



Santri in Learning Design: Implementing SRL in Pesantren English Classes

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Abstract

This study examines santri involvement in learning planning through applying the Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) approach in pesantren English classes. This research used a qualitative case study design involving 30 students from a pesantren in East Java. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results showed that the implementation of SRL can increase the active participation of santri in planning their learning activities. In addition, this approach helps Santri develop learning independence and intrinsic motivation. The findings make an essential contribution to the development of student-centred learning models in the pesantren environment.

Keywords: Santri, Pesantren, Self-regulated learning, English Language.

Introduction

Pesantren, a traditional Islamic educational institution, has a strategic role in shaping the character and competence of students. However, the main challenge in the pesantren education system is integrating modern learning methods without eliminating the traditional values that characterize it (Aziz & Dewi, 2019). One of the efforts to improve learning quality is actively involving students in the learning planning process. The Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) approach was chosen as a solution because of its focus on developing students' ability to self-regulate their learning (Eda & SEN, 2021).

One of the most intriguing pesantrens to examine is Pondok Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) Mambaus Sholihin, a modern-salaf pesantran in Gresik, East Java. This institution is distinguished by its success in integrating religious education with general education, including mastering Arabic and English as the language of daily Communication. The santri (Islamic Students) at this pesantran do not merely study *kitab-kitab kuning* (turats) and are encouraged to master global language skills to answer the challenges of the times. In their daily lives, santri use Arabic and English as a medium of Communication in the pesantren environment, both in formal activities such as classes and informal activities such as discussions and extracurricular activities.

It creates a unique learning environment and supports the development of students' linguistic abilities naturally (Aziz, 2025).

SRL is the process by which individuals take full responsibility for their learning, including setting goals, monitoring progress, and evaluating results (Ahmad, 2024). This study aims to answer the following questions: (1) How is SRL applied in English learning planning in pesantren? (2) How does santri involvement in learning planning impact motivation and learning outcomes?

Method

This research used a qualitative approach with a case study design (Yin, 2003) at Pesantren Mambaus Sholihin, Gresik, East Java, which has implemented Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) in English language learning. The selection of this research location is based on the characteristics of the pesantren as a salaf-semi-modern institution that integrates religious education with the mastery of Arabic and English as the language of daily Communication. A qualitative approach was used to deeply understand how SRL is applied in the context of English language learning in this unique pesantren environment. The case study design was chosen so that the research can explore the interaction between santri and teachers holistically in the learning process (Ary et al., 2010) involving the principles of SRL, as well as its impact on santri motivation and learning outcomes.

The research participants comprised 30 intermediate-level Santri (junior high school/high school equivalent) who attended English classes. English teachers were also key informants in providing perspectives on the implementation of SRL. Researchers collected data through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to observe santri activities during the process of planning and implementing learning so that an accurate picture of the application of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) in the pesantren environment could be obtained. In-depth interviews were conducted with Santri and teachers to explore their perceptions regarding the implementation of SRL, including the challenges and benefits felt during the learning process. In addition, documentation is used to collect data in the form of lesson planning documents, santri reflection notes, and evaluation results that provide additional information about santri learning progress and the effectiveness of the SRL approach in English language learning. These three methods complement each other to ensure the accuracy and depth of the data obtained. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. This process involved coding the

data, identifying patterns, and interpreting the findings to answer the research questions.

Result

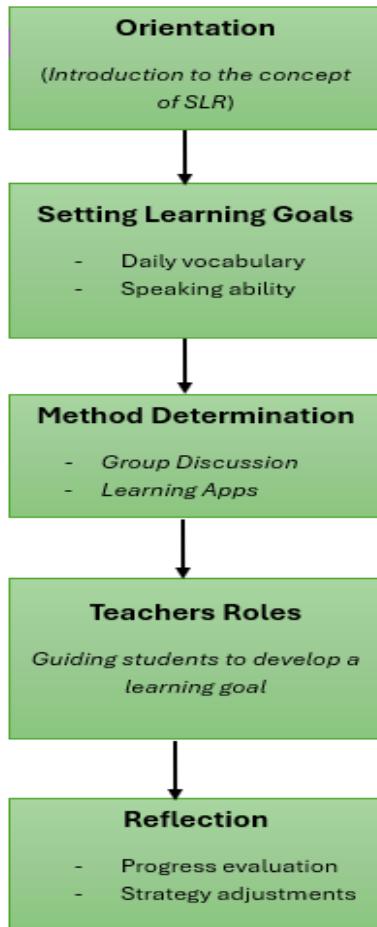
Implementation of SRL in Learning Design

Table1. steps of SLR implementation

Aspects	Description	Activities
Orientation Session	Santri is introduced to the concept of SLR.	The teacher explains the importance of SRL and gives practical examples of how to study independently.
Setting Learning Goals	Santri set their own learning goals with the teacher's guidance as a facilitator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Santri memorizes to master daily vocabulary. - Santri is hands-on learning to improve English speaking skills.
Pemilihan Metode Pembelajaran	Santri choose a learning method that suits their learning style.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group discussion is for Santri, who prefers collaborative learning. - Digital applications are for Santri, who prefers to learn independently.
Peran Guru	The teacher acts as a facilitator who guides Santri in developing realistic learning plans.	The teacher helps santri evaluate the appropriateness of the learning objectives and provides suggestions for improvement.
Weekly Reflection	Santri conducts weekly self-evaluations to evaluate their progress and adjust their learning strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write reflection notes on what has been learned. - Identify areas for improvement and customize learning goals.

The table shows that the implementation of SRL begins with an orientation session where santri is introduced to the concept of independent learning. Santris is then invited to set learning goals, such as “*mastering daily vocabulary*” or “*improving speaking skills*”. In this process, the teacher acts as a facilitator who guides santri in developing a realistic learning plan. The following are the steps for implementing SLR in Pesantren. In addition, santri are also involved in choosing learning methods that suit their learning styles. Some students select group discussion methods, while others

prefer self-study using digital applications. Weekly reflection activities are an essential part of this process, where santri evaluates their progress and adjusts learning strategies if needed. Here are the details of the SRL implementation process.



Picture 1. SRL process

Impact of Santri's Involvement in Learning Design

Interviews with santri revealed that their involvement in learning planning increased their sense of ownership of the learning process. Most santri reported feeling more motivated to learn because the goals they set are relevant to their needs.

Interviews with santri revealed that their involvement in lesson planning significantly impacts learning attitudes and motivation. “*Keterlibatan kami dalam*

perencanaan pembelajaran meningkatkan rasa kepemilikan terhadap proses belajar”. They report that their active participation in planning the learning process increased their sense of ownership of their learning. It suggests that when santri are involved in setting learning goals and strategies, they feel more emotionally and cognitively responsible for the outcomes. In addition, most santri reported feeling more motivated to learn because their goals were relevant to their needs. For example, some santri set goals to master daily vocabulary or improve their English speaking skills, which are directly related to their Communication needs in the pesantren environment. “*Sebagian besar kami merasa lebih termotivasi untuk belajar karena tujuan yang mereka tetapkan relevan dengan kebutuhan kita*”. The relevance of this goal makes the learning process more meaningful and motivates students to continue trying to achieve the predetermined targets. This finding shows that applying Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) improves learning outcomes and helps santri develop intrinsic motivation and a proactive attitude in learning. In addition, the evaluation results show a significant improvement in the student’s English language skills, especially in speaking and writing. Teachers also reported that Santri became more active and confident in class participation.

Discussion

This finding aligns with the SRL theory, which emphasizes the importance of student involvement in the learning process. Students’ participation in learning planning improves learning outcomes and helps them develop self-management skills essential for long-term success.

However, some challenges were also found in implementing Self-Regulated Learning (SRL), primarily related to the ability of santri to set specific and realistic goals. Some santri reported difficulties in identifying learning goals relevant to their needs and formulating concrete steps to achieve them. Some students often experience barriers in the early stages of SRL due to a lack of metacognitive skills (Aziz et al., 2022; Butler, 2023; Teich et al., 2024). Students also need external guidance, especially in the early stages, to help them build their confidence and ability to manage their learning (Winne & Perry, 2000). In the context of pesantren, this challenge becomes more complex because most santri are still in a stage of cognitive development that is not fully mature, thus requiring more intensive intervention from teachers. Therefore, the role of the teacher as a guide is significant to ensure that santri remain motivated and do not feel overwhelmed. Teachers not only act as facilitators, but also as mediators

who help students overcome psychological and technical barriers during the learning process (Derakhshan & Fathi, 2024).

This research also shows that the SRL approach can be adapted to the pesantren context without eliminating traditional values. It contrasts with the assumption that modern techniques such as SRL are challenging to implement in a traditional educational environment. Integrating contemporary learning methods with conventional Islamic values can harmoniously provide appropriate adaptations to the local culture (Mariyono, 2024). However, this study also shows that such adaptation requires systematic efforts to ensure that the core values of pesantren, such as spiritual discipline and collaborative learning communities, are maintained. For example, Santri continues to use Arabic as the primary communication medium for religious activities when learning English. In contrast, English is used to expand their global horizons. This approach shows that SRL can be applied in a modern context and enriched with traditional values that characterize pesantren.

On the other hand, the challenges in implementing SRL in pesantren also reflect structural weaknesses in the traditional education system that often provide less space for pedagogical innovation. For example, some teachers in pesantren still use instructive and teacher-centred learning methods, which can hinder the development of students' learning independence. Teachers' resistance to changes in learning methodology is often a significant barrier to adopting modern approaches such as SRL. Therefore, training for teachers on the principles of SRL and student-centred learning strategies is an urgent need to ensure the successful implementation of this approach in pesantren.

The implications of this study for language education in pesantren are significant. First, this study shows that implementing SRL can improve the effectiveness of English language learning in pesantren by actively involving santri in planning and evaluating learning. It not only enhances English learning outcomes but also helps students develop self-management skills that are essential for long-term success. Second, this research opens opportunities to build more inclusive and student-based language learning models in pesantren, which integrate traditional values with modern learning methods. Third, this study highlights the importance of training teachers to prepare them for the challenges of implementing SRL, especially in guiding santri to set specific and realistic goals. Thus, this study makes an essential contribution to the development of language education in pesantren, focusing on academic achievement, holistic character building, and life skills.

Conclusion

The involvement of santri in learning planning through the application of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) has been proven effective in improving their motivation and learning outcomes, including in English language acquisition. This approach not only helps students master academic material but also develops life skills such as self-regulation, goal setting, and metacognitive awareness. However, challenges arise in the form of difficulty for students in setting specific and realistic goals. Hence, the role of the teacher as a facilitator becomes essential in guiding them to stay motivated and focused. The research also shows that SRL can be harmoniously adapted into the pesantren culture without losing traditional values, creating synergies between modern approaches and local practices. The success of SRL in English language learning opens up opportunities to explore its application in other subjects, such as religious studies or science, to expand its benefits. Teacher training is needed to equip them better to support santri in overcoming obstacles during self-regulated learning. Overall, integrating SRL in pesantren is a strategic step to improve the quality of education while preparing santri to face academic and life challenges with holistic skills relevant to the needs of the times.

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