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**Subject : Integration of Four Skills**

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## **Introduction**

Integrating the four language skills creates a more comprehensive and effective learning environment. By fostering connections between listening, speaking, reading, and writing, educators can better prepare learners for real-world communication. This integrated approach not only enhances language proficiency but also develop critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration among students.

Integrating the four language skills not only enhances proficiency but also fosters a more engaging and comprehensive learning experience. By using a variety of activities that encourage interaction among these skills, learners can develop a more complex understanding of the language.

## **1.1 The concept of integration in language learning**

Integration refers to the action or process of combining two or more things in an effective way (Cambridge, n. d.).

Integration of skills is defined as the linking of the traditional four skills of language learning: reading, writing, listening, the process of skill-mixing facilitate teachers to provide maximum learning opportunities for different students with various language abilities in classes. The integration of the four skills is the key for creating a classroom environment as authentic as possible in order to teach English in a way close to a real communicative situation. (Brown,2014)

According to Brown (2001), integration of skills is an effective language teaching approach where if a course deals with reading skills, then, it will also deal with listening, speaking, and writing skills. The integration is used for communication not just for academic purposes. Exposing language learners to authentic language and challenge them to interact naturally in the language.

In this integrated approach, activities are designed to engage learners in tasks that require them to practice several language skills at once, fostering a more holistic understanding of language use (Nunan, 2004).

Example: A learner might read an article (reading), listen to a related podcast (listening), discuss the content with peers (speaking), and write a summary or reflection (writing) (Council of Europe, 2001).



(The Core Four Skills of language, 2009)

## 1.2 The reasons for integration

- All four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are an integral part of typical language proficiency and use. In the real world, people often integrate all four skills in order to communicate. In language teaching teachers should work to create the necessary condition for students to learn effectively and reach the desired outcome. However, the four skills should be integrated in an effective way. These skills should be integrated in a way that helps students meet the standards set for them and develop their communicative competence gradually
- Activities used by teachers in the classroom are real-life activities and situations used to create an interactive learning environment. In other words, when using the skills are integrated, teachers face their students with communicative situations that have is as real

as possible so that students realize the importance of learning the target language. Hence students are given a chance to expand their efforts in more meaningful tasks.

(Harmer,2007).

## **1.2 Types of integration instruction**

Oxford (2001) identifies two types of instruction which aims to direct the process of integrating the skills

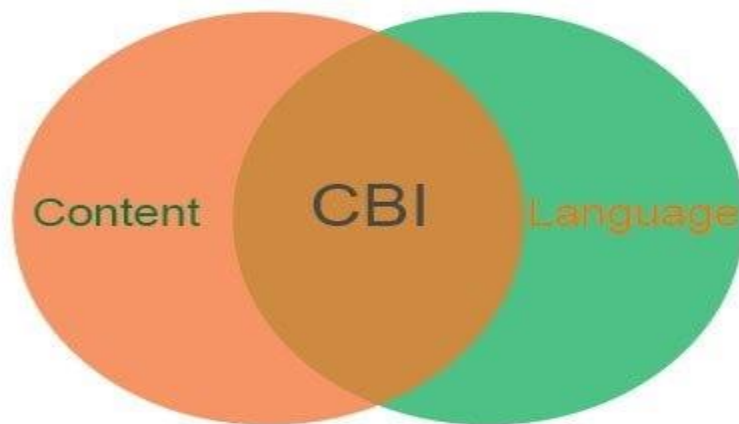
### **1. Content-based Instruction**

This instruction aims to help students practice all the language skills in a highly integrated, communicative style while learning content such as science, mathematics, and social studies.

This approach sets three models:

- Theme-based Model: integrates the language skills into the study of a theme (e.g., life in America; crime and violence; innovation and innovators), this is the most useful and common form of “Content-based Instruction”
- Adjunct Model: co-involved in two separate courses, one for language and one for content. Students take language class in addition to content class, and the main role of language class teacher is to help students follow their content courses and do their content class assignments (usually used when in L2 universities).

- Sheltered Model: the aim of this model is to help non-natives develop their language proficiency without postponing their academic study. It's called "sheltered" because learners are given special assistance to help them understand regular classes. Two teachers can work together to give instruction in a specific subject. One of the teachers is a content specialist and the other is the target language specialist. (Salor,2004).



(Content-Based instruction,2015)

## **2. Task-based instruction**

- Students interact and collaborate in pairs and groups on tasks which mimic or mirror real-world tasks.
- Attention is paid to language meaning more than language forms.
- Students often work together to produce a non-linguistic outcome, such as creating an advertisement, acting out a scene

from a movie or play, making a plan to go to the movies, or producing a class book or recipes.

- Task based instruction can be used at all levels, but the tasks become more complex at higher levels of proficiency in the target language (Oxford 2001).

According to Nunan (2013), tasks should focus on the following

1. Meaning is primary.
2. Learners are not given other people's meanings to simply repeat.
3. tasks should in somehow be related to real-world activities.
4. Task completion has some priority.
5. The assessment of the task is based on the outcome.

### **1.2.1 Classroom activities**

#### **Jigsaw Activities**

- Information gap activities in which each student in a group is provided with only some of the information he/she needs.
- Students work together until everyone has finished the activity. Each student becomes an expert on something and then shares that knowledge with experts on other topics.
- A vast number of words are construct by just fitting pieces together.

- Much of the learning is student-to-student; teachers become facilitators (Rooyen,2012).



(Jigsaw Puzzle Inspiration,2016)

## 2. Dictogloss

A dictogloss is a classroom dictation activity where learners are required to reconstruct a short text by listening and writing down key words, which are later used as a base for reconstruction.

The dictogloss is often regarded as a multiple-skills activity where learners practice listening, writing and speaking (by working in groups) and use vocabulary, grammar and interaction in order to complete the task (Townsend & Nagy2012.)

### **An example of a dictogloss:**

Students can take out a sheet of paper, read a paragraph about an interesting topic three times. Students first just listen. The second time, students are asked to listen and write. And the third time, they are



asked to listen and complete the dictation. Finally, getting them to work with a partner and compare what they've written

### **1.3 Advantages of Integrating the four skills**

1. **Authentic Learning Contexts:** The integrated skills approach simulates real-life communication where we naturally use multiple skills at the same time. For example, in conversation, we both listen and speak. This helps learners apply their language skills in practical situations.

2. **Holistic Development:** Learners develop all four skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing at the same time, fostering a balanced language proficiency.

This approach close skill gaps, ensuring students don't excel in one area while struggling in another.

3. **Increased Motivation:** Integrated tasks are often more engaging because they are similar to real-life activities, which can improve student motivation, increasing their desire to participate actively in the learning process

4. **Improves Critical Thinking:** integration of skills promotes higher-order thinking as learners must analyze, combine, and evaluate information while using multiple skills. For example, when listening and taking notes, learners are forced to focus on important details and structure their responses.

5. Collaborative Learning: Many integrated skill activities are collaborative, allowing learners to work in pairs or groups, which can enhance communication skills, cultural understanding, and team work (Oxford,2001).

6. Improved Retention and Application: Integrating skills helps learners retain language structures and vocabulary more effectively by practicing them in various contexts, leading to better retention and practical use

## **Conclusion**

Integrating the four language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing is crucial for effective language learning. Skill-integration ensures a holistic development of communication abilities, as these skills reinforce one another. Listening improves comprehension and speaking ability, while reading strengthens vocabulary and understanding, enhancing writing proficiency. An integration allows learners to experience language in a more natural context, resembling real-life communication, where skills are often used together. Ultimately, it fosters better retention, deeper understanding, and greater fluency, as learners can apply their knowledge more dynamically and confidently.

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