

VALIDATING ASSESSMENT OF SELF-EFFICACY, MOTIVATION AND SELF-REGULATED LEARNING

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The advent of a knowledge based society where knowledge, work skills and life skills are becoming obsolete rather fast has changed society's views on learning. Learning is no longer perceived as a process needed to obtain some general initial knowledge to be applied later at life and work and in ever changing knowledge, society learning is considered as a life long process to be adapted to new circumstances and thus ensuring personal economic and social success.

Based on this we can assume that learning is a process which involves more than acquiring knowledge and developing skills. If students do not develop the capability of directing their own learning, they will be only partially educated and limited in what they can do. Learning is facilitated when the process is initiated and owned by the students who should become more independent, responsible and effective for their own learning. The principal goal of higher education is to encourage individuals who are capable independent learning and this goal is considered to be the primary target to be achieved in higher education of most countries.

The concept of self regulated learning implies a teaching strategy that enables individuals to develop their own goal directed learning processes. It promotes not only individual learning, but in addition provides opportunities for students to be engaged in such learning activities as goal setting, self monitoring, self evaluating, self reinforcement and resource management. An important goal of teaching consists in leading students to spontaneous psychological activity and active participation so that they can explore and think, and furthermore, construct their own knowledge. Self regulated learning is therefore an important strategy to enable individuals to use the skills and knowledge construction processes. By constructing new skills and knowledge, self regulation can be defined as sustaining and activating one's own cognition, behavior and motivation.

Self direction learning confines to two distinct related aspects. Firstly, it is a process where a learner takes on primary responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating the learning process and secondly, it is referred to as learner self direction, centering on a student's desire or preference for assuming responsibility of learning (internal characteristics of the learner). In addition, it should be noted that self direction in learning can be described by using three dimensions which comprise sociological, pedagogical and psychological models.

There are numbers of different models of self regulated learning that propose different constraints and concepts, but all of them share some general assumption about learning and regulation. One common assumption is that learners are viewed as active, constructive participants in the learning process. A second assumption is that all learners can potentially monitor, control and regulate certain aspects of their own cognition, motivation and behavior as well as some aspects of their environment. A third assumption is that there is some type of criteria or standard against which learners compare their ability in order to assess where the process should continue or if some type of change is necessary. A fourth assumption is that the individuals' self regulation of their cognition, motivation and behavior mediate the relationship between the person, context and achievement.

Two models of self regulated learning being in wide use now are oriented to motivation and strategy. In the motivation oriented approach to self regulated learning, both motivational and cognitive factors that influence students' learning are taken into account. In the strategy orientation, a more cognitive approach is adopted where focus lies on different learning strategies.

Self efficiency, a motivational belief, plays a crucial role in language learning. Self efficiency is extremely important for self regulated learning because it affects the extent to which learners are engaged and persist at challenging tasks. Students with higher self efficiency are more likely to persist at a task even in the face of initial failures compared to low efficiency students. Considering that students sometimes can lose confidence and interest in learning foreign languages, improving self efficiency is an important goal.