PERCEPTIONS ON AND PRACTICES OF SEGREGATION OR INTEGRATION OF SKILLS IN ELT

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education

In Partial Fulfilment for the Master of Education in English

Submitted by

Dhram Dev Ojha

Faculty of Education

Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur

Kathmandu, Nepal

2017

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge this thesis is original; no part of it was earlier submitted for the candidature of research degree to any university.

Date: 14-03-2017   ….……….……….

Dhram Dev Ojha

RECOMMENDATION FOR ACCEPTANCE

This is to certify that **Mr. Dhram Dev Ojha** has prepared this thesis entitled **Perceptions on and Practices of Segregation or Integration of Skills in ELT** under my guidance and supervision.

I recommend this thesis for acceptance.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to

my **parents and all family members** whose blessing is with me forever.

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ABSTRACT

The study entitled **Perceptions on and Practices of Segregation or Integration of Skills in ELT** was conducted to find out the perceptions of secondary level English language teachers on the issue of isolating or integrating skills and to explore the practices of teaching English in Nepal in relation to segregation and integration of skills. The study followed survey research design. The population of the research consisted of secondary level English language teachers teaching in different schools of Kathmandu district. Ten teachers from different ten schools were selected as the sample for the study through convenient sampling strategy. As per the objectives of the study, a set of questionnaire and an observation form were used to collect the required data. The data were analyzed and interpreted descriptively making use of simple statistical tools such as frequency and percentile to derive findings of the study. The study found that teachers had positive perceptions on both of the approaches of teaching language skills. However, there was higher support for skill integration in comparison to skill segregation. Huge majority of the teachers (i.e. 90%) informed that they integrated two or more skills at a time and they integrated the skills by organizing them around a particular task or topic. However, in real practice, teachers were found to be teaching through segregated approach in a great deal. So, a gap was found between the responses of the teachers and their behavior observed in the classroom. Similarly, the gap was found in case of teachers' perceptions and practices of teaching English language skills.

This thesis consists of five different chapters. The first chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definition of the key terms. Similarly, second chapter deals with the review of theoretical as well as empirical literature and its implication for the study; moreover, it includes the conceptual framework. Likewise, the third chapter deals with the methods and procedures of the study including research

design and method of the study, population, sample and sampling strategy, research tools, sources of data, data collection procedures, data analysis and interpretation procedures, and ethical considerations. In the same way, the fourth chapter contains the analysis and interpretation of the results. Finally, the fifth chapter incorporates the findings and conclusion of the study followed by some policy related, practice related and further research related recommendation based of the study.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The study entitled "Perceptions on and Practices of Segregation or Integration of Skills in ELT" consists of five different chapters. This is the introductory chapter of the study which consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Directly or indirectly, English language is associated with power, prestige, property, career development and upward social mobility. This has led to the worldwide teaching and learning of English under varying contexts of learning and with various purposes of learning. Contexts of learning English are discussed by Harmer (2008, p. 12) in terms of three situations: EFL (English as Foreign Language), ESL (English as Second Language) and ESOL (English to the Speakers of Other Language). Similarly, he discusses the contexts of schools and language schools, large class and one to one teaching, in school and in company situation; and real and virtual learning environment. Harmer (2008, pp. 11-12) also presents six different reasons for learning English language : inclusion of English as compulsory subject in the curricula, better carrier development opportunity, need of integration with the target language culture, English for specific purposes, wish to study English language culture, and some miscellaneous purposes. These contexts and reasons for learning English are equally applicable in the context of Nepal as well.

Teaching English in such different contexts to the individuals with various purposes aims at equipping students with an ability to use English accurately and appropriately, receptively and productively; and in both written and spoken modes. Learning of a language involves the learning of the skills and aspects of the languages. In this regard, Oxford (1990, pp. 56) says:

Acquiring a new language necessarily involves developing the four primary skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing in varying degrees and combinations. These four skills also include associated skills; such as, knowledge of vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, syntax, meaning, and usage.

This implies that the teaching of English should focus on the development of four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in students in association with the aspects of the English language such as pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Similarly, Ur (2010, p. 103) adds, "Language proficiency can be defined in terms of accuracy and fluency". This indicates that the teaching of language aspects is generally oriented to develop accuracy whereas the teaching of skills firmly emphasis on fluency. So, in order to develop accurate and fluent linguistic abilities in students English language teachers need to provide instruction or create environment for helping students to get mastery over the skills and aspects of the language.

Teaching of language skills is guided by two different schools of thought: structuralism (parallel to behaviorism in psychology) and mentalism (parallel to cognitivism in psychology) and consequently there exist two different approaches to deal with language skills in the class, namely, skills-segregating approach and skill-integrating approach (Oxford, 2001). The former is rather traditional approach whereas the latter is modern and advocated by majority of the ELT practitioners.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Since the use of any language consists of the mastery over the four basic skills of the language, teaching should be directed towards the development of these skills in students. However, the way these skills are presented to the students and practiced by the students in many contexts around the world has created a

space for the ELT theorists and practitioners to debate over the issue of segregation versus integration of language skills in EFL/ESL instruction. The segregating (also termed as isolating or discrete) approach draws on the insights from the psychological school of thought known as behaviorism which regards learning as the formation of habits and recommends the breaking down of learning into smaller components which are to be practiced separately. Contrarily, integrating approach draws on cognitivism and/or constructivism which advocate(s) the whole approach to learning. Though the isolating approach is considered to be traditional and fruitless to develop communicative competence in students it still occupies a considerable space in the current paradigm of language teaching activities. On the other hand, integrating approach follows modern perspectives on language teaching and enjoys the support of the majority of English language teaching (ELT) practitioners. This approach is sometimes criticized on the grounds of fostering accuracy in students. Content based and task based instruction are the two major models of teaching within this approach.

The worldwide teaching of English over the last two decades or so indicates a general shift in second language education from teaching language in isolation to integrated teaching (Enright and McCloskes, 1998; Jing, 2006). Following such trends, ELT practitioners in Nepal as well seem to have redirected their focus of teaching English towards skill integrated teaching from traditional single skill based instruction. This can be observed in the recently implemented secondary level English curriculum and textbook (grade 9) which reflect the movement of teaching English from skill linked approach to communicative integrated approach. However, a small number of studies have been conducted in the actual practice of dealing with the four skills of English in its teaching. Moreover, the teachers' perceptions on these approaches to deal with language skills in the class have not been investigated. So, this study surveyed the teacher's views on these two approaches and explored the practices of teaching English language skills at secondary level in Nepal.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

a. To find out the perceptions of secondary level English language teachers on the issue of isolating or integrating skills, and

b. To explore the practices of teaching English in Nepal in relation to segregation and integration of skills.

1.4 Research Questions

The study investigated the following research questions to fulfill its objectives:

1. How do the secondary level English language teachers perceive the issue of isolating or integration of skills in ELT?

2. What are the practices of teaching English in Nepal in relation to integration and segregation of skills?

1.5 Significance of the Study

At first, this study is significant to those who have particular interest in teaching language skills. This study sheds light on secondary level English teachers' views regarding the segregated or integrated teaching of English skills. This helps the curriculum/syllabus, material and test designers to consider the views of real ELT practitioners while doing their respective jobs. Similarly, the study explored the real practice of teaching English in secondary level in Nepal. This helps the policy makers to find out the connection and /or gap between their intended practices and actual practices. Moreover, other ELT researchers may also find it important because it could be source of information for other similar issues. In addition, the findings from this research though limited in scope, can be useful for all the ELT practitioners and other stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in English language teaching.

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1.6 Delimitations of the Study

The delimitations of the study were as follows:

1. The study was limited to survey design.
2. The study investigated only two approaches of teaching four skills of English language.
3. Only secondary level teachers' perceptions and practices were explored.
4. The study was confined to Kathmandu district.
5. Data were derived from only ten teachers and their twenty classes.

1.7 Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Operational definitions of key terms refer to the definitions of the specific terms used in the study under investigation. Operational definitions of the key terms in the study are as follows:

Skill-integration: Skill-integration in ELT refers to the teaching of four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) simultaneously in a communicative way through content-based and/or task-based instruction.

Skill-segregation: In this study, skill-segregation refers to the teaching of English language skills in isolation following skill-linked teaching strategies such as reading strategies, speaking strategies, listening strategies and writing strategies.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Literature in research refers to the body of existing knowledge in the area of researcher's interest which can be either theoretical or empirical or both. Similarly, conceptual framework shows the relationship among the concepts, variables and objectives of the study. The review of both theoretical and empirical literature and conceptual framework of the study have been presented in this chapter.

2.1   Review of Related Theoretical Literature

Review of theoretical literature refers to the review of existing theoretical body of knowledge in the area of researcher's interest. Theoretical literature is primarily based on secondary sources of data. The review of related theoretical literature of the current study has been presented below:

2.1.1 Teaching English Language

Teaching of English generally refers to the creation of appropriate environment for learners as an aid for them to acquire the communicative abilities in English language or the instruction provided for the same purpose. The richness and rapidly increasing influence of English language in all aspects of our personal-social life and academic-professional career have led to the teaching of English as a second or foreign language in most of the schools/ institutions of most of the countries of the world. Such practice of teaching English is directly influenced by the philosophy of the ELT policy makers, material designers and, of course, the teachers regarding the "nature of language teaching and learning" (Anthony, 1963 as cited in Richards and Rogers, 2010, p. 19). The views and attitudes of the ELT practitioners toward the English and its learning process at philosophical level come under the broad concept generally termed as

"approach to ELT". An approach may consist of multiple methods which in turn consist of numerous techniques. "Method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material" (ibid) and is "the level at which theory is put into practice" (Richards and Rogers, 2010, p. 19) whereas "technique is the level at which classroom procedures are described (ibid).

2.1.1.1 Methods and Approaches

In spite of the demarcation between the terms method and approach by the theorists like Anthony the available literature has not yet been able to provide a clear cut distinction between these two terms. Such blurring boundaries between these two concepts and overlapping nature of some of the approaches and methods have led to the discussion of these two terms together in this part of literature review.

Nagaraj (2008) has discussed the approaches and methods of ELT in five different categories in five different chapters. She starts with the discussion on the grammar translation method in the first chapter followed by the structural-functional approach in the second. Thirdly, notional-functional syllabus and the communicative approach have been introduced under modern approaches. Fourthly, the category of humanistic approaches consists of the silent way, communicative language teaching, suggestopaedia and total physical response. Finally, the fifth chapter titled other methods consists of methods and approaches such as the direct method, the audio-lingual method, the reading method, the bilingual method, communicational teaching, and the lexical approach (new perspectives). Besides, Richards and Rogers (2008) and Larsen-Freeman (2009) discuss the approaches and methods such as community language teaching, content based and task approaches, participatory/cooperative approaches and multiple intelligence.

The underlying assumptions of these different approaches and methods have impact on the way the teaching of English proceeds. For instance, the audio-lingual method would suggest the breakdown of the language into different

components and their teaching in isolation whereas communicative approaches would recommend the content or task based instruction.

2.1.1.2 Techniques

Techniques are the activities that actually take place in the class. According to Anthony (1963, as cited in Richards and Rogers 2008, p. 19), "A technique is implementational (in nature)… it is a particular trick, stratagem or contrivance used to accomplish immediate objective. Techniques must be consistent with a method and therefore in harmony with an approach as well". Techniques of teaching English can be categorized based on multiple criteria. Techniques can be teacher centered (e.g., pair work, group work, role play and questioning) on the basis of the roles of teachers and students in the teaching learning process. Similarly, Larsen-Freeman (2008) has listed different techniques under different approaches and methods. For instance, audio-lingual method consists of the techniques such as dialog memorization, drill (and its different types), minimal pairs, and grammar game where as communicative language teaching consists of scrambled sentences, picture stripe story and role play. Moreover, Nagrag (2008) has talked of different techniques for the teaching of different skills and aspects of language. She also mentions some techniques such as dictation and drama that require the integration of different skills.

2.1.2 English Language Skills

Language skills refer to the skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing that language users possess. Regarding language skills Kecira and Shllaku (2014) say:

> All people as language users have certain abilities. They may listen and
>
> speak. Besides, if they are literate, they may read and write. Briefly,
>
> depending on the channel of communication, it can be said that they

listen, speak, read and write, thus they have four language skills: speaking, writing, listening and reading.

Moreover, Harmer (1999, p. 16) makes a distinction between productive and receptive skills. He states, "Speaking and writing involve language production, and are therefore, often referred to as productive skills. Listening and reading, on the other hand, involve receiving messages and are therefore often referred to as receptive skills". Similarly, Common European Framework Reference of Languages (CERF, 2006) maintains that productive activities and strategies include both speaking and writing activities. In oral production (speaking) activities the language user produces an oral text which is received by an audience of one or more listeners. In written production (writing) activities the language user as writer produces a written text which is received by a readership of one or more readers (p. 59). Receptive activities and strategies include listening and reading activities. In aural reception (listening) activities the language user as listener receives and processes a spoken input produced by one or more speakers (p. 65). This indicates that language skills are the skills of sending and receiving messages through the use of linguistic signs, symbols and sounds.

2.1.3 Skill Segregation in ELT

Skill segregation refers to the discrete or isolated approach of teaching four skills of a language. According to Mohan (1986 as cited in Oxford 2001) skill-segregation approach considers the mastery of discrete language skills such as reading and speaking as the key to successful learning and language learning is typically separate from content learning. So, this approach is a language based approach because language itself is the focus of instruction. Four skills are presented and practiced separately in classroom. One class or a session of the class concentrates on the learning of a single skill only. In this regard, Oxford (2001) points out:

Skill segregation is reflected in traditional ESL/EFL programs that offer classes focusing on segregated language skills. Teachers and administrators think it is logistically easier to present courses on writing divorced from speaking, or on listening isolated from reading. They may believe that it is instructionally impossible to concentrate on more than one sill at a time.

Similarly, Peregoy & Boyle (2001, as cited in Oxford, 2001) state that segregated-skill ESL/EFL classes present instruction in terms of skill-linked learning strategies: reading strategies, listening strategies, speaking strategies, and writing strategies. Here, learning strategies refer to the attempts, efforts or tactics made by students to improve their learning. Such strategies as mentioned by Oxford (2001) may include guessing meaning based on context, breaking a sentence or word down into parts to understand the meaning, and practicing the language with someone else.

Segregated skill oriented teaching can have two forms: complete segregation and partial segregation. Regarding complete segregation Brown (2000, p. 218) contends that segregated-skill-oriented courses "have language itself as the focus of instruction to the extent that excessive emphasis on rules and paradigms teaches students a lot about language at the expense of teaching language itself". Although the supporters of skill segregation such as Peregoy & Boyle (2001) present strategies as they are associated with one particular skill, sometimes this segregation of skills is unsuccessful or partial. On this matter Oxford (2001) views that in several ESL/EFL contexts around the world where the instruction is focused on a single skill, the segregation of language might not be complete; rather it is only partial or illusionary. She further adds that creative teachers can adapt a discrete-skill course to involve multiple, integrated skills. This indicates that in partial skill segregation instruction skills

appear to be isolated at first glance but are not separated completely in real sense.

So, skill segregation in ELT involves the teaching of four English language skills completely or partially separate from one another. Despite the fact that four skills of a language cannot be separated in real practice, the instruction is intended to develop any one of the four language skills.

2.1.3.1 Strengths of Segregated Skill Instruction

Hinkel (2010) points out some positive aspects of single skill approach to language teaching and treats those as the problems associated with integration of skill in language instruction. Some major points made by him have been summarized as follows:

A curriculum that concentrates on a single language skill at a time can permit more focused teaching and more intensive learning. Similarly, in various regions and cultures where the instruction in discrete language skills is highly valued, both teachers and learners have been known to resist skill integration. Moreover, complex integrated instruction with more than two language skills addressed in tandem places greater demands on both the teacher and the learner (for example, the teachers need to be at least somewhat familiar with discourse-based instructional models). Likewise, in many regions around the world, where teachers are required to teach very large classes, the teaching of integrated skills may not be a very practical option. Forevermore, many (if not most) learners may unevenly developed proficiencies across the four macro-skills (For example, stronger skills in listening and speaking than in reading and writing). Finally, the teaching of grammar and vocabulary, as well as accuracy in learner language production may receive less emphasis than they should. These points made by Hinkel (2010) suggest that skill segregation can be utilized in some specific contexts (such as accuracy based courses, large class teaching and intensive learning) for raising consciousness in students about the forms of English language.

2.1.4 Integrated Skills Teaching Practice

Integrated skills teaching practice involves purposeful communication as its primary goal. According to Harmer (2008, pp. 265-270), skills integration brings multiple skills together and teaching learning proceeds communicatively. Both input and output are connected in the classroom and students engage in the tasks that require the integration of multiple skills. Both productive skills (writing-speaking) and receptive skills (reading-listening) are treated as the essential and inevitable parts of effective and successful language teaching where one skill complements or reinforces another. For example, students learn to speak by what they see and hear. Similarly, Richards, Plat and Weber (1985, p. 144 as cited in McDonough and Shaw, 1993) state that, "It is the teaching of the language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking in conjunction with each other as when a lesson involves activities that relate listening and speaking to reading and writing". This shows that students are exposed to such language situation in which students require to apply most of the skills at the same time.

The first linguist who promoted the integration of the four language skills was Widdowson (1978, p. 144), who pointed out that language uses take place in the form of discourse and in specific social contexts, not in discrete "units". Therefore, to become competent language users, learners need to develop receptive and productive skills in both spoken and written discourse.

According to Honeyfield, (1988, pp. 25-33), skills integration generally refers to linking two or more of the traditional four skills of language learning: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Similarly, Richards, Platt, and Weber (1986, p. 144) define the teaching of integrated skills as "The teaching of the language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in conjunction with each other as when a lesson involves activities that relate listening and speaking to reading and writing." This shows that skill integrated approach allows students to be exposed to the real language use to use English appropriately for communication.

2.1.4.1 Forms of Instruction in Skill Integration

There are two major forms of instruction that are clearly oriented toward integrating the skills (Oxford, 2001). They are Content-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) and Task-Based Language Instruction (TBLI).

Content-based Language Instruction

CBLT bases its rationale on the premise that students can effectively obtain both language and subject matter knowledge by receiving content input in the target language. It has been recently recognized by authors such as Rodgers as "One of the Communicative Language Teaching spin-off approaches" (2001, p. 2). Similarly, Stryker and Leaver (1997, pp. 3-5) consider CBLT as "A truly and holistic approach to foreign language education…(which) can be at once a philosophical orientation, a methodological system, a syllabus design for a single course, or a framework for an entire program of instruction".

Instruction is organized around the contents from various disciplines in CBLT. Students learn the target language as they are engaged in studying the content in target language. Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989, p. 2) define CBI as "The integration of particular content with language teaching aims, or as the concurrent teaching of academic subject matter and second language skills". Stolller & Grabe (1997) argue that "practically all instruction is theme-based" (p. 7). They argue that sheltered and adjunct instruction are "Not alternatives to theme-based instruction [but] rather…two methods for carrying out theme based instruction. For this reason, [they] see the two terms, content-based instruction and theme-based instruction, as interchangeable" (p. 7). Despite the perceived differences in their orientation and immediate aims, all the models described share the view of language as a medium for learning content, and content as a resource for learning language.

Task-based Language Instruction (TBLI)

Nunan (1991, p. 279) views TBLI as an approach to language teaching which highlights learning to communicate through interaction in the target language, introducing authentic texts to learning situation, enhancing the learner's own personal experiences, and linking classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

The basic concept in TBLI is that students learn a language by performing tasks. The central tenet of task-based approach is the task itself. Many people in the related field have defined task from their particular perspectives. Second language acquisition researchers describe tasks in terms of their usefulness for collecting data and eliciting samples of learners' language for research purposes. For example, Bialystok (1983, p. 103) suggests that a communication task must (a) stimulate real communicative exchange, (b) provide incentive for the L2 speaker/learner to convey information, (c) provide control for the information items required for investigation and (d) fulfill the needs to be used for the goals of the experiment.

However, some scholars have defined tasks from classroom interaction perspective. Some definitions of a classroom task are very specific. For instance, J. Willis (1996, p. 53) defines a classroom task as "A goal-oriented activity in which learners use language to achieve a real outcome". Willis also suggests that language use in tasks is likely to reflect language use in the outside world. Other definitions are more general. Nunan (1989, p. 10) proposes that a communication task "Is a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form". Skehan (1998) represents the core features of tasks within four defining criteria: there is a goal to be worked towards; the activity is outcome evaluated; meaning is primary; and there is a real-world relationship. Ellis (2003, pp. 9-10) lists six "Criteria features of a task". He mentions all the aspects listed by Skehan above, and also includes the concept of task as a "work plan for learner

activity", which "requires learners to employ cognitive processes", and "can involve any of the four language skills".

In sum, TBLI helps learners to learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully while engaged in meaningful activities and tasks. The focus of instruction is on process rather than product. Basic elements are purposeful activities and tasks that emphasize communication and meaning.

2.1.4.2 An Example of Skill Integration

Deneme and Ada (2010) have presented an example of a skill integrated lesson. This has been presented below with slight adaptation.

The students read the passage about "Maldive Island" and teacher conducted the following activities in the classroom:

Activity 1

Students read the passage about Maldive Island and using the information they gathered, they asked some questions to one another about the passage of Maldive Island, so reading skill was integrated with speaking skill.

Using the newly-introduced information in the passage, the students asked some questions to one another. Reading skill was integrated with speaking skill.

Reading skill   Speaking skill

Some of the questions asked by the students during the lesson:

1)   Where is Maldive Island?

        Student:………………………………………………………….

2)   Which culture influences some of the Maldives' local dance and music?
        Student:………………………………………………………

3) Which language is spoken over Maldives?

    Student:………………………………………………………

Activity 2

Students watched the advertisement about Maldive Island. While they were watching it, they took some notes in order to get some information about the island, so listening skill was integrated with writing skill.

Listening skill   writing skill

The advertisement about Maldive Island:

Students watched the advertisement called "Dream Maldives think Kuoni" and took notes while watching.

Activity 3

Using the information learned from the passage about Maldive Island, the students prepared advertisements about Maldive Island and shared these advertisements with the other students in the class, by doing so reading skill was integrated with writing skill.

   Reading skill   writing skill

Activity 4

Students read the passage about Maldive Island and searched some extra information about the island. Using this information, students wrote a dialog entitled "A Travel to Maldive Island". Then the students shared the roles in the dialog and they carried out a role playing activity, which integrated writing skill with speaking skill.

Writing skill   Speaking skill

2.1.4.3 Strengths of Integrating Skills

The most important strength of integrated-skill approach is that it exposes English language learners to authentic language and challenges them to interact naturally in the language. As McDonough and Shaw (1993) and Richards (2006) opine, integrated skills teaching is that it exposes language learners to authentic language. In this statement, authentic language refers to the language as it is used in real life. This provides the opportunity for the learners to use combined skills in their day to day communication situations. Similarly, Cunningsworth (1984) says that the integration of the four macro skills in the classroom enhances learners' communicative competence since effective communication involves the integration of different language skills. This indicates that integrating skills in association with one another as it happens in real life is an important aspect of developing learners' overall communicative abilities such as asking for information, responding to information and making a request.

Regarding the strengths of skill integration, Oxford (2001) says, "The integrated skill approach can be highly motivating to students of all ages and backgrounds". Therefore, this approach can lead to stress free learning of English language as the learners are highly motivated in learning. In relation to skill integration, Kumaravadivelu (2003, p. 229) explains:

> Various learners bring various learning styles and strategies to class. Integration of language skills has the potential to offer "different opportunities for different types of learners, for example, the extroverts who like to speak a lot, the introverts who prefer to listen or read, and the analytically or visually oriented learners who like to see how words are written and sentences constructed.

According to Campbell and Kryszewska (1992), teaching by integrating skills allows language learners to engage in purposeful, meaningful and relevant learning. When these skills are practiced in integration it is more likely to be learned well. Integrated skills teaching practice as a form of communicative language teaching focuses on meaning. In terms of purpose, learners are aware that they read a text because they will be required to react to the text and to do something with it; and this makes the language lesson relevant.

2.1.5 Teaching English in Nepal: Current Policy at Secondary Level

The history of English language teaching in Nepal begins with the establishment of the Durbar school in 1910 BS. However, the first English language education was opened to the people in 1951 since previously education was limited to the members of the royal family and there were not any public schools across the country (Bistha, 2011). The first university of the country, Tribhuvan University, was established in 1959 which gave high priority to its curriculum in English. However, National Education System Plan (NESP 1971-76) reduced the weight age of English courses (from 200 marks to 100 marks) set up by earlier system and English was no longer a compulsory school subject in spite of majority of educators and students being in favors of "Continuing English in secondary level (Awasthi, 1979, p. 64). Medium of instruction in schools was also switched to Nepali from English" (Malla, 1977, p. 69).Tribhuvan University modified the structure of English syllabi in 1981 allotting weightage of 200 marks instead of 100 to the campus level English. Currently, English is taught as a compulsory subject from the very beginning of the school education to the Bachelors level.

The structure and contents of the current secondary level English curriculum and textbook can be interpreted as the policy of teaching English language skills in the context of Nepal. The current secondary level curriculum prescribed by curriculum development center (CDC) is fully theoretical course containing eight level wise competencies (previously objectives). It includes the course of Grade 9 and Grade 10. The structure of present secondary

curriculum consists of altogether twelve components. Among those components three major components viz. Grade wise learning outcomes, scope and sequence and students' assessment process have been reviewed as per the purpose of the study. The grade wise learning outcomes have been presented in terms of separate language skills. They prescribe what the students will be able to do after completing secondary level in regard to each skill. However, the component 'scope and sequence' presents content of Grade nine and ten English curriculum as a set of functions which are realized linguistically by grammatical structures and lexical items. Again the evaluation part of the curriculum presents the assessment tools for all the language skills separately. This indicates that the current policy of teaching English in Nepal is blend of both segregated and integrated approaches to teach skills.

Similarly, CDC has prescribed the book named "English 9" as a course book of compulsory English for Grade 9 according to new curriculum 2069 BS to achieve the determined competencies of the curriculum. Being consistent with the curriculum the textbook also seems to have followed the bended approach since it includes both skill-based activities and communicative activities that require the integration of multiple skills. The inclusion of sections such as creative tasks and fun corner besides the skill-based sections such as reading, grammar, listening, speaking and writing indicates the movement from discrete skill learning to real life integrated use of language. So, the textbook can be said to be based on communicative approach without downplaying the importance to teaching skills separately for intensive learning. However, reading is given more importance than listening and speaking and speaking is prioritized over listening.

2.2   Review of Empirical Literature

Review of empirical literature refers to the review of previous research works in the area of researcher's interest. Empirical literature is always based on primary sources of data. The review of empirical literature for the current study has been presented below.

Hungyo and Kijai (2009) carried out a study on "The Effect of Integrated and Segregated Skills Approach on English Language Acquisition among Freshmen Nursing and Business Students in Mission College, Thailand". This study aimed to examine the effect of using two different English Language teaching approaches (integrated skill and segregated skill) on language acquisition (listening, speaking, reading and writing) among a group of nursing and business freshmen students enrolled in Mission College, Thailand. A non-equivalent pretest posttest control group design was used as the research framework for this study. Analysis of covariance indicated that students in the integrated skills class performed significantly better in listening than students in the segregated skills class. However, no significant differences were found for adjusted posttest scores in speaking, reading and writing, and total.

Similarly, Aljiffri (2010) carried out a research on "Effects of the Integrated Approach to Teaching English and Social Studies on Achievement in a Saudi Private Elementary School". The purpose of this study was to present a comprehensive description of the integrated curriculum and its many models, followed by an evaluation study of integration involving literacy skills in English and Social Studies. The integration was implemented by using the sequenced model of integration of reading/writing skills in Foreign Language and Social Studies as an example of the practical side of curricular integration. This study employed the pre-test/post-test control group design of experimental research. Therefore, it involved an analysis of the performance of two groups of students. The first group, known as the experimental group (m=33), was taught English and Social Studies in an integrated approach of instruction with an emphasis on literacy skills (Reading and Writing) in a content-based fashion. The second group, known as the control group (m=31), completed only the same English as a Foreign language course and the Social Studies course with no particular emphasis on language integration with Social Studies teaching. Findings indicated that the integrated approach induced to better achievement gains in literacy development and Social Studies achievement. The research suggested that teaching the curriculum in a

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segregated manner does not help students with the transference of skills from one skill or discipline to the other.

Moghadam and Adel (2011) conducted a research on "The Importance of Whole Language Approach in Teaching English to Intermediate Iranian EFL Learners". The main objective of this study was to emphasize on whole language approach developing mainly the two primary skills of reading and writing in varying degrees and combinations. Based on a language proficiency test, out of 150 senior EFL learners from Azad University of Torbat Heydariye, 90 were chosen and defined as intermediate learners. Two expository reading and writing tests were taken and the results were compared with four reading and four writing scores which were defined as their general reading and writing scores. The results were analyzed using the SPSS software and some correlation and ANOVA analyses were run. The study showed that the EFL learners performed almost equally well on the skills of reading and writing, but with expository writing and expository reading texts the performance was quite different. The concept of language proficiency was reconsidered in respect to the integrative approach's principles.

Likewise, Tajzadl and Ostovar-Namaghi (2014) conducted a study entitled "Exploring EFL Learners' Perceptions of Integrated Skills Approach: A Grounded Theory". This qualitative study aimed at exploring EFL learners' perceptions of the integrated skills approach to language teaching. To this end, the researchers presented the integrated skills approach to a group of 30 participants and interviewed those who were willing to share their views and experience with the researchers. The researchers used grounded theory to collect and analyze interview data. Iterative data collection and analysis continued until theoretical saturation was reached. To establish credibility, transient and final categories were verified through member-checking. The results clearly showed that the participants positively perceive this approach. The findings have implications for all stakeholders including policy makers, syllabus designers, practitioners and learners.

Ambaw (2015) conducted a study entitled "An Assessment of the Integrated English Teaching Practice with Reference to Delachin Secondary School, Addis Ketema". This research was conducted to assess the integrated English teaching practice at grade 10 level. The subjects who participated in the study were the eleven English teachers and twenty students. In order to collect data from the subjects, three data collection instruments were employed: questionnaire, structured observation and interview. Hence both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Then, the collected data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively in an integrated manner. The study showed that, in relation to integrated skills teachers had positive attitudes but they were impractical. That is to say, the teachers, although some teachers sometimes integrated two skills, most of them did not teach two or more skills through integration deliberately. The study also indicated that the teachers ignore one or more skills; and focus on grammar since the learners had no interest to learn the skills and their major concern was learning the structures of the language to pass their exams. Moreover, the study revealed that whole class teaching was frequently employed by the teachers at the expense of pair and/or group work. Similarly, teachers' hardly organized additional tasks (in addition to the textbook) that help learners use two or more language skills at a time in the classroom. Furthermore, the study indicated that the teachers never used instructional materials and equipment when they taught the skills in integration.

In the same way, Al-Dosari (2016) conducted a study on "Effects of an Integrated Reading/writing Approach on Improving Writing Skills of EFL Students". The main objective of the study was to explore the effects of reading on writing in an integrated fashion during the learning process of EFL learners learning writing in King Khalid University. The quasi-instrumental research selected all male students whose average age was of 20-22 years in the Department of English as sample. The study concluded that integrated reading has a direct influence on the quality of writing as it gives positive

effects on literacy development which helps students consider efficiently genre of writing in the learning process according to the percentages of t-test.

This review of empirical literature indicates that the issue of segregation or integration of skills in ELT has not been investigated in the context of Nepal. The research works in Nepal have only focused on one of these two approaches to deal with language skills. This review shows that skill segregation and skill integration have not been studied in relation to each other which this study did. So, this research attempted to fill the research gap left out by the previous studies.

2.3   Implications of the Review for the Study

A comprehensive study and review of the existing literature under our research area is prerequisite to validate and justify our research. A new study cannot be conducted without having information about the area under research. So, literature review of both types-theoretical and empirical-has to play a significant role in every stage of our research.

The review of related theoretical literature provides an insight into the nature of knowledge concerned with our research area. Moreover, it helps us to know various aspects of the area in general and of our research topic in particular. It helps us (i.e. researcher) to comprehend the nature of various variables and their relationships. Similarly, it is beneficial and useful in the process of conducting tools for data collection and analyzing those data. It provides an in-depth knowledge into the theories to the subject in question. The review of theoretical literature in the current study has served the same purpose. The works of Richards and Rogers (2010), Larsen- Freeman (2009), Harmer (2008) and Nagraj (2008) have helped me to develop an insight into the current theories, methods, techniques and practices of teaching English. Similarly, the works of Oxford (2001), Mohon (1986), Hinkel (2010) and Widdoswon (1978) have helped to understand the issue of segregation and integration of skills.

In the same way, review of empirical literature helps us to find out the research gap, i.e. what has not been investigated yet. Moreover, it provides us an opportunity to investigate the way other people have conducted their studies and what they have found. We can sometimes conduct a study in order to challenge their findings. However, the main purpose of empirical literature review is to find out the gap in the existing body of knowledge. The review of empirical literature in the study has served the purposes such as locating the research gap and deciding on the methodology. The study of Ambaw (2015) played very significant role in preparation of the research tools for the current study.

2.3   Conceptual Framework

The main purpose of the conceptual framework is to show the relationship among the various concepts, theories and variables of the study in question. The conceptual framework of the study can be presented diagrammatically as follows:
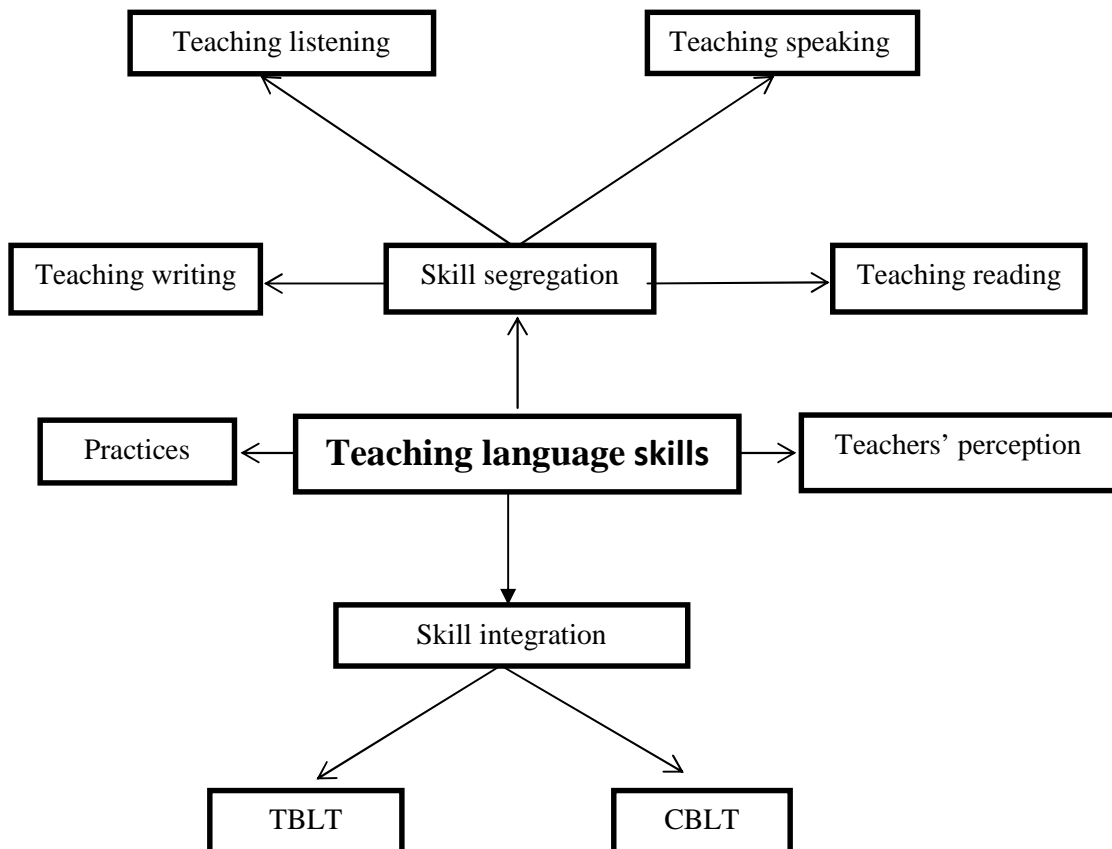
CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

This chapter of the study deals with the methods and procedures that were adopted to conduct the research. It includes the design of the study, population, sample and sampling strategy, research tools, sources of data, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

3.1   Design and method of the Study

The study was a survey research. "Surveys are the most commonly used descriptive methods in educational research and may vary in the scope from large scale governmental investigation to a small scale studies carried out by a single researcher" (Cohen and Manion, 1985, as cited in Nunan, 2008, p-140).

Research is a systematic activity; therefore, it should be conducted following some systematic steps. Creswell (2012, p. 403-404) provides the following steps in survey research:

At the first step, the researchers should decide whether a survey is the best design to use. Secondly, they have to identify the research questions or hypotheses to be investigated in the survey. In the third step, the population, the sampling frame, and the sample need to be identified. This is followed by the determination of the survey design and data collection procedures in the fourth step. The fifth step consists of the task of developing or locating an instrument for data collection. I the sixth step, the instrument should be administered followed by the analysis of the data in the sixth step address the research questions or hypotheses. Finally, the report is written encapsulating all the procedures and findings of the study.

Survey research in education involves the collection of information from members of a group of students, teachers, or other persons associated with educational process and the analysis of this information to illuminate important

educational issues. Most surveys are based on samples of a specified target population. The researcher often wishes to generalize the results obtained from the samples to the population from which samples were drawn.

The main purposes of survey research are to find out behaviors of different informants, find out public opinions or certain issues and assess certain activity.

This study intended to find out secondary level English teachers perception and practices of segregated versus integrated teaching of language skills. Questionnaire and observation form were the tools of data collection. Purposive non-random sampling was used to sample the population of the study. Thus, the study was a survey research.

3.2   Sources of Data

The study was primarily based on the primary sources of data. The first hand data were derived from the selected teachers and their classroom teaching practice. However, information from secondary sources such as books, journal articles and formal documents were utilized whenever-found relevant to the study.

3.3   Population, Sample and Sampling Strategy

The population of the research consisted of secondary level English language teachers teaching in different schools of Kathmandu district. Since it was not feasible to collect data from entire population because of the time and expense constraints, a small number of populations i.e. sample were selected to collect the data for the study. The sample of the study consisted of ten secondary level English teachers teaching in different schools of Kathmandu district. Besides the responses of the sampled teachers, two classes of each of these teachers were observed to collect the data for the study. Since the study required the activities such as observation of classroom teaching, possible challenges of the data collection procedure were considered in advance. Therefore, the sample

was selected through convenient sampling strategy. Priority was given to those teachers who were co-operative and ready not only to respond to the questionnaire but also allow the researcher to observe the classroom teaching.

3.4 Research Tools

The study used two types of tools for data collection: a set of questionnaire and an observation form. The questionnaire consisted of four different parts. The first part involved the background information about the respondent teachers. The second and third parts contained thirteen close ended items intended to find out the teachers' perception. Finally, the forth part contained four close ended items intended to explore the practices. The observation checklist consisted of ten different behaviors to be observed during the teaching of the selected teachers. The observation form intended to explore the practice of teaching English language skills as it occurred in real classroom teaching.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedures were as follows:

a. The researcher visited the selected schools and explained the purpose and process of the study to the administrators of the respective schools.

b. The researcher asked for permission to the administrators to allow their teachers to assist the study by filling questionnaire and letting their classes be observed.

c. The researcher developed good rapport with teachers and requested them to fill the questionnaire.

d. The researcher observed their classes.

e. The researcher collected the questionnaires and thanked the students, teachers and administrators for their cooperation.

3.6   Ethical Considerations

While collecting data, a culturally appropriate approach was taken to ensure that there would be no ethical concerns regarding this study. That is, all the teachers were asked for their verbal consensus for the study and permissions were taken from the concerned head teachers. The responses of the participants and observed details were kept confidential and used only for research purpose.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The quantitative data collected for the study were analyzed and interpreted to derive findings of the study. So, this chapter of the thesis includes the analysis and interpretation of the results.

4.1 Analysis of Data and Interpretation of Results

Data were analyzed and interpreted descriptively making use of simple statistical tools such as frequency and percentile. The facts were presented in different tables and paragraphs followed by descriptive analysis and interpretation.

This subsection of the thesis consists of the analysis of data collected through the tools such as questionnaire and observation form and interpretation of the results derived from the analysis.

4.1.1 Background Information

The first part of the questionnaire was intended to elicit the basic information about the participant teachers. The information sought about the teachers consisted of the name of the school, qualification, area of qualification and total years in teaching English language. So, a brief profile of the teachers who participated in the study has been presented in the table on following page:

Table 1: Teachers' profile

S.N.	Name of School	Qualification	Area of qualification	Total years in teaching
1	Kirti Secondary School, Kathmandu	M.Ed.	English Education	5
2	Puspsadan Boarding High School, Kathmandu	B.A.	English	8
3	Panga Secondary School, Kathmandu	M.A.	Social Studies	10
4	Salvinia Academy	B.A.	Humanities	15
5	Baghvairab Boarding High School, Kathmandu	M.A.	English	10
6	Mangus English Secondary School, Kathmandu	M.Ed.	English Education	5
7	Mangal Higher Secondary School, Kathmandu	M.Ed.	English Education	12
8	Creative Academy, Kathmandu	M.Ed.	English Education	5+
9	Ujjal Boarding School, Kathmandu	M.A.	English	5+
10	Kiritipur Secondary School, Kathmandu	B.Ed.	English Education	7

As can be observed in table 1, seven out of ten participant teachers had Master's degree in either education or art. Other three had Bachelor's degree either in education or art. Similarly, five of them were specialized in English education and three others were specialized in art English. The remaining two were specialized in other areas such as humanities and social studies. As far as experience is concerned, five of the teachers had experience of six to ten years. Similarly, four other teachers had experience of ten to fifteen years. This

profile shows that the English language teachers who participated in the study were well qualified and experienced.

4.1.2 Teachers Familiarity with Segregated or Integrated Teaching of Language Skills

Investigating the perception of teachers on a particular issue requires the prior knowledge on the part of the teachers on the issue. Unless the teachers are familiar with the issue being investigated, they neither can express their true perception nor can support or oppose any one of the aspects of the issue. Considering these factors, the second part of the questionnaire was designed. In this part, teachers were asked if they were familiar with two approaches-segregation and integration-of teaching language skills by any means. In case the teachers were unfamiliar with the issue under investigation, they were suggested to read a brief note at the end of the questionnaire. Only after being confirmed that the participant teachers were familiar with the area of investigation, they were requested to express their attitudes, views, opinions and practices.

The responses of the teachers regarding their familiarity with segregated and integrated teaching of language skills have been presented in the following table:

Table 2: Teachers' familiarity with segregated and integrated teaching of language skills

2.1	Yes		No		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Pre-service and/or in-service training about segregated and integrated skills teaching practice or familiarity with this by self-study or any other means	7	70	3	30	10	100

As can be observed in the table 2, 70% of the teachers out of total 10 were found to have been familiar with the issues of segregation or integration of

skills in ELT whereas 30% teachers were unfamiliar with the issues. This shows that the majority of teachers having required qualification and experience of five or more years in teaching English are well familiar with the issue.

4.1.3 Teachers' Advocacy of any one of these two

The second item in the second part of the questionnaire dealt with the teachers' advocacy of either skill segregation or skill integration. The responses of the teachers regarding their advocacy of any one of these two approaches have been presented in the following table:

Table 3: Teachers' advocacy of any one approach out of the two

2.2	SA		AG		NI		DA		SD		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		%
1. Isolated teaching of four skills	-	-	5	50	1	10	3	30	1	10	10	100
2. Integrated teaching of four skills	2	20	7	70	-	-	1	10	-	-	10	100

SA= Strongly Agree, AG= Agree, NI= Have No Idea, DA=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

Regarding the teachers' advocacy of skill segregating approach, we can observe in table 3 that five teachers (50%) out of the total ten teachers agreed, three (30%) disagreed, one teacher (10%) strongly disagreed and one (10%) teacher was undecided with the statement ' The four skills of language should be taught in isolation following skill based strategies such as reading strategies'.

In case of skill integrated approach, two teachers (20%) strongly agreed, seven (70%) teachers agreed, and one teacher (10%) disagreed with the statement ' The four language skills should be taught in integration as they occur in real life'.

On the whole, the total percentage of the teachers that agreed with the former statement was 50 and 40% others disagreed with the statement. Similarly, the overall percentage of the teachers that agreed with the later statement was 90 where as 10% others disagreed with the statement.

From this analysis, it can be generalized that there is considerable majority among secondary level English teachers in favor of skill integration in ELT. However, the number of teachers who advocate skill segregation cannot be underestimated. In spite of their strong support to skill integration, teachers still believe that skill segregation is useful in ELT.

4.1.4 Teacher's Views on the Advantages and Disadvantages of Segregated and Integrated Teaching of Language Skills

The third part of the questionnaire was intended to investigate the teachers' perceptions on the issue of skill integration or segregation of skills in ELT which was one of the two specific objectives of the study. This part consisted of ten statements in which the first five were in favor of skill segregation and the later five were in favor of skill integration. So, the teachers who supported the first five statements were interpreted as having positive perception on skill segregating approach to teachings skills and those who agreed to the later five sentences were interpreted as having positive perception on skill integration. Similarly, the teachers who were against the first five sentence were interpreted as having negative perceptions on skill segregation and those who disagreed with the last five statements were interpreted as having negative perception on skill integration.

The responses of the teachers on the statements in favour of segregated teaching of language skills have been presented in the table on following page:

Table 4: Response on statements in favour of segregated teaching

Statements	SA		AG		NI		DA		SD		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Development of grammatical accuracy and vocabulary	4	40	4	40	1	10	1	10	-	-	10	100
2. Logistical convenience	1	10	5	50	2	20	2	20	-	-	10	100
3. More focused and intensive learning	2	20	8	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	100
4. Impracticality in large classes	1	10	7	70	-	-	2	20	-	-	10	100
5. Instructional impossibility to concentrate on more than one skill at a time	-	-	3	30	-	-	6	60	1	10	10	100
Total	8	16	27	54	3	6	11	22	1	2	50	100

SA= Strongly Agree, AG= Agree, NI= Have No Idea, DA=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

As in the table 4, 4 teachers (40%) strongly agreed, 4(40%) agreed, 1(10%) had no idea and 1(10%) disagreed with the statement 'Segregated teaching of skills develops grammatical accuracy and vocabulary (grammatical competence) in students'. Altogether 80% teachers agreed and 10% disagreed with the statement.

Similarly, 1 (10%) teacher strongly agreed, 5 (50%) agreed, 2 (20%) had no idea and 2 (20%) disagreed with the statement ' It is logistically easier to present courses on writing divorced from speaking or listening isolating from reading'. So, 60% teachers agreed and 20% disagreed with the statement.

Likewise, 2(20%) teachers strongly agreed and 8 (80%) agreed leading up to 100% support to the statement ' Isolated teaching of skills leads to more focused and intensive learning'.

In the same way, 1 teacher (10%) strongly agreed 7 teachers (70%) agreed and 2 (20%) disagreed with the statement ' Many regions around the world, where teachers are required to teach very large classes, the teaching of integrated skills may not be a very practical option'. This leads to 80% support and 20% disagreement to the statement.

Finally, 3 (30%) teachers agreed, 6 (60%) disagreed and 1(10%) strongly disagreed with the statement 'It is instructionally impossible to concentrate on more than one skill at a time'. So, 30% teachers agreed and 70% teachers disagreed with the statement.

On the whole, out of total 50 responses 16% fell under the 'strongly agree ' category, 54% under' agree', 6 % under 'have no idea', 22% 'disagree' and 2% under 'strongly disagree.

This analysis indicates that teachers find skill segregation highly useful as it leads to more focused and intensive learning. Similarly, many teachers believe that segregated teaching of skills develops grammatical competence in students. A great number of teachers find segregated teaching useful in case of teaching very large classes where skills integrated teaching may not be practical option. However, there is huge majority of the teachers who believe that it is not instructionally impossible to concentrate on more than one skill at a time. Overall, teachers have positive perception on segregated teaching of language skills.

The responses of the teachers on the statements in favour of segregated teaching of language skills have been presented in the table on following page:

Statements	SA		AG		NI		DA		SD		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
6. Exposing authentic language for communication	6	60	4	40	-	-		-	-	-	10	100
7. One skill leading the use of another	4	40	6	60	-	-		-	-	-	10	100
8. Saves class time and reduces in Learners' Stress	1	10	6	60	1	10	2	20	-	-	10	100
9. Support in other academic subjects	1	10	7	70	2	20		-	-	-	10	100
10. Motivating, meaningful and purposeful instruction	2	20	7	70	-	-	1	10	-	-	10	1000
Total	14	28	30	60	3	6	3	6	-	-	50	100

The table 5 shows that all the participant teachers (100%) agreed with the statement 'The four language skills in integrated practice expose students to authentic language and enable them to use English effectively for communication' in which 6 (60%) teachers strongly agreed and 4 (40%) teachers agreed with the statement.

Similarly, 4 (40%) teachers strongly agreed and 6 (60%) agreed with the statement 'Skill integration saves class time and reduces in Learners' Stress'. This makes the 100% support to the statement.

In case of the statement ' Integrated skills teaching help students to be successful in their other academic subjects', 1 (10%) teacher responded as strongly agree, 6(60%) as agree and 2 (20%) as disagree. That is to say, 70% teachers agreed and 20 disagreed with the statement.

Similarly, 1 (10%) teacher responded as strongly agree, 7 (70%) agree and 2(20%) have no idea on the statement ' Integrating the four language skills enable students to be motivated and makes language instruction meaningful and purposeful'.

Finally, 2 (20%) teachers strongly agreed and 7 (70%) agreed with the statement 'Integrating the four language skills enable students to be motivated and makes language instruction meaningful and purposeful'. This leads to the 100% support to the statement.

As far as total 50 responses are concerned, 28% fall under the category 'strongly agree', 60% under agree, 3% under 'have no idea' and 6% under 'disagree'.

This analysis suggests that almost all the teachers believe that skill integration practice exposes students to authentic language and enables them to use English effectively for communication. Moreover, they think that it motivates students and makes learning meaningful and purposeful. Similarly, majority of the teachers believe that skill integration reduces stress in learning and helps to be successful in other academic subjects. Overall, teachers have completely positive perception in skill integrated teaching practice.

The analysis and interpretation of data regarding teachers' perceptions on segregated and integrated practice of teaching skills shows that teachers have positive attitude towards both of the practices. However, there is higher support for the skill integration practice in relation to skill segregated practice as 88% of the total responses in skill integration category support skill integration whereas 70% of the total responses in skill segregation category support skill segregation practice.

4.1.5   Practice of Teaching Skills

Regarding the practice of teaching skills of English, information was derived from the fourth and final part of the questionnaire. They were asked whether

they taught two or more skills to their students at a time. Similarly, they were asked about the types of activities they conducted based on the approach they followed. Likewise, they were asked about the extent to which they integrated the four skills.

The responses of the teachers regarding their practice of teaching language skills have been presented in the following table:

Table 6: Teaches' response on their practice of teaching skills

	Yes		No		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
4.1 Do you teach two or more language skills to your students at a time?	9	90	1	10	10	100
4.2 If your answer for question 4.1 is yes, do you integrate language skills by organizing them around the same topic and/or task at a time?	9	90	1	10	10	100
4.3 If your answer for the question 4.1 is no, do you teach skills using skill based strategies such as read and answer, look and describe, listen and match, and guided writing	1	10	9	90	10	100

As can be observed from the table 6, 9 teachers (90%) informed that they integrated two or more skills at a time whereas one teacher (10%) informed that he or she did not. Similarly, 9 teachers (90%) informed that they integrated skills by organizing them around a particular task or topic. Likewise, 90% followed skill linked strategy while teaching English based on skill segregation approach. This indicates that majority of the teachers follow skill integration approach while teaching English language skill.

The responses of the teachers regarding the extent to which they integrated the four language skills have been presented in the following table:

Table 7: Extent to which teachers' integrated skills

No.		AW	US	ST	RR	NR	Total
4.4	What extent do you integrate the four language skills?	-	5	5	-	-	10

AW= Always, US= Usually, ST= Sometimes, RR= Rarely, NR=Never

As in the table 7, 5 teachers informed that they usually integrate the four language skills whereas the same number of teachers informed that they sometimes integrated the skills. So, we can say that teachers integrate skills as per the need of the lesson to be taught.

4.1.6 Observed Classroom Practice: Segregation or Integration

The second specific objective of the study was to explore the real practices of teaching English language in relation to segregation or integration of skills. To fulfill this objective, an observation form consisting of ten different behaviors to be observed was used to collect data in which five behaviors were associated with skill segregation and five with skill integration. Moreover, the form consisted of a section under the heading 'remarks' which was intended to note down the activities conducted during the teaching of English language skills. The data collected through the observation form have been analyzed and interpreted in this part of the thesis.

The observation form consisted of two major behaviors to be observed: skill segregation and skill integration. These two headings were further divided into five further behaviors to be observed for each of the two approaches. The holistic analysis of the observed data has been presented on the table on following page:

Table 8: Holistic observed data

No.	Behavior to be Observed	Observed		Not observed		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
A.	Skill Segregation	66	66	34	34	100	100
B	Skill Integration	25	25	75	75	100	100

As can be seen in the table 8, 66% of the total observed 100 behaviors were based on behaviors associated with skill segregation. Whereas 25% of the behaviors were based on the behaviors associated with skill integration. So, we can say that segregated approach to teaching skill is used in majority of the classes.

The item wise analysis of the observed data has been presented as follows:

Table 9: Item wise observed data

No.	Behaviors to be observed	Observed		Not observed		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
A	**Skill segregation**						
1	Starts the class by mentioning a particular skill	15	75	5	25	20	100
2	Focuses on a particular skill throughout the class	14	70	6	30	20	100
3	Skill based strategies (e.g., reading strategies) are used	18	90	2	10	20	100
4	Complete segregation (only one skill is focused)	5	25	15	75	20	100
5	Partial segregation (more than one skills linger in)	14	70	6	30	20	100

B	Skill integration						
1	Starts with a topic or by introducing task	5	25	15	75	20	100
2	Communicative teaching is followed	5	25	15	75	20	100
3	Integrates skills through content based activities	3	15	17	85	20	100
4	Integrates skills through task based activities	3	15	17	85	20	100
5	Involves students in communicative tasks	9	45	11	55	20	100

In the table 9 within skill segregation category, we can observe that out of total observed 20 classes 15 (75%) classes started by mentioning a particular skill and in 14(70%) classes only one skill was focused throughout the lesson. Similarly, 18 (90%) classes were based on skill linked strategies such as reading strategies and writing strategies. However, complete segregation of skills was observed only in 5(25%) classes. In 14 (70%) classes only partial segregation of skills was observed.

As far as skill integration category is concerned, only 5(25%) of the total 20 classes started with a topic or by introducing task and communicative teaching was followed. The skills were integrated through content based activities in 3(15%) classes and same was the case with integrating skills through task based activities. Finally, in 9(45%) of the classes students were involved incommunicative tasks.

This analysis clearly indicates that skill segregated practice of teaching English is prevalent in Nepal. Most of the classes focus on the teaching of only one skill in a lesson. The teaching of four language skills simultaneously through content based and task based activities is avoided as far as possible. However, the separation of skills remains only partial in most of the classes as sometimes the skills that are not focuses linger in the lesson.

4.1.7 Activities in Skill Segregation and Skill Integration

The activities conducted by the observed teachers were noted down in the observation forms during the observation period under the heading 'remarks'. The activities conducted during the teaching of English language in relation to segregation and integration of skills has been presented in this section.

Activities in Skill Segregation

Sixteen classes out of total twenty were presented through skill segregation approach. The skill wise activities conducted during the class observation have been presented as follows:

Reading Activities

Out of total 20 observed classes 8 classes were based on reading lessons. The activities conducted in those reading lessons were: read and answer, matching word meaning, synonym-antonym, summarizing, true- false, guessing from picture, arranging sentences in correct order, and filling gaps.

Writing Activities

Three classes out of twenty were based on writing lessons. The activities conducted in those lessons were: introducing writing activity, study of samples, writing practice

Speaking Activities

Only one class out of twenty was presented on speaking lesson. In the lesson, the activities such as relating previous learning, studying a dialogue and speaking practice based on example dialogue were conducted.

Listening Activities

Only one class out of twenty was presented on listening lesson. In the lesson, the activities such as relating students' experiences, true-false, listen and answer and parallel writing were conducted.

Grammar Activities

Three classes out of twenty were based on grammar lessons. The activities conducted in those lessons were: introduction of the grammar item, structure and examples and discrete item practice.

Activities in Skill Integration

Four classes out of twenty were presented through skill integration approach. The activities conducted in the observed classes were: discussion on topic, reading activities, speaking (based on experiences or reading), sharing experiences, writing/Speaking based on reading, and listening ad reporting.

This data also supports the point that a great number of English language classes in Nepal at secondary level are conducted following skill segregation approach. In such classes, activities associated with a particular skill are conducted. For example, classes are presented only on reading lesson divorced from other skills such as listening and writing. The common activities in a reading lesson include activities such as question-answer, true false, matching, filling gaps and ordering. Similar skill linked activities are used while teaching other skills as well. Only a few numbers of classes are focused on skill integrated lessons in which multiple skills are brought together through activities such as discussion on topics, reading for speaking or writing and listening and reporting.

4.1.8 Gap Between Teachers Responses and Observed Practices

The analysis and interpretation of the data collected for investigating secondary level English language teachers' perception on and practices of skill segregation or skill segregation in ELT shows a huge gap between the responses of the teachers collected through questionnaire and their behavior observed in the classroom. The responses of the teachers on the fourth part of the questionnaire suggest that 90% of the teachers present lessons on English language through skill integration and they integrate multiple skills through content based or task

based activities. However, only four (20%) classes were found to be based on skill integration during the observation of twenty classes. Sixteen classes were presented through skill segregation approach which makes 80% of the total observed classes though only one teacher informed that s/he presented classes through skill segregation. Since this study does not have any data to justify this gap, a further study is suggested to investigate the causes behind this gap.

Similarly, the gap has been found in case of teachers' perceptions and practices of teaching English language skills. As the study reveals, 90% of the teachers advocate the integrated skills teaching practice, however, only a few of them practice this approach in real teaching. So, it can be said that at theoretical level teachers find skill integrated teaching practice attractive and in line with the latest teaching methodologies but at practice level they still stick to traditional segregated teaching practice as it requires less materials and effort on the part of the teachers.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the analysis of data and interpretation of results, the findings of the study were derived. The findings of the study led to some conclusions and recommendations based on the study. So, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study have been presented in his part of the thesis.

5.1 Findings

Some major findings of the study have been listed as follows:

a. It was found that seven teachers were familiar and three others were unfamiliar with the issues of segregation or integration of skills in ELT.

b. There were five teachers who advocated skill segregated teaching of language skills whereas four teachers were against it.

c. There were nine teachers who advocated skill integrated teaching of language skills whereas one teacher was against it.

d. Altogether eight teachers thought that segregated teaching of skills was useful for developing grammatical accuracy and vocabulary (grammatical competence) in students

e. It was found that six teachers considered that it was logistically easier to present courses by isolating skills from one another whereas 20% did not think so.

f. All the teachers were of the opinion that isolated teaching of skills leads to more focused and intensive learning. Moreover, eight teachers were of the opinion that integrated skills may not be practical in case of large classes.

g. Only three teachers thought that it was instructionally impossible to concentrate on more than one skill at a time and other seven did not think so.

h. All the teachers agreed to the points that integrated practice exposed students to authentic language enabling them to use English effectively for communication, and motivated and made language instruction meaningful and purposeful.

i. Majority of the teachers (i.e. 70%) were of the opinion that skill integration was useful in saving class time and reducing in learners' stress as well as helping students to be successful in their other academic subjects.

j. Teachers had positive perceptions on both of the approaches of teaching language skills. But there was higher support for skill integration in comparison to skill segregation.

k.   Huge majority of the teachers (90%) informed that they integrated two or more skills at a time and they integrated the skills by organizing them around a particular task or topic.

l. In real practice, teachers were found to be teaching through segregated approach in a great deal as 66% of the total observed classes were based on behaviors associated with skill segregation whereas 25% of the classes were based on the behaviors associated with skill integration.

m. In skill segregated lesson, the skill linked activities such as reading activities (read and answer, matching word meaning, true false and ordering) associated with a particular skill were conducted by teachers.

n. In skill integrated lesson activities such as discussion on topics, reading for speaking or writing and listening and reporting were conducted.

o. A gap was found between the responses of the teachers and their behavior observed in the classroom. Similarly, the gap was found in case of teachers' perceptions and practices of teaching English language skill.

5.2 Conclusion

The findings listed in the previous section of the research report lead to numerous conclusions in relation to teachers' perceptions on skill segregated and skill integrated teaching of English language and their practices of teaching English at secondary level. Since the study investigated a comparatively new area and/or topic in the context of Nepal, its conclusions have special significance in the context of Nepal.

The study reveals that the majority of teachers (i.e. 70%) with minimum required qualification and sufficient experience are well familiar with the issue of skill segregation and skill segregation in ELT. At theoretical level teachers are highly enthusiastic about skill integrated teaching practice as its supporters claim that it follows teaching procedures similar to real life situations outside the classroom and exposes students to natural use of language that ultimately helps to acquire English naturally without any stress. However, at practice level only a few teachers allow the integration of skills in their instruction as it requires more preparation on the part of the teachers. So, the teaching of four language skills simultaneously through content based and task based activities is avoided as far as possible in the context of Nepal.

There is also considerable support for skill segregated practice at theoretical level on the grounds of its emphasis on more focused and intensive learning as well as its contribution to the development of grammatical competence in students. In line with this, a huge number of classes are conducted through this

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approach to teaching language skills in the context of Nepal. Most of the classes focus on the teaching of only one skill in a lesson using skill linked activities such as reading activities and writing activities. However, the separation of skills remains only partial in most of the classes as the skills that are not focused in the lesson sometimes linger in.

In conclusion, it can be said that teachers are well known about the positive and negative aspects of skill segregated and skill integrate language instruction. Theoretically they realize the positive effects of skill integrated instruction but at practice level they are still struggling to cope with the recent trends of teaching English language. So, there is a gap between teachers' perceptions and their real practices of teaching English language skills.

5.3   Recommendations

On the basis of the findings and conclusion of the study recommendations related to policy, practice and further research have been presented in his sub-section.

5.3.1 Policy Related

As the study found a massive support of teachers for skill integrated approach it is suggested that policy makers at different levels should consider the benefits that can result from the integrated practice, however, the contextual utility of segregated practice cannot be ignored. Some major policy level recommendations based on the study have been presented as follows:

a. The English language curriculum designers at secondary level should include activities that require students to use multiple language skills simultaneously.

b. They should clearly mention the types of activities that should be conducted while teaching particular items of English language.

c. Policy should be such that teaching English goes from skill segregated to skill integrated practice.

d. Textbook writers should make optimal balance between skill segregated and skill integrates activities. And textbooks should be flexible so as to help teachers to make their own choices while teaching in a particular context.

e. Policy makers should find the ways that encourage teachers to present classes that require the use of multiple skills of a language together instead of relying heavily on traditional segregated skill instruction.

5.3.2 Practice Related

The study found that despite the massive support of teachers for integrated teaching they were considerably following skill segregated approach in real practice. This leads to the conclusion that teachers are not being able to practice skill integrated approach in spite of their awareness of the benefits that can result from the integration of skills in classrooms. So, some practice related recommendations based on the study have been presented as follows:

a. Teachers should encourage students to integrate multiple skills in classroom in order to help them to communicate successfully in English language.

b. Teachers can proceed with the development of separate skills followed by skill integration in the teaching stages that follow.

c. Teachers should design activities of their own instead of strictly following the activities in the textbook. They should use the textbook creatively making necessary adaptations to it.

d. Teachers should make balance between the classes that they present in relation to skill segregation and skill integration. They should not just

stick to skill segregated practice just for the sake of convenience or exam results.

e. After all, they should put into practice what they think beneficial to their students.

5.3.3 Further Research Related

Keeping the delimitations of the study in consideration, some more topics, areas and issues for further research have been suggested in this part of the thesis.

a. As the study shows a gap between the teachers' perceptions as well as responses and their real classroom practices regarding skill segregated and skill integrated practices, a study can be conducted to investigate the causes of this gap.

b. Since this research is limited to teachers' perceptions and practices a study can be conducted to explore students' attitudes, views and opinions on the issue investigated in this research.

c. An in-depth study can be conducted in the issue of skill segregation and skill integration following case study design to derive more detailed picture of the issue in the context of Nepal.

d. An experimental study can be conducted comparing the effectiveness of skill segregated and skill integrated practices of ELT.

e. A study can be conducted by focusing only on the practice of skill integrated approach in the context of Nepal.

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Appendix I

Tribhuvan University
Faulty of Education
Department of English Education

Questionnaire to be filled in by English language teachers

Dear Teacher,

This questionnaire is intended to gather relevant data for the study entitled "Perceptions on and practices of segregation or integration of skills in ELT" under the supervision of **Mr. Resham Acharya**, Teaching Assistant, Central Department of English Education, Tribhuvan University. Therefore, I kindly request you to give your genuine response for the success of the study. Your response will be used only for the purpose of the study and will be kept confidential.

Note: you do not need to write your name on the questionnaire.

Thank you very much for your cooperation in advance.

Part One: Background Information

Please give short answer on the space provided.

1.1   Name of the school …………………………………………………

1.2   Qualification………………………………………………………….

1.3   Area of qualification …………………………………………………

1.4   Total years in teaching English language ………………………………

Part Two: Questions related to teachers' familiarity of segregated and integrated teaching of language skills and their advocacy of any of these approaches

2.1   Have you ever taken pre-service and/or in-service training about segregated and integrated skills teaching practice? You can also tick 'Yes' if you are familiar with segregated and integrated teaching practice by self-study or any other means.

         a. Yes   b. No

2.2.   If you have ticked 'No' in the question just above, please read a short note at the end of this questionnaire. And then, respond to the statements given below:

   1. The four skills of language should be taught in isolation following skill based strategies such as reading strategies

      a. Strongly agree

      b. Agree

      c. Have no idea

      d. Disagree

      e. Strongly disagree

   2. The four language skills should be taught in integration as they occur in real life.

      a. Strongly agree

      b. Agree

      c. Have no idea

      d. Disagree

      e. Strongly disagree

Part Three: Questions related to teacher's views on the advantages and disadvantages of segregated and integrated teaching of language skills

3.1.   Indicate your response by putting a tick ( ) mark to the appropriate option.

1. Segregated teaching of skills develops grammatical accuracy and vocabulary (grammatical competence) in students

    a. Strongly agree

    b. Agree

    c. Have no idea

    d. Disagree

    e. Strongly disagree

2. It is logistically easier to present courses on writing divorced from speaking or listening isolating from reading

    a. Strongly agree

    b. Agree

    c. Have no idea

    d. Disagree

    e. Strongly disagree

3. Isolated teaching of skills leads to more focused and intensive learning

    a. Strongly agree

    b. Agree

    c. Have no idea

    d. Disagree

    e. Strongly disagree

4. Many regions around the world, where teachers are required to teach very large classes, the teaching of integrated skills may not be a very practical option.

    a. Strongly agree

    b. Agree

    c. Have no idea

    d. Disagree

e. Strongly disagree

5. It is instructionally impossible to concentrate on more than one skill at a time
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Have no idea
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

6. The four language skills in integrated practice expose students to authentic language and enable them to use English effectively for communication.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Have no idea
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

7. The use of one skill leads to the use of another skill i.e. one skill can reinforce another: we learn to speak by what we hear, and we learn to write by what we read.
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Have no idea
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

8. Skill integration saves class time and reduces in Learners' Stress
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Agree
   c. Have no idea
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

9. Integrated skills teaching help students to be successful in their other academic subjects.

   a. Strongly agree

   b. Agree

   c. Have no idea

   d. Disagree

   e. Strongly disagree

10. Integrating the four language skills enable students to be motivated and makes language instruction meaningful and purposeful

   a. Strongly agree

   b. Agree

   c. Have no idea

   d. Disagree

   e. Strongly disagree

Part four: Questions related to teachers' practice of teaching skills

4.1. Do you teach two or more language skills to your students at a time?

   a. Yes b. No

4.2. If your answer for question 4.1 is yes, do you integrate language skills by organizing them around the same topic and/or task at a time?

   a. Yes b. No

4.3. If your answer for the question 4.1 is no, do you teach skills using skill based strategies such as read and answer, look and describe, listen and match, and guided writing.

   a. Yes

   b. No

4.3. To what extent do you integrate the four language skills?

   a. Always

   b. Usually

   c. Sometimes

   d. Rarely

   e. Never

Segregation versus Integration of Skills

Regarding the teaching of four skills of language there are two paradigms: segregating the skills and integrating them. In segregated approach to teach language skills language learning is typically separate from content learning and the mastery of discrete language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing is seen as the key to successful learning .Frequently, segregated-skill ESL/EFL classes present instruction in terms of skill-linked learning strategies: reading strategies, listening strategies, speaking strategies, and writing strategies. In discrete skill approach a lesson or a session of a lesson is focused on the presentation and practice of a single skill only.

Skills integration approach brings multiple skills together and teaching learning proceeds communicatively. Both input and output are connected in the classroom and students engage in the tasks that require the integration of multiple skills. Both productive skills (writing- speaking) and receptive skills (reading-listening) are treated as the essential and inevitable parts of effective and successful language teaching where one skill complements or reinforces another. For example, students learn to speak and write by what they hear and see. Students are exposed to such language use situations in which students require to apply most of the skills at the same time e.g. when the teacher asks something about any topic the students set off their   input to   understand and after to answer him activating output.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Appendix II

Classroom Observation From

Name of the school ……………………………………………………………..

Date of observation……………………………………………………………

Code of the teacher……………………………………………………………

Grade and section ……………………………………………………………

Lesson topic…………………….. ……………………………………………

Time……………………………………………………………………………..

No	Behavior to be observed	Observed	Not observed
A	**Skill segregation**		
1	Starts the class by mentioning a particular skill		
2	Focuses on a particular skill throughout the class		
3	Skill based strategies (e.g., reading strategies) are used		
4	Complete segregation (only one skill is focused)		
5	Partial segregation (more than one skills linger in)		
B	**Skill integration**		
1	Starts with a topic or by introducing task		
2	Communicative teaching is followed		
3	Integrates skills through content based activities		
4	Integrates skills through task based activities		
5	Involves students in communicative tasks		

Remarks

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