

One Module, Two Disciplines: Exploring the Pedagogical Effects of a Combined Linguistics–Phonetics Course for First- and Second-Year EFL Licence Students in Algeria

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Abstract:

This theoretical study explores the recent curricular reforms in Algerian EFL higher education, which have merged linguistics and phonetics—previously independent modules—into a single course for first-year (L1) and second-year (L2) Licence students. It examines whether this integration enhances learning or poses additional cognitive and pedagogical challenges. Based on research in linguistics, phonetics, and applied linguistics, the study analyzes the progression and density of content, including foundational concepts, levels of analysis, major linguistic schools, articulatory mechanisms, phonetic transcription, and suprasegmental features such as stress, rhythm, and intonation. The discussion addresses conceptual and cognitive challenges, curriculum sequencing, content pacing, and learner engagement. By investigating semester-wise content progression, the article offers insights into the advantages and limitations of the integrated module, contributing to debates on curriculum coherence and instructional design in EFL university programs.

Keywords: Module integration; curriculum coherence; cognitive load; university EFL contexts; disciplinary convergence.

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1. Introduction

Recent changes in Algerian EFL university programs have redefined the organization and delivery of disciplinary knowledge. A notable change is the combination of linguistics and phonetics into a single core module, which is taught at both first-year (L1) and second-year (L2) Licence levels, with an allocation of 2 credits and a coefficient of 4. This approach is in line with broader trends in British, European, and LMD-aligned systems, where modular program structures are increasingly used to enhance curricular coherence, transparency, and comparability among institutions (Moon, 2002; Biggs & Tang, 2011).

In such modular systems, a module is perceived as a distinctly defined instructional unit integrated into a more extensive academic programme, characterized by clear learning objectives, specified content, allocated credits, and independent assessment procedures. According to Moon (2002), a module acts as an independent learning component that contributes cumulatively to program outcomes while preserving internal coherence. This definition is especially pertinent to the current discussion, as the integration of linguistics and phonetics occurs not at the programme level, but within a singular modular unit that must accommodate diverse disciplinary traditions, epistemological orientations, and learning needs.

Linguistics and phonetics play a crucial role in the academic training of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Linguistics familiarizes students with language as an organized and systematic entity, engaging them with abstract concepts related to structure, meaning, and usage. This field requires learners to develop their analytical reasoning, interpretive skills, and familiarity with specialized metalanguage. Conversely, phonetics concentrates on the physical and perceptual aspects of speech, focusing on articulatory mechanisms, auditory discrimination, and the symbolic representation of sounds through phonetic transcription. Although these two fields are theoretically related, they are markedly different in their methodological focus and the cognitive processing requirements they demand (Crystal, 2008; Ladefoged & Johnson, 2015).

Historically, the differences between these fields justified treating linguistics and phonetics as separate modules in Licence curricula. By teaching them independently, students were able to create a strong conceptual base in linguistic theory before addressing the technical and perceptual aspects of phonetic analysis. Therefore, the recent integration of both disciplines into one module for L1 and L2 students indicates a major pedagogical shift, altering both the content distribution and the sequencing and pacing of learning activities.

From a cognitive angle, this integration poses significant challenges. Investigations in applied linguistics and educational psychology suggest that novice learners are particularly vulnerable to content density and conceptual compression, especially when abstract theoretical models are presented alongside skill-based analytical tasks (Ellis, 2015; Sweller, Ayres, & Kalyuga, 2011). In the context of an integrated linguistics–phonetics module, students must process theoretical descriptions of language structure while concurrently enhancing their understanding of speech production, sound classification, and suprasegmental features. Such

requirements may exacerbate intrinsic cognitive load and impede the gradual assimilation of disciplinary knowledge.

The effects of integration reach not only learners but also instructors. Educators who once focused solely on a single discipline are now required to handle interdisciplinary material, synchronize theoretical discussions with practical applications, and maintain continuity over several semesters within constrained teaching time. As noted by Biggs and Tang (2011), effective curriculum design is dependent on constructive alignment between learning outcomes, teaching activities, and assessment methods. If integration is primarily executed as a structural reform without adequate pedagogical recalibration, the coherence intended at the curricular level may not be entirely realized in classroom practice.

Despite the rising use of integrated modules in EFL higher education, there is a notable scarcity of theoretical discussion concerning whether such integration effectively promotes learning coherence or inadvertently creates additional cognitive and pedagogical obstacles. A significant portion of the current literature persists in viewing linguistics and phonetics as separate fields, resulting in their intersection being insufficiently theorized, especially at the Licence level where students are in the process of cultivating essential academic skills.

In light of this context, the current article re-evaluates the shift from distinct to integrated instruction by exploring the linguistics–phonetics module as a cohesive curricular component. Employing a theoretical and curriculum-centered viewpoint, the study scrutinizes the organization, advancement, and conceptual challenges of the integrated module throughout four consecutive semesters. It is directed by a principal inquiry :

Does the integration of linguistics and phonetics within a single module enhance curricular coherence and learning outcomes, or does it increase cognitive and pedagogical complexity in EFL Licence programs?

2. Linguistics and Phonetics: From Disciplinary Separation to Curricular Convergence

The interplay between linguistics and phonetics has long been marked by both conceptual interdependence and disciplinary differentiation. Phonetics is traditionally seen as a foundational element of linguistic analysis, yet its methodological orientation and analytical processes have often led to its classification as a distinct area within language studies. Linguistics, in its broader interpretation, aims to account for language as a structured system that includes form, meaning, and usage, whereas phonetics is primarily focused on the physical realization of speech through articulatory, acoustic, and auditory dimensions (Crystal, 2008; Matthews, 2007). This divergence in analytical emphasis has traditionally influenced the positioning of the two fields within university curricula.

In traditional linguistics programs, phonetics was often presented as an introductory or supplementary field, equipping students with descriptive methods for examining sound systems prior to their advancement to more complex levels of linguistic theory. Nevertheless, over the

years, phonetics has established its own theoretical constructs, methodological approaches, and teaching traditions, particularly with the progress in experimental phonetics and phonological theory. As highlighted by Ladefoged and Johnson (2015), phonetics demands a kind of perceptual and procedural learning that is quite different from the conceptual reasoning required in syntactic or semantic analysis. This divergence has contributed to the long-standing practice of teaching linguistics and phonetics as separate modules, especially at the undergraduate level.

From an educational standpoint, the rationale for disciplinary separation was frequently based on cognitive considerations. Linguistics familiarizes students with abstract models and analytical frameworks that require an understanding of scientific reasoning and academic terminology. In contrast, phonetics engages students in careful observation of speech production and perception, often involving transcription systems and detailed auditory discrimination. When presented and taught independently, each discipline could be structured and paced in accordance with its internal logic, allowing learners to gradually acquire the requisite conceptual and analytical abilities (Roach, 2009; Catford, 2002).

The recent transition towards curricular integration indicates broader changes in higher education policy and curriculum formulation. In modular systems, particularly in European and LMD frameworks, integration is commonly endorsed as a method to enhance coherence, decrease redundancy, and promote interdisciplinary insight (Moon, 2002; Biggs & Tang, 2011). In EFL programs, the merging of linguistics and phonetics into a single module is aimed at helping learners recognize language as a singular phenomenon, where structure and sound are mutually enlightening rather than pedagogically segregated.

On the other hand, theoretical discussions in the field of applied linguistics caution that curricular alignment does not automatically ensure pedagogical coherence. As noted by Cook (2015), interdisciplinarity demands more than just structural proximity; it relies on careful conceptual alignment and explicit mediation between various forms of knowledge. In the context of linguistics and phonetics, successful integration requires that abstract linguistic theories be meaningfully linked to observable phonetic events, a task that can be cognitively challenging for beginner learners. In the absence of explicit support, students may find it difficult to align theoretical explanations with phonetic descriptions, resulting in a fragmented understanding instead of a cohesive insight.

The problem becomes especially significant at the Licence level, where students are concurrently adjusting to academic discourse, disciplinary metalanguage, and university learning conventions in a language that is not their own. Research regarding cognitive load suggests that when learners are required to handle multiple types of complex information simultaneously, their learning efficiency may be compromised unless the instructional design effectively regulates content density and progression (Sweller et al., 2011). Within an integrated linguistics–phonetics module, students are required to interact with theoretical models, historical viewpoints, analytical categories, and technical phonetic skills all within a single instructional environment, which may heighten cognitive demands.

From the instructor's viewpoint, curricular convergence also transforms pedagogical duties. Educators are no longer limited to a singular disciplinary focus; instead, they must navigate the distinctions between theory-based explanations and practice-oriented phonetic analysis. This requires not just disciplinary expertise but also pedagogical adaptability and an awareness of the curriculum. As Richards (2017) highlights, effective university teaching is contingent upon teachers' ability to integrate disciplinary knowledge with instructional sequencing and learner readiness, particularly in contexts where curricular reforms redefine established teaching roles.

Taking these considerations into account, the unification of linguistics and phonetics can be seen as a teaching opportunity alongside a possible source of tension. Although it offers a more comprehensive depiction of language, it also questions existing beliefs regarding sequencing, pacing, and the independence of disciplines. Recognizing this tension is important for assessing whether the integration represents a true enhancement in pedagogy or is simply an administrative change .

This theoretical viewpoint establishes the basis for the following examination of the integrated module as it is applied in first- and second-year Licence programs. Through the exploration of how disciplinary convergence manifests within a semester-based system, the article intends to clarify the conditions that may allow integration to foster learning coherence or, alternatively, increase conceptual and instructional complexity.

3. Semester-Based Structure of the Integrated Linguistics and Phonetics Module (L1–L2)

In light of the theoretical examination of disciplinary separation and convergence in the domains of linguistics and phonetics, this section reviews the formal arrangement of the integrated module over the semesters. The analysis references the official Licence curriculum and course descriptors (Framework and course descriptions for the English undergraduate program, following the annex of Decree No. 1116 dated 13 December 2022) that have been adopted in English departments under the LMD system. These documents offer authoritative direction on content distribution, learning objectives, and sequencing, which constitute the main reference for assessing curriculum coherence and progression (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

The analysis of syllabi is a well-established method in curriculum studies and applied linguistics for mapping the organization and integration of disciplinary knowledge, particularly in the context of curricular reform (Richards, 2013). This research examines the integrated linguistics–phonetics module over four successive semesters (Semesters 1–4), which align with first-year (L1: Semesters 1–2) and second-year (L2: Semesters 3–4) Licence instruction. By concentrating on the officially mandated content instead of individual teaching methodologies, this analysis highlights curriculum design and its theoretical ramifications for student learning and cognitive load.

The analyzed canevas shows that linguistics and phonetics are no longer presented as separate modules but have been integrated into one comprehensive module that spans four semesters. This arrangement formalizes the convergence of disciplines and necessitates that both students and educators engage with a unified, albeit conceptually intricate, body of knowledge. The subsequent subsections outline the structure of the module by semester, emphasizing the development of content along with the relevant cognitive and pedagogical factors.

3.1.Semester 1 (L1): Foundational Linguistic Knowledge and Introductory Phonetic Awareness

In the first Semester, students are introduced to the fields of linguistics and phonetics, which serve as fundamental aspects of language studies. The linguistics content focuses on defining linguistics as a scientific discipline, tracing its historical progression, and exploring key ideas such as language as a system of signs and Saussurean dichotomies (Crystal, 2008). This foundational insight provides a theoretical framework for engaging in analysis.

Instruction in phonetics concentrates on articulatory phonetics, covering speech organs and the classification of English consonants and vowels. At this stage, the integration is predominantly structural, with both disciplines coexisting within the same module rather than being conceptually aligned. Students are tasked with observation, recognition, and fundamental transcription, offering a scaffolded introduction to phonetic awareness.

3.2.Semester 2 (L1): Theoretical Development and Emerging Phonetic Complexity

During the second Semester, the focus of linguistic instruction broadens to include structuralist and generative perspectives, models of communication, and semiotic approaches, fostering comparative and explanatory reasoning (Matthews, 2007). The content of phonetics, however, progresses to syllable structure, diacritics, consonant clusters, syllabic consonants, and suprasegmental features, including word stress and pitch.

At this moment, the cognitive demands on students start to intensify, as they are compelled to work with abstract linguistic models together with detailed phonetic accounts (Roach, 2009). The integration becomes more significant, revealing the potential for both synergy and cognitive obstacles within the module. To elucidate the progression by semester and the related pedagogical aspects, Table 1 provides a summary of the focus, learning activities, and cognitive implications for L1 students:

Table 1: Progression of Linguistics and Phonetics by Semester for First-Year Licence (L1) Students

Table 1. Semester-Wise Progression of Linguistics and Phonetics (L1)

Semester	Linguistics Focus	Phonetics Focus	Learning Skills / Activities	Cognitive & Pedagogical Considerations
Semester 1	Introduction to linguistics; historical development; key concepts (Saussurean dichotomies, language as a system of signs)	Articulatory phonetics; organs of speech; basic classification of English consonants and vowels	Observation, recognition, basic transcription exercises	Moderate intrinsic load; descriptive content; <i>scaffolded introduction recommended</i>
Semester 2	Structuralist & generative perspectives; <i>communication models; semiotic approaches</i>	Syllable structure; diacritics; consonant clusters; suprasegmentals (word stress, pitch)	Comparative analysis; structured transcription exercises	Increased intrinsic load; emerging integration; <i>scaffolded guidance essential</i>

According to Table 1, L1 places a strong emphasis on foundational knowledge and descriptive tasks, with scaffolded support designed to assist students in managing intrinsic cognitive load while gaining familiarity with disciplinary metalanguage and phonetic concepts. The organization by semester indicates a progressive rise in both conceptual and technical requirements, preparing students for more sophisticated integration in L2.

3.3.Semester 3 (L2): Systematic Linguistic Analysis and Applied Phonetic Processes

In Semester 3, students are introduced to a more sophisticated level of analysis that is fitting for those in their second year. The content in linguistics encompasses phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse, which encourages students to identify different analytical fields while comprehending their connections (Crystal, 2008).

Phonetics instruction focuses on the practical elements of spoken English, encompassing phonemic and phonetic transcription, as well as weak and strong forms, and connected speech phenomena like assimilation and elision. This semester marks a pivotal phase where theory and practice are clearly interconnected, heightening cognitive load and necessitating scaffolded support for successful learning (Sweller et al., 2011).

3.4.Semester 4 (L2): Linguistic Schools and Advanced Suprasegmental Features

The fourth semester concludes the integrated module. Linguistics instruction is centered on the major schools of thought, specifically structuralist, mentalist, and functionalist, with a focus on theoretical comparisons and their historical development. Students are required to engage critically with competing models, which calls for a high degree of conceptual maturity

(Matthews, 2007). In phonetics instruction, advanced suprasegmental features are introduced, encompassing sentence stress, rhythm, intonation, tone, and pronunciation variations across different English varieties (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2015). Students are involved in writing analytical essays, completing transcription tasks, and undertaking integrative exercises that combine both theoretical and phonetic analysis. The following table provides a summary of the progression of L2 content, focusing on learning strategies and cognitive challenges.

Table 2: Progression of Linguistics and Phonetics by Semester for Second-Year Licence (L2) Students

Table 2: Progression of Linguistics and Phonetics by Semester for Second-Year Licence (L2) Students

Semester	Linguistics Focus	Phonetics Focus	Learning Skills / Activities	Cognitive & Pedagogical Considerations
Semester 3	Major levels of linguistic analysis: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, discourse	Applied phonetic processes: phonemic/phonetic transcription, weak/strong forms, connected speech phenomena	Applied transcription tasks; analysis of connected speech; linking phonology to phonetic patterns	High intrinsic and germane load; integration of theory and procedural skills; scaffolded guidance critical
Semester 4	Major linguistic schools: structuralist, mentalist, functionalist; theoretical comparison & historical development	Advanced suprasegmentals: sentence stress, rhythm, intonation, tone, variation across English varieties	Analytical essays; transcription and suprasegmental analysis; integrative tasks	Very high cognitive load; advanced conceptual and procedural demands; learner engagement & instructor support crucial

As illustrated in Table 2, L2 necessitates that learners integrate linguistic theory with phonetic analysis, which considerably heightens cognitive demands and requires specific instructional support. The semester-wise progression reflects a conscious effort to harmonize disciplinary convergence with curricular coherence, emphasizing both the opportunities and challenges faced by students in their learning journey.

3.5. Analytical Remarks on Syllabus-Based Integration

The evaluation of the integrated module throughout four semesters confirms that the convergence of linguistics and phonetics is institutionally entrenched rather than incidental. The vertical progression, cumulative content, and integration of disciplines are intentionally structured, even though they also amplify cognitive complexity. Establishing the discussion within the framework of official curricular documents ensures that observations are tied to institutional policy rather than being based on anecdotal classroom experiences.

This syllabus-oriented viewpoint establishes the basis for the subsequent section, which will examine the cognitive and pedagogical consequences of merging linguistics and phonetics into a unified module, explicitly referencing cognitive load theory, curriculum alignment, and EFL pedagogy at the Licence level.

4. Cognitive and Pedagogical Implications of Integration

The merging of linguistics and phonetics into one module for first- and second-year EFL Licence students holds significant implications for both cognitive processing and teaching practices. This section draws upon Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) and curriculum design principles to investigate how learners interact with the integrated content and how educators may assist in promoting effective learning.

4.1. Cognitive Load Considerations in Integrated Instruction

Cognitive Load Theory (CLT), first introduced by Sweller in 1988 to elucidate the constraints of working memory within educational settings, provides a valuable framework for comprehending the cognitive difficulties that may arise from integrated linguistics–phonetics instruction. CLT posits that working memory has a finite capacity, especially when dealing with new or unfamiliar information, such as disciplinary metalanguage and analytical constructs in the fields of linguistics and phonetics (Sweller, Ayres, & Kalyuga, 2011). CLT identifies three distinct types of cognitive load:

- 1) **Intrinsic cognitive load** is characterized by the inherent complexity of the subject matter. In the setting of an integrated module, a significant intrinsic load emerges when students are tasked with learning abstract linguistic theory alongside complex phonetic systems (e.g., transcription, suprasegmentals) at the same time, which interact and require simultaneous processing (Sweller et al., 2011; Paas, van Merriënboer, & Sweller, 2003).
- 2) **Extraneous cognitive load** is generated by instructional design or presentation that does not align with learning objectives. Poorly organized sequencing, unscaffolded transitions between theoretical knowledge and phonetic practice, or overly intricate syllabi can increase extraneous load and impede the learning process (Sweller et al., 1998).
- 3) **Germane cognitive load** is defined as the working memory resources dedicated to schema construction and meaningful learning. The goal of effective instructional design is to minimize extraneous load, which allows cognitive resources to be available for germane processing, thus enhancing learners' ability to incorporate new knowledge into long-term memory (Sweller et al., 2011).

The integration of linguistics and phonetics within a single module, coupled with the simultaneous introduction of multiple complex content areas without adequate instructional scaffolding, can lead to cognitive demands that exceed students' working memory capacity. As a result, comprehension and knowledge retention may suffer due to increased intrinsic and extraneous cognitive load (Sweller et al., 1998; Paas et al., 2003). This challenge is especially noticeable among novice learners who have not yet developed strong schemata in either field. In the absence of such foundational conceptual frameworks, students may find it challenging

to effectively relate abstract linguistic theories to the procedural skills necessary for phonetic analysis. This can result in a fragmented, superficial, or incomplete understanding rather than a coherent and integrated learning experience (Sweller, 1988; Paas et al., 2003).

4.2. Pedagogical Constraints and Curriculum Sequencing

Integrated modules necessitate careful pedagogical coordination to ensure coherence among the intended learning outcomes, teaching activities, and assessment practices. According to the theory of constructive alignment, learning is improved when these elements are systematically aligned, ensuring that instructional methods and assessment tasks directly support the knowledge and skills that students are expected to acquire (Biggs & Tang, 2011). In an integrated linguistics–phonetics module, this alignment requires organizing content progression in such a way that linguistic theory meaningfully informs phonetic practice, while assessments are designed to evaluate students' capacity to integrate concepts across both domains instead of demonstrating fragmented or isolated understanding (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

Without such alignment, integrated instruction might unintentionally heighten extraneous cognitive load, particularly when learners are tasked with navigating abrupt transitions between different disciplinary domains or dealing with conflicting instructional and assessment expectations. For instance, the immediate introduction of complex phonetic transcription tasks after highly abstract discussions of linguistic theory can place undue demands on learners who have not yet achieved adequate procedural competence (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Moreover, findings from cognitive load theory stress the importance of scaffolded pedagogical support—such as worked examples, guided practice, and task segmentation—to minimize unnecessary processing demands and encourage relevant cognitive engagement (Paas et al., 2003; Sweller et al., 2011). Consequently, gradually structured learning activities that support the incremental development of disciplinary schemata may enable students to cope more effectively with the simultaneous theoretical and procedural demands that characterize integrated modules.

4.3. Learner Engagement and Language Proficiency

The cognitive requirements linked to the combination of linguistics and phonetics carry significant consequences for student engagement. When learners find course material to be overly abstract or inadequately related to practical communication, they may lose interest and resort to memorization rather than cultivating analytical and transferable abilities. Empirical studies in EFL contexts reveal that learning tasks perceived as overly challenging or misaligned with learners' proficiency levels can weaken motivation and obstruct effective learning outcomes (e.g., research on cognitive task complexity in EFL curriculum design; Roozafzai, 2024).

Therefore, curriculum planners and instructors need to meticulously consider the readiness and language proficiency of learners by offering linguistic and phonetic content in easily understandable, structured formats, and by supplying explanations that clearly connect

analytical tasks to authentic language contexts. Utilizing progressive scaffolding can aid novice learners in developing the essential linguistic metalanguage and analytical approaches, consequently decreasing the chances of cognitive overload and learner disengagement.

4.4. Instructor Preparedness and Professional Development

The unification of linguistics and phonetics introduces fresh instructional requirements for university instructors, as it calls for both extensive disciplinary knowledge and considerable pedagogical proficiency. Teachers are expected to facilitate the connection between theoretical linguistic frameworks and practical phonetic exercises by crafting instructional sequences that enable gradual learning and effective conceptual integration. This teaching obligation may require focused professional development in areas such as curriculum design, cognitive load theory principles, and instructional methods that assist novice learners in navigating intricate integrated content. This preparation is especially vital in multilingual EFL environments, where learners' differing language proficiency levels can introduce additional cognitive challenges.

5. Recommendations for Curriculum and Instructional Design

The theoretical and curriculum-focused examination of the integrated linguistics–phonetics module accentuates the necessity of strategic instructional design to optimize learning outcomes while adeptly regulating the cognitive load of learners. The subsequent recommendations are based on principles derived from cognitive learning theory, constructive curriculum alignment, and studies in applied linguistics.

5.1. Scaffolding and Content Sequencing

In order to lessen the substantial inherent cognitive load that comes with integrated instruction, it is advisable for curricular content to be sequenced in a progressive fashion, allowing learners to incrementally build their conceptual understanding before they engage with more sophisticated analytical tasks.

-  **Early semesters (L1, Semesters 1–2):** During the early semesters of the first year (L1, Semesters 1–2), the instructional approach should prioritize foundational knowledge in linguistics and phonetics. It is essential to introduce key theoretical concepts in conjunction with the descriptive aspects of phonetics. Learning activities at this level should emphasize observation, recognition, and systematically organized practice, rather than requiring advanced analytical processing, to support the development of schemas and effectively manage intrinsic cognitive load (Sweller et al., 2011).
-  **Later semesters (L2, Semesters 3–4):** During the later semesters (L2, Semesters 3–4), it is essential for learners to progressively engage in applied and integrative tasks. These tasks encompass the transcription of connected speech, the analysis of suprasegmental features, and the comparative evaluation of theoretical frameworks. This incremental approach allows students to reinforce their foundational schemata before they confront

higher-order integration (Paas et al., 2003). Moreover, scaffolded instructional strategies—such as worked examples, guided practice, and segmented tasks—can effectively diminish extraneous cognitive load and assist in germane processing, which facilitates deeper understanding and skill enhancement (Sweller et al., 2011).

Furthermore, scaffolded instructional strategies—such as worked examples, guided practice, and segmented tasks—can help to further reduce extraneous cognitive load and support germane processing, thus facilitating deeper comprehension and skill development (Sweller et al., 2011).

5.2.Active Learning and Multimodal Approaches

Engaging students in interactive and multimodal learning experiences serves as an effective means to connect theoretical knowledge with practical application:

- ✚ Make use of audio recordings, spectrogram software, and interactive transcription exercises to link abstract linguistic constructs with concrete phonetic phenomena, thereby fostering experiential understanding.
- ✚ Integrate peer learning, group analysis, and collaborative tasks to promote cognitive offloading, allowing students to assist each other in navigating complex material and encouraging deeper conceptual integration (Cook, 2015).
- ✚ Employ problem-based or task-based learning strategies that encourage learners to actively associate theory with practice, thereby enhancing motivation, reinforcing analytical skills, and supporting long-term retention (Ellis, 2015).

5.3.Assessment Alignment

Assessment practices ought to be structured to reflect the interconnected nature of the linguistics–phonetics module:

- ✚ **Formative assessments**—including quizzes, transcription tasks, and concise analytical essays—deliver ongoing feedback regarding how well students are associating linguistic theory with phonetic practice.
- ✚ **Summative assessments** ought to evaluate both conceptual understanding and practical skills, rather than treating each discipline separately. This alignment guarantees that evaluation supports the module’s integrative objectives and encourages meaningful engagement with both theoretical and practical content (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

By aligning assessment with both theoretical and practical aspects, educators can strengthen integrative learning, encourage deeper comprehension, and ensure that students can effectively apply linguistic concepts in phonetic analysis.

5.4. Instructor Support and Professional Development

The successful execution of the integrated linguistics–phonetics module relies on the readiness of instructors:

- ✚ Teachers should be trained in integrated curriculum design, with an emphasis on managing cognitive load, employing scaffolding strategies, and ensuring interdisciplinary alignment.
- ✚ Professional development opportunities could feature workshops on teaching strategies tailored for novice EFL learners, multimodal phonetic instruction, and the alignment of assessments with integrated learning outcomes (Richards, 2017).
- ✚ Joint planning between linguistics and phonetics educators can guarantee a coherent sequence and conceptual connection, thereby reducing gaps and redundancies in instruction.

By equipping instructors with these essential skills and encouraging collaborative planning, the module can fulfill its potential for integrative learning, ensuring that students achieve both conceptual understanding and practical proficiency in linguistics and phonetics.

6. Implications for Future Research

Although this article offers a theoretical and curriculum-centered examination, empirical research is essential to evaluate the practical efficacy of integrated linguistics–phonetics instruction in EFL settings. Subsequent studies might explore the following aspects:

6.1. Learning Outcomes and Cognitive Load

Research should focus on how integration affects students' understanding, retention, and performance in both linguistic theory and phonetic practice. Quantitative studies, including experimental or quasi-experimental designs, could systematically measure these outcomes. Moreover, cognitive load could be evaluated using validated tools, such as subjective rating scales or performance-based measures, to determine how learners cope with simultaneous theoretical and practical demands (Paas et al., 2003).

6.2. Learner Perceptions and Engagement

Qualitative studies, which may involve interviews, focus groups, or reflective journals, can shed light on learners' experiences, motivation, and perceived challenges encountered in integrated modules. Furthermore, these investigations could determine if scaffolded instructional strategies and multimodal learning resources enhance engagement and lessen cognitive load (Cook, 2015; Ellis, 2015).

6.3. Instructional Strategies and Curriculum Models

Future research endeavors may focus on comparing various integration approaches, such as fully integrated modules against modularized sequences, to identify which designs are most effective for first- and second-year Licence students. Moreover, studies could explore the effects of teacher expertise and interdisciplinary collaboration, including the ways in which professional development programs enhance instructional coherence and positively influence student outcomes (Richards, 2017).

6.4. Cross-Linguistic and Multilingual Contexts

The effect of integration on learners with different linguistic backgrounds requires careful study, particularly in multilingual or low-proficiency EFL settings. Research may investigate how language proficiency correlates with cognitive load in integrated modules, supplying recommendations for curriculum changes that meet the needs of varied learner demographics (Ellis, 2015).

Overall, , these empirical inquiries would offer significant insights into the pedagogical, cognitive, and curricular effects of combining linguistics and phonetics, guiding the formulation of effective, learner-centered EFL programs at the Licence level.

7. Conclusion

The integration of linguistics and phonetics into a single module for first- and second-year EFL Licence students marks a significant innovation in curriculum design, aligning with contemporary trends towards interdisciplinary coherence and modular program structures. This article's theoretical and syllabus-based analysis reveals both the potential advantages and the challenges posed by this integration.

By merging linguistic theory with phonetic practice, the integrated module holds the promise of enhancing a more thorough understanding of language, aiding students in recognizing the interplay between abstract concepts and practical applications. Moreover, it promotes curricular coherence, guaranteeing that learning objectives, content sequencing, and assessment strategies are harmonized over four semesters. However, the analysis reveals that the cognitive demands of this module are considerable. Novice learners, especially, may face significant intrinsic and extraneous cognitive loads when dealing with complex theoretical content alongside procedural phonetic skills, which could hinder deep learning if not adequately supported.

From a pedagogical standpoint, the success of the integrated module hinges on deliberate curriculum design, thoughtful sequencing, and a constructive alignment between teaching practices, learning activities, and assessments. Scaffolding strategies, multimodal instructional approaches, formative assessments, and the preparedness of instructors are all critical for enabling students to engage effectively with both disciplines. Furthermore, collaboration

among teachers and targeted professional development can greatly improve the potential for achieving significant learning outcomes.

In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of empirical research aimed at understanding the practical operation of integrated linguistics–phonetics modules. Exploring learner perceptions, cognitive load, and performance outcomes will offer vital insights into the success of integration and shape future curriculum advancements. By considering both theoretical and practical dimensions, this article plays a role in the ongoing discussions surrounding interdisciplinary education, curriculum coherence, and effective learning in higher education EFL programs.

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