Towards self-regulated learning in school curriculum

Seifodin Rajabi

Department of English Language Teaching, Kermanshah Branch, Islamic Azad University. 6718997551, Kermanshah, Iran

Abstract

The concepts of learner autonomy and self-regulated learning have gained voice throughout the recent years as constructs characterizing successful and proficient learners. Self-regulation refers to the process through which learners systematically direct their thoughts, feelings, and actions toward the attainment of their goals. As far as educational enterprises are concerned, the school curriculum should cater for opportunities to equip learners, especially in the primary stages, with a repertoire of techniques and strategies for self-regulation so that they accept the responsibility of their learning in the educational system. If this goal is accounted for by the educationists and curriculum developers, much energy and money would be saved and the educational goals and objectives can be set and achieved in a process of negotiation with the learners. Such an educational system with its emphasis on individual learner moves towards humanizing the school curriculum and learner autonomy by considering student voices and interests. This article tries to shed some light on the concepts of self-regulation and learner autonomy emphasizing the need to integrate interesting and motivating self-regulation strategies into the educational system with the prospect of encouraging students to take more responsibility of their life-long learning.

Keywords: Self-regulated learning; Education; Learner autonomy; School curriculum

1. Introduction

The concepts of learner autonomy, independence, and self-regulated learning have attracted a lot of attention throughout the recent years. More recent learning and teaching approaches have placed much emphasis on the role of the learner in the learning process. As Thanasoulas (2000) points out, "the shift of responsibility from teachers to learners does not exist in a vacuum, but is the result of a concatenation of changes to the curriculum itself towards a more learner-centered kind of learning". (p. 1)

Another important concept in the area of independent learning is that of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) which has shown itself as a new concept in education in general and in the field of second/foreign language learning in particular. The concept of self-regulation or self-regulated learning has been defined by different scholars. For example, Boekaerts (1999) defines self-regulation as the ability to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes transferable from one learning context to another and from learning situations in which this information has been acquired to a leisure and work context. According to Cubukcu (2009), one of the major causes of students’ failure in their learning is the lack of self-regulation. Borkowski & Thorpe (1994) describe underachievers as more impulsive, having lower academic goals, being less accurate in assessing their abilities; more self-critical and less efficacious about their performance and tending to give up easily than achievers. On the other hand, self-regulators are easily...