INTEGRATING SPEAKING SKILLS BY LISTENING

Inomjonova Ezozkhon Rafikjon kizi
Fergana Region, Besharik District,
English Teacher of 9th Elementary School

Sattorov Akhadjon Aliyevich
Fergana Region, Besharik District,
English Teacher of 9th Elementary School

Khudoynazarova Dinora Nodirovna
Fergana Region, Besharik District,
English Teacher of 9th elementary school

Abstract: Speaking and listening skills have been regarded as being too difficult to cope with ,so generally students are not willing to participate in tasks focusing on these two skills. When they are integrated through information-gap tasks, students might see the actual outcome and become more willing to practice to achieve more success in communicating their ideas. Some instructors do not prefer information-gap tasks thinking that the class may get out of control which may cause barriers in communication process.

Keywords: speaking, listening, improving, skill, method.

In real-life communication, people use a variety of language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. "When people learn a foreign language, they usually want to make use of that language to communicate with people who speak the same language. They can find themselves in the need of understanding them and talking to them. As Raimes (1983) states, "listening and speaking are, regardless of who the people using the language are, at least as important as the other skills to communicate". Byrne (1991) states that "one should keep in mind that these skills are normally integrated in real life" (p.21). The term integrated skills is frequently used as if it were almost synonymous with reinforcement. Viewed in this way, the process of integrating language skills involves linking them together in such a way that what has been learnt and practiced through the exercise of one skill is reinforced and perhaps extended through further language tasks which bring different skills into use. Here, the use of any skill may quite naturally lead to the use of other.

It is essential for students to understand the language they are exposed to and to respond appropriately so thatthey can become competent users of that particular language. Seferoğlu and Uzakgöre (2004) claim that "listening isusually an interactive process" (p. 2). The listener does not always just listen to, but she or he also reacts to the speaker or asks questions for clarification. The most essential issue for the students should be to understand what they are listening to and to be able to give appropriate responses orally. This aim brings us to the integration of listening and speaking while teaching, as our main consideration should be not only learning the grammar of the target language but also communicating in that language, which highlights the importance of the integration of these two skills. As a result, it may be said that the more the skills are taught individually, the less communication will take place in the classroom.   Dell Hymes (1971) defined communicative competence as a term in linguistics which refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately. Within this process, communicative competence is a way of describing what a language speaker knows which enables him or her to interact effectively with others. Therefore, teachers should give more importance to teaching of the skills in integration in order to encourage the individuals become communicatively competent.

People listen or speak in order to obtain the presented information or to learn about a content which is intellectual rather than factual as a way of developing their own intellectual skills so that ideas can be more effectively manipulated, possibly with the aim of influencing the behavior of others, or of determining the

outcome of a series of operations. These reasons for listening and speaking are essentially practical. Thus, it can be said that listening is carried out for many purposes other than listening to the language itself. Just as messages are listened in order to be able to do something else, the student speaking a foreign language should be less concerned with the language than with the message sent to communicate. Therefore, students should develop not only listening but also speaking skills in order to communicate with others.

For some time in language teaching, it has been conventional to teach speaking as being of primary importance, regarding listening to be less important although it is known that oral skills and aural skills cannot be separated from each other. Language teachers should encourage students to predict, to tolerate ambiguity and to link ideas so that they stop dwelling on isolated words often not vital for comprehension. To facilitate communicative competence the teachers can also help students by discussing the title, theme, and cultural background before starting the tasks. While choosing the tasks, all types of materials from advertisements to literature can be used. In the first language, students have ready access to language used in meaningful contexts, and they incorporate needed patterns from those models into their own changing and evolving the linguistic system. What they often lack in the second foreign language classroom is the opportunity to develop a sufficient language base from which to generate messages they would like to communicate. Classroom use of comprehensible materials can help to alleviate this problem. Thus, all tasks should serve to facilitate communicative fluency in each of the other language skills including listening and speaking. The students can speak at a much higher level of proficiency than in the past when the preoccupation with grammar is used to deprive them of the opportunity to speak for the meaning. Besides these, information-gap tasks increase students' motivation and improve their level of comprehension.

Within the framework of this study, it was realized that the students were willing to participate in the tasks as the two skills were presented in integration through information-gap tasks, which created real life situations in the classroom. Listening is a receptive skill in that the listener is receiving a message from a speaker, but it shouldn't mean that the listener is passive during a listening task. The listening process, in a way, is a very active process as the listener needs to use background knowledge to understand the intended message of the speaker; so, the listeners should deal with various tasks while listening to activate their schemata. The follow-up of these stages can easily be the production stage, which inevitably means the integration of skills. Hence, teaching the skills separately will influence negatively the communication in the classroom; therefore, the teachers should create real life situations not only by integrating listening and speaking skills but also by implementing information-gap tasks to enhance real communication among the individuals.

In conclusion, it is seen that the results of the test show that students' success increases when these two skills are taught in integration through information-gap tasks. Moreover, practicing the skills through information-gap tasks carry up student involvement and motivation mainly because these kinds of tasks are related to real life and thus leads to communication. It may be said that the listening and speaking skills are at least as important as the reading and writing skills. This study suggests that students' success rises when listening and speaking skills are integrated through information-gap tasks.

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