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CONTENTS:

INTRODUCTION.....	3
CHAPTER I. LINGUISTIC AND METHODOLOGICAL BASES FOR INTEGRATING THE FOUR SKILLS.....	6
1.1. Historical overview of integrated-skills approach.....	6
1.2. Integrated-skills approach: what and why to integrate?	15
1.3. Key considerations in integrated language teaching.....	23
CHAPTER II. CURRENT PERSPECTIVES ON INTEGRATED TEACHING.....	31
2.1. Advantages and disadvantages of integrated skills approach.....	31
2.2. Models and principles of skills integration.....	41
2.3. Results of the survey.....	49
CONCLUSION.....	59
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	62

INTRODUCTION

Today, while implementing the third phase of National program of preparing all new specialists undergoing the higher educational system are required to know one or several foreign languages. In connection with this, huge tasks are set before teachers of English language; teachers became one of the main subjects of educational reforms. Therefore, if a teacher is open to welcome new pedagogical innovations, he can provide goal-oriented introduction of innovative ideas into educational process. Lately, range of significant official acts was issued on accelerating and developing the foreign languages teaching; intrinsically, they define the state policy towards teaching foreign languages.

On December 10, 2012 the first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov signed a decree “On measures to further improve foreign language learning system”¹. It is noted that in the framework of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On education” and the National Program for Training Specialists in the country, a comprehensive foreign languages’ teaching system, aimed at creating harmoniously developed, highly educated, modern-thinking young generation, further integration of the country to the world community, has been created. The decree intensifies the importance of foreign languages in Uzbekistan. According to it, starting from 2013/2014 school year foreign languages, mainly the English language, gradually throughout the country have been taught from the 1st year of schooling in the form of lesson-games and speaking games, continuing to learning the alphabet, reading and spelling in the second grade. Also it is envisaged that university modules, especially in technical and international areas, have been offered in English and other foreign languages at higher education institutions.

Throughout history, there have been many approaches for the teaching of English. All of them have been used during a period of time and then have been replaced by new approaches that proposed new ways for helping foreign students to reach a better proficiency of English as second or foreign language.

¹<http://uza.uz/en/society/president-resolves-to-develop-foreign-language-learning-system-11.12.2012-3147>

For a few years there have been many opinions reinforcing the idea of language as a whole and proposing that 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. They propose that the English language should be taught in a way that mixes reading and listening comprehension with oral and written expression. The language teacher should give the proper emphasis to the specific ability that is being studied, but combining it with the others in order to create a communicative classroom environment that engages students to improve their language abilities.

The aim of the final qualification paper:

- to learn the historical overview of integration of language skills;
- to analyze the importance and usage of integrated skills approach in ELT compared to skills segregation approach;
- to discuss the implementation of skills integrated learning and teaching in the classroom and its principles;
- to investigate advantages along with disadvantages of integration of four basic language skills in the classroom;
- to analyze if implementing integrated skills approach in our education system benefits;

The novelty of the final qualification paper. As to our research work, we opted for working deeply on integrated skills approach, its merits and demerits as well as current issues related to it in methodology, which are considered to be of great importance to be discussed among all methodologists in foreign language teaching. Because of rapid development and expansion of education, especially language teaching, we consider that it is already high time to implement the strongly approved methods of this approach to teach English in the system of our education.

The actuality of the final qualification paper. The integrated-skills approach has a crucial role in shaping modern and interactive ways of current methods of language teaching and learning, thus all foreign language teachers and

linguists around the world are trying to use this approach effectively during their classes and research. According to our consideration, to analyze the use of the integration of four skills to teach English and enable learners to acquire a language, advantages and disadvantages of implementing it in foreign language classes are essential issues which ought to be discussed and proposed by scholars. Many research works were dedicated to this theme, various articles were written by world's linguists and scientists. Our work was created according to the results of experiments that were held by famous methodologists, English language teachers and students learning foreign languages.

The theoretical and practical value of the research work. Theoretically, this research paper can be an essentially useful manual for lecturing on methodology classes. Apart from this, students of bachelor degree doing their research and masters doing their dissertations may utilize it as it includes almost all theoretical bases about the issue. Practically, this work is helpful for majority of teachers for having classes by using various proposed methods to integrate four basic skills in the classroom.

A great number of professors conducted research on the theme: R. Oxford, H.G. Widdowson, A. Sanchez, J. Harmer, E. Hinkel, J. Richards and T. Rodgers. The theoretical base of the research work contains books like "An Approach to Integration of Skills in English Teaching" by A. Sanchez, "Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy" by H. D. Brown , "Integrated Skills in the EFL/ESL Classroom" by R. Oxford and many other related works along with articles posted on online sources.

The content of the research work. The given final qualification paper consists of Introduction, two Chapters, Conclusion and Bibliography. The first Chapter deals with linguistic and methodological bases for integration the four skills in language teaching whereas the second Chapter focuses on current perspectives on integrated teaching. In the Conclusion directions and suggestions for the future research will be stated.

CHAPTER I. LINGUISTIC AND METHODOLOGICAL BASES FOR INTEGRATING THE FOUR SKILLS

1.1 Historical overview of integrated-skills approach

As language learners, everybody has certain abilities and skills. They may listen and speak even though they do not know how to write or read. Or they may acquire abilities to read and write after becoming literate. In other words, according to the channel of communication, it is obvious that they are able to listen, speak, read and write, thus they have four language skills: speaking, writing, listening and reading. Harmer makes the following definition with respect to language skills: “Speaking and writing involve language production, and are therefore, often referred to as productive skills. Listening and reading, on the other hand, involve receiving messages and are therefore often referred to as receptive skills”.² What follows is a table drawn by Harmer to illustrate skills.

MEDIUM SKILL	ORAL	WRITTEN
RECEPTIVE	Listening comprehension	Reading comprehension
PRODUCTIVE	Speaking	Writing

Both speaking and writing activities are considered to be productive activities and strategies. In oral production activities the language user produces an oral text which is received by an audience of one or more listeners. In written production activities the language user as writer produces a written text which is received by a readership of one or more readers. Receptive activities and strategies include listening and reading activities. In oral reception activities the language user as listener receives and processes a spoken input produced by one or more speakers.

Nowadays most contemporary second and foreign language teachers and professionals largely claim that language instruction is naturally divided into discrete skill sets, typically reflecting speaking, listening, reading, and writing, and

²Harmer J. The practice of English language teaching. – Harlow, 1999. – p 48.

usually arranged in this order. That is, the dominance of speaking skills in language teaching has remained the first on the priority not being discussed at all for almost the entire past century, since the rise and preeminence of structural linguistics in second and foreign language teaching. According to the linguistic principles proposed by Bloomfield and their implications along with applications to language pedagogy, the learning objective of imitating a native speaker lies at the core of the structural division of language teaching in the four skill areas.³ The continual separation of the four skills has always been a subject of research and testing in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

An aim at integrating the four basic language skills in pedagogy whenever possible is, however, one of the principles of some current approaches to teaching a language. Outgrowths of communicative teaching are usually accompanied by integrated language teaching and various integrated pedagogical paradigms. Like its predecessor, the audio-lingual method, integrated teaching of the four skills represents a central innovation. On the other hand, in the U.K., a strong audiolingual focus was not the path toward integrated teaching of the language skills but it derived rather from an evolution of older situational and functional teaching methods developed prior to the structural method in the U.S.

Primarily due to the divergent histories of the two countries during the second half of the 20th century, contemporary methods for teaching second and foreign languages in the U. S. and the U. K. have followed two distinctly different routes. The reasons for separating or integrating the teaching of the four skills in the U. S. and the U. K. are reviewed in turn and in their historical contexts.

In the early 1940s and during World War II, a group of specialists of the Linguistic Society of America were called to develop effective, efficient, and intensive language teaching to members of the U. S. Armed Forces. Based on methods for linguistic field studies kept with the outline developed by Bloomfield, the program was also a source scheme to teaching a wide range of languages, such

³ Bloomfield L. Language. – New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1933. – p 56.

as Chinese and Hungarian, as it was designed for target language instruction in small classes of specially selected learners who were highly motivated.

The students were tutored by native speakers together with linguists whose task was to interpret the structural, lexical, and phonetic patterns of the language for teaching purposes. The learners then drilled the elicited systematic patterns of spoken language to replace their first-language habits with second language behaviors.

In this way, following the principles of structural linguistics accompanied by existing behaviorist learning theories, the primacy of speaking skills was established in a famously successful language-teaching program. The instruction in, and the learning of, spoken patterns was associated with similar structure-based teaching and learning of listening skills, needed for conversing in a target language. Learning to read or write in another language was not a focus of the linguistic analyses or of teaching simply because these skills were not expected of the learners in their practical and required language uses in the field.

In a parallel development and in conjunction with teaching English as a second language in the U. S., Charles Fries and his successor, Robert Lado, undertook to design a similar program, one solidly rooted in structural linguistics, designed to teach English as a second or foreign language.⁴ The implementation of the English language courses at the University of Michigan led to the creation of the first North American set of teaching materials incorporating the English sound system, common grammatical structures, and lexical patterns, except from the available linguistic analyses. In accordance with the principles of structural linguistics, linguistic knowledge was methodically arranged for instruction in the first North American course of its kind. The structural separation of second language skills and the primacy of speaking served as a model for course and materials development. In later years, Robert Lado formalized methods for contrastive and structural analyses of languages and their application to the teaching and testing of discrete language skills. Lado's study was the first

⁴ <https://jalt-publications.org/files/pdf-article/jj-6.2-art3.pdf>

systematic application of contrastive analysis to curriculum development, preparing teaching materials and the discrete testing of such incremental language skills as phonemic discrimination, vocabulary, and grammar.

The structural and behaviorist approach to language teaching and learning, with an almost exclusive focus on speaking and grammar drills and listening comprehension, became known as the oral method, the aural-oral method, the structural method, and in the 1950s as the audiolingual method. Ellis Rod comments, however, that "Audiolingualism was very much an American method. In its purist form it was never very popular in Britain and Europe, where less attention was paid to teaching the formal patterns of the second language and more to their situational uses."⁵ She continues, however, that many of the audiolingual assumptions regarding the way language is learnt can be found in pedagogical prescriptions of British and European methodologists writing at this time.

In the U. K., the separation of the four skills had to do with the usage purposes of language teaching, rather than with matters of a particular methodology. According to Howatt and Widdowson, in the U.K., the period immediately after World War II was characterized by "continuation and consolidation rather than change"⁶ in English language teaching (ELT). Generally speaking, prior to the late 1950s, much of the British work in second or foreign language pedagogy was devoted to teaching English to school-age children in the colonies. Thus, teaching efforts were largely directed toward learners outside the U.K. without much prominence attached to listening and speaking skills, but with a primary instructional focus on learning grammar needed for translating written texts. The teaching of English as a second rather than a foreign language was conducted primarily in London, and second language teaching and learning there required listening and speaking skills, essential in basic communication and routine interactions.

⁵Rod E. Instructed Second language acquisition. – London: Basil Blackwell, 1990. – p 78.

⁶Hinkel E. Integrating the four skills: Current and historical perspectives. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. – p 67.

In the 1960s, however, with the influx of foreign workers and students, as well as former colonials, British perspectives on ELT began to change. One of the top priorities in teaching English as both a second and foreign language lay in the need for specialized instruction for technical and highly trained personnel, for academic linguistic skills for college students, as well as for grade school teachers of the children of immigrants. The emerging learning needs of these new populations of learners brought about curricular and methodological work in two novel directions: English for specific purposes for technical and professional learners and English for academic purposes for university students. Thus, the language learning needs of specific groups of learners led to pivotal shifts in the types of language that were taught, but not necessarily in the specific skills that were taught. Howatt and Widdowson comment that in the 1960s "history intervened in a somewhat dramatic way in the U. K., creating a wholly new professional alignment."⁷ New and urgent demands arose for teaching the language needed in technical and academic fields, as well as for integrated teaching of the discrete skills.

To this end, in the U. K., the emphasis on situational, rather than structural, language skills became predominant in the curricula, similar to the syllabuses developed by A. S. Hornby in the 1950s. The situational approach, also called the situational-structural method, the structural-situational approach, or situational language teaching, resembled the pragmatic and situationalized version of the audiolingual method, with a primary emphasis on speaking and listening skills. These were, however, socially, rather than structurally driven. According to Howatt and Widdowson, the principles underlying language instruction between the 1950s and 1970s postulated, "All four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) should be taught, but the spoken skills should be given priority."⁸

⁷Widdowson H. G. *Teaching Language as Communication*. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978. – p 77.

⁸Widdowson H. G. *Teaching Language as Communication*. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978. – p 78.

Real-world situational contexts of instruction, with lessons built around specific topics, such as "at the post office," "at the doctor's," or "a visit to the theater," served as a backdrop for teaching language chunks and contextually relevant grammar and vocabulary. The emergence of the situational approach also gave rise to the classroom teaching technique currently known as PPP (Presentation, Practice, and Production). The PPP model of instruction implies that learners can be guided from controlled practice of language features to free and automatic production of language in any or all of the four skills. By the end of the 1960s, however, many linguists and ELT methodologists arrived at the conclusion that the situational method was somewhat limited in scope and its interactional foci, in other words, speaking and listening, and did not provide clear principles that could guide curricula and instruction.

While Stern called the 1960s disorienting in language teaching and new theories about language, the 1970s and 1980s ushered in humanistic approaches to language pedagogy in North America and in Europe.⁹ It should be noted, however, that in the U. K. the strongly pragmatic goal-orientation in teaching the four skills and the impact of social factors on language usage continued to occupy a prominent place in ELT.

The introduction of the concept of communicative competence brought about a change in the perspectives on how language skills were to be taught and used for communication inside and outside of the classroom. Although not directly associated with language teaching, Hymes' work emphasized the key role of the social context in communication and the centrality of the socio-linguistic norms of appropriateness in speech communities and their cultures.¹⁰ He was particularly interested in language as social behavior. New perspectives began to emerge that the authentic representations and uses of language in the classroom were nearly impossible, particularly so within the established models associated with the audiolingual method. The structural separation of the four skills, pattern practice,

⁹ <https://es.scribd.com/document/159884785/Integrating-the-Four-Skills>

¹⁰ <https://es.scribd.com/document/159884785/Integrating-the-Four-Skills>

error avoidance, and native-speaker imitation in second and foreign language production contrasted markedly with teaching language as a means of communication.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) places a great deal of value on teaching language skills with the goal of enabling learners to communicate meaningfully both inside and outside of the classroom, as in, for example, asking for information, seeking clarification, relying on circumlocution when necessary, and in general, negotiating meaning by all linguistic and non-linguistic means at one's disposal. In their seminal publication on learners' coping strategies, Canale and Swain developed a three-component framework of language competence that learners needed to achieve: communicative competence, grammatical competence, and sociolinguistic competence.¹¹ Their empirical findings demonstrated convincingly that practicing a range of language skills simultaneously and in the context of communication allowed learners to attain levels of grammatical competence similar to those achieved by students who concentrated on audio-lingual structural patterns. In addition, however, the communicative competence of the learners who practiced their skills in interaction, measured in terms of language fluency, comprehensibility, and effort, substantively exceeded that of learners without comparable practice. As an outcome of this and other studies published at the time, CLT and its subsequent methodological offshoots have presently come to dominate integrated approaches to teaching of the central four skills.

As early as the 1970s, many researchers and methodologists noted that the teaching of language skills cannot be conducted through isolable and discrete structural elements. In reality, it is rare for language skills to be used in isolation; for example, both speaking and listening comprehension are needed in a conversation and, in some contexts, reading or listening and making notes is likely to be almost as common as having a conversation. The central innovative

¹¹ Canale M. and Swain M. Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. – Oxford, 1980. – p 108.

characteristic of the communicative approach in second or foreign language teaching was the integration of the four macro-skills and their components.

Widdowson was one of the first linguists to call for integrating the four language skills in instruction to raise learners' proficiency levels and enable advanced language learning.¹² In his proposal for integrated and communicative language teaching in general and in particular in English for specific purposes, he emphasized that virtually all language uses take place in the form of discourse and in specific social contexts. Although he notes that the separated teaching of language skills is probably more administratively convenient, as in divide and rule, language comprehension and production do not, in fact, take place in discrete units. Thus, to attain proficiency, learners need to develop receptive and productive skills in both spoken and written discourse. His strong emphasis on the integration of the four skills, as well as discourse-based teaching, have had a considerable impact on the emergence of discourse-oriented curricula and teaching methods in English for specific purposes and English for academic purposes. For this reason, to become competent language users, learners need to develop receptive and productive skills in both spoken and written discourse.

Widdowson's and Halliday's early work and their insights into the importance of discourse in language usage provided highly influential theoretical foundations in linguistic analyses and language teaching.¹³ These works have led to the subsequent rise and prominence of content-based and integrated language instruction, especially in English as a second language in Australia, in the U. K., and, to some extent in North America.

In the 1980s and 1990s, a great deal of elaboration and refinement took place in communicative and integrated teaching of the four skills. In light of the fact that opportunities for meaningful communication in the language classroom are limited, particularly so in the regions where English is taught as a foreign language, a great need arose for integrated communicative activities. These had to

¹² Widdowson H. G. *Learning Purpose and Language Use*. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983. – p 76.

¹³ http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1657-07902014000200008

be interaction-centered and as authentic as possible to enable students to use the language for purposeful communication.

The need for integrated activities led to the evolution of task-based instruction that gained currency in the early to mid-1980s. At present, the ubiquitous language practice exercises for groups or pairs of learners typically combine listening and speaking, reading and speaking, or reading, writing, and speaking. Such integrated classroom activities, also called tasks, include, for example, listening to language tapes, playing games, or working on information gap and problem-solving exercises. These types of practice require learners to engage in interaction and integrated language usage because group- or pair-work can be carried out only if the participants share and discuss, or read and pool their information. Task-based teaching is probably the most widely adopted model of integrated language teaching today, and it is often considered to be the closest classroom simulation of real-life interaction. In his highly acclaimed book, Nunan outlines the principles that should guide the design of teaching materials and modules for integrating a variety of language skills.¹⁴ Effective integrated modules are characterized by uses of authentic language models and exemplars, continuity of language work from comprehension to production, explicit connections of classroom language practice to real world uses, for instance, a business presentation or a job interview, and a systematic language focus that enables learners to identify and analyze language regularities. In his later work on designing integrated syllabuses, she explains that the first step is to identify the contexts and situations in which learners will need to communicate. After the communicative events are identified in general terms, the next phase should work toward learners' functional goals along with the linguistic elements required to achieve them.

Having been accepted as a more efficient way of presenting language skills nowadays, skills integration has been emerged in the above-mentioned historical outline and been continually defined variously by different scholars so far.

¹⁴ Nunan D. *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

1.2. Integrated-skills approach: what and why to integrate?

Language users employ a combination of skills at the same time. Speaking and listening usually happen simultaneously, and people may well read and write at the same time when they make notes or write something based on what they are reading.

Richards, Platt, and Weber define the teaching of integrated skills in the Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics: "The teaching of the language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in conjunction with each other as when a lesson involves activities that relate listening and speaking to reading and writing."¹⁵ There are several principled models for integrating the teaching of two or more language skills. Such models can vary substantially in their complexity and in the types of skills that can be integrated to benefit learning, and virtually all have their advantages and disadvantages in particular contexts. The simplest and most basic type of integrated teaching incorporates the skills in the same language medium, either spoken to include listening and speaking, or written to include reading and writing. A typical instructional paradigm found in many locations around the world deals with employing learners' receptive skills to provide input and modeling for productive skills. For instance, in the spoken medium, listening selections are used as models for speaking, interaction, or pronunciation skills, and in the written medium, reading input supplies models for writing.

More complex integrated curricula combine a range of language skills. For instance, instructional activities can bring together listening and reading input to promote speaking or writing, or to facilitate both speaking and writing. In complex integrated teaching methods, such as text-based, also called genre-based, language input materials are usually organized thematically. In this way, theme, register, and language content can be made consistent and cohesive to expose learners' to contextually linked vocabulary, relevant grammar constructions, and discourse organization features. For example, if the theme of the instructional materials has a focus on, say, weather, climate, or geography, then in speech or writing, the

¹⁵Richards J. C., Platt J. and Weber H. Longman dictionary of applied linguistics. – Harlow: Longman, 1988. – p 18.

register is likely to be somewhat more formal than it would be in a module on friends and family. The vocabulary on weather and geography is bound to include common climate-related terms, and the grammar constructions are likely to deal with the present, but not the past, tenses, several kinds of adverb clauses, and locational prepositions.

Certain techniques which might make language learning classes come close to real-life communicative situations where students should use all learning skills. For this purpose students should speak not only to the teacher but also to each other that means that's students will listen to each other. The listener can react by writing down for a reader his version for the information he has just heard. Brainstorming, guided discussion, interviews, skits in which students acting in an assigned role, dictation, storytelling, note taking are some of the techniques that give students the opportunity to use all their linguistic skills to help them explore and get started with their ideas on a given topic or allow the topic of a piece of writing to emerge out of classroom activities.

A way can be suggested that a teacher can proceed with the development of separate skills followed by skills integration in the teaching stages that follow. The same person might describe the lecture to friends or colleagues, and follow it up by reading an article that the lecturer suggested. Another case would be that of a person who reads about a concert or play in the paper and invites a friend to go to it. The same person will probably read the program for the concert or play and talk with his or her guest. Later he or she may write a letter to someone telling of the experience. In these cases, the same experience or topic leads to the use of many different skills, and teaching should reflect this. Where students practice reading, teachers will use that reading as the basis for practicing other skills. Students involved in an oral communicative activity will have to do some writing or reading in order to accomplish the task which the activity asks them to perform. Students will be asked to write, but on the basis of reading, listening or discussing. Often activities will have a focus on one particular skill, so that at a certain stage the students will concentrate on reading abilities. But the focus can later shift to one or

more of the other skills. In the process of language teaching skills became practically segregated for convenient utilitarian purposes. Structural segregation of language teaching in the four skill aims at imitating the native speaker.

Oxford uses the term integrated-skill instruction as opposed to segregated-skill instruction.¹⁶ By the latter she means the traditional way of learning a language which depends on the mastery of discrete language skills such as reading and writing. Instead, she proposes two types of integration:

1. Content-based language instruction which proposes teaching/learning the content through language;
2. Task-based instruction which emphasizes doing tasks that require language use.

According to Sanchez, interconnectedness of skills in language learning process can be as the following and we have to pay attention to this interconnectedness while integrating the language skills:¹⁷

1. Writing and other skills.

Writing activities give the students practice in manipulating structures and selecting and combining lexical elements, and that these activities help to consolidate the knowledge for use in other areas. According to the same source, written questions based on a reading passage encourage the student to read the text more attentively and discover areas which were misinterpreted on the first reading.

The most effective writing practice will have a close connection with what is being practiced in relation to other skills: when students have read, heard and said to themselves or others what they are expected to write, they are more likely to write it correctly. More effective results will be achieved in writing exercises if there is a continual integration of practice in all the skills.

In order to ensure the potential contribution of other skill areas, the teacher should promote active class discussion of what has been heard or read and encourage the presentation of short oral reports. This will follow the

¹⁶ <https://www.ericdigests.org/2002-2/esl.htm>

¹⁷ Sanchez M. A. A. An approach to the integration of skills in English teaching. – Oxford, 2000. – p 187.

communicative principle of task-dependency, which is essential to make the lessons meaningful from the students' point of view.

2. Listening and other skills.

When listening is integrated into a longer sequence of work, students feel the effort they have put into understanding is not wasted based on the following reasons:

a. The listening skill could be regarded as the most difficult to develop, whether we look at it from a cognitive perspective or due to the added difficulties that derive from the acoustics,

b. It is a vital part of the teacher's job to help students to improve their listening to spoken language, and

c. The better students understand what they hear; the better they will take part in spoken interactions.

As such, listening comprehension activities should spring naturally from, or provide material for, oral practice or reading, as well as provide a stimulus for writing activities. Rivers argues that since listening and reading involves similar processes such as speech perception, we could expect the development of listening strategies through intensive practice to carry over to reading.¹⁸ He contends that when various skills are integrated into free-flowing in which one provides materials for the other; students learn to operate confidently within the language, easily transferring knowledge acquired in one area for active use in another.

3. Reading and other skills.

When students learn to think in the second language, these students should be discouraged to stop whenever they come across a new or rather unfamiliar word to insert a native-language gloss between the lines. It is provided a suggestion to these students to increase their vocabulary: keeping individual notebooks in which they copy down words they wish to remember in complete phrases or sentences, so that they are reminded of the context in which they would be appropriately used, thus providing written practice from reading input.

¹⁸ Rivers W. M. Teaching foreign language skills. – Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981. – p 59.

Extensive reading fosters vocabulary growth and the acquisition of syntax in context. As such, students can, by reading, develop personal intuitions about what good writing looks like; practicing and applying those intuitions in writing is probably the best way for a student to become a good writer in second language.

Writing competence is acquired subconsciously, without readers being aware that they have acquired it, students, who get pleasure from reading at all ages, are better writers, while none of the poor writers seem to report a lot of pleasure reading. Students with good writing ability do more reading than students with poor writing ability.

4. Speaking and other skills.

It was viewed oral speech as the students' output, which can be based on previous written through reading or oral input through listening. Students' output can also lead to further activities in which the students continue to be involved. When students are involved in speaking activities, they are given a chance for rehearsal: to practice the real skill of speaking as preparation for using it outside the classroom.

Conducting questionnaires, surveys and other information-gap activities are among speaking activities that include a task with a clear, achievable end product. These activities generate genuine discourse practices and lend themselves to an integration of the skills and task dependency. When a student conducts a questionnaire or survey in target language, they practice speaking and listening skills, while addressing the questions and receiving the response from the informants. Writing the collected data or information in the questionnaire or survey form, will satisfy the student's writing skill practice, while reporting the outcome in target language will additionally develop the student's speaking skill.

If what it is the ultimate aim of language teaching is asked, most teachers would probably agree that one answer is that students should be able to understand and produce the language that they need; in other words, we want them to develop their autonomy in language use, that is, a kind of freedom in their choice of language and manner. By integrating skills, we are providing a certain input that

becomes a basis for further output, which in turn will be new input, and so on. In this way the students' contributions turn out to be part of the process in which language is generated.

Rather than focusing on ways of controlling the language and ideas that students produce, we should always be looking for ways to free things up. Similarly, we should move the students from the role as consumers in the classroom towards the role as producers. By doing this, we are also likely to move away from language specific work and instead involve the students in broader educational processes. Some teachers will actually say that they are only responsible for teaching the language, and not for the general educational development of the students. However, as noted by Andrew Littlejohn: "Whether we are aware of it or not, students will always learn more in their language classes than just language. They will also learn their role in the classroom and to a greater or lesser extent pick up values and attitudes from the texts they use. They will also learn a lot about themselves as learners, and about what language learning involves." ¹⁹

According to Jing, "the importance of using this approach lies on the fact that, when facing a real communicative situation, more than one skill is used to communicate and integrated skill approach provides opportunities to develop these skills at the same time." ²⁰

According to Harmer, productive work should not always be imitative. ²¹ Students are greatly helped by being exposed to examples of writing and speaking which show certain conventions for them to draw upon. He also states that skill integration is a major factor in lesson planning. Weaving threads of different skills and topics is a major art of teachers who plan for a sequence of lessons. Skill integration also happens when students are involved in project work, which may well involve researching through reading or listening, speaking, for example in

¹⁹ Littlejohn A. Language learning tasks and education. – London: English Teaching, 1998. – p 90.

²⁰ Jing W.U. Integrating Skills for Teaching EFL Activity Design For The Communicative Classroom. – US: Sino-US English Teaching, 2006. – p 109.

²¹ Harmer J. The practice of English language teaching. – Harlow, 1991. – p 50.

discussions or when giving a presentation, and writing, for instance submitting a report.

One of the principles of communication is the whole more than the sum of parts. In this respect, what is needed is the ability to deal with strings of sentences and ideas in the real time. Certain language textbooks promote the development of separated skills; one class may be devoted to practicing the skill of reading, another to speaking or writing. Teacher is responsible for the development of all skills. Harmer suggests that "...this position is clearly ridiculous for two reasons. Firstly, it is very often true that one skill cannot be performed without another. It is impossible to speak in a conversation if you do not listen as well, and people seldom write without reading - even if they only read what they have just written. Secondly, though, people use different skills when dealing with the same subject for all sorts of reasons. Someone who listens to a lecture may take notes and then write a report of the lecture."²²

In common perspectives on contemporary language curricula, teaching reading is typically connected to instruction on writing and vocabulary, teaching writing can be easily tied to reading and grammar, and speaking skills readily lend themselves to teaching listening, pronunciation, and cross-cultural pragmatics. In an age of globalization, pragmatic objectives of language learning place an increased value on integrated and dynamic multi-skill instructional models with a focus on meaningful communication and the development of learners' communicative competence.

In this respect, reference should be made to the intention of saying the goal of the individual users of any language, and the language learning needs of specific groups. The learning needs of learners ask for curricular and methodological work in two novel directions: English for specific purposes for technical and professional learners and English for academic purposes for students. According to Harmer, people learn language for practical reasons.²³ Children and students

²²Harmer J. How to teach English. – Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2007. – p 34.

²³Harmer J. The practice of English language teaching. – Harlow, 1991. – p 60.

mainly learn it because it is in the school curriculum. Some think it offers a chance for advancement in their professional lives; others are attracted to the culture of one of the teaching language components. Some want to know more about the people who speak it, the places where it is spoken and the writings which it has produced, some others learn it for fun. Some want to be tourists in a country, others learn it for special or specific purposes that are for academic, or occupational purposes or for science and technology. It is learners' reasons of learning a foreign language that involves teachers in writing certain foreign language teaching curricula.

Above all, integrating the skills is to work at the level of realistic communication, which is the aim of communicative approach and many researchers believe that handling realistic communication is an integral part of essential conditions for language learning.

Willis states that in the past language teaching has been focused on language rather than teaching, which means on the content and the ways to transmit it rather than communication.²⁴ He provides a description of a consistent methodology which is more than just a collection of activities and techniques.

As it was stated in his work, conditions for language learning are like the below:

Essential			Desirable
Exposure to a rich but comprehensible input of real spoken and written language in use	Use of the language to do things (i.e. exchange meanings)	Motivation to listen to and read the language and to speak and write it (i.e. to process and use the exposure)	Instruction in language (i.e. chances to focus on form)

²⁴ Willis J. A Framework for Task-Based Learning. – Oxford: Longman, 1996. – p 139.

1.3. Key considerations in integrated language teaching

Traditionally, English language teaching has focused on developing separate language skills, probably, because teaching was considered easier if syllabuses were organized around one skill than focused on more than one at one time. A general English course, teaching instruction should focus on the development of the four skills equally. Practically, whatever the focus of instruction, students integrate skills. If the focus of instruction were that of developing the skill of reading, students integrate skills, they read, discuss what has already been the point of their readings, employing in this way speaking and listening skills as well as many associated skills, such as pronunciation, grammar, and use. The teacher's approach must address the learner's reasons of learning, the learner's motivation, and learning resources and values that support foreign language teaching because in an age of globalization, pragmatic objectives of language learning place an increased value on integrated and dynamic multi-skill instructional models with a focus on meaningful communication and the development of learners' communicative competence.

It is better to acquire language through the meaningful conversation. By so doing, all the three domains of learning; knowledge, skills and appropriate attitudes can be acquired. Classroom interactions provided meaningful communications which facilitated acquisition of the language; however, there was no deliberate effort to use the literal material to teach the language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Language teacher educators should train teachers of English to use appropriate approaches in integrated English teaching.

A definition with respect to language skills have also been provided in The Common European Framework of Languages which points out that: “To carry out communicative tasks, users have to engage in communicative language activities and operate communication strategies. Many communicative activities, such as conversation and correspondence, are interactive, that is to say, the participants alternate as producers and receivers, often with several turns. In other cases, as when speech is recorded or broadcast or written texts are sent out or published,

producers are separated from receivers, whom they may not even know and who are unable to respond. In these cases the communicative event can be regarded as the speaking, writing, listening to or reading of a text”²⁵

In view of John Honeyfield, “skills integration generally refers to linking two or more of the traditional four skills of language learning: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.”²⁶ Others as Richards, Platt, and Weber define the teaching of integrated skills in the Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics: “The teaching of the language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in conjunction with each other as when a lesson involves activities that relate listening and speaking to reading and writing.”²⁷

In Carol’s opinion “the integration of skills in the language classroom can be defined quite simply as a series of activities or tasks which use any combination of the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing in a continuous and related sequence.”²⁸

In practically all methods and techniques geared toward integrated teaching, curricula typically include at least two essential teaching and learning objectives:

- a) language features needed for communication and used in the context of communication;
- b) thematic and cohesive stretches of discourse for language input, rather than a focus on discrete vocabulary items, patterns, or grammar points.

Discourse-based approaches to instruction afford learners an opportunity to focus on the linguistic and socio-cultural features of organizing and presenting information in particular contexts. Teaching the language with a discourse focus also greatly facilitates an integration of a broad range of skills when incremental skills can be transferred from one aspect of language to another. For example, learning to organize and explain one's ideas in writing can prove to be highly useful in structuring oral presentations. Similarly, the language features, for

²⁵ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>

²⁶ <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ468941>

²⁷ Richards J. C., Platt J. and Weber H. Longman dictionary of applied linguistics. – Harlow: Longman, 1988. – p 29.

²⁸ <http://konferenca.unishk.edu.al/icrae2014/cd/pdfdoc/816.pdf>

instance, vocabulary and grammar, associated with the formal register in speech, can also be applicable to constructing semi-formal written text, such as an email to a colleague. Transferability of skills from one type of discourse to another provides for a greater integration of the traditional four skills in language teaching, where writing tasks might be spoken in their mode, and vice versa.

A focal skill is a language skill that a student is currently working on. Our system of modules is set up in such a way that each student works on only one focal skill at a time. Supporting skills are language skills that can be used to support work on a focal skill. As outlined above, listening can be used to support work that is focused on all other skills; reading supports work focused on writing; and so on. A skill that has developed to the supporting level can normally continue to develop through regular use, and no longer requires focused attention. An emergent skill develops to some extent as a consequence of work focused on some other skill. For example, speaking and reading both improve somewhat as a result of progress in listening; and writing improves as reading improves.

Focal skills integrate the skills in a particularly effective way: by exploiting certain skills as tools for developing others. Progressive functional skill integration refers to the logical, systematic integration of the skills in accordance with their potential uses in the classroom. These considerations lead to the following ones:

1. Students should have good listening comprehension before working on reading, writing, and academic skills.
2. Students should have good reading comprehension before working on writing and academic skills.
3. Students should have good writing ability before working on academic skills.
4. Speaking should be encouraged throughout the process of acquiring English, especially after good listening comprehension has been attained.

The disciplined order of development set forth in these key considerations intensifies the efficiency of language acquisition, since students are always working on their weak skills from a position of strength.

According to Harmer, any of the four skills of the English language demand considerable language activation on the part of the learner; the brain is engaged with the texts learners interact with: “In other words, we have to think to understand, using any or all of our language knowledge to get meaning from what we are seeing or hearing.”²⁹

As he states, any of the four English language skills is rarely done in isolation, when people are engaged in a conversation, they are listening as well as speaking, in order to interact with the person they are talking to. In the case of lecturers, for instance, they read notes they have written previously and, in the same situation, people who are listening to lectures are also taking their own notes, an activity that could even provoke a conversation or at least a comment among the people attending the lecture, for this reason, if skill use is multi-layered in this way, it would make no sense to teach each skill in isolation. We will, therefore, look at how input and output are connected in the classroom, how skills can be integrated and how skill and language work are connected.

Consequently, integrating English language skills in a lesson is a natural process of skill-mixing that facilitates teachers to provide maximum learning opportunities for the different students in classes; it makes sense to integrate different skills.

According to Rebecca Oxford, the Integrated-Skill Approach leads to optimal ESL or EFL communication by interweaving the four primary English language skills during instruction, then in designing activities, teachers should consider all the skills conjointly as they interact with each other in natural behavior, for in real life as in the classroom, most tasks of any complexity involve more than one macro-skill.³⁰

The problem is that the Integrated-skills approach is not applied which does not lead to authentic communication and the importance of integrating the four skills of the English language lies on the fact that in meaningful communication,

²⁹Harmer J. How to teach English. – Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2007. – p 89.

³⁰Oxford R. Integrated Skills in the ESL/EFL Classroom. – Longman, 2001. – p 3.

people employ incremental language skill, not in isolation, but in tandem. In other words, since the communicative language is considered as a whole, then the teaching of it should be integral as well, because that would facilitate the students' natural language interaction.

Integration of skills exposes English language learners to authentic language and challenges them to interact naturally in the language. By this way, English becomes a real means of interaction and sharing among people. In addition to this, it allows the teacher to color his or her lesson with varieties because the range of tasks is wider and real success in English teaching and learning is when the learners can actually communicate in English inside and outside the classroom.

All the four basic communication skills are inextricably bound together into a single unity which improves their acquisition since the development of one of the skills helps the development of all the others. Those skills are supposed to be developed in an integral manner, so that reading and listening pave the way to speaking, speaking stimulates writing which, in its turn, requires speaking, reading and listening again, etc.

As Peregoy and Boyle state, "in natural, day-to-day experience, oral and written languages are not kept separate and isolated from one another. Instead, they often occur together, integrated in specific communication events."³¹ Moreover, they consider that during the language learning process, listening, speaking, reading, and writing should be treated as integrated, interdependent, and inseparable elements of language. They conclude that the teacher should incorporate opportunities throughout the reading for students to develop their own learning by responding verbally as they read, write, and learn in English, because it is the integrated use of oral and written language for functional and meaningful purposes that best promotes the full development of second language proficiency. They suggest that reading and writing as well as speaking and listening should be integral parts of all language classroom activities because all these processes

³¹Peregoy S. F. and Boyle O. F. Reading, writing, and learning in ESL: A resource book for K-12 teachers. – New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., 2001. – p 47.

interact with one another. Teachers should provide opportunities and resources for students to engage in authentic speech and literacy activities.

Hungyo and Kijai explain that the “term integrated means language learning where all four skills take place at the same time and with teacher, learner, and setting as playing their roles in the learning.”³² According to them, the integrated-skills approach is a whole language approach where if a course deals with reading skills, then, it will also deal with listening, speaking, and writing skills. This approach is considered as one in which the English language is taught not just for academic but also for communication purpose. In other words, it considers the communicational goal that every language course should achieve by exposing learners to the richness and complexity of the language.

A very important opinion to consider when talking about Integrated-skills approach is the one that gives Rebecca Oxford.³³ She compares the teaching of English in ESL or EFL classrooms is that of a tapestry in which every aspect of ELT, such as the characteristics of the teacher or students’ language, is a strand that contributes to form the final goal, which communication.

In order to achieve this goal, Oxford proposes that the instructor's teaching style must address the learning style of the learner, the learner must be motivated, and the setting must provide resources and values that strongly support the teaching of the language. If these conditions are not present within the EFL classroom, the instructional loom is likely to produce something small, weak, ragged, and pale. She states that the four essential strands to make this tapestry are teacher, learner, setting, and relevant languages. She also adds that the most crucial of these strands consists of the four primary skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing, which also includes associated or related skills such as knowledge of vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, syntax, meaning, and usage. When all of these

³²Hungyo J. and Kijai J. The effect of integrated and Segregated Skills Approach on English Language acquisition among Freshmen Nursing and Business Students in Mission College Tailand. – Thailand: The Scriptor, Journal of Arts & Humanities Department, 2009. – p 156.

³³ Oxford R. Integrated Skills in the ESL/EFL Classroom. – Longman, 2001. – p 3.

factors are successfully interwoven, it can be said that the Integrated-skills approach is being effectively used.

The effective way of integrating the language skills is another point that needs clarifying. According to her, in order to integrate the language skills in ESL or EFL instruction, teachers should consider taking these steps:

1. Learn more about the various ways to integrate language skills in the classroom, for example, content-based, task-based, or a combination.
2. Reflect on their current approach and evaluate the extent to which the skills are integrated.
3. Choose instructional materials, textbooks, and technologies that promote the integration of listening, reading, speaking, and writing, as well as the associated skills of syntax, vocabulary, and so on.
4. Even if a given course is labeled according to just one skill, remember that it is possible to integrate the other language skills through appropriate tasks.
5. Teach language learning strategies and emphasize that a given strategy can often enhance performance in multiple skills.

Besides that, integration of skills depends on the proficiency level of the learners. For learners with lower proficiency level integration can be general and basic; whereas for more advanced learners it can become more refined and complex. Moreover, she advocates that, materials, textbooks, and technologies that promote the integration of the skills as well as the sub-skills of language can be chosen by the teacher. Although some materials or textbooks may not include skills integration, the teacher can be creative, and can find ways to incorporate other language skills in activities and tasks. Some strategies such as predicting and, inferring, can be useful for more than one skill in ESL classrooms.

Again she suggests that, the language learning strategies that enhance performance in multiple skills can be taught by the teacher. Through this process, the teacher can make second language acquisition easier for the learners. However, unnecessary mixing too many skills without any thematic connection is confusing

for the students, and it will be counterproductive in the long run. Sanchez mentions that, skills integration should not be forced; rather they need to follow real life communication.³⁴ Therefore, while integrating the skills teacher should make a thematic connection among them. Also, transition from one skill to the other should be smooth.

For integration of skills, during the integration of skills, the notion of smoothness should be provided. That is, activities should be chosen so correctly that the transition between activities should be smooth.

Harmer has pointed out that one of the teacher's responsibilities is that the students should practice all the skills.³⁵ He finds separating skills ridiculous and he adds that someone who listens to a lecture may take notes and then write a report of the lecture. The same person might also describe the lecture to his friends or colleagues and follow it up by reading an article that the lecturer suggested. He confirms this with an example. For instance, one sees an advertisement in the newspaper, for instance for a job, holiday or device; talks about it to someone else or rings him up or writes a letter or chats on the computer. These kinds of activities could follow and provide a natural setting for language teaching and learning. Similarly, Cunningsworth states that "In the actual language use, one skill is rarely used in isolation... Numerous communicative situations in real life involve integrating two or more of the four skills. The user of the language exercises his abilities in two or more skills, either simultaneously or in close succession."³⁶

Again he also states that a good teacher recognizes the importance of integrating discrete language skills in the communicative situations, which simulate or duplicate the real life situations in which students will need to use the foreign language.

³⁴ Sanchez M. A. A. An approach to the integration of skills in English teaching. – Oxford, 2000. – p 157.

³⁵ Harmer J. How to teach English. – Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2007. – p 78.

³⁶ Cunningsworth, A. Evaluating and selecting EFL teaching materials. – London: Heinemann, 1984. – p 56.

CHAPTER II. CURRENT PERSPECTIVES ON INTEGRATED TEACHING

2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of integrated skills approach

Current models of integrated language teaching are not without their shortfalls. Nor is integrated instruction appropriate in all contexts of language teaching and for all purposes of language learning. The advantages and disadvantages of integrated teaching may crucially determine its usefulness in second or foreign language contexts.

The integrated-skill approach, as contrasted with the purely segregated approach, exposes English language learners to authentic language and challenges them to interact naturally in the language. Learners rapidly gain a true picture of the richness and complexity of the English language as employed for communication. Moreover, this approach stresses that English is not just an object of academic interest nor merely a key to passing an examination; instead, English becomes a real means of interaction and sharing among people. This approach allows teachers to track students' progress in multiple skills at the same time. Integrating the language skills also promotes the learning of real content, not just the dissection of language forms. Finally, the integrated-skill approach, whether found in content-based or task-based language instruction or some hybrid form, can be highly motivating to students of all ages and backgrounds.

There are several benefits of using an integrated-skills approach in language teaching. First, integrating language skills provides more purposeful and meaningful learning at all levels. Besides, it contributes to coherent teaching and to better communication. It also brings variety into the classroom. Teachers enrich classroom instructions by integrating language skills cooperatively. By integrating the skills, students learn to operate the language and they can easily transfer the acquired knowledge to the other areas. Practicing of all four skills promotes language learning and affects the second language knowledge of learners positively. When the language skills are integrated in language teaching, language learning comes closer to the way we do in real life. Rivers explains the benefits of

skills integration as follows: “When various skills are integrated into free-flowing activities, in which one provides material for the other, students learn to operate confidently within the language, easily transferring knowledge acquired in one area for active use in another. It is most important that the teacher not compartmentalize the learning...”³⁷

Although in discrete skills approach, skills are taught separately, in class integration of multiple skills occur naturally. As we integrate skills when we use language in real life, it is unrealistic and impossible to use only one skill solely in class. For instance, in a reading skill oriented class, students need listening skill to comprehend teacher’s instruction, speaking skill for discussing the reading text, thus integrating listening, speaking and reading skill naturally in class. Similarly, in case of the textbooks, a particular skill might be highlighted, but other language skills are used nevertheless through the activities presented in the book. Therefore, implementing integrated skills approach in ESL classes can have some upper hands in contrast to segregated skills approach. Although, discrete skills approach can teach the learners the language skills in an orderly manner, but integrating them allows them to use these skills simultaneously during communication. Here, in case of the former the language practice is controlled and contrived, whereas the latter gives simulation of communication in real-life context.

Here, simultaneous use of the skills can be very beneficial for the learners as they improve uniformly in all four skills. Also, the four skills complement each other in classroom. For, example, the reading passage can give ideas to the learners for speaking or writing. Integrated approach provides the learners with reflection time. The students are given the autonomy to reflect on the ideas of the reading or listening text by relating them with their own knowledge, view or experience through speaking or writing.

Akram and Malik have discovered that, reading helps the students get vocabulary to be used, and the learners give better performance in writing when all

³⁷ Rivers W.M. Teaching Foreign-Language Skills. – Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981. – p 57.

the skills are integrated at the first place.³⁸ As mentioned earlier, in the traditional segregated approach learners were less motivated as they were taught language as a subject itself. Through integration of skills language is treated as means for interaction and inter-play, which boosts the motivation and confidence of the learners as they can express their own ideas and views without fearing the teacher.

Integrating skills reduces learners' level of stress and anxiety by engaging them in real communication of ideas rather than mechanical practice of skills and components. Also, the segregated approach focuses on form, mastery of language, accuracy. However, the integrated approach focuses meaning, using language for communication, fluency. The former approach is stressful as it encourages memorisation and mastery of language forms, whereas the latter is less stressful and cognitively less demanding as it focuses on expressing and exchanging ideas.

Discrete skills approach is strictly teacher centered as the teacher sets the tasks and activities. However, integrated skills approach gives learners' autonomy and is centered on the learners as they are free to construct and negotiate meaning during reading and listening as well as exchange and share ideas during writing and speaking. This challenges and reconstructs the teacher's role in the class. Also, it increases students' talking time and decreases teacher talking time.

Integration of skills leads to reconceptualization of teacher's role. In short, Jing feels that, successful integration of skills can make the lessons dynamic by involving the learners in various activities which gives them the scope for interaction and communication thus makes them motivated to learn.

Another advantage of using this approach is that teachers can build the lesson plan around a theme or a topic based on the interest of learners and also on topics that are relevant to them, which contributes to make lessons more dynamic and engaging for learners, who participate in different kinds of activities and interaction. They also state that language tasks involve more than one skill and so segregated skill approach never quite completes a lesson.

³⁸ Akram A. and Malik A. *Integration of Language Learning Skills in Second Language Acquisition*. – Oxford, 2010. – p 68.

According to Oxford, one of the most relevant advantages of using the integrated-skill approach is that it “exposes English language learners to authentic language and challenges them to interact naturally in the language.”³⁹ She also comments that exposing students to communicative situations helps them to get an idea of the richness and complexity of the English language. In addition, Barbuzza mentions that “in recent decades the experts have realized that by emphasizing what learners can do with the language, rather than using the forms of language, EFL instructors can incorporate any or all of the language skills that are relevant into the classroom arena.”⁴⁰

Hungyo and Kijai state that the “activities used by teachers in the integrated approach are real-life activities and situations and thus create an interactive learning environment.”⁴¹ In other words, when using the integrated-skills approach, teachers face their students with communicative situations that have to as real as possible so that students realize the importance of learning the foreign language.

Applying this approach brings advantages to the students, as being exposed to authentic language which challenge learners to interact naturally in the language, realize that English is not just an object of academic interest but also an opportunity for them to interact in an almost real communicative situation. It also brings advantages for teachers who are able to track students’ progress in multiple skills at the same time.

The absence of the integrated-skill approach of the English language affects negatively in the students’ performance when learning English as a foreign language. This problem considers two different variables. On one hand, the Integration of the four skills of the English language, this is going to be considered as the independent variable. On the other hand, the students’ performance, which is

³⁹Oxford R. *Integrated Skills in the ESL/EFL Classroom*. – Longman, 2001. – p 4.

⁴⁰Barbuzza S., Del Giusti S., Del Moral G. and Vernier S. *The Five Language Skills in the EFL Classroom*. – Argentina: Universidad Nacional del Cuyo, 2008. – p 67.

⁴¹Hungyo J. and Kijai J. *The effect of integrated and Segregated Skills Approach on English Language acquisition among Freshmen Nursing and Business Students in Mission College Tailand*. – Thailand: The Scriptor, Journal of Arts & Humanities Department, 2009. – p 46.

going to be considered as the dependant variable, due to the fact that the student performance when learning English as a foreign language depends on whether the four skills of the target language are integrated within the lesson.

Carol points out that there are certain advantages in providing students with integrated skills: “Skills integration allows for: a) continuity in teaching learning program, tasks are closely related to each other, b) it helps to ensure that there is input before out, the input ensure the basis, c)it is realistic, it allows for the development of four skills within a realistic communicative framework, it gives learners opportunities to recognize and redeploy the language they are learning in different contexts and modes they provide variety and can be valuable for motivation it allows for the recycling and revision of language which has already been taught, and therefore remedial teaching, it may give confidence to a weaker or less confident learner.”⁴²

Despite our history of treating the four skills in separate segments of a curriculum, there is a recent trend toward skill integration which clarifies the advantages of this approach in EFL classrooms. Among other advantages, research findings show that skill integration:

1. Helps learners carry over their skills and declarative knowledge from one skill to another which facilitates and simplifies the improvement of the other skills.
2. Creates a dynamic and exciting classroom environment.
3. Enables learners to have a more realistic access to authentic language learning, whereas a segregated approach does not offer a meaningful understanding of language or a motivating style to learning a foreign language.
4. Leads to focus on realistic language and can therefore lead to the students’ all-round development of communicative competence in English.

⁴²<http://konferenca.unishk.edu.al/icrae2014/cd/pdfdoc/816.pdf>

5. Was enthusiastically accepted by students and most of them had a positive attitude toward this approach.
6. Leads to better comprehension of the material by students.

Presenting skills in a segregated fashion may help learners to learn their knowledge of language but it will not enable them to use their knowledge in actual communication. On the other hand, integrating skills is a matter of language use. While the former approach is contrived in nature, the latter is a simulation of communication in actual contexts of use. Thus integrating the four main language skills, in other words, listening, reading, speaking, and writing, is very beneficial in the second language classroom. Considering that communication requires the integration of both the main and the accessorial skills, namely, grammar, punctuation, pronunciation, it makes sense that language is taught in a communication promoting way. This method is beneficial since it enables learners to meliorate the four main skills simultaneously and how they complement each other. In integrated approach, language is treated as a means of interaction and interplay, rather than an academic subject.

The integrated skills approach enables learners to interact properly and achieve to high level of motivation to learn a language. This also relates to motivation, and it is more likely for students to be motivated to learn a language if they are able to use it to interact, rather than to just have knowledge about the language. This point is clarified in students' interviews which show their satisfaction with interaction opportunities with other learners and teachers. These chances motivate them to express their own ideas and speak without any fear or stress. Learners find the class interesting. This is in drastic contrast with the traditional approach which is very boring for them.

Besides that, integrating language skill paves the way for real communication in the classroom since it increases students' knowledge and gives them something to talk about. Confident speakers are those who have a high level of knowledge on the subject. Furthermore, when teacher breaks the language into skills and components and focuses on one skill or component at a time, teachers do

not have sufficient time to cover them all. On the other hand, when skills are presented in an integrated fashion, there is sufficient time for practice and communication. Previously, the researchers' main concern was coverage of the textbook, with this approach; however, their concern has shifted away from coverage towards communication. Previously teachers had to analyze the reading passage, explain the new language items such as vocabulary and grammar help the students do lots of mechanical exercises. Teachers always complained that they do not have sufficient time. With the integrated skills approach, however, the teacher encourages the students to read the text as quickly as they, get some ideas, and then use them in speaking and writing.

The integrated approach focuses on meaning rather than form; communication rather than language; fluency rather than accuracy; reading for information rather than mastery of language forms. Thus compared with other methods, it is stress-free. This approach is cognitively less demanding and consequently less stressful since it focuses on getting and exchanging ideas rather than memorizing useless facts about language. Moreover speaking is less stressful since the reading gives the learners some ideas to exchange. Since students communicate to exchange views about the text, they have a friendly relationship with each other and this reduces their level of stress.

An integrated approach allows learners to explore, gather, process, refine and present information about topics they want to investigate without the constraints imposed by traditional subject barriers. Learners are given the chance to interact in an authentic and meaningful way and are exposed to the richness and complexity of the language. During speaking students have very little time at their disposal to reflect upon what they say. To fill in this gap, in the integrated approach are asked to read the text, get some ideas, reflect on the ideas by relating them to their own knowledge and experience and then exchange them with their friends.

This approach is conducive to a learner-centered approach since students have an active part in constructing and meaning during reading, writing and

conversational exchange with the partners. In the traditional approaches teacher's role is central since he is the only active participants and students are the passive receiver of information transmitted by the teacher. Thus this approach reconceptualizes teachers' role as a facilitator who guides and design opportunities cooperation among learners.

It should be noted, however, that the teaching of integrated language skills can also have a number of disadvantages. To begin with, a curriculum that concentrates on a single language skill at a time can permit more focused teaching and more intensive learning. Furthermore, in various regions and cultures where the instruction in discrete language skills is highly valued, both teachers and learners have been known to resist skill integration. In such settings, integrated instruction may not be well suited to the local traditions of how teaching and learning are to be conducted.

Additionally, complex integrated instruction with more than two language skills addressed in tandem places greater demands on both the teacher and the learner. Curricula and syllabi that integrate a range of language skills require the teacher to be reasonably versatile and well-trained. In most cases, the teachers need to be at least somewhat familiar with discourse-based instructional models, such as those noted earlier. At the same time, teachers can be expected to devote more time and effort to preparing materials appropriate for integrated instruction. In many regions around the world, where teachers are required to teach very large classes, the teaching of integrated skills may not be a very practical option.

Another notable disadvantage of integrated instruction is that many learners have unevenly developed proficiencies across the four macro-skills. For example, second language learners who live in English-speaking countries may have stronger skills in listening and speaking than in reading and writing. Conversely, English as a foreign language learners are likely to be better readers and writers than listeners and speakers. For this reason, the teaching of integrated skills can become complicated, when instructional materials and practice have to account for a considerable variance in learners' abilities. In complex integrated teaching, a

frequent tendency is for a particular language skill or set of skills to receive less attention than learners' proficiencies might require. In light of the fact that the integrated curricula concentrate primarily on purposeful communication and meaning making, typically, the teaching of grammar and vocabulary, as well as accuracy in learner language production, may receive less emphasis than they should. Some experts and methodological authorities also contend that integrated language teaching with its main focus on the learning process tends to overlook the quality of the learning product.

Jing states that “integrating skills is very demanding of teachers seeing that it necessitates much time and effort on the part of the teacher since, for instance, he or she has to bear in mind the various needs and abilities of the learners retaining their attention, arousing their motivation, and increasing their participation.”⁴³ He adds that choosing materials and designing tasks are other teacher duties which require the teacher using the integrated approach in a communicative classroom to supply more energy in comparison with traditional English language teaching.

According to him, the followings are the problems in front of the teacher:

- a. They need to have a good understanding of discourse, and to be able to use textbooks flexibly.
- b. This can also be time-consuming, requiring a lot of preparation.
- c. Another limitation is the problem of designing suitable materials that take account of students' different skill levels. The four skills tend to develop at a different pace: receptive skills are stronger than productive skills, for example.

This means that teachers have to be skillful in selecting or designing integrated activities for their students.

Research on integrated and segregated approaches towards skills teaching in ESL classrooms has given some interesting insights. Discrete teaching of skills can be beneficial in certain classroom contexts. In case of discrete teaching of skills, the learners have the opportunity to learn the skills thoroughly in an isolated

⁴³ Jing W.U. Integrating Skills for Teaching EFL Activity Design For The Communicative Classroom. – US: Sino-US English Teaching, 2006. – p 88.

manner. Here, they progress in each skill individually. This is supported that, teaching discrete language skills on class allows more focused teaching and more intensive learning. In some cases, using multiple skills at a time can be confusing for the learners; especially if they lack somewhat proficiency on the language skills. The learner will struggle a lot if they are face with complex task including a lot of skills which may demotivate them.

When we integrate skills, we are thinking beyond language alone and reflect on how our teaching does, or does not, enrich the lives of students, and most importantly, we are using the target language and culture to do so.

Researchers have suggested that, integrated skills teaching can be complex as the tasks or activities integrate multiple language skills and learners use multiple communicative processes at the same time, in other words, both receptive and productive skills, and put greater demands on both the instructor and the learners. Teachers have to work hard to find or design materials appropriate for integration of skills in class as well as plan the tasks and activities in a way that balance all four skills for authentic use. Therefore, integration is demanding much of the time and patience of teachers. Moreover, it can lead the learners to avoid some of the skills or sub-skills as they feel overchallenged by them.

A particular language skill or set of skills to receive less attention than learners' proficiencies might require if integration is too complex in class. Sometimes, teachers tend to overlook inaccurate languages used by the learners for sake of language fluency in integrated tasks. As a result, learners fail to receive genuine feedback from the teacher and continue to make those mistakes which are hard to unlearn later.

Besides that, teachers and learners resist skill integration in various regions and cultures where the instruction in discrete language skills is valued more. Finally, in a large classroom lacking proper teaching aids teacher will struggle a lot to implement skills integration approach successfully in a short amount of time. Thus, limited time and large class size negatively affects the integrative teaching.

2.2. Models and principles of skills integration

Oxford states that there are two types of integrated-skill instruction, which are content-based language instruction and task-based instruction.⁴⁴ The first of these emphasizes learning content through language, while the second stresses doing tasks that require communicative language use. Both of these benefit from a diverse range of materials, textbooks, and technologies for the ESL or EFL classroom.

In content-based instruction (CBI), students practice all the language skills in a highly integrated, communicative fashion while learning contents such as science, mathematics, and social studies. CBI is valuable at all levels of proficiency, but the nature of the content might differ by proficiency level. For beginners, the content often involves basic social and interpersonal communication skills, but past the beginning level, the content can become increasingly academic and complex. The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), created by Chamot and O'Malley shows how language learning strategies can be integrated into the simultaneous learning of content and language.⁴⁵

At least three general models of content-based language instruction exist: theme-based, adjunct, and sheltered. The theme-based model integrates the language skills into the study of a theme, for instance, urban violence, cross-cultural differences in marriage practices, natural wonder of the world or a broad topic such as change. The theme must be very interesting to students and must allow a wide variety of language skills to be practiced, always in the service of communicating about the theme. This is the most useful and widespread form of content-based instruction today and it is found in many innovative ESL and EFL textbooks. In the adjunct model, language and content courses are taught separately but are carefully coordinated. In the sheltered model, the subject matter is taught in simplified English tailored to students' English proficiency level.

⁴⁴Oxford R. Integrated Skills in the ESL/EFL Classroom. – Longman, 2001. – p 78.

⁴⁵https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264372712_The_Cognitive_Academic_Language_Learning_Approach_A_Bridge_to_the_Mainstream

CBI is the integration of particular content with language teaching aims, or as the concurrent teaching of academic subject matter and second language skills. In CBI approaches the second language is the medium to convey informational content of interest and relevance to the learner, rather than the immediate object of study. It is worth noting, though, that oftentimes what EFL instructors teach in any kind of content-based course is not so much the content itself, but some form of the discourse of that content. For example, the instructor does not teach literature itself, but how to analyze literature. For every piece of content recognized, there is a discourse community which somehow provides us with the means to analyze, talk about, and write about that content. Hence, the task for EFL instructors in CBI is to acculturate students to the specific discourse communities. Research in second language acquisition also offers support for CBI; empirical research findings provide evidence that language learning becomes more concrete. For instance, the integration of language and content in instruction respects the specificity of functional language, in other words, students can realize that meaning changes depending upon context, and the fact that more sophisticated language is learned within a framework that focuses on complex, authentic context.

In case of content based language teaching, students learn all the language skills in an integrated manner through learning other subjects, in other words, science, mathematics, or social studies. As EFL instructors, we may question whether CBI is valuable at all levels of proficiency. Oxford maintains that CBI is indeed valuable at all levels of proficiency, although the nature of the content may differ according to proficiency level. For instance, the content in beginner courses may involve basic social and interpersonal communication skills, but at intermediate to advanced proficiency levels, the content can become more academic in nature. On the whole, CBI allows for the integration of language skills. It is because CBI is aimed at the development of use-oriented second and foreign language skills and is distinguished by the learning of a specific content and related language use skills. As the structure of CBI classes is dictated by the nature of the subject matter, students are likely to get involved with all the

language skills as the instructors have the students reading, discussing, solving problems, analyzing data, writing reports, etc. Thus, students practice all the language skills in a highly integrated communicative fashion while learning content, such as science, math, and social studies.

On the other hand, in the regions where English is taught as a foreign language the opportunities for meaningful communication outside the language classroom are limited which resulted in a great need for integrated communicative activities that led to the evolution of task based language teaching. In task-based language teaching, students interact and collaborate through group or pair-work to complete a specific task that ensures use of language in an integrated manner.

In task-based instruction (TBI), students participate in communicative tasks in English. Tasks are defined as activities that can stand alone as fundamental units and that require comprehending, producing, manipulating, or interacting in authentic language while attention is principally paid to meaning rather than form.

The task-based model is beginning to influence the measurement of learning strategies, not just the teaching of ESL and EFL. In task-based instruction, basic pair work and group work are often used to increase student interaction and collaboration. For instance, students work together to write and edit a class newspaper, develop a television commercial, enact scenes from a play, or take part in other joint tasks. More structured cooperative learning formats can also be used in task-based instruction. Task-based instruction is relevant to all levels of language proficiency, but the nature of the task varies from one level to the other. Tasks become increasingly complex at higher proficiency levels. For instance, beginners might be asked to introduce each other and share one item of information about each other. More advanced students might do more intricate and demanding tasks, such as taking a public opinion poll at school, the university, or a shopping mall.

TBI is an approach that highlights learning to communicate through interaction in the target language, introducing authentic texts to learning situations, enhancing the learner's own personal experiences, and linking classroom language

learning with language activation outside the classroom. Although the course goals are linguistic in nature, they center on the learners' pragmatic language competence. Two caveats are worth noting, however, with respect to the term task.

A task is any structured language learning endeavor which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those students who undertake the task. Consequently, a task is not a special form of teaching technique because several techniques may comprise a task. For example, a problem-solving task may include a grammatical explanation, followed by the instructor's initiated questions, and then specific turn-taking procedure. On the whole, tasks are bigger in their ends than techniques. A second caveat worth mentioning is that TBI is not a method. It puts tasks at the center of one's methodological focus, and the learning process is a set of communicative tasks that are linked to the curricular goals they serve. As CBI, the purpose of TBI extends beyond the practice of language for its own sake. Far from being a hodge-podge of useful things all thrown haphazardly into the classroom, TBI is characterized by the development and sequencing of tasks. The EFL instructors are called upon to consider several dimensions of tasks since they should specify what learners will do with the input and what the respective roles of the teacher and learners are. Thus, instructors who embrace TBI should consider that the priority is the functional purposes for which language is used. For instance, as TBI resorts to real-world tasks, the input for those tasks can come from various authentic sources.

Among others, Brown mentions speeches, conversations, interviews, media extras, etc.⁴⁶ The pedagogical task should therefore specify what learners will do with the input, the roles of the teacher and the learner, and the evaluation thereof forms an essential component that will determine its success for performing the task again with another group of learners.

On the whole, EFL instructors can organize their classrooms around practical tasks in which language learners engage, either inside class or in the real

⁴⁶Brown H.D. Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy. – New York: Longman, 2001. – p 167.

world. For instance, a pedagogical task designed to teach EFL students to give personal information in a job interview might involve exercises in comprehension of wh-questions, listening to extracts of job interviews, analyzing the grammar and discourse of job interviews, modeling an interview such as teacher and one student, role-playing a simulated interview like students in pairs and understanding cross-cultural rules of etiquette in a job interview. Hence, this job interview task serves to illustrate how the principles of listening, speaking, reading, writing and culture become subsumed under a rubric of what the learners are supposed to do with language, which allows the instructors to disengage themselves from thinking exclusively in terms of the traditional four language skills.

TBI promotes and stimulates the integration of skills through completing daily-life activities that improve students' communicative competence because it offers learners the possibility of practicing the target language constantly. Here, the activities can be diverse; namely, "simulated conversations in pairs and small groups, storytelling, picture description, reproducing any incident"⁴⁷. Nunan affirms that tasks aim at providing occasions for learners to experiment and explore both spoken and written language through learning tasks that are designed to engage students in the authentic, practical, and functional use of language.⁴⁸ TBI enables pupils to solve real-world issues. It is so far considered the closest classroom simulation of real-life interaction that made it the most widely adopted model of integrated language teaching.

In sum, CBI and TBI are just two exponents of Integrated-Skill approaches. Their advantages are various both for learners and teachers. To begin with, learners are exposed to authentic language, are challenged to interact naturally in the language, and gain a picture of the complexity of the English language for communication. As the language becomes a means whereby students interact with people, they develop their communicative competence. For teachers, these

⁴⁷ Akram A. and Malik, A. *Integration of Language Learning Skills in Second Language Acquisition*. – Oxford, 2010. – p 67.

⁴⁸ Nunan D. *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

approaches allow them to track their students' progress in multiple skills at the same time.

As opposed to just dissecting language forms, teachers who endorse CBI or TBI can promote the learning of real content, which highly motivates students of various ages and backgrounds. Is it feasible to apply integrated-skill approaches in the Uzbek EFL classroom? How can we possibly do it? Firstly, the EFL instructor should learn more about the various ways to integrate skills in the classroom, either by applying TBI or CBI separately or in combination. As EFL professionals, we should think over our approach to the teaching of EFL in our environment and evaluate the extent to which the skills can be integrated. Once we decide to adhere to one of these approaches, we should carefully select materials, textbooks, technologies that promote the integration of listening, reading, speaking, writing and culture, which will eventually enhance our learners' communicative competence.

Overall, going back to Oxford's image of a tapestry, EFL teachers can integrate the language skills, and in so doing, they can strengthen the tapestry of language teaching and learning. In the following section, the integration of two of the language skills, listening and speaking, is addressed, illustrating how these two skills may be interrelated with culture in a CBI or TBI-oriented class. Before plunging into the integration of these two skills, let us briefly illustrate the crucial role culture has come to play in the EFL class.

According to Richards and Rodgers, integrated language instruction that engages learners in meaningful communication and enables them to attain their learning objectives can be found in an unlimited array of models, teaching materials and techniques.⁴⁹ A few examples of such integrated models with a communicative and contextualized focus are content-based, sometimes also called theme-based, task-based, text-based, also called genre-based, discourse-based, project-based, network-based, technology-based, corpus-based, interaction-based,

⁴⁹ Richards J., and Rodgers T. *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.) – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. – p 45.

literature-based, literacy-based, community-based, competency-based, or standard-based.

Oxford suggests the adoption of project-based instruction as an effective method for integrating and enhancing acquisition of language, content, and skills.⁵⁰

In project work different foreign language communication skills, namely, speaking, listening, reading, and writing are much better and more organically integrated than in practically all other learning activities. When preparing their projects, students inevitably have to read very many materials in the target language that they themselves find in their information research, for instance, the information research done on the Internet. Such information research may also be bound with listening because a lot of professional information can be obtained from audio materials found on the Internet. Besides, students listen to each other when discussing their projects. This develops their reading and listening skills and makes reading and listening in the target language an organic part of all ESP project assignments. Those assignments, the process of completing them, and the intermediate and final stages of their completion are always being discussed by students in the target language speaking while project results, again intermediate and final, are always presented in writing.

Therefore, in fact, the work on every separate task in the framework of students' project work always begins with reading developing students' reading skills. Students read various authentic electronic profession-related English texts found by them on the Internet and devoted to theoretical and practical issues related to their project. Such reading is always accompanied by listening developing students' listening skills. It is so because students always use not only Internet materials for reading but they are also required to find audio and video Internet materials to be used as relevant resources of project information. Having collected the information for their current project task, students start discussing it with the view of deciding how to use that information for completing the task developing speaking skills, as well as listening skills because students listen to

⁵⁰Oxford R. Integrated Skills in the ESL/EFL Classroom. – Longman, 2001. – p 4.

each other. Such discussing, besides discussions and debates, may also include students' presentations, brainstorming, case studies, and other speaking activities which finally lead to the decision of what the final product of that particular project task should look like. Since such a final product of every separate project task is always one of the chapters of learners' book, discussing in the oral form inevitably leads to writing that chapter by different students or their teams. This develops writing skills. However, when different versions of the chapter in question are written by different students or their teams, those versions again need to be discussed with the aim of choosing the best version or of combining several versions into a better one, etc. Such improving of the final version may require additional reading or listening to Internet materials, rewriting the final version and so forth – until the transition to the new project task is made, again requiring new reading and listening, and so on ad infinitum. In this way, the process of developing students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in English taught and learned for professional communication becomes an organic process of transiting from one communicative activity to another.

Teaching of grammar and vocabulary, as well as accuracy in learner language production, may receive less emphasis in integrated skills classroom setting, as a result learners' productive language lacked accuracy and sociocultural. Some culture may reject integrated-skills approach as they feel comfortable teaching skills discretely. Teachers need to be sensitive about a certain culture's view. It is also preferable to refer to activities rather than skills, regarding them as more pragmatic and realistic, since language users hardly ever use language skills isolated. Therefore, we are engaged in comprehension which includes listening and reading, composition, namely present both in speaking and writing, and conversation, listening and speaking combined. The splitting of skills is idle and counterproductive and testing must remain loyal to learning, rather than teaching. Tests will then be better and more informative of the students' level if they have a direct bearing on what the students do with the language.

2.3. Results of the survey

Throughout the years, the teaching of English as a foreign language has been segmented considering the four skills of it, namely reading, listening, writing and speaking, separately. Consequently, it has produced an unreal teaching context in which learners are not prepared to face real-life communication, where the four skills are used in a complementary way.

In real life, language is used as a whole and speakers do not consciously think about what skill is more likely to be used according to the situation. Therefore, the objective of this investigation is to identify if the four skills of the English language are integrated during a lesson of schoolchildren aged 11-15 and the effects that this integration may have on the pupils' performance.

This investigation corresponds to a non-experimental-transactional model, which means that it only investigates what is happening while the observation takes place, without considering what happened before or what is going to happen after it. Another characteristic that supports this design choice is the fact that the instruments applied will consider the relationship between variables.

To describe the methodologies used for the teaching and practice of the different skills of the English language, 5 classes with not similar characteristics were visited in order to observe teachers' and pupils' performance during the lessons. The five groups studied were: Grade 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Grade 5 and 6 were classes formed by 35 pupils (17 girls and 19 boys) and 30 pupils (16 girls and 14 boys) respectively. Grade 7, 8 and 9 were classes formed by 31 pupils (17 girls and 14 boys), 33 pupils (15 girls and 18 boys), and 32 pupils (16 girls and 16 boys) accordingly. These pupils were not grouped according to their English language proficiency, which means that these were more varied groups in which it was possible to find different kinds of pupils of English as a foreign language. The schedule of these groups, in which every lesson lasted 45 minutes, which is one pedagogical hour, allowed the observation of 13 pedagogical hours to be reached in 13 lessons. In the end, 65 pedagogical hours were observed, distributed according to the schedule of every class.

In order to obtain the most faithful information from the sample studied and observed, the instruments for recollecting information were a checklist, which has been designed by the authors of this investigation, considering the aspects mentioned by Rebecca Oxford which was valid, since this instrument measured the presence or absence of every skill, and its integration or segregation. The checklist was applied several times in order to obtain results as reliable as possible.

The objective for the instrument was to verify if the teaching of the four skills was complementary or segregated and how much emphasis was given to each one, in terms of receptive or productive skills. Another objective for using this instrument was to notice the strategies used by the teachers in order to integrate the four skills of the English language.

It has considered different aspects that should configure a successful integrated-skill classroom including setting, prominence of abilities and opportunities for the pupils to practice language in situations that were as authentic as possible. All of these aspects should provide a clear idea about the way in which the four skills of the English language were integrated and which of the language skills dominated the other ones.

The Checklist was applied as many times as possible within the same group, each time corresponding to a different lesson.

The questions included in this checklist were:

1. Is every task connected with the previous one?

This question addresses the skills integration since if the activities designed and developed in a lesson are varied and have a logical sequence the skills can be developed as well, highlighting the objective of every foreign language lesson, which should be authentic communication.

2. Does the teacher speak more than the pupils?

Pupils must develop their productive skills, in this case, speaking which cannot be achieved if the teacher speaks during the whole lesson and does not give pupils the chance to express themselves.

3. Is the lesson receptive (reading, listening)?

The primary English skills are divided into four, listening, reading, and writing and, speaking, which at the same time are subdivided into two categories, receptive and productive ones respectively. This question aims to observe if receptive abilities are developed during the lesson and what activities are being done to achieve this.

4. Is the lesson productive (writing, speaking)?

This question is connected to Question Number 3 since it aims to observe if these abilities are developed during the lesson, or if it is primarily productive.

5. Does the teacher provide an appropriate setting that strongly supports the teaching of the language?

In order to help pupils to acquire the language, the lesson must be developed within an appropriate context that contributes to the teaching and practicing of every skill. For example, there must not be too much noise so that pupils can hear what the teacher says, and to communicate among themselves.

6. Does the teacher primarily use English to explain the activities?

The importance of this question lies on the fact that teacher's speech is the pupils' primary exposure to the foreign language. This is pivotal, especially in classrooms in which learners are not exposed to any other kind of input like, multimedia instruments.

7. Do the pupils use English for asking questions or for clarification?

This is the primary use of English, the first evidence that pupils are developing their productive skills, in this case, speaking.

8. Does the teacher associate pupils' previous knowledge with the new contents?

As previous lessons contents and themes, associating current contents with pupils' previous ones makes learning easier and engages the pupils with the topics.

9. Does the teacher expose the pupils to authentic communication?

Authentic communication refers to the effective use of English for expressing opinions and understanding among speakers. Therefore, the objective of

this question is to verify if pupils are asked to do activities that help them to develop their communicative competence.

10. Does the teacher encourage pair work in order to increase pupils' interaction and collaboration?

Interaction among pupils contributes to the development of oral skill without the pressure of teacher's evaluation.

11. Does the theme allow the pupils to be interested in practicing language skills?

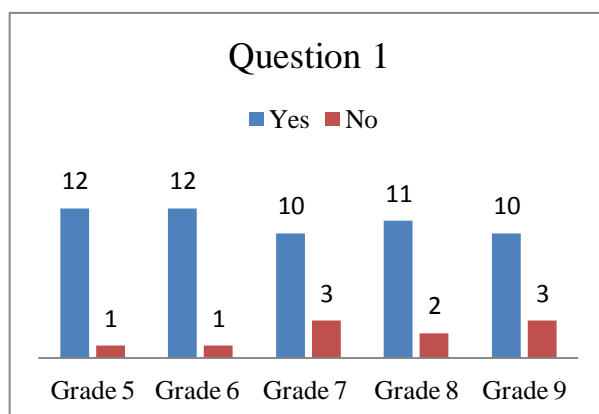
This presents a cause and effect process. If the pupils are exposed to topics that are interesting for them, they will be motivated to do further reading, listening, writing or speaking activities concerning those topics.

12. Does the teacher integrate the four skills?

This is the most crucial question, because it aims to note the actual integration or segregation of skills during the lesson observed.

The following graphs show the information obtained from what was registered on the checklist for all classes observed.

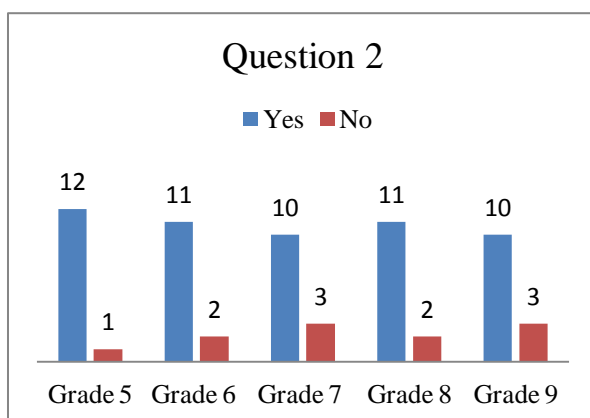
1. Is every task connected with the previous one?



In all classes, almost all of the lessons presented a coherent sequence in which the contents and topics were developed fluently. Furthermore, the material used was very clear and engaging, which made the lessons very dynamic. Starting with the presentation and explanation of

the contents in which pupils were asked to answer practice or comprehension exercises or providing examples of their own depending on the lesson in particular.

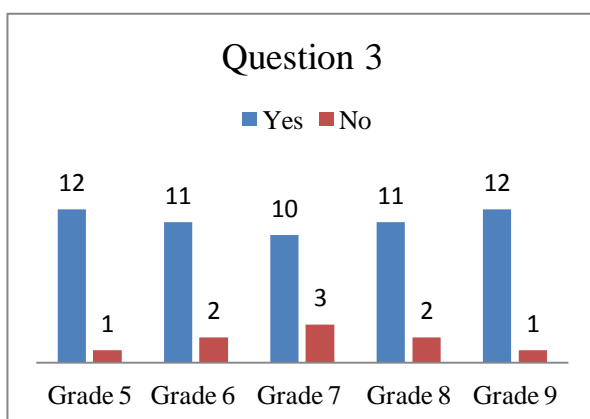
2. Does the teacher speak more than the pupils?



For this question, vast majority of the lessons were devoted to explain new contents and giving instructions. Topics were explained and instructions were given for comprehension exercises while the pupils were paying attention and taking notes. In the remaining

lessons the pupils were more participatory; however, it does not mean that they did not participate during the other lessons, but that time they were more active. Pupils spoke when they were asked to give their answers to the mentioned exercises, or when they were asked to provide some example of their own.

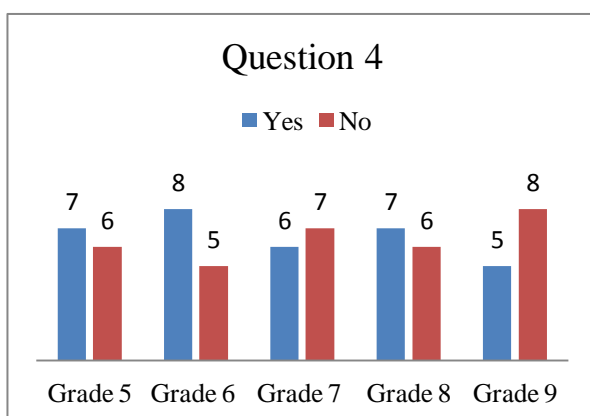
3. Is the lesson receptive (reading, listening)?



The 85% of positive answers to this question represents that the pupils read exercises or answered reading comprehension questions, which was in most of the lessons. They also listened to a recording and answered listening comprehension questions, but their

listening corresponded most of the time to their listening to the teacher. The 15% represents the lessons in which receptive skills were not observed.

4. Is the lesson productive (writing, speaking)?

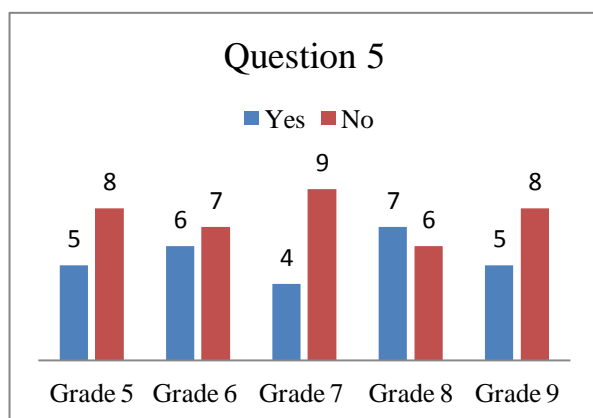


The fact that the answers to this question were equally divided between “Yes” and “No” can be explained because there were some lessons in which the pupils were asked to provide examples of their own, whether written or oral, therefore, the pupils were practicing the productive

skills. The other about 50% of the lessons observed were devoted to explain the

contents and the pupils were mostly paying attention and answering practice exercises and worksheets; therefore, learners were listening to the teacher and reading exercises. Besides, they were encouraged to relate the contents with their own experiences, present or future, and were asked to express their opinions and ideas about them.

5. Does the teacher provide an appropriate setting that strongly supports the teaching of the language?

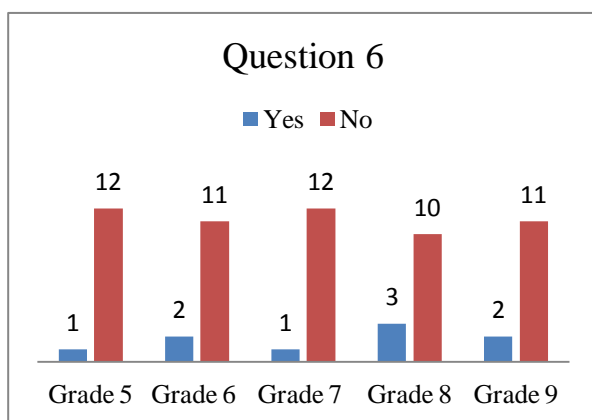


In the 62% of lessons there was not an appropriate setting because many pupils were not paying attention, having as a consequence some disruptive behavior throughout the lesson. At the same time, this disruptive behavior made the other pupils to lose focus and produce a mess

in the classroom. Another problem observed was the material provided. It was not interesting or motivating for pupils, besides, the contents were not related with pupils' personal experiences. As a consequence, pupils did not feel engaged or interested in studying or working on the activities proposed. The other 38% represents the lessons in which the setting provided contributed to a better pupils' behavior that led to a better understanding of the contents as well. However, in some classes the contents were exposed very clearly and also were related with pupils' previous knowledge or experiences, which contributed to make the pupils to feel engaged with the topics. Besides, the material used for explaining the contents was very dynamic and easy to understand. In addition to this, the setting was appropriate because the class was in silent and actively collaborating to achieve the goals for the lesson.

6. Does the teacher primarily use English to explain the activities?

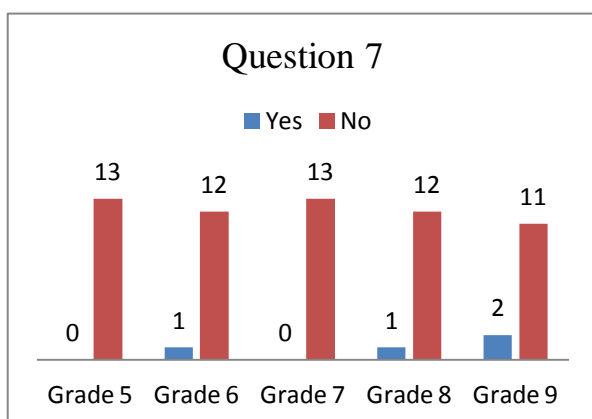
The 85% of negative answers to this question represents the lessons in which English was used to explain contents and give instructions, although they were immediately translated into Uzbek, which does not allow the pupils to think and



get their own comprehension of what was said. Maybe it happened, because according to what was observed, the pupils do not have a level to understand everything at the first time or a lesson that is completely given in English, however if they are not exposed to the

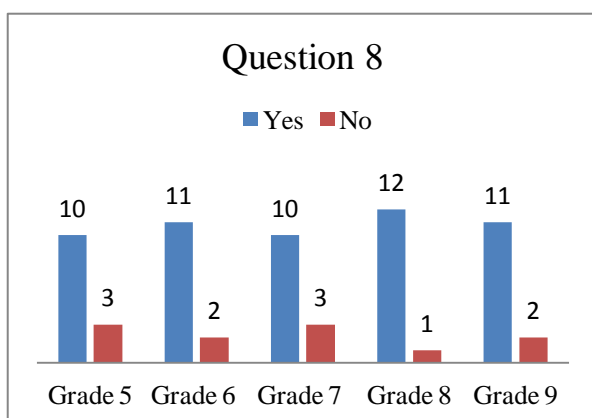
language they may not acquire it. The low percentage of achievement for this question (15 %) is an expression of a very noticeable behavior. Even though, at the beginning of the lessons English was used for explaining topics; the instructions were given and then were translated into Uzbek. After this, Uzbek was used for most of the remaining time of the lesson.

7. Do the pupils use English for asking questions or for clarification?



The 0% in some classes expresses that the pupils did not speak English during any of the lessons observed. They used English for reading their answers to the exercises, which is not considered as their own production, and their pronunciation was not very good. In this

case, little percentage of “Yes” answers represented in the graph means that pupils were encouraged to use English for expressing any comment or question they may have, which was done throughout the lessons observed.

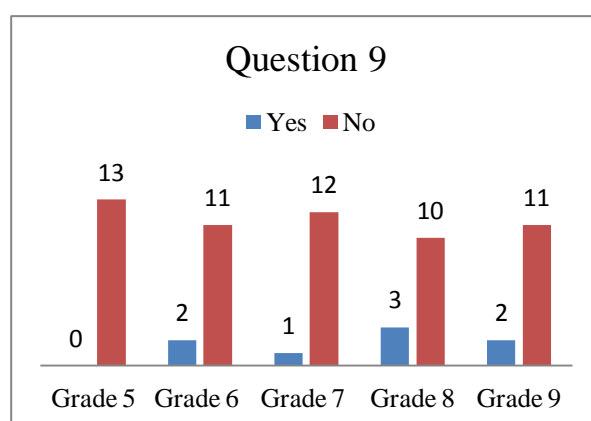


8. Does the teacher associate pupils' previous knowledge with the new contents?

As well as the activities within the lesson were related to one another, the contents from lesson to lesson were equally

related, which gave the teacher the chance to check knowledge from previous lessons. Around 15 % in which the negative answer to this question can be explained by the fact that pupils seemed to have some gaps of knowledge, and that the topic of the reading comprehension text they were studying was unknown for the pupils. The rest of achievement for this question demonstrates a clear sequence from lesson to lesson, taking into account the previous topics and contents known by the students. In some classes even there were not gaps of knowledge and that relating new contents with pupils' experiences and knowledge was constantly done. Pupils were also asked to respond question by imagining themselves in certain situations and express what would they do when facing them.

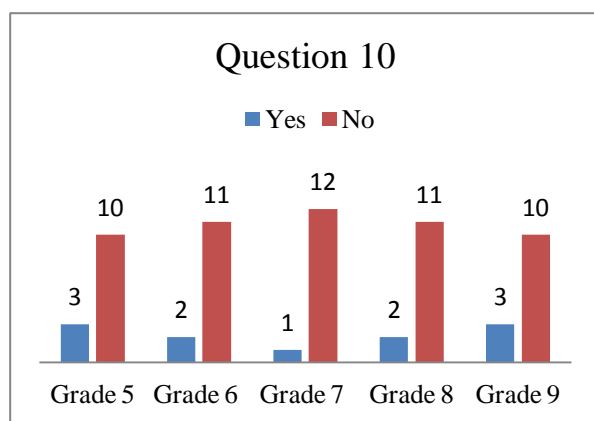
9. Does the teacher expose the students to authentic communication?



The 0% represents that the pupils were not constantly encouraged to produce speeches of their own whether it was written or oral, so that pupils did not practice the language in a real communicative context. The 15-23% of negative answers to this question

represents the two or three lessons in which most of the time was devoted to explain new contents and practice them by answering worksheets and exercises from the textbook. The 7% that represents only one lesson means that, according to what was observed, most of the time was devoted to ask pupils about their opinions, feelings and ideas related to the topic studied. Once again, this does not mean that this was not done during the other lessons, but that particular time, pupils were given more time to relate themselves with the contents.

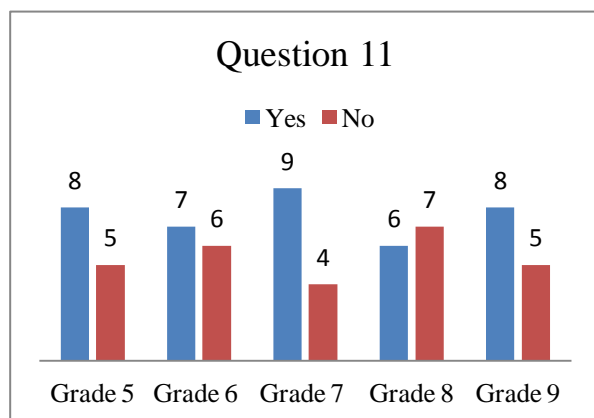
10. Does the teacher encourage pair work in order to increase pupils' interaction and collaboration?



The 15% of achievement for this question in which the pupils were asked to work in pairs in order to answer a handout that they had to add to a portfolio, and another lesson in which they were encouraged to work in pairs as a way to discuss their opinions on

certain grammatical questions. Nevertheless, most of the lessons (85%) were devoted to explain contents and to solve exercises individually. The result of this graph means that pupils were not asked to work in pairs. The pupils did work in pairs as a way to increase their interaction and collaboration; however, this seemed to be an acquired behavior. In other words, the pupils are used to work in pairs so that they do not need to be asked to do it.

11. Does the theme allow the pupils to be interested in practicing language skills?

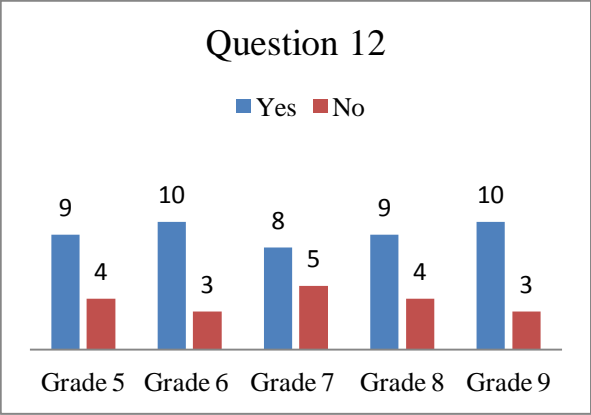


This graph is a reflection of Question 5, because the contents were not related with personal experiences of the pupils, hence, they did not feel engaged to them. It is also a reflection of Question 6, because, since English was not used all the time, the pupils did not feel that

learning English is important. The 62% of achievement for this question was in which the topics were related with pupils' experiences or lessons in which the activities were dynamic and engaging, both of these situations could help pupils to feel interested in enhancing their practice of English. However, in the other 38% of the lessons observed, the development of the lesson was not dynamic and engaging and pupils did not feel encouraged to practice English on their own. In some lessons new contents were related with real situations in which pupils could use those contents, which helped to engage them with the lesson. A few lessons were

devoted to solve worksheets; however, the pupils seemed very enthusiastic and interested in solving the exercises, which demonstrates that the material was appropriately selected.

12. Does the teacher integrate the four skills?



Even though the four skills of the English language were developed during the lessons observed, many times they were worked separately. In about 70% of lessons the four skills of the English language were successfully developed, asking the pupils to solve reading

comprehension exercises or to provide examples of their own. However, the remaining lessons were mostly receptive, because of the explanation of contents and when pupils were asked to solve exercises, not to produce authentic speeches.

CONCLUSION

Skills are the building blocks and effective elements in the process of language development. In order to make the comprehensive and complex process of language learning simple and effective, skills integration can be an integral part of teaching language. Integrating language skills helps learners to develop their ability in using two or more of the four skills in contexts and real life situations.

In the past several decades, much evidence has emerged that, in order for learners to attain language competence, teaching needs to integrate linguistic and communicative skills. The overarching goal of integrated instruction is to advance learners' language proficiency required for communication in various contexts. In general, the learning of language for communication in both speaking and writing entails achieving mastery in discourse, language strategies, sociocultural and interactional norms, and the communicative culture of the people who use the language. Today, after decades of research in language teaching and learning, it seems clear that, in many cases and for many purposes, the separation of the four macro skills is likely to be less effective than integrated instruction simply because, in reality, communication does not take place in terms of discrete linguistic skills.

We have tried to explore the theoretical background and analyse the methodological implications behind the approach of integrating the practice of the four skills in the language classroom. The idea is to make the teaching and learning situation come closer to the way we do things in real life, in order to make classes more challenging, motivating and meaningful for the learners of English as a second language.

The main objective of this investigation was to identify the integration of the four skills of the English language and notice if it affects positively the pupils' performance during a lesson, in this case of Grade 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

According to what was inquired, it can be said that the integration of the four skills of the English language, in fact, influences on the pupils' performance. Nevertheless, it is not only a matter of integrate the four skills of the English

language, but how to integrate them in a lesson, in order to make the students to be involved in a real communicative situation. Moreover, there are other relevant aspects within a class that can make the lesson more or less effective in terms of language learning, which depends primarily on the teacher, as in what they do to motivate students to be interested in the second language, the classroom environment that is basically how the teacher manages the classroom, the use of the voice such as volume, intonation, and so on, the use of the first language and how much teacher uses English language in an English lesson, among others.

These variables were taken into account when observing five different classes in their lessons in the same school but at different levels. On one hand, there was a class, in which the four skills of the English language were integrated during the lessons observed. Another observed behavior was the habit of relating topics with pupils' experiences and asking them about their opinions and feelings concerning the topics studied. The way in which the new contents were exposed and the materials provided were both dynamic and engaging. Clearly, the methods and techniques were successful to reach the goal of getting pupils to learn English. On the other hand, there was a class in which the four skills of the English language were not integrated. The contents were not related with pupils' own experiences or they were not asked to express their opinions concerning the contents studied. Besides, the materials provided did not engage pupils to practice their language skills on their own, in other words, the textbook was used most of the time. In this case, the integration of skills was not present – which did not help to increase the proficiency of pupils.

The techniques used for the different skills, in the case of receptive skills, were similar: listening to recordings, reading comprehension exercises, etc. However, the results of these techniques were different for the five classes. This could be explained because the way in which these techniques were used was different. Even though all groups used recordings for listening comprehension exercises, this technique seemed to be more successful in one class because English was used during the whole lesson, so that, pupils were used to listen to

English. While in a group, the topics of the reading comprehension exercises were not related with pupils' context and were presented as isolated and distant texts, the other sample the contents were presented in a way that made pupils feel engaged in working and developing exercises. Classroom management in general was different and more motivating than the techniques used in the other class, affecting the teaching-learning process.

The contrast with productive skills is practically the same. Asking opinions, relating topics, encouraging pupils to use English as much as possible in order to communicate what they think is basic for reaching English proficiency. This was more clearly observed in one sample. Pupils were asked to provide examples of their own and express opinions, they also used English for asking questions or clarification. In opposition to this, was the other class observed. Since English was not use during the whole class, pupils did not use it for asking questions or for clarification either. Even though they were asked to provide examples of their own, the proficiency observed was poor because they were not exposed to constant English speaking lesson.

Thus, with careful reflection and planning, any teacher can integrate the language skills and strengthen the tapestry of language teaching and learning. When the tapestry is woven well, learners can use English effectively for communication.

The current models of integrated teaching of the four language skills have the objective of developing learners' fluency and accuracy, as well as their sociocultural communicative competence requiring adapting the language from context to context and from genre to genre. In light of the fact that nowadays English is widely employed as the medium of international communication, it seems easy to predict that integrated language teaching will continue to dominate among the various types of pedagogical models. There is little doubt, however, that the evolution and change of integrated teaching models and methods will remain one of the main, if not the main, defining characteristic of language teaching around the world.

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