



Relationship among EFL Learners' Self-Regulated Learning Strategy Use, Speaking Anxiety and Speaking Strategy Use

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The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between EFL learners' use of self-regulated learning strategies (SRLS) with their speaking anxiety and speaking strategy use. To do so, the 70 Iranian male and female EFL learners were selected based on convenience sampling procedure from National Language Institute in Tehran. Three measurement instruments including self-regulated strategy use, Self-Regulated Foreign Language Learning Strategy Questionnaire (SRFLLSQ) questionnaire; Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS), and Questionnaire of Speaking Strategy Use by EFL Learners were utilized to collect the data. To analyze the gathered data, Pearson Moment Correlation analyses were conducted. The results revealed a significantly negative and strong correlation between use of self-regulated learning strategy and level of speaking anxiety among EFL learners. Furthermore, the results showed a significantly positive and strong correlation between SRSU and speaking strategy use. Finally, it was shown that there is significantly negative correlation between speaking anxiety with all the subcategories of Questionnaire of Speaking Strategy Use by EFL Learners. Based on the findings of this study, pedagogical implications will be suggested.

KEYWORDS: EFL learners, speaking, self-regulated learning, speaking anxiety, speaking strategy use

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, interest in the important role that learners' unique characteristics may play in the process of language learning has increased (Lightbown & Spada, 2013; Zare, 2012). The majority of researchers have also made conscious transitions away from emphasizing instructional paradigms and toward examining individual traits

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(Carson & Longhini, 2002; Fahim & Zaker, 2014; Zaker, 2015). In a similar spirit, Dörnyei (2005) emphasized the necessity of researching and examining individual characteristics, including those thought to have a significant impact on language acquisition, such as creativity, autonomy, self-regulation, self-esteem, learning styles, and personality types. Since the introduction of communicative and conversational methods to second language teaching, the importance of communication as a process and a goal of second/foreign language education has been highlighted. For many students, learning a language entails speaking that language. The claim made by Dörnyei (2005, p. 207) that the goal of language learning is to improve "the learners' communicative competence in the target language" makes this clear (Savignon, 2005). However, due to human nature, the expectation that learners will have a high level of communicative competence and eventually use the target language willingly and effectively may end up being a surprising result. It has long been believed that teaching pupils to speak in English as a foreign language solely entails exercises and dialogue memorization, which is a gross underestimation of the task. As a result, there are several issues in EFL classes, including the predominance of teacher-centered teaching methods, paper-based exams, students' low motivation and interest in the language, and a lack of opportunities for speaking the language outside of the classroom. High-efficiency filters, classroom anxiety, and emotional characteristics including low motivation, shyness, lack of confidence, or self-consciousness are additional psychological obstacles that might prevent learning.

To be able to take chances when speaking, the pupils should be taught how to employ certain tactics in this respect. Self-regulated learning strategies are among the most significant approaches that have been shown to significantly contribute to autonomous learning, boost learners' self-assurance, and encourage active participation in the learning process (Schunk, 2001). Effective learning techniques, effort, and tenacity are all characteristics of good self-regulators, who have cultivated the knowledge and habits necessary to succeed as students. The key for educators is to be aware of how to develop and sharpen these abilities in each student. (Dinsmore, Alexander, & Loughlin, 2008). A significant amount of research has been done recently on the personal characteristics of EFL learners, including self-regulation, speaking anxiety, and strategy utilization (Mahjoob, 2015; Nosratinia & Zaker, 2015). However, it seems that there is a dearth of studies that have examined the connections between the three variables, namely self-regulation, speaking anxiety, and the usage of speaking strategies. According the present study was conducted to investigate the relationship between EFL learners' use of self-regulated learning strategies (SRLS) with their speaking anxiety and speaking strategy use. Further, it intended to explore the predictive power of the self-regulated learning strategy use with regard to these speaking-related variables. According to the objectives of the study, the following research questions were generated.

Q1. Is there any statistically significant relationship between EFL learners' self-regulated learning strategy use (SRLS) and speaking anxiety?

Q2. Is there any statistically significant relationship between EFL learners' self-regulated learning strategy use (SRLS) and speaking strategy use?

Q3. Is there any statistically significant relationship between EFL learners' speaking anxiety and speaking strategy use?

Review of the Literature

Problem of students speaking

The pupils should be given more time to speak during speaking activities than the teacher, Nawshin (2009). In reality, many professors still dominate the classroom activities while the students only observe and are reluctant to speak. Speaking is the most challenging skill for learners, according to many researchers, who can learn it as a second or foreign language due to their low proficiency (Richards, 2009) identifies the following as contributing factors to speaking difficulties: Students worry about making mistakes or receiving negative feedback in their conversations, or they still feel shy. Students should participate orally to exchange spontaneously in speaking a second language. According to Khan (2005), many students learning English as a second language have trouble using words and expressions in speech. As a result, vocabulary issues arise when a person lacks the words necessary to communicate and is unable to put those words together effectively into a sentence. In his research, he claims that some of his subjects have psychological issues with speaking. It highlights how psychological issues, which frequently interfere with the emotional or physical health of pupils, also impair their effectiveness in speaking (Derakhshan et al., 2015). These psychological issues could have a detrimental impact on how well students talk. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), speaking ability was neglected in classes using traditional teaching approaches in favor of reading and writing proficiency. Reading and writing, for instance, were the crucial abilities in the Grammar-Translation technique, whereas speaking and listening were of less importance. Speaking is the most crucial and crucial ability for efficient communication, according to Ur (2000), among the four language abilities of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. By the same vein, Xinghua (2007) contended that psychological issues frequently affect their emotional and physical health as well as their ability to maintain healthy relationships, perform well at work, and adjust to their new circumstances. Examples of these issues include feeling anxious, lacking self-assurance, and being afraid to speak. These issues could have an impact on how well pupils talk. Students are amazed by their ability and intellect as a result of other students actively participating in negotiation as a result of their discussion engagement (Celce-Murica, 2001).

Foreign language learning anxiety

There are several definitions of foreign language anxiety in the literature. Horwitz et al. (1986) and MacIntyre (1989) have established notable definitions of language anxiety that have contributed to our understanding of the condition (1999). Language anxiety is described as "a discrete set of self-perceptions, attitudes, feelings, and actions associated to classroom language acquisition emerging from the particularity of the language learning process" by Horwitz et al. in 1986. (p. 128). Language anxiety is similarly described by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) as a tension, uneasiness, emotional reaction, and fear related to learning a second or foreign language. The various facets of anxiety should be examined in order to comprehend foreign language anxiety from a

broad perspective. Three aspects of anxiety have been identified psychologically: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. When a person has a persistent desire to feel nervous, this is known as the characteristic viewpoint (Scovel, 1978). It is a universal personality attribute that remains constant in all circumstances. Trait anxiety, according to Pappamihel (2002), "indicates consistent personality variations in anxiety proneness" (p. 99). Since it is a part of a person's personality, this component of anxiety doesn't change over time. Regardless of the existence or absence of an actual threat, anxiety is defined by Spielberger et al. (1983) as "the emotional reaction or pattern of response that happens in an individual who views a specific circumstance as personally hazardous or threatening" (p.489). Another way to describe the condition of anxiety is as a persistent, varying level of anxiousness. Examination anxiety is a clear example of the stage of anxiety in which pupils feel anxious about a certain test, albeit this sensation might vary over time. Anxiety has an impact on a person's feelings, thoughts, and behaviors (Donley, 1997). A particular moment in time as a result of a particular scenario gives rise to the situation-specific perspective.

Self-Regulated learning strategies

The broad definition of SRL is "an active, constructive process where learners set learning objectives and then make an effort to monitor, regulate, and control their thoughts, intentions, and actions, led and restricted by their objectives and the contextual aspects of the environment" (Pintrich, 2000, p. 453). Pintrich (2000) created a model for classifying phases that other SRL models (like Zimmerman, 2000a) and areas for SRL commonly shared, despite the fact that researchers have created numerous SRL models with various constructs (e.g., Boekaerts, 1996; Butler & Winne, 1995; Schunk, 1989, and Zimmerman, 2000a). Four phases forethought, planning, and activation; monitoring; control and reaction; and reflection are used in the paradigm to describe various elements of SRL. Setting goals, planning, and using past task, context, and self-information in relation to the task constitute the first step of Pintrich's (2000) paradigm. Process monitoring is done in the second step. The third stage entails managing and regulating various aspects of the task, the environment, and oneself. The task, the context, and oneself are all addressed in the fourth phase, which is reaction and reflection. According to a research that looked at empirical literature released between 1994 and 2006, self-efficacy was positively correlated with academic success, the use of learning techniques, satisfaction with online courses, and likelihood of taking more online courses in the future. Time management, metacognition, effort regulation, and critical thinking had significant positive correlations with academic achievement in online higher education, according to Broadbent and Poon's (2015) systematic review of research on SRL strategies related to academic achievement in online higher education settings published from 2004 to December 2014. The social cognitive model of SRL, one of the theoretical frameworks utilized in studies on SRL in online learning settings, proved especially helpful in examining SRL and students' achievement in conventional online courses (Artino & Stephens, 2007).

Related studies

Ting and Rijeng (2018) looked at the prevalence of Mandarin speaking anxiety and its causes among non-native Mandarin speakers in one of their research on speaking phobia. To accomplish the goal, 100 Foundation Mandarin students at UiTM Sarawak were examined. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used in this study to assess non-native Mandarin learners' anxiety related to speaking Mandarin. To analyze the data, the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used. The results indicate that non-native Mandarin speakers have encountered some Mandarin speaking anxiety. Speaking Mandarin out of the blue is the biggest source of worry while speaking the language. In a similar vein, Han and Keskin (2016) investigated how using WhatsApp activities in undergraduate level EFL speaking classes affected students' feelings toward the activities and their speaking anxiety. 39 undergraduate participants completed the tasks on WhatsApp during four weeks of EFL speaking classes. At the start and conclusion of the trial, the FLCAS was given. Face-to-face interviews were also used to investigate the opinions of the participants on the mobile application activities. The students' language acquisition was greatly benefited by their WhatsApp interactions by reducing their EFL speaking fear, according to the results.

Nosratinia and Deris (2015) examined the relationship between Willingness to Communicate (WTC) and Self-Regulation (SR) among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in one of the study papers in this area. Male and female EFL students majoring in English Language Teaching, English Translation, and English Literature at Islamic Azad University in the province of Fars were chosen at random to serve this purpose. The results of the research pointed to a substantial direct association between SR and WTC, with an extremely narrow confidence range and a considerable effect size. Similar to this, Mahjoob (2015) investigated the link between Iranian EFL learners' ability to self-regulate and their speaking ability. The study included 60 advanced female and male students who were enrolled in the adult program at the ILI in Shiraz, Iran. The association between variables was determined using correlational analysis. The results showed that there is little correlation between self-regulation and speaking skill among Iranian EFL learners. The IELTS speaking test was used to assess the participants' speaking ability. Similarly, Sadi and Uyar (2013) looked into the direct and indirect relationships between students' biology achievement in Turkish high schools, self-efficacy for learning and performance, cognitive self-regulated learning strategies (CSR), metacognitive self-regulated learning strategies (MSR), time and study environmental management strategies (TSEM), and effort regulation strategies. According to the findings of a path analysis, students who have high levels of MSR, TSEM, and organizational techniques to finish a job in the face of difficulty can succeed in biology. In order to analyze the usage of LLS by successful students, Ranjan, Philominraj, and Arellano Saavedra (2021) looked at the link between the employment of techniques in learning Spanish as a foreign language and its linguistic competency. The results showed no relation between the uses of self-reported learning strategies and language proficiency. However, there was a moderate relationship between the use of LLS and proficiency of 15 higher proficient students from both the universities. Zekrati (2017) investigated the connection between Iranian high school

EFL students' usage of grammar study techniques and language proficiency. 300 students from three proficiency levels (Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, and Intermediate) took part in the study. Of these, 230 completed and returned an Oxford Solution Test as well as a Likert-scale Grammar Learning Strategies Questionnaire (GLSQ) with 35 statements. The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data revealed that Iranian high school EFL learners used a variety of learning strategies while learning and using grammar structures; however, the results of one-way ANOVA indicated that there was a significant difference in the frequency of use of grammar learning strategies among different proficiency levels.

There have also been other related studies examining different variables in relation to speaking (Navidinia et al., 2019; Razaghi et al., 2019; Torabi, 2020, etc.). Nonetheless, the present study is an attempt to investigate the relationship between three different variables which seem not have been investigated in relation to each other so far; namely, EFL learners' use of self-regulated learning strategies (SRLS), their speaking anxiety and speaking strategy use.

METHOD

Participants

The participants of this study were a group of 70 Iranian male and female EFL learners selected based on convenience sampling procedure from National Language Institute in Tehran. All the participants were in the upper-intermediate level of language proficiency and their age ranged from 16-27 years old. They spoke Farsi as their first language and used it as the language of education and learn English as the foreign language.

Instruments

Self-Regulated Foreign Language Learning Strategy Questionnaire (SRFLLSQ)

In order to assess the participants' level of self-regulated strategy use, Self-Regulated Foreign Language Learning Strategy Questionnaire (SRFLLSQ) questionnaire was utilized. This scale developed and validated through a three-phase process by Habók and Magyar (2018). It is a 34-item self-report questionnaire assigned to the strategy fields from Oxfords' Strategic SRL model. The questionnaire encompasses 6 subcategories including metacognitive (8 items), cognitive (6 items), meta-affective (7 items), affective (2 items), meta-sociocultural-interactive (8 items) and sociocultural-interactive (3 items). A five-point Likert scale was used for the children's responses. The scale ranged from 1 ('Never or almost never true of me') to 5 ('Always or almost always true of me'). In order to ensure the internal consistency of the items and assess the reliability of the questionnaire in this study, the Cronbach alpha method conducted and the coefficient turned out to be .89 which indicated an acceptable and satisfactory level of internal consistency.

Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS)

In order to measure the participants' speaking anxiety, Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS) was employed. This self-report scale is 17-item questionnaire

adopted from Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) who designed their questionnaire by selecting 18 items from the 33 items of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al., 1986. Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) explained that they chose the 18 items among 33 items of FLCAS Horwitz's scale which is directly related to foreign language speaking anxiety. The respondents were asked to rate each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. In order to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire to be employed in the present study, Cronbach alpha method was utilized and the coefficient alpha was found to be .83 which indicated satisfactory level of internal consistency among the items of the questionnaire.

Questionnaire of Speaking Strategy Use by EFL Learners

Questionnaire of Speaking Strategy Use by EFL learners is a combination of adapted and simplified items selected from 'Language Strategy Use Survey' and 'The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning' (SILL) version 7.0 (Oxford, 1990). The speaking strategies had been exclusively selected from the above sets in order to compose the questionnaire for this study. It became a self-reporting questionnaire in requiring the EFL-major students to answer how often they used 14 speaking strategies with a five-point scale ranging from "almost never" to "always". The numerical rating scales were 'almost never=1', 'rarely sometimes=2', 'sometimes=3', 'usually=4', and 'always=5'. The questionnaire was divided into five categories classified by Stern (1992) including Management & planning (Q 2,8), Cognitive (Q 7,9,11,14), Communicative-experiential (Q 5,10), Interpersonal (Q 1,12,13), and 5. Affective (Q 3,4,6). In order to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach alpha method was utilized and the coefficient alpha was found to be 0.86 which indicated satisfactory level of internal consistency among the items of the questionnaire.

Procedure

In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the following steps were taken. First, due to the practicality and accessibility issues, contacting the officials of the intended language institute, the researcher received the required permissions and the contact information (email address) of 90 EFL learners studying in this institute. Having received that permission and contact information, the researcher sent an email to all of them and explaining the purpose of study tried to encourage them to participate in the study. After ensuring the participation of the intended numbers of the EFL learners, in the main phase of the study the predetermined questionnaires were merged into a single document and was distributed online (Google Surveys) to reduce costs and enable participants to fill in the online questionnaire by means of an invitation containing a link to it. It is noteworthy that the questionnaires had an introduction in which the aim of the survey was explained once more with a respectful and understandable language, while making it clear that it is a voluntary survey and that their data would remain confidential. After answering some demographic questions, the participants should go on to the online questionnaires. The participants were given two weeks to complete the questionnaires and send back them to the researcher. Among 90 distributed questionnaires (as a merged file), 70 complete and acceptable file were received from

the respondents. After completing the collection of the data on the prescribed questionnaires, the data were inserted in the SPSS 21 software to be analyzed.

Design

For the purpose of this study, a quantitative non-experimental correlational design was adopted to examine the possible relationship between EFL learners self-regulated strategy use, speaking anxiety and speaking strategy use. In this study speaking anxiety and speaking strategy use were considered as the dependent variable and self-regulated strategy use was taken as the independent variable.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics including mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviations of the variables of the present study are presented in the following section.

Descriptive statistics for self-regulated strategy use

The descriptive statistics for the participants' scores on the Self-Regulated Foreign Language Learning Strategy Questionnaire (SRFLLSQ) which is the indicator of the level of self-regulated strategy use are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics for the level of self-regulated strategy use (SRSU)

Variables	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Total SRSU	70	1.00	5.00	3.76	.46
Metacognitive	70	1.00	4.80	3.87	.87
Cognitive	70	1.00	4.80	3.81	.98
Meta-affective	70	1.67	5.00	4.11	1.43
Affective	70	1.29	4.90	3.33	1.23
Meta-sociocultural-interactive	70	1.00	4.55	4.01	.55
Sociocultural-interactive	70	1.67	4.87	4.21	.71

The obtained mean score for total SRSU ($M=3.76$) shows relatively moderate level of self-regulated strategy use among the EFL learners who participated in this study. The mean scores of the subcategories of the SRSU also have been presented in the above table.

Descriptive statistics for the participants' speaking anxiety

The descriptive statistics for the participants' scores on Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS) as the indicator of the participants' level of speaking anxiety are demonstrated in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of foreign language speaking anxiety scale (FLSAS)

Variables	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
FLSAS	70	1.76	5.00	4.11	.66

As it is illustrated in Table 3, the mean score of the participants in the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS) is 4.11 ($M= 4.11$, $SD= .66$) and its scores range from 1.76 to 5. It means that the participants might have moderate level of speaking anxiety.

Descriptive statistics of the speaking strategy use

The descriptive statistics for the participants' scores on Questionnaire of Speaking Strategy Use by EFL Learners (QSSU) which is indicator of the level of speaking strategy use are demonstrated in Table 3 below.

Table 3
Descriptive statistics participants' scores on questionnaire of speaking strategy use (QSSU)

Variables	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Management planning	70	1.34	4.32	4.66	.89
Cognitive	70	1.23	4.21	3.89	.90
Communicative-experiential	70	1.11	5.00	4.47	1.03
Interpersonal	70	1.58	5.00	4.58	.86
Affective	70	1.78	5.00	3.58	.86
Total ER	70	1.91	4.33	4.23	.56
Management planning	70	1.34	4.32	4.66	.89

As it is demonstrated in the above table, the mean score of the participants in the speaking strategy use was found to be 4.23 out of 5 ($M= 4.23$, $SD= .89$) which indicated a high level of using these strategies among them. Further, the obtained mean scores of the participants in the subscales of Questionnaire of Speaking Strategy Use (QSSU) are presented in Table 4.5. As it is shown in the above table, the highest mean score belongs to management and planning ($M= 4.66$, $SD= .89$) and the lowest mean score belongs to affective ($M= 3.58$, $SD= .86$). Among the subscales of QSSU, the mean scores of management and planning ($M= 4.66$), communicative experiential ($M= 4.47$), and interpersonal ($M= 4.58$) were higher than the total mean score of QSSU.

Results of the research questions

In this section, the statistical analyses and the related findings concerning the research questions of the study are presented.

Investigating the first research question

The first research question sought to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' self-regulated strategy use and speaking anxiety. To answer this research question, a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted and the summary of results is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Correlation matrix between self-regulated strategy use and speaking anxiety (N = 70)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Speaking Anxiety	1							
2. Metacognitive	-.42**	1						
3. Cognitive	-.37**	.84**	1					
4. Meta-affective	-.45**	.78**	.78**	1				
5. Affective	-.68**	.68**	.65**	.69**	1			
6. Meta-sociocultural- interactive	-.32**	.88**	.74**	.85**	.78**	1		
7. Sociocultural- interactive	-.58**	.79**	.85**	.75**	.69**	.84**	1	
8. Total SRSU	-.61**	.58**	.79**	.85**	.75**	.69**	.84**	1

As it is demonstrated in the above table, the total score of self-regulated strategy use (SRSU) as measured by Self-Regulated Foreign Language Learning Strategy Questionnaire (SRFLLSQ) and its subscales are significantly correlated with the participants' speaking anxiety as measured by Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS) and its subcategories. More specifically, it was found that there is a significantly negative and moderate level of correlation between SRSU and speaking anxiety as a whole component ($r = -.61, N = 70, p < .005$). It was shown that there is also negative and significant correlation between speaking anxiety with all the subcategories of SRFLLSQ. The obtained results suggested that speaking anxiety had the highest level of correlation with affective subscale ($r = -.68, N = 70, p < .005$) and the lowest level of correlation was for cognitive ($r = -.37, N = 70, p < .005$).

Results of the second research question

The second research question intended to investigate relationship between EFL learners' self-regulated learning strategy use (SRLS) and speaking strategy use. To answer this research question, a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted and the findings are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Correlation matrix between speaking strategy and self-regulated strategy use (N = 70)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Speaking Strategy	1							
2. Metacognitive	.67**	1						
3. Cognitive	.58**	.84**	1					
4. Meta-affective	.71**	.88**	.78**	1				
5. Affective	.62**	.78**	.65**	.69**	1			
6. Meta- sociocultural- interactive	.49**	.88**	.74**	.85**	.78**	1		
7. Sociocultural- interactive	.51**	.87**	.85**	.82**	.69**	.84**	1	
8. Total SRSU	.62**	.88**	.79**	.91**	.87**	.69**	.63**	1

According to the data in Table 5, it was found that the total score of self-regulated strategy use (SRSU) as measured by Self-Regulated Foreign Language Learning Strategy Questionnaire (SRFLLSQ) and its subscales are significantly and positively correlated with the participants' speaking strategy use as measured by Questionnaire of Speaking Strategy Use by EFL Learners. More specifically, it was indicated that there is a significantly positive and strong level of correlation between SRSU and speaking strategy use as a whole component ($r = -.62, N = 70, p < .005$). It was found that there is also positive and significant correlation between speaking strategy use with all the subcategories of SRFLLSQ. The obtained results suggested that speaking strategy use had the highest level of correlation with metacognitive subscale ($r = .67, N = 70, p < .005$) and the lowest level of correlation was for meta-sociocultural interactive ($r = .49, N = 70, p < .005$).

Results of the third research question

The second research question intended to investigate relationship between EFL teachers' speaking strategy use and speaking anxiety. In order to answer this research question, a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted and the findings are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6

Correlation matrix between speaking anxiety and speaking strategy (N = 70)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Speaking Anxiety	1						
Management	.52**						
Cognitive	-.33**	.84**	1				
Communicative-experiential	-.38**	.74**	.71**	1			
Interpersonal	-.37**	.85**	.78**	.89**	1		
Affective	-.47**	.63**	.69**	.69**	.58**	1	
Tot. Speaking Strategy	-.41**	.59**	.71**	.78**	.85**	.64**	1

As it is shown in Table 8, there is a significantly negative correlation between speaking strategy use and speaking anxiety ($r = -.41, N = 70, p < .005$). It was shown that there is also significantly negative correlation between speaking anxiety with all the subcategories of Questionnaire of Speaking Strategy Use by EFL Learners. The findings revealed that speaking anxiety had the highest level of correlation with management and planning ($r = -.52, N = 70, p < .005$) and the lowest level of correlation was for cognitive ($r = -.33, N = 70, p < .005$). The findings implied that the frequent use of speaking strategies might lead to lowering the level of speaking anxiety among EFL learners.

DISCUSSIONS

This study was conducted to investigate the relationship between EFL learners' use of self-regulated learning strategies (SRLS) with their speaking anxiety and speaking strategy use. Further, it intended to explore the predictive power of the self-regulated learning strategy use with regard to these speaking-related variables. The first major finding of this study showed that there is a significantly negative and strong correlation

between use of self-regulated learning strategy and level of speaking anxiety among EFL learners. It is also found that among the subcategories of the self-regulated strategies, the affective subscale had the highest level of negative correlation with speaking anxiety. On the contrary, cognitive component was found to have the lowest level of correlation. Reviewing the research on self-regulated methods and anxiety related to speaking a foreign language, it is found that there is a link between the two variables. Preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, and peer seeking are the four basic tactics that students employ to lessen their anxiety about learning a foreign language, according to Marwan (2007). Furthermore, Chang & Liu (2013) noted that learners with low levels of anxiety employ metacognitive methods the most frequently. Additionally, Liu and Chen (2015) discovered that language anxiety is substantially correlated with social strategies, whereas cognitive and metacognitive strategies come next. Additionally, Martirosian and Hartoonian (2015) who showed that these two factors had a bad association with one another. The researcher hypothesizes that teaching self-regulated strategies to EFL university students may lessen their speaking anxiety based on the aforementioned literature review and empirical studies. The findings in this section are consistent with those of El-Sakka (2016), who discovered that the group of EFL learners who received instruction in self-regulated methods had much less speaking anxiety. The findings in this section are in line with those of Nosratinia and Deris (2015), who proposed a significant direct correlation between SR and WTC, standing for a large effect size and a very narrow confidence interval.

The second major finding of this study indicated that there is a significantly positive and strong correlation between SRSU and speaking strategy use. It was also revealed that speaking strategy use had the strongest correlation with metacognitive subscale and the weakest correlation with meta-sociocultural interactive. According to Tseng et al. (2006), SR is thought to help students create more relevant academic objectives, learn more efficiently, and succeed at greater levels in a variety of academic contexts (Butter & Winne, 1995; Zimmerman & Risenberg, 1997). Schunk and Zimmerman (1998) claim that learners with high levels of SR demonstrate more active participation and lead a more effective learning process in a variety of ways; this has an impact on how they organize and practice the information that needs to be learned, how they perceive their own abilities and the value of learning, as well as many other important factors. The results in this section may be consistent with those of Mahjoob (2015), who found that high achievers exhibit the same level of self-control as low achievers while speaking a foreign language. The findings of this study may be supported by the findings of Aregu's (2013) study, in which he demonstrated that the self-regulated learning intervention adjusting for beginning differences accounts for 56% of the variance in speaking performance and 39% of the variance in speaking efficacy. The findings in this area are also in line with those of El-Sakka (2016), who found substantial variations between the speaking proficiency and speaking anxiety pre- and posttests.

The third research conclusion revealed a substantial inverse relationship between speaking anxiety and all of the Questionnaire of Speaking Strategy Use by EFL Learners' subcategories. The results showed that speaking anxiety had the most link with management and planning, whereas cognition had the weakest correlation. The

findings implied that the frequent use of speaking strategies might lead to lowering the level of speaking anxiety among EFL learners. The results of this section may be in agreement with Abdul Rahman's (2015) investigation into the connection between language learning techniques and students' motivation for learning English as a second language, which revealed that motivation was positively correlated with all kinds of language learning techniques. Additionally, it was shown that their usage of language learning strategies was substantially connected with their motivation to learn English. The findings of Demir Ayaz (2017), who suggested that both sexes most frequently favor the metacognitive and social strategy types. However, the findings of the present study may not be supported by the findings of Ranjan et al(2021) 's investigation in which they found that there is no connection between language competency and the usage of self-reported learning tactics.

CONCLUSION

There is a consensus that self-regulation is neither a specific personality trait that students either do or do not possess, nor is it a mental ability or particular academic performance skill. Instead, it is a selective use of strategies by which learners transform their mental processes into academic skills adapted to individual learning tasks (Zimmerman, 2002). This process of self-regulation motivates students to plan, monitor, and assess their learning independently (Zumbrunn, Tadlock, & Roberts, 2011). Therefore, the regulation of learning is considered one of the fundamental pillars of pedagogy, and one whose importance has increasingly been appreciated during the current century (Priego, Munoz, & Ciesielkiewicz, 2015). Also, Costa Ferreira, Veiga Simão and Da Silva (2015) assure that regulation of learning is a fundamental requirement for the successful attainment of skills in academic contexts and moreover, in life-long learning. Several researchers and practitioners state that students should learn to regulate their own learning for many reasons. For example, self-regulation has a positive influence on the learning outcomes (Pintrich, 2000) as it helps students to apply better learning habits and improve their study skills (Wolters, 2011), use learning strategies to enhance academic outcomes (Harris, Friedlander, Sadler, Frizzelle, & Graham, 2005), monitor their performance (Harris et al., 2005), and evaluate their academic progress (De Bruin, Thiede & Camp, 2011). Consequently, self-regulation turns learners into independent ones. Considering speaking skill, teaching self-regulation strategies and practicing them in class can create opportunities that help students manage and monitor their speaking (Priego et al., 2015). Mahjoob (2015) argues that students should be trained to use specific strategies to be able to self-regulate their speaking. To the researcher's view, training in self-regulation will increase students' understanding of their own capabilities and make learning to speak more enjoyable and fruitful. Therefore, it can be said that if a learner is a self-regulated one, he may use specific strategies and also a certain number of them, while speaking to control his speech and reduce his anxiety.

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