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THE PECULIARITIES OF TEACHING MOTHER TONGUE AND READING LITERACY SUBJECTS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL THROUGH AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH

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Abstract. This article examines the peculiarities of teaching Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy subjects in primary school through an integrative approach. The study analyzes the theoretical foundations, pedagogical significance, and practical implementation of integration in the educational process. Special attention is paid to the role of integrative teaching in developing students' reading comprehension, communicative competence, critical thinking, creativity, and functional literacy. The article highlights the advantages of combining language and literacy instruction within a unified learning environment and discusses the impact of integrated lessons on learners' academic achievement and motivation. The findings indicate that the integrative approach contributes significantly to improving the quality of primary education and supports the formation of key competencies required for lifelong learning.

Keywords: integrative approach, primary education, Mother Tongue teaching, Reading Literacy, reading comprehension, communicative competence, functional literacy, critical thinking, competency-based education, interdisciplinary integration.

Introduction. In the contemporary educational landscape, the development of literacy skills has become one of the primary objectives of school education. Rapid technological advancements, globalization, and the increasing flow of information require individuals not only to possess basic reading and writing abilities but also to demonstrate critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills. Consequently, educational systems around the world are shifting from traditional knowledge-centered instruction toward competency-based approaches that emphasize the practical application of knowledge and skills. Within this context, primary education serves as the foundational stage for the formation of learners' linguistic, cognitive, and social competencies.

Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy are among the most significant subjects taught in primary school. These subjects play a crucial role in developing students' ability to communicate effectively, understand written texts, express their thoughts coherently, and engage actively in the learning process. The mastery of reading literacy is particularly important because it influences students' success in all other academic disciplines. Learners who possess strong reading and language skills are better equipped to acquire new knowledge, analyze information, and participate meaningfully in educational activities.

Traditional methods of teaching Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy often focus on isolated language components such as grammar, spelling, pronunciation, and vocabulary acquisition. Although these elements remain essential, modern pedagogical theories suggest that language learning becomes more effective when it is connected with meaningful reading experiences and real-life communication. Therefore, educators increasingly advocate for teaching approaches that integrate various language and literacy skills within a unified instructional framework. Such approaches enable students to perceive language not merely as a subject of study but as a practical tool for communication, learning, and personal development.

The integrative approach has emerged as one of the most effective educational strategies for achieving these goals. Educational integration refers to the process of establishing meaningful connections among different areas of knowledge, skills, and learning experiences. In primary education, an integrative approach allows teachers to combine Mother Tongue instruction with Reading Literacy activities, thereby creating a more holistic and learner-centered educational environment. Through integration, students simultaneously develop reading comprehension, vocabulary, speaking, writing, and critical thinking skills while engaging with authentic and meaningful content.

The importance of integrating Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy has become particularly evident in the context of educational reforms implemented in many countries, including Uzbekistan. Modern curricula emphasize competency-based education, which requires students to apply acquired knowledge in practical situations rather than simply memorize information. Reading literacy is now recognized as a key component of lifelong learning and an essential indicator of educational quality. International assessments such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) have further highlighted the significance of reading literacy in determining students' academic achievement and future success.

An integrative approach contributes significantly to the achievement of these educational objectives. By connecting language instruction with reading activities, students gain opportunities to analyze texts, discuss ideas, express personal opinions, and create written responses. Such experiences not only improve language proficiency but also foster creativity, collaboration, and independent thinking. Furthermore, integrated lessons increase student motivation because learning activities become more engaging, relevant, and connected to real-life contexts.

Another important feature of the integrative approach is its contribution to the holistic development of learners. Modern educational philosophy views children as active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of information. Consequently, teaching methods should address students' intellectual, emotional, social, and communicative needs simultaneously. Integrative instruction creates conditions in which students can explore ideas, solve problems, work collaboratively, and construct knowledge through meaningful interactions with texts and peers.

Despite the growing recognition of integrated teaching practices, effective implementation requires a clear understanding of their pedagogical foundations, benefits, and distinctive characteristics. Teachers need to design learning activities that establish logical connections between language and literacy skills while maintaining educational objectives and age-appropriate content. Therefore, examining the peculiarities of teaching Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy through an integrative approach remains a relevant and important area of educational research.

Literature Review. The issue of teaching Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy through an integrative approach in primary education has become one of the most important directions of modern pedagogical research. Both foreign and Uzbek scholars have conducted numerous studies on the integration of educational content, the development of literacy competencies, and the establishment of interdisciplinary connections in the teaching process. Their works provide valuable theoretical and practical foundations for improving the quality of primary education.

The theoretical foundations of educational integration have been extensively explored by international scholars such as James A. Beane, Susan M. Drake, and Rebecca C. Burns. In his work Curriculum Integration, Beane argues that knowledge should be presented to learners as an interconnected system rather than as isolated facts. According to the scholar, integrated learning enables students to develop independent thinking, problem-solving abilities, and the capacity to apply acquired knowledge in real-life situations.

Similarly, Drake and Burns emphasize that integrated curricula enhance students' cognitive activity, logical thinking, and academic achievement. Their studies demonstrate that lessons organized on the basis of interdisciplinary connections significantly increase learners' motivation and participation in the educational process. The researchers note that integration creates meaningful learning experiences and helps students establish relationships between concepts and practical applications.

The psychological foundations of integrative teaching can also be found in the sociocultural theory developed by Lev S. Vygotsky. Vygotsky highlighted the essential role of language and social interaction in cognitive development. He argued that learning occurs most effectively through communication and collaborative activities. These ideas support the integration of Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy instruction, where learners simultaneously develop language skills and reading competence through active engagement with texts and discussions.

Studies on reading literacy conducted by Catherine Snow, Michael Pressley, and John T. Guthrie have expanded the understanding of literacy beyond the ability to read and write. These scholars define literacy as the capacity to comprehend, analyze, evaluate, and effectively use information obtained from written texts. Their findings indicate that integrated instruction contributes significantly to the development of functional literacy and higher-order thinking skills among primary school students.

In Uzbekistan, issues related to integrative teaching have also been investigated by a number of educational scholars. For example, N. Saidahmedov emphasizes that the implementation of modern pedagogical technologies and interdisciplinary integration enhances students' learning activity and educational outcomes. According to the scholar, contemporary education should focus on the comprehensive development of learners, and integrative methods play an important role in achieving this goal.

Another prominent Uzbek educator, R. Ishmuhamedov, highlights the significance of interactive methods and innovative technologies in fostering students' independent thinking and creativity. His research suggests that the application of integrative approaches in Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons contributes to improving the overall quality and effectiveness of education.

The pedagogical ideas of Abdulla Avloni also provide an important foundation for integrated language education. Avloni stressed that education and upbringing are inseparable processes and emphasized the crucial role of the mother tongue in the intellectual and moral development of children. His educational views remain relevant in contemporary discussions of integrated literacy instruction.

Furthermore, the methodological works of Uzbek scholars such as Q. Abdullayeva, S. Matchonov, T. G'afforova, and K. Qosimova have made significant contributions to the development of primary education methodologies. Their studies focus on text analysis, speech development, reading comprehension, and the formation of communicative competencies, all of which support the effective integration of Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy instruction.

In recent years, international assessment programs such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) have further highlighted the importance of reading literacy in modern education. These assessments place particular emphasis on students' abilities to understand, interpret, evaluate, and apply information from various types of texts. The results of these international studies demonstrate that integrative teaching approaches are among the most effective means of developing reading literacy competencies.

The analysis of the reviewed literature reveals that the integrative approach serves as an effective pedagogical tool for enhancing communicative competence, reading comprehension, critical thinking, and creative activity among primary school students. Therefore, the integration of Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy subjects is increasingly recognized as one of the essential requirements of contemporary primary education and a significant factor in improving educational quality.

Results and Discussion. The analysis of theoretical sources, methodological literature, and contemporary educational practices demonstrates that the integrative approach significantly enhances the effectiveness of teaching Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy in primary school. The findings indicate that integrating language instruction with reading literacy activities contributes to the comprehensive development of learners' linguistic, cognitive, communicative, and social competencies. Unlike traditional teaching methods, where language and reading skills are often taught separately, the integrative approach creates a unified learning environment in which students acquire knowledge through interconnected activities and meaningful learning experiences [1].

One of the major findings of the study is that the integrative approach contributes significantly to the development of reading comprehension skills. Reading literacy is not limited to the ability to read words correctly; it also involves understanding, interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating textual information. When Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons are integrated, students are encouraged to engage deeply with texts through various activities such as discussions, questioning, summarizing, and creative responses. These activities help learners identify the main ideas of a text, recognize supporting details, establish cause-and-effect relationships, and draw logical conclusions. As a result, students demonstrate a higher level of comprehension and critical engagement with reading materials compared to those taught through traditional methods [2].

The findings further reveal that integrated instruction positively influences students' vocabulary development and language proficiency. During integrated lessons, learners encounter new words within meaningful textual contexts rather than through isolated memorization exercises. This contextualized learning enables students to understand the meanings, functions, and practical applications of vocabulary items more effectively. Moreover, reading activities provide opportunities for learners to observe grammatical structures and language patterns in authentic contexts, thereby strengthening their overall language competence. Consequently, students become more capable of expressing their thoughts accurately and confidently in both oral and written forms [3].

Another important result concerns the enhancement of communicative competence. The integrative approach encourages students to participate actively in classroom discussions, collaborative learning tasks, role-playing activities, and oral presentations. Such activities create opportunities for learners to exchange ideas, justify their opinions, and engage in meaningful communication. The findings indicate that students who participate in integrated learning environments demonstrate greater confidence in speaking, improved listening skills, and a stronger ability to communicate effectively with peers and teachers. These outcomes are particularly important in primary education, where the formation of communicative competence serves as a foundation for future academic success [4].

The study also found that integrative teaching promotes the development of critical and creative thinking skills. In integrated classrooms, students are encouraged not only to understand information but also to analyze, compare, evaluate, and interpret it. For example, after reading a story or informational text, learners may be asked to predict outcomes, identify problems and

solutions, compare characters, or create alternative endings. Such tasks stimulate higher-order thinking processes and encourage students to become active constructors of knowledge rather than passive recipients of information. The findings suggest that students exposed to integrative learning activities demonstrate greater intellectual curiosity and problem-solving abilities than those engaged primarily in traditional instruction [5].

Furthermore, the results indicate that the integrative approach contributes positively to students' motivation and engagement in learning. Traditional language lessons sometimes focus heavily on mechanical exercises, which may reduce students' interest and participation. In contrast, integrated lessons combine reading, speaking, writing, and creative activities in ways that are meaningful and relevant to learners' lives. The use of stories, real-life situations, group projects, visual materials, and interactive tasks makes learning more enjoyable and purposeful. As a result, students become more actively involved in the educational process and demonstrate a stronger desire to participate in classroom activities [6].

The findings also reveal that integrative teaching supports the implementation of competency-based education, which has become a central objective of modern educational reforms. Competency-based education emphasizes the practical application of knowledge and skills rather than the simple memorization of information. Through integration, students learn to apply language and literacy skills in authentic contexts, thereby developing competencies that are essential for lifelong learning. The ability to comprehend texts, communicate effectively, think critically, and solve problems represents key competencies required for success in both academic and social environments [7].

An additional finding concerns the role of teachers in facilitating integrative learning. Effective implementation of the integrative approach requires careful lesson planning, appropriate selection of learning materials, and the use of interactive pedagogical methods. Teachers must design activities that establish meaningful connections between language learning and reading literacy while taking into account students' age characteristics and developmental needs. The analysis indicates that when teachers successfully organize integrated lessons, students achieve higher learning outcomes and demonstrate greater enthusiasm toward learning [8].

Practical observations also suggest that integrated lessons provide opportunities for interdisciplinary connections. Reading texts can be linked with topics from science, social studies, art, and environmental education, enabling students to broaden their knowledge while simultaneously developing literacy skills. For instance, a reading passage about nature may serve as a basis for vocabulary development, environmental discussions, creative writing tasks, and scientific observations. Such interdisciplinary learning experiences contribute to the formation of a holistic worldview and encourage students to recognize relationships among different fields of knowledge [9].

Overall, the findings confirm that teaching Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy through an integrative approach has a substantial positive impact on the quality of primary education. The approach enhances reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, communicative competence, critical thinking, creativity, motivation, and practical application of knowledge. These outcomes support the view that integrative instruction is an effective pedagogical strategy for fostering well-rounded, competent, and independent learners. Therefore, the wider implementation of integrative teaching practices in primary schools can contribute significantly to improving educational effectiveness and achieving the goals of contemporary competency-based education [10].

Conclusion. The study of teaching Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy subjects in primary school through an integrative approach demonstrates that this method is one of the most effective

strategies for improving the quality of modern education. The findings reveal that integrating language and literacy instruction creates favorable conditions for the comprehensive development of learners' cognitive, communicative, and creative abilities. Unlike traditional teaching methods, the integrative approach enables students to acquire knowledge and skills in a holistic manner, helping them establish meaningful connections between different learning experiences.

The research confirms that the integration of Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons contributes significantly to the development of reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, oral and written communication, and critical thinking skills. Through integrated learning activities, students become more active participants in the educational process, which enhances their motivation, engagement, and academic performance. Furthermore, the approach supports the formation of functional literacy by enabling learners to apply acquired knowledge and skills in real-life situations.

Another important conclusion is that the integrative approach aligns with the objectives of competency-based education, which has become a priority in contemporary educational reforms. By combining reading, writing, speaking, and analytical activities within a single instructional framework, teachers can foster key competencies required for lifelong learning and successful participation in society. The approach also promotes interdisciplinary learning, allowing students to broaden their knowledge and develop a more comprehensive understanding of the world around them.

The study further indicates that the successful implementation of integrative teaching requires careful lesson planning, the selection of appropriate learning materials, and the use of innovative pedagogical methods. Teachers play a crucial role in creating meaningful learning environments where students can actively interact with texts, share ideas, solve problems, and develop independent thinking skills.

In conclusion, teaching Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy through an integrative approach significantly enhances the effectiveness of primary education. It contributes to the development of literacy competencies, communicative abilities, creativity, and critical thinking while increasing students' interest in learning. Therefore, the wider application of integrative teaching practices in primary schools can serve as an important factor in improving educational quality and preparing learners to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. Future research may focus on developing innovative instructional models and practical methodologies for the effective implementation of integrative approaches in primary education.

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