and school attended, was also presented in this questionnaire.

A Vietnamese version of this questionnaire was more than necessary for the quality of the collected data due to the students' level of English proficiency. I worked with a Vietnamese teacher to translate the questionnaire from English to Vietnamese in order to have a solid Vietnamese version. After that, I asked the other two English teachers to transcribe the Vietnamese version in English. The results were impressive. Both Vietnamese and English versions were comprehensive and equivalent. I conducted a pilot using the Vietnamese version some days later before delivering the questionnaire to my research participants.

3.4.2. Interview

Interviews are important to understand the story behind a participant's experiences as well as to pursue in-depth information about the topic (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012; Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). Therefore, interviews for qualitative data will be conducted with 6 representatives from 3 groups of expected achievers (high achievers, mediate achievers, and low achievers) based on the data collected from the questionnaire.

An individual interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. Each interview was divided into two sections, including ten questions. In section 1, three questions are aimed at the respondent's general information (age, years of learning English, and other foreign languages besides English). This section also allows the researcher to build rapport with the participants, making him or her feel more at ease. Thus, they can provide honest feedback, resulting in rich qualitative data. Section 2, comprising questions 4 – 10, revolves around the attitudes towards the incorporating of the Dizi Gui into EFL classrooms. Open-ended questions can be customized to the specific situation during in-depth interviews. All interviews were recorded and scripted with the participants' consent. For clarity of information, Vietnamese was preferred during the interview.

4. Results

4.1. Young learners' self-regulation in EFL classrooms

Self-regulation is measured in young learners' EFL classrooms via the framework to assess young learners' self-regulation in second language acquisition (see Table 3.2) adapted from the teachings in Dizi Gui, the questionnaire to assess self-regulation in vocabulary acquisition in Tseng, Dörnyei & Schmitt (2006) and the scale on self-

regulation in learning in Erdogan & Senemoglu (2016). 51 items of the framework were clustered into 5 sections, all of which describe how self-regulation might be measured 1) before study, 2) during study, 3) after study, 4) in what categories it controls and 5) motivational factors. The respondents rated the level of “how frequent” they perform a statement in the questionnaire according to a seven-point rating scale adapted from Azar (1999) was used to rate the frequencies of young learners’ performances on self-regulation in the classrooms with the Dizi Gui incorporated. The level of measurement is presented as *usually* (luôn luôn: 99%- 90%), *often* (thường: 90%- 75%), *sometimes* (thỉnh thoảng: 75%- 50%), *sometimes* (đôi khi: 50%- 25%), *seldom* (ít khi: 25%- 10%), *rarely* (hiếm khi: 10%- 1%) and *never* (chưa bao giờ: 0%).

The data gained from the questionnaire was subjected to Statistic Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. As in chapter 3, when I reported the research methodology, the pilot questionnaire’ internal consistency was $\alpha=.82$. To avoid biases, the items in the questionnaire were restructured and the newly edited questionnaire was used for data collection. A Scale test was run to assess the questionnaire scale reliability before further analyses. The Cronbach coefficient alpha computation was $\alpha=.85$ (see Table 3.6). Thus, the scale is reliable and valid for analyzing data in detail.

A Descriptive Statistics test was run to examine the mean score of the effects of incorporating the Dizi Gui into young learners’ self-regulation in EFL classrooms. The following sections present the overall mean score of self-regulation a) before study, b) during study, c) after study, d) of which category controls, and of which motivational factors.

4.2. Effects of infusing the Dizi Gui on young learners’ self-regulation in second language acquisition in classroom settings

4.2.1. The overall mean score of young learners’ self-regulation in EFL classrooms

Table 4.3: The overall mean score of young learners’ self-regulation

	N	Min.	Max	Mean	SD
Self-regulation	100	2.51	5.1	3.52	.53

The focus of self-regulation on young learners comprises 51 items. In general, the mean score $M=3.52$ ($SD=.53$) indicates an under-average level (less than 50%) of how often the young learners self-regulate in their learning process. In the following sections, the finding of the frequency level of young learners’ self-regulation before study, during study and after study will be presented. Then the statistical results of the categories of control on self-regulation and motivational factors will also be reported in detail.

4.2.2. The mean scores before the study

In terms of self-regulation before the study, a relatively high level of frequency was recorded (more than 50% of frequency) by the mean score $M=2.96$ ($SD=.97$). Such performances of self-regulation were observed to be sometimes used by the young

learners (M=2.31, SD=1.09, M=3.31, SD=1.91, M=3.71, SD=1.62, M=2.90, SD=1.68, and M=2.59, SD=1.68, respectively). The maximum score of item 1 (Max.=6.00) indicates that some young learners rarely care about setting goals to speak English with correct grammar. This can be sensibly explained that most young learners have come to the examining center to learn English for communication from a very young age. As time goes by, English has been acquired as their second language without much serious consideration of grammar as their target was to use English to get the gut of the speech and to express what they mean. The rest items obtained Max.=7.00, which implies that some students never care about these performances on self-regulation before study (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Frequency levels of young learners’ self-regulation before the study

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Q1: I set goals to speak English with correct grammar.	100	1.00	6.00	2.31	1.09
Q7: I find good friends to sit with when learning English.	100	1.00	7.00	3.31	1.91
Q31: I handle problems that arise in learning English easily.	100	1.00	7.00	3.71	1.62
Q32: I set lofty goals for myself when it came to learning English.	100	1.00	7.00	2.90	1.68
Q34: I keep my school stuffs organized when I am in English classes.	100	1.00	7.00	2.59	1.68
Total	100	1.00	5.40	2.96	.97

4.2.3. The mean scores during the study

In terms of self-regulation during the study, the mean score M=3.01 (SD=.76) shows that young learners do not often self-regulate during the study (about 57% of frequency). Six groups of self-regulating strategies were studied: *organization and transforming; seeking information; rehearsing and memorizing; keeping records and self-monitoring; seeking peer, teacher, or adult assistance; and reviewing*, among which *keeping records and self-monitoring* accounts for the highest mean score M=3.85 (SD=.79). Table 4.5 displays the statistic results of the frequency levels of young learners’ self-regulation during the study in general and of the six groups specifically.

Table 4.5: Frequency levels of young learners’ self-regulation during the study

Variables	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Organization and transforming	100	1.00	5.50	2.83	1.00
Seeking information	100	1.00	6.50	3.07	1.34
Rehearsing and memorizing	100	1.00	6.00	2.50	1.21
Keeping records and self-monitoring	100	1.67	6.00	3.85	.79
Seeking peer, teacher, or adult assistance	100	1.00	6.00	2.38	1.11
Reviewing	100	1.00	6.00	3.51	1.38
Total	100	1.62	4.85	3.01	.76

From Table 4.5, we can observe that among the six groups of self-regulation, young learners sometimes organize and transform themselves, about 60% of the frequency

(M=2.83, SD=1.00), rehearse and memorize, about 65% of the frequency (M=2.5, SD=1.21), and seek peer, teacher, or adult assistance (M=2.38, SD=1.11), about 66% of frequency, during their English study. The records also show that no one among the participants never organize and transform (Max=5.50), and some rarely or even never seek information (Max=6.50). Almost all participants at least rarely experience the rest items (*rehearsing and memorizing; keeping records and self-monitoring; seeking peer, teacher, or adult assistance; and reviewing*). Of the six observed self-regulating strategy clusters, *keeping records and self-monitoring* was reported to be done the least, according to the participants' ratings (M=3.85, SD=.79). The Min=1.67 and Max=6 also imply that no participant takes the action less than 10% of frequency, which mean "rarely" or "never" in self-regulating performances.

4.2.4. The mean scores after the study

In terms of self-regulation after the study, the mean score M=2.61 (SD=.78) shows that young learners sometimes self-regulate after the study (about 63% of frequency). The highest mean score M=3.51 (SD=1.79) implies that participants sometimes tell their English teachers the answers that they are not sure of (about 50% of frequency), however, some never do so (Max=7.00). Young learners experienced the rest items with a relatively high level of frequency (M=2.29, SD=1.27; M=2.32, SD=1.64; M=2.30, SD=1.38, respectively). Table 4.6 reports the statistical results of the frequency levels of young learners' self-regulation after the study.

Table 4.6: Frequency levels of young learners' self-regulation after the study

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Q22: I am aware that I need to improve certain skills in order to learn English more effectively.	100	1.00	7.00	2.29	1.27
Q36: I only raise my hand when I am certain of the answer.	100	1.00	7.00	2.32	1.64
Q37: I tell my English teachers the answers that I am not sure of.	100	1.00	7.00	3.51	1.79
Q48: I am aware of my own strengths and weaknesses in learning English.	100	1.00	7.00	2.30	1.38
Total	100	1.00	5.25	2.61	.78

4.2.5. Categories of control

In terms of categories, the total mean scores of 3.89 indicate that young learners sometimes used self-regulating categories of control (less than 50% of frequency). The interviewees pointed out that they are aware of the effects of infusing the Dizi Gui on their self-regulation in learning English.

"I see that the content of the teachings is close to me." (C, female, 13 years old, M=5.1)

"I suddenly think of the teachings in the Dizi Gui and I regain the motivations and I feel happier." (C, female, 13 years old, M=5.1)

“Teachings from the Dizi Gui remind me of basic etiquettes in daily life and ethical values that have been forgotten.” (A, female, 13 years old, M=1.4)

The highest mean score was found at item 11 ‘I get angry when my teachers and friends tell me of my mistakes in English classes.’ (M=6.68, SD=.62) (see Table 4.8), indicated learners’ high level of emotional control in English classes. The mean score of item 23 ‘I want to give up learning English when I feel stress.’ was the second highest (M=6.07, SD=1.11), which also belonged to the category of emotional control. Moreover, the participants often feel happy if their friends always praise them for their English skills.’ (M=1.75, SD=1.11) and patiently and calmly exchange ideas with friends when working in pairs or groups very often.’ (M=1.90, SD=.98).

Teachings in the Dizi Gui clearly mention the importance of always reflecting on oneself to be better day by day. Initially, teachers at the center for foreign languages aimed at helping learners enhance their motivation in learning by explaining the Dizi Gui teachings and giving realistic examples. Moreover, participants in the interviews also indicated that they can self-control their own thoughts and self-reflect on their own mistakes. They could even write motivational quotes on a small piece of paper and stick them around the corner (for example, “*you just live in life one time so do everything you want and try your best, show the universe that you are not stupid*” - C, female, 13 years old, M=5.1). Therefore, the frequency of performance of young learners in emotional control is understandably high even though this category did not receive the highest mean score in clusters (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Frequency levels of employing self-regulating categories of control

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Q5: I persevere my goal of being as good as my friends in learning English.	100	1.00	7.00	2.25	1.38
Q12: When learning English, I have special techniques to achieve my learning goals.	100	1.00	7.00	3.43	1.68
Q26: I overcome all the difficulties related to achieving my English learning goals.	100	1.00	7.00	3.08	1.38
Q21: When learning English, I am careless with what is easy.	100	1.00	7.00	4.53	1.74
Q24: When learning English, I make notes of questions that come up.	100	1.00	7.00	3.89	1.80
Q8: I lose my interests in learning English.	100	1.00	7.00	5.72	1.37
Q15: During English classes, I am confident I can overcome any sense of boredom.	100	1.00	7.00	2.88	1.64
Q25: I liven up my friends when working in pairs or groups.	100	1.00	7.00	3.25	1.86
Q29: I regulate my mood to invigorate the learning process in English classes.	100	1.00	7.00	3.18	1.49
Q6: I patiently and calmly exchange ideas with friends when working in pairs or groups.	100	1.00	6.00	1.90	.99
Q11: I get angry when my teachers and friends tell me of my mistakes in English classes.	100	4.00	7.00	6.68	.62

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 A STUDY ON SELF-REGULATION IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Q18: I am happy if my friends always praise me about my English skills.	100	1.00	6.00	1.75	1.11
Q23: I want to give up learning English when I feel stress.	100	3.00	7.00	6.07	1.11
Q27: I know how to reduce the stress in learning English.	100	1.00	7.00	3.09	1.69
Q3: I find suitable time to join English classes.	100	1.00	7.00	3.06	1.81
Q14: I become distracted when learning English.	100	1.00	7.00	5.45	1.52
Q20: When the English learning environment becomes unsuitable, I try to sort out the problem.	100	1.00	7.00	3.22	1.74
Q28: I switch to learning vocabulary while doing grammar exercises.	100	1.00	7.00	5.05	1.81
Q38: I pay no attention to what is going on around me during English classes.	100	1.00	7.00	4.20	1.69

The highest level of metacognitive control ($M=4.21$, $SD=1.12$) and the following excerpts from the interviewees of the present study agree with Grunschel et al. (2016) in their study to examine the effect of motivational regulation strategies used on academic procrastination. They found that those who used most of the strategies had less academic procrastination.

“Procrastination is what scares me the most because from time to time I hold the mobile phone and go like “I’ll stop surfing in 5 minutes, 10 minutes, what time will I leave my phone to self-study” then the time flies, the “little more” means it comes to the end of the day. Then after up to 2-3 hours, I finally sat down and pulled out my lessons to review.” (C, female, 13 years old, $M=5.1$)

“I think it’s quite important to study, so whenever I study, I have to try to absorb the knowledge.” (B, female, 14 years old, $M=3.2$)

In another excerpt of the interview, the participant informed that he thought about non-related stuff during the lessons, and he tried to concentrate because of being scolded or complained by his teachers (D, male, 12 years old, $M=1.6$). Controlling unrelated thoughts is usually practiced in English classrooms at this center for foreign languages during the meditation session. That can also be another explanation for the awareness of self-managing in learning style among learners in class.

Environmental control received the second highest mean score ($M=4.20$, $SD=.87$). This can be explained that the participants enjoy good conditions in the classroom settings with air-conditioner, movable chairs, television, and projector. Therefore, they paid less consideration to the quality of the surrounding environment, compared to varied environmental distractions at home. Besides, most of the participants' sharing in the interviews revolved around the ability to adjust to the surrounding environmental conditions when studying English at home. Consequently, the data collected is not of analytical value within the scope of this study.

Satiation control did not show the highest level of frequency in the data collected from the questionnaire ($M=4.03$, $SD=.78$). However, interviewees listed a wide range of

ways to dominate their boredom. Some felt bored because they had to face difficulties raised or annoying factors during their learning process. Thus, they used their own methods to overcome, as reported in the excerpts:

“I usually search Google to look for new words in the dictionary, for example, Tflat or Cambridge if I don’t have enough vocabulary to express my ideas.” (C, female, 13 years old, M=5.1)

“I usually read the lesson basing on a favorite rhythm. I write each sentence in the lesson into a small piece of paper and stick around my house for revision. I face down on the table with my eyes closed and keep repeating the content. I replace the forgettable words in the lesson by other related ones until the meaning of the sentence sounds nice and familiar with me.” (D, male, 12 years old, M=1.6).

In other cases, the students did not feel bored because they struggled with the lessons. They were affected by external things. However, they did have effective methods, as they shared:

“I surf on my mobile phone, read books when I feel bored because, you know, my teacher’ voice is usually very soft and low.” (C, female, 13 years old, M=5.1)

“I’ll think about funny memories with the people I think of, then I’ll naturally gain my interest back to the lesson.” (F, male, 13 years old, M=4.7)

“Usually if I get bored in the middle of studying, I will go out, I wash my face or I find something to eat and then I come back to continue studying, then I won’t be bored.” (E, Female, 14 years old, M=3.4)

As can be seen from the excerpts, the learner with a lower mean score (M=1.6) tended to have more effective and interesting techniques for controlling his boredom. That was explained that his frequency of being bored was relatively high and his experience in controlling other criteria is not remarkable.

The Dizi Gui, as reported, helped remind learners of keeping up with their long-term goals, which were categorized into commitment control of self-regulation. Findings from the interviews in the present study align with Hardi (2014). The semi-structured interview data in her study also yielded the same results, i.e. the most common long-term goals for young learners to study English were for “*career orientation, travelling, passing the language exam, and other utilitarian reasons*”. In the present study, participants also pursued their goals of learning English to (1) have a good job in the future with a high salary, (2) have good communication skills and be able to talk to foreigners and business partners, and (3) satisfy their parents’ hopes (as modified in Table 3.8). Here are the excerpts from the present interviewees:

“When I think of the Dizi Gui, I realize that if I learn English harder, I can apply for a good job with high salary when I grow up, so I can help my parents”. (C, female, 13 years old, M=5.1)

“Learning English helps me with good communication skills so I will be able to talk to the foreigners.” (D, male, 12 years old, M=1.6)

“Dizi Gui reminds the children mostly about how to treat their parents. For me, I acknowledge that I can go to school thanks to my parents’ income. Therefore, whenever I feel discouraged, I remember that I always have my parents behind me and that I can learn English because of my parents.” (E, female, 14 years old, M=3.4)

Most of the learners in the center come from families whose parents are intellectuals and they have a good salary. That initiated the desire of mirroring their parents and hope for a bright future if they are aware of having good English communication skills. The teachings in the Dizi Gui once again strengthen their motivation and commitment to learning English to meet their parents’ both material and mental needs.

Overall, the results indicated that the respondents used the categories of control in self-regulation in general and that their category of employment was somewhat different. Table 4.8 describes the statistical results of the frequency levels of employing self-regulating categories of control in the total mean score and cluster scores in detail.

Table 4.8: Frequency levels of employing self-regulating categories of control in clusters

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Commitment control	100	1.00	5.67	2.92	1.18
Metacognitive control	100	1.50	7.00	4.21	1.12
Satiation control	100	1.40	5.80	4.03	.78
Emotional control	100	2.80	5.40	3.90	.49
Environmental control	100	2.80	6.60	4.20	.87
Total	100	2.80	5.70	3.89	.56

4.2.6. Motivational factors

The effects of motivational factors do not manifest frequently (about 45% of frequency), M=3.84, SD=.61, according to the statistical results (see Table 4.9). Most of the participants seldom attribute their failure (about 21% of frequency), implied by the mean score M=5.53, SD=1.64. However, the frequency of these item slippers on over the scale (usually to never), shown by the Min.=1 and Max.=7, indicating that there are young learners who attribute for their failure very often, but there are ones who probably never care about these. The results also depict that task value accounts for the highest level of frequency (about 67% of frequency) among four clusters of motivational factors (M=2.33, SD=.89). Young learners admit that they sometimes realize their self-efficacy (43% of frequency) and anxiety (40% of frequency). The results are denoted by the means (M=4.00, SD=1.6;

M=4.18, SD=.94, respectively). A stunning statistical analysis about very specific experiences from which participants sometimes feel anxiety (Min.=2.67) but some of them rarely or never become worried or feel nervous during their learning process (Max.=6.33). This finding meets Hardi (2013) that pupils, for instance, ‘keep on learning’, ‘do something else’, ‘ask somebody for help’, ‘do something pleasant’, or ‘think positively’ to override anxiety. Accordingly, they use challenging, avoiding, and lowering strategies to get rid of their nervousness.

Table 4.9: Frequency levels of motivational factors

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Self-efficacy	100	1.50	6.50	4.00	1.06
Task value	100	1.00	5.50	2.33	.89
Attributions for failure	100	1.00	7.00	5.53	1.64
Anxiety	100	2.67	6.33	4.18	.94
Total	100	2.38	5.38	3.84	.61

4.3. Learners’ attitudes towards the effects of infusing Dizi Gui on self-regulation in second language acquisition in classroom settings

4.3.1. Preferences for learning the Dizi Gui

Young learners expressed their preferences for the teachings in Dizi Gui. They believed that the English version of Dizi Gui helped them enhance their vocabulary because it covered familiar topics in everyday life. Therefore, they could use their English to discuss and give examples to deepen the teachings of Dizi Gui.

“The content of Dizi Gui’s teaching is close to me, so I can use English to express my ideas easily.” (C, female, 13 years old, M=5.1)

In addition, participants prefer the teachings in the Dizi Gui compared to what they have been learning in other subjects (IELTS, Civic Education).

“In IELTS, you may have to think further but this one is close to you, so you feel free to discuss, it’s not unfamiliar at all.” (C, female, 13 years old, M=5.1)

“The teachings in Civic Education are not realistic and in the part of “Setting Situations”, my teacher just leads general discussions.” (D, male, 12 years old, M=1.6)

From the excerpts, it was clearly stated that the teachings in Dizi Gui impressed young learners considerably. Other opinions mentioned that the teaching in Dizi Gui resembles simple daily etiquette forgotten by most children. Some thought that reading the stanzas in Dizi Gui was like giving the vow to cultivate oneself every day.

4.3.2. Dislikes in learning the Dizi Gui

Although some young learners argued that the Dizi Gui was approachable and easy to express in English, some disagreed. As reported, they struggled more when they were asked to discuss in groups and provide examples.

As for the Vietnamese version of the Dizi Gui, it was believed that repeating the stanzas in Dizi Gui after each class created boredom rather than motivating them to improve themselves.

Furthermore, one participant suggested that teachers should not provide examples in advance and asked for group discussions to draw lessons. On the contrary, they needed to share their own stories with friends and teachers to receive constructive feedback and suggestions for improvements instead of solving given situations. However, it appeared that this was just from participant B's opinion, as stated in her excerpt:

“I like to take examples from myself or friends in the class to better understand them.” (B, female, 14 years old, M=3.2)

4.3.3. Suggestions

Interviewees expressed their hope to continue learning the Dizi Gui in their English classes and lengthen the time for each class with the teachings. Additionally, findings also revealed that English teachers should design more activities and tasks when infusing the teachings into language classes to maintain the excitement of young learners in learning the stanzas as well as to motivate and enhance their second language learning strategies.

“I want to lengthen the time learning them, but at the second half of the English class.” (D, male, 12 years old, M=1.6)

“I want to do the role play to illustrate for the examples that we think of.” (B, female, 14 years old, M=3.2)

“I think we should watch movies instead of reading the stanzas. There should be the lines of teachings inserted in the movies so it will be more interesting.” (C, female, 13 years old, M=5.1).

A male participant (13 years old, M=4.7) also expressed that he wanted the teachers to invite the Venerables in a pagoda so that he could have a chance to talk to venerable guests in class. He added that the explanations and examples from them are profound and heart-touching.

5. Discussion

In respect of the findings, another question arouses: "Whether or not self-regulating strategies should be explicitly taught, and if yes, what could be the best intervention?" It could be the case in which both teachers' and students' awareness of self-regulation is too low to explicitly implement the strategies in their teaching and learning. It would also be another case in which both teachers and students do not have a habit to look for more effective methods to increase the frequency of self-regulation in learning and teaching. As a result, when the teachers do not explicitly raise awareness in the students or do not train the students how to self-regulate throughout their learning process, the students do not take the actions in a professionally trained way, neither could they have any idea to make the performances become their learning strategies.

The finding of this research marks a significant point in raising awareness for English instructors of building self-regulation for language learners using different types of interventions in language education in general, in which self-regulation training is particularly one of the main focuses. In the process of training the learners' self-regulation, assisting to form a life-long learning strategy for young learners is necessary. From where I am standing now, I would propose that there should be more professional training in which the EFL teachers have more access to self-regulation and interventions to increase the frequency levels of self-regulation first. After that, they would implement these experiences at the classroom level. By helping young learners to form an effective learning strategy, we could help them to be autonomous and independent in their learning, so that they could build themselves a lifelong learning capacity. My suggestion is rooted from (Wigfield et al., 2011) that if language learners could regulate their cognition, motivation, affect and behavior, then they could promote better performance at school. With more knowledge and practical suggestions, educators can help learners activate their strategy after another and learn independently at the end (Keiko, 2019).

Most of the research done was to investigate the self-regulation of high school learners (e.g., Boran and Karakus, 2022), and college and university learners (e.g., Alotumi, 2021; Do, 2022). My present study is aimed at young learners (as defined in chapter 2). This is in concord with research findings made by Hardi (2014). When investigating Hungarian primary school learners' vocabulary learning strategies in English as a foreign language, her study with more than 400 primary students aimed to assess strategic vocabulary learning, propose categories of self-regulated vocabulary learning behavior in young learners, and highlight age-related differences in this area. According to the findings, young learners used a variety of strategies to learn vocabulary. They were aware of what they were doing to learn words, used self-motivational strategies, and employed their self-regulating capacity. The youngest learners were surprisingly the most strategic in vocabulary learning, indicating that self-regulation in vocabulary learning has developed by the age of 8-9. Thus, based on the finding in the present study and previous research, it can be deduced that self-regulated learning

strategies are essentially and beneficially grown with learners' educational advancements “over the years across cultures, disciplines, and learning contexts” (Do, 2022).

6. Recommendations

Further research should hold larger samples and could be conducted in the experimental design, in which explicit implementation (e.g. the Dizi Gui) at the classroom level for self-regulation is used. After that, an evaluation of how much young learners' self-regulation ability is improved could be made through their performance observations. Specifically, the most effective category of control in self-regulation in enhancing young learners' self-regulation could be found as well. Teachers' perspectives on incorporating any new materials into their classroom should be carefully examined as well so that researchers can be aware of the expected outcomes on student learning and underpinning reasons in every activity in the classrooms. As a result, evaluating the effects of the new material is also simpler and more reasonable.

As reviewed in chapter 2, the Dizi Gui has been widely applied in business and education environments for many countries around the world. Although rooted in the thought and educational philosophy of Confucius, the Dizi Gui is not steeped in religion or belief. The teachings in the Dizi Gui are not a dogma for believers but are for almost everyone. The Dizi Gui teachings have opened a new step in the application of basic standards to daily activities and in family and social relationships. In Vietnam, if the “5 things Uncle Ho taught children” is considered the foundation of moral education and self-regulation training for primary school students, then the Dizi Gui can be considered as a descendant of Uncle Ho's teachings. I suggest that the Dizi Gui should be recognized as a good intervention to be more widely applied and studied in the national and private education systems in Vietnam. Furthermore, this study also lays the first brick in the literature review related to ethical values and how to bring about ethical values into language learning to promote academic achievements in Mekong Delta. For researchers, findings from this study contribute to evidence for further research related to how ancient teachings influence young learners' learning strategies in second language acquisition. Besides, the results obtained from such research will suggest further applications and adaptations of other ancient teachings such as 太上感應篇圖說 (A graphic theory of super sympathetics - Thái thượng cảm ứng thiên) for teenage learners and 群書治要 (The governing principles – Quần thư trị yếu) for adult learners.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, young learners self-regulate at an under-average level (less than 50%) on the frequency scale proposed by Azart (1999) in their learning process. Data collected also revealed that participants sometimes use categories of control on self-regulation, and the most highly have commitment control. Motivational factors are sometimes paid attention to by the participants, among which, task value is considered the most.

With regards to the second research question, the majority of young learners agree to continue learning the stanzas from the Dizi Gui incorporated into the English for communication program at the center. Furthermore, they are excited to suggest some interesting activities to improve the quality and atmosphere of the lesson, as well as to increase the ability to solve problems and empathize with others.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Nguyen Thi Anh Thu is currently completing a Master in Principles and Methods in English Language Education at Can Tho University, Vietnam. She has extensive experience in teaching language learning strategies and English skills for the communication to students. She is interested in conducting research on language learning strategies.

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