

Explicit Affective Strategy Instruction to Develop Speaking Performance of Egyptian EFL University Students

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the effect of explicit affective strategy instruction on the speaking performance of Freshmen English majors at Faculty of Education, Suez University, Egypt. The design of the study is a pre-post quasi experimental one. The instrument is a pre/post speaking performance test (designed by the researcher). Participants were eighty Freshmen English majors, randomly divided into two groups: a control group (N=40) and an experimental one (N=40). During the experiment, the experimental group was explicitly taught some affective strategies (lowering anxiety, encouraging yourself and monitoring emotions) while the control group was taught using the traditional method. All participants were tested using the pre/post speaking performance test before and after the intervention. The difference between the post test's mean scores of the control and experimental groups were calculated using Independent Samples t-test and the difference in the mean scores between the pre- and post tests of speaking performance was calculated for each group separately using Paired Samples t-test. A significant difference was found between the post test's mean scores of the control and the experimental groups in favor of the experimental group. Moreover, a significant difference was found between the mean scores of the pre and post test of the experimental group in favor of the post test. It was concluded that participants' level of speaking performance significantly improved after receiving the explicit affective strategy instruction.

Keywords: explicit affective strategy instruction, speaking performance, EFL university students

1. Introduction

1.1 Introducing the Problem

Speaking is the medium through which a foreign language is encountered, understood, practiced, and taught (Al Hosni, 2014). To Safitri, Akib, and Hartanti (2018), it is a means through which learners can communicate with the others to achieve certain goals and express their opinions, viewpoints, hopes and intentions. To emphasize the importance of speaking in learning a foreign language, people who know a foreign language are referred to as speakers of that language (Torky, as cited in Safitri, Akib, & Hartanti, 2018). Therefore, speaking is considered as the ultimate goal of language learning and the most fundamental skill to attain (Aleksandrak, 2011). Consequently, since the beginning of the communicative era, speaking's development has gained the attention of both teachers and learners. Yet, it is a complex process including linguistic competence, oral skills, and strategy use (Chou, 2018).

In spite of its importance, speaking has always been a challenge for Egyptian EFL students especially those at university levels (El-Sakka, 2016; Safitri, Akib, & Hartanti, 2018; Wael, Asnur, & Ibrahim, 2018). EFL students enter university after having learnt English as a foreign language, in most cases, for twelve years. Despite they own the sufficient lexicon and grammar that help them communicate the language, they face various problems, both internally and externally. They may feel anxious, reluctant to use the target language, afraid of making mistakes, uncomfortable using the target language either inside or outside the classroom (Diyab, Abdel-Haq, & Aly, 2013; El Sakka, 2016; Wael, Asnur, & Ibrahim, 2018). Undoubtedly, these feelings hinder their speaking performance even with the extensive knowledge of the English language's grammar and vocabulary (Aleksandrak, 2011). In such circumstances, it is advisable to assist them in controlling their feelings and affects, in order to improve their speaking performance and become more successful lifelong learners. According to the researcher, a promising classroom intervention is the explicit teaching of affective strategies that rests upon the premise that speaking performance will become more efficient if supported by the use of affective strategies.

Researchers over the years emphasized the development of cognitive element in language learners and subconsciously neglected learners' emotions and attitudes (Minghe & Yuan, 2013). As an active interaction between a speaker and a listener, speaking involves thoughts and emotions (Underwood, 1997), that undoubtedly influence the learning process in general and speaking performance in particular. In spite of its importance, the implementation of affective strategy instruction in classes was, if found, very limited and mostly implicit (Ata Allah, 2016). Although the official programs tended to provide solid foundations for strategy instruction, they fell short of offering explicit guidelines for affective strategy instruction (Ata Allah, 2016). To discuss foreign language learning, specially speaking, without considering the affective reactions of the learners to language learning was and remains a serious oversight (Horwitz, 2001). Accordingly, the researcher nominated the explicit affective strategy instruction as a reasonable solution to promote EFL students' speaking performance. There have been a few studies handling affective strategy use as a single variable related to students' speaking performance; hence, to the knowledge of the researcher, no experimental study handled the explicit teaching of affective strategies, therefore, the present research is expected to be a contribution to such a field of study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problem of the present study was that freshmen EFL students at Faculty of Education, Suez University encounter low level of speaking performance. Therefore, the present study aimed to develop their speaking performance through the explicit teaching of affective strategies.

Thus, the present study aimed to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the features of explicit affective strategy instruction?
- 2) What is the impact of explicit affective strategy instruction on the speaking performance of EFL university students?

1.3 Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the present study are:

- 1) There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the post test of speaking performance of the control group and the experimental one.
- 2) There would be a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the experimental group exposed to explicit affective strategy instruction on the pre and post test of speaking performance.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study lies in the following:

- 1) It directs material developers' attention to consider affective strategy use in English language curricula.
- 2) It is helpful for education developers and policy makers in terms of the application of explicit teaching of affective strategies as one of the main principles of teacher education programs.
- 3) It helps teachers be familiar with affective and motivational strategies in language learning; besides, they should be able to implement them in their classes.
- 4) Applying affective strategy instruction hopefully helps language teachers in making the classroom environment less stressful and reduces students' anxiety level.
- 5) The implementation of affective factors in teaching will encourage trust and working together between teachers and students, intensifies students' responsibility and self-esteem, and stimulates students' learning motivation and interest.
- 6) It raises learner's awareness of affective strategies and provides them with systematic practice, reinforcement and self-monitoring of speaking performance.

1.5 Delimitations of the Study

The present study is delimited to:

- 1) 80 first year English majors at Faculty of Education, Suez University.
- 2) The second term of 2017-2018 academic year.
- 3) Explicit affective strategy instruction and speaking performance.

1.6 Definition of Terms

1.6.1 Affective Strategies

Affective strategies are operationally defined as the steps and procedures the speakers follow to reduce their anxiety, monitor their emotions and encourage themselves during speaking.

1.6.2 Explicit Affective Strategy Instruction

It is operationally defined as a method of teaching affective strategies that starts with defining the target strategy and its importance. Then, the researcher models it in front of class followed by students' practice of the strategy learned. Finally, assessment tools are used by the participants to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.

1.6.3 Speaking Performance

In the present study, speaking performance was operationally defined as the progress participants achieved in their speaking performance as manifested in by their scores in the following speaking aspects: pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and interactive communication.

1.7 Review of Related Literature

At the beginning of the 1990s some authors such as Oxford, O'Malley and Chamot start to notice affective strategies as part of the group of strategies used in foreign language learning (Garay & Etxebarria, 2012). Both Pishghadam and Zabihi (2012) believe that affect is one of the indicators of improving the quality of life; thus, teaching should focus on the affective domain. Despite their importance in creating better classroom atmospheres, student-centered lessons, and better uses of language materials and activities, affective strategies are not well researched and studied as the cognitive ones (Torres, Zapata, & Larenas, 2017). In the 1970s, with the rise of humanistic approaches, enough attention has been given to the affective domain in foreign language learning (Mendez Lopez & Pea Aguilar, 2013; Pishghadam, Zabetipour, & Aminzadeh, 2016). Consequently, teachers should devote valuable class time to the development of affective strategies.

The term affect is related to emotions, feelings, moods, and attitudes (Torres, Zapata, & Larenas, 2017). They are those non-academic strategies in nature that stimulate learning through establishing a level of empathy between the instructor and student (Hammi, 2017). In particular, affective factors refer to the emotions, feelings, and attitudes that individuals bring to the learning experience (Dörnyei, 2001; Hurd, 2008). Affective factors influence the way information is encoded and stored in the brain and that can be regulated through the use of the affective strategies component; reducing anxiety, encouraging oneself and monitoring one's emotions (Oxford, 1990). Therefore, Affective strategy use becomes one of the factors influencing students' speaking performance (Wijirahayu & Dorand, 2018), and that strategy instruction may lead to success if explicitly integrated in the curriculum (Chamot, 2004; Cohen, 2009; Griffiths & Oxford, 2014).

1.7.1 Importance of Affective Strategies

Affective strategies are very important especially to those learners who do not have a support or a motivation to learn from their teacher or class (White, 1995 as cited in Oxford, 2011). Affective strategies, also called self-motivational strategies (Dörnyei, 2003), assist learners in dealing with personality factors which are believed to impair their progress in learning and using the language such as anxiety, low self-esteem, and negative attitudes (Ata Allah, 2016). Both Garay and Etxebarria (2012) believe that affective strategies help learners create and maintain the emotional stability throughout learning. Those strategies make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations (Oxford, 1990, p 80). Oxford goes further and emphasizes that effective strategies increase learners' self-esteem and self-confidence, speed the consecution of proposed aims, direct learners to respect other mates, teacher and school, as well as influence the use of cognitive strategies. To conclude, the use of affective strategies develops language learners' abilities in EFL learning and helps them to become independent and aware of the ways they can learn most effectively (Mostafavi & Vahdany, 2016), because these strategies help EFL learners manage their feelings and attitudes towards learning and learn to interact with others in a prosperous manner (Chou, 2004).

1.7.2 Theoretical Foundations of Affective Strategy Instruction

A basic approach that has enjoyed increasing influence in education and training circles is humanism. Arising originally in North American psychotherapy, this approach emphasizes the role of feelings and motives relating to learning (Prabhavathy & Mahalakshmi, 2016). Humanism considers language learning as a process that involves the whole person and not only the intellect. It takes into account the emotional and spiritual needs of an individual too (Prabhavathy & Mahalakshmi, 2012). The term humanistic describes learning approaches that assert the central role of the whole person in the learning process. Therefore, as the humanistic approach develops, affect in

education gains more and more attention. Humanistic approaches to language learning and teaching have called for humanizing FL classroom by promoting learners' self-actualization and personal growth (Ata Allah, 2016).

On the part of learning a foreign language, it has become much more than mastering the language skills, the system of rules and grammar of a given language (Arifi, 2017). To reach the aims of humanism, it is necessary to involve emotions and affective factors in the teaching process (Stevick, 1990).

1.7.3 Affective Strategy Taxonomy

In this study, the researcher will teach the affective strategies included in Oxford's (1990) taxonomy. The researcher found such taxonomy the most complete one and the most related to the research's aims. That classification makes a clear differentiation between affective and social strategies, and that is exactly what the researcher needs for in order to draw conclusions when investigating the use of affective strategies in developing speaking performance.

Oxford (1990, 2011) classifies affective strategies into three main kinds: lowering anxiety, encouraging oneself, and taking your emotional temperature. That taxonomy includes 10 sub-strategies namely: making positive statements, taking risk wisely, rewarding yourself, listening to your body, using a checklist, writing a language learning diary, and discussing your feelings with someone else. Each main kind includes 3-4 sub strategies.

Lowering anxiety is the first affective strategy in Oxford taxonomy. Learners often experience anxiety when speaking a new language (Oxford, 1990). To lower anxiety, learners can depend on various procedures such as: progressive relaxation, deep breathing, or meditation, music, laughter. Using progressive relaxation reduces the tension by relaxing the muscles of the body (Oxford, 1990). Deep breathing means taking a deep breathing not just from the lungs but also from the diaphragm. It is an effective integrative body-mind exercise for dealing with stress and emotional conditions (Ma et al., 2017). Oxford (1990), Brown, Gerbarg and Muench (2013) confirm that deep breathing brings calmness. As for meditation, it means focusing on a mental image or sound to concentrate on one's thought, and it also reduces the anxiety that often inhibits language learners to speak (Oxford, 1990, p. 164). Using music is used to calm learners and put them in a positive attitude to learn the language (Oxford, 1990). Considering using laughter, it is used to eliminate boredom and generate motivation by adding humor (Oxford, 2011). Learners can use laughter by reading a humorous book, listening jokes, watching a funny movie, and so on.

The second group of strategies is "encouraging yourself". This strategy means how the learners motivate and encourage themselves to learn (Oxford, 1990). This strategy includes making positive statements, taking risk wisely, and rewarding yourself. Making positive statements is utilized to increase learner's confidence in learning a new language (Oxford, 1990). Learner can say or write a positive statement to value his performance (Oxford, 1990). The second is "*taking risks wisely*". It means learners take a reasonable risk in learning new language even they make mistakes or have difficulties by making a positive self-talk (Oxford, 1990). As for "*rewarding yourself*", it means the reward comes from learners themselves (Oxford, 1990). For example, they can reward themselves for good work by watching a favorite TV show.

As for the third strategy, "*taking your emotional temperature*" it means learner's self-assessment of their feelings, motivations, and attitudes in learning a new language (Oxford, 1990). That strategy includes listening to your body, using a checklist, writing a language learning diary, and discussing your feelings with someone else. Listening to your body means paying attention to the signals of the body (Oxford, 1990). Both positive and negative feelings bring different effects for the body. The positive feelings are happiness, interest, calmness, and pleasure whereas the negative ones are tension, worry, fear, and anger. Learner needs to understand such feelings in order to control them (Oxford, 1990). To help the learners discover their feelings, attitudes, and motivations in learning a new language, they can use a checklist (Oxford, 1990). Learners can make a checklist every day or every few days to assess their feelings and attitudes in learning a new language. Writing a language learning diary/journal helps the learners describe their feelings, attitudes, and perceptions about learning new language process on such diary or journal (Oxford, 1990). As for discussing your feelings with someone else, it is a very important strategy for the learner to talk with other people such as friends, parents, relatives, or teachers to express their feelings in learning a new language.

1.7.4 Explicit Strategy Instruction

Research studies have shown that effective language learning strategy instruction should be explicit and integrated into regular class work activities (Chamot, 2004). Explicit strategy instruction involves step-by-step training in a particular strategy. It is the overt, teacher directed teaching of strategies as well as the systematic transfer of control of such strategies from the teacher to students (Manset-Williams & Nelson, 2005). It is

primarily concerned with raising students' awareness of the strategies they use, teacher modeling of strategic thinking, student practice with new strategies, students' self-evaluation of the strategies used and transferring them to new tasks (Marzbana & Isazadeh, 2012). According to MacIntyre and Noels (as cited in Barra, 2008) the affective strategy should be introduced explicitly as students benefit from the instruction if they understand the strategy itself. The teachers should help students identify their existing strategies and introduce them new or unused strategies. Through practice and instruction, learners' use of affective strategies can be automatized (Cottrell, 1999). Thus, the main goal of the explicit approach of strategy instruction is to improve learners' awareness of learning strategies and provide learners with systematic practice, reinforcement and self-monitoring of their strategy use while attending to language learning activities (Cohen, 2009). There is somehow agreement among several researchers and theoreticians on the stages of explicit strategy instruction (El Sakka, 2008; Neufeld, 2006; Phelps, 2005). They summarized these stages as follows: introducing the strategy, modeling the strategy, practice, and assessment.

Introducing the strategy means providing a definition or even a description of the target strategy. The students should be provided with the purposes of learning the strategy and its usefulness. In modeling, the teacher explains how the strategy is applied by modeling it in front of the students. As for practice, students should practice the strategy taught to gain confidence and independence. Finally, students should learn how to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies by using assessment tools such as checklists or KWL charts.

1.7.5 Explicit Affective Strategy Instruction and Speaking Performance

A general consensus among strategy researchers implies that learning strategies are characteristics of effective learners (Wong & Nunan, 2011), and that strategy instruction leads to success in language learning if explicitly integrated in the curriculum (Cohen, 2009; Griffiths & Oxford, 2014). Ismail (2015) believes that both negative and positive emotions students experience in English classes have an impact on their speaking performance. Affective strategies make learners motivated, and have positive attitudes towards speaking (Roboh & Tedjaatmadja, 2016). Similarly, Oxbrow (2005) believes that affective strategy training can lead to proficiency if both students and teachers are aware of these strategies and attentively apply them during their speaking. Consequently, speaking performance varies from a student who is totally motivated and controls his affects from another who does not know how to control his emotions when s/he is speaking a language which is not the mother tongue (Garay & Etxebarria, 2012). Consequently, affective strategy variable explains as much as 56.50% towards speaking performance (Wijirahayu & Dorand, 2018). Moreover, Scimonelli (2002) maintains that affective strategies are the areas in which the teacher's intervention should come first to develop positive pictures of mind in the students and help them overcome the sense of stress and discomfort that is sometimes caused by a poor or low oral command of English.

In the present study the researcher would explicitly teach the affective strategies to the experimental group in order to improve their speaking performance. The researcher would teach three main strategies: anxiety reduction strategies, monitoring emotions strategies and self-encouragement strategies.

1.7.6 Previous Research

Previous studies examining the relationship between strategy use and proficiency have shown that the relationship is generally significant, (Lan & Oxford, 2003; Yammamori, Isoda, Hiromori, & Oxford, 2003; Griffiths, 2010; Gunning & Oxford, 2014) particularly in oral performance (Nakatani, 2006; Naughton, 2006; Gunning & Oxford, 2014).

In 2016, both Galti and Tahiru investigated the relationship between students' speaking anxiety and their use of affective strategy during speaking tasks. Ninety three students were selected for this purpose. FLCAS questionnaire and affective strategies category of Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL, Oxford 1990) were used as instruments. A significant relationship between the level of speaking anxiety and the students' use of affective strategy during speaking was found.

Wijirahayu and Dorand (2018) investigated a model of affective strategy training to improve speaking performance of the students of Akademi Telkom Jakarta. The results of the study revealed that there is a positive effect of affective strategy training on students' speaking performance. The students were able to manage themselves relax although only a small number of students practiced controlling their heartbeat while speaking. This result confirmed the similar success of a study conducted by Yunus and Singh (2013) in which majority of the respondents claimed that they were strong users of affective strategy to lower their anxiety by relaxing when they had to speak English. They also stated that such strategies improved their confidence level and speaking performance.

2. Method

2.1 Design

The present study is a pre-post quasi-experimental study. The researcher used two groups: a control group (N=40) and an experimental one (N=40). The experiment lasted for 3 months during the second term of 2017-2018 academic year. During the experiment the participants in the experimental group were exposed to the explicit instruction of three main affective strategies (anxiety reduction, monitoring emotions and self-encouragement strategies), while the control group were taught using the traditional method.

2.2 Participant

The participants of the present study were 80 EFL freshmen, chosen on purpose from Faculty of Education, Suez University, during the second semester of the 2017-2018 academic year. Those students were assigned to two groups: control group (40 students) and experimental one (40 students). All participants spent at least 12 years learning EFL.

2.3 Instrumentation

A speaking performance test was developed by the researcher to measure the participants' level of speaking performance before and after the experiment. The test was divided into four parts. In part one, the examiner asks the examinee some simple personal questions on everyday familiar topics (work, study, food, holidays, friends, festivals, sports ...etc). In the second part, the participants have twenty minutes to read an article and take brief notes on it. Each participant has four minutes to give an oral summary about what s/he read. In part three, the examinees look at a picture card and asked to speak about it for about 5 minutes. Before speaking, the participant has two minutes to make notes. In part four, the examiner and the participant have a discussion relating to the subject area in Part 3.

To achieve tests' validity, a jury of EFL specialists was consulted to check the content. The revised test was tried out with 25 first-year students (out of the sample of the study). The test scores were calculated to check for reliability using the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR20). The value of test reliability test was 0.78.

The test was scored using a rubric devised by the researcher. It consists of 4 grading criteria: pronunciation, accuracy, fluency, interactive communication. Each grading criteria is assessed on a 5-point scale. To reduce subjectivity, two raters marked the speaking test. They were oriented in how to use the scoring rubric before marking the participants' responses.

2.4 Materials of the Study

The explicit affective strategy instruction was integrated with the course of "Teaching School Curriculum" taught to freshmen English majors during the second term. The topics of the course were used as the speaking material of speaking sessions.

2.5 Experimental Manipulation

The experiment was divided into three stages:

a. Pre-testing

Before being exposed to explicit affective strategy instruction, the participants of the two groups (control and experimental) were pretested using the speaking performance test devised by the researcher.

b. Intervention

After making sure that the two groups have no significant difference in their scores in the speaking performance, the control group was taught "teaching school curriculum" course in the traditional way, while the experimental group was exposed to the explicit affective strategy instruction combined to the course.

The researcher explicitly taught three main affective strategies: anxiety reduction, monitoring emotions, and self-encouragement strategies. Each main strategy included three sub- strategies. Each main strategy was explicitly taught to the participants during two weeks, one session a week. The researcher starts the session by introducing the target strategy by defining it and mentioning its importance in developing speaking performance. Then, the researcher modeled the strategy in front of the group and after that participants apply the strategy themselves during speaking about the topics included in "teaching School Curriculum). Finally, using KWL or reflective journal, the participants evaluate the use of the strategy and how it helped them in improving their speaking.

As for the control group, they did not receive any special instruction in terms of affective strategies.

c. Posttesting

Having taught all the instructional sessions, speaking performance posttest was administered to all participants.

3. Statistical Analysis

The independent samples t-test was used to test the first hypothesis of the study that “there would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the control group and that of the experimental group on the post test of speaking performance.”

Table 1. Independent Samples t-test of the difference between the mean scores of the control and experimental group on the post test of speaking performance

Group	N	Mean	St.deviation	DF	T-value	Sig.
Control	40	0.9492	1.8290	39	17.895	0.000
Experimental	40	7.1825	1.6670	39		

As shown in Table 1 , there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the control and experimental group on the post test of speaking performance in favor of the post test ($t=17.895$, $p\leq 0.05$). Also, the effect size of that difference, using Cohen’s formula (1988) of the effect size for independent samples, was large in favor of the experimental group ($d=3.5$, $d>0.8$). Therefore, it was concluded that the explicit affective strategy instruction significantly improved the speaking performance of the experimental group. In light of this statistical result, the first hypothesis was accepted.

The second statistical result of the study was that a statistically significant difference was found in the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre and post test of speaking performance in favor of the post test as shown in the following table:

Table 2. Dependent Samples t-test for the difference in the mean scores of the experimental group between the pre and post test of speaking performance

Test	Mean	St.Deviation	DF	T-value	Sig
Pre	7.682	1.762	39	27.92	0.000
Post	17.86	2.12			

Paired samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in the mean scores between the pre and post test of speaking performance in favor of the post test ($t=27.92$, $p\leq 0.05$). Using Eita Square, the practical effect caused by the explicit affective strategy instruction was calculated. It was found that explicit affective strategies yielded a large and substantial effect size ($d=8.7$, $d>0.8$). This result suggested that the participants of the experimental group achieved significant improvement in their speaking performance during the period of the study. Consequently, it was concluded that the explicit affective strategy instruction was effective in developing the speaking performance of Freshmen English majors at Faculty of Education, Suez University. Therefore, the second hypothesis was accepted.

4. Discussion

In view of the previous statistical results, explicit affective strategy instruction was effective in developing the speaking performance of EFL university students. One of the possible explanations for the observed result is that the explicit method of teaching suits the Egyptian students who are accustomed to the direct methods of teaching as asserted by El-Sakka (2008) and Wijirahayu and Dorand (2018) who revealed that the success of affective strategy use does not always depend on students’ roles; teachers should explicitly introduce the importance of using such affective strategies. Another possible explanation may be related to the affective domain. Giving more emphasis to learners’ emotions and affection has influenced their speaking performance. Teaching affective strategies explicitly to the students of the experimental group make them aware of such strategies to control them while speaking in order to improve their performance. Undoubtedly, learning how to reduce anxiety, encourage oneself and control emotions have benefited the participants a lot in controlling their speaking performance and avoiding the negative effects that may be caused by such passive emotions. A third possible explanation is

related to using the affective strategies while speaking. Those strategies helped participants to lower their affective filter and thus control their negative feelings and turn them into positive attitudes. This finding supports Krashen's (1983) study, which found that foreign language is acquired best when affective filter is lowered. An additional explanation is the relaxed and encouraging atmosphere created by using the affective strategies; such friendly atmosphere provided an effective environment for oral language proficiency. Adding to the previous, when students learn to regulate their emotions and any anxious feelings, they become more apt to persevere when a challenge is presented. This allows students more opportunities to practice and achieve the goal (Florez, 2011). Thus, when students are highly motivated to speak with minimal stress, they will do their best to improve their speaking performance. That result found empirical support in the results of many studies such as Wijirahayu and Dorand (2018) who found a strong correlation value of 75.2% between the variables of affective strategy and students' speaking performance, and Xu (2016) who figured out that there was a significant positive correlation between affective strategies and IELTS speaking performance test.

5. Conclusion

Within the delimitations of the study as well as the results reached, the researcher concluded that the explicit affective strategy instruction was effective on developing the speaking performance of Egyptian EFL university students. Consequently, the result of this study adds a new dimension to the growing body of research regarding the positive effect of the explicit teaching of the affective strategies on improving the speaking performance of EFL university students.

Like many other studies, the present study was faced with some limitations which could impede the generalization of the results to other situations. First and foremost, if a larger sample size were considered, the obtained results could have been more significant and reasonable than they are now. Second, although the implementation of Explicit affective strategy approach in an EFL classroom may prove to be incentive and useful for students, teachers may lag behind so as to terminate the formal syllabus in due time. Finally, the practical problem is that, to appropriately use such a procedure in the classroom requires more competent and experienced instructors that are almost always unavailable (Abdolrezapour, 2013).

6. Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Research

In light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were formulated. A. Affective strategies must be explicitly taught and practiced in speaking classes. B. Affective strategy instruction should be made part of the speaking courses at university level. C. University teachers should encourage their students to reduce their anxiety, monitor their emotions as well as reward themselves while speaking. Moreover, the need for further studies in the following areas becomes apparent: A. the impact of affective strategy instruction on lowering the affective filter of EFL students. B. Towards an empirical application of the filter hypothesis theory in teaching English as a foreign language. C. Explicit versus implicit affective strategy instruction on developing the communication skills of EFL students. D. The impact of affective attitudes of EFL teachers on their students' achievement and attitudes towards the language.

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