The Effectiveness of a Proposed Project-Based Program for Teaching Oral Skills to Tenth Grade EFL Students In Jordan and Their Attitudes Towards These Skills

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Abstract

The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to investigate the effect of a proposed Project-Based Program on improving the oral performance skills of tenth grade EFL students in Jordan and on their attitudes towards these oral skills. Throughout her experience as a teacher and a supervisor, the researcher noticed that many students find it difficult to communicate orally in English. Even when they were to speak, they look worried, hesitant, and disorganized. The researcher proposed that this could be due to the teaching strategies used, the types of feedback students receive, the types of speaking activities in textbooks, or lack of opportunities to communicate orally. This study may derive its significance from the attempts to highlight the characteristics of Project –Based Program for teaching oral skills of Jordanian schools since these are normally ignored or least attended to by many teachers. The subjects of the study were 80 tenth grade female students who were chosen randomly from Um Nowareh Secondary Public School in Amman during the academic year 2013-2014. Three instruments were used to collect data for the study: An oral performance test (debate), an oral attitudes survey, and a rating scale. To answer those questions, the adjusted mean scores and standard errors were calculated. Multiviriate Analysis of Coverience (MANCOVA) was also used to find out if the differrences in the mean scores were statistically significant or not. The results of the study showed that there were statistically significant differences ($\alpha= 0.05$) in tenth geade EFL students' mean scores with regard to their oral performance and to their attitudes towards oral skills in English. Those differences were in favor of the students who were taught using project based learning.On the other hand , the results of the study showed that there were no statistically significant differences ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the oral performance mean scores or attitudes mean scores that can be attributed to the interaction between project-based learning and students' general level of English(good , avarage, poor) except with students' preferences and their total attitudes toward learning and teachng oral skills.Inlight of the results of the study , the researcher recommendes that more research be conducted to examine the effect of project based learning on developing the non-verbal skills of EFL students at different grade levels. Training workshops for supervisors and teachers are highly recommeded to equip them with the knoweldge and practice needed to apply project-based learning in the oral skills classes. English language curricula planner are also advised to incorporate more project activities into the curriculm.

Keywords: Project-Based Program (PBP), Conventional method, Oral skills, Oral performance, Oral Performance scale, Attitude, Students' general level of English (GPA) .

1. Introduction

Speaking is an important language skill because it is the medium through which speakers can express their feelings, ideas, thoughts, attitudes and beliefs. It facilitates communication with people from other cultures and helps them to acquire new experiences, especially with the growing interest in using the Internet. Nowadays, many teachers agree that students should learn to speak the second language by interacting with others. Students are required to master several speaking skills and sub skills such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. The English teacher should improve students' speaking skill, give attention to the speaking context, and make communication in English more exiting (Ramirez,1995).

1.1 Background of the study

Many researchers believe that oral communication is more than just a message transmitted from a speaker to a listener; the speaker is both subject and object of his own message at the same time. Thus, the goal of learning this skill is to have the ability to understand the spoken language and to provide a meaningful reply in the target language. Yule (2001) points out that spoken language functions both interactionally and transactionally. Interactionally, it is intended to maintain social relationships, while transactionally it aims to convey information and ideas.

Three decades ago, Project- based learning (PBL) was introduced into the field of foreign language education as a way to reflect the principles of communicative approach and learner-centered teaching and it has been suggested as an appropriate method of teaching English as a foreign language(Tricia,2000).Project-Based Learning resonates with communicative language learning (CLL) which engages teachers and learners in meaningful transactions in a supportive learning environment (Richards and Rogers, 1986).

In Jordan, the methods of teaching oral skills are generally similar to those in other parts of the world. However, teaching English language in Jordan has been influenced by modern instructional trends. For example, The EFL curriculum has been developed around activities in which students are expected to participate in debates and presentations and to discuss many topics under the guidance of the teacher. Students are also expected to acquire a sufficient knowledge of English that enables them to communicate with others By this, it is hoped that students are given the opportunity to practice the target language as much as possible in a meaningful way either in groups or in pairs (MOE, 2003).

1.2 Statement of the problem

The researcher has been teaching English as a foreign language for seven years at public schools. Throughout her experience as a teacher and a supervisor, the researcher noticed that many students find it difficult to communicate orally in English. Even when they were to speak, they look worried, hesitant, and disorganized. The researcher proposed that this could be due to the teaching strategies used, the types of feedback students receive, the types of speaking activities in textbooks, or lack of opportunities to communicate orally. Many teachers also complain that teaching oral skills is difficult because these skills are not easy to measure, they do not have due emphasis in the class because of time pressure, and they are not included in the final exams. On the other hand, project based learning activities that are found to substantially promote oral interaction in world literature are barely addressed in the EFL curriculum for the tenth grade (MOE, 2006).Therefore, it is hoped that the proposed project-based program will enhance tenth grade EFL students' oral skills and their attitudes towards these skills.

1.3 Purpose of the study and research questions

This study attempts to investigate the effectiveness of a proposed Project-Based Program of teaching oral skills to the tenth grade EFLstudents in Jordan and their attitudes towards these skills. Therefore,the following questions were addressed:

1. Are there any statistically significant differences (α= 0.05) in the tenth grade EFL students' mean scores regarding their oral performance in English that can be attributed to the teaching method (project-based program vs conventional method) ?

2.Are there any statistically significant differences (α= 0.05) in the tenth grade EFL students' mean scores regarding their attitudes towards oral s kills that can be attributed to the teaching method (project based program vs conventional method) ?

3. Are there statistically significant differences (α= 0.05) in the oral performance' mean scores of the tenth grade EFL students that can be attributed to the interaction between Project-based learning and students' general level of English (good, avarage, poor) ?

4. Are there statistically significant differences (α= 0.05) in the attitudes' means scores of students that can be attributed to the interaction between Project-based learning and students' general level of English (good , avarage, poor) ?

1.4Significance of the study

This study may derive its significance from the attempts to highlight the characteristics of Project –Based Program for teaching oral skills of Jordanian schools since these are normally ignored or least attended to by many teachers. It is hoped that the results of this study will give insights into the effectiveness of applying such a program in the Jordanian EFL context. Curriculum developers may find the results of the present study useful to incorporate the principles and activities of Project-Based in the curriculum. These results may also help English language teachers and supervisors in Jordan to adapt the activities and teaching techniques described in Action Pack textbooks and teachers' books in light of the principles of the project- based program. Other researchers may build on the results of this study to develop similar programs and investigate other aspects or skills of students' learning.

2. Literature Review

According to Adler and Rodman (2003), Oral communication is a social systematic process of creating symbolic meaning and responding between communicators constructed in a specific context. It is a social systemic because it covers the multidimensional nature of interaction among communicators .Moreover, Moss and Duzer(1998) explains that each communicator (speaker or listener), as a main sub-system, needs 'input' (past and present stimuli that give communicator his/her information about the worlds) to create meaning and respond to others participants in the process of communication surrounded with a fluid context which is created and changes moment to moment depending on contextual variables. Ramirze (2010) also stresses that speaking and listening skills are accompanied by nonverbal communication such as gestures, facial expressions, and body movements and positions. He also maintains that if someone wants to become a good speaker, he must learn English with his ears, not with his eyes. In other words, the main mechanism for people to use when trying to communicate any utterance is the ears, they are, joined with the mouth, the senses that should be put into practice in order to be fluent and express themselves with coherence.

Richards (1990) also distinguishes between three functions of oral communication; talk as interaction, talk as transaction and talk as performance. In talk as interaction, the focus is more on the speakers and how they wish to present themselves to each other than on the message. In talk as transaction, the message is the central focus and making oneself understood clearly rather than the participants and how they interact socially with each other. While Talk as performance, tends to be in the form of monolog rather than dialog. It often follows a recognizable format and it is closer to written language than conversational language. it is often evaluated according to its effectiveness or impact on the listener, something which is unlikely to happen with talk as interaction or transaction.

Speaking skills are the central issue of foreign language learning and teaching process. Ramirze(2010) maintains that students need to be involved in activities which develop specific listening skills, such as the ability to understand the message of a talk and the ability to evaluate critically what is being said. Cotter (2007) argues that as students learn to use English in the classroom setting, they should also be involved in learning about how language works. They should be asked to reflect on various aspects of language, to develop a common. In order to achieve mastery of a foreign language, learners must develop the four principal language skills.

There has been a strong movement, over the last decade, away from the highly structured, teacher-oriented foreign language instruction in favor of a task- oriented, communicatively based, and learner centered teaching. This was influenced by the communicative approach to language learning. Accordingly, the fundamental concept underlying Communicative tasks is that the teacher does not predetermine what linguistic forms will be learned (Yule and Powers, 1994).

 The origins of Project-Based Learning (PBL) can be tracked back to the progressive era. The history of projects –Based Learning can find its root in the late 19th century American Progressive Education tradition advocated by John Dewey who believed that the classroom should be a reflection of society and learners should be active gents in their learning process rather than receptacles to be filled with information by their teachers (Roza,2012; Polman,2000).

Furthermore, Simpson (2011) remarks that the Features of PBL include: (a) complex explorations over a period of time; (b) a student-centered learning activity whereby students plan, complete and present the task; (c) challenging questions, problems or topics of student interest which become the centre of the project and the

learning process; (d) the de-emphasis of teacher-directed activities; (e) frequent feedback from peers and facilitators, and an opportunity to share resources, ideas and expertise through the whole process in the classroom; (f) hands-on activities and the use of authentic resources and technologies.

Reviewing the literature related to teaching English language shows that numerous language educators incorporate project into their classrooms to achieve many goals .Ke (2010) remarks that the primary aim of using project in EFL classrooms is to build an effective teaching environment in which learners use their English and develop their oral skills, and the secondary goals are to develop abilities for independent thinking, Problem-solving and decision-making, the use of practical research skills, and the Practicing the planning activities in general. To sum, Project work is potentially motivating, stimulating, empowering, and challenging. It usually results in building student confidence, self-esteem, and autonomy as well as improving students' language skills, content learning, and cognitive abilities. The outcomes attached to PBL activities include the development of appropriate workplace skills, and the potential to increase students' sense of responsibility for and control over their own learning, In other words, project-based learning is a transformative experience that provides a rich context for connecting classroom experiences with "real life" workplace expectations (Callison, 2006) .

3. Methodology

3.1 The subject of the study

The subjects of this study were 80 tenth grade female students registered at Um Nowareh Secondary Public School in Marka District, during the academic year 2013-2014. The total number of tenth grade students at the school was 122 students distributed to three sections. Two sections were randomly selected to conduct this study. There were 40 students in each of those two sections. One section was randomly assigned for the experimental group and the other represented the control group. The reason this school was chosen is that the principal, the English language teacher, the tenth grade students and their parents agreed on the implementation of the proposed program.

3.2 Research Instruments

For the purpose of this study, the researcher developed three instruments: an oral performance pre-post test, oral performance scale, and an attitudes survey to investigate students' attitudes towards teaching and learning oral skills in English. Two oral performance tests were developed by the researcher to collect data about students' oral performance in oral skills. Each test consisted of ten topics as prompts for debate . Each of the pretest and the posttest consisted of ten topics for debate. Students' oral performance on the pre and the post test was evaluated based on a specially developed scoring scale based on related literature . The same scale was used to rate students' oral performance of the two groups of students. The scale covered the following aspects of oral skills in English Language : Mechanics (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary), Functions (transaction interaction and the quality of argument), and Social and cultural rules (turn taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers and relative roles of participants). The total score was 96 distributed as follows: (26%) for Mechanics; (28%) ; for the social and culture rules; and (42%) for function. The attitudes survey was developed based on some related literature such as (Bad and Okan ,2000) , (Khamkhien,2011) ,(Nazara,2011) , and (Asassfeh.et. al ,2012) in order to explore students' attitudes toward teaching and learning oral skills in English. The survey consisted of learners' beliefs (10 items), learners' preferences (11 items), learners' feelings (8 items), and teachers' practices (11 items). The items were translated into Arabic as suggested by the validating panel. A five – point- item Likert-scale ranging from "Strongly agree" (5Points) , :Agree" (4 Points) , "Neutral" (3 Points) , "Disagree" (2Points) , "Strongly Agree" (1 Point) was used to measure students' responses .

3.3 Validity of the research instruments

To ensure the validity of the oral performance tests, in terms of appropriateness, structural accuracy, correctness and relevance to purpose , a panel of 11 experienced EFL professors, supervisors and teachers were consulted and they recommended deleting two debatable topics . This suggestion was taken into consideration to develop the final version of the pre and post tests.

The validity of the oral performance scale was achieved by asking a jury of 11 EFL experts (university professors, supervisors and teachers of English to judge it in terms of appropriateness, accuracy, fair distribution of marks and relevance to the purpose of the study. Those experts required the weight of function to be 42%

instead of 36%.

The validity of the oral attitude survey was ensured by the same panel of 11 exerts. They were asked to give their opinions, comments and suggestions in terms of appropriateness, clarity, accuracy of language, and organization. The experts' comments and recommendations included adding, deleting and rephrasing some items. Therefore, the final version of the survey consisted of 40 items instead of 72 items.

3.4Reliability of the research instruments

The reliability of the oral tests was ensured by using two methods: the test-re test and Cronbach alpha. Person correlation coefficient was calculated to measure the test- re-test results. On the pre-test, the calculated values were (.,88) for mechanics; (.,84) for structure and social rules; and (.,85) for function; and (.,81) for the overall test. on the post-test, the values were (.,89) for mechanics; (.,93) for structure and social rules; (.,91) for function; and (.,84) for the overall test. Using Cronbach alpha formula, the calculated values on the pres- test were (.,85) for mechanics; (.,86) for structure and social rules; (.,88) for function and (.,85) for the overall test. On the post-test, the calculated values were (.,82) for mechanics; (.,91   ) for structure and social rules; (.,88) for function; and (.,88) for the overall test.

Table 1: Reliability coefficients: Test- retests (Pearson) and constancy (Cronbach Alpha) for the oral performance tests

Reliability Coefficients / Oral skills	Test	Test- retest (Pearson)	Cronbach Alpha (consistency)
Mechanics	Pre- test	0.88	0.85
	Post-test	0.89	0.82
Social and culture rules	Pre-test	0.84	0.86
	Post-test	0.93	0.91
function	Pre-test	0.85	0.88
	Post-test	0.91	0.88
All	Pre-test	0.81	0.85
	Post-test	0.84	0.88

To confirm the reliability of the oral performance scale, two raters (the researcher and the cooperative tenth grade teacher) independently scored the oral debate of fourteen tenth grade students from the third section at the same school. Inter-rater reliability was measured by averaging the scores given to each student by the two raters. The equation of agreement and disagreement between raters was used which revealed that raters' agreement was (0.90), which was considered appropriate to achieve the purpose of this study.

To establish the reliability of the oral attitudes survey, it was applied to a pilot group of 30 tenth- grade EFL students from the third section at the school where was the study was conducted. Two methods were used. First, Cronbach alpha formula, which yielded the following values of consistency coefficients: (0.85) for the learners' beliefs; (0.80) for learners'' preferences; (0.78) for learners' feelings; (0.83) for the teachers' practices; and (0.90) for the total. The second was the test-re-test method which revealed the following values of Pearson correlation coefficient: (0.81) for the learners' beliefs; (0.88) for learners'' preferences; (0.88) for the learners' feelings; (0.85) for the teachers' practices; and (0.89) for the total. All those values were considered satisfactory to achieve the purpose of this study. Table (2) shows the values of both test-re test coefficients and consistency coefficients for each part of the oral attitudes survey.

Table 2: Reliability coefficients: Test- retests (Pearson) and constancy (Cronbach Alpha) for the oral attitudes survey

Fields	Test- retest (Pearson)	Cronbach Alpha (consistency)
learner's beliefs about learning the oral skills	0.81	0.85
learner's preferences of oral skills	0.88	0.80
learner's feelings about learning oral skills in English	0.88	0.81
teacher's practices in the oral skills class	0.85	0.83
Over all	**0.89**	**0.90**

3.5 Design of the study

This study adopted the quasi-experimental design since the school where the study was conducted was purposefully selected. However, the tenth grade students were randomly assigned to the experimental group and the control group. The independent variable was the teaching method, which has two levels: the conventional method and the Project- based program. The two dependant variables were students' performance in the oral skills in English and their attitude towards teaching and learning oral skills. The interaction between the method (project-based program, conventional way) and the students' general level of English language was also measured. This design can be represented statistically as follows:

EG: O1   O2   X   O1   O2

CG: O1   O2   _____   O1   O2

EG : Experimental Group .

CG: Control Group.

O1: oral performance pre and post test.

O2: attitude towards oral skills pre and post test.

X: the treatment: Proposed Project-Based Program .

____ **:** no treatment.

3.6 Statistical Analysis of the study

To answer the questions of the study, the researcher used descriptive statistics (i.e. means and standard deviations). Two Way MANCOVA was also used to detect any significant differences in the oral performance' mean scores or the attitudes' mean scores of students that can be attributed to the teaching strategy.

4. Findings of the study

Results of the first question: Are there any statistically significant differences (α= 0.05) in the mean scores of tenth grade EFL students with regard to their oral performance in English that can be attributed to the teaching method(project based progrm vs conventional method?

In order to answer this question, the adjusted means and standard errors regarding students' oral performance were calculated. The results are presented in Table (3) below.

Table 3: The adjusted means and standard errors of the subjects of the study

with regard to their oral performance

Dependent Variable	Group	Mean	Std. Error
Mechanics	experimental group	70.9	1.400
	control group	61.8	1.429
Social and cultural	experimental group	70.7	1.307
	control group	63.4	1.334
function	experimental group	62.1	1.885
	control group	48.6	1.924
Total score	experimental group	67.03	.933
	control group	56.5	.952

Table (3) shows that the adjusted mean scores of the experimental group are higher than those of the control group regarding all fields of oral skills (i.e. Mechanics 70.9 > 61.8 ; Social and cultural norms 70.7 > 63.4 ; function 62.1 > 48.6 and total 67.03 > 53.5) . In order to findout if these differences were statistically significant or not , Multiviriate Analysis of Coveriance (MANCOVA) was used . The results are presented in Table (4) below.

Table 4: The Results of MANCOVA with regard to the students' oral performance

source	Dependent Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Group	mechanics	970.723	1	970.723	16.995	.000	.193
	Social and culture	628.372	1	628.372	12.623	.001	.151
	function	2171.274	1	2171.274	20.965	.000	.228
	Total score	1305.787	1	1305.787	51.502	.000	.420
Error	mechanics	4055.323	71	57.117			
	Social and culture	3534.352	71	49.780			
	function	7353.142	71	103.565			
	Total score	1800.146	71	25.354			
Corrected Total	mechanics	24999.260	79				
	Social and culture	22844.228	79				
	function	38727.608	79				
	Total score	21108.819	79				

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level (α= 0.05)

Table (4) shows that all the differences in the mean scores were significant (α= 0.05). All these differences were in favor of students in the experimental group as shown in Table (3). This means that teaching oral skills based on the Project-Based Program (PBP) was more effective than using the conventional method.

 Results of the second question: Are there any statistically significant differences (α= 0.05) in the mean scores of tenth grade EFL students with regard to their attitudes toward teaching and learning oral skills that can be attributed to the teaching metho(the project based progrm vs conventional method)?

In order to answer this question, the adjusted means and standard errors regarding students' attitudes were calculated. The results are presented in Table (5) below.

Table 5: The adjusted means and standard errors of the subjects of the study regarding their attitudes toward learning and teaching oral skills

Dependent Variable	Group	Mean	Std. Error
Learners' beliefs about learning oral skills	experimental group	4.3	.052
	control group	3.6	.051
Learners' preferences of oral skills	experimental group	4.4	.060
	control group	3.2	.059
Feelings about learning oral skills in English	experimental group	4.3	.060
	control group	3.2	.059
Teachers' practices in oral skills class	experimental group	4.5	.071
	control group	3.3	.070
Total	experimental group	4.4	.039
	control group	3.3	.038

Table (5) shows that the adjusted mean scores of the experimental group are higher than those of the control group regarding all fields of the survey (i.e. Learners' beliefs 4.3 > 3.6 ; learners' preferences 4.4 > 3.2 ; learners' feelings 4.3 > 3.2 ; teachers' practices 4.5 > 3.3; and total 4.4 > 3.3) . In order to findout if those differences were statistically significant or not , the researcher used Multiviriate Analysis of Coveriance (MANCOVA). The results are presented in Table (6) below.

Table 6: The results of MANCOVA regarding students' attitudes towards learning and teaching oral skills

source	Dependent Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Group	Learners' beliefs about learning oral skills	7.067	1	7.067	86.369	.000	.552
	Learners' preferences of oral skills	19.918	1	19.918	181.727	.000	.722
	Feelings about learning oral skills in English	18.267	1	18.267	166.515	.000	.704
	Teachers' practices in oral skills class	20.030	1	20.030	131.284	.000	.652
	Total score	15.780	1	15.780	343.627	.000	.831
Error	Learners' beliefs about learning oral skills	5.728	70	.082			
	Learners' preferences of oral skills	7.672	70	.110			
	Feelings about learning oral skills in English	7.679	70	.110			
	Teachers' practices in oral skills class	10.680	70	.153			
	Total score	3.215	70	.046			
Corrected Total	Learners' beliefs about learning oral skills	19.175	79				
	Learners' preferences of oral skills	37.616	79				
	Feelings about learning oral skills in English	30.284	79				
	Teachers' practices in oral skills class	34.150	79				
	Total score	23.169	79				

- **The mean difference is significant at the .05 level (α= 0.05)**

Table (6) shows that all the differences in the mean scores were significant (α= 0.05). All these differences were in favor of students in the experimental group as shown in Table (5). This means that teaching oral skills based on the Project-Based Program (PBP) was more effective in improving students' attitudes than using the conventional method.

Results of the third question: Are there statistically significant differences (α= 0.05) in the oral performance' mean scores of the tenth grade EFL students that can be attributed to the interaction between Project-based learning and students' general level of English (good , avarage, poor) ?

In order to answer the third question, the adjusted means and standard errors regarding students' oral performance were calculated. The results are presented in Table (5) below.

Table 7: The adjusted Means and Standard Errors of the subjects of the study with regard to their oral performance

Dependent Variable	group	Students' general level in English	Mean	Std. Error
Mechanics	experimental group	Good	68.2	2.813
		Average	68.9	1.871
		Poor	75.6	2.645
	control group	Good	59.9	2.099
		Average	63.7	2.031
		Poor	62.0	2.619
Social and culture	experimental group	Good	66.3	2.626
		Average	74.6	1.747
		Poor	71.3	2.469
	control group	Good	65.2	1.959
		Average	63.4	1.896
		Poor	61.8	2.445
function	experimental group	Good	62.8	3.788
		Average	60.0	2.520
		Poor	63.6	3.562
	control group	Good	48.1	2.826
		Average	46.2	2.734
		Poor	51.3	3.526
Total score	experimental group	Good	65.3	1.874
		Average	66.7	1.247
		Poor	69.1	1.762
	control group	Good	56.0	1.398
		Average	56.01	1.353
		Poor	57.3	1.745

Table (7) shows that there are differences in the adjusted mean scores of good , average and poor students regarding their oral performance. In order to examine whether these differences were statistically significant or not, the researcher used Two-Way Multiviriate Analysis of Coveriance (MANCOVA). The results are presented in Table (8) below.

Table 8: The Results of Two-Way MANCOVA of the interaction* between group students' general level in English

source	Dependent Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Group	mechanics	970.723	1	970.723	16.995	**.000**	.193
	Social and culture	628.372	1	628.372	12.623	**.001**	.151
	function	2171.274	1	2171.274	20.965	**.000**	.228
	Total score	1305.787	1	1305.787	51.502	**.000**	.420
GPA	mechanics	193.695	2	96.848	1.696	.191	.046
	Social and culture	149.806	2	74.903	1.505	.229	.041
	function	245.592	2	122.796	1.186	.312	.032
	Total score	59.067	2	29.534	1.165	.318	.032
Group * Students' general level of English	mechanics	217.643	2	108.821	1.905	.156	.051
	Social and culture	295.782	2	147.891	2.971	.058	.077
	function	12.046	2	6.023	.058	.944	.002
	Total score	17.558	2	8.779	.346	.709	.010
Error	mechanics	4055.323	71	57.117			
	Social and culture	3534.352	71	49.780			
	function	7353.142	71	103.565			
	Total score	1800.146	71	25.354			
Corrected Total	mechanics	24999.260	79				
	Social and culture	22844.228	79				
	function	38727.608	79				
	Total score	21108.819	79				

- **The mean difference is significant at the .05 level (α= 0.05)**

Table (8) shows that there was no significant interaction between the method of instruction and students' general level of English since the total performance score 0.709 > 0.05 ; mechanics 0.156> 0.05 ; social and cultural 0.058> 0.05 , and function 0.944> 0.05 . This means that , regardless of the students' level in English, all have the same benefit from the program.

Results related to the fourth question: Are there statistically significant differences (α= 0.05) in the attitudes' means scores of students that can be attributed to the interaction between Project-based learning and students' general level of English (good , avarage, poor) **?**

In order to answer the fourth question of the study, the adjusted means and standard errors were calculated. The results are presented in Table (9) below.

Table 9: The adjusted Means and Standard Errors of the subjects of the study with regard to their attitudes towards their oral skills

Dependent Variable	group	Students' general level in English	Mean	Std. Error
Learners' beliefs about learning oral skills	experimental group	Good	4.4	.110
		Average	4.3	.070
		Poor	4.2	.117
	control group	Good	3.9	.099
		Average	3.5	.082
		Poor	3.4	.103
Learners' preferences of oral skills	experimental group	Good	4.3	.127
		Average	4.4	.081
		Poor	4.4	.136
	control group	Good	3.4	.114
		Average	3.1	.095
		Poor	2.9	.119
Feelings about learning oral skills in English	experimental group	Good	4.2	.127
		Average	4.4	.081
		Poor	4.3	.136
	control group	Good	3.2	.115
		Average	3.1	.095
		Poor	3.1	.119
Teachers' practices in oral skills class	experimental group	Good	4.4	.150
		Average	4.5	.095
		Poor	4.6	.160
	control group	Good	3.2	.135
		Average	3.3	.113
		Poor	3.3	.141
Total Score	experimental group	Good	4.3	.082
		Average	4.4	.052
		Poor	4.4	.088
	control group	Good	3.4	.074
		Average	3.2	.062
		Poor	3.2	.077

Table (9) shows that there were differences in the mean scores of good, average, and poor students regarding their attitudes towards oral skills. In order to examine whether those differences were statistically significant or not, Two Way Analysis of Covariance was used. The results are presented in Table (10).

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Table 10: The Results of Two Way MACNOVA of the interaction * between group and students' general level of English

source	Dependent Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Group	Learners' beliefs about learning oral skills	7.067	1	7.067	86.369	.000	.552
	Learners' preferences of oral skills	19.918	1	19.918	181.727	.000	.722
	Feelings about learning oral skills in English	18.267	1	18.267	166.515	.000	.704
	Teachers' practices in oral skills class	20.030	1	20.030	131.284	.000	.652
	Total score	15.780	1	15.780	343.627	.000	.831
GPA	Learners' beliefs about learning oral skills	.608	2	.304	3.713	.029	.096
	Learners' preferences of oral skills	.173	2	.086	.788	.459	.022
	Feelings about learning oral skills in English	.039	2	.019	.176	.839	.005
	Teachers' practices in oral skills class	.296	2	.148	.970	.384	.027
	Total score	.043	2	.021	.468	.628	.013
Group *Students' general level of English	Learners' beliefs about learning oral skills	.243	2	.121	1.482	.234	.041
	Learners' preferences of oral skills	1.131	2	.565	5.157	.008	.128
	Feelings about learning oral skills in English	.392	2	.196	1.789	.175	.049
	Teachers' practices in oral skills class	.016	2	.008	.051	.951	.001
	Total score	.312	2	.156	3.393	.039	.088
Error	Learners' beliefs about learning oral skills	5.728	70	.082			
	Learners' preferences of oral skills	7.672	70	.110			
	Feelings about learning oral skills in English	7.679	70	.110			
	Teachers' practices in oral skills class	10.680	70	.153			
	Total score	3.215	70	.046			
Corrected Total	Learners' beliefs about learning oral skills	19.175	79				
	Learners' preferences of oral skills	37.616	79				
	Feelings about learning oral skills in English	30.284	79				
	Teachers' practices in oral skills class	34.150	79				
	Total score	23.169	79				

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level (α= 0.05)

Table (10) shows that there was no significant effect of the interaction between the method of instruction and students' general level of English with regard to learners feelings 0.175>.05; learners' beliefs 0.234 >.05; teachers' practices 0.951>.05.However, the differences were significant with regard to learners' preferences 0.008 ◄ .05 and total mean score 0.039 ◄ .05, In general, it can be realized that using the Proposed Based-Project Program (PBP) has significantly developed the treatment group's oral performance and their attitudes

towards teaching and learning oral skills in English.

5. Discussion of the results

The findings of the first question revealed that using the proposed project-based program was effective in improving not only the oral performance of students as a whole, but also their oral performance on each aspect of oral skills (i.e. mechanics, culture and social rules, and function) as shown in Table 3. The findings related to the second question revealed that using the proposed project-based program was effective in improving the oral attitudes of students toward teaching and learning oral skills in English.

The results of the third question showed that there was no significant interaction between the teaching strategy and students GPA with regard to students' total oral performance. This means that all students, regardless of their level in English, had the same benefit from the project based program.A possible interpretation of this result could be that teachers in Jordan are expected to use the same teaching strategies to teach all students in the same class regardless of their GPAs. In other words, the cooperating teacher did not use different procedures, steps, instructional materials, or assessment techniques to achieve the objectives of the project -based program. Another explanation could be that students who are good at oral performance are not necessarily so good at other language skills (i.e. Speaking, listening, or reading) which are included estimating students' GPAs.

The preferences mean scores and the total attitudes mean scores of good, average and poor achievers in the experimental group were significantly higher than those of their counterparts in the control group. This implies that the better students are at English, the more they benefited from the proposed program. This result confirms the results of other researchers such as Farahani and Nejad (2009 who found a highly significant correlation between students' oral performance levels and their overall English language proficiency. One possible explanation can be attributed to different cognitive and psycholinguistic differences among students. Good achievers, who can be placed in higher levels of cognitive and psychological readiness, seem to have established more meaningful relationships with the project techniques which are strongly social, cognitive and psychological. Project-based learning techniques of language development which were socially and humanistically driven seemed to be quite influential on the development of attitudes, especially for good achievers who were in higher levels of cognitive and psychological readiness (Farahani and Nejad, 2009).

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study and the discussion above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. It can be concluded that the proposed program was successfully implemented within a tight schedule, though it would be more desirable if the duration of the program were longer. This may indicate that the steps of such a program can be incorporated in the speaking lessons of English language curriculum for the secondary grade in Jordan.
2. The more the students discuss topics related to their interests and background knowledge, the more they enjoy communicating orally with others.
3. The learning environment plays a major role in teaching oral skills since oral communication in a foreign language classroom usually creates anxiety, frustration and reluctance to participate. Therefore, teachers should do their best to involve all students in oral communication activities in a non-threatening learning environment.
4. As one of the central elements of communication, speaking needs special attention and instruction in an EFL context like Jordan. Therefore, helping learners to speak English fluently and appropriately needs carefully prepared activities and qualified teachers.

5.2 Recommendations:

Based on the abovementioned discussion and conclusions, the following recommendations can be made

Teachers should be encouraged to try the proposed project based program.

If EFL students have no chance to use the target language outside schools, teachers should give them the opportunity to practice the target language in the classrooms.

Rather than teaching students to memorize conversations and to repeat words and to answer artificial close questions, students should be highly involved in real-life activities that help them to use the language to achieve all the functions of language.

Teachers need to encourage students to communicate using English wherever and whenever possible without too much correction of their language; students' motivation is strongly related to achievement in language learning (Ur, 1991).

More research should be carried out to which focuses on non-verbal communication.

Other researchers duplicate this study to investigate the effect of project based learning on other students at different grade levels at different schools for longer periods of time.

Textbook authors and curriculum planners include more EFL projects which are organized around socially important problems and questions and that are also personally important and interesting for students.

Teachers are also advised to provide their students with different authentic investigations and to find solutions to real problems from their real life situation and discuss them orally at class.

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