Relationship between L2 Motivational Self-system and Self-regulated Learning (SRL): A Case of EFL Learners in Iran

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Abstract

This study investigated whether there exists a noteworthy correlation between the L2 motivational self-system of Iranian EFL learners and utilization of self-regulation learning (SRL). A sample of 60 Iranian EFL learners was selected based on convenience sampling strategy. To obtain the necessary data, the researchers discussed the research goals with the language school's supervisor and obtained their consent. The researchers then explained the purpose and procedure to the participants who decided to take part in the research. The participants took the Motivational Self Questionnaire and Self-Regulated Language Learning Questionnaire. Pearson correlation suggested that learners' L2 motivational self-system had a statistically positive correlation with their self-regulation strategy use. Moreover, the analyzed data showed that there was a statistically strong positive relation between learners' score on ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and attitudes to L2 learning, with their score on self-regulation strategy use. The study has implications for English language education programs, bringing into focus that educators need to be aware of the significance of personal characteristics including motivation and SRL strategies in language teaching. Teachers can help learners develop their L2 motivational self-system and self-regulation strategies by creating a supportive learning environment and providing chances for students to take ownership of their learning and regulate their progress.

***Keywords*:** Attitudes to Learning, Ideal L2 Self, Motivational Self-system, Ought-to L2 Self, Self-regulation Strategy Use

INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged that motivation plays a critical role in language learning achievement and success. According to Duttweiler (1986), motivation acts as a driving force that stimulates, guides, and maintains improved performance. Students possessing high levels of motivation, positive self-image, and self-esteem, but low levels of anxiety, tend to achieve more success in SLA. On the contrary, low motivation levels, lack of self-confidence, and high anxiety levels can construct an emotional barrier, referred to as the “affective filter,” to hinder

language acquisition (Krashen, 1985). Calling into question the notion of cognitive-centeredness, some researchers mentioned that motivation has a significant role in language acquisition, in addition to diverse affective factors (Brown, 1987; Horwitz, 1988).

Motivation is a complicated, multifaceted notion that has been identified as a key element significantly impacting researchers' achievement in acquiring a second language (Oxford, 2001). Motivation fuels the desire to study L2 and keep up with the subsequent learning process (Dornyei, 2005). Zimmerman (2008) argues that motivation is deemed a crucial aspect of SRL, and without it, achieving SRL is considerably more difficult.

Some studies have associated motivation with self-regulation (Ushioda, 2006). For example, Tabachnick, Miller, and Relyea (2008) highlighted that learners' instrumental motivation is intimately connected to the employment of self-regulation strategies. Some researchers contended that powerful instrumental objectives and international posture, along with positive future self-guides, are requirements to be met for effective utilization of self-regulatory strategies (Kormos & Csizer, 2014). McWhaw and Abrami (2001) argued that students' interest influences how they make use of metacognitive strategies. Learners' intrinsic desire to pick up a foreign language or culture is frequently cited as a key component in maintaining long-term efforts in the L2 acquisition (Lamb, 2007).

SRL is characterized by students' active participation, engaging motivationally, metacognitively, and behaviorally in their own learning journey (Zimmerman, 2000). Learners who are equipped with self-regulatory strategies, based on Zimmerman (2002), decide, perform, and control their own activities. Self-control is the grease that keeps the gears in long-term learning abilities turning. Alongside its distinct effects on the learner, self-regulated learning raises significant illuminating concerns for teacher-learner engagement. Self-regulated learners are active individuals who are very interested in recognizing their own strengths and shortcomings, as well as looking for and getting access to learning-related knowledge (Zimmerman, 2002).

Motivation and self-regulation have received considerable attention as two important variables in identifying individual variations among L2 learners (Teng & Zhang, 2017). Although a substantial number of studies have focused on L2 motivation as well as self-regulation learning, the notions of motivational variables and self-regulation strategy constructs have remained unexplored (Kormos & Csizer, 2014), and the two research constructs still need to be analyzed in a systematic and comprehensive manner (Tseng, Chang, & Cheng, 2015). Several renowned linguists have suggested that investigating the correlation between learners' motivation and SRL is deemed a hot issue for research (Cohen & Griffiths, 2015). Therefore, the aim of the current research is to shed light on whether there is any significant interplay between L2 motivational self-system and self-regulation within the EFL context of Iran. As such, the following research questions were generated:

Research Question One: Is there any statistically significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' L2 motivational self-system and their self-regulation strategy?

Research Question Two: Is there any statistically significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' ideal L2 self and their self-regulation strategy?

Research Question Three: Is there any statistically significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' ought-to L2 self and their self-regulation strategy?

Research Question Four: Is there any statistically significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' attitude toward L2 learning and their self-regulation strategy?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivation

Dornyei (2001) noted that motivation accounts for the drive behind people's selecting a specific activity, the duration of time that they are willing to dedicate to practicing it, and the intensity of effort that they put into it. Such aspects of motivation are closely related to setting and achieving goals, as well as initiating and sustaining learning efforts. The perspectives of Gardner and Lambert (1972), which highlighted the importance of culture and attitude toward language learning, initiated a new phase of inquiry on language learning motivation. More particularly, motivation model and social framework proposed by Gardner had significant influences on research on language learning motivation and were integrated into most research prior to the 1990s (Dornyei, 2001).

In the following decades, it was realized that Gardner's approach was not capable of digesting the novel visualizations of social identity, which led to the emergence of further research on motivation. Cognitive constructs were found to be important in educational settings, and researchers began to apply them to second language teaching. This paved the way for the cognitive perspective, the attribution theories, and, the self-determination theory to appear. Such frameworks accentuated the notion of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation has to do with personal satisfaction of learning as well as a desire for self-fulfillment, whereas extrinsic motivation is associated with external factors including positive reinforcement, imposed rules, or optional performance (Dornyei, 2001). In the current era, the focus is on exploring how learners' social context, identity, as well as view of the self play crucial roles in promoting second language motivation.

Dornyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System, which encapsulates the constructs of the Ideal L2 self, the Ought-to L2 self, and the L2 Learning experience, is one of the motivational theories. The Ideal L2 self is considered as an aspect of a person's Ideal self that is specific to the L2 (Dornyei, 2005), illustrating an Ideal picture of a second language learner that one desires. Being less-internalized, the Ought-to L2 self denotes the qualities people think they ought to attain as a consequence of obligations, responsibilities, and duties. Besides, Dornyei stated that L2 learning experience revolves around the attitudes of learners toward target language learning, and it is influenced by particular motivating forces associated with learning contexts and experiences (Dornyei, 2005).

Typology of Motivation

Integrative and Instrumental Motivation

Two kinds of motivation including integrative and instrumental have been proposed by Gardner and Lambert (1972). The former gives rise to the kind of learning taking place with the purpose of engaging with the culture of its speakers. The latter is the driving force behind learning the language to realize practical goals, namely finding jobs or advancing in careers. Such motivation types may influence and direct the paths and consequences of learning. Succinctly put, the integrative/instrumental motivation recommended by Gardner and Lambert (1972) plays beneficial roles in L2 learning (Cook, 2000).

In a similar vein, Ellis (1994) and Gardner (1985) presented the same dichotomy for integrative and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation occurs when learners yearns to be included as a part of a special group or culture. Instrumental motivation arises when learners look forward to plentiful advantages that they propose to possess while learning certain specific languages. Contrasting such kinds of motivation, the integrative motivation, according to Ellis (1994), is regarded as the superior and most desirable form of motivation. Integrative motivation is seen as more well-organized and appropriate. In sum, learners who are not driven

in an integrative or instrumental way have issues learning and acquiring knowledge of L2 within classes, and they find it difficult to master the language in general (Cook, 2000).

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Other issue in the realm of motivation is the concept of Self-Determination Theory, which was propounded by Ryan and Deci (2000). According to this theory, different types of motivation might be categorized and differentiated drawing upon the varying reasons, causes, or goals that support a behavior or achievement. In line with this theory, the crucial distinction is between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The former is reflected in a person's desire and excitement to undertake and engage in certain activities because they are intriguing and fascinating to them. Walker, Greene, and Mansell (2006) argued that students enjoying intrinsic motivation tend to stick to tough and complex issues and learn from mistakes and blunders. Moreover, intrinsic motivation is required for the process of integrating new knowledge with existing internal knowledge. However, extrinsic motivation is the inclination to get involved in tasks due to reasons which are not naturally connected to the tasks. This can be the prediction of prize or punishment, such as passing tests successfully and receiving high marks (Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci, 2006).

In sum, intrinsic motivation is the drive to carry out an activity for its own sake. In fact, individuals who possess intrinsic motivation engage in activities and conversations because they find pleasure in doing so. Yet, extrinsic motivation is a motivation to participate in activities with the aim of attaining a goal. Those who have an extrinsic motivation perform and carry out talks with the expectations that their efforts will bring about desirable outcomes as rewards, teacher appreciation, or punishment avoidance (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996).

The L2 Motivational Self-system

The Ideal Self, a concept introduced by Dornyei (2009) to reconstruct motivation with a focus of modern understandings of self and identity, has recently been included in motivational theories. Motivation comes from learners' urge to close the distance between their actual selves and ought-to L2 self. Dornyei (2005) proposed a model of motivation capturing three components:

The Ideal L2 Self: It is the desired self that students seek to achieve via acquiring the L2. It is associated with "the L2 specific facets of one's ideal self" (Dornyei, 2009, p. 235) and with students' aspirations, desires, and hopes. Its motivating power lies in that individuals wish to decrease the gap between their actual self and their ideal self (Dornyei & Chan, 2013).

Ought-to L2 Self: It is the self that students think they ought to become through picking up the target language. Regarding the ought-to L2 self, Dornyei (2009) highlighted that it assesses features that learners believe they should possess "in order to meet expectations or avoid possible negative outcomes" (p. 235). The negative consequences can disappoint important persons, such as peers and parents.

L2 Learning Experience: Dornyei (2005) referred to L2 learning experience as the characteristics of executive motivations that are linked to the immediate learning environments and experiences.

Motivational Self-System "attempts to respond to the problem that the changing reality of the twenty-first century poses for the Gardenarian concept of integrativeness, the notion of the native speaker, and learners' identification with native speakers" (Gardner, 1985, as cited in Kormos & Csizer 2008, p. 328).

Such a framework looks at how to deal with motivation in globalized cultures and contexts where English is the main communicative means and L2 community notions have

shifted dramatically. In other words, the spectrum of integrativeness needs to be explored in a broader context of the Ideal L2 Self, where English language might be identified with global communities (Csizer & Dornyei, 2005).

Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009) noted that the Ideal L2 self had positive relations with integrativeness. They demonstrated that the Ideal l2 self "achieved a better explanatory power toward learners' intended efforts than integrativeness did" (p. 78). Additionally, the Ideal L2 self has been deemed a prominent issue in similar studies. Ghapanchi, Khajavy, and Asadpour (2011) and Rajab, Far, and Etemadzadeh (2012) found that ideal L2 self was deemed the most important predictor of second language learning, whereas Islam, Lamb, and Chambers (2013) reported a significant relationship between the Ideal L2 self and perceptions toward English language learning and instrumentality. Dörnyei (2014) has argued that the Ideal L2 self is the most important dimension of L2 motivation, as it is the primary constituent that drives learners' motivation to learn a second language.

Regarding the L2 Learning experience, a number of researchers stated that it is a strong motivating component. The most significant predictors of intended efforts, according to Islam, Lamb, and Chambers (2013), are attitudes toward English language learning and the ideal L2 self. According to Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009), English learning experience was the most significant predictor of attempted efforts, meaning that students who enjoyed more positive experiences in learning English tend to put more efforts into their language learning.

Various research studies have reported different results with reference to the ought-to L2 self and its impacts on learners' motivation. The ought-to L2 self has often been reported to be weaker than its ideal L2 self (Papi, 2010). Some researchers confirmed that the ought-to L2 self has the least influence on intended efforts in comparison with the other dimensions of the L2MSS (Islam, Lamb, & Chambers, 2013). Based on Islam, Lamb, and Chambers' (2013) study, the ought-to L2 self has less contribution to motivated learning performance, although there might be variability across various contexts and cultures. For example, in Asia, where there may be more pressure from family and school to learn English language, the ought-to L2 self has been identified a more crucial factor (Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009).

Self-regulation

Ertmer, Newby, and MacDougall (1996) viewed Self-regulation as a person's capability and motivation to use, control, and assess varied learning strategies so as to facilitate knowledge acquisition. SRL is described as self-regulated emotions, beliefs, and behaviors that are guided in a systematic fashion toward the accomplishment of learners' own objectives (Schunk, 1989). In brief, SRL is seen as a naturally self-initiated, constructive learning mechanism (Winne, 1995).

A broad definition of SRL refers to a learning process which is directed by metacognition, strategic action, and incentive to learn (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005; Perry, Phillips, & Hutchinson, 2006). Such a definition suggests that self-regulatory learning or behavior comprises three components: metacognition, strategy use, and motivation. There are three key characteristics that are typically found in most conceptualizations of self-regulated learning (Zimmerman, 1990):

1. Systematic employment of metacognitive motivational as well as behavioral strategies

2. Self-oriented feedback loop nature of learning. Such a process has a periodical nature in which learners control adjust their learning approaches and strategies.

3. The how and the why students select to utilize specific strategies and responses.

The particular features frequently associated with self-regulated learners have to do with their motivational thoughts and perceptions, cognitive strategy use, and metacognitive competence. Self-regulated students are considered to keep adaptable attitudes and beliefs that arouse learners' eagerness to become involved in academic work. Such learners have a tendency to be self-efficacious persons who concentrate on enhancing their skills and proficiencies and regards the materials they are learning in educational contexts as worthwhile, engaging, and relevant to their goals (Wigfield, 1994).

SRL is viewed as a process in which learners coordinate and deal with their learning, and reflect over their beliefs and thoughts, emotional state (i.e., anxious feelings), behavior (how to tackle learning tasks), as well as the learning milieu (Zimmerman, 1998). Furthermore, the incentive to learn can be controlled and modified consciously (Winne & Hadwin, 2008). Such a conceptualization of SRL indicates considerable overlapping with motivation and autonomy, as demonstrated by self-determination approach, which argues that SRL is related to independent motivation and is described by a sort of choice in one's actions and decisions (Reeve et al., 2008).

Self-regulated learners, on the other hand, are thought to have a broad repertoire of cognitive techniques that they may employ quickly and effectively to complete various academic tasks. These learners, according to Alexander, Graham, and Harris (1998), are adept at a number of organizing, rehearsal, and elaboration techniques. Moreover, self-regulated learners are conceived to be metacognitively aware concerning monitoring cognitive processes and strategy utilization (Zimmerman, 1994). In addition, they are competent in adjusting their learning behavior based on changing contextual and situational circumstances (Zimmerman, 1989). To sum up, such learners possess high degrees of awareness of various cognitive learning strategies and are capable of choosing, monitoring, and regulating their strategy employment when involved in academic work.

The Relation between Motivation and Self-regulation

Motivation can be linked to self-regulation in various ways, according to Zimmerman (2008). Motivation may be a precursor to SRL since it increases enthusiasm in learning and using self-regulation methods. Motivation can also mediate self-regulation since it increases the chance of using self-regulation in activities. Furthermore, because learners become increasingly interested in academic activities as their abilities develop, motivation can be a companion of SRL outcomes. Finally, self-regulated learning can result in increased motivation.

Researchers have demonstrated that inadequate self-regulatory knowledge can result in low motivation and poor learning outcomes (Schunk, 1994) and self-regulation strategies have a positive correlation with perception (Chang & Wu, 2003). Even though there are various approaches and frameworks of SRL, they share common assumptions that learners are capable of monitoring motivation, cognition, and behavior actively, and by engaging in diverse regulative mechanisms, they can attain their aims and improve their performance (Zimmerman, 1989). Self-regulation skills, according to researchers like Lindner and Harris (1993) and Zimmerman (1990), can enhance learning outcomes across different instructional approaches. Nevertheless, Schunk (1989) believes that self-regulatory development is not treated as an unconscious process for different students; SRL does not develop automatically as individuals age, nor is it absorbed from the immediate environment in a passive manner. Attempts to employ constructive strategies with the aim of paving the way for fostering SRL skills including active learning in authentic contexts, cooperative efforts, and reflective thinking are suggested (Shulman, 1992).

Drawing upon self-determination theory approach by Ryan and Deci (2000), there are different classifications of motivation, each with varying levels of autonomy. Learners who are self-directed and motivated experience volition and psychological freedom. They are engaged in learning tasks because of their own interest or enjoyment in the task (intrinsic motivation) or because they recognize the value of the task in achieving personal aims (identified motivation). On the contrary, when learners score high on controlled motivation, they tend to undergo pressure. Such a pressure can come from either internal or external sources. For example, some learners may feel pressure to engage in a task to avoid negative emotions of shamefulness or guilt (known as introjected motivation), while others may feel pressure from an external source such as teachers and parents who have requested or required them to complete the task (known as external motivation).

Previous studies illustrate that motivation investments marked by higher levels of independent motivation in relation to controlled motivation accomplish improved performance and self-regulatory achievement results. In the research conducted by Vansteenkiste et al. (2009), the good quality group gained a higher score for cognitive processing, metacognitive self-regulation, and accomplishment in comparison to the counterpart group. Even though, their study showed that motivation investments featured by higher levels of independent motivation are connected with certain self-regulated learning skills, it is not clear whether such investments are interrelated with self-monitoring strategy appropriateness and accuracy.

Paas, et al. (2005) investigated the relationship between motivation investments and training efficiency, and reported that that learners with higher independent motivation are likely to put efforts into the tasks while receiving the training. Learners enjoying motivation investments featured by a sense of independent motivation probably notice the modeling examples more, and thus leading to more efficient learning outcomes. At times the training is influential, it can help to make the dual task of regulatory strategies and problem-solving less cognitively challenging by breaking down complex tasks into smaller manageable parts. As such, it is expected that after self-regulation learning training, learners with motivational profiles, reveal more accurate performance monitoring, a deeper learning outcome, and lower experiences of mental efforts.

Empirical Research Findings

Within the realm of language learning, empirical research has attempted to examine the potential relations between motivational factors and self-regulatory constructs. For example, Chen, Chen, and Yang (2018) developed a vocabulary learning application in English having SRL mechanisms to help students in improving their self-regulated capabilities and enhance their learning performance and motivation in a dynamic learning situation. The findings of the study showed that the learners in the treatment group significantly had a better performance compared with the control group regarding learning performance and motivation. Furthermore, the learners who made use of the app displayed better learning performance and motivation irrespective of gender. Moreover, the findings confirmed that the app was more advantageous to field-dependent students than to field-independent students regarding learning performance and motivation.

Csizer and Tanko (2017) gave a description of self-regulatory control strategy in English majors in a writing course by constructing learners' profiles considering these variables and pursued to explore the correlation between control strategy, motivational tendencies, and self-efficacious attitudes. To obtain such objectives, a questionnaire was developed and distributed among 222 junior students studying English language at a university situated in Hungary in order to collect data regarding learners' control strategy use and their dispositions toward second language motivation, and their writing self-efficacy beliefs. According to

correlational and cluster analytical measurements, the findings indicated that despite students were encouraged to promote their competence in academic writing, merely a third of sample appeared to enjoy the capability and eagerness to monitor their writing processes knowing that SRL was associated with higher motivation levels and self-efficacious beliefs and lower writing anxiety levels.

Zheng, Liang, Li, and Tsai (2018) put forward a structural relation framework that incorporated L2 learners' motivation within online self-regulatory learning. Questionnaires were developed by the researchers including Online Language Learning Motivation (OLLM) and Online Self-regulated English Learning (OSEL) and were distributed among 293 students in China's higher education. The study demonstrated that OLLM was comprised of five elements, notably online second language learning experiences, cultural dispositions, instrumentality-prevention, instrumentality-promotion, and the expectations of others. Yet, OSEL was made up of 6 elements: setting goals, managing time, structuring milieu, seeking help, using task strategy, and practicing self-assessment. The analyzed data indicated that learners having optimistic future images of L2 and an integrative keenness in the culture of the L2 were inclined to hold deeper self-regulation potential with respect to online learning milieus. On the contrary, learners who learned English in order to prevent negative academic consequences had less motivation to accomplish online SRL. It is also worthwhile to state the negative correlation between second language students' previous online learning experience and SRL effort. Students enjoying positive experiences in online learning had the propensity to be resilient and autonomous in SRL processes.

Mega, Ronconi, and De Beni (2014) put forward a theoretical framework connecting emotional state, SRL, and motivation to academic success. The framework was pilot tested with 5805 learners. Learners filled out three self-report questionnaires, including the Emotions Questionnaire, the SRL Questionnaire, and the Motivation Questionnaire. The results were in line with the hypotheses and seemed to advocate the facets of the proposed framework. The structural equation framework indicated learners' emotions had an impact on their SRL and their motivation, and thus influenced academic success. Therefore, SRL and motivation mediated the impacts of emotions on academic success. In addition, experiencing positive emotions reinforced academic success at times they were accompanied by SRL and motivation.

Ning and Downing (2010) embraced the social cognitive view and scrutinized the mutual interrelationship between motivation and SRL variables in impacting academic achievement. Drawing upon the analyzed data gained from undergraduate university students in Hong Kong, a structural equation model recognized important mutual impacts whereby learners' self-regulation anticipated their consequent motivation. After previous academic achievement was controlled for, learners' motivation was considered the most important factor in promoting academic achievement.

Kavani and Amjadiparvar (2018) carried out a study with the purpose of examining the impact of strategy-based instruction (SBI) on motivation, SRL, and reading comprehension capability of EFL students in Iran. In so doing, 55 EFL students were chosen and positioned randomly to treatment and control groups. Consequently, the two groups were requested to complete the motivation and SRL questionnaires as well as reading comprehension tests as pretests. Then both groups were presented with 12 sessions teaching time. The learners in the treatment group were taught 6 types of reading strategies involving making associations, raising questions, anticipating, making visualizations, monitoring, and summarizing. Lastly, the reading comprehension test and the two questionnaires were distributed among both groups as the posttest, and the scores were computed using MANCOVA. The study demonstrated that strategy-based instruction had significant impacts on comprehension, motivation, and SRL.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were 60 Iranian females intermediate EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners, aged between 12 and 15 years. They were English language school learners who had been learning the English language for 2 years. They were selected adopting convenience sampling procedures, meaning that they were located through their availability and willingness to participate. Attempts were made to have participants who did not have any experience of spending time in English speaking countries.

Materials

L2 Motivational Self Questionnaire: The L2 Motivational Self Questionnaire was given to the students (L2MSQ). The 3 components from the L2 Motivational Self, namely the Ideal L2 self (6 items), the Ought-to L2 self (6 items), and the L2 Learning experience (6 items), were the three major variables of the questionnaire. The questionnaire items were developed and adapted by Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009). The items were presented through five-point Likert scales, ranging from 1 indicating 'not at all' to 5 indicating 'very much'. Furthermore, according to Cronbach's alpha, the internal consistency of the scores was computed. The findings showed a high index of consistency ($\alpha = .90$), indicating that the instrument was reliable.

Self-Regulated Language Learning Questionnaire (SRLLQ): This scale was created and validated by Salehi and Jafari (2015) to measure EFL learners' self-regulatory learning behavior. The instrument comprises 13 sub-categories with 41 items: intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, locus of control orientation, attitude, organization, memory strategy use, self-evaluation, self-monitoring, goal setting and planning, concentration and sustained attention, effort regulation, environment regulation, and help seeking. The items were in a four-point Likert scale covering the following items from Not Important to Essential. Cronbach's alpha consistency was also utilized to assess the reliability of the instrument. The questionnaire's reliability in this analysis was calculated to be .71, which is acceptable.

Procedure

Initially, the researchers discussed the research aims with the supervisor of the language school in order to obtain their consent. Next, the instructors explained the aim and procedure of this study to the participants who agreed to participate in the research. The participants were provided with the L2 Motivational Self Questionnaire and the SRL Questionnaire, which they were requested to complete.

RESULTS

To deal with the first research question exploring any statistically significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' L2 motivational self-system and their self-regulation strategies, Pearson correlation was calculated. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was run to assess the normal distribution of learners' score on L2 Motivational Self-System and Self-Regulated Language Learning.

Table 1

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for Learners' Score on L2 Motivational Self-system and Self-regulation Strategy Use

		L2 motivation	Self-regulation
N		60	60
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	59.0667	125.9333
	Std. Deviation	11.61803	23.28880
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.166	.142
	Positive	.166	.142
	Negative	-.148	-.098
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.284	1.099
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.074	.179

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

Based on Table 1, the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test ensures the normal distribution of learners' score on L2 Motivational Self-System and Self-Regulated Language Learning (p= .07, .17, p> .05).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Score on L2 Motivational Self-system and their Self-regulation Strategy Use

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Self-regulation	125.93	23.28	60
Motivation	59.06	11.61	60

Table 3

Correlation between Learners' Score on L2 Motivational Self-system and Self-regulation Strategy Use

		Motivation
Self-regulation	Pearson Correlation	.869**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 depicts that learners' L2 motivational self-system was in statistically strong positive correlation with learners' self-regulation ($r = .86$, $p < 0.05$). To address the second research question seeking possible correlation between learners' ideal L2 self and self-regulation strategy use, another Pearson correlation was run.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Score on Ideal L2 Self and their Self-regulation Strategy Use

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Self-regulation	125.93	23.28	60
Ideal L2 self	20.45	3.86	60

Table 5

Correlation between Learners' Score on Ideal L2 Self and Self-regulation Strategy Use

		Ideal L2 self
Self-regulation	Pearson Correlation	.846**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows that there was a strong positive relationship between learners' ideal L2 self and their self-regulation (r= .84, p< 0.05).

To address the third research question investigating any significant relationship between learners' ought-to L2 self and self-regulation strategy use, again Pearson correlation was run.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Score on Ought to L2 Self and their Self-regulation Strategy Use

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Self-regulation	125.93	23.28	60
Ought to L2 self	18.78	3.97	60

Table 7

Correlation between Learners' Score on Ideal L2 Self and Self-regulation Strategy Use

		Ought to L2 self
Self-regulation	Pearson Correlation	.760**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 illustrates that learners' ideal L2 self was in statistically strong positive relations with their self-regulation (r= .76, p< 0.05).

To investigate the fourth research question exploring the significant relationships between Iranian learners' attitude to L2 learning and their self-regulation strategies in reading comprehension, another Pearson correlation was run.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Score on Attitude to L2 Learning and their Self-regulation Strategy Use

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Self-regulation	125.93	23.28	60
Attitude to L2 learning	19.66	5.70	60

Table 9

Correlation between Learners' Score on Attitude to L2 Learning and Self-regulation Strategy Use

		Attitude to L2 learning
Self-regulation	Pearson Correlation	.745**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As Table 9 shows, learners' attitude to L2 learning and their self-regulation strategy use was in statistically strong positive relationship ($r= .74$, $p< 0.05$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of Pearson correlation demonstrated a significant positive correlation between Iranian EFL learners' self-regulation strategy use and L2 motivational self-system. Furthermore, EFL learners' employment of self-regulation strategies correlated statistically positively with their ideal L2 self, ought to L2self, and learners' attitude to L2 learning. The obtained results empirically affirmed the theoretical postulations on the correlation between SRL and motivation (Pintrich, 2000), the positive impact of the self-regulatory cycle on motivation to keep on learning (Zimmerman, Bonner, & Kovach, 1996), and the main role of utilizing cognitive and metacognitive strategies in academic motivation development (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2005).

The correlation between motivation and self-regulation strategy use might be explained by asserting that motivation is vital to SRL and is claimed to establish the employment of self-regulated strategies. Motivation is usually taken as a pre-requisite for utilizing skills including monitoring and regulation of study. Learners must feel confident or self-efficacious to carry out the activities. If learners believe they can fulfill the academic activities, they might employ

a variety of self-regulation strategies. Learners who are uninterested or do not find the activities relevant, valuable, and engaging are less likely to adopt self-regulation strategies than learners who find the activities interesting and significant. Lastly, learners who are concentrated on purposes of learning purposes, comprehending, and self-improvement tend to be more self-regulating than learners following other purposes including attempting to look more intelligent than their peers, or attempting not to look foolish.

Self-regulation which is marked by learners' active involvement in the process of learning has a significantly positive correlation with learners' positive attitudes toward teachers, the syllabi, the classmates, and the success experiences. Furthermore, self-regulation had a significant positive relationship with Ideal L2 self which is the desired self that students want to become through acquiring the L2, as well as Ought to L2 self which is the self that students feel they need to become through acquiring the target language.

Zimmerman (2008) made the association between motivation and self-regulation clear in various manners. Motivation can be a predecessor to self-regulation since it arouses enthusiasm in learning as well as self-regulation strategy use. Also, it can arbitrate self-regulation since motivation can boost the likelihood that individuals will utilize self-regulation in activities. Furthermore, motivation can be an attendant of SRL consequences since learners become more interested in academic work as their proficiencies are developed. Finally, motivation can come as a result of SRL.

Some L2 educators consider motivation to be probably one of the most significant features that learners bring to learning activities (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Research within L2 motivation is of importance since it permits us to delve into the underlying factors regarding the success or failure of language learning. Such knowledge can be beneficial for language instructors and curriculum developers in attaining a more profound understanding of motivational mechanisms in language learning and reinforcing learning milieus that facilitates learners' achievement (Ushioda, 2011).

The findings of the current research can be of both theoretical and applied values. More importantly, at the applied level, the findings could contribute to the evaluation of the pedagogical applicability of self-regulation strategies and motivational techniques. As Dornyei (2014) contended, L2 teachers are not well provided with the essential tools to motivate their learners. The results could possibly equip language teachers to practice explicit instruction with learners on self-regulation strategies and to provide them with exercise. Moreover, they can enhance their learners' motivation with a variety of techniques to select from according to learners' personal tastes, characteristics, and needs.

Investigating this issue further could present educators with deeper understandings of how to aid their learners in achieving desired academic progress. It can yield one of the first reports regarding the interplay between self-regulation strategy employment and motivational self-system of learners. This study can provide teachers with further tools of motivation enhancement by dwelling on the techniques of the self-regulatory learning.

Another possible implication of the present study is to incorporate self-regulated learning strategies in EFL materials and textbooks with the purpose of increasing opportunities for learners to self-regulate. The incorporation of activities and tasks which center on SRL in course books can contribute to learners' deeper engagement in their learning, assist them to be agents of their learning, and foster their independence which demands certain requirements including motivation (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998).

The participants of the study were restricted to Iranian students in high school who were chosen based on convenience sampling procedure. Therefore, the generalizability of the study

to larger populations may be under question. Another limitation was the fact that this study exclusively investigated female learners since the language school where the study was conducted was only for female learners.

Furthermore, the data collection instrument was confined to questionnaires. Even though, according to Dornyei (2007), utilizing questionnaires can bring about a large body of data in a short span of time, the collected data are rather superficial which confines the depth of investigation. Future studies can draw on qualitative methodologies such as reflective journals and observation to corroborate the validity of findings and illustrate a much clearer picture.

Acknowledgments

The authors express gratitude to the participants who dedicated their time and effort to participate in the study.

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