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### **A Critique of Dual Skills Approaches to Reading Instruction: Reading-Writing vs. Reading-Listening vs. Reading-Speaking**

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**Abstract:** Classroom reading activities fall into two broad categories, an input phase and an output phase, and these in turn can be further classified into socially interactive and independent activities. Learners listen to their teacher read a story aloud. They read silently. They respond to comprehension questions orally and in writing. They discuss what they read. Although reading is by definition an encounter with written language, reading instruction necessarily involves multiple skills and modalities (listening, speaking, reading, writing). While numerous possibilities exist for combining the four basic language skills in a reading class, the focus always remains on developing independent readers who can get meaning from the printed page. This interdependence of skills in the reading class raises a number of questions, both practical and theoretical, of interest to classroom teachers and researchers. In reading classes where the goal is to develop skillful independent readers, some questions needing to be considered are the following: (1) What is the difference between an EFL/ESL "reading class" and an EFL/ESL "integrated skills" class? (2) In a "reading class," how do age, ability, and other variables affect what proportion of time should be devoted to reading, writing, speaking, and listening? (3) In what circumstances are certain combinations of skills and modalities (e.g., reading-writing vs. reading-listening) more appropriate than others? The present study considers these and other questions primarily within the context of second- and foreign-language reading classes at the intermediate level, although the findings to a large extent can apply to first-language classes as well. Following a review of the literature, the study presents a content analysis of reading textbooks for non-native learners examining the relationship between reading and the other skills: (1) What kinds of listening, writing, and speaking activities are included? (2) What is emphasized? (3) How closely are they related to the text? (4) What theoretical and pedagogical positions do they reflect? (5) How do reading textbooks intended for an international audience differ from those intended for a specific linguistic-cultural group (in this case, Japanese learners of English)? Based on these findings and previous research, the speaker proposes a model for integrating listening, speaking, and writing activities within the reading lesson and reading curriculum, specifically critiquing "dual-skills" approaches (reading-writing, reading-listening, and reading-speaking) to course design.