Journal of Curriculum and Teaching Methodology (JCTM) • Vol 3, Issue 5 (2024) • P: 70 - 61
https: //journals.ajsrp.com/index.php/jctm
ISSN: 2790-7333 (Online) • ISSN: 2790-7325 (Print)

Integrated Approach in Teaching Language between Theory and Practice

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Received: 20/01/2024

Revised: 01/02/2024

Accepted: 02/03/2024

Published: 30/05/2024

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Citation: Bani-Yaseen, M. F., Al-Zu'bi, M. A., & Al-Tawalbeh, A. M. (2024). Integrated Approach in Teaching Language between Theory and Practice. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching Methodology, 3*(5), 61 – 70. https://doi.org/10.26389/AJSRP.M200124

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Abstract: The study aimed at studying the integrated approach in teaching language between theory and practice. To achieve the purpose of the study, the researchers designed a model of whole- language approach, Language experience approach, whole text approach, the cognitive academic approach, then, they designed a comprehensive model for an integrated approach to recognize the nature of this approach. The study relied on an analytical descriptive approach. So, it described the integrated approach, analyzed its structure, and clarified the relationship between its elements. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommends to curry out experimental studies and training courses to recognize the effectiveness of the integrated approach, and including the importance of integrated approach in the students' curricula.

Keywords: Language, Teaching, Integrated approach.

المنهج التكاملي في تعليم اللغة بين النظرية والممارسة

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المستخلص: هدفت الدراسة إلى دراسة المنهج التكاملي في تعليم اللغة بين النظرية والممارسة. ولتحقيق هدف الدراسة، صمم الباحثون نموذجًا لنهج اللغة الكاملة، ونهج تجربة اللغة، ونهج النص الكامل، والنهج الأكاديمي الإدراكي، ثم صمموا نموذجًا شاملاً للمنهج التكاملي للتعرف على طبيعة هذا النهج. اعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، حيث وصفت المنهج التكاملي، وتحليل هيكله، ووضحت العلاقة بين عناصره. بناءً على نتائج الدراسة، يوصي الباحثون بإجراء دراسات تجريبية ودورات تدريبية للتعرف على فعالية المنهج التكاملي، وتضمين أهمية المنهج التكاملي في مناهج الطلاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: لغة، تعليم، المنهج التكاملي.

Introduction

There were several efforts to construct a comprehensive theory to teach language. They emphasized the contrast between language as a science and language as a material. The scope of the first one is the university students but the scope of the second one is the school students. In this context, it is important to classify the approaches of teaching language into two sections: the first one represents the structural approach which focuses on describing the language. The second one is the functional approach which focuses on the language functions and the skills of language practices. There is another classification that divides the approaches of language teaching into two parts: the first one represents the branches approach which separates reading from perusing, rhetoric, and syntax. The second one is the art approach that emphasizes integration.

Several approaches depend on these theories, such as the traditional approach, the structural approach, the communicative approach, the functional approach, the skillful approach, the whole approach, and the integrated approach. Every approach has its philosophical and psychological, lingual principles and its applications. The integrated approach considers the lingual performance which is represented in the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) as a system. In this system, every element affects other elements and affected by others. There is a relationship between reading and listing in so they are receptive skills. So, understanding the listened language affects what you read and vice versa. Besides, there is a relation between speaking and writing. Each of them is considered a productive skill. Besides, oral expression affects writing expression and vice versa. There is a relation between the sender and the receiver. The studies claimed that the relation between the sender and the receiver is interactive and exchanged (Goodma, 1992, 354). Thus, reading affects writing and vice versa and listening affects speaking vice versa (Murad, 2004, 21; Aldolaimi and Alwaeli, 2005; and Bani yasain, 2010, 179). The importance of language teaching approaches derived from the importance of the language itself which derived from several dimensions: the national dimension, the religious dimension, the educational dimension, and the cultural dimension.

The problem of the study:

The Arabic university students are weak in lingual performance during their classes and after graduation. The proficiency exam prepared by the Ministry of Higher Education revealed that the lingual performance of students who study Arabic is low. There is a relation between the experience and the language (Patricia & Richard- Amato. 2003; Mary Anne Hell, 1996, 1). The researchers claimed that the reasons for this weakness related to the methods used by the instructors of Arabic. Thus, it is necessary to explore the student's attitudes towards Arabic teaching approaches in particular the integrated approach. Several studies (Ibrahim and Aldolaimi, 2013, 345) emphasized its effectiveness. The researchers noticed that the concept of integration is mysterious. So, the researchers who were interested in integration used several terms such as integrated approach, integrated curriculum, integrated instruction, integrated method, integrated strategy, integrated style, and integrated model. Some of these studies which used the term "entry" are (Abd-Alal, 2001 and Alhamra, 2010) but (Kasaimeh, 2007; Nemer, 2008; Abu zahri, 2008; Alathamat, 2010; Alnnasir, 2011; Abdalhameed, 2013; and Alhatamleh, 2014) used the term of study curve. Also, some studies used studying curriculum are: (Rashwan, 2004; Esawi, 2008; Alshloul, 2009; Alsa'edi, 2013 and Alroubi, 2013) but (Aljahouri, 2002) used the term "method". While the study of (Alkhayat, 2001 and Kalsum, et al. 2023) used the term "integrated instruction". Moreover, there is an inter-lap between both terms (whole approach and integrated from the specialists' point of view.

The reasons for those inter-laps are due to the translation and continuous development caused by researches and studies. Also, the differences are caused by the point views; some specialists say that integration is related to the curricula designers but others say that integration is related to the teacher. Moreover, there are several integrated approaches. Some of them relied on an integrated text approach. Others depend on the lingual experience. Others relied on an academic cognitive approach. Depending on the starting point, some specialists started with the concept approach, others started from the task approach, and others started from the skills. Others started from the functional approach. The researchers found a necessity for an integrated approach. Integration includes all stages of curriculum design like planning, construction, performing, assessing, and development. It includes elements of the curriculum like purposes, content, activities, assessment, and evaluation. As a result, the study tried to answer the following question: What is the integrated approach? How could it be employed in teaching language? Through designing a model of an integrated approach in teaching language to decrease the gap between theory and practice.

The importance of the study:

The study is very important for several reasons. First, it pays the attention of the researchers to the nature of the integrated approach definition. Then, it provides a suggested model for an integrated approach. Finally, it provides a model for integrated entries.

The operational definitions:

The integrated approach: It was defined as the teacher's practices in achieving the lingual purpose according to the suggested model in the current study. It is achieved by fulfilling the integration between the language qualities and linking styles to improve the purposeful lingual performance.

The limitations of the study:

The study was limited to the suggested model and what includes principles, elements, and relations between its elements.

The methods and procedures

The researchers used the analytical descriptive approach. The integrated approach was described and analyzed. Thus, the definition of the integrated approach could be recognized by using the analytical descriptive approach.

The population of the study:

It is possible to generalize the suggested model and get benefits to involve all students at all educational stages.

The results and discussion

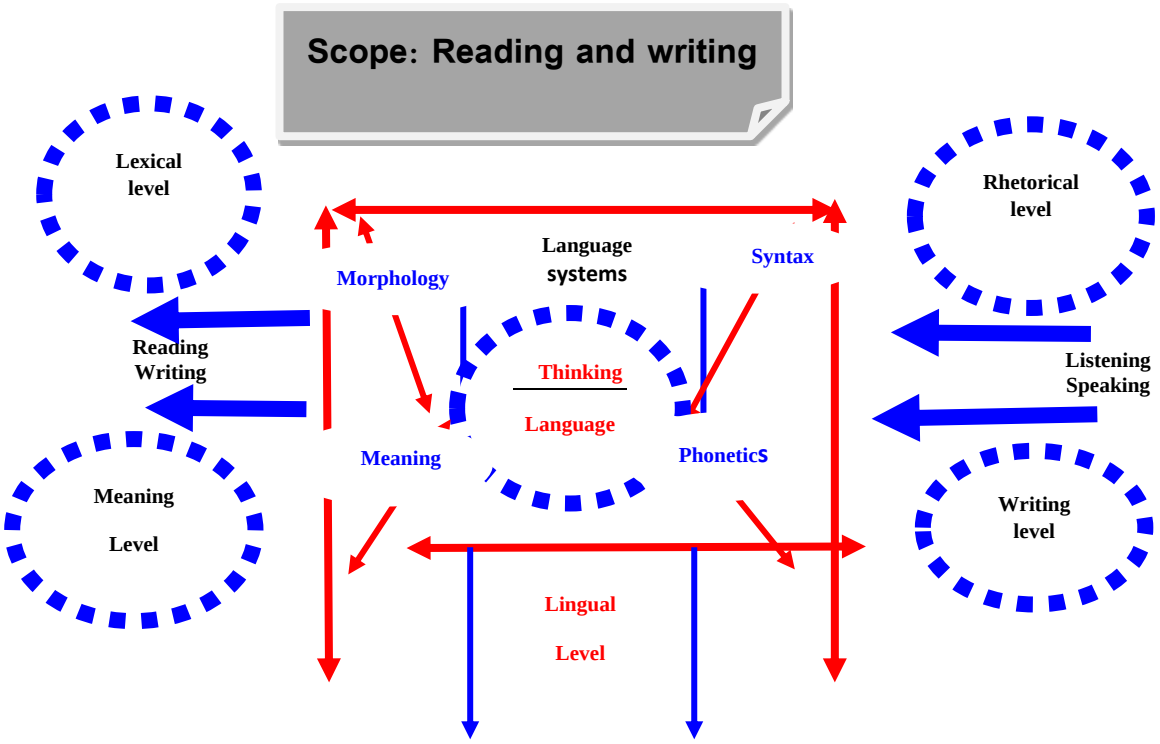
To understand the nature of the integrated approach concept, the researchers focused on the integrated approaches (Awad et al, 2019).

According to the following suggested models:

1. **Whole language approach**

It is considered as a philosophy in teaching and learning the language rather than a method. It is a set of beliefs about the nature of language and learners. The teaching of language is based on the top-down approach in a real context. Thus, it does not emphasize dividing the language into parts (Kotob, 2015, 567). Figure (1) elaborates this approach:

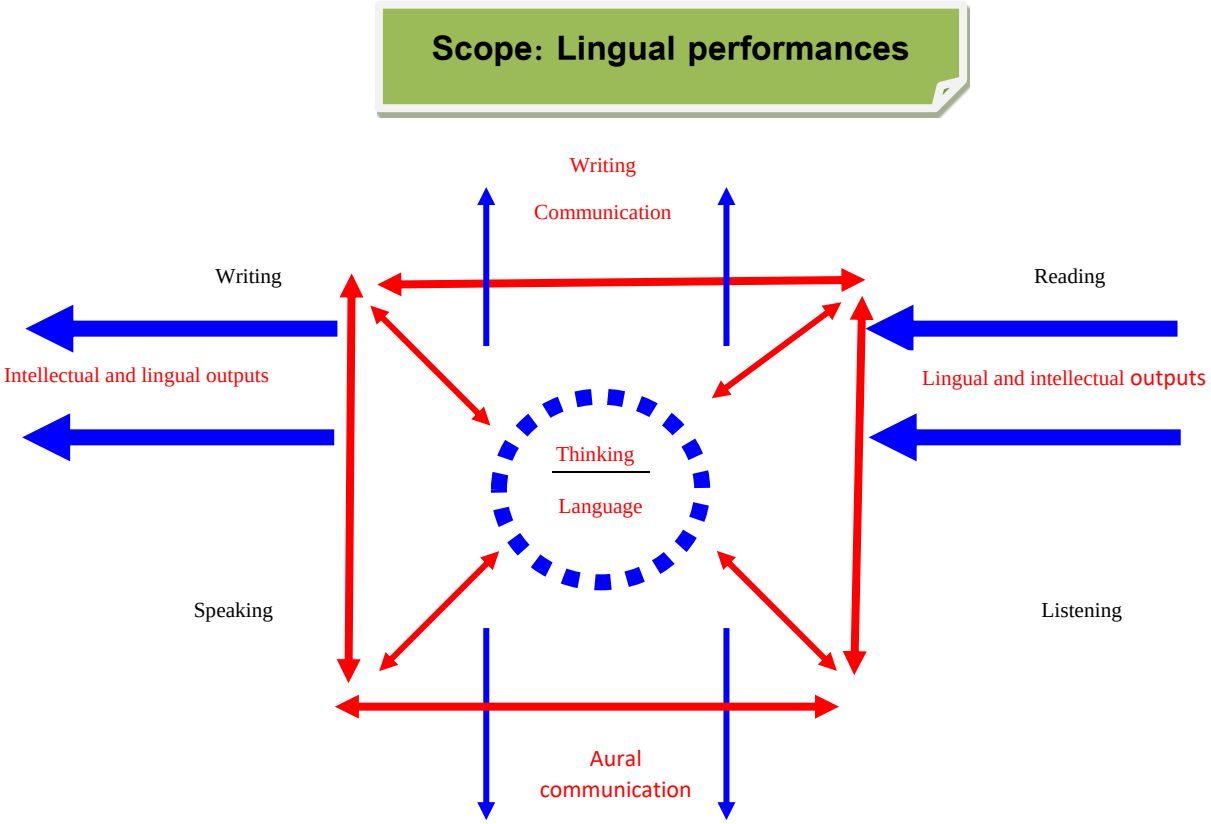
Figure (1) Whole Language Approach



2. Lingual experience approach

The lingual experience approach depends on the learners' personal experiences. It emphasizes their spoken language in producing lingual materials. It emphasizes language arts and its skills to be acquired by the students. The basis of this approach is the interfered relation between language and experience (Patricia & Richard- Amato. 203). It depends on the lingual pre-experience. Figure 2 clarifies this approach:

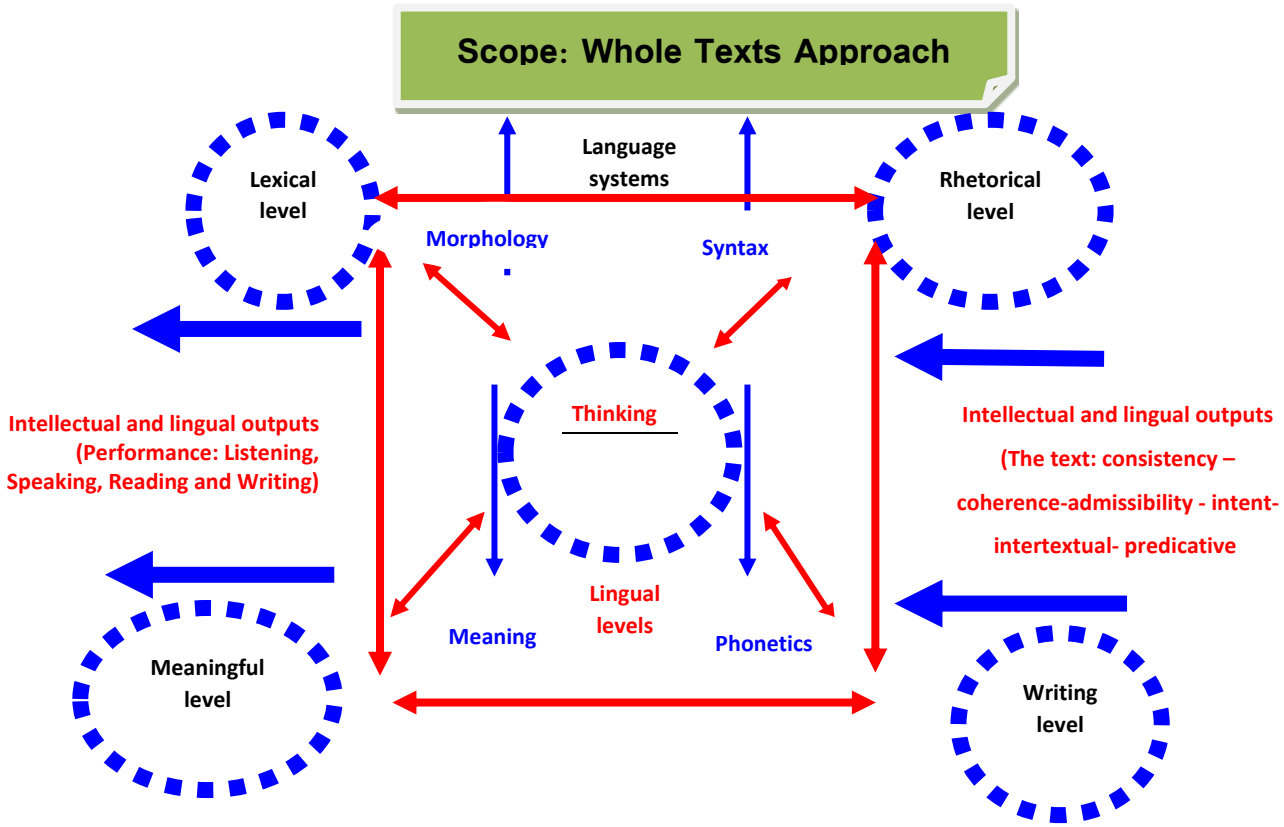
Figure (2) Lingual Experience Approach



3. Whole text approach

The whole text approach depends on showing the literary text linked with the idea. The text is written in front of the learners. Then, the examples are written in a distinct font or underline. The students read them. After that, the teacher discusses them to discover the rule. Figure (3) illustrates this approach:

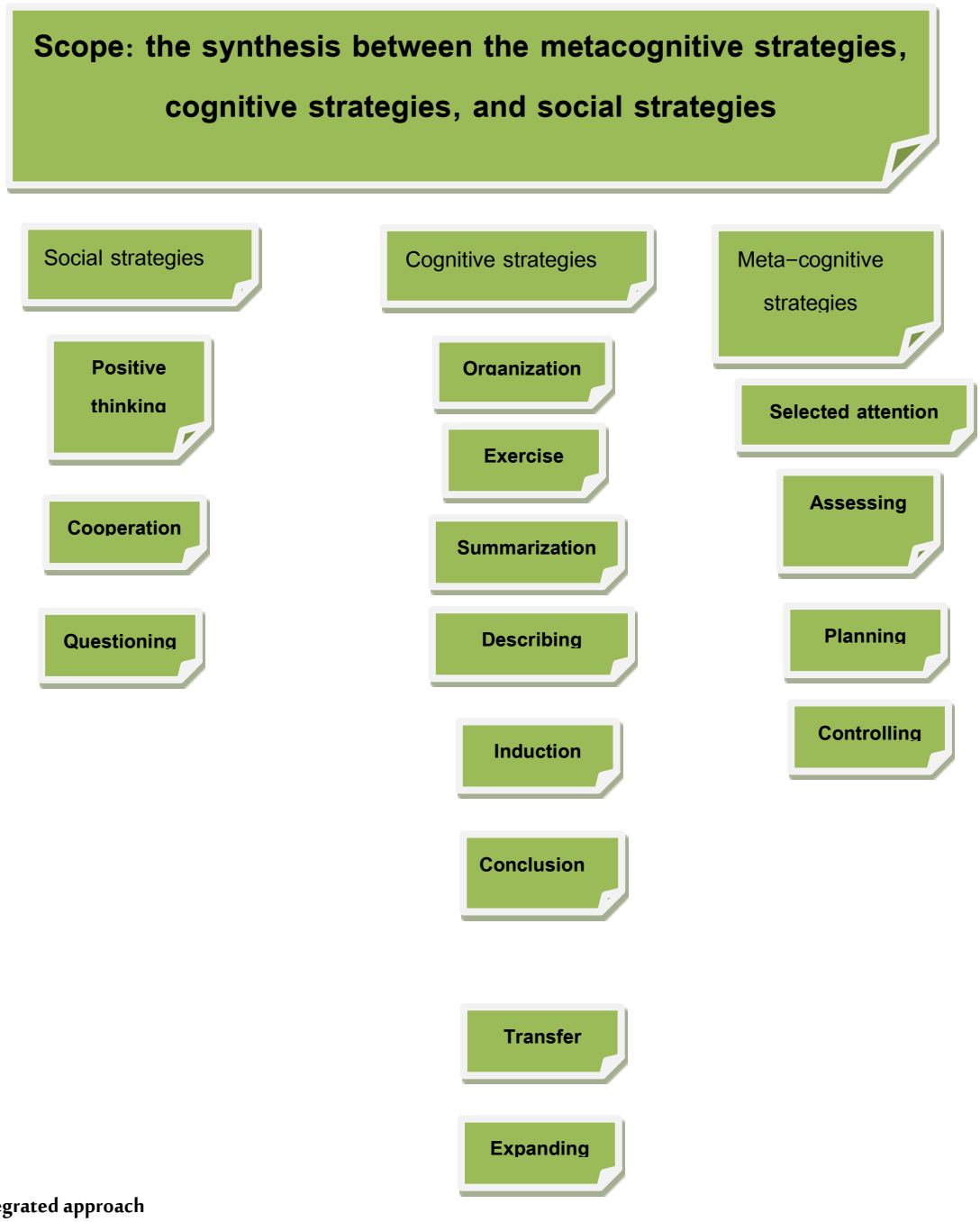
Figure (3)



4. The academic cognitive approach

The academic cognitive approach is considered as an approach in teaching and learning languages. It relies on the psychological cognitive theory and cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and social strategies. It enables students to be aware of the mind process. Besides, it enables students to understand the qualities of the mind and control its performances and evaluate them. Figure (4) repeats this approach:

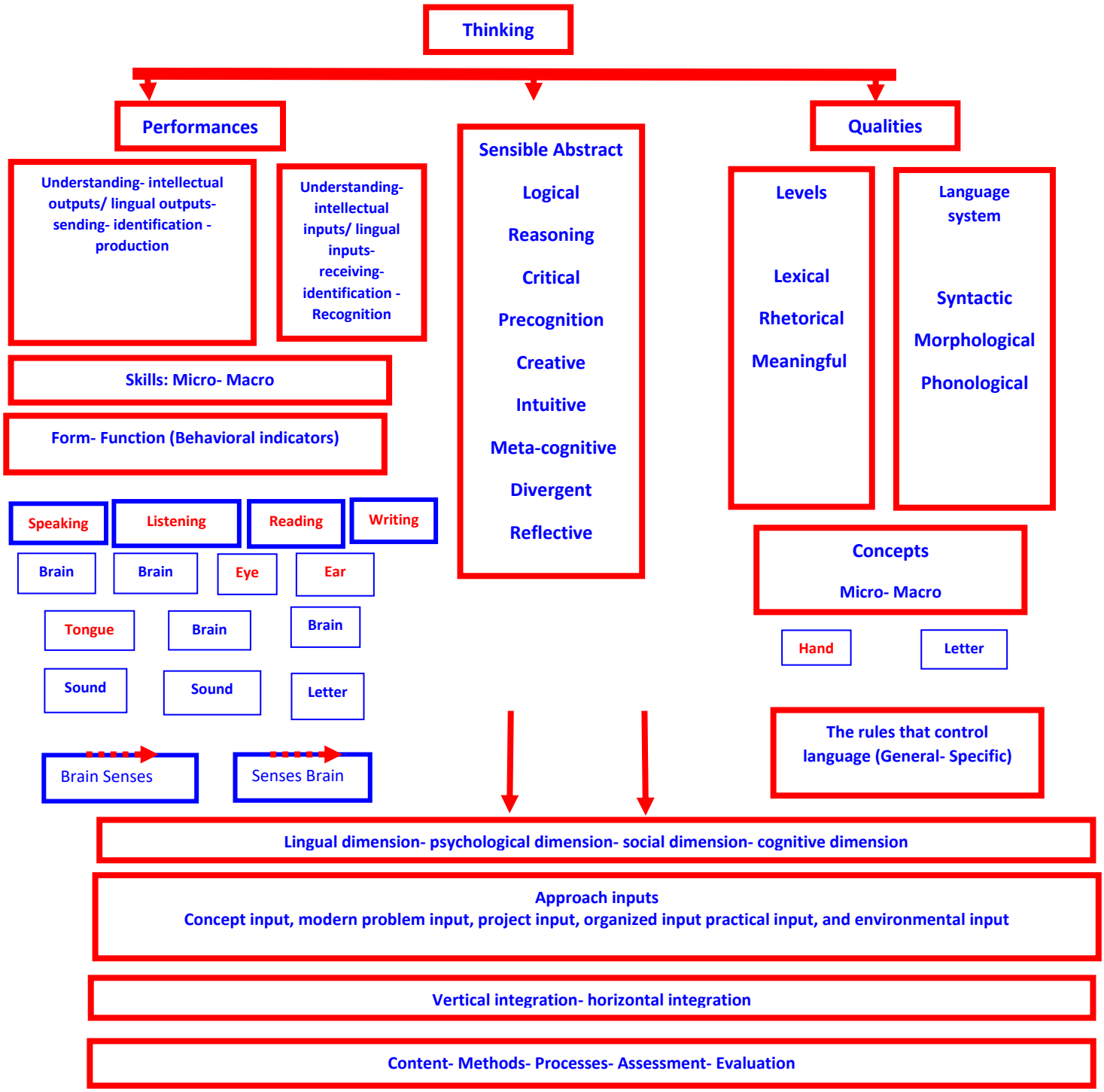
Figure (4) Academic Cognitive Approach



The integrated approach

Figure (5) represents the suggested integrated approach. It includes principles and elements as follow:

Figure (5) The integrated approach



The researchers suggested the suggested model previously to treat the gap between the practice and the theory. It is necessary to recognize the elements of the previous model theoretically. Those elements represent the recognition of integration vertically and horizontally. Also, the model clarifies the understanding of the integration concept between skills: listing, speaking, reading, and writing. It also indicates the integration between the sub-skills of each skill and what includes for example form skills, context, and behavioral indicators. Besides, this model introduces the integration concept between the thinking styles and their different levels. Moreover, it suggests the integration between language branches depending on the theory of language arts not depending on literature, syntax, and others. Also, it achieves the integration between Arabic courses and other courses.

The integration between the lingual qualities represented in the language system and its levels is considered a basis for the integration approach (Alrefa'i, 2016،156; Fuchs. 2000 ؛Borg, 2008). It is important to recognize the systems of language: The syntactic system, the sound system, the morphological system, the lexical system, and the rhetorical and meaningful systems.

As mentioned previously, it is clear that the integrated approach emphasizes the availability of cognitive knowledge represented in cognitive qualities and its performances to move to the practical applications to be changed to processes designed by the curriculum designers. The case will be clear when the integrated approach and conventional approach get balanced in achieving the expected purposes. If the purpose represented indicates the "doer" as one of the syntactic concepts and one of the elements of the sentence, so the conventional approach emphasizes the importance of available examples related to the doer in all of its different cases. In this case, the lingual rule is the authority, and the sender practices the role of transfer but the receiver practices the negative role which stores the information represented in the rules that govern the language work. The conventional approach affects the language negatively because it damages the language. The conventional approach causes a gap between theory and practice. This gap occurs on both sides of language: the abstract and sensible and a gap between the focus on the knowledge, facts, and concepts and the ability to practice the skills language in real situations quickly and accurately.

On the opposite, the integrated approach treats the same purpose differently. It starts from the vertical integration and focuses on pre and post-learning (Isawi, 2008, 24). It concentrates on the macro and micro-related concepts. Also, it expands to the horizontal integration beyond the ideas of the text. For example, it uses history or geography or sciences or Islamic studies to text to treat the concept of "doer" and to describe this concept as one of the syntactic concepts and one element of the verbal sentence. Besides, the available syntactic, morphological, phonological, rhetorical, and lexical concepts in those texts are emphasized depending on the art theory, not the braches one.

The age and mental levels are focused by designing different processes which lead to the integration opportunity between the styles of thinking and its types. One time, the situation requires reflection, another time criticism or creativity or to make the learner thinking about his/her thinking. This could be achieved by making a balance between the intellectual and lingual inputs and outputs to practice the understanding (Mustafa, 2002, 59).

The lingual performance is the basic dimension in the integrated approach (Murad, 2004, 24). For example, the knowledge of the learner about the concept of "doer" and its rules is considered as a way to practice language skills. The processes make real positive opportunities for the learner to pass planned lingual situations. Sometimes, he/she listens or speaks or reads, or writes (Alnnasir, 2011, 1539). For the teacher, he is a follower and a professional director who saves the opportunities of integration among the four skills in, the integration between the form and context skills from another hand and the integration of the sub-skills. To achieve this, it requires variation in the methods of learning and going out of classes and schools. For example, while talking about "doer", the teacher may ask learners to book the behaviors of the director or the bus driver or any visitor then write sentences depending on the rules they know. Then they discuss the sentences focusing on the "doers". The teacher may ask some students to write a story or express those scenes in a text. So, the cooperative environment is a good tool to achieve the integrated approach.

As seen, it is necessary to balance between the integrated approach inputs during planning, constructing, performing, evaluating, and developing (Al-Khayat, 2001, 246). The input of concepts, generalizations, and theories plays a significant role in organizing the curriculum knowledge, its reality, and experiences. It also facilitates learning and scientific thinking (Isawi, 2008, 168). It also helps to transfer facts from short memory to long-term memory and avoid repetition. For the modern problem input, it focuses on the problems that students feel about and they have the desire to solve. The teacher used it because it is a good tool to encourage students to use the scientific way of thinking. For the organized input, it aims at linking facts and knowledge to be organized to move from whole to part or from general to specific. For the applicable input, it achieves the integration between the cognitive field and scientific field by designing processes that lead the learners to apply what they have learned.

For the environmental input, it reinforces the learners to search for sources and references to reach different environmental problems. For the project input, it focuses on the role of the learner in the type of knowledge represented in the project (Aljouhari, 2002, 53). Moreover, the student goes beyond selecting a project to plan, construct, and perform. The teacher plays the role of director and he introduces different types of feedback such as; immediate and delayed feedback, individual and group feedback, fixed and modified feedback, knowledge, and motivation. Feedback is considered as a prior evaluation for the students' performance which supplies them with information and perceptions on their project and it improves their mental sides. The integrated teacher makes a

balance between all types of feedback. Also, he makes a balance between the feedback introduced from teacher to student and students to students. Thus, the teacher makes a balance between all dimensions of the cooperative approach which include the lingual dimension, psychological dimension, social dimension, and cognitive dimension.

The conventional curriculum focuses on what to teach but the integrated curriculum focuses on how to teach. So, the conventional curriculum focuses on the content but the integrated curriculum is integrated between all elements of the curriculum which are content, method, processes, assessment, and evaluation. The conventional curriculum agrees with the theory of "bottom-up" in which the meaning occurs in the text and the learner is neglected. The integrated curriculum agrees with the socio-cultural theory which sees that the meaning occurs when the reader and the writer interact in the social and environmental context (Baniyasain, 2010, 142).

Conclusion

The integrated approach depends on the theory of art. It focuses on the mental and age levels of the learners by designing variated processes that leads to integration between the thinking styles and types. The lingual performance is considered as the basic element of the integrated approach so the processes give real chances to overcome the learner's negative role in the lingual situations so he sometimes listens or speaks or reads or writes. Also, the integrated approach focuses on how to teach so it integrates between the elements of the curriculum (content, method, processes, assessment, and evaluation). The integrated approach agrees with "socio-cultural" theory which claims that the interaction between the reader and the writer is occurred in the environmental and social context.

Recommendations

In the light of the result of the study, the researchers suggested the following recommendations:

1. Conducting experimental studies to discover the effectiveness of the suggested model.
2. Conducting training courses for teachers to recognize the integrated approach.
3. Implicating the importance of integrated approach in the students' curricula.

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