

Vietnamese EFL Students' Use of Emotion Regulation Strategies

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Abstract

This study was conducted to find out Vietnamese EFL students' emotion regulation strategies (ERSs) in English language learning. The research was carried out with the participation of 155 English majors studying at a university in Vietnam. Two main instruments i.e. questionnaire and semi-structured interview were employed. The findings revealed that students employed various ERSs to regulate and manage their emotions throughout the learning process. Students tended to use cognitive reappraisal strategies, particularly effort-oriented decision, situation selection/modification strategies, particularly task management, and attentional deployment strategies, particularly task focus and goal-orientation. Among the strategies examined, effort-oriented decision, task management, and task focus had the highest mean scores, at 3.81, 3.80, and 3.79, respectively. The qualitative findings further indicated that students tended to increase their learning efforts, manage their study time, and focus on learning goals when experiencing negative emotions. The findings have pedagogical implications for university EFL instruction by highlighting the need for teachers to attend to students' emotional experiences, support the development of constructive emotion regulation strategies, and create a supportive classroom environment. Teachers may also guide students to appropriately manage both positive and negative emotions to support their engagement and learning processes.

Keywords: *emotion regulation strategies; English language learning; L2 students; mixed methods study*

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INTRODUCTION

Learning languages (LL), especially English, plays a crucial role in almost any field in our lives. Nevertheless, mastering any language is not always an easy task for everyone. Indeed, people who specialize in this major must encounter many obstacles and strive to deal with them if they want to reap success during their learning. One of the most common difficulties that L2 students usually experience is how to regulate emotions effectively during learning process because of its importance and popularity as well. Pekrun and his colleagues (2011) assert that emotions really play a vital role in educational settings and have a significant impact on learners' academic performance. Pekrun (2019)

also states that emotions are of fundamental importance to students' performance when it comes to emotions in LL. Additionally, they constitute a considerable impact on students' language development and communication ability (Garrett & Young, 2009). Yu (2022) mentions that "emotions have an inseparable relationship with cognitive ability, which is an important factor affecting foreign language learning" (p. 1). Students often experiencing positive emotions during the learning process tend to achieve higher academic results if compared to those who usually confront negative ones (Pekrun, 2014; Pekrun & Stephens, 2012). Over a span of decades, there have been many researchers carrying out studies with the aim of investigating emotions and their effects on learners' academic performance in English language learning (ELL) settings (e.g., Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020; Pekrun et al., 2019; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Shams, 2008). Although there is some discrepancy among prior studies in terms of participants or contexts, overall, they concur with the fact that emotion is really of paramount importance in LL contexts, especially in ELL, due to its considerable effects on learners' academic performance.

Along with prior studies on academic emotions, emotional regulation (ER) is an emergent research area. ER refers to the ability to respond to certain situations with a range of emotions, such as excitement or nervousness. ER constitutes as a main concern in applied fields like educational contexts (Schutz et al., 2014; Shuman & Scherer, 2014). ER also constitutes a necessary part in educational settings (Shuman & Scherer, 2014). Gross (2002) affirms that, research with regard to ER "has roots that go back over a century to early psychoanalytic theorizing about the nature of psychological defenses" (p. 281). Gross (2002) also states that humans' emotional reactions are likely to fit together well with the needs of their life contexts.

Due to its undeniable importance, previous studies with regard to ER were found to be popular in international academic settings, especially in ELL, when they were carried out in various areas and countries around the globe (e.g., Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020; Rottweiler et al., 2018; So & Dominguez, 2005). In EFL contexts like Vietnam, however, this topic has been somehow overlooked. The importance of ER in applied linguistic research has still been overlooked although this topic has caught the attention of researchers in psychology and education (Pham, 2017). Nguyen and Phan (2022) reckoned that there was a limit in numbers and quality of research in emotion management in the educational context. Although several studies were carried out to discover ERS use in educational settings as well as to gain insight into its impacts on teaching and learning (e.g., Ngo, 2021; Ngo & Le, 2024), most of the past research mainly focused on teachers' emotion regulation strategy (ERS) use and perceptions as well. Therefore, investigating students' ER during the learning process in ELL still remains scarce.

Furthermore, to address these gaps, this study aims to investigate Vietnamese EFL Students' use of emotion regulation strategy use during ELL, focusing on English major students at a university in Vietnam. By examining the students' uses of the strategies, this present study seeks to contribute to literature in terms of evaluating English majors' ERS use in ELL and gain insight into students' emotions throughout the learning process. Therefore, teachers could design suitable lesson plans and set up more activities or mini games to create a comfortable atmosphere in classes with the primary purpose of relieving pressure on students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Emotional Regulation (ER)

According to Gross (1998), ER refers to “the processes by which we influence which emotions we have, when we have them, and how we experience and express them” (p. 275). To put it simply, ER is the process of individual management and shifts in oneself or other people’s feelings (Hong Chen, 2016). In other words, ER “refers to attempts to influence emotions in ourselves or others” (Gross & McRae, 2020, p. 1).

Gross (2002) also gave comments about this notion of ER because it has several things which need to be taken into account (p. 282). First, ER could be considered either as conscious or as unconscious processes. Next, ER is neither inherently good nor bad. As mentioned by Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2020), the use of ER of their participants seemed to depend on specific situations, the learning context, and learners’ characteristics. These things could lay the foundation for future studies if researchers long to investigate ER profoundly.

A Process Model of ER

The process model of ER illustrates how specific strategies could be differentiated via emotional reactions along with the timeline of a certain situation (Gross, 2002; Gross & Thompson, 2007). “The fundamental claim of this model is that ERS differ in when they have their primary impact on the emotion generative process” (Gross, p. 282), as shown in **figure 1**.

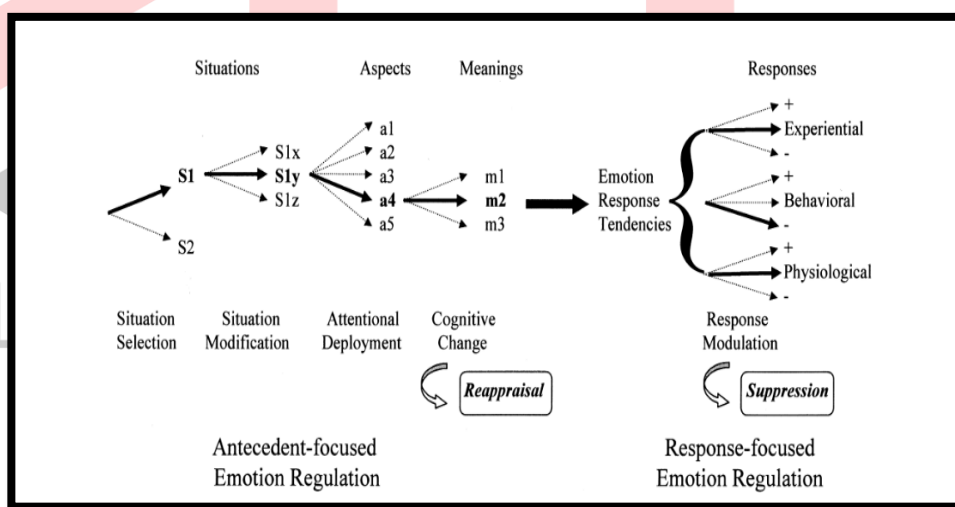


Figure 1. A process model of ER (Gross, 2002)

Based on this process model, Gross (2002) differentiated antecedent-focused ER from response-focused ER. He indicated that antecedent-focused ER “refers to things people do before emotional responses have become fully activated and have changed their behavior and peripheral physiological responding” (e.g., candidates can view their job interviews as value opportunities to learn more new things about the company and gain more precious experiences as well, rather than as failures); meanwhile, response-focused ER “refer to things we do once an emotion is already underway, after the response tendencies have been generated” (e.g., parents try not to show their worry and anxiety as well when they decide to leave their children at nursery schools for the first time) (p. 282). To sum up, the former “involves changing how we think about a situation in order to decrease its emotional

impact”, while the latter “involves inhibiting ongoing emotion-expressive behavior” (Gross, 2002, p. 281).

Based on the process model, emotion could be regulated by five main points, and they are considered as the major families of these emotional generative processes. Regarding antecedent-focused ER, it includes situation selection (refers to choosing situations or things), situation modification (refers to choosing situations or things which are likely to lead to desired feelings), attentional deployment (refers to turning attention away from certain aspects of a situation), cognitive change (refers to a situation in which people change their explanations or use other sayings to manage their emotional responses effectively and appropriately). Response modulation (refers to changing the way in which emotions are experienced and expressed) is the only process when it comes to response-focused ER.

There are many compelling reasons why this study considered Gross’s model as the laid the crucial foundation for tackling the research question. First, his ER model clearly elucidates when and how feelings are regulated and managed from the moment a situation happening to the last emotional response. The model indicates two main processes: antecedent-focused ER (before emotions fully develop) and response-focused ER (after emotions occur). This helps this research systematically discover and analyze students’ emotional management at different stages. Second, Gross’s ER model has been successfully applied in various contexts, namely Western and Asian educational ones. Therefore, given the analogous settings between the past studies (Molina et al., 2014; Rottweiler et al., 2018; Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020) and the current research, it decided to employ Gross’s process model of ER as the main foundation for discovering students’ ERS use on their academic performance at a research site.

Previous studies

In international academic contexts, there were several past research projects focusing on the use of ERS of learners in the educational context. For instance, Molina et al. (2014) studied the development of ERS as reflected in the narratives of children with the participation of 69 preschool children (between the ages of 3 and 6 years). An experimental procedure based on story completion tasks was designed to elicit the emotion-related narratives. After coding of the narratives, there were three main ERS mentioned, including *behavioral strategies*, *social support* and *cognitive reappraisal*. They also indicated that verbal skills, non-verbal intelligence and emotion comprehension were connected to the use of ERS only at specific ages. A study conducted by Rottweiler et al. (2018) explored the effectiveness of several ERS use (e.g., *reappraisal*, *suppression*, *expression*, *distraction*) across two contexts (exam-related vs. non-exam-related anxiety). A total of 68 university students engaged in an experience sampling study for 6 days before an important exam. They revealed that *suppression* improved emotions in exam-related anxiety, while *distraction* improved feelings only in non-exam-related anxiety. In addition, Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2020) successfully discovered English majors’ ERS based on Gross’s process model of ER (2002). Their findings showed that students used a range of different emotional strategies to handle their issues (e.g., *acceptance*, *reassurance*, *distraction*). They found that the choice of ERS of participants seemed to depend on specific situations, learning environments, and their characteristics. Overall, although there were discrepancies about discovering the use of ERS due to different educational levels of participants and their backgrounds as well, these aforementioned studies all followed Gross’s conceptual foundations

about ER. They have proved the effectiveness as well as popularity of his theories when it comes to emotional management in academic settings.

Likewise, in educational settings in Vietnam, there were several studies attempting to discover the use of ERS in recent years. For instance, Ngo (2021) conducted a study to identify kinds of emotions that EFL teachers experienced, factors that influenced these feelings, and how they regulated challenging emotions in online-teaching with the participation of EFL teachers. Her findings showed that the teachers leaned towards applying *cognitive reappraisal's* ERS to breed positive outcomes in lieu of *suppression*. Nguyen and Phan (2022) carried out research to examine students' emotional management skills at Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City and found that students used a range of emotional strategies (e.g., *acceptance of feelings, readiness to confront undesired emotions, self-support*). Their findings also indicated that the higher their academic years were, the more students had a tendency to use ERS during their learning process. Another research was conducted by Ngo and Le (2024) with the aim of finding out why and how teachers make use of certain moods in their classrooms and manage negative emotions occurring during their lessons. Their results revealed that the teachers felt unpleasant emotions due to students' behaviors, namely lack of attention and engagement. In order to handle emotions of dissatisfaction and disappointment, the teachers strived to use the *reappraisal strategy* to adjust their attention and eliminate their negative emotions as well. Overall, past studies took advantage of a certain framework to study participants' ERS use, but applying Gross's process model of ER and his conceptual foundations to facilitate gaining in-depth understanding of students' emotional management still took the lead. Nevertheless, examining students' ERS use in the academic contexts, especially in LL, in general, seems inadequate and needs to be investigated more. As mentioned by Pham (2017), ER has attracted a great deal of attention in psychology and education, but it has still been somewhat overlooked in the field of applied linguistic study.

METHODS

Research design

The mixed methods design combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches was applied in this study. These two kinds of approaches for data collection because this could help researchers compare and supplement each other for precise findings in lieu of only employing either a quantitative or qualitative method to deal with the problem of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research took advantage of two research instruments, including a closed-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview, for data collection. The quantitative method collected and classified the statistics through the questionnaire. After that, qualitative method was also used to analyze data better through interviewing suitable samples.

Research site

This study was conducted at a university in Vietnam. Regarding the English teaching and learning, English also plays a crucial role in students' involvement in study and extracurricular activities, especially for English majors. In order to create favourable conditions for students, there are many seminars and conferences with the participation of prestigious speakers or native English teachers in the purpose of providing students with knowledge as well as equipping them with necessary skills when studying and working later.

Before conducting the study officially, the quick surveys were carried out with the participation

of English majors including from freshmen to senior via one-one interviews. The results showed that the number of students feeling anxiety or worries when using English in front of many people in class accounted for about 60% and most of them were the first- and second-year students. The findings also revealed that many English majors felt very interested in studying and expressing positive feelings in their learning, there were still many individuals who often encountered unpleasant emotions and gradually lost motivation to learn foreign languages over the years, which often led to their poor academic results later. As for juniors and seniors, on the contrary, they said that they were seemingly accustomed to those things when studying at the college for years. Based on their comments, engaging in activities which require productive skills like public speaking by English was not a difficult task for them. Thanks to subjects in the program of English linguistics of the university (e.g., discussion skill, presentation skill, translation & interpretation skill), they had more confidence and did not feel anxious too much like before and could express their own ideas as well as opinions naturally.

Research participants

Participants were first-year and second-year students. As mentioned above, the prior surveys of this study showed that freshmen and sophomores must adapt to new things like learning environment or schedules which are completely different from high school, whereas juniors and seniors are seemingly accustomed to those things. In addition to this, there are many students who come from many different provinces, so they could experience a lot of new things to adapt new living conditions. It can be seen that they have a tendency to experience a range of emotions and try to handle those feelings appropriately during their learning process at that time. Therefore, the first-year and second-year students were considered as best participants for this study. After piloting a questionnaire with them, the study began choosing appropriate participants carefully to find suitable samples. It was based on whether their own answers in the questionnaire are interesting and unique enough or not.

As previously mentioned, several quick surveys had deployed before the research sprang into action officially. Their preliminary results found that most of the freshmen and sophomores shared that they usually felt worried and unconfident about their competencies when taking real tests. For instance, they often felt slightly frightened and uncomfortable when presenting individually in front of classmates and teachers due to lack of vocabulary and bad pronunciation. Conversely, most of experienced students like juniors and seniors often showed confidence when joining in academic activities like public speaking by English. Therefore, they had a tendency to regulate their feelings better if compared with those who have just entered university. Those findings played a pivotal role in considering freshmen and sophomores as appropriate samples of the research.

Data collection was conducted with the participation of 155 students purposively sampled from six classes. Participants were sampled based on the following criteria: (1) they were English majors; and (2) they were first-year or second-year students. Participants' general information includes five main items. About the participants' academic year, the current study endeavored to choose 3 classes of first-year students and 3 classes of second-year ones between August 2024 and July 2025. There were 80 freshmen and 75 sophomores, accounting for 51.6% and 48.4 % respectively. As for genders, more than half number of participants (58.8%) were females with 91 individuals; meanwhile, there were 64 male students (41.2%) engaging in completing the questionnaire. Regarding respondents' extra classes at language centers, approximately two-third of students (65.2 %) did not attend centres to study as well as to practice this language. The rest (34.8%) took part in English classes at language

centres when they were being high school students. Regarding participants' time for self-ELL autonomy on a daily basis, the information revealed that they were inclined to invest from 1 to 2 hours to learn and improve their English ability, making up roughly 67% of the total number of respondents.

Among 155 participants, 14 students were invited for interviews based on their willingness. There were 8 first-year students, and 7 second-year students. They were

Research Instruments

Two instruments were used for data collection. A closed-ended questionnaire, which was adapted the findings from Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak's (2020) study and Gross's process model of ER, consists of 14 questions using a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree). Both of them constituted main instruments for data collection of this paper because they were all cost-saving and easy to prepare. Two instruments were first designed in English and then converted into respondents' mother tongue to help them answer without any language difficulties. They were also piloted and modified before being used in the official study.

After piloting the questionnaire with participants from six chosen classes, the study began opting for appropriate responses thoroughly to select suitable samples by prioritizing to those who invested more time and effort in their own answers. Regarding a semi-structured interview, which was designed based on the questionnaire, it allowed the researcher to explore as well as probe deeper into participants' perspectives while maintaining concentration on the study's primary objective. Online interviews were carried out through supporting tools like Google Meet or Zoom. All of them were open-ended ones. This enabled interviewees to respond flexibly and comfortably in an open-text format and averted the rigidity of the close-ended question structure to a certain extent. Questions were constantly updated or modified throughout the interview process if necessary, including:

1. *What kind of emotions that you often experience most during your learning process?*
2. *What are the emotional problems related to ELL that you often have to solve during your learning process?*
3. *Do you often use ERS in your ELL? Why/Why not?*
4. *Do your learning productivity and academic outcomes improve when you use ERS in your ELL?*
5. *What are your ERS that you use most? Why?*
6. *Do you think that ERS are necessary for ELL? Why/Why not?*

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was administered to the target students who were provided instructions and explanations. They spent around 15 minutes answering the questionnaire. The valid answers were 155. Then, 14 students were invited for semi-structured interviews which were conducted in participants' mother tongue and recorded with participants' consent. Each of which lasted approximately 20 minutes.

The questionnaire data was calculated by using SPSS Statistics to find out the value and calculate the means (M) as well as the standard deviation (SD). Qualitative data was collected and analyzed from semi-structured interviews. The interview recordings were transcribed and deductively analysed using the content analysis. Interviewees were coded as S1, S2 to S14.

RESULTS

L2 Students' ERS in terms of cognitive reappraisal

For the cognitive reappraisal, as illustrated in Table 1, it can be seen that acceptance (accepting unpleasant things as part of development), reassurance (using explanations and comfort to make one feel less worried), and effort-oriented decision (deciding to work hard and make more effort to learn and prepare carefully) were strategies which students often use most with $M = 3.61, 3.44, \& 3.81$ respectively. An opposite trend could be seen in the mean score of excusing oneself (explaining one's failure with several external causes beyond one's control) stood at only 2.54, which means that students did not show much interest in this method.

No	Cognitive reappraisal	N = 155	
		M	SD
1	Acceptance	3.61	.89
2	Reassurance	3.44	.77
3	Effort-oriented decision	3.81	.75
4	Excusing oneself	2.54	.78

Table 1. L2 Students' ERS in terms Cognitive Reappraisal

These results were in line with qualitative data collected from interviews. Among 14 student interviewees, many had to accept that their speaking skills were not as good as their friends', then they tried to work hard to improve their pronunciation and speaking skills. For example,

"...I was so shocked when I saw other students speaking English and expressing their own ideas naturally and fluently. That was the reason why I decided to study more to improve my pronunciation and speaking skills as well. Fortunately, my academic results greatly improve now, and I am not much afraid of presenting by English in front of class like before". (S5)

Interviewees reported that they often spent more time on ELL to reduce negative emotions like anxiety or disappointment.

"...I often have to face pressure from upcoming exams, and therefore I have a tendency to work hard and make more effort to learn seriously and carefully to reduce worry and anxiety as well". (S7)

L2 Students' ERS in terms of response modulation

Regarding response modulation, the mean scores of all three strategies, including suppression (relating to the attempt to hide or reduce ongoing emotion-expressive behavior), emotional release (allowing negative emotions to be expressed), and negative induction (increasing negative emotions to enhance learning effort), ranged from 2.6 to 3.34. This showed that students were quite neutral and probably took these methods into consideration before deciding to use them to manage and regulate their emotions in ELL.

No	Response modulation	N = 155	
		M	SD
1	Suppression	3.34	.87
2	Emotional release	2.70	.80
3	Negative induction	2.62	.88

Table 2. L2 Students' ERS in terms of response modulation

As for qualitative results collected from interviews, most of participants did not show much interest in response modulation although they did not deny the perks of negative emotions on their learning performance. Some shared that:

1. *"...I often try my best to use ERS to control both positive and negative emotions during the learning process. It is undeniable that positive feelings help me a lot in maintaining my interest in ELL. However, I contend that negative emotions sometimes help me to recognize my own limitations and prompt me to find ways to solve them better". (S1)*
2. *"...I think ERS is necessary for all students. For me, sometimes I intentionally enhance negative emotions or stress in a certain extent and view as a motivation to study better when I want to achieve high goals in ELL". (S10)*

L2 Students' ERS in terms of situation selection/ modification

Regarding situation selection/modification ERS, the mean score of task avoidance (avoiding tasks which can lead to negative consequences) was only 2.66 while the figures of social support (looking for help from other people) and task management (relating to time management of the task) were 3.71 and 3.8 respectively. This demonstrated that English majors opting for these two strategies was prevalent in the context of ELL.

Table 4. L2 Students' ERS in terms of situation selection/ modification

No	Situation selection/ modification	N = 155	
		M	St. D
1	Social support	3.71	.86
2	Task avoidance	2.66	.78
3	Task management	3.80	.97

For qualitative data collected from online meetings, besides effort-oriented decision, task management was also considered as the most prevalent ERS applied by English majors in ELL. Half of participants reported that they had a tendency to rearrange their study plans and spent more time on ELL to constrain unpleasant moods like boredom or disappointment. Some interviewees said:

1. *"...I am used to be afraid of speaking exams because of lack of vocabulary and bad pronunciation. Thanks to investing more time in boosting lexical resources and practicing this skill, now I am quite confident about my ability when having to present by English in front of many people in classes". (S8)*
2. *"...My mood is often terrible and disappointed in myself when I get a bad score in English exams. To tackle this, I tend to reschedule my study plans for improving my own weaknesses to do better in upcoming exams. I think this is the key reason that I have obtained high achievements in ELL recently". (S14)*

L2 Students' ERS in terms of attentional deployment

Concerning attentional deployment, the mean scores of comparison with peers (comparing oneself to others to reduce negative emotions) and distraction (changing attention from a negative emotion-inducing aspect of a situation to thinking of something else) ranged from 2.7 to about 3. The reverse trends could be witnessed in the numbers of task focus (increased concentration on tasks to ensure success) and goal-orientation (imagining positive outcomes of an unpleasant situation or completing tasks to achieve future targets), which were 3.79 and 3.69 respectively. This proved that the popularity of the latter strategies applied by students was much greater than the former ones.

Table 5. Students' ERS in terms of attentional deployment

No	Attentional deployment	N = 155	
		M	SD
1	Distraction	3.07	.85
2	Task focus	3.79	.85
3	Comparison with peers	2.70	.88
4	Goal-orientation	3.69	.86

As for responses collected from meetings, most of interviewees gravitated towards investing more time and energy in accomplishing small targets one by one (e.g., learning vocabulary every day, focusing on improving limitations) in order to achieve more higher academic achievements later.

"...I tend to strive to balance my emotions in some certain extent and do not permit any of them to be expressed strongly. When I get a high score, this can make me exhilarate but I will try not to let it trigger my learning distractions later. By contrast, I often feel bored and hopeless when I have to receive bad academic results. However, in lieu of experiencing negative emotions in a long time, I am now inclined to consider those things as ordinary ones because ELL is a long journey that I have to get over its difficulties to obtain best achievements in the future". (S7)

Additionally, respondents shared that they re-set study goals to improve their learning shortfalls. One mentioned:

“...When I get low scores in English tests, I am inclined to reschedule my study plans and spend a lot of time on improving my own weaknesses gradually to obtain optimistic results later”. (S14)

DISCUSSION

In terms of the results of the research question, it can be seen that the ERS use of English majors in ELL is quite diverse. The study found that there were 7 strategies that students often used most throughout their learning process. Among the groups of strategies, cognitive reappraisal ranked first when it came to most popular methods for emotional management, including acceptance ($M = 3.61$), reassurance ($M = 3.44$), & effort-oriented decision ($M = 3.81$). Situation modification and attentional deployment were considered as the second most common strategies with social support ($M = 3.71$), task management ($M = 3.80$), task focus ($M = 3.79$), and goal-orientation ($M = 3.69$) respectively.

On the contrary, response modulation was viewed as unpopular in ELL reported by participants. These findings could be ascribed to several main reasons as cited earlier. There are many students who come from many different provinces, and they must adapt to new things like living conditions, learning environment or even schedules which are completely different from high school in a short interval. In addition to this, there are striking differences in curriculums between high school and university. High school education and testing system which mostly emphasizes grammatical lessons and reading activities. As written by Pham (2017), English teaching in our country continues to depend heavily on traditional methods in general. One of the main reasons that English language teaching methods continue to use outdated methods which prioritize learning about the written language instead of focusing on how to use it (e.g., Le, 2000, 2011; Le & Barnard, 2009). All these reasons lead to a situation in which most freshmen are not familiar with those tasks that students are required to use productive skills like writing and speaking more frequently during their learning process. These aforementioned things contribute to the fact that students, especially freshmen, are inclined to be shocked and overwhelmed by those things and their academic results are often not good at that time. Therefore, it is understandable why most students decide to work hard and study more aiming to improve their own weaknesses as well as adapt to university programs as soon as possible. Participants' general information proved this when it revealed that the proportion of students investing from 1 to 2 hours and more on a daily basis to improve their English made up roughly 71% of the total number of respondents. Besides, qualitative data collected from online meetings also verified those findings with task management and effort-oriented decision which were the most prominent strategies shared by samples.

Although there are several discrepancies about the findings between the two studies, the overall results of this paper still match the ones of Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak's (2020) study to a certain extent. When it comes to cognitive reappraisal, these results match the findings of their study in which acceptance, reassurance and effort-oriented decision were the most popular strategies. An opposite result can be seen in the outcomes of response modulation when students do not get much into it. Those are in line with the conclusions of Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak in which all three strategies of this group were not used frequently by English majors. However, there is some discrepancy between the results of this paper and their study emerging when looking into them in more detail. Regarding situation modification, this study found that English majors tend to gravitate towards social support and task management, whereas Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2020) discovered that their participants did not show much interest in task management and it even was viewed as an unpopular strategy although social support was quite common during students' ELL. Regarding

attentional deployment, overall, the findings of this research and Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak's (2020) study are quite similar as both of which indicated that strategies of this group are relatively popular. Nevertheless, the current paper found that task focus and goal-orientation are prominent strategies in terms of this ERS group; meanwhile, Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2020) showed that distraction and task focus were the most prevalent ones in lieu of goal-orientation.

CONCLUSION

The present study was conducted to find out English majors' ERS in ELL and explored their perceived effects of ERS use on their academic performance. Based on the findings, two aforementioned research questions have been addressed to some certain extent. Regarding the first one, the study discovered that the ERS use of English majors in ELL was manifold. Students were predisposed towards cognitive reappraisal ERS (acceptance, reassurance, effort-oriented decision), situation modification ERS (social support, task management), and attentional deployment ERS (task focus, goal-orientation), while they did not show much interest in response modulation ERS. As for the influences of applying ERS in ELL, most of the responses from surveys and interviewers' comments revealed that ERS could play an essential role in enhancing concentration, maintaining motivation, tackling emotional problems during the learning process, facilitating flexible use of strategies in ELL, and improving learning productivity & academic results.

This study is significant for teachers teaching at university. They will have a general view of English majors' emotions in ELL as well as evaluate their ERS use in certain settings. Also, instructors could pay more attention to their students' moods during classes, especially freshmen who may not be accustomed to learning at university in the early period. Based on this, as previously mentioned, teachers could engineer their own lesson plans and set up more activities or mini games to create a comfortable atmosphere in classes with the primary purpose of relieving pressure on students. When it comes to emotional management in educational contexts, teachers can support their students by reinforcing students' motivation and develop their ability by enhancing their task-related positive feelings. Additionally, students only experiencing positive emotions in learning is somehow flawed. These emotions should be associated with tasks of tackling problems related to cognitive resources and studying learning materials as well. Next, it is not necessary to encourage students to experience positive emotions during their learning process. Instead, it would be better to prompt them to take advantage of using negative ones appropriately in order to enhance their academic performance. Finally, teachers strive to reduce their students' excessive negative emotions in learning. Instructors also should not overlook forming a classroom culture to promote students' learning by making best use of the vitality of unpleasant feelings at the same time.

Although the current paper strived to tackle the primary aim as previously mentioned, it cannot avoid the limitations. This current study only focused on investigating ERS use of English majors and still did not discover students' perspectives in other academic fields. Regarding participants, this research has only shed light on freshmen and sophomores' perceptions about ERS use in ELL to a certain extent and still did not uncover juniors and seniors' perspectives. In addition to this, the samples engaging in interviews for data collection were quite low, leading to the results from those online meetings which were still not flawed and restricted. On top of that, the results of this thesis should be regarded as reference only due to their low reliability coefficient. Last but not least, the paper did not probe into investigating the effects of ERS use on a specific skill of learners. Future research can fill the aforementioned gaps of the study by conducting studies with regard to discovering the effects of other kinds of academic emotions on students' learning performance. Researchers also can carry out examining emotional factors affecting learners' ELL during the learning process. Furthermore, future papers can focus on investigating the impacts of positive or negative emotions on students' academic performance profoundly. The future studies, as mentioned above, can discover the effects of ERS use on a specific skill of learners, namely productive skills like speaking or writing.

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