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INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES IN EFL TEACHING: CONNECTING ENGLISH WITH OTHER SUBJECT AREAS

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Modern learners need more than knowledge of individual subjects. They also need to understand how different areas of knowledge are connected and how this knowledge can be applied in real-life situations. This is particularly relevant to English language education because English can serve not only as an academic subject but also as a tool for learning about science, technology, business, culture, and other fields. The purpose of this article is to examine the use of interdisciplinary approaches in EFL teaching and to demonstrate how connecting English with other subject areas can make language learning more meaningful, practical, and engaging.

In many English classrooms, language is taught separately from other areas of knowledge. Learners study vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, listening, and speaking through language-focused activities. Although these activities are necessary, students also need opportunities to use English for purposes connected with their academic, professional, and personal interests.

An interdisciplinary approach can provide such opportunities. In this approach, English is integrated with content from another subject area. For example, learners can study a topic related to technology while developing their English vocabulary and communication skills. They may read a short text about artificial intelligence, discuss its possible applications, and present their opinions. In this situation, English is not only the subject being studied but also a means of exploring another area of knowledge.

Technology is one of the areas that can be effectively integrated into EFL lessons. Learners can explore topics such as artificial intelligence, social media, online education, digital communication, and emerging technologies. These topics can be used for reading activities, discussions, presentations, writing tasks, and project work. The teacher can select content appropriate to the learners’ language proficiency and provide vocabulary and language support when necessary.

Business and professional subjects can also be connected with English language learning. University students, for example, may need English for their future employment. English lessons can incorporate topics such as job interviews, workplace communication, marketing, international business, professional correspondence, and presentations. Students can work on a business-related problem and discuss possible

solutions in English. This allows them to develop language skills while practising communication that may be relevant to their future careers.

Science and environmental topics provide another important opportunity for interdisciplinary learning. Learners can read about environmental problems, discuss possible solutions, and write short opinion paragraphs. Such activities combine language development with knowledge of important social and environmental issues. They also encourage students to use English to explain causes, compare ideas, provide evidence, and express their opinions.

Interdisciplinary teaching can contribute to the development of critical thinking skills. When learners work with content from another field, they may be required to analyze information, compare different perspectives, solve problems, and make decisions. Such activities require more than memorizing vocabulary or grammatical rules. Learners need to use English actively to communicate their understanding and justify their ideas.

The teacher’s role is particularly important when implementing an interdisciplinary approach. The content should be neither too difficult nor too simple for the learners’ level. If students cannot understand the content, they may spend most of the lesson translating individual words rather than communicating in English. Teachers can therefore provide key vocabulary, visual materials, guiding questions, or brief background explanations before the main activity.

Lesson objectives should also be clearly defined. An interdisciplinary lesson should normally include both a content objective and a language objective. For example, students may learn about environmental problems while simultaneously practising how to express opinions, provide reasons, and suggest solutions. Clear objectives make it easier for the teacher to evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson.

Project-based activities can be particularly effective in interdisciplinary teaching. Students can work in small groups to research a topic, collect and analyze information, prepare a presentation, and present their findings in English. For example, a group may prepare a project about a smart city, an environmentally friendly school, or the role of technology in education. Such projects require students to integrate several language skills and develop their ability to work collaboratively.

Interdisciplinary learning can also increase learners’ motivation because the content is connected with topics beyond the English classroom. Students may become more interested when they can discuss subjects related to their university studies, future professions, or everyday lives. In this context, English becomes a practical means of communication and knowledge acquisition rather than simply an academic subject.

However, interdisciplinary teaching requires careful preparation. Teachers need to select appropriate content, consider learners’ language proficiency, and ensure that language objectives remain central to the lesson. Cooperation between teachers from different subject areas can also strengthen this approach. For example, an English teacher and an IT teacher can collaborate on a project related to digital technologies,

allowing students to develop both subject-specific knowledge and English communication skills.

This approach is particularly relevant to university education. University students are expected to work with information from different academic fields, read specialized and academic materials, participate in discussions, conduct research, and communicate their ideas effectively. English can support these activities by providing access to international academic and professional resources.

In conclusion, interdisciplinary approaches can make EFL teaching more closely connected with learners’ academic, professional, and real-life needs. By integrating English with technology, science, business, environmental studies, and other subject areas, teachers can create opportunities for meaningful communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and active learning. At the same time, successful interdisciplinary teaching requires clearly defined objectives, appropriate materials, consideration of learners’ proficiency levels, and careful methodological planning. When language and content are balanced effectively, English lessons can contribute not only to language development but also to learners’ broader academic and professional growth.

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