



EFL Teachers' Perspectives Towards Self-regulation in Language Learning¹

Gülşah YILMAZ² Seçil TÜMEN AKYILDIZ³

To cite this article:

Yılmaz, G., Tümen-Akyıldız, S. (2023). EFL Teachers' Perspectives Towards Self-regulation in Language Learning [İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Dil Öğrenmede Öz-düzenlemeye Yönelik bakış Açılıarı] *Electronic Journal of Education Sciences*, [Elektronik Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi], 12(24), 152-183. DOI:

Research article

Received: 2023-08-07 Accepted: 2023-09-11

Abstract

The learner-centered approach of self-regulated learning (SRL), long regarded as an effective approach in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), encompasses both cognitive and affective components. As the world changes rapidly, learners need to develop the skills and strategies they need to learn independently. SRL is therefore essential to prepare students for the challenges of 21st-century life and the workplace by preparing them to become lifelong learners. Educators play a key role in promoting and nurturing SRL in their classrooms, since they are among the most important stakeholders guiding students in the learning process. The beliefs of EFL teachers are crucial in this regard. In the context of EFL in Turkey, there are comparatively few studies on SRL. In order to better understand Turkish EFL teachers' perspectives on self-regulated learning, this study looked into their perspectives. This study is a qualitative research inquiry that aims to explore the viewpoints of Turkish EFL instructors regarding SRL in the context of language instruction. The study included a total of 15 EFL teachers who were employed at secondary schools located in Elazığ. The study's findings yielded insights into the perspectives and attitudes of Turkish EFL teachers about SRL. The results of the study indicated the presence of some misconceptions and a limited understanding of SRL among EFL teachers. Furthermore, it was determined that their behaviors and beliefs exhibit a lack of consistency. Finally, factors that affect teachers' beliefs about SRL on a context-level, a teacher-level, a student-level, and a parent-level were examined.

Keywords: Self-regulated learning, EFL, teachers' perspectives.

¹ This article is derived from the thesis titled SECONDARY SCHOOL TURKISH EFL TEACHERS' BELIEFS IN SELF-REGULATED LEARNING, which was successfully completed by the 1st author under the supervision of the 2nd author.

²  Gülşah YILMAZ, MA, g.cebecioglu@hotmail.com, Teacher of the English language employed by the Ministry of National Education

³  Seçil TÜMEN AKYILDIZ, Associate Professor, Fırat University



İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Dil Öğrenmede Öz-düzenlemeye Yönelik bakış Açıları⁴

Gülşah YILMAZ⁵ Seçil TÜMEN AKYILDIZ⁶

Atf:

Yılmaz, G., Tümen-Akyıldız, S. (2023). EFL Teachers' Perspectives Towards Self-regulation in Language Learning [İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Dil Öğrenmede Öz-düzenlemeye Yönelik bakış Açıları] *Electronic Journal of Education Sciences*, [Elektronik Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi], 12(24), 84-108. DOI:

Araştırma Makalesi

Geliş Tarihi: 2023-08-07

Kabul Tarihi: 2023-09-11

Öz

İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretiminde etkili bir yaklaşım olarak kabul edilen öz düzenlemeli öğrenme hem bilişsel hem de duygusal öğeleri içeren ve öğretimde öğrenci merkezliliği savunan geniş bir kavramdır. Günümüzün hızla değişen dünyasında başarılı olmak için öğrenenler bağımsız öğrenme becerileri ve stratejileri geliştirirler. Bu nedenle, öğrencileri 21. yüzyıla uyum sağlayabilecek yaşam boyu öğrenenler olmaya hazırlamak için öz düzenlemeli öğrenim kavramının üzerinde durulması gerekmektedir. Öğretmenler, öğrenme sürecinde öğrencilere rehberlik eden en önemli paydaşlardan biri olduğundan, sınıflarında öz düzenlemeli öğrenmeye teşvik etme ve desteklemedeki rollerinin farkında olmalıdırlar. Bu bağlamda, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin inançlarını anlamak oldukça önemlidir. Türkiye’de dil alanında yapılan öz düzenlemeli öğrenme çalışmaları oldukça nadirdir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öz-düzenlemeli öğrenmeye ilişkin inançlarını araştırmaktır. Çalışma nitel verilerin analiz edildiği bir araştırmadır. Görüşmelerin katılımcılarını Elâzığ ilindeki ortaokullarda görev yapan 15 İngilizce öğretmeni oluşturmuştur. Çalışmanın sonuçları, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öz düzenlemeli öğrenmeyi akademik başarı için değerli ve gerekli bulduğunu ve öğrenme ortamının öz düzenlemeli öğrenmenin geliştirilmesinde kolaylaştırıcı rolünü kabul ettiğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öz-düzenlemeli öğrenme hakkında bazı kavram yanlışlarına ve bilgi eksikliklerine sahip olduğu bulunmuştur. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin inançları ve uygulamaları arasında tutarsızlıklar olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Son olarak, öğretmenlerin öz düzenlemeli öğrenime ilişkin inançlarını etkileyen hem kolaylaştırıcı hem de kısıtlayıcı faktörler bağlam, öğretmen, öğrenci ve veli açısından analiz edilmiştir. Bu çalışma İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öz düzenlemeli öğrenme üzerine inanç ve düşüncelerini araştırmıştır ve değerli bulgularıyla alana katkı sağlayacaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Öz-düzenlemeli öğrenme, Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce, öğretmen görüşleri.

⁴ Bu makale 1. yazarın 2. yazar danışmanlığında başarıyla tamamladığı SECONDARY SCHOOL TURKISH EFL TEACHERS' BELIEFS IN SELF-REGULATED LEARNING adlı tezinden türetilmiştir.

⁵  Gülşah YILMAZ, Yüksek lisans, g.cebecioglu@hotmail.com, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığına Bağlı İngilizce Öğretmeni

⁶  Seçil TÜMEN AKYILDIZ, Doç.Dr., Fırat Üniversitesi

Introduction

Self-regulated learning (SRL), which is one of the most effective learning strategies, requires students to keep track of each stage of their learning, both cognitively and emotionally (Zimmerman, 2002). Self-regulated learners actively participate in the learning process and take ownership of every aspect of it, from planning to observing to assessing. Over the years, a variety of teaching and learning techniques have been created in response to the needs of the time and the learners. The educational paradigm has changed from knowledge-based learning to inquiry-based learning as a result of social and technological breakthroughs (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986). In both the learning environment and the actual world, a reformed concept has emerged that integrates knowledge, competencies, and attitudes with a broad perspective (Wolters, 2010). The learners should have fundamental competencies to adequately prepare for the future in a swiftly transforming, digital world (Mullin, 2011). In the modern age of technology, people must be equipped with the skills necessary to maintain changes by using critical thinking, questioning, generating solutions to problems, mastering effective communication, and moving forward in all facets of life (Lemke, Coughlin, Thadani & Martin, 2003). One of the key skills people need to develop to succeed in both school and the real world is the capacity to manage time, resources, and procedures (Perry, Phillips, & Hutchinson, 2006). Instead of teaching knowledge directly to students, educational institutions want to give them the tools they need to acquire information on their own (Saraç & Tarhan, 2020) so that the competencies can be permanent. The major goal is to empower students to become self-regulated learners by teaching them how to learn. SRL stresses the active participation of learners in every stage of their learning process, both cognitively and motivationally (Zimmerman, 1990; Pintrich, 1995; Boekaerts, 1999). It is regarded as one of the most successful learner-centered approaches. Learners take control of their own learning through the SRL process, in which teachers serve as facilitators (Zimmerman, 1990). By setting clear objectives and tracking and reviewing their progress, self-regulated learners take control over what they learn (Zimmerman, 2002). People are encouraged to be self-regulated individuals who can regulate all aspects of their lives in the digital society where there are no time or space boundaries. Self-regulated learners are able to motivate themselves and manage their time and resources in the workplace with ease thanks to the skills they developed in school. Simply put, learners develop self-regulatory skills adapted to real life better and equipped to continue learning throughout their lives (Lombaerts, Engels & Vanderfaeillie, 2007). The SRL strategies should be thoroughly explained at this stage.

SRL and Strategies

A procedure that requires students to plan each stage of their own learning, both cognitively and motivationally, is referred to as self-regulated learning (SRL), and it first appeared in educational psychology in the middle of the 1980s (Zimmerman, 2002). Since one of the key elements of SRL is motivation, learners should not only be intellectually prepared for the learning process but also driven to learn (Nota, Soresi, & Zimmerman, 2004). Without motivation, learning cannot be successful. Self-regulated learners, also known as motivated learners, actively participate in the learning process more and as a result exhibit higher academic accomplishment (Mega, Ronconi, and De Beni, 2014; Schunk, 2005). Self-regulated learners have the capacity to establish clear goals for themselves, monitor, and finally evaluate their own learning processes (Zimmerman, 1990). Through the SRL process, learners gradually develop their independence. Teachers initially serve as facilitators, providing feedback to

students to help them identify their strengths and weaknesses. Then, learners develop into self-regulatory people with awareness of their strengths and shortcomings and the capacity to control their behavior (Pintrich, 1995). When learners control all aspects of their learning, from motivation to metacognition, they are said to be masters of their learning. The good impact that SRL has on students' motivation and academic performance made it popular in the field of education (Boekaerts, 1999; Cleary & Zimmerman, 2002; Perry & Vandekamp, 2002; Schunk, 1996; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001). To fulfill the needs of the modern educational paradigm, particularly in the technologically sophisticated age of the 21st century, learners must develop self-regulation competences and strategies. In order to understand how SRL can be used effectively in both traditional and online learning environments, it would be necessary to analyze these strategies.

Learning strategies are the steps students take to improve their own learning. These steps are utilized to enable learning easier, faster, more fun, more effective, more self-directed, and more adaptable to new situations (Oxford, 1990). Strategies created based on SRL theory act as a bridge between theory and practice and create a roadmap for individuals to gain SRL skills (Broadbent & Poon, 2015). Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons (1986) define SRL strategies as “actions directed at acquiring information or skill that involve agency, purpose (goals), and instrumentality self-perceptions by a learner” (p.615). Pintrich (2000) refers to SRL strategies as a set of cognitive processes and actions that students use to achieve their learning objectives. While Zimmerman examines SRL strategies as a whole, Pintrich analyzes them in three parts: cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and resource-management strategies.

Theorists suggest that students should be taught how to best use SRL strategies to achieve better academic results. The strategy choices students use for SRL are affected by situational characteristics such as classroom context, home environment, social environment, and by personal factors such as the learner's self-efficacy belief, interests, and motivation (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). For this reason, it is very important to determine the appropriate strategies for the student in SRL. Successful implementation of SRL strategies facilitates effective learning and helps learners to achieve better academic results (Wang, Shannon & Ross, 2013; Pressley, Borkowski & Schneider, 1987).

Cognitive Strategies

According to Boekaerts (1996), cognitive strategies are related to the cognitive processes and behaviours that students use during their learning experiences to complete a task or achieve a goal. Broadbent & Poon (2015) define cognitive strategies as an attempt to help learners in acquiring knowledge. Learners use cognitive strategies to perform academic tasks or improve their social skills. The use of cognitive strategies increases learners' efficiency in any learning situation. Rehearsal, elaboration, organization, and critical thinking are techniques of cognitive strategies.

Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognition means being aware of one's own thinking processes and being able to control these processes Flavell (1979). In a similar vein, it was asserted by Pintrich and others (1991) that meta-cognitive strategies are those assisting pupils in regulating and controlling their cognition. The ability to regulate and control cognition allows learners to use information flexibly and in a situational manner when necessary. Wells (2007) distinguishes metacognitive regulation from metacognitive knowledge. The theorist elaborates on this position, claiming that metacognitive knowledge is about the learners' awareness of their own thinking and

strategies; on the other hand, the strategies used to adjust the situation of thinking are known as metacognitive regulation. Metacognitive strategies are classified as planning, monitoring, and regulating.

Resource-Management Strategies

Kuhl (1984) emphasizes the necessity of action control in the learning process in order to achieve goals as well as the use of learning strategies. Action control, which is called resource management strategies, requires learners to make optimal use of the resources in their environment. Pintrich and others (1991) specify these strategies as regulation of time and study environment, effort regulation, peer learning, and help-seeking.

SRL and Teacher as the Facilitator

Learners' taking responsibility for their learning is a popular topic in today's world where flexible and autonomous learning opportunities are provided. Learners equipped with self-regulation skills exhibit higher achievements both inside and outside of school (Boekaerts, 1999; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). Schools are encouraging students to have the knowledge and abilities required to thrive in the 21st century as a result (Mullin, 2011; Wagner, 2008). Education experts contend that rather than only presenting the fundamental material, teachers should also teach students how to think critically and learn. To become self-regulated learners who can plan and manage their own learning, students should be supported by their teachers, according to Randi (2004). Zimmerman (2002) asserts that teachers should be able to impart SRL to students in order to better prepare them for real-life circumstances (Randi, 2004). Scholars focus on teacher education and practice because of the vital role of self-regulation skills in learning (Spruce, 2012). In pre-service education programs, the SRL can be encouraged through teacher education programs, claim Kremer, Hayon, and Tillema (1999). In pre-service education programs, the SRL can be encouraged through teacher education programs. The learning environments in teacher preparation programs may be set up so that teachers can learn self-regulation techniques and then apply those techniques to draw lessons from their own experiences (Randi, 2004). Similar to this, Paris and Winograd (2003) assert that when SRL is used in teacher training programs, teachers become more equipped to understand themselves as learners. Teachers are therefore more capable to design lessons that encourage students to self-regulate their learning through self-reflection. Similar to this, Paris and Winograd (2003) assert that when SRL is used in teacher training programs, teachers become more equipped to understand themselves as learners. Teachers are therefore more capable to design lessons that encourage students to self-regulate their learning through self-reflection. It can be stated that teachers are expected to modify the learning experiences and learning settings in the classroom in order to promote self-regulation. (Moos & Ringdal, 2012; Randi, 2004).

Numerous research (Randi, 2004; Perry & Vandekamp, 2002; Kremer, et. al., 1999) have shown how crucial the teacher is in encouraging self-regulation in the classroom. Examining the instructors' incentives for SRL reveals that both their knowledge of SRL and their attitudes about it play a significant role in the educational inquiry (Lombaerts et al., 2007; Spruce, 2012; Dignath-van Ewijk & van der Werf, 2012). Research has demonstrated that educators who encourage student SRL in the classroom are more likely to hold such ideas (Lombaerts et al. 2009). Upon this, with the help of their teachers, students create learning beliefs about certain courses. These beliefs have an impact on the students' levels of mastery

and performance approach objectives, self-efficacy, and achievement (Muis & Foy, 2010; Tsai, 2002; Johnston, 2001).

Although there is a wealth of research on the beneficial impact of teacher belief on SRL (Lombaerts et al., 2009; Pajares, 1992; Nespor, 1987; Muis & Foy, 2010), other studies (Dignath-van Ewijk & van der Werf 2012; Spruce & Bol 2015; Lau, 2013) have yielded inconsistent results. These researchers' findings show that despite teachers' positive opinions about SRL, they do not implement SRL education practices in their classrooms. According to Dignath-van Ewijk and van der Werf (2012), this mismatch resulted from teachers' insufficient understanding of SRL. Teachers can't encourage kids to use SRL if they don't completely understand how it works. It should not be overlooked that the most effective learning occurs when the teacher serves as an example for the students. The academic background of instructors is also said to shape their beliefs (Hollingsworth, 1989; Farrell, 1999). That implies that the use of effective strategies like SRL is constrained by teachers' commitment to their prior experiences (Mohamed, 2006). However, Spruce and Bol (2015) point out that teachers' readiness to implement SRL tactics in the classroom is impacted by students' inadequacy in utilizing SRL skills. Lau (2013), who views SRL as an effective method for students, echoes this idea.

Numerous scholars have also stressed the importance of SRL in language learning (Andrade & Bunker, 2009; Chen, Wang, & Chen, 2014; Zheng, Liang, Li, & Tsai 2018). According to Holec (1979), independent language learners fully assume responsibility for the learning process, from establishing goals to monitoring and evaluating it. The grammatical, lexical, and phonological forms to be studied are shaped by the goals language learners choose based on their needs. The motivational component of self-regulated learning is just as crucial to language learning as the cognitive and metacognitive components, as it aids students in addressing the affective barriers to learning. Compared to other areas and academic topics like math, physics, and music, SRL research in EFL is scarce in Turkey. While Cebesoy (2013) examined pre-service science teachers' perceptions of SRL, Celik and Gundogdu (2020) looked at self-regulation and self-efficacy perceptions in mathematics teacher candidates. On the other hand, Akyüzlüer (2014) looked into the SRL abilities of prospective music teachers. Researchers Saraç and Turhan (2020) and Zembat and Yılmaz (2018) looked into the ways in which preschool teachers promoted self-regulation in their classrooms. The awareness of SRL techniques among elementary school teachers as well as their perceptions of their own efficacy were also examined by Tanrıseven (2013).

In Turkey, there are few SRL studies in EFL. There are studies on SRL addressing prospective teachers in the Turkish context (Güneş, 2023; Tümen-Akyıldız & Donmuş-Kaya, 2021; Karacan, Yıldız & Atay, 2020; Zer & Akçayolu, 2021; Yüce, 2019); however, the current study is unique because it is the first to examine in-service EFL teachers' beliefs in SRL. Last but not least, studies by Gömleksiz and Demiralp (2012) and Özdemir and Önal (2021) that looked at pre-service teachers' SRL beliefs and the impact of various variables on such views added to the literature. As already stated, there is a paucity of research that specifically examines the self-regulated learning perspectives of in-service EFL teachers. The concept of language learning autonomy, as defined by the Common European Framework (Council of Europe, 2001), encompasses the acquisition of necessary communication skills and the cultivation of knowledge and abilities essential for becoming a proficient autonomous learner. Since, self-regulated language learning refers to a dynamic and constructive process wherein learners proactively assume responsibility for their own learning endeavors. Examining the perspectives and ideologies of the instructional authority is vital, as they have a pivotal role as key

stakeholders in the educational journey, assuming the role of mentors for the students. The researchers conducted an investigation with the aim of contributing to the advancement of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) community, as there was a lack of teachers' perspectives on Self-Regulated Learning (SRL). The objective of this study is to determine the perceptions of in-service EFL instructors on SRL in the context of EFL training. Consistent with the objective of the study, the research question was established in the following manner:

1-What does SRL in EFL mean to Turkish EFL teachers?

Methodology

The social sciences attempt to show many approaches to comprehending social cases (Jackson, Drummond, & Camara, 2007). Human experiences and thoughts are the primary focus of qualitative studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). For the purpose of enhancing the research, participants in qualitative studies are expected to provide in-depth comments regarding their experiences (Jackson et al., 2007). In order to acquire comprehensive information on a particular situation, this study has been constructed as a case study (Creswell, 2007). The use of a case study design was motivated by its ability to provide comprehensive and thorough sources of information that are abundant in contextual richness (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). The consideration of context is a crucial element. Merriam (1998) asserts that while examining a specific phenomenon inside a case study, it is not feasible to isolate the phenomenon from its surrounding context. Nevertheless, it is important to comprehend the SRL context as an integral component of the EFL research endeavor. Sanders (1981) posits that case studies serve as a valuable tool for comprehending the intricacies of events, projects, and programs, as well as for uncovering contextual attributes that can provide insights into a particular issue or object (p. 44). Therefore, to understand the SRL context in the field of EFL, the comprehensive interview questions were prepared.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Selecting volunteers willingly is the initial attempt to demonstrate the validity of the study. Giving participants the option to decline research participation Giving participants the option to decline research participation is one strategy to increase the study's credibility, according to Shenton (2004). In terms of transferability, a study's findings might be applicable to different situations (Merriam, 1998). Merriam also (1998) posits that transferability refers to the external validity of a study's findings, indicating its potential applicability to different contexts or populations. However, Shenton (2004) argued that the generalizability of findings from a qualitative study with a limited sample size is limited and cannot be extrapolated to other contexts and people. Given that the results are limited in scope to the persons involved in the study. This study does not make a definitive claim that the perspectives expressed by the participants are representative of the broader population, since it acknowledges the influence of their country-specific circumstances and individual factors. In order to be trusted, the researcher accurately described the procedure, as Shenton (2004) suggested. The guidelines to eliminate subjectivity doubt were confirmed by three academics from the faculty of education. Additionally, the interviews were recorded and stored. Therefore, within the study, 15 teachers (12 females and 8 males) participated in semi-structured interviews voluntarily. The interview questions focused on their thoughts and practices of SRL and SRL instruction. Categories and codes were created for six main interview questions. The findings obtained from the interviews were presented below. The abbreviations used in this section were IQ: interview question, T1: first teacher, and T2: second teacher. In order to protect the confidentiality of the participants, a coding system was employed to represent their statements, rather than using their complete

names. For instance, the participants were identified as T1 and T2. The codes represented the first participant and the second participant.

The Elazığ National Education Directorate provided its consent for the interviews to be conducted after receiving the research ethical approval from the University's Social Sciences Ethics Committee (2021, subject 21, number 05). The researchers conducted interviews with a sample of 15 EFL teachers who were selected by convenience sampling. The teachers participated voluntarily after being informed about the purpose of the study and the interview process. Written consent forms were acquired from all individuals who provided their agreement to partake in the study.

Data Analysis

The written data were analyzed through qualitative content analysis. Content analysis is one of the ways that allows the researchers to expand the understanding of theoretical issues by extracting written data into categories (Cavanagh, 1997). Four main stages were followed as Berg (2001) recommended. The researchers identified the meanings first, included the content, identified codes as homogenous groups and lastly drew realistic conclusions by the help of calculated frequencies. For uniformity and consistency Oleinik (2010) suggested pathways to ensure reliability of the content analysis. One of them is getting help from others to confirm the codes. Thus, two professors of the field confirmed the codes constituted by the researchers.

Findings and Results

IQ1. What does self-regulated learning mean to you?

Findings regarding the first question resulted in the categories and codes given in Table 1. For the first interview question, the responses of participants were gathered under three main categories. Then, codes were created according to the SRL definitions of the participants associated with the sub-stages of metacognition, motivation, and behaviour processes.

Table 1. EFL Teachers' Definitions of SRL

General Categories	Codes	F
Metacognitive	Self-monitoring	8
	Planning	4
	Setting goals	4
	Organizing learning	3
	Self-evaluating	2
Behavior	Structuring environments	5
	Creating environments	3
	Selecting environments	2
Motivation	Self-efficacy	1
	Self-attributions	1
	Intrinsic task interest	1

A group of statements (f=21) regarding the definition of SRL were associated with the metacognitive process. The number of participants (f=3) referring to the motivation process was quite limited compared to other categories. Participants in the last category (f=10) had a behavior-oriented conceptualization of the SRL.

The majority of the teachers defined SRL by emphasizing the metacognitive process of it. Therefore, in this context, SRL was considered to be related to learners' ability to plan the process, set goals, organize, self-monitor, and self-evaluate. T3 answered the question as *"The ability of students to manage their learning processes and to apply the learning strategies that they have shaped according to their own plus and minus aspects and according to the appropriate educational environment."* Learners' ability to 'manage the process' was related to the self-monitoring code of meta-cognitive category. Further, the emphasis on 'plus and minus aspects' pointed to meta-cognitive process that enables learners to be self-aware in their approach to learning. Likewise, the expression of 'appropriate educational environment' can be associated with meta-cognitive process that enables learners to be decisive in their approach to learning. The same correlation can be seen in the answer of T7 *"According to me, self-regulated learning means being able to identify one's own learning needs and taking responsibility for meeting those needs. It means being able to boost oneself to learn, focus and stay on task, and persist in the face of challenges. It also means being able to reflect on one's own learning process and make adjustments s/he needs to improve future learning outcomes."* In addition, 'learners' ability to identify needs' may be associated with the setting goals code under the same category. The probe of 'setting goals and planning' was also observed in the answers of both T4 and T9. T9 declared that *"In self-regulated learning, the individual designs, plans and implements her own learning process. As the learner is more active in the process, more permanent learning takes place, so it is important"*. The phrases 'design and plan the learning process' alluded to the codes of setting goals and planning. The point of 'being aware of the greatest responsibility to achieve success, sets his goals, makes plans, determines his strategies' includes almost all codes of metacognitive category. Moreover, the expression 'follow the process' can be attributed to monitoring code, as well as the expression 'monitoring and controlling one's own learning process'. The code of 'monitoring' was also detected in the response of T6 who stated that *"SRL refers to how individual control and direct their learning process. It means being successful at learning by oneself."*

Within the second category, participants' definition of SRL was associated with the learners' ability to report high self-efficacy, self-attributions and intrinsic task interest which are codes of motivation aspect. However, only three of the 15 teachers participating in the interview mentioned the motivation process of SRL. This shows that the motivation area is neglected in the self-regulation process. T7, who gave one of the most productive answers, touched upon various aspects of SRL. *"According to me, self-regulated learning means being able to identify one's own learning needs and taking responsibility for meeting those needs. It means being able to boost oneself to learn, focus and stay on task, and persist in the face of challenges. It also means being able to reflect on one's own learning process and make adjustments s/he needs to improve future learning outcomes."* First of all, being able to 'identify one's own needs' may be related to the intrinsic task interest code of the motivation category. Because when individuals determine their needs in line with their own interests without being influenced by external factors, they become more motivated and eventually achieves greater success. T8 explained *"Self-regulated learning, in my opinion, means monitoring and controlling one's own learning process. In this process, the individual is aware of the greatest responsibility to achieve success, sets his goals, makes plans, determines his strategies, tries to*

implement them, follows the process, makes self-criticisms and makes the learning process most efficient with the changes he deems necessary. In short, the individual plays an active role in the learning process and success is inevitable.” From this definition, the focus on the ‘making self-criticism’ implies the motivational aspect of self-regulation under the self-attribution code. Finally, T14 pointed to the motivation aspect “*Self-regulated learning is an active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment.*”

In the last category, participants emphasized the behavioral aspect of SRL in their definitions. According to them, self-regulated learners have the ability to select, structure and create environments that optimize learning. T1 defined SRL as “*Learning strategies or approaches that an individual creates in light with his/her own learning level or approach.*”. The emphasis on the word ‘creates’ in this definition is directly related to the behaviour category of SRL. T2 quoted “*Pupils can understand the ways of their own learning. They can benefit from learning strategies.*” The expression of ‘benefit from learning strategies’ points to learners’ ability to choose the correct strategy that can be associated with the ‘selecting environments’ code of behaviour category. The same code was also observed in the definition of T11 which declared “*SRL means that a learner has the responsibility to choose the content, time and pace of the learning on his/her own.*” The definition of T3 involves the codes for both metacognitive and behaviour categories. “*The ability of students to manage their learning processes and to apply the learning strategies that they have shaped according to their own plus and minus aspects and according to the appropriate educational environment.*” The same relationship was found in the definitions of T8 and T9 which said “*learners implement their own learning strategies*”. In their definitions, the word ‘implement’ has the same role as ‘apply’ from the previous explanation. With the focus on the expressions of ‘making adjustments/changes’ a relation can be attributed to the structuring environments code of behaviour category. Finally, the emphasis on “own” in almost all answers indicates that learners have the ability to manage the learning process by themselves. T6 defined SRL as “*It refers to how individuals control and direct their learning process. It means being successful at learning by oneself.*” In this definition, the statement of ‘learning by oneself’ has the same emphasis as ‘own’ which alludes to the ‘self-instructing’ code of behaviour category. In short, emphasis is placed on the concept of ‘taking responsibility’ which is a crucial aspect of SRL.

Analysing the responses of the participants to the first questions, it was revealed that there were some responses that did not correspond with any category created according to SRL areas. T5 defined SRL as “*Students’ management of their own learning process*”. T10 stated, “*It means learners’ owning the process*”. T13 explained SRL as “*Taking control of one’s learning process*”. T15 answered the question “*Students managing the learning process on their own*”.

According to responses obtained from participants, ‘being active’ was specially emphasized by T8, T9, and T12. On the other hand, the expression “learner autonomy” is only included in the answer of T12 who defined SRL as “*Learners arranging their learning processes. Taking responsibility and being active. Caring learner autonomy*”.

IQ2. Why SRL should be implemented to language teaching?

Findings concerning the second interview question resulted in the categories and codes given in Table 2.

Table 2. EFL Teachers' Reasons to Implement SRL in Language Teaching

General Categories	Codes	F
Academic Perspective	Learner-centeredness	8
	Taking responsibility	5
	Self-awareness	3
	Learner engagement	2
Social Perspective	Life-long learning	5
	Autonomous learning	4
	Motivated learning	3

When stating the reason for implementing SRL in language education, the participants in the first category focused on the 'academic perspective' (f=18) of SRL. In the category, 4 codes were formed. The first code 'learner centeredness' (f=8) was indicated by most of the participants in this category. T2 stated "*Only dictating may not work. Pupils should understand how to learn when they have not any teachers around them. They should also add their own work on the teaching processes provided by teachers.*" T5 quoted "*SRL makes learners independent from teachers and fixed curriculum. Learners become autonomous learners so the learners can gain the skill of overcoming the problems and difficulties during learning process. Besides with the help of SRL skill, learners are able to choose the methods and techniques which are the most suitable for their own speed and knowledge. It also makes teaching process easier for teachers.*". The expressions in the answers of the teachers 'no teachers around, enabling students to determine, independent from teacher and curriculum, being able to monitor learning process, choose time and pace of learning, organize time, managing whole process without external support' indicate learner centred learning.

The following code 'taking responsibility' was emphasised by 5 teachers. T3 commented as "*Especially in the age of technology, individuality comes to the fore. Students should master this method, which is a student-centered method and requires taking responsibility, in order to cope with the needs of the new age. As every place is a field of education, the student should learn to organize her own process and should not need support all the time. Especially since learning a language is a global effort, they should use the opportunities in every area of life and cope with the difficulties. There are many platforms for learning languages. Learning can be achieved more efficiently because the student knows how to control the process when self-regulated.*"

Teachers also indicated that enabling 'self-awareness' (f=3) is one of the reasons for implementing SRL in language education. T6 quoted "*If students know their ability, capability, and how get information necessary for their learning they may learn easily.*"

Another code for the first category 'learner engagement' was specified by only two teachers. T11 expressed "*Although it has disadvantages, SRL motivates learners to be active*

in the decision-making process of learning and it is convenient to choose time and pace of the learning. T12 reported “SRL keeps students active because unless they get engaged, they cannot practice enough. Thus, they find opportunity to develop their skills. Plus, language will be every part of life. When students can regulate themselves and control external factors they would be qualified to cope with challenges of every aspect of life.”

The participants in the second category emphasized the ‘social perspective’ (f=12) of SRL when explaining why SRL should be implemented in language education. Three codes were identified for this category. The first code in the second category, ‘life-long learning’, was declared by five of the participants. T1 commented as *“When acquiring a new language, one of the most significant factors is learning new words. The student can develop different strategies while learning new words, he can bring to mind the event from his own life, or if it is a different word that evokes it, he can strengthen his memory. This is very important not only for vocabulary, but also for learned patterns or rules. Each individual has a different lifestyle and environment; therefore, the ways in which they associate or adapt what they have learned are different from each other. For this reason, SRL can be benefited as it is quite permanent and advantageous method in language teaching.”* Being a ‘well-equipped learner’ is another point of SRL that prepare learners for real life and ensures life-long learning. T12 reported, *“...When students can regulate themselves and control external factors they would be qualified to cope with challenges of every aspect of life.”*

For a number of the teachers, ensuring ‘autonomous learning’ (f=4) is a significant point of SRL that help learners to take responsibility for their learning process. T8 pointed *“... The long and difficult process of language learning can be successful if the individual is aware of the fact that she is independent and responsible for this process. It is very important for language learning to have students who have self-regulation skills, who support the language learning process by thinking about their goals and plans, and support the language learning process from various other sources besides what the teacher offers, instead of students who only listen to their teacher at school and do not read, listen or write a single thing about English until the next lesson.”* The emphasis on the concepts of “individuality, being independent” was associated with the principles of autonomous learning.

The last code of this category ‘motivated learning’ was mentioned by only 3 teachers despite its significance in SRL. T7 noted *“...It fosters motivation and engagement. When learners are able to set their own learning goals, monitor their progress, and make adjustments to their learning strategies, they become more eager to learn by themselves. It supports individualized processing. Self-regulated learning enables learners to identify their own strengths and weaknesses and adapt their learning strategies.”*

IQ3. What are the facilitating factors that affect SRL in language teaching?

Findings about the third interview question resulted in the categories and codes given in Table 3.

Table 3. Facilitating Factors Affecting SRL Implementation

General Categories	Codes	F
Student Level	Capability	8
	Motivation	6
	Attitudes	5
	Characteristics	3
	Age	1
	Language level	1
Context Level	Technological equipment	2
	Class size	2
	Class hours	1
	Curriculum	1
	Peer support	1
	School culture	1
	Teacher Level	
	Professional competence	2
	Attitudes	1
	Educational background	
Parental Level		2
	Attitudes	2
	Socio-cultural status	1
	Socio-economic status	

As for the first category ‘student level’, 6 codes were formed. It was noted by five teachers that students’ ‘attitudes’ toward language education facilitated their SRL skills. T6 stated “*Having a lot of data and easy access to it. Being aware of importance of learning a second language may be another reason.*” T8 commented as “*...Another consideration may be to encourage students to evaluate their own learning processes and strategies. Through reflective thinking, students can become aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their learning processes. And the last factor that comes to my mind is to keep students’ self-efficacy levels high, which will help them overcome the difficulties they face in the language learning process and keep them learning. An individual who does not believe that she can succeed cannot be expected to be successful.*” The emphasis on ‘being aware’ linked to students’ attitudes towards SRL.

The second code of this category ‘characteristics’ (f=3) of learners, was evaluated as a facilitating factor affecting the SRL application. T5 remarked “*Teachers’ attitude, classroom atmosphere, background knowledge, learner’s’ personality, parents’ attitude is among facilitating factors.*”

The next code, the “language level” of the students, was specified by only one teacher. T11 declared “*It is both easy and convenient to choose the time of the learning. Since the pandemic has begun in 2020, online learning programmes has become much more popular around the world. I think i can be more successful while learning something if i have the advantage to choose the when and how of the teaching process. It is really time-consuming and tiresome to keep up with a curriculum designed by someone else. It may not serve your*

particular needs in learning. But in SRL, you can choose the content, time, method and pace according to your needs and level.”

The fourth code ‘capacity/ability’ of learners (f=8) was indicated by most of the participants in this category. T12 was the only participant to use the word ‘capacity’ directly in his response. T12 stated *“Students eager and also capacity positively affect SRL promotion in class. Their characteristic traits are also an important factor. Not all students take responsibility, this is related his or her character that is shaped in family. Their age affect SRL skills. Younger students may not achieve SRL. But high school students can do it. They arrange learning environment, time and effort on their own but younger students can’t do these. In this case family or teacher support them. They would gradually become self-regulated.”* Other participants stated that being able to set goal, monitor, organize or evaluate the learning process is closely connected to self-regulation ‘capacity/ability’ of students.

Teachers also indicated that students’ ‘motivation’ (f=6) was an important factor facilitating SRL implementation. T3 attracted attention both students’ and teachers’ motivation during self-regulated language learning process. T3 explained *“...Motivation is also crucial. The teacher should motivate the student and the administration should motivate the teacher. That's why course load and syllabus are very important factors. In addition, there should be cooperation both between teachers and teachers and parents so that efficiency will increase.”* T9 teacher focused on other affective factors besides motivation. *“In this process, learners’ motivation to learn a language will be effective. If the motivation is internal, that is, if the person works for herself without any pressure or external force, she organizes her own work environment. High self-esteem, ability to tolerate high uncertainty, low stress level, motivation and many affective factors will positively affect the self-regulated learning environment in the language learning process.”*

The last code of the category, the ‘age’ of learners, was highlighted by only one teacher. T12 stated *“Students eager and also capacity positively affect SRL promotion in class. Their characteristic traits are also an important factor. Not all students take responsibility, this is related his or her character that is shaped in family. Their age affect SRL skills. Younger students may not achieve SRL. But high school students can do it. They arrange learning environment, time and effort on their own but younger students can’t do these. In this case family or teacher support them. They would gradually become self-regulated.”*

As for the second category, the participants (f=9) focused on the ‘context -level’ factors that facilitates SRL, and six codes were identified. 2 teachers evaluated ‘class size’ as a facilitating factor in SRL. T15 explained *“...Other physical factors are also important such as Physical conditions of learning environment. Easy access to learning materials, the number of students in classroom may impact teacher practices.”* T5 also noted *“Teachers’ attitude, classroom atmosphere, background knowledge, learner’s’ personality, parents’ attitude is among facilitating factors.”*

Among context level factors, ‘class hours’, ‘curriculum’ and ‘school culture’ were interpreted by only one teacher. T3 *“Teacher’s being role model is one of the most important factors facilitating SRL. Because, it is more permanent and beneficial to make the student apply what she observes rather than doing what she is told. The teacher should provide a suitable environment. The biggest facilitating factor in student-centered methods is the time allocated to the student and the quality of the time spent. Motivation is also crucial. The teacher should motivate the student and the administration should motivate the teacher. That's why course*

load and syllabus are very important factors. In addition, there should be cooperation both between teachers and teachers and parents so that efficiency will increase.”

The following code, ‘peer support’ emphasized by T10. *“I believe that peers are one of the most significant factors among others. Because learners spend time mostly with each other. Apart from that, teacher as a supervisor and also family are other important factors...”*

The last facilitating factor of the ‘context-level’ category is the use of ‘technological equipment’ (f=2) in the classrooms. T6 commented as *“Having a lot of data and easy access to it may facilitates SRL application. Being aware of importance of learning a second language may be another reason.”* T15 stated *“... Other physical factors are also important such as physical conditions of learning environment. Easy access to learning materials, the number of students in classroom may impact teacher practices.”*

The next category is related to teachers. Participants (f=8) in this category indicated that teachers influence the development of SRL in EFL classes. For this category, three codes were labelled. 2 participants reported that teachers’ positive ‘attitude’ facilitates the development of students’ SRL skills. T8 answered the question by exemplifying her teacher's attitude. *“... Let me give an example by talking about an unforgettable memory. One day, we asked our teacher what profession he thinks we will do in the future. Considering everyone's character and working processes at that time, she said that some of us would be teachers, some of us would be hostesses, and some of us would be translators or academics. And almost everyone is doing the jobs our teacher told us then. If I tell it from my own perspective, what my teacher said about me that day deeply affected me. That latent goal had grown so much and became my sole goal that I am here now and gladly do my job thanks to that dream. Another consideration may be to encourage students to evaluate their own learning processes and strategies. Through reflective thinking, students can become aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their learning processes...”*

The last code ‘professional competence’ of teachers (f=5) was the most commented one among others in this category. Teachers’ action in the classroom, guidance and encouragement can be related to their professional competence that supports their training. T3 expressed *“Teacher’s being role model is one of the most important factors facilitating SRL. Because, it is more permanent and beneficial to make the student apply what she observes rather than doing what she is told. The teacher should provide a suitable environment...”*

Within the framework of the facilitating factors, the last category was about ‘parental-level’ factors (f=5). As for this category, three codes were formed. The first code of this category, ‘attitude’ of parents was commented on by two teachers. T3 quoted *“...In addition, there should be cooperation both between teachers and teachers and parents so that efficiency will increase.”* T5 declared *“Teachers’ attitude, classroom atmosphere, background knowledge, learner’s personality, parents’ attitude is among facilitating factors.”*

The second code of the category is the ‘socio-cultural status’ (f=2) of parents. T12 expressed *“Students eager and also capacity positively affect SRL promotion in class. Their characteristic traits are also an important factor. Not all students take responsibility, this is related his or her character that is shaped in family. Their age affect SRL skills. Younger students may not achieve SRL. But high school students can do it. They arrange learning environment, time and effort on their own but younger students can’t do these. In this case family or teacher support them. They would gradually become self-regulated.”*

Table 4. Challenges of Implementing SRL

General Categories	Codes	F
Student Level	Motivation	12
	Capability	8
	Attitudes	6
	Age	4
	Characteristics	4
	Individual differences	3
	Language level	1
Context Level	Class size	5
	Class hours	4
	School culture	3
	Standardized tests	2
	Curriculum	1
Teacher Level	Demographic variables	3
	Professional competence	2
	Characteristics	2
Parental Level	Socio-cultural status	2
	Socio-economic status	1
	Attitudes	1

In terms of the ‘student-level’ constraining factors, which are by far the most mentioned ones, seven codes were formed. Among the student-level factors that hinder SRL implementation, one of the most prominent ones ($f=6$) was the ‘attitudes’ of students toward English. T8 stated *“I think the biggest challenge is the students themselves. Students may experience loss of motivation in self-regulated learning activities. Considering that we are a society that wants to get immediate results or effects in some things, students' thinking that these activities have no effect may lead to undesirable results. Second, students may display an anxious attitude about the process and doubt their competence, feeling that they are inadequate in self-regulated learning. Third, students' individual and cultural views on education, training, and learning can inhibit the self-regulated learning process. Some students may insist that learning can only happen by listening to the teacher; they may feel that it is not necessary to involve themselves in the process.”* T14 stated *“As for students lack of willingness, lack of motivation, lack of self-esteem and for the teachers lack of awareness and lack of practice can be said as challenges for SRL in language teaching.”*

The second code for this category was the students’ ‘characteristics’, commented on by four teachers. T9 who mainly focused on the student level factors declared that *“In the language learning and teaching process, students' being passive in participating the lesson as they are afraid of making mistakes, and constantly waiting for feedback from the teacher or their friends would keep them away from the self-regulated learning approach. Yes, it is okay to give feedback to students to support their development, but the student should not be dependent on the teacher”*

in this process. Students should see their teachers as guides. If the feedback given is a direct correct answer, the student does not research and gets used to ready-made information. Instead, it would be more effective to encourage them to do research, perhaps to arouse suspicion with confusing questions. In summary, teachers' direct feedback to students makes them passive in the teaching process, and if the student's personality traits are introverted and low in self-confidence, they will fall behind in the self-regulated learning process."

Only T1 identified students' inadequate 'language level' as a constraining factor by stating "When I consider the challenges of implementing SRL, I can say that the crowded classroom makes SRL practices difficult. Having approximately 30 students in a class means having 30 different characters and views. In this case, it can be very difficult to provide education that is suitable for the level of all classes or to find a motivation method that will attract attention of all students."

More than half of the participants (f=12) complained of learners' lack of "motivation" as a major factor hindering SRL practice in EFL classrooms. T3 noted "...Students' lack of motivation also affects the process negatively. There is a big prejudice, there is dependence on the teacher, maybe we can say incompetence. Because in order for a self-regulated student to be successful, they must have the ability to direct the process."

Students' lack of 'capacity/ability', was interpreted by eight teachers as an important factor limiting SRL application. T3 expressed "...Students' lack of motivation also affects the process negatively. There is a big prejudice, there is dependence on the teacher, maybe we can say incompetence. Because in order for a self-regulated student to be successful, they must have the ability to direct the process."

The next code, the 'age' of the students, was specified by four teachers. As teachers generally associated students' inability to implement their SRL skills in language education with their age, they evaluated these two factors together. The comments regarding the age of the students can be observed in the responses of T5, T11, T12, T15 in the previous code.

The last code of the factors at the student level is the "individual differences" of the students expressed by the three participants. T7 noted "There are lots of challenges of implementing self-regulated learning in language teaching. Some of them are lack of learners' readiness, time restrictions, teachers not trained on SRL, assessment difficulties and differences among target groups." T8 explained "...Third, students' individual and cultural views on education, training, and learning can inhibit the self-regulated learning process. Some students may insist that learning can only happen by listening to the teacher; they may feel that it is not necessary to involve themselves in the process."

As for the second category, the participants (f=15) focused on the 'context-level' factors that restrain SRL, and five codes were identified. The first code of this category 'class size' was indicated by five teachers. T1 stated "When I consider the challenges of implementing SRL, I can say that the crowded classroom makes SRL practices difficult. Having approximately 30 students in a class means having 30 different characters and views. In this case, it can be very difficult to provide education that is suitable for the level of all classes or to find a motivation method that will attract attention of all students."

In parallel with the class size, 'class hours' were reported by teachers (f=4) as one of the barriers restraining SRL since 5th and 6th graders have three hours for English while 7th and 8th graders have four hours in a week and each class hour is forty minutes in total. The answers of T3 and

T12 in the previous code include the effect of both class size and course hours on SRL. Apart from them, T2 commented as “*We may need more time, more creativity.*”

The third code of context-level factors ‘curriculum’ was commented on only by one teacher. T10 quoted “*With a given syllabus, it can be hard to do that. In addition to that, when it is considered that every individual differs from each other in terms of characteristics, it can be seen as a difficult way to achieve goals.*”

The next code, ‘school-culture’, was stated to affect SRL application. T8 expressed “*I think the biggest challenge is the students themselves. Students may experience loss of motivation in self-regulated learning activities. Considering that we are a society that wants to get immediate results or effects in some things, students' thinking that these activities have no effect may lead to undesirable results...*”

The last factor that the teachers complained about was the “standard tests” (f=2), which greatly limits the practice of SRL. T3 remarked in this sense as “*...One another factor is the effort to train students for the exam system. This situation negatively affects language teaching in particular. Because of the time spent while preparing students for questions that do not measure ability in the exams, the necessary importance is not given to the four skills...*”

As for the third category, the participants (f=7) focused on the ‘teacher-level’ factors that restrain SRL, and three codes were identified. The first code ‘demographic variables’ (f=3) was the most commented one among others in this category. Teachers’ educational background, experience and age were evaluated as their demographic variables. Regarding the educational background, T7 attributed the challenge of implementing SRL to the reason that “*teachers not trained on SRL*”. The effect of other demographic variables, ‘experience’ and ‘age’ of the teacher, on SRL was mentioned by T12 stating that “*...Moreover teacher’ character, age or experience have an impact on SRL promotion. They have to keep students active, assist them and arrange learning environment in a way facilitating SRL; otherwise, it negatively affects students.*”

Within the framework of the constraining factors, the last category was about ‘parental-level’ factors that have an undeniable effect on SRL. Teachers (f=4) in this category indicated that parents influence the development of SRL in EFL classes. For this category, three codes were labelled. The first code ‘attitude’ of parents was specified by T12 who noted “*... And maybe irresponsible family negatively affect self-regulation skills of students...*” Other codes of parental -level category, the ‘socio-cultural status’ and ‘socio-economic status’ of parents were evaluated among the factors affecting SRL practices. T6 stated “*Lack of motivation and interest and not being curious about language learning, insufficient socio-economic status, educational status of parents is among factors hindering SRL implementation.*”

Discussion and Conclusion

The research question aimed to probe into the thoughts of Turkish EFL teachers on SRL. Depending on the data obtained through semi-structured interviews, significant findings emerged.

Asking the teachers about how they define SRL, three categories were identified based on Zimmerman's work focusing on the SRL definition (2008). Most of the EFL teachers defined SRL by focusing on the *metacognitive* process. In general terms, they related SRL to the learners' ability to plan the process, set goals, organize, self-monitor, and self-evaluate. In this respect, metacognitive processes enable students to be self-aware, knowledgeable, and decisive in their approach to learning. Compared to other groups, the number of teachers emphasizing

the *motivational* process of SRL in their definitions was quite limited. This result shows that the motivation area, which is among the most significant aspects of SRL, was disregarded by teachers in classroom practices. Within the motivational process, participants' definition of SRL was associated with the learners' ability to report high self-efficacy, self-attributions, and intrinsic task interest. Regarding the motivational process, self-regulated learners are self-starters who display extraordinary effort and persistence during learning. The remaining participants defined SRL by elaborating the behaviour process. According to them, self-regulated learners have the ability to select, structure, and create environments that optimize learning. In terms of behavioural processes, self-regulated learners seek out advice, information, and places where they are most likely to learn; they self-instruct during acquisition and self-reinforce during performance enactments.

SRL is a learner-centred way of learning comprising not only metacognitive but also motivational and behavioral processes (Zimmerman, 2008; Pintrich, 2000; Schunk, 2005; Boekaerts, 1999). However, the number of teachers who are able to describe SRL in detail, mention all areas of SRL, and explain what needs to be done at each step is quite limited, and this is the same for the results of Spruce and Bol's (2015) study. In addition, in their study aiming to examine teachers' knowledge and belief in SRL, Dignath-van Ewijk & van der Werf (2012) revealed that most of the teachers mentioned the characteristics of constructivist learning and none of them integrated the whole process of SRL in their definition. Moreover, Lau (2013) stated that teachers did not have a clear understanding of SRL before the researcher-teacher collaborative project, which aims to explore the perceptions and practices of Chinese teachers regarding SRL. Another finding of this study shows that although the majority of teachers define SRL by focusing on the metacognitive process, the number of teachers emphasizing the motivational process is scarce. In a similar vein, the result of Huh & Reigeluth's (2018) study of online K-12 teachers' perceptions of SRL in the United States indicated that teachers' practices of supporting students' SRL were more heavily weighted toward cognitive and behaviour areas. It is clear that the motivational area was neglected during SRL implementation which is also valid for the current study.

As a result, it is assumed that Turkish EFL teachers in the current study have narrow views on SRL as they do not approach to self-regulation concept from different perspectives, and fail to expand their definitions by addressing whole areas of SRL. This shows their lack of knowledge about the concept of SRL.

The study also revealed Turkish EFL teachers' thoughts on the reasons for implementing SRL in language education. Their ideas were categorized as *academic perspective* and *social perspective*. While the academic perspective focuses on the learners' actions at school, the social perspective emphasizes the actions and behaviours in daily life. More than half of the EFL teachers in this study pointed to the academic perspective of SRL which enables *learner-centeredness* in the classroom, enables learners to *take responsibility* for their learning process, enhances their *self-awareness* and activates *learner-engagement* in the language learning process. Among academic reasons to implement SRL in language education, the point of learner-centeredness was the most emphasized one among others. Regarding the social perspective of SRL, nearly half of the teachers indicated that learners become *life-long learners*, *autonomous*, and *motivated learners* who have the skills to cope with the challenges of real life.

In terms of academic perspective, the effect of SRL on success has been proven by numerous theorists in the literature (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001; Corno, 1989; Winne, 2001; Paris & Byrnes, 1989; Nota, Soresi & Zimmerman, 2004; Broadbent & Poon, 2015; Mega,

Ronconi & De Beni, 2014). In the language learning process, students have a higher chance of success when they know what they are studying for and why. Students are better adapted to the learning process if they know their talents, abilities, strong and weak sides, and how to obtain the information necessary for their learning. In other words, learners initially need to be self-aware to get prepared for the learning process. Then, with active involvement in the process without immediate support from the teacher at any time, learners gradually become self-regulated learners who can take responsibility for their own learning process.

Considering the social perspective, SRL motivates learners to be autonomous in their learning as it is convenient to choose the time and pace of the learning. Since learning a language is a global effort, it takes part in every part of life; thus, individuals need to be ready to experience it anytime, anywhere. Through the process, individuals are obliged to control and manage the whole learning on their own, without external support. They know how to motivate themselves which makes SRL vital in language education. In this respect, SRL enables learners to sustain their efforts and manage successfully the challenging process (Wang & Zhan, 2020). To put it another way, learning can be achieved more efficiently as the student knows how to control the process when self-regulated. Furthermore, especially with the outbreak of Covid-19, the educational paradigm has changed in a form requiring digitalization (Mukhtar et al., 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Basilaia & Kvavadze 2020; Tümen Akyıldız, 2020). In the online learning process gaining popularity during the pandemic, the absence of instructors or limited teacher assistance required students to take responsibility for their own learning. Based on the aforementioned studies, it has been proven that self-regulated learners are better adapted to the autonomous nature of the online education process, as learners have control over their learning processes in deciding when and where to study or the method to be used during teaching (Broadbent & Poon, 2015; Huh & Reigeluth 2018; Usta, 2011; McLoughlin & Lee 2010). That is to say, when learners have SRL skills, they can easily deal with real-life problems, and SRL enables learners to become lifelong learners.

The findings regarding the third and fourth interview questions were evaluated comparatively. The findings of the questions asking the participants about the facilitating and constraining factors affecting SRL in language teaching, respectively, resulted in four main categories: *student-level* factors, *context-level* factors, *teacher-level* factors, and *parent-level* factors. Among them, it was determined that the factors at the student level were the most commented factors for both situations. The facilitating factors reported under the *student-level* category were respectively students' *attitudes*, *characteristics*, *language level*, *capacity*, *motivation* and *age*. In addition to the ones mentioned under facilitating factors, the individual differences of the students were also evaluated as limiting factor affecting the SRL implementation.

When the answers given by the teachers to the attitude factor were examined, it was revealed that they associated it with the students' self-efficacy levels, self-awareness and sustainable interests. It is believed that self-efficacy, belief in one's own competence, influence students' attitudes towards learning which is consistent with the literature (Schunk, 1984). Likewise, students' self-awareness, and recognition of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, shape their attitudes toward learning. On the contrary, EFL teachers in this study emphasized that *students'* negative *attitudes* towards English in particular and new teaching practices constrain the enhancement of SRL. The participants stated that the learners' having an anxious attitude about the process, doubting their competence, feeling inadequate about SRL, and lack of desire and self-confidence prevent them from being involved in the learning process. This

finding is in parallel with the results of Vattøy (2020), and Lau (2013) as EFL teachers in their studies also complained about students being reluctant and passive listeners in the classroom.

Although students' characteristic traits, language levels, and age are important factors that affect their behaviour in the classroom and success in SRL they were not properly mentioned by the teachers participating in the study. The findings of this study on student characteristics, which is consistent with the literature (Paul, Fisher & Nosich, 1993), revealed that students with extroverted traits actively participate in classes and this ultimately supports the development of their SRL skills. However, students being passive about participation in the lesson and constantly waiting for feedback from their teachers or friends as they are afraid of making mistakes distract them from the SRL approach.

With respect to the fact that students can choose the content, time, and method in the learning process without the need for any external regulation, SRL allows students to progress at their own pace and language level. In line with the results of this study, Lee (1998) asserted that students' cognitive and language levels play an important role in teachers' choice of challenging activities. Language teachers can employ more comprehensive and complex activities to foster self-regulation skills when their students have higher language levels.

The result of the research regarding the age factor indicated that although young learners have difficulty taking full responsibility for their own learning, they gradually become self-regulated learners when supported by their teachers and parents. This finding has corroborated the findings of Paris and Paris (2001) and Lombaerts et al. (2007) who argue that learners of all ages can profit from SRL in accordance with their levels and goals. They also claimed that the effects of investments made at an early age show their effect in the long term. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the teachers who evaluated the young age of learners as a constraining factor in SRL asserted that secondary school learners are not capable enough to regulate their learning due to their deficiencies in thinking and management (Paris & Byrnes, 1989). Additionally, participants reported that SRL practice with younger students is difficult, as they often need teachers' physical, emotional, and cognitive guidance and support. Consistent with the literature, these results of the current study are echoed in the studies of Spruce and Bol (2015), Lau (2013), and Vattøy (2020) in which they investigated teachers' perception toward SRL. In line with the quantitative part of the study, more detailed information about teachers' views on the age of the students at SRL was obtained by means of the interviews.

According to the findings, students' motivations and capacities were determined as the most effective factors affecting their SRL development. The motivation factor, an essential component of SRL, has been highly valued by various researchers (Boekaerts, 1996; Zimmerman, 2008; Pintrich, 2004; Schunk & Zimmerman, 2012; Pintrich & Zusho, 2002; Garcia & Pintrich, 1994). As parallel with literature, teachers participating to the study acknowledged the significance of motivation which plays an initiative role in facilitating learning and helping students to better adapt to SRL. The facilitating role of motivation was also highlighted by Huh & Reigeluth (2018) in their study that investigated online K-12 teachers' perceptions of SRL in the United States. According to them, self-regulatory learners can easily compensate for their lack of motivation, and this ultimately boosts their success in the learning process. Although the significant role of motivation in SRL was acknowledged by teachers, more than half of the participants complained of learners' lack of motivation as a major factor hindering SRL practice in EFL classrooms. This finding concurs with the study results of the Geduld (2017) and Lau (2013) studies which put forward SRL as challenging for students with poor motivation. The teachers who participated in the interview stated that in order to be

motivated in language learning, the affective filter should be lowered and students' prejudices about language should be eliminated. As mentioned in the literature, students' low motivation influences teachers' beliefs and decisions to use SRL-based instruction; therefore, it is recommended to regulate classroom practices to promote adaptive efficacy beliefs, interest and value, and the adoption of mastery objectives (Pintrich, 1999).

The findings of the current study concerning cognitive capacities indicated that students with a high ability to manage their learning process achieve better results in language education. This finding is consistent with the study result of Yan (2018) who examined the effect of teachers' beliefs in SRL and demographic variables on their SRL instruction. According to the findings of this study, Hong Kong teachers believed that SRL played an important role in teaching and learning, and they also thought that students were capable of using SRL. It is noteworthy to state that teachers generally associated students' inability to implement their SRL skills in language education with their age. For this reason, teachers who think that SRL is not suitable for secondary school students also support that these students' capacity is not sufficient to self-regulate themselves. The finding of the current study is in line with the results of Spruce and Bol (2015), Lau (2013), Vattøy (2020), Saraç & Turhan (2020). According to Spruce and Bol (2015), despite having positive views on SRL, teachers lacked confidence in their students' SRL skills, which prevent them from applying SRL-based teaching. For this reason, it was proposed to organize instructional strategies in accordance with students' abilities and performances. Furthermore, the researchers recommend providing low-ability students with more scaffolding to assist them improve their self-regulation skills (Paris & Paris, 2001; Lau, 2013).

In this current study, participants expressed a wide range of barriers inhibiting students' self-regulation skills. One of the constraining factors at the student level is the individual differences among students. Since each student's expectations, interests and competencies regarding language are different, their beliefs and practices change accordingly. Teachers participating in the research claimed that individual differences made it difficult to implement learner-centred language practices, particularly SRL.

The factors reported under the *context-level* category were respectively *class size*, *class hours*, *curriculum*, *school culture*, *peer support*, *technological equipment*, and *standardized tests*. In terms of inhibitory factors, peer support and technological equipment were not interpreted by the teachers, and the standardized test was only categorized as a hindering factor.

Crowded classrooms and class hours were highly emphasised by the participants. Teachers reported that it is challenging to implement SRL in EFL classes with more than twenty students, similar to the studies of Le, et al., (2015), Lombaerts et al., (2009), Saraç & Turhan (2020), Lau (2013). In addition, it is difficult to recognize the talents and skills of all students in large classrooms and thus create an appropriate environment that supports the SRL process. Together with this, crowded classrooms reduce the time allocated to each student and also teacher-student interaction, and this negatively affects the practice of SRL. As stated in the literature, it takes a long time for cognitive, metacognitive, and behavioral self-regulation; therefore, long-lasting SRL training might not be suitable for learning situations with time constraints (Collins, Brown & Holum 1991).

Regarding the effect of curriculum on the implementation of SRL, teachers stated although the English language teaching curriculum in Turkey is long and content-heavy, the class hours are short. Besides, standardized tests like LGS do not allow teachers to focus on self-regulation skills, mainly in the eighth graders. This finding has corroborated the findings

of Yan (2018) who declared that while primary school teachers noticed more advantages for students related to SRL, this was not the case for secondary schools due to the examination system that limited the application of SRL skills. A similar result was also reported by Lau (2013) arguing that knowledge memorization in Chinese language curriculum hinders the implementation of SRL practices. In addition, the public examination makes students accustomed to relying on teachers and also put pressure on teachers to follow the curriculum strictly. As emphasized in the literature review, it is recommended to adapt the curriculum according to the level, interests, and needs of the students instead of following a rigid curriculum (Randi & Corno, 2000; Paris & Winograd, 2003; Dembo & Eaton, 2000; Pintrich, 1995).

School culture which refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and values of the other school members and also society was stated to affect the development of SRL. EFL teachers in the study indicated that as administrators place more value on test scores, self-regulated learning is not their priority. This finding is parallel with the study of Spruce & Bol (2015) stating that the public school system is not designed to support SRL. Additionally, participants of the study suggest cooperation between teachers to promote SRL, which is in line with the ideas of Dignath-van Ewijk & van der Werf (2012), Huh & Reigeluth (2018). These researchers argued that throughout the entire SRL experience process, teacher collaboration should be encouraged to interact with each other in the exchange of knowledge.

The following factors affecting the SRL practice in language education are related to the *teacher level*. When EFL teachers' answer to the interview questions were analysed, it is clear that among four levels of factors affecting SRL, student-level factors were the most mentioned, followed by context-level factors, teacher-level factors and lastly, the least mentioned were parental-level factors. According to this distribution, it was observed that especially for the constraining factors, teachers mostly dealt with student-level and context-level factors. Evaluations of teacher-level factors were quite rare when compared to other factors. Given this, it can be concluded that teachers lack self-criticism.

While teachers' *attitudes, educational background, and professional competence* were believed to facilitating factors that affect SRL, their *demographic variables, characteristics* and, as common determinant, *professional competence* were related to the hindering factors. EFL teachers reported that having a positive *attitude* facilitates the development of students' SRL skills. As stated in the literature review, teachers who believe they are effective put more effort into teaching, are more receptive to new ideas and allow for more innovative practices (Dignath-van Ewijk, 2016; Tanrıseven, 2013). According to the findings of the current study, teachers' educational background was also stated to affect their SRL practices which is consistent with the literature (Thomas, Peeters, De Backer, & Lombaerts, 2022). According to the answers given by the EFL teachers participating in the study, the fact that the teachers did not receive training on SRL caused them to have difficulties in applying SRL in their teaching. Furthermore, it was highlighted that the faculties teachers graduated from have an impact on their perspectives and teaching skills due to the variance in visions and missions across the faculties they studied (Peeters, De Backer, Jacquet, Kindekens & Lombaerts, 2013). This finding is parallel with the studies of Kaplan and İpek (2002) and Gömleksiz and Demiralp (2012); however, there is a disagreement with the results of Özdemir and Önal (2021), who did not detect any difference in SRL beliefs of prospective teachers according to their departments. The results of the current study revealed that teachers' professional competencies which can be associated with their actions, guidance and encouragement in the classroom, support SRL practices. This finding of the study has corroborated with the results of Güneş (2023), Tümen-

Akyıldız and Donmus-Kaya (2021) and Karacan, Yıldız, and Atay (2020) in which pre-service teachers possess a high degree of SRL skills. On the contrary, teachers' lack of professional competence, such as a lack of knowledge and practice in SRL, hinders the development of students' SRL skills. The English teachers participating in the study did not state their inadequacies in the SRL within the fourth interview question; however, the fact that they could not fully define the concept of SRL in the first question shows that there is a lack of knowledge about the concept of SRL. Lastly, among demographic variables of teachers, experience and age were determined to affect their SRL practices. As mentioned in the literature review, teachers' experiences, as well as their abilities and beliefs, also affect how they perceive SRL, which is expected to ultimately shape their teaching (Lombaerts et al., 2009; Dignath-van Ewijk & van der Werf, 2012). The view that experienced teachers have more positive beliefs in SRL and that they are better at developing students' self-regulation skills has been supported by the studies of (Huberman, 1993; Bolton, 2018; Martin et al., 2006; Zembat & Yılmaz, 2018; Soliman & Alenazi, 2007).

EFL teachers in this study, lastly, emphasized that *parental level* factors such as parents' *attitudes, socio-cultural and socio-economic status* affect SRL implementation. While parents' cooperation with teachers to monitor their children's development, and providing financial, cultural and psychological support to their children were reported as factors that facilitate them to become self-regulated learners; the irresponsibility of parents about their children's education was regarded as a limiting factor affecting SRL negatively. This result is consistent with Şeker and Ader's (2015) study, which argues that parent-level factors have a significant effect on learner behaviour and success.

The results of the SRL strategies Turkish EFL teachers applied in their classes revealed notable findings. The activities that EFL teachers use in their classrooms to develop students' SRL skills were categorized under *cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and regulation strategies* created by Pintrich (2000). The activities reported under the *cognitive strategy* were respectively *rehearsal strategies, elaboration strategies, organization strategies and critical thinking*. When the results were examined, it was revealed that only a small number of participants mentioned cognitive strategies. As a rehearsal strategy used to activate the information in working memory (Pintrich et al., 1991), only one teacher mentioned using the repetition strategy in the classroom. Likewise, the use of brain mapping as an organizational strategy helps students prepare for the subject to be learned by restructuring the subject was stated by a teacher. The use of the elaboration strategy which allows information to be stored in long-term memory by linking old and new information (Richardson et al., 2012) was exemplified by four teachers with the use of imagery and stickers, summarizing and taking notes. Three EFL teachers reported using brainstorming and solving problem activities as a critical thinking strategy to develop their students' SRL skills. These results of the current study are in line with the results Huh & Reigeluth (2018) and Spruce & Bol (2015) which reflect the use of cognitive strategies to improve students' SRL skills by teachers participating in the study.

Metacognitive strategies that assist students in regulating and controlling their cognition (Pintrich et al., 1991) were *planning, monitoring, and regulation strategies*. Most of the teachers in the current study stated to use planning strategies which include the processes of goal setting, task analysis, planning, selection, and arrangement of appropriate material (Zimmerman, 1989). The monitoring strategy, which aims to keep track of students' attention and assess how well the goals are met (Weinstein and Mayer, 1983), was emphasized by seven teachers. The regulation strategy, the continuous adjustment of one's cognitive activities (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia and McKeachie, 1991), was by far the most mentioned one among

others. Examining the answers of EFL teachers, it is obvious that there is limited reference to the evaluation process of SRL. This finding is in parallel with the studies of Lau (2013) and Spruce & Bol (2015), stating that teachers did not encourage students' reflection upon learning at the end of the lesson. Additionally, there is consistency with Huh & Reigeluth's (2018) results, which argue that students did not receive balanced support for developing SRL skills due to little emphasis on the reflection part.

Lastly, the activities reported under the *resource-management strategies* were respectively *regulation of time and study environment, effort regulation, peer learning and help-seeking*. Resource management strategies emphasize the necessity of action control and require learners to make optimal use of the resources in their environment Kuhl (1984). Although peer learning is highly valued at SRL, only one teacher reported using it in classroom activities. In addition, teachers stated that students have difficulty in arranging their study times and environments due to distracting factors, especially the use of the phone, which prevents them from concentrating. This finding is similar to the result of Yüce (2019) stating that participants in his study struggled with scheduling their study time.

Within the last interview question, which was about self-reflection of teachers in terms of teaching SRL skills, nearly half of the teachers participating in the study stated that they are not competent enough to teach SRL and they need to improve themselves. Huh & Reigeluth (2018) asserting that teachers did not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the systematic nature of SRL, share the same result with the current study. On the other hand, although a number of teachers claimed to be familiar with SRL and aware of its benefits, they reported having trouble implementing it in their courses due to preventing factors. This finding of the study has corroborated with the findings of Dignath-van Ewijk & van der Werf (2012), Geduld (2017), Spruce (2012), Lau (2013), Vattøy (2020), Spruce and Bol (2015) reporting that teachers participating to study have positive beliefs in SRL but doubt in the practicability of it.

To sum up, the importance of students' ability to be engaged in SRL has increased as a result of the growing interest in and acceptance of independent and lifelong learning. Self-regulation is a crucial part of 21st century abilities, as stressed throughout the study, and its incorporation into language instruction, a worldwide endeavor, is an imperative necessity. The goal of the current study is to acknowledge the self-regulation notion by investigating EFL instructors' opinions and thoughts on SRL because teachers play a significant role in the learning process. The current investigation will advance the subject by producing significant findings. However, some limitations need to be considered. The primary constraint of the present investigation was the insufficient sample size. The sample used in this study represented a limited proportion of EFL teachers in Turkey. Moreover, the participants in this study were not randomly selected but rather self-selected, which introduces the possibility of volunteer bias and perhaps limits the generalizability of the findings. This phenomenon frequently occurs when conducting an in-depth analysis of a limited number of samples. Furthermore, the scope of this study was limited to the investigation of the opinions held by English teachers specifically employed in Elazığ. In order to enhance the precision of findings pertaining to the perspectives of Turkish EFL instructors on SRL, it is imperative to do a more comprehensive investigation encompassing a wider geographical scope within the nation. Furthermore, the scope of this study was limited to EFL instructors specifically within the context of secondary schools. Hence, the findings are not generalizable to the context of EFL instructors working in preschool, primary, or secondary educational settings. Finally, the present study was unable to include classroom observations in order to ascertain the genuine value that teachers place on

SRL and to examine the specific ways in which they integrate SRL practices into their instructional strategies.

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Ek. Ethic Committee Approval

ETİK KURUL KARARI

TOPLANTI TARİHİ	TOPLANTI SAYISI	KARAR NO	ÇALIŞMACILARIN ADI SOYADI
15.10.2021	21	5	Sorumlu Araştırmacı : Doç.Dr. Seçil TÜMEN AKYILDIZ Yardımcı Araştırmacı:Gülşah CEBECİOĞLU

KARAR

“Secondary School Turkish EFL Teachers’ Beliefs and Perspectives About Self- Regulated Learning” konulu çalışma etik kurulumuzda görüşülmüş olup; çalışmanın etik kurallara uygun olduğuna oybirliğiyle karar verilmiştir.

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Prof. Dr. Süleyman İLHAN (Üye)	Katılmadı	Doç.Dr. Haki PEŞMAN (Üye)	İmza
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Prof. Dr. İrfan EMRE (Üye)	İmza	Doç.Dr. Ayşe Ülkü KAN (Üye)	İmza
Doç. Dr. Taner YILDIRIM (Üye)	İmza	Dr.Öğr. Üyesi Serkan BİÇER (Üye)	İmza
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurul Sekreteri: Pınar ARSLAN			İmza