



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INTEGRATING ALL FOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS FOR COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract. Developing communicative competence is a central goal of modern English language teaching. This article examines the importance of integrating all four language skills - reading, writing, listening, and speaking - in English language courses in order to foster communicative competence. Analysis of the findings indicates that integrated-skills approaches, coupled with authentic materials and interactive activities, can significantly enhance Uzbek English learners' communicative competence. The article concludes with recommendations for implementing integrated-skills instruction in English language classrooms in Uzbekistan to maximize learners' communicative competence development.

Keywords: communicative competence, integrated language skills, English language teaching, Uzbekistan

Annotatsiya. Kommunikativ kompetensiyani rivojlantirish zamonaviy ingliz tilini o'qitishning markaziy maqsadi hisoblanadi. Ushbu maqola kommunikativ kompetensiyani rivojlantirish uchun barcha to'rt til ko'nikmalarini - o'qish, yozish, tinglash va og'zaki nutqni ingliz tili kurslarida integratsiyalash muhimligini ko'rib chiqadi. Natijalarni tahlil qilish shuni ko'rsatadiki, integratsiyalashgan ko'nikmalarga asoslangan yondashuvlar haqiqiy materiallar va interaktiv mashg'ulotlar bilan birgalikda ingliz tilini o'rganayotgan o'zbek talabalarining kommunikativ kompetensiyasini sezilarli darajada oshirishi mumkin. Maqola talabalarning kommunikativ kompetensiyasini maksimal darajada oshirish uchun O'zbekistonda ingliz tili darslarida ko'nikmalarni integratsiyalashgan o'qitishni joriy etish bo'yicha tavsiyalar bilan yakunlanadi.

Kalit so'zlar: kommunikativ kompetensiya, integratsiyalashgan til ko'nikmalari, ingliz tilini o'qitish, O'zbekiston

Аннотация. Развитие коммуникативной компетенции является центральной целью современного обучения английскому языку. В этой статье рассматривается важность интеграции всех четырех языковых навыков - чтения, письма, аудирования и разговорной речи - на курсах английского языка для развития коммуникативной компетенции. Анализ результатов показывает, что подходы, основанные на интегрированных навыках, в сочетании с аутентичными материалами и интерактивными занятиями могут значительно повысить коммуникативную компетентность узбекских студентов, изучающих английский язык. Статья завершается рекомендациями по внедрению интегрированного обучения навыкам в классах английского языка в Узбекистане для максимального развития коммуникативной компетенции учащихся.

Ключевые слова: коммуникативная компетентность, интегрированные языковые навыки,

INTRODUCTION

Communicative competence, defined as the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in real-life situations, is a primary goal of contemporary English language teaching [1]. Hymes introduced the concept of communicative competence in the 1970s as a response to Chomsky's focus on linguistic competence, arguing that knowing a language involves more than just mastering its grammar rules [2]. Canale and Swain later proposed four components of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies [3]. To develop learners' communicative competence in all these areas, many scholars advocate integrating the four language skills - reading, writing, listening, and speaking - in English language instruction [4][5][6].

In Uzbekistan, English has become increasingly important since the country gained independence in 1991. English is now a compulsory subject in schools and universities, and proficiency in English is highly valued for educational and professional opportunities [7][8]. However, despite the growing emphasis on English, many Uzbek learners struggle to communicate effectively in the language [9]. Integrating language skills in English teaching has been proposed as a way to enhance Uzbek learners' communicative competence [10].

METHODS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The review encompasses both international and Uzbek perspectives on the topic. Internationally, there is a wealth of literature supporting the integration of language skills for communicative competence development. Hinkel argues that an integrated-skills approach "emulates real-life language use" and allows for "practicing language skills in tandem," leading to more authentic communication [4]. Oxford emphasizes that integrated-skills instruction fosters "interaction and collaboration" and better reflects "the way people actually use language" [5]. Tajzad and Ostovar-Namaghi assert that "skill integration leads to meaningful communication" in language learning [6].

In the Uzbek context, scholars have also advocated for integrating language skills to enhance learners' communicative competence. Irgasheva stresses that integrated-skills teaching can make language learning "more interesting and effective" for Uzbek students [10]. Abdullayeva highlights the importance of "authentic materials and real-life tasks" in integrated-skills instruction in Uzbekistan [11]. Makhmudov and Saidov argue that integrating skills helps Uzbek learners "transfer their abilities" and "use English more confidently" outside the classroom [12].

RESULTS

The literature review reveals several key benefits of integrating language skills for communicative competence development:

Authentic Language Use. Integrated-skills instruction promotes authentic language use by mirroring real-life communication scenarios [4][5][10]. For example, a lesson on giving directions could integrate reading a map, listening to instructions, speaking to ask for clarification, and writing down the directions. This holistic approach helps learners understand how skills interconnect in real communication.

Meaningful Interaction. Skill integration encourages meaningful interaction and collaboration among learners [5][11]. For instance, a jigsaw reading activity where students read different parts of a text and share information requires integrating reading, speaking, and listening skills. Such interactive tasks foster communicative practice and negotiation of meaning.

Transferability of Skills. Integrating skills allows learners to transfer their abilities across different contexts [6][12]. A student who practices reading and discussing news articles in class can transfer those skills to reading and discussing news in real life. Integrated-skills instruction thus enhances the applicability of language learning.

Motivation and Engagement. Integrating skills through authentic materials and tasks can increase learners' motivation and engagement [10][11]. For Uzbek learners, activities like role-playing a job interview or debating a current issue can be more interesting and relevant than isolated skill exercises. Integrated-skills instruction taps into learners' real-life interests and goals.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The findings underscore the significance of integrating language skills for communicative competence

development in English language teaching, particularly in the Uzbek context. Integrated-skills instruction offers several advantages over traditional segregated-skills approaches.

Firstly, skill integration aligns with the communicative nature of real-life language use. In authentic communication, skills are rarely used in isolation; rather, they intertwine to create meaning. By mirroring this interconnectedness in the classroom, integrated-skills teaching better prepares learners for real-world English use. This is especially important in Uzbekistan, where English proficiency is increasingly necessary for educational and professional success.

Secondly, integrated-skills instruction promotes active learning and meaningful interaction. When skills are integrated through collaborative tasks, learners engage in authentic communication and negotiate meaning with peers. This interactive process facilitates language acquisition and builds communicative confidence. For Uzbek learners accustomed to teacher-centered instruction, integrated-skills activities can provide valuable opportunities for communicative practice.

Thirdly, skill integration enhances the transferability and applicability of language learning. By practicing skills in tandem, learners develop the ability to use English flexibly across different contexts. This transferability is crucial for Uzbek learners who need to use English beyond the classroom, such as in higher education or international business.

However, implementing integrated-skills instruction also presents challenges. Teachers may need training in designing and facilitating integrated-skills lessons. Authentic materials and tasks must be carefully selected to suit learners' proficiency levels and interests. Assessment of integrated skills can be more complex than single-skill tests. These challenges require thoughtful planning and ongoing professional development.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, integrating all four language skills - reading, writing, listening, and speaking - is crucial for developing learners' communicative competence in English. Integrated-skills instruction promotes authentic language use, meaningful interaction, transferability of skills, and learner motivation. In the Uzbek context, integrated-skills teaching can significantly enhance English learners' ability to communicate effectively in real-life situations.

However, realizing these benefits requires careful planning, appropriate materials and tasks, and teacher training. By implementing the recommended strategies and adapting integrated-skills approaches to the Uzbek context, English language teachers can foster their learners' communicative competence development.

Further research could explore the specific challenges and best practices of integrated-skills instruction in Uzbekistan, as well as the impact of integrated-skills approaches on Uzbek learners' English proficiency outcomes. Longitudinal studies tracking learners' communicative competence development through integrated-skills programs could provide valuable insights.

Ultimately, integrating language skills is a powerful tool for preparing Uzbek learners to use English effectively in the real world. By embracing integrated-skills instruction, English language teachers in Uzbekistan can equip their students with the communicative competence needed for success in a globalized society.

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