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The Impact of Skills Integration on Enhancing English Learning

The Case of Beddouda Mohammed El- sayah Middle School English Teachers

Presented and publically defended

by**:**

Khedidja Douma

Board of Examiners:

MrsNousseiba Djeha	**UKMO**	**Chairperson**
Dr Malika Kouti	**UKMO**	**Supervisor**
Dr Nawal Dib	**UKMO**	**Examiner**

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Dedication

To my beloved and ever-loving parents for their unconditional support throughout my life. Thank you for giving me the strength to chase my dreams.

To my sisters Salha, Siham, and Yamina for their endless support
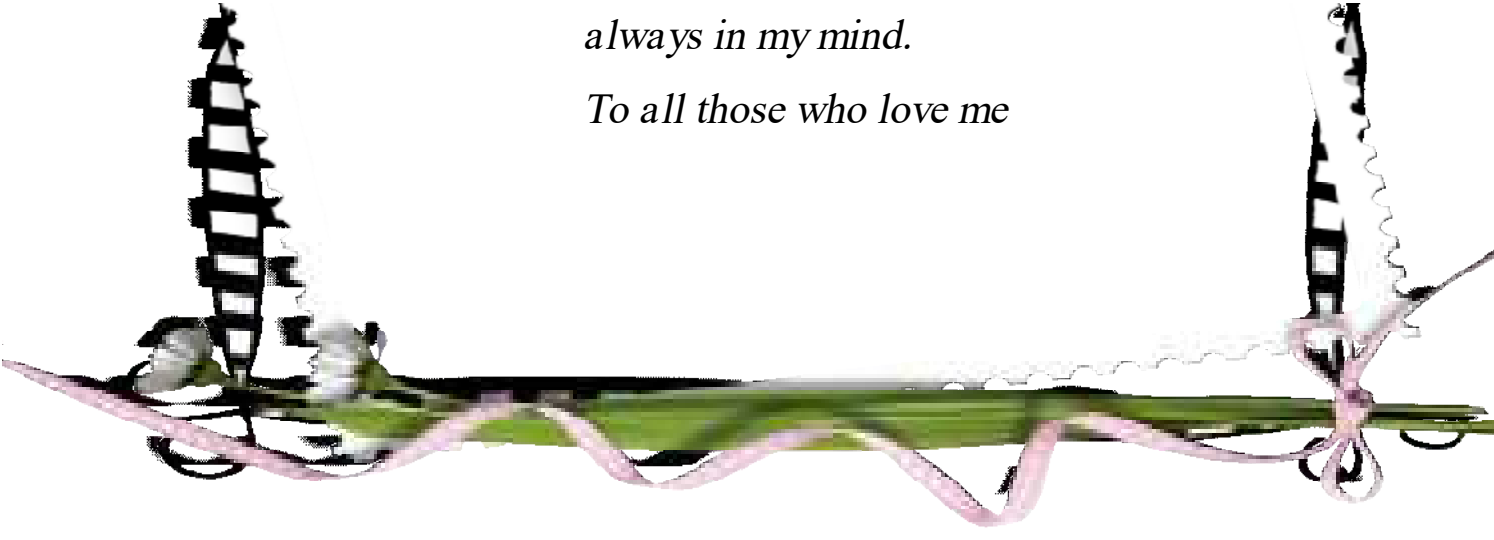
To my brothers Hocine, Ahmed, and Mohammed

To my all my nephews and nieces

To my aunties and uncles

To my English teachers Habiba Boudjamaa, Badra Laadjimi and Kawther Kadir

To all my friends, thank you for sharing with me the good and bad moments; thank you for your encouragement and support. Your friendship made a wonderful journey of my life. I cannot list names but you are always in my mind.

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to investigate the influence of skills integration in enhacing English learning for pupils of middle school. This is a case study in which 3 English teachers in Beddouda Mohammad El- sayah Middle School and 40 middle school teachers, from different institutions, were involved. In order to achieve the aim of this study and to prove the hypothesis, the researcher used three instruments: classroom observation in order to have an overview about what is happening during the lessons, interviews with three (03) English teachers in order to have their points of view concerning the impact of skills integration on enhacing pupils' English learning and a questionnaire that was distributed to 40 middle school teachers to have more insights about the investigated topic. The obtained results showed that the implementation of an integrated skills approach in an EFL classroom effectively enhances pupils English learning.

Key words: skills integration, English learning , Enhancement , Integrated-Skill approach

List of Abbreviations:

- ➢ **ESL :** English as a Second Language

- ➢ **EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

- ➢ **TEFL:** Teaching English as a Foreign Language

- ➢ **CBA:** Competency- Based Approach

- ➢ **CBLT:** Competency -Based Language Teaching

- ➢ **CLT:** Communicative Language Teaching

- ➢ **CBI:** Content- Based Instruction

- ➢ **TBI:** Task-Based Instruction

- ➢ **Ls:** Learners

- ➢ **Ts:** Teachers

- ➢ **LTs:** Language Teachers

- ➢ **L1:** First Language

- ➢ **L2:** Second Language

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General Introduction

Introduction

English plays a dominated role in almost all fields of life due to the status of being the first international. In the field of language teaching, a number of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers have applied various kinds of approaches for the teaching of English that helps foreign language learners to have good English proficiency. In this respect, the Integrated-skills approach is a new trend in an EFL context due to its effectiveness in developing the learners' communicative competence and making them able to use English inside and outside the classroom. Hinkel (2010) emphasises that integrated language skills teaching models aim at developing learners' fluency and accuracy as well as their socio-cultural communicative competence.

Despite the great effectiveness of the integrated skills approach, some teachers, in EFL classrooms, still use the traditional approaches; that is, teaching language skills in isolation, which is known as segregated skills approach. The application of the latter approach may help learners to develop their knowledge of language, but it does not make them able to use it in real life communication. Therefore, an integrated skills approach should be implemented in teaching programmes in order to have a competent learner who knows how to use the English language and how to communicate effectively in real situations.

As a matter of fact, it is necessary for Algerian middle school teachers to help their learners promote their language skills and enhance their English learning through the application of effective approaches and strategies for successful communication inside and outside the classroom. This is in fact the inspiring idea which gave birth to this work that aims at identifying the integration of the four language skills in an EFL classroom and investigating the influence of skills integration in enhancing pupils' English learning.

Background of the problem

Language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing were at first taught in isolation in the traditional approaches. For example, proponents of the Audio Lingual Method believed that language is basically oral and therefore the focus was on speaking. The outcome of this approach was that the learners who knew the language skills were unable to communicate their thoughts, especially in writing. Another example is that of Grammar Translation Method (GTM) which focused on teaching students to analyse grammar and translate from one language into another. This method restricted language learning to a very narrow, non-communicative range of tasks that did not prepare students to use the language in everyday life (Sbai, 2016). In relation to this, Oxford (2001) describes this approach as a segregated-skill approach (or language-based approach). According to her, such a segregation is reflected in traditional ESL/EFL language programmes, yet this segregated-skill approach was found to contradict with natural processes of first language acquisition. In contrast to the segregated-skill approach, there was a shift from the traditional model towards the communicative approach. According to Hinkel (2010, p.), " *To study language, you may need to break the language into parts. To use it, however, the skills and component must be integrated.*"

Widdwson (1978) was one of the first linguists who called for integrating the four skills in language teaching for the purpose of raising learner's proficiency levels. Although he notes that the separated teaching of the four language skills is probably more administratively convenient, as in "divide and rule" (ibid, p. 144), language comprehension and production does 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 (Hinkel, ibid).

Harmer (2007) stated that in most of the time, language skills are rarely used in isolation. He argued that whenever we are engaged in a conversation, we listen as well as we speak; otherwise, we cannot interact with each other. In the case of a classroom, the teacher presents his lectures while some students are listening and at the same time taking notes; others may listen to the teacher then they ask questions concerning the subject they are being taught. This situation describes how language skills cannot be separated or even taught alone. Therefore," *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 skills and*

language work are connected' (Harmer, ibid, p. 265). Consequently, integrating the four language skills was a natural process of "skill-mixing" that helps teachers to provide maximum learning opportunities for different learners in class.

According to (Oxford, 2001), the integrated-skill approach leads to optimal ESL/EFL communication by interweaving the four primary English language skills during instruction. She explained how learners had the benefit of practising all language skills in an integrated, natural, communicative way, even if the focus was on one skill in a given lesson. For example, in a reading oriented class, learners need the listening skill to comprehend the teacher's instructions; also, they need the speaking skill for discussing the reading text. It is the same case for the textbook in which one skill might be highlighted, but other language skills were used through the activities presented in the book.

Statement of Purpose

This study aims at investigating the application of an integrated skills approach in an EFL classroom at Beddouda Mohammad El- sayah Middle School at and its influence on pupils English learning enhancement.

Statement of Problem

In the Algerian educational system English is considered as a foreign language. The main aim of teaching English is to use it as a means of communication in all its forms by improving learners' abilities to use the language and developing the basic language skills ,namely listening speaking reading and writing. For this reason, many approaches are applied in middle school classes such as the integrated- skills approach in order raise pupils' English proficiency and develop thier communicative competence .

Therefore, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

  ➢ Are middle school teachers aware of the application of an integrated skills approach in class?

  ➢ To what extent can skills integration enhance pupils' English learning ?

Hypotheses

The present work is based on two hypotheses that will be examined and verified through research instruments.

  ➢ The application of an integrated skills approach in a middle school classroom makes pupils use English effectively.

- The integration of the four skills in middle school classes affects positively pupils' English learning.

The structure of thesis

This thesis is divided into two main parts: theoretical and practical. The theoretical part includes one chapter that focuses on the four language skills and their integration and the different approaches to language teaching. The first chapter is about the four language skills listening, reading, writing and speaking. The second part, practical, is about the research design of this thesis, including the sample and population, a description of the instruments, the classroom observation, the semi-structured interview and the questionnaire . It also includes the interpretation of the collected data and discusses the main results and provides some suggestions and recommendations for future research.

Limitations of the study

This study has mainly one limitation. It is about the number of observation sessions which were reduced to 7 because the participants were about to have the winter holiday and first term examination.

Conceptual and operational definitions

a) Conceptual definitions

- ***Skills integration :*** the combination of the four traditional skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) of language learning.

- ***English learning:*** it is what people do that enables them to use the English language.

- ***Enhancement :*** the increase or improvement in value, quality, desirability or attractiveness.

b) Operational definition

This investigation is going to observe whether the four language skills are integrated in an English language learning middle school class or not integrated during lessons of middle school classes in order to identify the influence of skills integration on pupils English learning enhancement.

Theoretical Part

Chapter 01

Chapter 01: ─────────────── Theoretical part

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Introduction

The need for English for the sake of communication is the main reason behind learning English for EFL learners. In this case, enhancing middle school pupils' English learning is not an easy task for many EFL teachers. This need leads teachers to use different approaches and strategies. This chapter aims to present the four language skills and some strategies that develop them. Moreover, it sheds light on the integrated skills approach, its forms and the ways teachers integrate the four language skills. Finally, it highlights the two useful approaches to language teaching, namely communicative language and competency-based approach.

1. Language skills

Language skills are divided into two types: receptive and productive.

1.1. Receptive skills

Receptive skills include reading and listening.

1.1.1. Reading skill

Reading is defined simply as "*an interactive process which involves a negotiated interaction between the written discourse (text) and the reader for the sake of extracting the intended meaning*" (El Kouti, 2017. p, 13). In other words, it involves the readers ability to reconstruct information from the written message with the combination of the background knowledge in order to achieve text comprehension.

Hadfield (2008) argued that reading in the learner's first language is totally different from reading in a foreign language because in L1, there are various ways of reading, depending on what it is read and why. There is a variety of sub-skills that help learners read efficiently. They use their background knowledge of certain topics in order to help them predict the content of the text and also to understand it easily because they already know how different texts are structured (El Kouti, ibid).

In language teaching terms, there are two kinds of reading: *intensive reading* and *extensive reading*. Intensive reading involves reading in details with specific aims and tasks. Learners in this process are helped by their teacher to dig deep into every word in every sentence in every text in class. Intensive reading can help to lay solid foundation, but cannot help much to build up a large vocabulary that can only be done by reading extensively.

Extensive reading, also known as fast reading, has two different roles: one is to acquire a large vocabulary and the other is to develop the ability to think in a foreign language. The idea of extensive reading is that a lot of reading of interesting materials will enhance the comprehension level of the reader and foster his or her language skills although it is used to obtain general understanding of a subject and includes independent reading of longer texts for pleasure (kirubahar & Subashini, 2010).

1.1.1.1 How to Develop the Reading Skill

According to Hadfield (2008), teachers play a vital role in developing learner's reading skill. They should help learners to focus their reading on the meaning rather than getting stuck on individual words or unimportant details so they lose the main meaning of the text. Also, they should help their learners to read in different ways and use sub-skills and strategies that will help them improve and comprehend what are they reading efficiently (El Kouti, 2017).

Researchers such as Harmer (2007) and Grabe (2009 as cited in El Kouti, ibid) suggest some strategies and activities that may help students comprehend reading texts. First, learners need to be able to scan the text which means reading quickly while looking for specific information. In addition to this, they need to be able to skim, which means reading quickly for getting the general idea of a text.

In addition to the aforementioned strategies, Hadfield (2008) adds some other strategies such as reading for details. This strategy is used when dealing with texts that require very careful reading such as legal documents and a set of complicated instructions.

Hadfield (ibid) also three reading sub skills: *activating background knowledge, predicting and using linkers.* Activating background knowledge helps learners to understand a text by discussing the topic before reading. To do this, there are two useful techniques such as *brainstorming* which means to think quickly of anything related to the topic and *mind- mapping* which is trying to order the ideas in separate categories. These two activities help to activate vocabulary learners already have. Previewing a text can be done by looking at the title, pictures or illustrations while predicting is forming hypothses before reading (Grabe, ibid as cited in El Kouti, ibid). Students can make mini-predictions during reading. The last sub-skill is using linkers. Linkers are words that act as signals to show students the structure of a text and help them understand when a new bit of information is coming. The use of these sub skills can be very helpful in the development of the reading skill.

1.1.2. Listening Skill

According to Hadfield (2008), listening is one of the most challenging skills to master in a second language. Spoken language can be well orgnised as similarly as written language; however, most of the time, it is different from written language. For example, in a spoken conversation between people, there is no time to stop and go over something again as you would if you were struggling to understand a written text. He also adds, "*In English, speakers may miss out a subject or verb, or may break off their sentence in middle,(…) or hesitate to think about what he is going to say next, (…)or includes words, phrases, or ideas that are not strictly necessary.*"(ibid, p. 77).

Harmer (2007) mentions that there are two kinds of listening which can improve the students' listening skill. These are extensive and intensive listening. Listening in both kinds is very important since it provides the perfect opportunity to hear voices other than the teacher's besides enabling students to acquire good speaking habits. Extensive listening refers to the listening in which students often do for pleasure or some other reasons. There are various sources where can students find different materials to listen to such as Mp3 players, Radio, videos or the Internet. Extensive listening is very important from a motivational perspective because it increases dramatically when students make their choices about what they are going to listen to.

On the other hand, intensive listening is the one in which "*student listen specifically in order to study the way in which English is spoken, it usually occurs takes place in classroom or language laboratories, and typically occurs teachers are present to guide student through any listening difficulties, and point them to areas of interest.*"(Bastias et al. 2011, p. 24).

1.1.2.1. How to Develop Listening Skill

Hadfield (ibid) developed a set of strategies and activities that help students develop their listening skill. *Listening with a purpose* is very important because "*learners can adapt the way they listen to their aims.*" (p.77) focusing more on the information they need to extract from what they are listening to. He also mentions another aspect which is *listening for a gist*. In this strategy, the teacher sets some questions or tasks and gives them to his learners before they listen. Hence, they can know what information they are listening to. The last strategy is *listening for specific details* which means to listen to precise details where "*learners develop the ability to filter out everything they do not need to know.*" (ibid, p. 78).

1.2.   Productive Skills

Productive skills are writing and speaking.

1.2.1. Writing Skill

Among the four English skills, writing is commonly known as the most difficult and the least liked skill although it plays a crucial role in language production. Harmer (2007) mentioned some important aspects that there are considered in writing such as *handwriting* even though communication takes place electronically nowadays. However, there are instances in which students write with hands as in language examinations. *Spelling* is also a main issue in writing. One reason why spelling is difficult for students of English is that the correspondence between the sound of a word and the way it is spelt is not always obvious. A single sound may have many different spellings, and the same spelling may have many different sounds.

Another aspect is *layout and punctuation* which are essential in writing. They are different from one community to another; hence, they are frequently non-transferable from one community or language to another. Thus, "*to be successful as writers in our own or other languages, we need to be aware of the layouts and use or modify them when appropriate to get our message across as clearly as we can*" (Harmer, ibid, p. 325).

1.2.1.1.   How to develop writing skill

There are some issues that help learners develop their writing skill. One of these issues is *genre* which, according to Harmer (2007), represents the norms of different kinds of writing. The best way to teach genre is when the teacher shows models of text types. By using this technique, students do their own work. In the same vein, Hadfield (2008) says that when the teacher wants to teach how to write a particular text type, he should show learners how to produce it by providing examples of it, help them understand how it is structured and what language they have to use.

Harmer (ibid) focuses on another aspect of writing which is cooperate work. Although many learners write on their own, it is better to use cooperative writing in classes, because group writing allows the teacher to give more detailed and constructive feedback. Writing in groups, whether as a part of a long or a short process, is very motivating for student to develop this skill.

He mentions another approach which is referred to as creative writing that implies the imagination as the basis in writing poetry, stories and plays. Ur (1996) states that "*most of people feel pride in their work and want it to be read*" (p. 169). This is the case when people talk about creative writing instead of any other written products. Creative writing is a journey of self-

discovery, and self-discovery promotes effective learning. Learners will be more motivated when teachers give imaginative writing tasks. Because they feel engaged and try to achieve best results in producing a variety of correct and appropriate language, then they might write for more routine assignments.

According to Harmer (2007), it is necessary to build a writing habit in learners. By doing this, learners will recognise writing as a normal part of classroom practice, and they come to writing assignments with much enthusiasm. To achieve the writing habit, it is important to give learners interesting and enjoyable tasks to do.

Hadfield (2008) suggests another way of helping learners to express their ideas and organise them logically. This can happen through "*process writing*" which means dividing the writing activities into several stages in each of which learners practise a sub-skill that is important in the writing process. Brainstorming, drafting and planning…etc are some of good techniques to use in writing.

1.2.2. Speaking Skill

Speaking is defined as the act talking to or having a conversation with someone else. According to Hadfield (2008), speaking involves interaction between people, which is not only putting a message together but also the response that the listener can give to the speaker. This interaction presents a difficulty for EFL learners since they need to think of something to say and feel confident enough to express it. Then, they have to use what they have learnt in terms of vocabulary and grammar to produce a message that other people can understand.

1.2.2.1. How to Develop Speaking Skill

In order to help learners develop their speaking skill, Hadfield (ibid) proposes that teachers can help them by giving them ideas such as asking them to read a text about the topic that is being discussed so that learners can manage some vocabulary about it. This is very helpful because it allows learners to think around the topic and generate ideas.

He also proposes that teachers should provide help with what to say; for example, providing students with role cards with an outline. Thus, learners can have extra information about what to say. Moreover, teachers should set a precise task with a clear goal for students to reach so that it makes student have a clear idea about the outcome of their work. Another way to help learners is to break the task down. This means to break down the general question of the topic into smaller questions. Pyramid discussion is a good technique to do this, "*when learners are given with series*

of small questions and work first in pairs, then group of four, and then group of eight' (p.106). There are other ways to break discussions down such as using questionnaires or ranking activities.

In order to help students develop their confidence for speaking, Hadfield (2008) proposes some ways to do that like giving planning time to allow students to think out what they will say using activities that involve the participation of all students in addition to giving them the opportunity to share ideas in pairs before talking in front of the whole class. Teachers help students develop fluency by asking them to speak; that is to say, to have oral presentations by presenting interesting topics or communicational situations for them to express themselves.

Teacher feedback is another important aspect to consider in the development of the speaking skill. Teachers should avoid interrupting students to correct them while they are speaking because this can mean that they will not have the opportunity to develop fluency.

2. Integrated –Skill Approach (ISA)

Peregoy and Boyle (2001 cited in Chen, 2007) stated that "*In natural, day- to-day experience, oral and written language are not kept separate and isolated from one another. Instead, they often occure together integrated in specific communication events.*"(p.29)

Chen (ibid) argued that the language learning process of the four skills should be treated as integrated, interdependent, and inseparable elements of language. Therefore, as (Peregoy & Boyle , ibid) conclude (in Chen, ibid) that the teacher should incorporate opportunities through reading for students in order 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 promote 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 classeroom activities because all these processes interact with one another. Teachers should provide opportunities and resources for students to engage in authentic speech and activities.

According to Brown (2001), the integrated-skill approach is a "*whole language approach, where a course that deals with reading skill, then will also deal with related listening, speaking, and writing skill*" (p. 232). As Hungyo and Kijai (2009) state in (Bastias et al. , 2011), this approach is considered as one in which "*the English language is taught not just for academic but also for communicative purposes.*" It considers the communication goal that every language course should achieve by exposing learners to the complexity of language.

One of the most suitable images used to describe the task of TEFL is that of Rebecca Oxford's (2001) who argued that integrated language teaching is an effective strategy for language learning as a whole. She describes TEFL as a tapestry. A tapestry is woven from many stands which must be interwoven in positive ways to produce a strong and colourful piece. The stands of tapestry in TEFL is made up of the characteristics of the teacher, the learner, the setting and the related language (in this case learners' L1). To achieve this tapestry, Oxford (2001) considered three key factors. First, the instructor's teaching style should address the learning style of the learner as much as possible. Second, the learner should be motivated to learn the target language. Third, the setting should provide resources and values that strongly support the teaching of the language.

She adds that the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing and their components, vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation, spelling and meaning, should be woven well to create the integrated approach. Therefore, when the skills are interwoven during instruction, this will lead to optimal ESL/EFL communication. This is known as *the integrated-skill approach*. However, if this weaving together does not happen, the stand consists only of discrete, segregated skills which do not interact with each. This is referred to as segregated-skill approach (Sbai, 2016).

2.1. Advantages and limitations of the Integrated- Skill Approach

There are advantages and limitations of the ISA.

2.1.1. Advantages

Oxford (ibid) states that:

> *The integrated-skill 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* (p.11).

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Moreover, Sbai (2016) lists five advantages for integrating the main and subsidiary language skills. He says:

> "*(1) Language becomes not just an object of academic interest but a real means of interaction among people. (2) Skill integration allows mutually supportive growth in all the main skills and the subsidiary skills. (3) In an integrated-skill format, language instruction promotes the learning of real content, rather than the discussion of language forms. (4) The learning of authentic content through language is highly motivating to students of all ages and backgrounds. (5) Teachers are given the power and the opportunity to track students' progress in multiple skills at the same time.*"(p.5)

2.1.2. Limitations

According to Sbai (2016), the ISA has little or no limitations compared to its segregated counterpart. However, since there is no perfect approach, he provides some disadvantages of the Integrated-skill oriented courses:

➢ The challenge of the necessity of teachers to maintain an appropriate balance between integration and separation.

➢ Integrating the four skills: can be demanding from the part of the teacher (understanding discourse, using textbook flexibly); can be time-consuming, requiring a lot of preparation.

➢ Assessment in skills integration is not defined precisely since all the skills are assessed at once while it must be borne in mind that whatever the teacher does, s/he will always find students with better writing skills, others with better oral abilities and so on (ibid.7)

The limitations of this approach should not prevent teachers from using it because it is considered as the optimal approach when it comes to skills instruction.

2.2. Integrating Language Skills

Integrating language skills is a strategy that enhances language learning by exposing learners to real life contexts. In an EFL classroom, interaction between teachers and students is expected; therefore, one skill cannot be taught on its own because the four language skills are connected to each other. Consequently, in order to make learning meaningful and relevant to the student and to have a successful communication, it is necessary for teachers to integrate the four language skills. This will allow learners to face real life communication in L2. Olivé (2014 as cited in Guillen & Yanet, 2018) defines:

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> *The conscious, dynamic and effective combination of two or more communicative skills*
> *in the language, during the teaching-learning process of English, to reach a higher*
> *objective, which can be the treatment of a particular skill for its optimization, or the*
> *integration of them in follow-up stages to complete a sequence of comprehension,*
> *learning or improvement of a process related to the development of a specific skill*
> (p.13).

There are some aspects that teachers should take into account in order to integrate the four skills effectively; they have to learn about different ways of skills integration. They have to think about the integrated approach and to what extent there is a real integration in classroom. Moreover, they should select authentic materials that will promote skills integration.

In line to this, activities and tasks in integrated skill teaching and learning processes should be sequenced in a logical progression. McDonough and Show (2003 as cited in Pardede, 2019) state that the skill integration in the topic or task in a lesson unit(s) could be done in various ways, but the most common and convenient way is using the pattern that sequences them from receptive skills – listening and reading to productive skills – writing and speaking.

2.3.   Forms of ISA

Oxford (2001) states that there are basically two teaching methods under the communicative approach of language teaching. Those types of integrated-skill instruction are content-based language instruction and task-based instruction. The first of these emphasises learning content through language while the second stresses doing tasks that require communicative language.

2.3.1. Content- based instruction (CBI)

Content based instruction focuses on the subject matter more than the forms, aspects and communicative functions of language. Here, students practise "*all the language skills in a highly integrated, communicative fashion while learning content such as science, mathematics and social studies*" (Crandall, 1987, as cited in Oxford, 2001, p. 9). Content-based language instruction is equally useful at all grades and levels of study; however, the nature and difficulty level of the content differ from grade to grade. The content selected for beginners involves basic social and interpersonal communication skills, but for the higher level learners, the content becomes increasingly academic and complex.

Scarcella and Oxford (1992) have presented three general models of content based language instruction as given below (cited in Oxford, 2001):

a) The Theme-Based Model

In this model, the language skills are integrates into a particular theme such as social discrimination, global warming, cross- cultural variations in marriage practices, etc. These theme-based topics must be familiar and highly interesting to the learners so as to allow them to become fluent and spontaneous in communication. This model is very useful and widespread in the recent years. That is why, a great number of modern ESL/EFL textbooks are written using this framework.

b) The Adjunct Model

In this model of language instruction, language and contents are taught in a separate way but with careful coordination. There is a perfect symmetry among all the subject matters in this model.

c) The Sheltered Model

In this model, the subject matters for instruction are selected and graded to suit the levels and interests of learners. This selection is based on identifying the students' existing proficiency level through proficiency tests.

2.3.2. Task-Based Instruction (TBI)

For Oxford (2001), task-based instruction entail students' participation in communicative tasks in English. Nunan (1989) defines tasks as activities that can stand alone as fundamental units requiring comprehension, production, manipulation, or interaction in authentic language while paying attention to meaning rather than to form (cited in Oxford, 2001).

The task-based model influences both the teaching of ESL and EFL and the measurement of learning strategies. In task-based instruction, student interaction and collaboration are increased through pair and group works. For example, students are involved developing a television commercial, writing and editing a class newspaper, etc. Task-based instruction can also use more structured cooperative learning formats.

Though task-based instruction fits all levels of language proficiency, the nature of tasks varies from one level to another in that the complexity of tasks increases at higher proficiency levels. For example, beginners can be asked to introduce each other, and share specific items of information about each other. More advanced students can be involved in more demanding tasks, such as taking public opinions surveys at the university, or shopping malls.

3. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), The communicative language teaching (CLT) "starts from a theory of language as communication" (p. 159). The goal of CLT is developing student's communicative competence which involves the knowledge about the language and how to use it in communicative contexts. The aim of the language teacher, therefore, is to teach language as it is used in real life in order to have a competent learner who is able to use the foreign language in practical contexts. However, sometimes it is not the case in EFL practices; that is to say, there is a gap between teaching language skills in isolation and real life use of language. In order to decease this gap, it is suggested to adopt an integrated language teaching approach (Akram & Malik, 2010).

In our daily life, we use more than one language skill in order to communicate. Integration of the four skills entails the focus on realistic language that can help language teachers develop English learners' communicative competence. The integration helps a teacher add up more variety into the lesson because the range of activities will be wider. A successful integrative approach helps teachers make the lessons dynamic, and involves the learners in diverse activities and interactions. This makes students actively participate in class activities. A vivid and effective communicative class is supposed to be involving the integration of the four language skills in which the teacher needs to establish a positive atmosphere, plan appropriate activities, encourage learners and deal with problems sensitively (Davies & Pearse, 2000; Jing, 2006 as cited in Akram & Malik, ibid).

4. Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT)

Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) is the application of the principles of Competency-Based Education (CBE) to language teaching. This approach focuses on what "*learners are expected to do with the language*" (Richards & Rodgers, ibid, p. 141). CBLT is based on functional and interactional perspectives. It seeks to teach language in relation to social contexts in which it is used. Language always occurs as a medium of interaction and communication among people, for the achievement of specific goals and purposes such as specialist or professional abilities. CBLT is also built around the notion of communicative competence, like CLT, and looks for developing functional communication skills. Thus, this approach shares the features of CLT (ibid).

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the application of integrated skills approach in middle school classrooms, for all language skills are vital in teaching and learning. The integration of those skills allows pupils to communicate effectively in real life. Moreover, the chapter shed light on the Communicative language teaching (CLT) and Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) as adequate approaches to develop pupils' communicative competence .

Practical part

Chapter 02

Introduction

Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the practical part of this research work. It focuses on the data collection and analysis. It is a case study about an educational situation which is investigating the influence of skills integration in Enhancing pupils' English learning. To investigate this case, classroom observation will be conducted in addition to a semi-structured interview and a questionnaire for middle school teachers. This chapter sheds light on all of the conclusions and main results after describing the research instruments and data analysis methods.

5   Research Design

A descriptive analytical design has been selected in this case study research due to the characteristic of the context and the specific population. A case study is the investigation of a single instance of a class of project or entities in the context in which it occurs. Yin (1984) defined a case study as "*an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used*" (p. 23 cited in Nunan, 1992, p.).

A case study enables the researcher to link the collected data and the conclusions; in other words, it is beneficial for the coherence of the work. The researcher can carefully examine the situation data through case study. Generally, case studies investigate and explore contemporary phenomenon by selecting a very restricted number of people as the subjects of study.

6   The Sample and Population

The study was conducted at Beddouda Mohammed El-Sayah middle school, Temacine. This institution has about 500 pupils distributed in four (4) levels: first, second, third, and fourth year; each level includes three (03) classes, the number of which is about 40. Following the health care protocol instructions, those classes are further divided into two (02) groups that have about 20 pupils. For the classroom observation, one class has been selected for each level. For the semi-structured interview, three (03) English teachers, who I attended lessons with, are purposively selected and they represent the whole population. For more exact results about the investigated issue, a questionnaire has been distributed to 40 middle school teachers.

6.1 The Teachers' Profile:

This study includes three (03) English teachers. They have approximately the same degrees in teaching English; one is graduated from ENS whereas the others have a Bachelor degree. They have been teaching English for many years: one has six (06) years, the second has eleven (11) years, and the third has fifteen (15) years of experience. Those teachers have been chosen because they are completely aware about the various approaches that are used in teaching English for middle school classes (beginners) and its influence on pupils' English proficiency.

7   Research Instruments

The present work was conducted through the use of classroom observation, a semi-structured interview, and a questionnaire for teachers to collect data for a deep investigation and from a great source of insight.

7.1 Observation

Observation is a data collection method of generating data. This method offers the researcher an opportunity to gather live data from naturally occurring social situations (a classroom, bilingual family home, a work environment, etc). Researchers aim to provide a careful description of subjects' activities without influencing the events in which the subjects are engaged. The objective of using this instrument is, first, to have a close view about what is happening in the classroom during instructions and to verify if the teaching of the four skills is integrated or segregated and how much emphasis is given to each one, in terms of receptive or productive skills. Another objective for using this instrument is to know which strategies are used by the teacher in order to integrate the four skills of the English language.

The data collected were based on set of criteria, which are:

1) Is the lesson receptive (listening, reading) or productive (speaking, writing)?

English language has four primary skills listening, reading, writing, and speaking, those skills are divided into two categories, receptive skills (listening, reading) and productive skills (speaking, writing). This question aims to observe if receptive abilities or productive ones are developed during the lesson and what activities are being done to achieve this.

2) Does the teacher speak more than 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 students the chance to express themselves. The aim, then, is to show if the teacher motivate pupils to speak during lesson.

3) Does the teacher use real life communicative situations during the lesson?

Activities that involve real life situations must be orgnised in order to improve pupils' communicative competence. The aim of this question is to notice if the teacher is concentrating on developing this competence.

4) Does the teacher use only English to explain activities?

The importance of this question lies on the fact that the primary exposure to English language for the pupils is the teacher talk in the classroom. It is vital since pupils, in classroom, are not exposed to any kind of inputs.

5) Do the pupils use only English while asking for clarifications?

The aim of this question is to clarify if pupils are developing their productive skills in this case (speaking).

6) Does the teacher encourage group work in the classroom?

The aim of this question is to show the effect of pupil-to-pupil interaction on the development of speaking skill.

7) Does the teacher use activities that make pupils interested practicing language skills?

This question is related to pupils' interest, if they are interested in the topic they will be motivated to have more listening, reading, writing and speaking activities about it.

8) Does the teacher integrate the four language skills during the lesson?

This is the most important question that indicates the presence or the absence of an integrated-skill approach during the lesson observed.

7.2 Interviews

Interviews are defined as "*the elicitation of data by one person from another through person-to-person encounter*" (Nunan, 1992, p. 231). They are characterised in terms of their level of formality, and most can be placed on a continuum ranging from unstructured through semi-structured to structured. A semi-structured interview, therefore, is considered as preferable and the most useful kind by many researchers due to its flexibility (ibid).

In the present study, the semi-structured interview was conducted after the classroom observation. Three (03) teachers were asked a set of twelve (12) questions in order to have a deep understanding of what motivate pupils to learn English, to know the different approaches that teachers can use in order to improve pupils' English proficiency, and the most crucial aspect is how the application of an integrated-skill approach can enhance English learning. The data collected will be analysed as a whole since the three teachers have approximately the same answers.

7.2.1. The interview Guide

3   How old are you?

4   What are your qualifications?

5   How many years have you been teaching?

6   Why do you think pupils need to learn English?

7   How do you motivate your pupils to become active learners in your class?

8   What are the different approaches that you use for teaching English?

9   Which approach do you think is effective for developing the pupils' communicative competence?

10 What roles does competency based teaching approach play in teaching?

11 During the teaching sessions, do you pay attention to using the four skills?

   - If yes, do you use them separately or integratedly? Why?

   - If no, which skills do you focus on most? And why?

12 Do you give importance to the use of tasks and activities that may look as real life situations?

13 What are some examples of activities that integrate the four skills?

14   According to your teaching career, how can skills integration influence pupils' English learning?

7.2.2.   The Interview Implications

The first, second, and the third questions are concerned with the general information of the three teachers. Answers are provided in the teachers' profile above. The two variables sex and age are not taken into consideration, so they do not affect our study.

The aim of the fourth question is to notice if teachers are taking into consideration the pupils' need for learning English, therefore, if teachers know why pupils need to learn English they will provide them with effective ways to do this. The following quote gives us teacher's ideas about the pupils' reasons to learn English.

> *I think pupils need to learn English for many reasons. They learn it in order to communicate with others from all around the world since they are using different social media. Pupils learn English in order to be able to read different books, articles…etc, which are written in English or translated to it. Another reason is to increase their chance to get a future good job in one of the international companies or even go abroad*

Through the teacher's words we understand that she highlighted the use of English as means of communication. Therefore, identifying pupils' needs will help teachers to choose the appropriate approaches that will develop pupils' language skills and improve their communicative competence.

The purpose of the fifth question is to find out the ways in which teachers make pupils more motivated and interested in learning the English language. It is very important to raise pupils motivation to learn, and this will encourage them to achieve better results in developing language skills and, therefore, having a good English proficiency. Teachers have provided many ways to motivate pupils in the classroom. One of them said: " *I motivate my pupils by using projector, pictures, jokes, short stories, to become active in the class, those strategies make them more motivated to learn English , and do not get bored*".

Another teacher said:

" *I use different ways to get my pupils motivated to learn English, I get them involved in most of the classroom activities , give them responsibilities and I always encourage them to work in pairs or in small groups , also I made a connection between real life and the activities they*

supposed to do; moreover, I sometimes offer incentive marks, small presents and rewards .this will extremely lead to better achievements".

The following two questions, i.e. the sixth, and the seventh, shed light on the different approaches that usually teachers use in their classrooms, and focus more on which one of these approaches is effective for the development of pupils' communication competence. The three teachers approximately gave the same list of the main approaches that they have been using during their teaching career, one of them said "*for teaching English, I use rarely the direct method; in line with grammatical rules and vocabulary. Other times, I use communicative language teaching, because it focuses more on what a non-native speaker can deliver in English*".

Concerning the effectiveness of those approaches in developing pupils' competence, teachers chose the appropriate approach for their pupils that will yield better results. The three teachers agreed that the CBLT and the CLT are two useful approaches that suit pupils' needs; hence, the teacher will have a pupil who is able to use English effectively and vividly inside and outside the classroom. In addition to those two approaches, one of the teachers found that the Audio-lingual method is also effective for pupils to develop oral skills. She said, "*for my point of view, the Audio-lingual method the effective approach for developing the pupils' communicative competence; because it is used in daily communication which may look suitable for learning to communicate in English*".

The next question aims to find out the different roles that CBLT plays in teaching English. CBLT plays a crucial role in language teaching since it focuses more on teaching language in relation to social contexts in which it is used and developing learners' functional communicative skills. The following quote represents one of the teachers' answers. She said:

"*Competency -Based Approach (CBA) plays many roles such as: help learners to grow and deepen their learning from where they are. It makes them feel responsible for training and play an active role in their learning process; moreover, CBA enable learners to find answers to their questions and resulting from their daily experiences; also, it makes pupils have the ability to master a skill or develop their competencies . Finally, it allows Algerian pupils to develop their capacities to think and act according to a vision of a world that they will construct day by day*".

The ninth question (09) was targeted to find out the teachers' opinion about using the integrated-skill approach while teaching language. The following quote shows the teacher's idea about how important is presenting the new language using four skills. "*Yes, I do. I use them*

integratedly in order to facilitate the understanding and producing language (written or spoken) to the learners to have coherence and harmony from a step to another".

However, the other teacher said: "*yes, I do. I use them separately, I focus on reading for developing professional knowledge, and on speaking because it helps in traveling, hospitality... etc*".

Through the teachers' words, it is understood that they give importance to the communicative competence. They agreed that using the four language skills in the same lesson promotes the development of the communicative aspect of learning a language, and helps the students to use the target language effectively.

The next two questions, tenth (10) and eleventh (11), aim to find out whether the teachers give importance to use tasks and activities that looks as close as real life situations, and to have an idea about different classroom activities that involve the integrated skills approach .Through their responses, it is understood that they give much importance to those activities because they facilitate learning and make pupils more interactive. One of the teachers said:

"*yes, of course that makes learners involved and integrated, because social context of learning enhance the collaboration of the learners' social interaction and communication ,i ,e. discussion ,feedback and sharing ideas which are powerful in learning influences*".

Also, they provided some examples of classroom activities that involve the integration of the four skills. Among various activities they propose: "*memory games, bored activities, cross-words, re-ordering words to get coherent sentence, information gap activities, role plays, etc*".

The purpose of the last question, which is the core of our investigation, is to know the effect of the integration of the four language skills in the classroom in enhancing pupils' English learning. The three teachers support the notion of the positive effects of integrated skill approach on pupils' English proficiency. They claim that implementing an integrated-skill approach in middle school programme promotes the communicative aspect of learning a language and helps pupils to use the English language. The following quote shows the teachers' responses on this question: "*integrating the four skills enhances the focus on realistic communication to develop pupils' competence in English*".

Another teacher said, "*the improvement of skills automatically leads to the improvement of English learning, if the learner improve their ability in the four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) it will be easy for them to learn English and they will be motived to learn more*".

7.2.3. Data Interpretation of Teacher's Interview

The analysis of the collected data from the teachers' interview helped to draw a set of results concerning the integration of language skills and its effect on the development of pupils' English proficiency. According to the data obtained, teachers tend to use effective approaches and strategies in order to motivate learners and help them develop their competencies in using the language, especially the communicative competence since most of the pupils need to learn English as a means of communication. Also, they think that using activities and tasks that involve authentic communication is very important because learners are prepared to face life so they've to be able to use language successfully. Moreover, they are aware of the application of integrated skills approach in classroom and they have argued that it affects pupils' English learning positively. The results obtained from the interview will be taken into consideration in designing the teachers' questionnaire.

7.3. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a common tool used by researchers for collecting data, being the easiest one because it does not require much time or energy to be done. It is a collection of close, open and multiple choice questions. According to Nunan (1992, p. 231), "*a questionnaire is an instrument for the collection of data, usually written form, consisting of open and/or closed questions and other probes requiring a response from subjects*".

The questionnaire, in this study, consists of twelve questions (the same questions of the interview); the total number of the participants is 40 middle school teachers excluing the teachers who were interviewed. The questionnaire is designed to achieve the purpose of this study and reach the conclusions. It gives an opportunity to middle school teachers to express their opinions about the influence of skills integration in the enhancement of English learning. Another objective for designing this questionnaire is to have more in-depth insights about the influence of skills integration in enhancing English learning.

7.3.1. Data Analysis of the Questionnaire

The results of the collected data serve to examine the effectiveness of the application of the integrated skills approach in middle school classes and its influence on pupils' English learning. The collected data was anlysed by using Microsoft Excel, the analysis of each question is as follow:

The first part is concerned with the general information of the participants. The majority of participant were females (26 females, 14 males), their age is vary from (24) to (62) and most of them 35 (87%) have Bachelor degree, 4 (10%) have Master degree in English language whereas one (3%) teacher is graduated from ENS, yet these obtained results do not affect our study.

1) How many years have you been teaching English?
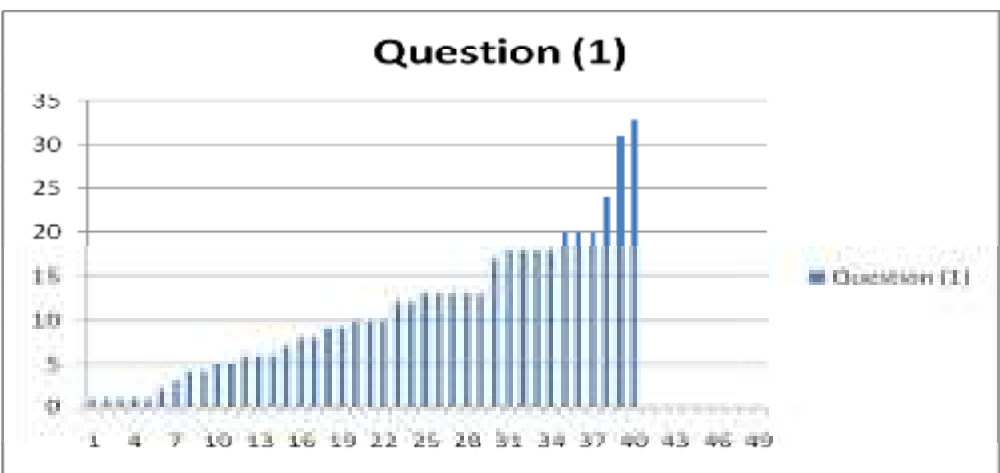
Figure (01): Teachers' Experience in Teaching English

The first question is concerned with the teachers' experience in teaching English which is varied from one year (01) to thirty-two years (32). The teacher experience might influence the way they lead pupils to fulfill their goals; therefore, having many years experiencing teaching will make teachers have a wide knowledge on how to deal with pupils and to have better understanding in applying suitable approaches for them.

2) Why do you think pupils need to learn English?

    a) To know what the elements and rules of English language are ☐

    b) To know the language skills ☐

    c) To use it as a means of communication ☐
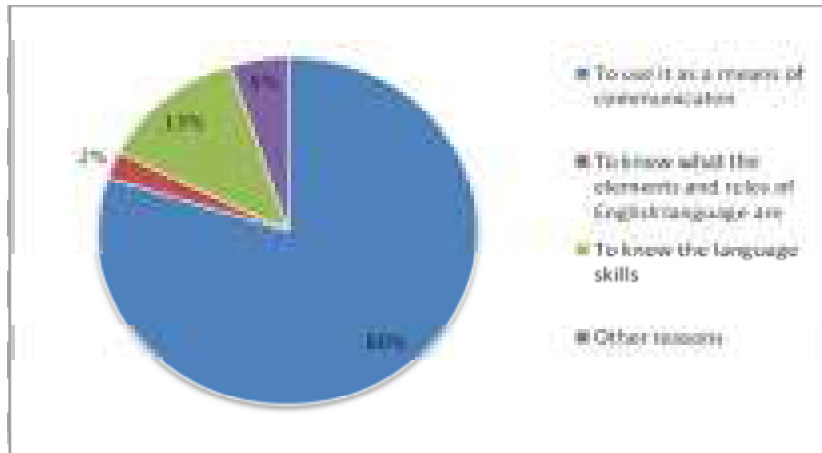
    d) Other reasons ☐

Figure (02): Pupils' Reasons for Learning English

By asking this question, teacher's point of view about the reasons behind pupils English learning was needed. 80% of teachers argued that pupils learn English for the sake of communication; others said that pupils learn English just to know its components. From this point, we can understand that teachers pay great attention to pupils' needs for learning English so they will take this into account when teaching it.

3) How do you motivate your pupils to become active learners in your class?
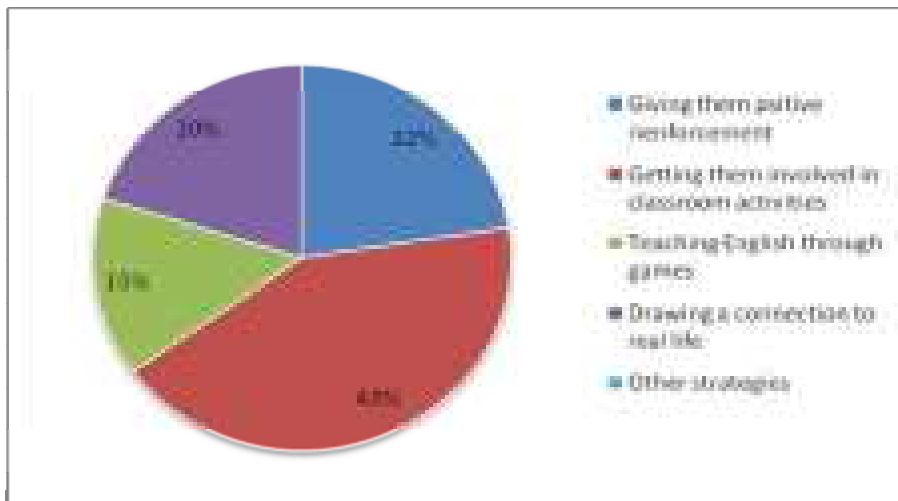
Figure (03): Teachers' Strategies Motivating Pupils in Class

This question is targeted to identify the most useful strategies that teachers use in order to motivate their pupils in the classroom. From the obtained results, involving pupils in most of

classroom activities and giving them positive reinforcement are, according to teachers, the best strategies to keep pupils active during the lesson.

4) What are the different approaches that you use for teaching English?
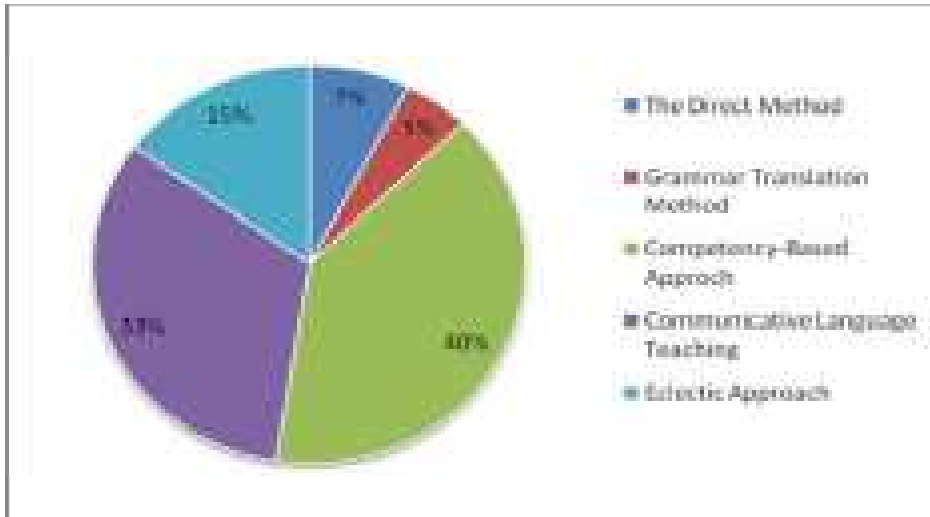
Figure(04): The Different Approaches Used by Teachers for Teaching English

Concerning this question, the aim was to know the various approaches that are used by middle school teachers in teaching English. Teachers provided various answers, but all were approximately the same. The majority of them make use of CLT and CBA(see Figure 4 above), whereas others still use the traditional approaches such as Grammar Translation Method (5%) and Direct method (7%); also 15% of teachers mentioned the eclectic approach which means drawing several methods in a single lesson.

5) Which approach do you think is effective for developing the pupils' communicative competence?

The purpose of this question was to have teachers' opinions about the effective approaches for developing pupils' communicative competence. Middle school teachers state that CLT and CBA are considered as the most effective ones since they help pupils develop their communicative competence in English language.
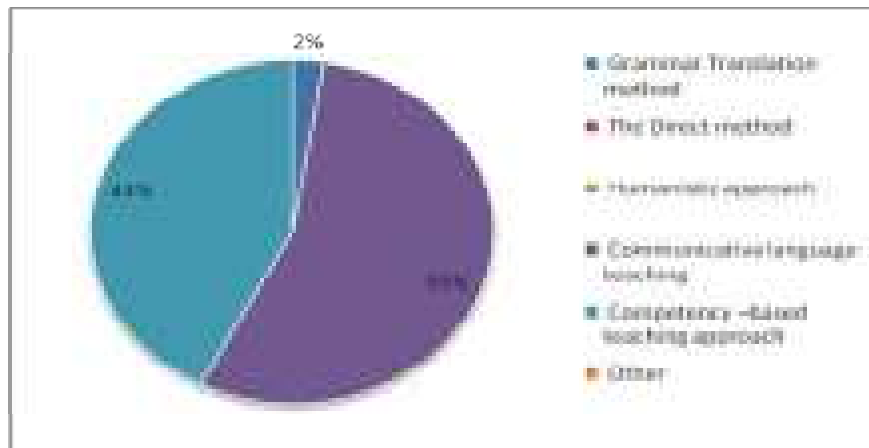
Figure(05): The Effective Approaches in Developing Pupils' Communicative Competence

6) **In your opinion, what roles does competency- based teaching approach play in teaching?**

By this question, the aim was to know the teachers' point of view about the role of CBA in language teaching and learning. The obtained answers revealed that:

_ CBA plays a vital role in language teaching /learning since it meets different learning abilities and can lead to more efficient learning.

_ Also, it involves the learner in the teaching process (learner- centered) and help him/her retain what he/she learnt because of its modern strategies.

_ this approach allows pupils to advance their ability to master a skill at their own pace regardless of environment.

_ This approach is tailored to meet different learning abilities.

_ CBA can make learners reinvest their resources and use them to solve real life situations.

7) **During the teaching sessions, do you pay attention to using the four language skills?**

   a) **Yes**

   b) **No**

   - If yes, do you use them separately or integratedly? And why?

   -If no, which skills do you focus on most? And why

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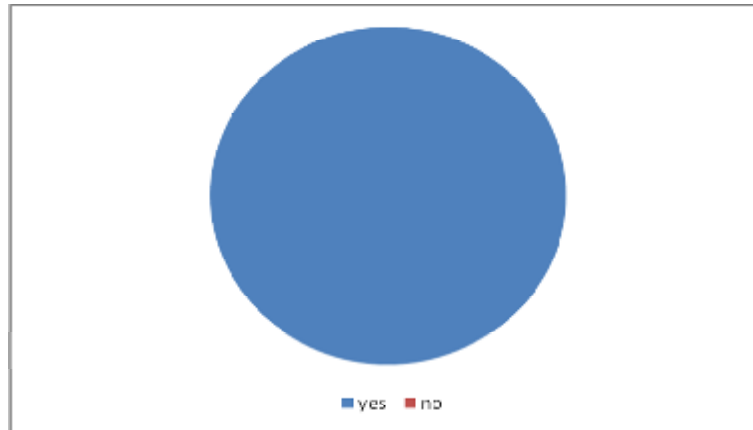
Figure(06): Teachers' Awareness of the Use of Integrated Skills Approach in Class

This question is targeted to check if middle school teachers are aware of the use of the integrated skills approach in the classroom, focusing on the way in which they teach the four language skills during the same lesson. Answers show that all teachers (100%) pay more attention to the use of the four skills during lessons. However, 67% (See Figure 7 below) use language skills integratedly during the lesson, claiming that all skills are important and they work together; 15% use them separately to make sure that their students know their own mistakes and correct them. They also claim that they do not have enough time to integrate them all at once, and it is better to organise them in terms of delivery so the learners can gasp the information. It can be too much on them sometimes. Nonetheless, 18% of them claimed that teaching language skills separately or integratedly depends on the lesson objectives.
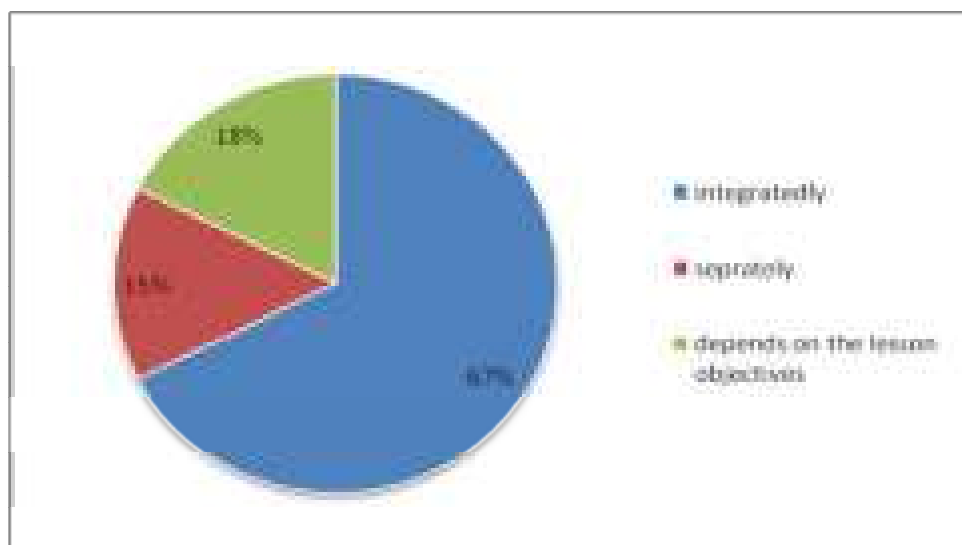
Figure(07) : The Use of Language Skills in the Classroom

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8) Do you give importance to using tasks and activities that may look like real life situations?

        a) **Yes**   ☐

        b) **No**   ☐

■ yes ■ no
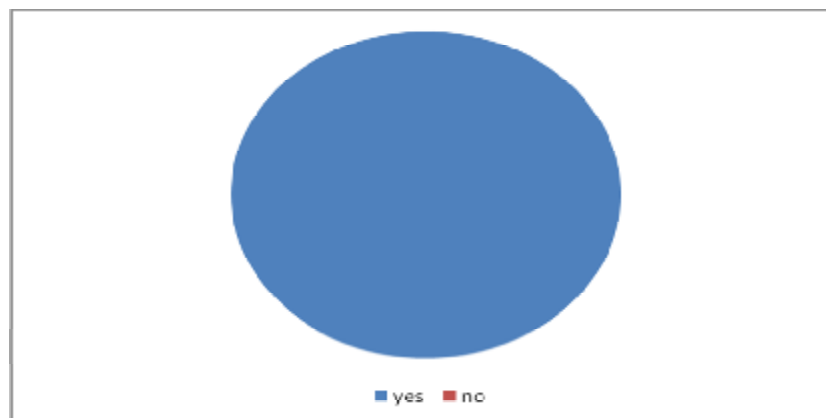
Figure(08): The Importance of Using Authentic Communicative Activities in the Classroom

This question aimed to check whether middle school teachers give importance to using tasks and activities that are similar to real life situations, i.e. authentic communication. All teachers answered that they give much importance to this kind of activities because they are naturally understood and mastered. Such kind of activities involves real life situations which bring fun in the classroom, inspire learners and activate their learning.

9) What are some examples of activities that integrate the four language skills?

The purpose of this question was to discover the kinds of activities that involve the integration of language skills. Middle school teachers have proposed different kinds of tasks that motivate pupils to learn English and that develop their knowledge and make them able to use English effectively in the future. From the obtained results, we notice that there is a large number of activities that teachers use in classroom such as:

Dialogue, Storytelling , role plays , songs , Drilling , written descriptions, silent reading with a given task or reading aloud with a given task, listening to audio dialogues with tasks, memory games, communicative games, interpreting pictures, cross-word puzzles, filling in gaps, board activities, drawing answers.

10) According to your teaching career, how can skills integration influence pupils' English learning?

The last question is vital since it focuses on teachers' opinions about the effect of skills integration in enhancing English learning. Teachers have provided various answers, but all were nearly similar. Middle school teachers state that teaching the four skills integratedly can affect the learners' performance in their process of learning any language in general or English in particular. They state that all human languages are based on the four skills without neglecting any one. The more you listen, the more you speak, and the more you read, the more you write and vice versa .The learner, therefore, can be socialised through practising and moving from one skill to another. Moreover, skills integration influences pupils by making them active in class and by exposing them to authentic language and challenging them to interact naturally.

7.3.2. Data Interpretation

As far as the teachers' questionnaire interpretation is concerned, the answers revealed that the majority of middle school teachers agreed that pupils learn English in order to be good users of the language. Hence, this can only be achieved if they are motivated enough to develop their knowledge of language skills and how to use the language.

Middle school teachers have motioned different strategies they use to motivate pupils such as getting them involved in most classroom activities and giving them positive feedback. Also, they highlighted CBA and CLT as two main approaches they use in teaching English since they have great influence in developing pupils' language skills and communicative competence.

Moreover, teachers' responses revealed that teachers are aware of integrating the four language skills in a lesson, and most of them agreed that language skills cannot be taught in isolation because one skill complements the other. Furthermore, they suggested a large number of various activities that a teacher can use in order to develop their pupils' English proficiency.

Another important point is that, according to their teaching career, they stated that integrating language skills in middle school classes has great effects on pupils' English learning. It influences pupils' English learning through involving them and making the language as a habit not just abstract ideas; in other words, they concretise the language.

8. Discussion of the Main Results

In the present global world, English plays an important role in many domains due to its power of being widely spread. In the field of TEFL, much emphasis is placed on enhancing pupils English learning and developing their communicative abilities,which enables them to function appropriately in future situations. Therefore, educators attempt to use the most efficient ways to make this improvement happen with the knowledge needed to achieve effective communication.

The results of both the questionnaire and the interview addressed to middle school teachers have shown that the majority of teachers are aware of the application of the integrated skills approach in their classes. They agree that CLT and CBA are two effective approaches to language teaching since they help pupils improve their language and communicative skills. In this regard, teachers argue that using new trends and activities in teaching language skills may help students achieve their intended goal of being good English language users.

All the previously mentioned findings strengthened more the background of this work. They confirm the two hypotheses that the integration of the four skills in middle school classes has positive effects on pupils' English learning. Also, the application of the integrated- skill approach in classroom would make pupils use English they learn effectively and vividly.

9. Suggestions and Recommendation

Suggestions for future research based on the findings of this study are as follows. First, the present study was conducted on a sample of forty-three (43) English teachers at a middle school level in Touggourt. To ensure the trustworthiness of findings, future studies may include larger samples of teachers of different age groups of learners at different proficiency levels. Second, more classroom studies are needed to empirically investigate the impact of integrating language skills on a lesson on the development of English learning of different age groups such as learners of secondary school level. Finally, since this study found out that CLT and CBA are the most used approaches by the majority of middle school teachers, more research is needed to investigate the possibility of matching different teaching approaches to different proficiency levels of learners in EFL settings.

Here are some pedagogical recommendations which are based on the data analysis for this study:

➢ There is a need to raise the awareness of some teachers to the importance of the application of integrated skills approach (ISA) in classroom since there are some teachers who do not apply it as part of their daily teaching practices.

➢ English teachers need to be encouraged to develop communicative tests that involve skills integration and emphasise the development of the four skills.

➢ Teachers should have more training in order to develop their professional knowledge to implement skills integration in their teaching practices and design communicative activities that emphasise communication skills as the desired learning outcome of teaching English.

7.3 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the practical part of the thesis in that it exposed the data collection, namely the classroom observation, teachers' interview and teachers' questionnaire and the data analysis. It has also provided some recommendations for raising teachers' awareness of implementing ISA in middle school classes and some suggestions for further studies. The findings revealed the teachers' views about the influence of skills integration in pupils English learning development. The data analysis demonstrated that implementing this approach in middle school programme affects positively the enhancement of pupils' English learning.

Conclusion

Conclusion

In Algeria, English is considered to be the second foreign language in the educational system. It is taught as a four-year course, starting from first year middle school. Due to its important role in the global world, English is learnt for educational reasons as well as it is learnt for communicative purposes. Therefore, much attention was given to the different approaches and methodologies that are used in teaching English language. In this respect, EFL teachers have applied various approaches and strategies in teaching language skills, such as the integrated-skills approach that enables pupils to develop their English learning and their communicative competencies. To this end, the main objective of this study was to investigate the application of the integrated skills approach in EFL classroom (middle school class) and its influence on pupils English learning enhancement.

In this vein, the present thesis is composed of two parts. The first part was about the literature review, whereas the second chapter dealt with the practical part as it embodied the data collected from the classroom observation, semi-structured interview and the questionnaire for middle school teachers and the data analysis.

According to what was inquired, it can be said that the integration of the four skills of the English language in fact influences the pupils' English proficiency. Nevertheless, it is not only a matter of integrating the four skills of the English language, but how to integrate them in a lesson in order to make pupils get 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 such as motivating pupils to be interested in English, managing the classroom well, providing positive feedback, controlling the use of L1 in class.

Communicative Language Teaching and Competency-Based Approach were seen as the major effective approaches that involve skills integration during the lesson. The principle of each approach is to make pupils participate effectively in society. This can be achieved by engaging them in different communicative activities; hence, they can be trained to use thier knowledge about language as well as developing their communicative competence. In the same light of thought, based on the questionnaire's responses, teachers have suggested various communicative activities that primarily involve the integration of the four language skills; in addition, they may help pupils to enhance their English proficiency. Among those activities are: guessing games, information gap, dialogues, role play, storytelling …etc.

Conclusion

Considering the results of the classroom observation, semi-structured interview and questionnaire, it can be properly affirmed that skills integration influences pupils' English learning in different ways. First, integrating language skills leads pupils to use the relevant language in the suitable situations. Second, it makes pupils socialised through practising and moving from one skill to another. Moreover, learning English as a whole through involving all the skills helps pupils in developing and improving their language, so the more they speak, listen, write, and read, the more they make progress in learning English. Finally, the thesis ended with a number of recommendation for future research.

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Appendix

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Teachers' questionnaire

Dear Teacher

I am conducting this questionnaire as a part of my dissertation. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of skills integration in enhancing English learning. I would be grateful if you complete the following questions by ticking the appropriate box or writing brief answers in the spaces provided when requested. your answers will be great help for my research .

Age:………..

Sex:

- Male ☐
- Female ☐

Qualifications:

- Licence ☐
- Master ☐
- Other ☐

_ …………………………………………

1) How long have you been teaching English ?...........................

2) Why do you think pupils need to learn English?

   a) To know what the elements and rules of English language are ☐

   b) To know the language skills ☐

   c) To use it as a means of communication ☐

   d) Other reasons ☐

_……
……………………………………………………………………………………………….

3) How do you motivate your pupils to become active learners in your class?

   a) Giving them positive reinforcement ☐

   b) Getting them involved in classroom activities ☐

   c) Teaching English through games ☐

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d) Drawing a connection to real life [ ]

e) Other strategies [ ]

_..
....

4) What are the different approaches that you use for teaching English?

_..
....

5) Which approach do you think is effective for developing the pupils' communicative competence?

a) Grammar Translation method [ ]

b) The Direct method [ ]

c) Humanistic approach [ ]

d) Communicative language teaching [ ]

e) Competency –based teaching approach [ ]

f) Other [ ]

_………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………

6) In your opinion, what roles does competency- based teaching approach play in teaching ?

_..
....

7) During the teaching sessions, do you pay attention to using the four language skills ?

c) Yes [ ]

d) No [ ]

_ if yes ,do you use them separately or integratedly? And why?

_………………………………………………………………………………………

_if No , which skills do you focus on most? And why ?

_..

8) Do you give importance to using tasks and activities that may look like real life situations ?

c) Yes [ ]

d) No [ ]

_ why ? ……………………………………………………………………………..

9) What are some examples of activities that integrate the four language skills?

     a) ……………………………………….

     b) ……………………………………….

     c) ……………………………………….

     d) ……………………………………….

10) According to your teaching career, how can skills integration influence pupils' English learning ?

………

………

………

…………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for your participation

CHECKLIST

CLASS: 4th year Middle School (G01)

DATE: January, 19th, 2021

Criteria	Answers	Comments	
		Teachers' work	**Pupils' work**
• **Is the lesson receptive (listening , reading) or productive(speaking, writing)?**	Both of them	The teacher gives instructions to listen to the dialogue and then do the task	Pupils are listening carefully while the teacher is reading
• **Does the teacher speak more than pupils?**	Yes	She gives instructions and reads the text and explains the task	They pay attention to the teacher's instructions and keep silent while she talks
• **Does the teacher use real life communicative situations during the lesson?**	Yes	The task's aim is to have a conversation about primary school memories	They are asked to prepare some question by following the teacher's instructions
• **Does the teacher use only English to explain activities?**	Yes	All instructions are in English	They ask for clarification whenever they need
• **Does the pupils use only**	No	She always repeat that	They ask questions in

English while asking for clarifications?		speaking in Arabic is not allowed	English with some grammatical mistakes
• **Does the teacher encourage group work in the classroom?**	Yes	She asks them to formulate groups (4 pupils) to do the task then from each group two volunteers make the conversation	They have to work in groups then in pairs
• **Does the teacher use activities that make pupils interested practicing language skills?**	Yes	She asks them to talk about primary school memories which is an interesting topic for pupils	They are interested to talk about their memories of primary school
• **Does the teacher integrate the four language skills during the lesson?**	Yes	The lesson involves both receptive and productive skills , since pupils listen first the text then they write some questions on their copybooks, after that they were asked to have a conversation .	

CHECKLIST

CLASS: 4th year Middle School (G02)

DATE: January, 19th, 2021

Criteria	Answers	Comments	
		Teachers' work	**Pupils' work**
• **Is the lesson receptive (listening , reading) or productive(speaking, writing)?**	Receptive	She reads the text out loud and repeat reading several times ask student to tick the right answers	They listen carefully and do the task
• **Does the teacher speak more than pupils?**	Yes	She gives them instruction and moving from one pupil to another to correct the task	They do the task silently then they wait for the teacher to correct them
• **Does the teacher use real life communicative situations during the lesson?**	No	She only focuses on the given text	They just following teacher's instructions
• **Does the teacher use only English to explain activities?**	Yes	All instructions and explanations are given in English	They ask for clarification whenever it is needed
• **Does the pupils use only English while asking for clarifications?**	No	Teacher encourage them to use English while asking for explanation and	They use English and Arabic in asking questions

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		sometimes oblige them to use only English	
• **Does the teacher encourage group work in the classroom?**	No	Ask pupils to listen and take notes Individually	Each pupils is listening carefully and take notes
• **Does the teacher use activities that make pupils interested practicing language skills?**	Yes	She corrects answers, and gives pupils score	They were very active to have high scores
• **Does the teacher integrate the four language skills during the lesson?**	No	The lesson is primarily receptive , since the pupils only listen to the teacher and take notes	

CHECKLIST

CLASS:3rd year Middle School (G01)

DATE: January, 20th, 2021

Criteria	Answers	Comments	
		Teachers' work	**Pupils' work**
• **Is the lesson receptive (listening , reading) or productive(speaking, writing)?**	Productive	The teacher ask pupils copy down the sentences written on the bored	They write the sentences silently
• **Does the teacher speak more than pupils?**	Yes	The teacher explains the lesson and the task	they listen to the teacher and solve the task silently
• **Does the teacher use real life communicative situations during the lesson?**	No	There is no authentic communication during the lecture since it is a grammar lesson	They were silent along the lesson and solve grammar questions
• **Does the teacher use only English to explain activities?**	Yes	All instruction are given in English	Pupils are exposed to the language
• **Does the pupils use only English while asking for clarifications?**	No	The teacher does not allow pupils to speak in Arabic	They use English and Arabic to ask for clarification

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• **Does the teacher encourage group work in the classroom?**	Yes	The teacher ask pupil to solve tasks in pairs	Each pupil solves the task with his/her classmate
• **Does the teacher use activities that make pupils interested practicing language skills?**	Yes	The teacher ask pupils to fill-in the gaps in each sentence	They were so active since this kind of activities is very interesting
• **Does the teacher integrate the four language skills during the lesson?**	Yes	She first wrote some sentences on the board and asks pupils to copy down, then she discuss examples with them and then do the task to check understanding	

CHECKLIST

CLASS: 3rd year Middle School (G02)

DATE: February , 11th, 2021

Criteria	Answers	Comments	
		Teachers' work	**Pupils' work**
• **Is the lesson receptive (listening , reading) or productive(speaking, writing)?**	Both of them	The teacher write a dialogue on the bored and ask them to copy down on their copy books	Pupils listen the teacher's instructions and then write the examples
• **Does the teacher speak more than pupils?**	Yes	The teacher gives more explanation about the lesson	Pupils ask for clarification and solve the task orally
• **Does the teacher use real life communicative situations during the lesson?**	Yes	The task was a dialogue about traditions and traditional food	Pupils are asked to fill the gaps to complete the dialogue and to read it out loud
• **Does the teacher use only English to explain activities?**	Yes	All instruction are in English	Ask questions and clarification for the given task
• **Does the pupils use only English while asking for clarifications?**	No	Teacher use different ways to explain difficult words (draw words)	They hardly use just English , most of them use Arabic

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• **Does the teacher encourage group work in the classroom?**	Yes	Most of tasks of this grammar lesson were done in pairs	they share ideas while doing tasks
• **Does the teacher use activities that make pupils interested practicing language skills?**	Yes	Teacher make a challenge who can formulate sentences using the given structure	They interact with each other and produce sentences as much as they can
• **Does the teacher integrate the four language skills during the lesson?**	Yes	She gives pupils a dialogue about traditions, they elicit some rules and identify tenses, then they fill the gaps to compete the task ;and finally produce another dialogue using their own sentences	

CHECKLIST

CLASS: 2nd year Middle School

DATE: January, 19th, 2021

Criteria	Answers	Comments	
		Teachers' work	**Pupils' work**
• **Is the lesson receptive (listening , reading) or productive(speaking, writing)?**	Both of them	The lesson was about giving directions ,she start the lecture by asking about directions ,she gives the structure of the sentence to follow	All Pupils together answer the teacher out loud by using the form that she gives
• **Does the teacher speak more than pupils?**	Yes	She explain how to give directions or how to locate a place	Pupils listen to the teacher's explanation
• **Does the teacher use real life communicative situations during the lesson?**	Yes	The teacher tries to make the class as street and she gives some pictures buildings and ask pupils to do the task which is asking for direction	The whole class is engaged in this activity some ask about directions others answer and vice versa
• **Does the teacher use only English to explain activities?**	Yes	All instructions given in English	They were listening carefully to the teacher and repeat all together out loud whenever they are asked to do

• **Does the pupils use only English while asking for clarifications?**	No	Teacher order pupils to use only English in class, she provides help when they do not know how to say it	They use English with some lexical and grammatical mistakes
• **Does the teacher encourage group work in the classroom?**	Yes	She divided the class into two groups the first ask questions and the second give the directions	All pupils were engaged in the task and the interact with each other
• **Does the teacher use activities that make pupils interested practicing language skills?**	Yes	The teacher asks the pupils to do the task as if they are outside the classroom	Pupils enjoy the activity by moving around the class and using what they have learned
• **Does the teacher integrate the four language skills during the lesson?**	Yes	The teacher start the lesson by explaining how to ask about directions then pupils write examples in their copybooks then she ask them to formulate groups and do the task given	

CHECKLIST

CLASS: 1st year Middle School

DATE: February, 14th, 2021

Criteria	Answers	Comments	
		Teachers' work	**Pupils' work**
• **Is the lesson receptive (listening , reading) or productive(speaking, writing)?**	Receptive	Teacher ask pupils to write the date on their slits and then correct them	Pupils write the date with some spelling mistakes
• **Does the teacher speak more than pupils?**	Yes	The teacher always repeat instructions several times	Pupils are exposed to English for the first time so always they need more clarification
• **Does the teacher use real life communicative situations during the lesson?**	No	She kept explaining the lesson which concerned with using indefinite articles and the pronouns he/she in a sentence	Pupils listen to the teacher explanation and do the task of filling gaps
• **Does the teacher use only English to explain activities?**	Yes	The teacher use most of the time English but she is tolerant with pupils of 1st year since they still do not master the language	They ask for clarification whenever they need
• **Does the pupils use only English while asking for**	No	The teacher provide help whenever pupils	They hardly use the English , so they use

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clarifications?		need	Arabic
• **Does the teacher encourage group work in the classroom?**	No	The teacher asks pupils to keep silent and to do tasks individually	All tasks are done individually , there is no interaction between pupils
• **Does the teacher use activities that make pupils interested practicing language skills?**	Yes	The teacher presents activities concerning indefinite articles and the pronouns he/she but does not relate them with the development of language skills.	Since the lesson is focuses on indefinite articles and pronouns They do not feel interested in further practice.
• **Does the teacher integrate the four language skills during the lesson?**	No	The lesson is primarily receptive, pupils were listening to the teacher instruction and do tasks	

Abstract

The goal of this study is to investigate the influence of skills integration in enhacing English learning for pupils of middle school. This is a case study in which 3 English teachers in Beddouda Mohammad El- sayah Middle School and 40 middle school teachers, from different institutions, were involved. In order to achieve the aim of this study and to prove the hypothesis, the researcher used three instruments: classroom observation in order to have an overview about what is happening during the lessons, interviews with three (03) English teachers in order to have their points of view concerning the impact of skills integration on enhacing pupils' English learning and a questionnaire that was distributed to 40 middle school teachers to have more insights about the investigated topic. The obtained results showed that the implementation of an integrated skills approach in an EFL classroom effectively enhances pupils English learning.

Key words: *skills integration, English learning , Enhancement , Integrated-Skill approach*

الملخص

تهدف هذه المذكرة إلى دراسة تأثير تكامل المهارات في تعزيز تعلم اللغة الانجليزية لتلاميذ الطور المتوسط. هذه الدراسة هي دراسة الحالة لثلاثة أساتذة لغة انجليزية في متوسطة بدودة محمد السايح بالإضافة إلى أربعين 40 أستاذا من مؤسسات أخرى. من اجل تحقيق الهدف من هذه الدراسة واثبات صحة الفرضيات استخدم الباحث ثلاثة وسائل وهي : مراقبة الفصول الدراسية وذلك من اجل الحصول على نظرة عامة حول ما يحدث في القسم أثناء التدريس. كما قام أيضا بإجراء مقابلة شفوية مع الأساتذة الثلاث في المؤسسة السالفة الذكر وذلك من اجل معرفة وجهة نظرهم حول اثر تكامل المهارات في تعزيز اللغة الانجليزية. بالإضافة إلى توزيع 40 استبيانا للأساتذة لغرض الحصول على المزيد من الأفكار بخصوص الحالة المدروسة . أظهرت النتائج المتحصل عليها أن تطبيق منهج المهارات المتكاملة في الفصول التي تدرس اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية يعزز بشكل فعال تعلم هذه اللغة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تكامل المهارات, تعلم اللغة الانجليزية , تعزيز , منهج تكامل المهارات