

A Generative Learning Strategy-Based Program to Develop EFL Vocabulary and Oral Performance Skills of Al-Azhar Secondary Stage Students

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Abstract

The current study was carried out to investigate the effectiveness of utilizing a generative learning strategy-based program in fostering the targeted EFL lexical and oral performance skills among Al-Azhar secondary stage students. To attain the purpose of the study, the Quasi-experimental method was adopted with its pretest-posttest control /experimental groups design. Participants of the study consisted of (N=50) EFL students enrolled in the first-year Al-Azhar secondary stage, El-Sharkia Institute for girls, El-Ibrahimiya Educational Directorate, Sharkia Governorate during the first semester of the academic year 2022/2023. They were chosen and divided into two groups: treatment group (n=25), and non-treatment group (n=25). An EFL oral performance questionnaire accompanied with a scoring rubric, a pre-post oral performance test (OPT) and a pre-post lexical skills test (LST) were used as instruments of the study. The targeted EFL lexical and oral performance skills for 1st year secondary school students were determined to be enhanced through the use of a checklist approved by a jury of specialists in teaching EFL. Results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the treatment group in the pre-and post-administrations in both EFL lexical and oral performance skills, favoring the post-administrations. The findings of the study also revealed that the program

based on the generative learning strategy had a positive effect on developing the EFL first-year secondary stage students' lexical and oral performance skills.

Key Words: *Generative Learning Strategy, Vocabulary Skills, Oral Performance Skills.*

برنامج قائم على استراتيجيات التعلم التوليدي لتنمية الثروة المفرداتية
ومهارات الأداء الشفهي بالإنجليزية لدى طلاب المرحلة الثانوية الأزهرية

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المستخلص

استهدفت الدراسة، تعرف فعالية برنامج مقترح قائم على استراتيجيات التعلم

التوليدي

في تنمية الثروة المفرداتية ومهارات الأداء الشفهي بالإنجليزية لدى طلاب المرحلة الثانوية الأزهرية، ولتحقيق هذا الغرض تم إعداد قائمة بمهارات الأداء الشفهي الضرورية لطلاب الصف الأول الثانوي الأزهرية، واختبار معرّف في الأداء الشفهي، ومعياري لتصحيح الإختبار، واختبار معرّف للمهارات المعجمية، وإعداد مواد المعالجة التجريبية المتمثلة في البرنامج المقترح المقدم وفق استراتيجيات التعلم التوليدي. وقد استخدمت الدراسة المنهج شبه التجريبي لمجموعتين تجريبية وضابطة ذو الإختبارين القبلي والبعدي؛ حيث تم اختيار مجموعة من طالبات الصف الأول الثانوي الأزهرية، بمعهد فتيات شرقية مباشرة بإدارة الإبراهيمية التعليمية الأزهرية، محافظة الشرقية، وتم توزيعهم عشوائياً على مجموعتي الدراسة؛ المجموعة التجريبية (٢٥ طالبة)، والمجموعة الضابطة (٢٥ طالبة)، واستمرت الدراسة سبعة

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أسابيع خلال الفصل الدراسي الأول من العام الدراسي ٢٠٢٢ - ٢٠٢٣م، وخلال هذه الفترة تم تدريب طالبات المجموعة التجريبية على المهارت المستهدفة من خلال برنامج مقترح قائم على استراتيجيات التعلم التوليدي، في حين لم تتلق المجموعة الضابطة أية معالجة. وبعد دراستهن للبرنامج، وتطبيق أدوات الدراسة بعدياً توصلت الدراسة إلى وجود فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية في الثروة المفرداتية ومهارات الأداء الشفهي لصالح المجموعة التجريبية في التطبيق البعدي، مما يشير إلى فاعلية البرنامج المقترح في الثروة المفرداتية، ومهارات الأداء الشفهي بالإنجليزية لدى عينة الدراسة.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

استراتيجية التعلم التوليدي - الثروة المفرداتية - مهارات الأداء الشفهي بالإنجليزية.

1. Introduction

Language has been considered as a means of communication and interaction among people for many years. We communicate with others, to express our ideas, thoughts, opinions and feelings, in the form of words put together in a meaningful way. Being able to communicate is important in everyone's life. People communicate most of the time orally. Today, students are considered successful language learners if they can speak effectively in their foreign language. In effect, language and communication are keys to success in life.

In education, English language has become the primary language of communication. Communication is, therefore, a vital need for human beings. McDonough and Shaw (2003 p. 157) point out, "Human beings want to communicate something to achieve a particular goal. This may involve expressing ideas and opinions; expressing a wish or a desire to do something;

negotiating and/or solving a particular problem; or establishing and maintaining social relationships and friendships. To achieve these speaking purposes, human beings need to activate a range of appropriate expressions".

In that sense, Valette (2001) stated that communication it is the ability to understand what one hears or reads, and the ability to express oneself in speaking and writing. So, it means receiving as well as producing messages, either written or spoken. As a consequence, it is important to develop oral skills in the English language teaching and learning.

Figure (1)

Communication Skills in a Foreign Language



Adapted from Rao & Jyotsna (2009)

One of the major responsibilities of any teacher who teaches English language learners (EFLs) is to enable them to communicate effectively through oral language. Developing students' oral performance skills demands classroom activities that allow them to exchange ideas with each other, express their opinions, and develop learning strategies and communication skills for successful negotiation (Karfa, 2007).

Oral performance skills requires providing students with EFL varied life-like contexts and chances to talk inside and outside class. These contexts should be designed in a way that motivates students to communicate in different virtual as well as realistic situations. Stress should be put on vocabulary, grammar, collocations, word combination and pronunciation to achieve comprehension, fluency, accuracy and interaction as well Sanad (2021).

Manurung (2015) argues that progress in language learning is "often evaluated by the ability of learners to communicate in the language they are studying" (p.45). Furthermore, Harmer (2007) debates that language learners depend on the oral performance skills they acquired when they speak. Accordingly, teaching EFL oral communication includes many different aspects of the spoken language. For instance, it includes face-to-face conversations, making a speech, telephonic conversation, oral discussions and presentations, oral debates and retelling a story.

In fact, the integration of listening and speaking will make learners good listeners and speakers, so as to be able to communicate effectively. The mastery of these skills is a gradual process and it is similar to muscles building. Teachers, for instance, should expose learners to gradually challenging tasks and materials.

Oral performance skills which comprise listening and speaking are indispensable life skills. These skills have been used to communicate ideas long before the development of a writing system. Ability to use the skills effectively and successfully influences one's level of success in different life

efforts, particularly in the current era of globalisation (Ogunsiji, 2004). Therefore, the place of listening and speaking in teaching any language cannot be overemphasized since the goal is to enhance effective communication.

Listening is yet another necessitate in language. It is one important skill to possess as good listening is an integral part of communication process resulting from people's daily lives. As for that, listening plays an important role in everyday communication that must be comprehend in learning English. It is a common knowledge that listening in English is an active skill requiring listeners to deal with a variety of complicated tasks such as discriminating between sounds (consonants and vowels) and identifying stress and intonation. It is also known that listeners is used a variety of mental processes to give meaning to the information they listen.

Listening is essential not only as a receptive skill but also to the development of a spoken language proficiency. Rost (2002) also indicated that developing proficiency in listening is the key to achieving proficiency in speaking.

Nunan (1998) explained most people think that being able to write and speak in a second language means that they know the language; however, if they do not have the efficient listening skills, it is not possible to communicate effectively. Listening is the basic skill in language learning and over 50% of the time that students spend functioning in a foreign language will be devoted to listening. Listening comprehension is considered a prerequisite for communication.

According to Gilakani& Sabouri (2016), there are some suggestions that are beneficial to students to overcome some of their listening comprehension problems. They are as follows:

- a.** Listening activities should be provided based on the students' needs.
- b.** Teachers should provide authentic listening materials for students that help them understand better the natural speech uttered by native speakers.
- c.** Teachers should design listening tasks that arouse students' interest and help them learn listening skills and strategies.
- d.** Teachers should provide students with different types of input like radio news, films, everyday conversation, and interviews.
- e.** Teachers should familiarize their students with the rules of pronunciation to help them hear the different forms of rapid natural speech and ask them to imitate native speakers' pronunciation.
- f.** Teachers should give their students the necessary feedback on their performance because it can promote their error correction and increase their motivation.
- g.** Teachers should help their students to develop the necessary skills of listening comprehension like listening for understanding specific information, listening for the main ideas, explanation and inference.
- h.** Teachers should encourage their students to develop listening strategies. For instance: Guessing, asking for clarification, and using non-verbal cues to improve learners' listening comprehension ability.

However, it is surprising that teaching listening comprehension skill is still neglected in schools; it is not really taken very seriously by English language teachers. Millar (2003) pointed out that listening skill has been neglected to a secondary position in the EFL classrooms. Listening is essential at language classroom because it provides the learner with input, without which any learning simply cannot start at the right level because listening is a vital process to speaking. Speaking is the other oral skill, is important since the main goal of any language is to understand a certain message and be understood when expressing on self through speaking.

Learning to speak is a crucial aim in itself, for it equips students with a set of skills they can use for the rest of their lives. Speaking is the form of communication used to express opinions, make arguments, offer explanations, transmit information, and make impressions upon others. While articulating such utterances, one is required to take into consideration different phonological features of words (Masoud, A, & Ibrahim, O. 2018).

Speaking is one of the four macro skills which is necessary for attaining an effective communication for EFL learners (Morozova, 2013). Additionally, oral skills need to be developed along with the other skills so that these integrated skills will enhance communicative competence. The development of oral skills seems to be one of the most challenging tasks in EFL classrooms.

On the other hand, speaking a language fluently and improving oral performance is one of the fundamental goals of most EFL learners. Therefore, speaking is the basis of the oral

performance and its actual form. Learning to speak in a foreign language will be facilitated when learners are actively engaged in attempting to communicate (Nunan, 1991).

With the help of speaking, students can express their feelings, opinions, ideas and emotions. As they can tell stories, inform and explain. Moreover, speaking is important even outside the classroom because many organizations and factories look for people who have a foreign language diploma with good speaking ability in order to communicate with the foreign comers. (Kouicem 2010:30) agreed that: "a student who can speak English well may have greater chance for further education of finding employment and gaining proportion".

"Making learners talk is still a challenge for teachers, as it has been frequently reported that most EFL learners are passive, quiet, shy, reticent, and unwilling to answer" (Nazari & Allahyar, 2012 p.18).

The ability to speak naturally is required to create good communication. That is why some learners sometimes avoid this type of situation as they often lose words and feel difficulty in presenting a good image of themselves. Therefore, language instructors should provide learners with opportunities for meaningful communicative behavior about relevant topics by using learner-learner interaction as the key to teaching communicative language. Communication is derived essentially from interaction (Rivers, 2018).

Speaking skill should be taught and practiced in the language classroom, because any language course should enable students to communicate in English. So, speaking skill needs special treatment. In daily life, most of the time people speak

more than they write; yet many EFL teachers still spend the majority of class time on reading and writing practice almost ignoring speaking and listening skills (Abd-Al Qader, 2020).

Considering the importance of EFL oral skills and the increased emphasis on them, a number of previous studies attempted to develop oral communication skills by different techniques, strategies, approaches and programs as the study of Hala (2021) who investigated the effectiveness of using a program based on readers' theater to develop FEL prospective teachers' oral communication skills and willing to communicate. The results of the study revealed that the readers' theater based-program significantly developed EFL oral skills among prospective teachers.

Furthermore, Abdel-Salam (2020) who tackled digital storytelling to improve EFL oral skills among sixth year primary school pupils. Results of the study revealed that the experimental group's EFL oral communication skills improved significantly than the control group as a result of using digital storytelling. Therefore, it can be concluded that using digital storytelling was effective in developing EFL sixth year primary school pupils' oral communication skills.

Moreover, Abd-Al Qader (2020) who investigated the effectiveness of a task based program to develop EFL oral communication skills among al-Azhar secondary stage students. The results of the study showed that the task-based program had a positive effect on developing the EFL oral communication skills of El-Azhar First-year Secondary Students.

Similarly, El Sallami (2018) who investigated the effect of using simulation of dramatic performance on developing

some EFL oral communication skills in English language first-year prep school students. Results indicated that the suggested program has a positive effect on the development of students' oral communication skills.

Generally speaking, oral performance skills are one of the macro skills to be developed as a means of effective communication in both first and foreign language learning contexts. There are a number of factors relating to oral skills to be considered for effective English oral performance; vocabulary, and lexical relations are singled out as important factors to be emphasized in building fluency and accuracy for EFL speakers (Boonkit, 2010).

In oral performance, students usually fail to express their thoughts appropriately because of the use of incorrect vocabulary; thus they need to sustain accuracy in vocabulary, the correct use of lexical items according to specific context, and not just consulting word synonyms. Moreover, Lexical skills restrict the chances of learning and speaking the target language hence pose serious threat to oral communication. As a consequence, when learners try to express themselves orally, they only pronounce isolated words and disconnected sentences making their production poor and meaningless. To perform well in speaking, English as a foreign language learners need a massive word store and a variety of mental lexicon. There is a strong relationship between lexical competence and oral performance skills.

Vocabulary has long been regarded as a vital component and basics of (communicative) language ability. It is conceived of as a good indicator of EFL proficiency, which is supported by

empirical investigation (Katagiri, 2001; Meara & Buxton, 1987; Read, 2000). In addition, vocabulary is one of the essential and fundamental components of communication (e.g., Levelt, 1993; Nakamura, 2004; Singleton, 1997). Although there have been some studies examining relationships between vocabulary and other language skills, few studies have focused specifically and systematically on associations between vocabulary and oral production.

Hashemian & Soureshjani (2011), believes that words are extremely important in language learning because they are the basic building blocks of language and they are the units of meaning from which the larger structures of language such as sentences, paragraphs, and whole texts are formed. Also, Huy (2015) indicated that one of the most crucial problems that EFL students often have is lacking of vocabulary. He concluded that lack of vocabulary is the biggest problem that most students usually have when they study writing skill. He added that vocabulary limitation also affects the learning's results of other skills.

According to Decarrico (2001), lexical competence is considered as the central part of communicative competence, whether the language is first, second, or foreign. Lexical competence is the core of communicative competence performance and not merely as the knowledge of words and knowing how to pronounce them, but it is a more complex term that involves a series of language aspects (Bezukladnikov, Shamov & Novoselov, 2013). Jiang Yuhong (2007), agreed that lexical skills learning could promote the oral proficiency of English learners not only as viewed from grammatical

competence, but also in terms of the external communicative performance, by improving processing speed and expressive accuracy, and interaction in real-life situations.

In brief, to develop EFL lexical and oral performance skills, students need to participate in the classroom's oral tasks in a more enjoyable learning environment (Derakhshan, Tahery, & Mirarab, 2015). Therefore, there is a need for a paradigm shift in English language pedagogy to learner-centred learning so as to incorporate the internal processes of learning that are stimulated by students' schema and prior experience.

To achieve this, innovative methods, activities and techniques should be adopted for more involvement and engagement of students in their learning. Students need to learn to be knowledge builders not knowledge seekers. Generative Learning Strategy is a promising method which provides such a supportive learning atmosphere.

Generative Learning strategy is one of the prominent learning strategies based on constructivism. Constructivism theory is defined as generative learning. It is the act of creating meaning from what is learned. In constructivism, each learner constructs knowledge individually and socially, and it is actually not a new idea (Suhendi, Purwarno, & Chairani, 2021).

The term Generative Learning was first coined by Osborn and Wittrok in 1985 as an educational learning model. Learners, in this model, use their cognitive structures to link their newly acquired information with their previous knowledge in their cognitive structure. Generative Learning, as a strategy, allows the learner to generate meaningful relationships and so the generative learning strategy is interested in generating

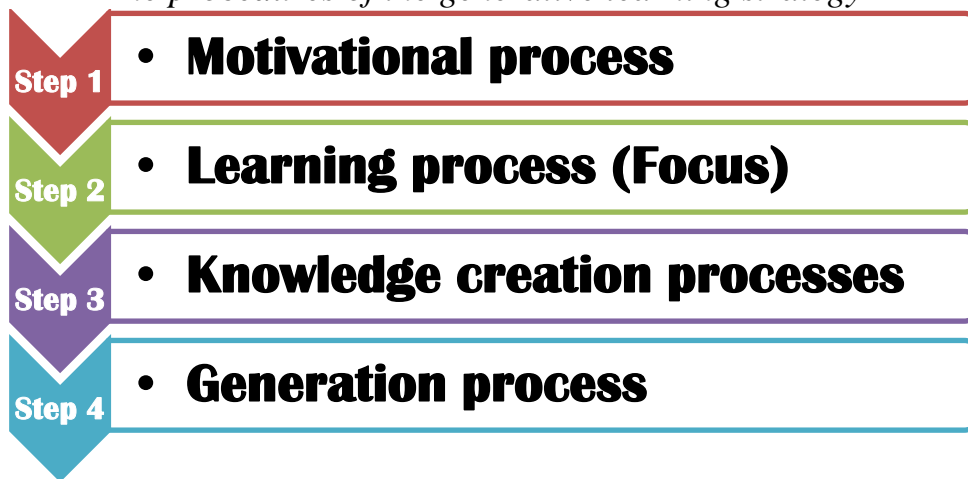
meaningful relationships between new and previous information. Therefore, background knowledge is regarded as a frame for building meaning and interaction between both types of knowledge (Al-Najdi & Abdul-Hadi, 2005).

Generative learning is defined as a constructivist process aimed at generating ideas, information and using prior knowledge to add new information through building relationships between information (Mary, K; 2010). According to Ogunleye (2011), the generative learning strategy helps learners construct their own learning by relating their prior knowledge with the new body of information and students work in groups to practise during the lesson while the teacher offers prompt corrective feedbacks. It also encourages students' self-efforts, activities or abilities through cognitive processing during learning.

Wittrock's generative learning model consists of four Components: motivational processes, learning processes, knowledge creation processes, and generation processes. These four components result in an active and dynamic generation of meaning. Understanding is increased through the reorganization, reconceptualization, elaborations, and relations which result from the four components (Wittrock, 1992; Andermam, 2010; Mary, 2010) as shown in figure (2).

Figure (2)

The procedures of the generative learning strategy



Note: Original

Concerning the effects of generative learning strategy on students' achievement and performance, it has been investigated in a number of studies. For example, (Amal, 2021) who investigated the effect of utilizing an integrative strategy based on generative learning model to develop EFL secondary school students' critical reading skills and self-regulation. The results of the study showed that the integrative strategy based on generative learning model had a positive effect on developing the EFL critical reading skills and self-regulation of First-year Secondary Students.

A number of studies found that the strategy had a significant effect on students' learning outcomes in these subject areas. However, these studies did not examine the effect of generative learning strategy on students' EFL lexical and oral performance skills. In view of this, the researcher advocated conducting the current study hoping to explore the effect of a

generative learning strategy-based program on developing EFL first-year secondary stage students' lexical and oral performance skills.

2. Context of the problem

The problem of the current study is manifested in EFL first-year secondary stage students' weakness in their lexical and oral performance skills. Such weakness may be attributed to the insufficient training and unsuitable strategies given to students in EFL lexical and oral classes. This weakness might also be attributed to the lack of the adequate training and enough time required for developing a dynamic living lexicon that could help them recognize and use vocabulary actively while they use the language orally in different contexts. Consequently, students' performance might be influenced.

To document the study problem, a pilot study was conducted on (N=15) EFL students enrolled in the first-year Al-Azhar secondary stage, El- Sharkia Institute for girls, El-Ibrahimiya Educational Directorate, Sharkia Governorate. It was conducted during the second semester of the academic year 2018-2019. The EFL lexical and oral performance tests, which were used as a pretest for the study participants)

Table (1)

Results of EFL lexical and oral performance tests (pilot study)

N o.	EFL oral performance skills	Proficiency Testing Frequency
1	Comprehension	20 %
2	Fluency	25 %
3	Accuracy	35 %
4	Interaction	35 %
EFL Lexical skills		

6	Lexical Knowledge	30 %
7	Lexical use	25 %

It was concluded that: the frequency of the students' responses to these skills was less than (50%) and none of them could achieve the required proficiency level (80%).

3. Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study lies in the fact that most of first year secondary stage students suffer from weakness in their lexical and oral performance skills as the results of the pilot study indicated. This weakness might be attributed to the traditional approaches and methods applied by teachers in lexical and oral classes. This weakness might also be attributed to the lack of the adequate training and enough time required for developing a dynamic living lexicon that could help them recognize and use vocabulary actively while they use the language orally in different contexts. Consequently, students' performance might be influenced.

The current study investigated the effect of a generative learning strategy-based program on developing EFL first-year secondary stage students' lexical and oral performance skills. In this sense, the current study was an attempt to answer the following main research question:

"What is the effect of a generative learning strategy-based program on developing EFL first-year secondary stage students' lexical and oral performance skills?"

The above-mentioned main research question could be subdivided into the following sub-questions:

- 1-** What are the oral performance skills required for EFL first-year secondary stage students?

- 2-** How far do EFL first-year secondary stage students successfully perform these skills?
- 3-** What are the lexical skills required for EFL first-year secondary stage students?
- 4-** How far do EFL first-year secondary stage students successfully perform these skills?
- 5-** What are the aspects of the Generative Learning strategy-based program to develop EFL first-year secondary stage students' lexical and oral performance skills?
- 6-** What is the effect of the Generative Learning strategy-based program to develop EFL first-year secondary stage students' oral performance skills?
- 7-** What is the effect of the Generative Learning strategy-based program to develop EFL first-year secondary stage students' lexical skills?

4. Hypotheses of the study

The current study attempts to verify the following hypotheses:

- 1.** There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and the control group students in the post administration of the EFL oral performance skills test, in favour of the experimental group.
- 2.** There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post administrations of the overall EFL oral performance skills test and its subskills in favour of the post administration.

3. There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and that of the control group students in the post administration of the EFL lexical skills test, in favour of the experimental group.
4. There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students in the pre and post administration of the EFL lexical skills test, in favour of the post administration test.
5. The generative learning strategy-based program has a positive effect on developing EFL oral performance skills.
6. The generative learning strategy-based program has a positive effect on developing EFL lexical skills.

5. Delimitations of the study

This research was delimited to

1. The GLS based program proposed by the researcher to develop the participants' EFL lexical and oral performance skills.
2. A group of fifty 1st year Al-Azhar secondary stage students, enrolled in El- Sharkia Institute for girls, El-Ibrahimiya Educational Directorate, Sharkia Governorate.
3. The first semester of the academic year 2022/2023.
4. The current study skills include: EFL oral performance skills (comprehension, fluency, accuracy, interaction) and EFL lexical skills (word combinations, formation and compound words, words with multiple meanings, idioms and phrasal verbs synonyms, and antonyms, word derivatives, different prefixes and suffixes).

6. Operational Definition of Terms

Generative Learning

Generative learning is defined as "the ability of the learner to generate ideas, knowledge and answers to a question" (Chin & Brown, 2000: 119). Similarly, Generative learning, as a learning/teaching strategy is based on the connection between the learner's previous and new experiences to generate ideas, expressions and vocabulary, to improve written expression (Banoui, 2018). From what is preceded, the researcher can define generative learning operationally, as a learning strategy based on the connection between the previous and new experiences of the learner to generate ideas, expressions and vocabulary, to improve their EFL lexical and oral performance skills.

Oral Performance

According to Kayi (2006), oral performance is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts. Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching. Despite its importance, for many years, teaching speaking has been undervalued and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues.

Based on some opinions above, oral performance is **operationally**, the ability of 1st year students to use the target language to express ideas in interactive situations. It is one of the important skills to be successfully done. It requires different abilities needed to be produced at the same time. These abilities are comprehension, fluency, accuracy, and interaction.

Lexical skills

Lexical skills are a crucial component of language comprehension and production.(Nation, 2014). They are also among the most fundamental components of foreign language reading and listening comprehension. Moreover, they are one of the essential prerequisites to speaking or oral performance (Segalowitz & Gatbonton, 1995).

Richard and Renandya (2002) agreed that Vocabulary is part of language component and list of words that have been used by people to communicate. It also provides much of the basis for how well students speak, listen, read and write.

Lexical skills are operationally defined as the ability to produce and understand the words of a language. Lexical competence is an aspect of both linguistic competence and communicative competence.

7. Method of the study

- Design and participants

The current study was a quasi-experimental study that aimed to develop students' EFL Lexical and Oral Performance Skills using the Generative Learning Strategy- Based Program. Two groups of 1st year Al-Azhar secondary stage students were chosen from El- Sharkia Institute for girls, El-Ibrahimiya Educational Directorate, Sharkia Governorate, Egypt. They were randomly assigned to two groups; an experimental group (n=25), and a control one (n=25). The experimental group was taught through the Generative Learning Strategy-Based Program, whereas the control group was taught regularly. Table (2) below highlightens the experimental design of the study.

Table (2)

The Experimental Design of the Study

Groups	Main Procedures			Test
	pre-tests	Treatment	post-tests	
Experimental	✓	✓	✓	EFL Lexical and Oral Performance tests
Control	✓	-----	✓	

8. Instruments and materials of the study

To achieve the purpose of this study, the following instruments and materials were designed:

- An EFL oral performance questionnaire to identify the suitable oral performance sub-skills for 1st year secondary stage students. A pre-post EFL oral performance test.
- A rubric for correcting the oral performance test.
- Lexical skills test.
- A suggested program to describe the steps to be followed when using the generative learning strategy to develop some EFL targeted skills.

- The EFL oral performance questionnaire

- Description of the EFL Oral performance Skills questionnaire

The initial form of the questionnaire included 22 oral performance skills. Three degrees of importance on each item, were (very important, important to some extent and less important), then the jury experts were requested to tick (✓) in front of each item. The initial form of the questionnaire was submitted to a jury of specialists in TEFL at Zagazig, Benha and Al-Azhar Universities and institute inspectors to determine the

most important oral skills required for the first-year secondary stage students. They estimated the validity of the questionnaire in terms of clarity and importance.

- The oral performance skills pre-post test

- Description of the EFL oral performance skills test

The test consists of twenty-six items; given thirty points designed for evaluating some EFL oral performance skills. Specifications of the oral performance test are shown in table (6).

- Validity of the EFL Oral performance skills Test

To determine the test validity, the test was submitted to a jury of specialists in TEFL experts and a number of institute inspectors who validated its content, questions numbers, the allocated time and the suitability to participants' level and age. In the light of the jury experts' modifications and the results of piloting the test, the final version was designed. The test validity was determined by using SPSS program (v.28).

- Reliability of the EFL oral performance skills test

The reliability of the test was measured by using different methods. The first one was Alpha -Cronbach way.

-Test-retest method

To estimate the reliability of the test, a pilot study of the EFL oral performance Skills pre-post test was conducted at the beginning of the first semester of the academic year 2022-2023 on a randomly selected group of 1st year secondary stage students (N=15) other than those participating in the current study. They were retested after two weeks from applying the pre-test, and then the researcher used Cronbach's alpha correlation to estimate the reliability of the test. The Cronbach's

alpha correlation showed a high correlation coefficient (Cronbach's alpha=0.80), which indicates a statistically reliable value.

Table (2)

Reliability of the components of the EFL oral performance skills test

Sub-skills	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Comprehension	.677
Fluency	.519
Accuracy	.509
Interaction	.562
Overall EFL Students' Oral Skills Cronbach's Alpha= 0. 80	

- Inter- rater reliability

Inter-rater reliability is used to determine the extent to which different raters/observers give consistent estimate of the same phenomenon. To avoid the subjectivity factor in grading the oral skills test, one rater was asked to measure the reliability of the oral performance skills pre-posttest using the rubric designed by the researcher. Calculating the relation between the two applications indicated that $r = 0.87$.

- Piloting the test

The test was piloted to a group of (15) first-year secondary stage students other than the participating group in order to determine the suitability, clarity and simplicity or difficulty of the questions for the participants. Results revealed that most of the students had low scores concerning their EFL oral performance skills. The majority of students expressed their needs to have more guidance and help to interact effectively and communicate fluently and accurately. On the other hand,

students found the assigned topics interesting and related to their everyday lives.

- Scoring the test

To ensure the reliability of scoring, one rater besides the researcher evaluated the fifteen students. The test was scored by using the oral performance skills scoring rubric. The rubric was designed by the researcher to score the participants' responses to the open-ended questions included in the test. The rubric included four levels of the EFL oral performance skills. Each level included several sub-skills. The rubric consisted of four points

- The EFL oral performance rubric

- Description:

The scoring rubric was adapted from the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001). A total of 18 points was equally divided among four main dimensions: comprehension, fluency, accuracy and interaction. Each part has four scales (excellent, good, satisfactory and needs correction).

7. GLS based-program

The GLS based program is designed is to develop EFL lexical and oral performance skills of 1st year Al-Azhar secondary stage students. This main aim was divided into some specific objectives that were expected to be achieved throughout the sessions of the program.

- Description of the program:

The program is composed of thirteen sessions; One orientation session in which students are introduced to the

program aim and objectives, the procedures to be followed in the following sessions and the skills to be dealt with later on. The other twelve sessions were the core of the program. The content of the GLS scripts was collected, revised and modified by the researcher.

The researcher made sure that the content is suitable and relevant to the students' background knowledge, culture, age, and language level of the first year secondary students. Each session revolved around a main topic. Each session consists of scripts through which lexical skills were taught and students were asked to interact orally and practice many activities. The content will be introduced in approximately 26 two-hour sessions that were distributed along seven weeks, two sessions per week.

- Content Validity:

The program was submitted to a jury of EFL professors and expert teachers (N=5) to determine its validity according the scenario and guidelines of the program. They were requested to give their opinions as to the following:

- 1) The extent to which the program content is sufficient to enhance first-year Al-Azhar secondary stage students.
- 2) The extent to which the selected texts are appropriate for the participants' level?
- 3) The extent to which the learning objectives of each instructional session are clear and relevant to the overall aim of the program?
- 4) The extent to which the tasks and activities are consistent with the learning objectives of each instructional session?

- 5) The extent to which 2-hour duration is appropriate for implementing each instructional session?
- 6) The extent to which the suggested procedures can attain the aims of the program?

All those suggestions and recommendations were put into consideration during modifying the program. All modifications were made in the final form of the training program and it was ready for administration as a treatment for the first experimental group students.

9. Duration of the treatment:

After estimating the suitable time according to the results of piloting the test, the EFL lexical and oral performance tests were pre-administered to both groups on 4th October 2022; four days before the experiment. The generative learning strategy-based program consists of thirteen sessions. Each session took about two hours to be fully implemented. Two sessions are to be implemented each week. Thus the duration of the program lasted for eight weeks. It lasted from the beginning of October 2022 till the end of November 2022 of the first semester of the academic year 2022/2023. On finishing the treatment, both groups received the posttest on 29th November 2022; three days after the experiment. Post-test conditions were relatively the same as those of the pre-test in terms of place and time.

10. Results of the Study

In order to test the study hypotheses, the Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS Ver.28) was used to calculate the differences between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups on the pre and the post administrations of the study instruments. The value of eta squared (η^2) was also

estimated to identify the effect size of the independent variable of the study (generative learning strategy-based program) on the dependant variable (EFL lexical and oral performance skills). The analyses were performed as follows:

Table (3)

Results of the experimental group on the pre-post administration of EFL oral performance test and its sub-skills.

Skill	Group	N	M	S.D	df	t-value	sig
Comprehension	Pretest	25	7.76	2.067	48	8.683	.01
	Posttest	25	11.16	1.248			
Fluency	Pretest	25	5.04	.611		10.392	.01
	Posttest	25	7.44	1.446			
Accuracy	Pretest	25	5.60	.577		8.317	.01
	Posttest	25	8.40	1.826			
Interaction	Pretest	25	4.88	.726		8.335	.01
	Posttest	25	6.80	.957			
Overall EFL oral performance skills	Pretest	25	23.28	2.574		11.808	.01
	Posttest	25	33.80	5.008			

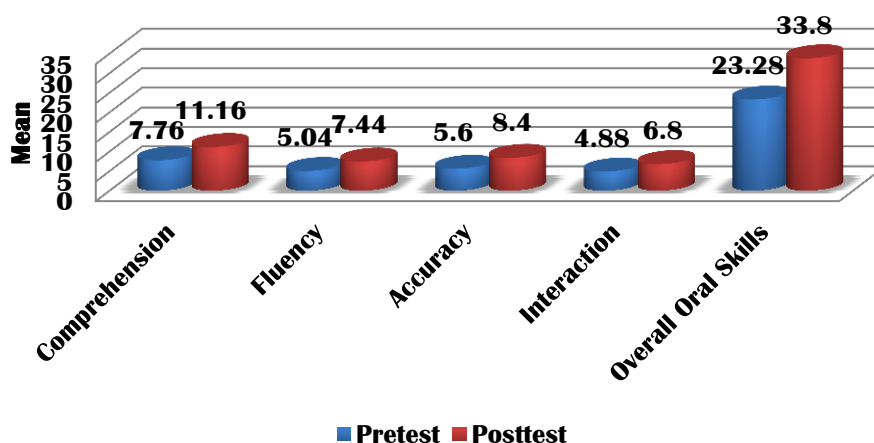
*significant.

The above-mentioned results indicates that the means scores of the experimental group were higher in the post test than those of the pre-ones in the EFL oral performance skills test and its subskills, where t-values were, (11.8) for overall EFL oral performance skills, (8.6) for comprehension, (10.3) for fluency, (8.3) for accuracy, (8.3) for interaction; which is significant at 0, 01 level. These differences can be attributed to

the generative learning strategy-based program. The following figure shows graphically the differences between the results of the experimental group on the pre-post administration of EFL oral performance skills test and its sub-skills. This result is further depicted in the following figure:

Figure (2)

Mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-post administration of EFL oral performance skills test and its sub-skills.



In order to measure the size of the practical effect caused by the GLS based program on the EFL oral performance skills of the experimental group, the effect size was calculated using Eta Squared (η^2) and Cohen's formula for paired samples. The result is depicted in the following table:

Table (15)

The effect size of the experimental group in EFL oral performance skills as a whole in the pre and the post-test.

Skill	Group	N	M	S.D	df	t-value	η²	d	effect size
Comprehension	Pretest	25	7.76	2.067	48	8.683	.508	1.7	large
	Posttest	25	11.16	1.248					
Fluency	Pretest	25	5.04	.611	48	10.392	.549	2.0	huge
	Posttest	25	7.44	1.446					
Accuracy	Pretest	25	5.60	.577	48	8.317	.527	1.6	large
	Posttest	25	8.40	1.826					
Interaction	Pretest	25	4.88	.726	48	8.335	.571	1.6	large
	Posttest	25	6.80	.957					
Overall EFL oral performance skills	Pretest	25	23.28	2.574	48	11.808	.645	2.3	huge
	Posttest	25	33.80	5.008					

***Significant at (0, 01)**

Table (14) indicates that the effect sizes of the experimental group in the post oral performance test were higher than those of the pre-ones in the EFL overall oral performance skills, where the effect sizes were (.645) for overall oral performance skills, (.508) for comprehension, (.549) for fluency, (.527) for accuracy, and (.571) for interaction, all these values were significant at 0,01 level. Therefore, this hypothesis was confirmed. These differences can be attributed to the generative learning strategy- based program. According to the findings of Cohen's formula and the interpretations of the effect size, the percentage (2.3) indicates that the generative learning strategy- based program had a positive effect on improving the students' EFL oral performance skills.

10. Discussion and Interpretation of the Results

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of a GLS based program on developing EFL first-year secondary stage students' lexical and oral performance skills. Results indicated that the GLS based program was beneficial for the treatment group students who were taught through the program that was designed and introduced to them. All the differences were statistically significant at 0.01 level between the mean scores of the study group on the pre and post-test in the overall oral performance skills and in each sub-skill favoring the post test scores. Moreover, the program yielded a huge and substantial effect size on the participants' oral performance skills.

These results indicated that the English speaking performance ability of the treatment group students significantly increased at the 0.01 level after they were exposed to the suggested program. The EFL lexical and oral performance skills of the treatment group students were positively affected by utilizing the GLM and each of the targeted oral sub-skills (i.e. comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and interaction) was highly improved due to the intervention. The superiority of the treatment group students in the post test of oral production skills compared with the pretest could be ascribed to several interpretations:

This significant improvement and increase in the participants' scores were attributed to using the generative learning strategy-based program on teaching and training the experimental group as it created a positive environment which

made them so excited and eager to work. Such an environment is so crucial for effective learning. This interpretation is in consistent with the views of Howida (2020) and Douglas et al. (2016). They also highlighted the great importance of supplying a native-like environment for increasing the active participation and involvement of all students in creating meaning and constructing knowledge.

Another possible interpretation for these findings may lie in the fact that the generative learning strategy-based program enabled the participants to discuss, generate and share ideas whether with their classmates or the instructor which they stressed to be very effective and interesting. It also enabled them to have a deeper understanding of the different tasks, skills and activities given and made them fully engaged, motivated and interactive in learning. It provided them with an impressive learning environment which gave the participants a great opportunity to build up and generate their knowledge, refer to the aural text and check their understanding, interact with the text more, analyze the relationships among ideas and put pieces of information together. In addition, this study showed that students were active participants rather than passive recipients of information. They also were more interested in participating in oral activities and they had fun in doing those activities.

Another determining factor for the superiority of the experimental group to the control group could be attributed to dividing the session into four basic stages (motivational step, focus step, knowledge creation step and generation step) was of great value and usefulness for students to acquire the different EFL lexical and oral performance skills.

Another interpretation might lie in the fact that activating students' prior knowledge about the topic being discussed might increase students' confidence, motivation and fostered their oral skills. In each lesson of the program, the researcher was trying to make connections between new knowledge and students' personal experiences. This interpretation is in line with (Essousi, 2022; Boonkit, 2010 and Shen and Byfield (2018). They agree that schema building and activation promotes learners' confidence, which is considered an essential factor for an empowering learning environment. Vocabulary determines the communicative competence. Without sufficient vocabulary one cannot communicate effectively and cannot express his or her ideas through written or spoken language. In this respect, many studies agreed that vocabulary has been identified as a significant predictor of oral skills (e.g., Noreillie et al., 2018; Wang & Treffers-Daller, 2017; Kurniawati, 2012; Decarrico 2001).

The results of the present study are in line with the previous studies which stressed the positive effect of utilizing the GLM on developing students' performance (Rizk, 2021; Elhagga, 2021; Masoud, 2020; Al-Sharif, 2020; Mohamed; 2019; Banoui, 2018). The effectiveness of the GLM based program was reflected in the high scores the students obtained after exposure to the GLM intervention. The large-size effect derived from the t-test provides confirmation that using the GLM based program resulted in improved overall EFL lexical and oral performance skills among the study group.

11. Conclusions

Based on the statistical analysis of the results, their discussion and interpretation, the following conclusions could be inferred:

- a.** The use of the generative learning strategy-based program was effective in improving the EFL first-year secondary stage students' lexical and oral performance skills.
- b.** Participants activated their prior knowledge and they were enthusiastic during the sessions of the generative learning strategy-based program which motivated them to communicate orally with each other through various activities.
- c.** Working in pairs or groups and making open discussions after each session encouraged them to orally communicate using the target language in meaningful contexts.

12. Recommendations

In the light of the results and conclusion of the current study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1.** EFL teachers are recommended to adopt generative learning strategy in teaching English language skills in general and oral performance skills in particular to EFL students at different stages.
- 2.** EFL teachers must play an important role in making the class lively and active. Students' initiatives should be encouraged and respected.
- 3.** EFL students need to be given plentiful opportunities to interact orally in the target language.
- 4.** Oral performance skills should be given more attention in TEFL classrooms as they are vital skills.
- 5.** EFL teachers should change their traditional roles from being the only source of information to be advisors,

facilitators, motivators, organizers, and feedback providers.

6. Curriculum designers should make a concerted effort to incorporate various teaching techniques so as to meet students' different proficiency levels.

13. Suggestions for Further Research

Based upon the findings of the present study, the researcher suggests the following areas for future research:

1. Conducting empirical studies to investigate the effect of using the suggested program in other educational stages (e.g. primary, preparatory and university).
2. Investigating the relationship between GLM and developing EFL students' critical reading and creative writing skills.
3. Identifying the relationship between GLM and enhancing EFL students' reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition.
4. In this study, oral skills are clearly determined by a number of factors, including comprehension, fluency, accuracy, and interaction. It would be useful to examine the relationship of oral performance skills to the many other factors.

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