Integrated Collaborative Learning Approach (ICLA): Conceptual framework of pedagogical approach for the integration of language skills

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ABSTRACT

The study is an attempt to introduce contemporary multidisciplinary pedagogical approach in the classrooms of English as a Second Language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and English as a Native Language (ENL) for the integration of basic language skills such as Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (LSRW) across the globe. English language is a passport to achieve the learning goals in education everywhere in the world irrespective of any culture, religion and ethnic background because it is currently an international and most powerful language in different parts of world along with the national languages of the different regions. Educationists, linguists and policy makers are working on the advent of new approaches which should be deemed fit for the effective and better cumulative achievements in learning. The researchers worked on literature to find out one of the best teaching approaches that can help learners to partake actively and achieve learning goals of language skills according to the needs of current scenario with the help of language abilities and communicative activities under the umbrella of enabling skills through pedagogical and target tasks. In order to get a proficient and productive teaching and learning approach, the researchers linked two contemporary approaches which are followed by many educationists and English teachers everywhere in the world especially known as Collaborative Learning Approach (CLA) and Integrated Teaching Approach (ITA) for the better and effective learning of basic language (LSRW) skills. The researchers merged two approaches and introduced a new approach titled as Integrated Collaborative Learning Approach (ICLA) as a multidisciplinary approach. ICLA is not only designed for the integration of basic language skills (LSRW) but also equally applicable to all disciplines except ESL/EFL classrooms because ITA and CLA are practised widely in all disciplines in the various corners of the world.

Keywords: Integrated Collaborative Learning Approach (ICLA), Multidisciplinary, Conceptual Framework, Basic Language Skills (LSRW), ESL/EFL Pedagogy.

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ENGLISH AS A PASSPORT LANGUAGE (EPL)

English undoubtedly is the most important language which is being employed for communication purposes across the globe (Akinwamide, 2012). English is the universal language as well as a passport to good career, current knowledge, and the best source of sharing information with entire world in advance and technological age. Each individual is feeling the importance of English Langauge to learn about the emerging trends in various disciplines. English is growing very fast with the speed of technology and advancement. According to Mahboob (2003), the most powerful langauge is English as an international language; therefore, it is playing a great role in studies across the world including Muslim countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Pakistan. According to Mahboob (2005), English langauge shows the concept of langauge power in the form of a status symbol in society. Al Chibani (2014) explained that "English achievement is important to be taken into consideration because research has verified that success in English classes helps students in their future studies and future academic life" (p. 334).

"Language acquisition is based on the neuro-psychological processes" (Maslo, 2007: 41). According to Kramina (2000) "Language acquisition is opposed to learning and is a subconscious process similar to that by which children acquire their first language" (p. 27). Therefore, Robbins (2007) said that "language acquisition is an integral part of the unity of all language" (p. 49). Kramina (2000) suggested that "Language learning is a conscious process, is the product of either formal learning situation or a self-study programme" (p. 27). Whereas Robbins (2007) explained that learning is;

If the development of the native language begins with free, spontaneous use of speech and is culminated in the conscious realization of linguistic forms and their mastery, then the development of a foreign language begins with conscious realization of language and arbitrary command of it and culminates in spontaneous, free speech. But, between those opposing paths of development, there exist a mutual dependency just as between the development of scientific and spontaneous concepts" (John-Steiner by Robbins, 2007, p. 49). Vigotskis (2002) has argued that scientific concept learning differs from spontaneous concept acquiring as foreign language learning differs from native language acquiring. The development of scientific and spontaneous concepts is interrelated as foreign and native languages relate to each other.

Language Acquisition	Language Learning
Unconscious	Conscious
Mother Language	Foreign Language

From concrete to abstract	From abstract to concrete
Thought generalisation	Object generalisation
Implicit	Explicit
Unstructured/ non-systematic	Structured/ systematic
Informal context	Formal context
Based on ideas or knowledge	Based on grammatical rules
Depending on attitudes	Depending on aptitudes
Complex Learning	Simple to complex learning

Table: 01 Difference between Language Acquisition and Language Learning

ENGLISH IN SOUTH ASIA

English is equally treated and used in all South Asian countries like Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Indonesia etc. English is taught as medium of instruction in the almost all countries in the region of South Asia. Language is the source of developing human feelings that urge them to think, feel and act in a group (Rahman, 1996). Pakistan is no doubt a country of various rich languages and cultures in which five languages are considered as indigenous languages like, Pashto, Punjabi, Balouchi, Sindhi, and Saraiki but the central languages of the state are Urdu and English (Rahman, 2003; 2004). As per the Constitution of Pakistan (1973), article 251(1), (2), Urdu and English Languages are known as the national and official languages of Islamic Republic of Pakistan with a total number of 74 different languages (Ethnologue, 2018). Lewis (2009) stated that Pakistan is the state of diverse languages and cultures consisting 72 different living languages excluding English. Actually, the developing countries are facing critical roles in terms of English and Pakistan is one of them (Mansoor, 2002; 2003). Haidar (2018) said that "English is a passport to privilege and needed for survival in Pakistan" (p. 1). English is an inspirational and motivational langauge being one of the traditions of English colonialism (Rahman, 2004; 2006). One of the prerequisite requirements of getting good professional jobs is English being an official language in Pakistan (Rahman, 2005). Hence, proficiency and competence in English is taken as the key characteristics for a social class and a symbol for superiority among all languages (Shamim, 2008).

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

English language is known as ESL in Pakistan because it is used both as the medium of instructions in schools, colleges, universities and also in day to day communication. There are three basic conditions for the understanding of the concept of ESL such as;

i.   The language which is used by the immigrants as well as minorities in the English speaking countries,

ii. The countries in which English is not used as L1 but used for day to day communication such as Philippines, India, Pakistan and Singapore, and

iii. Most of the countries in which English is not treated as L1 like Japan, Sweden and Germany (Richards, Platt & Weber, 1985).

ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL)

The concept of EFL is not new for the native and many speakers of west countries. EFL is described on the base of ethnic and regional identity. But the concept of EFL is complex for the non-European speakers. The countries in which English is designed to teach in schools as a subject without any other important role or position in society is known as EFL (Nayar, 1997).

Judd (1987) says that as per the context of EFL, English "serves little communicative function and has no special status or use over any other foreign language" (p. 6). "English is taught in schools, often widely, but it does not play an essential role in national or social life" (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, and Pincas, 1978, p. 6). According to the Socio-linguistic settings, Kachru (1988, 1991) differentiated ESL and EFL as Outer and Expanding Circles as per the poly model of world Englishes. Platt and Weber (1979) argued that English varieties keep on moving with the passage of time. EFL changes into ESL, when the language is used for day to day communication in a country. Moag (1982) believes that sometimes in the phenomenon of language various EFL/ESL varieties create fuzziness with the help of back to future in the form of quasi organic way like ESL changes into EFL. Judd (1987) supported the viewpoint of Moag while giving the reference of Malaysia in which the status of English is used to be converted from ESL to EFL.

IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH IN THE EDUCATION OF PAKISTAN

Higher Education and higher positions are dependent on English as leading language for development in Pakistan (Coleman, 2010; Rahman, 2002). Moreover, English is the only resource which is considered the most important in the failure of education for laymen (Bruthiaux, 2002).The growing prestige of English took the charge of imposition everywhere in Pakistan that caused several problems for ordinary students with limited English access. English is playing

different roles and producing various results in different developing countries (Haider, 2018). Some researchers claimed that English learning is beneficial for students' academic and professional career (Haidar, in press; Vaish, 2005). Other researchers claimed that English learning affects negatively students' understanding and progress which later on caused a factor of their failure (Bruthiaux, 2002). There are four school types on the basis of medium of instruction in Pakistan like as elite public, elite private, general public and general private (Rahman, 2001). The educational system of Pakistan is mostly influenced by English as compared to the local languages. English is the symbol used for literal and educated people. The local languages are considered less valued (Tamim, 2014).

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING APPROACH (CLA)

Collaborative Learning Approach (CLA) is the base for most of the learning approaches in contemporary era. The concept is considered to be derived from one of the most important learning theories known as sociocultural theory by Lev Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky argued that social settings gave birth to the development of human beings. CLA is defined as "a situation in which two or more people work together in order to learn something" (Dillenbourg, 1999, p. 1). In the current work, CLA referred to the small groups of ESL undergraduates working mutually on particular activities with each other through an active participation (Cohen, 1994). CLA denotes the environment in which "a small group of learners working together as a team to solve problems, complete a task, or accomplish a common goal" (Graham, 2005, p. 11). CLA has deep and strong pedagogical as well as theoretical roots. As far as the theoretical perspective is concerned, CLA is widely applied in Education as well as in the fields of ESL and EFL (Kohonen, 1989; Kohonen, 1992; Gaillet, 1992; McWham et al., 2003; Nunan, 1992). As per pedagogical perspective, it is an effective way to help ESL learners by instruction in achieving proficiency in L2 on the basis of communication in small groups (Storch, 2005). CLA is different from traditional learning in terms of diverse bases. CLA supports fundamental prospects for learners in the form of assigned roles to be achieved in groups on the basis of same goals in joint venture.

Normally, CLA is contrasted with the classrooms where the context is operationalized for teacher centered or competitive activities (Kessler, 2003). Individual learning does not impact on others both in positive or negative ways. Therefore, competitive learning means to get higher position among students. It is proved fact that CLA is the key approach for the apprentices to acquire skills that enhanced the learning with the support of other learners (Schmuck, 1985). CLA has advantages such as weak learners effectively work in the company of brilliant ones (Gabriele, 2007; Winskel, 2008). While working in small groups, the learners used to construct important skills in the form of thinking, leading, encouraging self-esteem and motivation (Garibaldi, 1979; Gunderson & Johnson, 1980; Hill & Hill, 1990; Johnson & Ahlgren, 1976). Storch (2002) claimed that it is the first responsibility of the instructor to encourage the students to participate effectively

in the promotion of social skills as far as reconstruction of the ideas. CLA uncovers emerging ideas for the learners when they share, discuss and exchange their views with others. They improve their learning with proper feedback from other classmates and in this way they feel motivated and encouraged (Graham, 2005). CLA is multidisciplinary approach and it is applied in ESL/ EFL pedagogy for effective learning process and evidences proved it one of the best approaches. CLA plays an important role in langauge teaching and learning especially in langauge skills. The basic Langauge skills are developed in the best way through the natural environment (Krashen, 1982). Therefore, the teaching methods which are followed in contemporary era in Pakistan are outdated and teacher centered. So, single pedagogical approach is insufficient to meet the needs of the ESL students, for this purpose the researcher will apply another approach which is known as Integrated Teaching Approach (ITA) with CLA to get desired objectives.

INTEGRATED TEACHING APPROACH (ITA)

Oxford (2001) defined Integrated Teaching Approach (ITA) as an approach in which two or more than two skills are interwoven with one another like the strands of loom in a tapestry. Scarcella and Oxford (1992) emphasized on the importance of the ESL teaching in the form of integrating language skills. Scarcella and Oxford explained that language depends on communication which is the exchanging of ideas in real situation. Therefore, it is impossible to learn language with a single skill in actual way. The use of listening skill is not enough to learn a whole language without the help of other skills like reading, writing and speaking as well. Communication works directly or indirectly with the help of integrating basic skills of language.

The amalgamation of two or more than two skills together in a communicative task is known as Integrated Teaching Approach (Harmer, 1983; Littlewood, 2001; Oxford, 1990; Nunan, 1990). Therefore as per recommendation of Lucantoni (2002), language skills are integrated with each other for cooperation in real context. Moreover, the users of language also love to express their thoughts through the combination of language skills at the same time (Harmer, 1983). For the teaching of the basic language skills in a classroom, teachers prepare the learners for effective communication in ESL classes for practical implications of language skills in society. In practical life, reading, writing, listening and speaking skills are not used in isolation. All four basic skills are considered as a bridge which serves to connect individual to the society (Pysarchyk & Yamshynska, 2015, p.17).

Oxford (2001) also strongly recommended ITA for teaching language skills like the colorful strands of looms in a tapestry in both English as a Second Language and English as a Foreign Language. Oxford compared the different strands of loom used in tapestry with the qualities of teachers, learner, setting and the relevant language used in classrooms.

ITA is English language pedagogy which is specifically directly or indirectly interlinked with basic four skills such as Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (LSRW) across the world. Widdowson (1978) categorised the language skills in two categories known as the receptive or passive and the productive or active keeping in mind the needs of ESL students. Widdowson placed reading and writing under the receptive skills while speaking and writing under the productive skills (p.57). As stated by Kuśnierek (2015) explained that effective foreign language learning process depends on the integration of four skills. However, the effective process is perplexed and time taking for integrating the language skills in classrooms to be carried out. Both speaking and writing skills produce language that is why the skills are known as productive skills. Speaking relies on sounds to communicate verbally whereas writing skill is the source of communication in writing (p. 75). Ur (1996) observed that;

> Of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as speakers of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing; and many if not most foreign languages learners are primarily interested in learning to speak (p. 120).

Ur elucidated that speaking is much important in terms of using extensive information especially on the part of various aspects of langauge. It is the fact that speaking is known as the one of the most complicated skills because it focuses on well exposure and continuous practice. As stated by Kuśnierek, (2015)

> Nowadays, many people identify fluency in speaking with the most desirable ability in their target language, for being able to talk smoothly with a native speaker very often proves the actual linguistic level. Accordingly, for most people, the ability to speak a foreign language is synonymous with knowing that language because speech is for them the basic means of human communication. (p. 75)

Teacher should follow the protocol of integrating the language skills in a sequenced way for the achievement of better and positive results in ESL settings. The following steps should be focused in the process of instructing the learners especially in ESL classrooms;
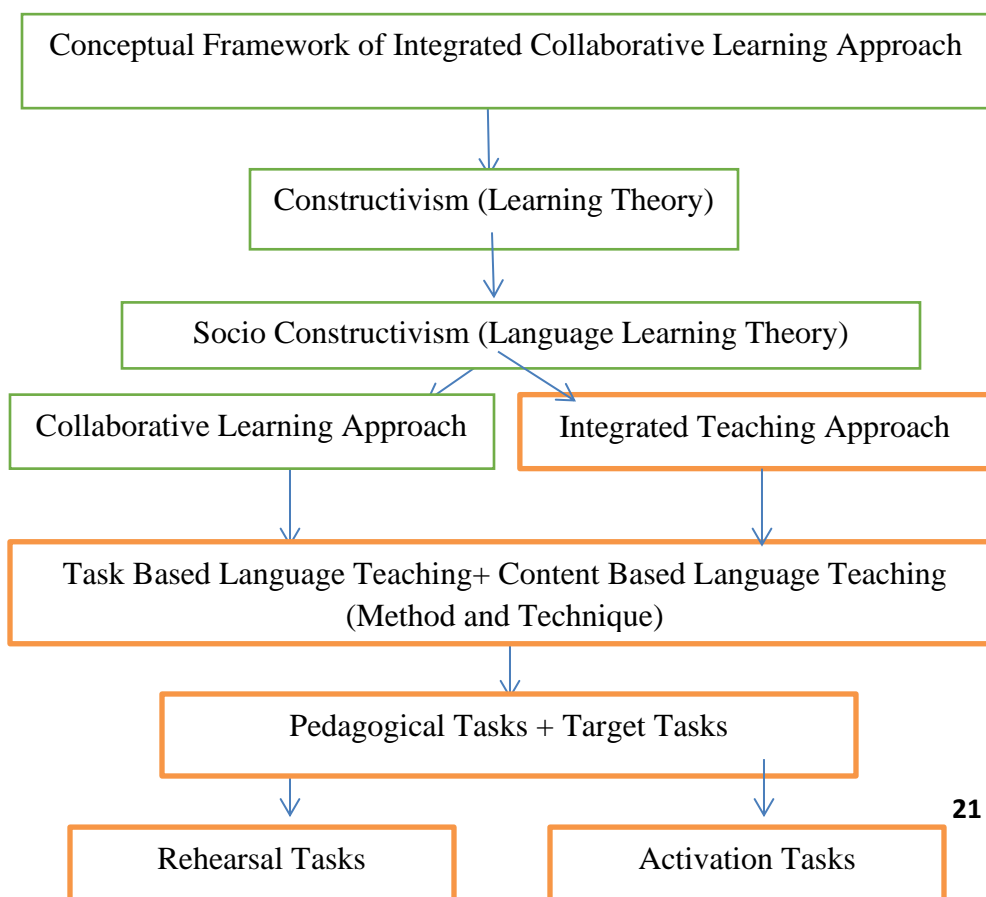
i. Learn more about the various ways to integrate language skills in the classroom (e.g., content-based, task-based, or a combination),

ii. Reflect on their current approach and evaluate the extent to which the skills are integrated,

iii. Choose instructional materials, textbooks and technologies that promote the integration of listening, reading, speaking and writing as well as the associated skills of syntax, vocabulary and so on,
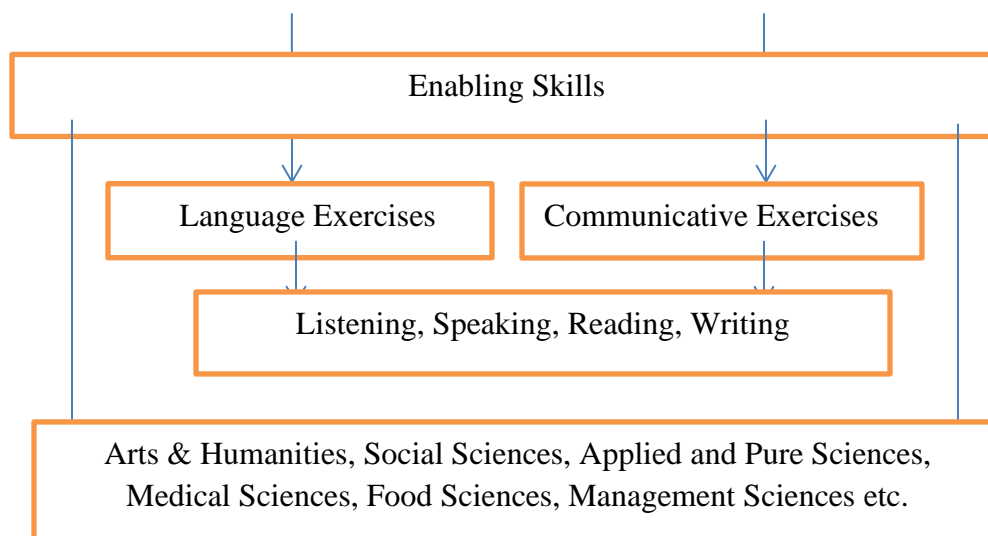
iv.   Even if a given course is labeled according to just one skill, remember that it is possible to integrate the other language skills through appropriate tasks, and

v.   Teach language learning strategies and emphasize that a given strategy can often enhance performance in multiple skills (Oxford, 2001, p. 11).

INTEGRATED COLLABORATIVE LEARNING APPROACH (ICLA)

Collaborative Learning Approach (CLA) and Integrative Teaching Approach (ITA) are merged for the effective teaching and learning of English Language which is known as Integrated Collaborative Learning Approach (ICLA). It is the mixture of two multidisciplinary emerging approaches of contemporary era in the field of linguistics especially in ESL/EFL context. The researcher will use ICLA in English pedagogy to meet the requirements of the current scenario for achieving effective Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (LSRW) skills. ICLA deals with the art of English language pedagogy in which the instructor will teach language skills in terms of integrating the suitable strategies and techniques, keeping in mind the pedagogical and target tasks with the help of enabling skills to motivate the learners for the process of effective learning. The two approaches and their characteristics are playing a great role in the learning process of ESL classrooms. ICLA will provide active, better, productive, diversified and creative environment for the learners and in this way they will polish their skills of learning in real context along with pedagogical and real or target tasks.

Graphical Presentation of Integrated collaborative Learning Approach (ICLA); A Multidisciplinary Approach

Conceptual Framework of Integrated Collaborative Learning Approach

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Constructivism (Learning Theory)

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Socio Constructivism (Language Learning Theory)

Collaborative Learning Approach   Integrated Teaching Approach

Task Based Language Teaching+ Content Based Language Teaching
(Method and Technique)

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Pedagogical Tasks + Target Tasks

Rehearsal Tasks   Activation Tasks

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                        Enabling Skills                          │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
        ┌──────────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────────┐
        │  Language Exercises  │      │  Communicative Exercises │
        └──────────────────────┘      └──────────────────────────┘
            ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────┐
            │   Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing      │
            └──────────────────────────────────────────────┘
   ┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
   │  Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences, Applied and Pure Sciences, │
   │   Medical Sciences, Food Sciences, Management Sciences etc.      │
   └─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers recommended some of the contributions for new researchers not only in the field of English Language Teaching and Learning especially in ESL/EFL classrooms but also for the students of Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences, Applied and Pure Sciences, Medical & Dental Sciences, Nursing, Food Sciences and Management Sciences etc.

i. ICLA is a multidisciplinary approach which is equally applicable to all disciplines irrespect to any part of the world.

ii. People can use ICLA in developing basic Language skills (LSRW) through applying different rehearsal and target tasks to polish enabling skills of learners in real context.

iii. ICLA is neither restricted to ESL/EFL pedagogy nor to the language skills in English language teaching, it can be used in developing creative, individual, collaborative, social, practical and moral skills of the learners not only in educational context but also for practical and real time accomplishment.

iv. Future researchers can investigate the effect of ICLA on ESL undergraduates' performance in Speaking and Writing abilities and the students' Views on its use in learning academic English.

v. The researchers can investigate the effect of ICLA on ESL undergraduates' performance in Listening and Speaking abilities and the students' Views on its use in learning academic English.

vi. The researchers can investigate the effect of ICLA on ESL undergraduates' performance in Reading and Writing abilities and the students' Views on its use in learning academic English.

vii. The researchers can investigate the effect of ICLA on ESL undergraduates' performance in reading and listening abilities and the students' Views on its use in learning academic English.

viii.   The researchers can investigate the effect of ICLA on ESL undergraduates' performance in listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities and the students' Views on its use in learning academic English.

ix.   The researchers can discover the views of undergraduates and their teachers on the use of Collaborative Learning Approach (CLA) in speaking and writing skills in the learning of academic English.

x.   The researchers can also discover the views of undergraduates and their teachers on the use of Collaborative Learning Approach (CLA) in reading and listening skills in the learning of Academic English.

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