THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN INTEGRATED PROGRAM BASED ON WEB QUESTS AND METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY INSTRUCTION IN DEVELOPING EFL ORAL COMMUNICATION AND READING COMPREHENSION PERFORMANCES OF SECONDARY STAGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

The present study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of using an Integrated Program Based on Web Quests and Metacognitive Strategy Instruction in Developing EFL Oral Communication and Reading Comprehension Performances of Secondary Stage Students. Seventy four first -year secondary stage students were the participants in this study. They were assigned randomly to an experimental group (thirty nine) and a control group (thirty five). The instruments were an EFL reading comprehension test, an EFL oral communication test, Cards for participants' own reflection on the program of the study. An integrated program based on Web Quests and Metacognitive strategy was designed by the researcher. The program was conducted in the second term of the academic year (2022/2023) and lasted for seven weeks, four sessions a week, and nearly thirty five minutes for each session. On the other hand, the students of the control group received the regular instruction. The scores of the experimental and control groups were compared and analyzed. Also, the pre and post scores of the experimental group were compared and analyzed. The results of the study indicated that 1-The experimental group surpassed the control group in the post administration of the EFL oral communication test 2- The experimental group did better in the post administrations of the EFL reading comprehension test, and the EFL oral communication test than in the pre administrations. Therefore it could be concluded that the integrated program based on Web Quests and metacognitive strategy instruction has been effective in developing EFL reading comprehension and EFL oral communication performances.

Key words: EFL metacognition, EFL Web Quests, EFL Reading comprehension skills, EFL Oral communication skills.

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Introduction

The main purpose of learning a foreign language is using it for meaningful and effective communication both inside and outside the classroom. Oral communication is an important process in daily life. This communication can take place with different people at different times, in different places, and different situations. This communication occurs within thoughts. Sometimes it is necessary to communicate with a small group or a larger group of audience, such as members of the public .Reading is worth noted for English learners. It provides a good model for English writing, provides opportunities to study vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation, and demonstrates the way to construct sentences, paragraphs, and whole text. This skill is also fruitful not only for careers study and pleasure, but also for language acquisition.

Escudero et al (2020) focused on the drawbacks that EFL students experience in oral communication in spite of years of English instruction. The instruments of the study were an observation guide and an interview to the teacher. The sample was 31 high school senior students. Results determined that learners face many problems in producing spoken language due to cognitive and social difficulties. The discussion and conclusions aimed to seek solutions to these drawbacks.

Nakatani (2010) investigated whether the use of specific communication strategies can improve learners' English proficiency in communicative tasks. The participants were 62 students who participated in a twelve week course of English lessons using a communicative approach with a training strategy. The findings confirmed that strategies for maintaining discourse and negotiations of meaning could enhance the learners' communicative ability, but they might not have enough opportunities to improve the form of utterances.

Jameshidnejad (2010) proved that oral communication problems can be major challenges to effective foreign language learning and communication. Alsuwat &Young (2016) proved that there are many communication problems facing Arab learners of English. Reading comprehension performance is neglected in EFL classes Students cannot share points of view, construct the meaning of the text by negotiating it with their peers.

One of the main concerns of teaching English as a foreign language is reading comprehension which is one of the crucial points of the current study. EFL Reading comprehension skill forms the central place in any foreign language teaching and learning processes. It is considered to be a very important channel for getting the required exposure of the target language and it also helps the learners in understanding the nuances of the target language, however this important language skill does not go well with foreign language learners who often dislike it due to various reasons, Hamouda (2013).Reading is the most important activity in any language class not only as a source of information and a pleasurable activity, but also as a means of consolidating and extending one's information which is the knowledge of the language, Juyandegan (2016).

Taguchi et al (2006) mentioned that reading fluency has been a major concern in reading research and Education in English L1 setting for the past three decades. Extensive research has explored various types of instructional methods to develop reading fluency in the hope of improving reading comprehension directly and indirectly. He also mentioned that some preliminary studies on reading fluency in L2 or EFL contexts have directed the attention of researchers and educators to the issue of whether reading fluency plays a crucial role in successful reading comprehension. He recommended further research on EFL reading comprehension.

This is the case with the Egyptian Schools and problems in reading comprehension and oral communication performances, and students' metacognitive awareness in English as a foreign language, so they have negative attitudes towards these foreign language skills. So, emerging new approaches in language teaching enhances communicative interaction and allows learners to be engaged in trying to communicate content towards the communicative goal, Khamis (2010).

Web Quests have proved to be a valuable language learning tool for students since engaging in a Web Quest activity has developed reading comprehension and oral communication performances. Web Quests are claimed to be beneficial for ESL/EFL learners in light of linguistic perspectives include 1- exposure to authentic materials 2- meaningful content 3- possibilities for real communication in the target language, Vladisavljević (2017).Sabramaniam& Hin (2006) stressed on the importance of web Quests as a means of addressing effective technology use for developing digital literacy skills and it also promotes constructivist learning principles.

Many empirical studies proved the importance of Web Quests in the field of teaching English as a foreign language. A study of Zhang (2014)

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demonstrated the impact of Web Quests as communication technology on Electronic reading. The use of communication technology may change the interactions among readers and writers. It aimed at investigating this kind of change in electronic reading due to the employment of Web Quests as communication technology. It concentrated on reader-reader interaction about a text, a reader -text interaction, and communicative tasks in reading. The results of the study proved the importance of Web Quests in governing excessive freedom for readers. It also proved that Web Quests can increase communication among readers, their critical thinking ability, and their independent reading.

Metacognition has been shown to have a principal role in second language acquisition; Ohata & Fukao (2014) .Metacognition was invented and introduced by Flavell (1979) in cognitive psychology. Flavell's model of metacognition consists of four cognitive enterprises: a) metacognitive knowledge, b) metacognitive experience, c) goals or tasks, d) actions or strategies. Metacognitive awareness is the key to successful learning which lies in the learners' knowledge of various strategies, and how they can be used and when and why to employ them. Success also depends on the self-regulatory skills of planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning, Donohoo (2015). This is apparent in the following figure 1;
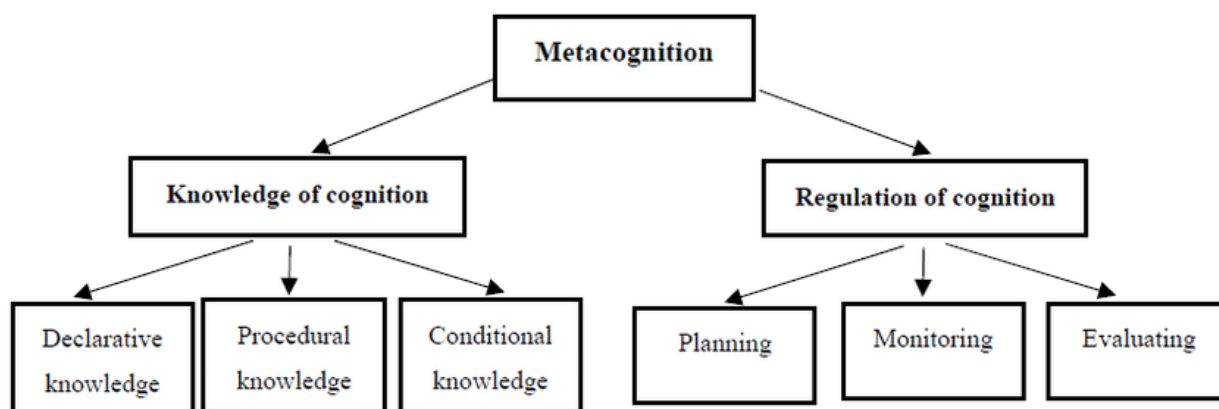

Figure (1) components of metacognition, Screw (2001)

Metacognition is "a trait that distinguishes expert from no voice learners", Pintrich (2002). Students who are metacognitive are able to focus their attention on information, judge how they understand it, and use intellectual strengths to cover their weakness. Briefly, they assess their learning. To measure learners' metacognitive awareness and self-regulation, you will find various types of instruments; including self-report questionnaires, coded observations, think aloud protocols, performance rating, and interviews, Nash & Nitzel (2010).

Many studies proved the relationship between the variables of the current study; such as El Khateeb's(2012) which demonstrated the impact of using Web Quests on the Palestinian seventh graders' English reading comprehension skills and their attitudes towards Web Quests. The target skills were predicting, skimming, scanning, and guessing the meaning through context and inference. The participants were 88 EFL students. Achievement reading comprehension test was administered and a scale to measure students' attitudes towards the Web Quest. The results of the

observation cards revealed the importance of Web Quests

The need for the present study sprang from some resources; the pilot study, which was administered by the researcher. The pilot study proved the problem of the current study. Another resource which illustrates the need for the current study is the teacher's work in the secondary stage; she noticed that there is a clear deficiency in the first year secondary school students' level of oral communication and reading comprehension performance. The mentioned previous studies investigated that there are many difficulties in communicating in English as a foreign language.

Another need for the current study is that we need to use computer-based language learning in our schools, because we are in the age of technology. Teachers are being challenged to find ways to integrate the use of ICT into their teaching to both addresses the learning outcomes and enhance what they have previously done in classrooms. Web Quest is an important approach which should be used by teachers and students, Fitlrianto&et al

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(2016). He also proved that all students have difficulties in reading comprehension

1.1-The context of the problem:

A pilot study was conducted and a pilot Reading Comprehension test and a pilot Oral Communication test were designed in order to assess the level of the first-year secondary school students in reading comprehension and oral communication sub- skills. They were administered to 23 students of the first-year secondary school students at Rabea Falah Secondary school for girls in Diarb Negm, Sharkia governorate; they were not included nor in the control group or the experimental group.

The whole percentage of the scores of students who answered the test was 42.3 which mean that 47.7 of the students could not answer the questions of the oral communication test. Hence, there is a deficiency in their receptive and productive skills (oral communication skills). The researcher believed that the problem of the study sprang from a stated complaint that the first-year secondary school students find many difficulties in oral communication and communicative competence; communicative skills are productive skills (speaking sub skills) and receptive skills (listening sub skills). They were not able to communicate spontaneously, effectively and confidently. They could not speak English well in authentic communicative situations. They could not identify errors in a transcription, and they could not predict the end of a message.

The whole percentage of students who answered the questions of the reading comprehension pilot test. It also demonstrates that the whole percentage of students who answered questions on the test which was 39%. Hence, there are 61% of the students who could not answer the questions. Through conducting the reading comprehension test, it was revealed that secondary school students could not identify a referent word in a text, they also could not complete a sentence or a paragraph with missing words or phrases, insert a sentence into the text, and translate a sentence into a native language. Finally, they could not use grammar points in a context. Many previous studies such as; Taugchi et al (2006), Sporer et al (2009), Mourtaga (2006), Qaqriz& Rashid (2017) proved that there are problems in EFL reading comprehension performance. Hence the researcher suggests using Web Quests and the Metacognitive strategy instruction to develop EFL reading comprehension and oral communication performances and their metacognitive awareness in English as a foreign language.

1.2- Statement of the problem of the study

Based on the aforementioned discussion the previous review of literature, and the results of the pilot study, the problem of the study could be stated as follows:

A great number of Secondary school students find difficulties in their oral communication and reading Performances. They also lack the most important oral and reading skills. Hence, the present study tried to help overcome such problems through an integrated program based on Using Web Quests and Metacognitive strategy instruction. Moreover it was an attempt to answer the following main questions;

Questions of the dissertation:

The study aimed to investigate the effect of a Web Quests based program and Metacognitive strategy instruction on promoting Secondary school students' oral communication and reading comprehension performances in English as a foreign language. Therefore, it would seek to answer the following main question:

"What is the effectiveness of implementing a proposed integrated program based on Web Quests and Metacognitive strategy instruction in enhancing EFl oral communication and reading comprehension performances of secondary school students"?

This main question could be subdivided into the following sub questions:

1- What are the required EFL oral communication skills secondary school students possess?
2- What are the required EFL reading comprehension skills secondary school students possess?
3- What are the features of the proposed program based on Web Quests and metacognitive strategy instruction to improve EFL oral communication and reading comprehension performances of secondary school students?

How far would the integrated program based on Web Quests and Metacognitive strategy instruction be effective in enhancing the first secondary school students' oral communication and reading comprehension performances?

1.3-Delimitations of the dissertation

Since it is beyond the limits of any study to consider a wide range of factors, the current study was restricted to the following points;

1- 74 EFL first year secondary school students from Gamal Abd El Naser school for girls, Zagazig, Sharkia governorate, who were

chosen randomly and they were divided into a control group and an experimental group.

2- The duration of the administration of the study was the second term of the academic year (2022/2023) at the beginning of the second term for two months

3- The variables of the study were divided into dependent variables which are EFL oral communication and reading comprehension Performances and dependent variable which is the program based on Web Quests and Metacognitive strategy instruction.

4- Five units of student' book of first year of Secondary school students.

2- Literature Review
1- 2.1- Reading Comprehension performance
Many points would be discussed in the following literature review of the EFL reading comprehension performance. It would illustrate the nature of reading comprehension, its importance, its nature, its types, its strategies, its levels, and factors that develop reading comprehension, and finally a general commentary on all points discussed.

In his study about reading comprehension Al-Mekhlafi (2018) illustrated that Reading is a literacy skill; and hence, it is of great importance to every educational setting. ESL/EFL teachers are often required to provide reading instructions to learners who struggle to read academic texts in English in tertiary education. The problem assumes a critical stage especially when English is the medium of instruction at the tertiary level.

2.2-Oral Communication performance
There are many dimensions of oral communication that should be illustrated in order to cover all the literature review and the previous related studies concerning this dependent variable. The researcher covered this dependent variable of the study by illustrating the importance of EFL oral communication, oral communication difficulties, the causes of these difficulties and different approaches and strategies to develop oral communication

Şenel (2012) demonstrated that it is beneficial and indispensable to know a foreign or a second language for people living in any country. In one sense, language is the proof of their existence. The purpose of this study is to determine the communication problems and anxiety of some Turkish EFL learners. His study was set out to determine their oral communication problems and deal with these problems. The Participants were the 4th grade students of English language teaching department. They were 25 female and 7 male. In the light of the findings we can say that there is a common belief all among the students that they really need real native speakers since these native speakers will provide them lots of opportunities for not only to promote their target language but also to decrease their oral communication anxiety

Tuan (2011) confirmed that the primary aim of learning a language is to use it in communication in its spoken or written forms. Classroom interaction is a key to reach that goal. This paper seeks to revisit the two forms of oral interaction in EFL classrooms encompassing teacher-learner interaction involving Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) pattern and teacher questioning, and learner-learner interaction involving pair work and group work, and topic-based and task-based activities. Besides exploring factors influencing classroom oral interaction, the paper reviews the linkage between classroom interaction and second language acquisition predicated on the three hypotheses, namely input hypothesis, interaction hypothesis, and output hypothesis.

2.3- EFL Web Quests
Among many Web-based applications in education, Web Quests have become popular learning tool, which makes use of Internet resources. Web Quests are also increasingly becoming popular in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) reading and writing because they provide learners authentic and collaborative tasks. As students do the Web Quest tasks, they find the information, read and write about it and complete the task, Kocoglu (2010).web quests could be discussed in the current study as follows; the nature of Web Quests, components of Web quests, importance of Web Quests, and Web Quests in the EFL classrooms

Aydin (2016) examined Web Quests as tools for second-language acquisition and foreign language-learning processes to guide teachers in their teaching activities and researchers in further research on the issue. The study concluded that Web Quest use improved interaction, communication, critical thinking, knowledge application, social skills, scaffold learning, higher order thinking skills and problem-solving skills. Moreover, Web Quests helped learners to acquire and learn linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge in a secure atmosphere in the processes of second-language acquisition and foreign language learning. Second, the results of study revealed that Web Quests have positive effects on reading skills and vocabulary knowledge.

2.4- EFL metacgnition

Haukås et al (2018) illustrated that there can be little doubt that metacognition plays a key role in the processes of successful language learning and teaching. It is quite indisputable, for instance, that good language learners should possess a high level of awareness of the intricacies of the target language they are trying to master, how it compares to their mother tongue and other known languages, the challenges involved in the process, their own deep-seated beliefs about learning and teaching of additional languages, and the strategies that can be employed for this purpose.

Khaki& Hessamy (2013) aimed at investigating the metacognitive strategies EFL learners apply while doing two types of writing tasks, namely, integrated and independent. The participants were 202 at intermediate proficiency level took part in this study. They were assigned to write a reading-to-write and a writing-only test task and after accomplishing each task, they filled out a writing metacognitive strategy inventory which was previously validated. The results indicated that there was no significant difference existed between the two tasks in metacognitive strategy use. Also, gender played no significant role in metacognitive strategy use and their interest in writing was weakly correlated with strategy use.

Method of the study;

This chapter presents in detail the study design, participants, the instruments, the material and finally the procedures conducted;

Study design

The study adopted both descriptive analytic and quasi experimental designs. The first was to identify oral communication, reading comprehension and how to develop them using web quests and metacognitive strategy instruction. This study will follow the Pre\posttest in which there is a control group and an experimental group.Secondly, the quasi experimental design was used to state the impact of the control group and the experimental group. The experimental group was taught using web quests and metacognitive strategy instruction whereas the control group was taught using the regular method. The independent variable: is the program based on web quests and metacognitive strategy instruction.

The dependent variables: are EFL oral communication and reading comprehension Performances.

Participants:

The participants of the study were about 15-16 years. They were at the first year of the secondary stage.The pre- posttests of reading comprehension and oral communication were administered to 39 of the experimental and 35 of the control group. So the total number of the participants was 74 students.

The participants of the two groups were from Gamal Abd El Naser Secondary school for girls, zagazig, Sharkia governorate.The researcher herself taught the experimental group the units from seven to eleven and another teacher taught the control group in order to avoid personal judgments. Standard of oral communication: All students were supposed to be at the same level. They both (the control and the experimental groups) scored low in the oral communication pre-test, so it was a launching point of this research.

Standard of reading comprehension performance: There were no significant differences between the means of the scores of the two groups in the Reading comprehension pretest, so the results have been neutral to be generalized, because the compared groups were approximately at the same level.

Significance of the study

It was hoped that the study would be significant to:

1- EFL Students; It may enable them to enhance their speaking, listening and reading comprehension performances through the use of a proposed integrated program based on Web Quests and metacognitive strategy instruction. The current study may be significant in creating an interactive and a co-operative classroom environment.

1- EFL teachers: It might provide them with a list of EFL oral communication and reading comprehension skills necessary for secondary school students to be taken into consideration during teaching English as a foreign language. It may also provide them with an appropriate program based on Web Quests and metacognitive strategy instruction that may enhance students' oral communication and reading comprehension performances.

3-Course designers: It might be useful for them in designing EFL textbooks which is one of the main purposes of the current study.

4- EFL researchers: it would be a starting point to more researchers in this respect.

Instruments of the dissertation

The instruments of the study were designed in the light of its dependent variables as follows:

1- EFL Oral communication performance
2- An EFL Oral communication checklist
3- An EFL oral communication test
4- An EFL oral communication Rubric.
2-Reading comprehension performance
5- An EFL reading performance checklist.
6- An EFL Reading comprehension test
7- An EFL reading performance Rubric.
8-EFL participants' reflection cards about the program of the study.

Verifying the study hypotheses
Hypothesis one:
There would be statistically significant differences at the .05 level between the means of scores of the two groups of the experiment on the postal administration of the reading comprehension test in favor of the experimental group; t test for independent samples was used to test the first hypothesis to find if there was statistically significant differences between the means of the scores of the experimental group and the control group in the post results of reading comprehension test.

Table (1) comparing the post results of the experimental group and the control group in the reading comprehension test

group	number	test	mean	St.d deviation	t value	significance	Effect size
control	35	Post test	16,2	4,1	3.9	05	3.6
experimental	39	posttest	27,8	5,3		.05	

From the table (1) t value is more than 2.05 because we have 38 degree of freedoms and we also have .05 significance.
H1 was accepted and H0 was refused which stated that there would be statistically significant differences at the .05 level between the means of scores of the two groups of the experiment on the postal administration of the reading comprehension test in favor of the experimental group.

Hypothesis two;
The program would have a positive effect on developing students' EFL reading comprehension performance.

So the effectiveness of the program is huge because if ∑s is greater than 2.2 we consider that the effectiveness of the program is huge.

Hypothesis three:
There would be statistically significant differences at the .05 level between the means of the scores of the two groups of the experiment on the postal administration of the oral communication test in favor of the experimental group:
t test for independent samples was used to test the second hypothesis to find if there were statistically significant differences between the means of the scores of the experimental group and the control group.

Table (2) comparing the post results of the experimental group and the control group in the oral communication test

group	number	test	mean	St.d deviation	t value	significance	Effect Size
control	35	Post test	16,6	3.2	4.8	.05	4.3
experimental	39	posttest	25,8	5,1		.05	

From table (2) t value is greater than 2.05 which is an evidence that we refuse H0 and accept H1 which stated that There would be statistically significant differences at the .05 level between the means of the scores of the two groups of the experiment on the postal administration of the oral communica tion test in favor of the experimental group.

Hypothesis four:
There would be statistically significant differences at the level of .05 between the means of the scores

of the pre –post administration of the oral communication test of the experimental group in favor of the post test.

t test for paired samples was used to test the third hypothesis to find there was statistically significant differences between the means of the scores of the experimental group in the pre and posttest of oral communication.

Table (3) comparing the pre- post results of the experimental group in the oral communication test

group	number	test	mean	std deviation	t value	significance
experimental	39	Pre test	10.9	3.2	3.8	.05
experimental	39	posttest	25,8	5,1		.05

From the results of the table the program used in the current study had a positive effect on the participants' oral communication.

Hypothesis five:

The program would have a positive effect on developing students' EFL oral communication performance The effect size is 4.3 which means the effectiveness of the integrative program based on Web Quests and metacognition is extremely huge. Finally the program of the current study was effective in enhancing EFL oral communication skills of the experimental group

Hypothesis six

It was hypothesized that "there would be statistically significant differences at the level of .05 between the means of the scores of the experimental group on the pre-posttest of EFL reading comprehension in favor of the post results. t test for paired samples was used to test the third hypothesis to find there was statistically significant differences between the means of the scores of the experimental group in the pre and posttest of EFL reading comprehension.

Table (4) comparing the pre- post results of the experimental group in the EFL reading comprehension test;

group	number	test	mean	Std deviation	t value	significance
experimental	39	Pre test	9.2	3.8	4.2	.05
experimental	39	posttest	27,76	5.3		.05

Results of the study

1- There are statistically significant differences at the .05 level between the means of scores of the two groups of the experiment on the postal administration of the reading comprehension test in favor of the experimental group

2-There are statistically significant differences at the .05 level between the means of the scores of the two groups of the experiment on the postal administration of the oral communication test in favor of the experimental group

3-There are statistically significant differences at the level of .05 between the means of the scores of the pre –post administration of the oral communication test of the experimental group in favor of the post test.

4- " there are statistically significant differences at the level of .05 between the means of the scores of the experimental group on the pre-posttest of EFL reading comprehension in favor of the post results.

5-"there are insignificant statistical differences at the level of .05 between the experimental group and the control group on the pre results of EFL reading comprehension test.

6- "There were insignificant statistical differences at the level of .05 between the experimental group and the control group on the pre results of EFL oral communication test".

7-The integrative program based on Web Quests and metacognitive strategy instruction was effective in improving EFL oral communication and reading comprehension performances.

Conclusion of the study

1- From the results analysis. It is proved that this integrated program based on Web Quests and

Metacognitive strategy instruction helped students who have difficulty in reading comprehension be able to interact with the text to construct meaning. Collaborate, and criticize information.

2- It could also be concluded that through using the program students practiced oral communication skills such as recognizing sounds of English, understanding communicative function of utterances using context to predict events.

3- The experimental group was able to make critical judgments and logical decisions about what is being stated.

4- The experimental group was able to guess meaning and remember new information and collocations.

5- Associating web Quests and its components ;(introduction- task- process- evaluation- and conclusion) with different strategies of metacognition such as creating, evaluating, analyzing, monitoring, and problem solving improved the girls reading comprehension performance besides their oral communication.

6-More attention should be given for oral communication skills because it is main deficiency in schools, so it paves the way for a lot of researchers to develop it using different innovational strategies

7- The conclusion acknowledges that the student has accomplished the task and provides positive reinforcement such as positive feedback

Recommendations of the study

In the light of discussing the study results, and conclusion of the present study the following recommendations might be usefully used;'

Concerning the independent variables;

1- Oral communication performance should be given more attention in the Egyptian classes because there is a clear problem in this part of learning English as a foreign language. More time and effort should be exerted to improve it.

2- EFL teachers should put an end to traditional roles by providing them with opportunities and improve EFL students' reading comprehension skills through metacognitive strategy instruction.

3- EFL teachers should concentrate not only reading comprehension as a skill but also as levels using different reading strategies.

Concerning the dependent variables;

4- Training courses in this program which integrate metacognitive strategy instruction and web quests should be presented to EFL teachers to highlight the nature of these strategies and its successful implications in the educational process.

5- Teachers should give more attention to Web-based learning. Students will be responsible for their learning and they search for information through the web, because we are in the age of technological development.

Further suggested researches;

Out of the study delimitations the following areas of research can be suggested;

1- The relationship between metacognitive strategy instruction and metacognitive awareness.

2- The relationship between Web Quests and developing EFL writing skills.

3- The relationship between metacognition and students willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language.

4- What 'sup application in relation to oral communication skills.

5- Metacognitive strategy instruction in relation to EFL speaking skills.

6- Info graphics in relation to developing oral communication skills.

7–Communicative language teaching approach in relation to EFL reading comprehension skills

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