

## Relationship between Self-regulated Learning and Self-Disclosure in EFL Classes: Speaking Competence in Focus



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### Abstract

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**Keywords:**  
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The present study aimed at investigating the relationship between self-regulated learning and self-disclosures in EFL speaking classes. To this end, 30 male and female Iranian EFL learners whose level of proficiency was intermediate participated in the study. Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT) was used for evaluating the participants' general English knowledge and their self-regulations were assessed by Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI). A pre-test was administered to evaluate how much the students were good at self-disclosure. The self-regulation strategies were taught directly to the participants in 10 sessions. After completing the treatment, the post-test was conducted to assess the participants' improvement and to understand the relationship between self-regulation and self-disclosure. To measure the relationship between self-regulation and self-disclosure, Person Correlation was run. The results of the study revealed that there was a strong positive correlation between self-regulation and self-disclosure. In another words, self-regulation learning affected participants' self-disclosure positively. The results of the study may offer implications for English teaching in general and teaching oral skill in specific.

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## Introduction

Speaking as one of the four language skills is a noticeably obvious skill. Most people regard a person as knowledgeable at a foreign language when they can speak accurately and fluently (Ur, 1997). To most EFL learners, reading and writing are more important priorities in English learning than speaking. However, even in academics and executives whose main interest in English is for reading and writing reports may need to explain their ideas and thoughts from time to time, or merely to make polite conversation in English (Abbaspour, 2016). In most English teaching classes, students are taught to learn about English through learning grammar structures, memorizing vocabulary, and repeating drills. Therefore, most EFL learners are not successful at becoming fluent and accurate speakers and their speech tends to be slow, hesitant, and full of repetitions and self-corrections (Schemitt, 2010). Therefore, it is very important to enhance EFL learners' speaking competence.

Self-regulation refers to the degree to which individuals become metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning processes (Zimmerman, 2000). Since the 1970s, due to the findings in cognitive science, the research concern in L2 learning and teaching has shifted from methods of teaching to individual differences. Thus, investigating language learning strategies has become a highlighted research field in L2 studies. Comparing the research on language learning strategies in second language acquisition and self-regulated learning in educational psychology, researchers have suggested that extra research in language study can be augmented via self-regulated learning (Ping, 2012). Hence, more studies needed to be done for self-regulated learning in the field of language teaching and learning.

Self-disclosure can be defined as communication that relates to one's self (Canary, Cody, and Manusov, 2008). Reciprocity is one important characteristic of self-disclosure which means a person's disclosure increases the likelihood that the other party will also disclose. Several authors propose that self-disclosure plays an important role in students' participation (Goldstein and Benassi, 1994), accelerating student-teacher interaction, and achieving learning objectives (Cayanus, 2004). Self-disclosure can be studied in different areas such as psychology and teaching more specifically in SLA. Hence, it is strongly recommended that to investigate its effects on improving EFL learners' speaking competence.

Conclusively, speaking is a very demanding skill for EFL learners since they do not have enough exposure to authentic language and they do not have enough opportunity to use their English knowledge in real contexts. However, self-regulation and self-disclosure can be two effective methods that provide learners with possibilities of using English orally in real situations. Therefore, an attempt was made in this study to investigate the effects of these two methods on improving Iranian EFL learners' speaking competence.

Accurate and fluent speaking has always been a challenging area for most EFL learners. Unlike writing, improvising is a very important issue in speaking and people do not have time to think for each sentence in oral communications. In addition, accent and especially pronunciation are important matters in speaking because bad accent and pronunciation can lead to misunderstanding (Grant, 2007). It is believed that learners with strategic knowledge of language learning become more efficient and flexible, thus they can acquire a language more easily. However, learning strategies are not theoretically and operationally well defined. Theoretically, various terminology and classifications have been used to refer to learning strategies (O'malley and Chamot, 1990). Operationally, the psychometric properties of the assessment instruments measuring learning strategies are in question. To overcome some weaknesses, scholars turned to a related and new concept, self-regulation (Tseng, Dörnyei, and Schmitt, 2006). Unfortunately, self-regulation is not very common in English teaching and learning and so many EFL instructors are not familiar enough with this concept (Maftoon and Tasnimi, 2014).

Self-disclosure is called to be one of the important tools that psychotherapists use to create a deep and successful psychotherapeutic relationship. Therefore, if the foreign language classroom is meant to cope with a counselor-client (teacher-student) relationship, then, self-disclosure can be used by the teacher as a successful tool (Farani and Fatemi, 2014). Although it has been proved that self-disclosure has a positive effect on enhancing learners' autonomy and it can facilitate learning (Cayanus, 2004), it has not been regarded commonly as a teaching and learning strategy in the majority of EFL classes (Iwata, 2010). Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a study to investigate the relationship between self-regulation and EFL learners' self-disclosure.

This study is aimed at investigating the relationship between self-regulated learning and self-disclosures in EFL speaking classes. Thus, the following research question was addressed:

**RQ:** Is there any significant relationship between self-regulated learning and self-disclosures in EFL classes?

### Literature review

#### Speaking Skill

Speaking which is “the use of oral language to interact directly and immediately with others” (Butler, Eignor, Jones, McNamara, and Suomi, 2000, p. 2) could be the most important language skill in communication. Some scholars believe that speaking is the central point of L2 learning, and they claim that it is the most important skill for business and government personnel working in the field (Egan, 1999). Acquiring competency in speaking is vital because it is mostly necessary to communicate within the international market. Students, who are good speakers in English, gain better opportunities in their lives with regard to the kind of job they might be offered, gaining promotions, or even continuing their studies (Baker and Westrup, 2003). Students may effort to develop strong EFL English speaking skills attributable to the difficulty of the language (Nunan, 1999). The differences between English and their first language create problems with speaking the new language in front of other people (Ellis, 2008), and most importantly lacking the probability of practicing the language repeatedly in different situations (Shumin, 2002). Although learning English in general and speaking skill in specific is completely arduous, the reality of most EFL students verifies that, in spite of good general planning, purposive curriculum, integrated textbooks, qualified teachers, achievement is below the expectations (Khan, 2011).

Speaking is one of the four macro skills which are necessary for good communication in all languages, specifically when speakers are not using their first language. Since English is universally used as a means of communication, particularly in the internet world, English speaking skills should be developed in consort with the other skills so that these combined skills will improve communication achievement both with native speakers of English and the ones whose native languages are not English (Boonkit, 2010). Due to the noteworthy role of speaking in action, Bailey (2005) and Goh (2007) argued how to enhance the development of speaking skill by dint of syllabus design, principles of teaching, types of tasks and materials, and speaking assessment.

Research findings related to L2 speaking revealed that oral repetition and imitation-based practice have been commonly used as one of the key methods to increase fluency in speaking in

L2 learning. Such rehearsal is employed to improve the knowledge of novel words, phrases, and sentences by concentrating on intonation and speed. Research on individual differences in language learning has shown that it is necessary to maintain and rehearse phonological information in working memory. It is generally believed that learners have more difficulties with sentence production when a sentence consists of new words or unfamiliar phrases. Respecting the fact that new information surges cognitive loads in working memory, language fluency is more possible to be interrupted when L2 learners have to process new words (Ayunda, 2015).

Studies indicated that insufficient exposure to a target language affects the accomplishment of language development at the acquiring stages (Hughes, 2007). As Maxom (2009) pointed out, elementary level-typed students interact with their occupied vocabulary of which they learn to use many more verbs besides to be (I am, you are, it is). The students learn to talk and ask about matters related to daily routines. They also begin to refer to past and future tenses while at pre intermediate level, students learn to discuss their experiences and future plans. They learn vocabulary related to their daily life and are able to discuss free time activities and explain their favorites.

Brown (2007) suggested principles for designing speaking techniques supported by meaning-focused input as follows: 1) the techniques used cover the variety of learner needs, from language-based focus on accuracy to message-based focus on interaction, meaning, and fluency, 2) the techniques should be fundamentally motivating, 3) the use of real language is promoted in meaningful situations, 4) suitable feedback and correction must be presented, 5) speaking and listening, reading and writing must be naturally linked, 6) opportunities to start oral communication should be open to a large extent, and 7) development of speaking strategies is encouraged.

### **Self-Regulation**

Based on Zimmerman and Bandura (1994), self-regulation is a concept that refers to learners' self-generated ideas, actions and feelings which are oriented systematically toward achievement of educational goals. Zimmerman (2000) states that "self-regulated learning engages students' active participation in learning from the metacognitive, motivational and behavioral point of view" (p. 66).

Baumeister and Vohs (2007) stated that self-regulation refers to a person's ability to change his/her behavior. The characteristic and existence of these actions would modify in relation to

some objectives, ideals, and norms regardless of if their stem would have public or internal anticipation. As a whole, human behavior flexibility and adaptability will enlarge during self-regulation process. This flexibility allows learners to adjust their performance to an expansive range of situational or public necessities they face in their everyday life experience. Self-regulation is promoted through effects of goals on motivation, learning, self-efficacy, and self-evaluations of progress (Bandura, 1997).

Zimmerman (1989) argued that research on learning strategies reveals developmental analyses of learners' use of strategies. In general, self-regulation is used more effectively by adolescents than by children, and is more obvious among higher achieving than lower achieving learners. Boekaerts (1999) stated that there are also two important corresponding facets regarding self-regulation of the components of motivational and cognitive range with a reciprocal relationship between them. These features concentrate on three levels which are goals, strategy use, and domain specific knowledge. Bandura (1986) believed that self-regulative behavior is not achieved by an act of will. It requires particular abilities in self-leading and self-motivation. Some scholars have conducted research on students' use of self-regulatory processes and its quality and quantity has shown a high correlation with academic accomplishment as well as with standardized test scores (Zimmerman and Pons, 1986).

Schunk and Zimmerman (2003) asserted that like other processes, self-regulation (or self-regulated learning) changes through the life span. A weak spot about Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) is that few studies have been conducted on learners after they leave their formal schooling, yet the available data does not appear to be insufficient follow up. There are some questions about how individuals regulate their family life, finances, and work schedules. A productive area to investigate and one, which has attracted much attention, is how grownups use self-regulation to balance their professional and personal lives, how they use goal setting, self-evaluation of the process, monitoring of time spent, and other methods and skills; and which ways are most efficient to teach these strategies. Zimmerman (1998) defined self-regulation processes as a kind of self-directed feelings, ideas, and behaviors for reaching academic aims. He continued that, self-regulated learning involves goal-directed actions that students modify, sustain, and instigate. He also believed that learners could practice this strategy for their academic studies.

Zimmerman (2002, p. 67) organized self-regulated processes under three cyclical phases, namely, forethought phase, performance phase, and self-reflection phase. Forethought phase, or proactive phase, pertains to beliefs and processes that occur before learners' attempts to learn; it involves two main levels: task analysis, which by itself consists of goal setting and strategic planning, and self-motivation, which is rooted in students' perceptions and learning beliefs. The performance phase also contains two sub-phases. Self-control refers to choosing methods during forethought phase, and self-observation is the self-record of personal events or self-experimentation to finding the cause of such events. The self-reflection phase consists of two major stages: self-judgment and self-evaluation. These levels refer to comparing one's self presentation against some principles and rules.

As stated by Zimmerman (2002), self-regulated learning is an activity that learners make for themselves in a practical method not a hidden event that happens to them in reaction to teaching. In other words, students can change their own mental capability into educational aims in a self-generated process. Therefore, it cannot be an academic performance skill or a mental ability. In this situation proactively can be defined as the awareness of student's own limitations and strengths. Based on Boekaert's (1999) model, self-regulated learning has a strong construction that enables researchers: Firstly, to describe the different constituents that are part of successful learning; secondly, to explain the communal and recurrent communications that mount up among the different components, and thirdly, to relate learning and achievement directly to the self, that is to a person's good structure.

Boekaert's (1999) three-layer model of SRL in its inmost layer provides some information about the normal way in which students learn and describe the importance of their self-regulation process and its quality. The middle layer signifies how the learners adjust learning processes based on their own knowledge and ability. The outmost layer deals with regulation of the self; this contains students' ability to define ongoing and upcoming actions in the light of their own needs, expectations, and wishes. It is commonly believed that self-regulation strategies can be learned, taught, and controlled. In general, the learners who are involved in the self-regulated process must have some qualities that others lack. In actual fact, research has revealed that such features distinguish self-regulated learners from those who lack such qualities (Oettingen, Hönig, and Gollwitzer, 2000; Perry and VandeKamp, 2000; Winne, 1995; Zimmerman, 1998, 2002).



### **Self-disclosure**

Self-disclosure plays an important role in social and clinical settings and it has an impact in education, too (Goldstein and Benassi, 1994). One feature of self-disclosure is its reciprocity, meaning that a person's disclosure increases the likelihood that the other party will also disclose (Serag, 2011). Numerous authors suggest that self-disclosure plays a critical role in student participation (Goldstein and Benassi, 1994), facilitating student-teacher interaction (Fusani, 1994), and achieving learning objectives (Cayanus, 2004).

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The participants of this study were 30 male and female Iranian EFL learners whose level of proficiency was upper-intermediate. The participants' ages were between 15 and 19 years old. They were studying English at two language institutes in Isfahan. The participants were selected after administering the placement test to 100 EFL learners and the ones whose level of proficiency was suitable for the aim of the study were selected to take part in it.

### **Design of the Study**

The present study was a quasi-experimental one with the aim of investigating the relationship between self-regulated Learning and self-disclosures in EFL classes and its representation in their speaking competence. The study had two variables which were self-regulation and self-disclosure. Self-regulation was the independent variable and self-disclosure was the dependent variable.

### **Instruments**

The instruments of the study were Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT), Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI), and pre-test and post-test.

### **OQPT**

OQPT was used to evaluate the participants' general English knowledge and to make sure about their homogeneity. OQPT provides reliable and efficient means of placing students at the start of a course for teachers (Allan, 2004). According to Allan (2004) the tests have been calibrated against the levels system provided by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (commonly known as the CEF), which has been adopted by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) as well as by governments and



major institutions, including exam boards, throughout Europe. OQPT was used to measure the participants' level of proficiency in English. The test had 60 multiple-choice questions and the participants had to choose the answer from the alternatives for each question. Each participant whose score was between 40 and 45 was considered an upper-intermediate EFL learner. The test evaluated the skills of reading comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, and grammar.

### **MAI**

Schraw and Dennison (1994) developed the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) to assess metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulation which they referred to as the knowledge of cognition factor and the regulation of cognition factor. The MAI consists of 52 questions tapping into these two components of metacognition (see Appendix B). They found that there was strong support for the knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition components and that these two components were related (Young and Fry, 2012).

### **Pre-test and Post-test**

The pre-test and post-test were oral proficiency tests. The pre-test was given to the participants before performing the treatment and the post-test was given after completing the treatment. Both tests had a similar format. In the tests, the participants were interviewed. They were asked to talk about themselves, their favorites, interests, hobbies, anxieties, dreams, and future plans. The test took five minutes for each participant.

### **Procedure**

As the first step, the placement test was administered to 100 EFL learners and the ones whose scores were between 40 and 45 out of 60 were chosen as the participants of the study. Then, the pre-test was administered to evaluate how much are the students were good at self-disclosure. The self-regulation strategies were taught directly to the participants in 10 sessions. Each session lasted for 90 minutes. To implement the treatment, one of the self-regulation strategies was introduced to the participants by the researcher. They were informed that self-regulation process would help them to be an active speaker, and that they would be able to control the speaking process, their behavior, and their environment better by applying self-regulation strategies while speaking. They also learned how self-regulation strategies could assist them disclosing themselves more effectively. The participants were supposed to utilize the strategies in the form of the designed tasks/activities which are described below. The tasks/activities were based on self-regulation

strategies proposed by Zimmerman (1989). The strategies included in eight categories, which had to be carried out:

1. Environmental Structuring
2. Organizing and Transforming
3. Goal Setting and Planning
4. Keeping Records and Monitoring + Organizing and Transforming
5. Seeking Information + Seeking Social Assistance
6. Rehearsing and Memorizing
7. Reviewing Records
8. Self-evaluation + Self-cons equating

Every session, the participants practiced self-regulation strategies while speaking and self-disclosure. The treatment was a common English learning course but, in each session, one of the self-regulation strategies was explained to the participants at the beginning of the session. On the last session of the treatment, the MAI was given to the participants to understand how much they became familiar with self-regulation. After completing the treatment, the post-test was conducted to assess the participants' improvement and to understand the relationship between self-regulation and self-disclosure.

## Results

In this section, the results of data analysis are reported. The research question of the present study was:

### Results of the OQPT

The descriptive results of OQPT, as shown in Table 4.1 indicated that the mean score of the participants at the beginning of the study was 42.67 ( $SD=1.081$ ). Then, all the students were in the score range of 35 and 45 and were considered to be at intermediate level of English proficiency. Then the sample was homogeneous.

**Table 1***Descriptive Statistics for OQPT Results*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
OQPT	30	42.76	1.081	.197

Subsequently, one-sample *t*-test was used, in order to show whether the difference between participants' proficiency levels was significant or not. Table 4.2 demonstrates the results.

**Table 2***Results of One-Sample t-Test for OQPT*

Test Value = 43						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
OQPT	-1.237	29	.226	-.244	-.65	.16

According to Table 2, there was not a significant difference between the obtained mean score and the test value since the *p* value was greater than .05 ( $p = .226$ ). This showed that the difference of participants' level of proficiency did not have any significant effect in the relationships between self-regulation and self-disclosure that was the focus of the present study.

### Results of the Pre-test and Post-test

To achieve the purpose of the study, the results obtained from MAI before and after participants' self-regulation learning were compared. The results are shown in Tables 3 and 4.

**Table 3***Descriptive Statistics of Participants MAI Results in Pre-test and Post-test*

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	14.468	30	1.0071	.1839
	Post-test	16.487	30	2.2436	.4096

According to Table 3, there was an increase in participants self-disclosure measured by MAI after participants learning how to employ self-regulation strategies. In order to see how much the difference between participants' self-disclosures before and after their self-regulation strategy training was significant, a paired sample *t*-test was conducted, and the results are shown in Table 4. Below:

**Table 4***Results of Paired Samples t-Test for Pre-test and Post-test*

Paired Differences									
				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Mean		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper				
Pair 1	Pre-test					-	-	-	
	Posttest	-2.0184	2.2334	.4078	2.8524	1.1845	4.950	29	.000

According to Table 4, there was a significant difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test because the *p* value was lower than .05 ( $p < .001$ ). This shows that teaching participants how to employ self-regulation strategies affected their self-disclosure significantly. On the other hand, Person Correlation results, demonstrated in Table 5, indicates that this difference was positive.

**Table 5**

*Results of Person Correlation for the Relationship between Self-regulation Strategy learning and Participants Self-disclosure*

		Self-Regulation	Self-disclosure
Self-Regulation	Pearson Correlation	1	.849**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	30	30
Self-disclosure	Pearson Correlation	.849**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	30	30

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

According to Table 5, there was a strong positive correlation between self-regulation and self-disclosure ( $r_{x,y} = .849$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In another words, self-regulation learning affected participants' self-disclosure positively.

### Discussion

The present study was an attempt to investigate whether there is a relationship between self-regulation learning and self-disclosure in EFL classes or not. For this purpose, the data obtained from Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) in pre-test and post-test, in a group of participants who passed self-regulation training intervention, were compared through paired-samples t-test. The results indicated that the difference of participants mean scores in post-test and pre-test was statistically significant. It can then be concluded that training participants about self-regulation strategies had affected their self-disclosure in the class significantly. Pearson correlation results revealed that this effect was positive and self-regulation training enhanced participants' self-disclosure ability.

Self-regulation is a concept that refers to learners' self-generated ideas, actions, and feelings which are oriented systematically toward achievement of educational goals (Zimmerman and Bandura, 1994). On the other hand, according to Vogel and Wester (2003), self-disclosure is the "process in which a person exposes private feelings, thoughts, beliefs, or attributes to another person" (p.351). Self-disclosure is related to development of learners' speaking skill. According

to the results of this study, training learners how to use self-regulation strategies positively affects learners' self-disclosure and consequently may affect development of their speaking skills.

The concept of self-disclosure is closely related to speaking skill. According to Levelt (1989) information processing model of speech production, speaking is a productive and interactive skill. Carter and Nunan (2002) introduced four main stages of speaking: conceptualization, formulation, articulation, and self-monitoring. According to them, Conceptualization refers to a sort of pre-speaking stage in which the speaker plans what to say. This involves connecting background knowledge to the topic and the conditions in which the speech is made. This step is closely related to forethought phase of self-regulation where learners use planning, elaboration, and repetition strategies. In the formulation step of speaking, appropriate linguistic forms (words and phrases) are found and they are matched with the correct grammatical markers (affixes, articles, auxiliaries).

In the stage of articulation, the speaker articulates every word by means of articulatory organs. These two steps are closely connected to the second phase of self-regulation, namely performance phase, where learners engage in self-monitoring and self-control strategies. In the last stage, the speaker checks the speech and corrects mistakes by self-evaluation which is similar to the self-reflection phase of self-regulated learning. Consequently, there is a close relationship between the phases of self-regulated strategies and the stages of the speaking process. As these processes of speaking production require automaticity on the part of the speaker; therefore, using self-regulated strategies may help along the different stages of speech production and consequently improve the speaking proficiency (Carter and Nunan, 2002).

The positive effect of self-regulation training on the part of learners has been referred to in many studies. Some have referred to its effect on learning outcomes (Pintrich, 2000), improving their study skills (Wolters, 2011), enhancing academic outcomes (Harris, Friedlander, Sadler, Frizzelle, and Graham, 2005), monitoring their performance (Harris et al., 2005), and evaluating their academic progress (De Bruin, Thiede and Camp, 2011). With regard to speaking skill, teaching self-regulation strategies and practicing them in class helps students manage and monitor their speaking. It can be concluded that 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.

The present study was in line with Aregu (2013) study who found that self-regulated learning intervention has had a significant effect on students' speaking performance. Consequently, he concluded that the knowledge and use of self-regulated learning strategies helped the experimental group students succeed in spoken communication and develop their speaking. Similarly, Samah Mohammed Fahim El-Sakka(2016) found that the self-regulated strategy instruction was effective on developing the speaking proficiency of EFL university students.

The idea of self-disclosure is closely related to self-beliefs and self-confidence. While few studies in western context have referred to the possibility of training self-regulation, they believe that it could lead to "success experiences in schools that, in turn, relate to positive feelings about oneself as a learner and a competent person" (Corno, 1987, p. 252, cited in Manning and Payne, 1996, p. 17). Accordingly, Boggiano and Pitman (1992) declared that students develop more confidence if their regulation behavior is more internalized. In a similar vein, even Zimmerman (1994) claimed that self-regulation, not only develops students' cognitive capacity, but also their affects, in case self-regulation ability enhanced appropriately. All in all, he believes that self-regulation training makes participants active meta-cognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally in the teaching/learning process. These studies findings can be regarded in line with the findings of the present study indirectly, as self-confidence is a major factor in one's tendency to self-disclose. Then if self-regulation training enhances one's self confidence, it should also be effective in his or her self-disclosure.

Similarly, Williams and Burden (1997) stated that language learning is not merely a matter of having a high level of intelligence, but learners' use of strategies and their ability to manage their learning in a particular learning context as effectively as possible are really important. The finding of the present study confirms their finding for self-regulation strategy training, as a type of strategy training. Similarly, Pajares and Schunk (2002) claim that some students' difficulty in learning is not due to their lack of successful performance, but it is due to having been "learned to see themselves as incapable of handling academic work." (p. 17).

On the other hand, according to Pajares (1996), most of the studies have concentrated on the effect of interventions on students' performance, and the effect of the interventions on learners' affect (such as self-disclosure), as far as the researcher knows, are neglected. It is suggested that such intervention studies explore not only learners' performance, but also their related affects. The



present study was an attempt to explore self-disclosure as an affect closely related to speaking skill. While there is a plethora of studies on speaking performance of learners, no study has been conducted on the effect of an intervention (here self-regulation training) on an affective domain of speaking skill (here self-disclosure) in Iranian context.

### Conclusion

Speaking skill is one of the most challenging skills language learners encounter with during their language study. Consequently, enhancing students' speaking performance has been the focus of many studies till now. but a learners' performance is never independent of his or her affect. Many studies have pointed out the fact that strategy training affects students' performances positively, but learners' affective domain, as far as the researcher knows, has been neglected in studies investigating the relationship between an intervention and students' performances. The present study was an attempt to investigate the relationship between self-regulation strategy training and students' self-disclosure as an affect. According to the present study, self-regulation training affected participants' self-disclosure ability positively in Iranian context. This finding can be a motivation for language teachers to include self-regulation strategy training in their instruction, especially with an aim of improving students' speaking skill. The study can also act as a motivation for conducting more studies that include the possible effect of affective factors when investigating the relationship of some interventions on the learners' performances. Even material developers and syllabus designers will be stimulated to include more self-regulated strategies training in their materials and course designs especially with regard to speaking skill.

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