



PNU University

English Language Teaching Methodology

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امروزه کتاب‌خوانی و علم‌آموزی، نه تنها یک وظیفه‌ی ملی، که یک واجب دینی است.

مقام معظم رهبری

در عصر حاضر یکی از شاخصه‌های ارزیابی رشد، توسعه و پیشرفت فرهنگی هر کشوری میزان تولید کتاب، مطالعه و کتاب‌خوانی مردم آن مرز و بوم است. ایران اسلامی نیز از دیرباز تاکنون با داشتن تمدنی چندهزارساله و مراکز متعدد علمی، فرهنگی، کتابخانه‌های معتبر، علما و دانشمندان بزرگ با آثار ارزشمند تاریخی، سرآمد دولت‌ها و ملت‌های دیگر بوده و در عرصه‌ی فرهنگ و تمدن جهانی به‌سان خورشیدی تابناک همچنان می‌درخشد و با فرزندان نیک‌نهاد خویش هنرنمایی می‌کند. چه کسی است که در دنیا با دانشمندان فرزانه و نام‌آور ایرانی همچون ابوعلی سینا، ابوریحان بیرونی، فارابی، خوارزمی و ... همچنین شاعران برجسته‌ای نظیر فردوسی، سعدی، مولوی، حافظ و ... آشنا نباشد و در مقابل عظمت آنها سر تعظیم فرود نیاورد. تمامی این افتخارات ارزشمند، برگرفته از میزان عشق و علاقه فراوان ملت ما به فراگیری علم و دانش از طریق خواندن و مطالعه منابع و کتاب‌های گوناگون است. به شکرانه‌ی الهی، تاریخ و گذشته ما، همیشه درخشان و پر بار است. ولی اکنون در این زمینه در چه جایگاهی قرار داریم؟ آمار و ارقام ارائه‌شده از سوی مجامع و سازمان‌های فرهنگی در مورد سرانه‌ی مطالعه‌ی هر ایرانی، برایمان چندان امیدوارکننده نمی‌باشد و رهبر معظم انقلاب اسلامی نیز از این وضعیت بارها اظهار گله و ناخشنودی نموده‌اند.

کتاب، دروازه‌ای به سوی گستره‌ی دانش و معرفت است و کتاب خوب، یکی از بهترین ابزارهای کمال بشری است. همه‌ی دستاوردهای بشر در سراسر عمر جهان، تا آنجا که قابل کتابت بوده است، در میان دست‌نوشته‌هایی است که انسان‌ها پدید آورده و می‌آورند. در این مجموعه‌ی بی‌نظیر، تعالیم الهی، درس‌های پیامبران به بشر، و همچنین علوم مختلفی است که سعادت بشر بدون آگاهی از آنها امکان‌پذیر نیست. کسی که با دنیای زیبا و زندگی‌بخش کتاب ارتباط ندارد بی‌شک از مهم‌ترین دستاورد انسانی و نیز از بیشترین معارف الهی و بشری محروم است. با این دیدگاه، به‌روشنی می‌توان ارزش و مفهوم رمزی عمیق در این حقیقت تاریخی را دریافت که اولین خطاب خداوند متعال به پیامبر گرامی اسلام (ص) این است که «بخوان!» و در اولین

سوره‌ای که بر آن فرستاده‌ی عظیم‌الشان خداوند، فرود آمده، نام «قلم» به تجلیل یاد شده‌است: «اقْرَأْ وَ رَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ» در اهمیت عنصر کتاب برای تکامل جامعه‌ی انسانی، همین بس که تمامی ادیان آسمانی و رجال بزرگ تاریخ بشری، از طریق کتاب جاودانه مانده‌اند.

دانشگاه پیام‌نور با گستره‌ی جغرافیایی ایران‌شمول خود با هدف آموزش برای همه، همه‌جا و همه‌وقت، به‌عنوان دانشگاهی کتاب‌محور در نظام آموزش عالی کشورمان، افتخار دارد جایگاه اندیشه‌سازی و خردورزی بخش عظیمی از جوانان جویای علم این مرز و بوم باشد. تلاش فراوانی در ایام طولانی فعالیت این دانشگاه انجام پذیرفته تا با بهره‌گیری از تجربه‌های گرانقدر استادان و صاحب‌نظران برجسته کشورمان، کتاب‌ها و منابع آموزشی درسی شاخص و خودآموز تولید شود. در آینده هم، این مهم با هدف ارتقای سطح علمی، روزآمدی و توجه بیشتر به نیازهای مخاطبان دانشگاه پیام‌نور با جدیت ادامه خواهد داشت. به‌طور قطع استفاده از نظرات استادان، صاحب‌نظران و دانشجویان محترم، ما را در انجام این وظیفه‌ی مهم و خطیر یاری‌رسان خواهد بود. پیشاپیش از تمامی عزیزانی که با نقد، تصحیح و پیشنهادهای خود ما را در انجام این وظیفه‌ی خطیر یاری می‌رسانند، سپاسگزاری می‌نماییم. لازم است از تمامی اندیشمندانی که تاکنون دانشگاه پیام‌نور را منزلگاه اندیشه‌سازی خود دانسته و ما را در تولید کتاب و محتوای آموزشی درسی یاری نموده‌اند، صمیمانه قدردانی گردد. موفقیت و بهروزی تمامی دانشجویان و دانش‌پژوهان عزیز آرزوی همیشگی ما است.

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Preface

English Language Teaching Methodology is for English as a foreign language learners who wish to understand the wide range of issues in first and second language learning, teaching, and research. It provides a thorough review of theory and practice currently discussed in L2 educational contexts across the globe. Care has been taken to include themes which are relevant, thought-provoking, and intellectually stimulating in a reader friendly fashion. Although the materials chiefly cater to the Bachelor's students of English literature, teaching and translation majors, Master's students will also find them equally useful and valuable. Indeed, both undergraduate and postgraduate students need to have a clear picture of the major L2 learning and teaching trends in the past and at the present in order to grasp what a long and twisty journey L2 researchers, scholars, practitioners, and teachers have made to get to the place where we are currently standing. This awareness also helps them decide which method(s) or even juxtaposition of them address their learning needs as well as the needs of the educational contexts they serve in the future as English practitioners or teachers.

The book consists of eight chapters. Chapter one covers general concepts of language, learning, and teaching. These mainly include some information on the concepts of language and learning as well as the theoretical foundations underpinning language learning process and development. The second, and third chapters focus on first and

second language acquisition processes in detail, highlight their similarities and differences, and provide areas of interest for research. Chapter four discusses the psychological and affective aspects of language learning. While chapters five and six present a historical overview of the language learning/teaching methods dominant in the Twentieth century and the alternative methods, chapter seven includes the current trends and ongoing issues in the field. The final chapter concerns teaching language skills such as speaking, listening, writing, reading, etc. Following the format of other books of Payame Noor, each chapter includes chapter-end questions. The chapters can be read in any order. A remarkable feature of the book is the inclusion of answer keys at the end of the book.

I would like to acknowledge the support and encouragement of all people involved in the creation of this book, and more specifically, to the colleagues and reviewers whose invaluable comments and expertise improved the quality of the book. I would also like to express my gratitude to those students who gave their time developing, reading and proofreading the manuscript. Without their support, this book would not have become a reality.

Chapter 1

Language, Learning and Teaching

What is Language?

Language is an extremely important way of interacting with people around us. Language is the medium by which higher intellectual processes are revealed. It is the essential means of social communication and is one of the outstanding systems of habits which distinguish man from the lower animals. We use language to inform people around us of what we feel, what we desire, and question/understand the world around us. Language enables us to learn, teach, express our preferences, and agree on certain norms and standards within a society in order to co-exist. Language is the human capacity for acquiring and using complex systems of communication. Through language we can connect with other people and make sense of our experiences. As a parent, teacher, or other type of caregiver, we shape a child's language development to reflect the identity, values, and experiences of our family and community. Therefore, it is up to us to create a warm and comfortable environment in which our children can grow to learn the complexities of language. The communication skills that our children learn early in life will be the foundation for his or her communication abilities for the future. Strong language skills are an asset that will promote a lifetime of effective communication.

We can modify our language to each situation. For instance, we talk to our small children with different words and tone than we conduct a business meeting. We communicate with our words, gestures, and tone of voice in a multitude of situation. To interact

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effectively, we send a message with words, gestures, or actions, which somebody else receives.

Language is the most important part of our being. Since it is the basic part of our identity, the most important language that one should learn is his/her own mother tongue. Moreover, it is important to learn other languages besides our own because it helps us to learn about other people and cultures.

More and more schools are recognizing the importance of language. Some schools begin offering to teach a second language as early as middle school. Many schools and employers are requiring specific language requirements as part of their application process.

Language is the expression of human communication through which knowledge, belief, and behavior can be experienced, explained, and shared. Humans are not unique in communicating with each other. Many animal and even plant species have the same capability of communication. Though, human language is unique in being a symbolic communication system that is learned instead of biologically inherited. This sharing of knowledge is based on systematic, conventionally used signs, sounds, gestures, or marks that convey understood meanings within a group or community. Symbols are sounds or things which have meaning given to them by the users. All symbols have a material form but the meaning cannot be discovered by examining the forms. They are abstractions.

Languages are sets of signs which combine an exponent (a sequence of letters or sounds) with a meaning. As Edward Sapir (1921) states language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communication by means of voluntarily produced symbols. By the same token, Bloch and Trager (1942) clarify that a language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates. Furthermore, grammars are ways to produce signs from more basic ones. As Wayne Weiten (2007) explains a language consists of symbols that convey meaning, plus rules for combining those symbols, that can be used to generate an infinite variety of messages.

Language is a means to communicate, it is a semiotic system. Sign systems are universal: clocks, road signs, pictograms – they all are parts of sign systems. Language differs from them only in its complexity. This explains why language signs have much more internal structure than ordinary signs. Language allows expressing every thought that we have and moreover we are able to understand utterances that we have never heard before. Every year, hundreds of thousands of books appear, and clearly each of them is new.

One of the major advantages of human language, as a learned symbolic communication system, is its flexibility. Meanings can be changed and new symbols created. This is evidenced by the fact that new words are invented daily and the meaning of old ones change. For example, the English word "nice" now generally means pleasing, agreeable, polite, and kind. In the 15th century it meant foolish, wanton, lascivious, and even wicked. Languages change through historical and social conditions. Some language transformations occur in a generation or less. For instance, you probably are familiar with many technical terms, such as 'text messaging' and 'high definition TV', that were not used even a decade ago.

Theoretical Frameworks of Language Development

Language development is a process starting early in human life. Infants start without language, yet by 4 months of age, babies can discriminate speech sounds and engage in babbling.

Productive language begins with a stage of preverbal communications in which infants use gestures and vocalizations to communicate with others. By means of general principle of development, children learn words to express the same communicative functions which they had already expressed by preverbal means.

Language development proceeds by ordinary processes of learning in which children acquire the forms, meanings and uses of words and utterances from the linguistic input. The major discussion is the way they acquire rules of syntax. Two major approaches to syntactic development are proposed: the Nativist and the Empiricist.

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The Nativist Theory proposed by Noam Chomsky, argues that language is a unique human accomplishment. Chomsky claims some principles of syntax are innate and are transmitted through the human genome. He maintains that all children have the LAD, an innate Language Acquisition Device, that allows them to produce consistent sentences once vocabulary is learned. He asserts that language is an innate faculty, i.e., we are born with a set of rules about language in our heads which he refers to as the 'Universal Grammar'. The universal grammar is the basis upon which all human languages build. His claim is based upon the view that what children hear is insufficient to explain how they come to learn language. He argues that linguistic input from the environment is limited and full of errors. Therefore, nativists assume that it is impossible for children to learn linguistic information solely from their environment. However, because children possess this LAD, they are able to learn language despite incomplete information from their environment. This view has dominated linguistic theory for over fifty years and remains highly influential.

The Empiricist Theory suggests that there is enough information in the linguistic input that children receive, and therefore there is no need to assume an innate language acquisition device. Empiricism is the theory that experience is of primary importance in giving us knowledge of the world. Whatever we learn, we learn through perception. Knowledge without experience is impossible. John Locke and David Hume among others argued that knowledge is acquired during a person's life. According to empiricists' arguments, newborn babies are born in a blank slate better known as "Tabula Rasa" which states that the brain has inborn capabilities for learning from the environment but does not contain content such as innate beliefs. Some researchers in this tradition employ a methodology involving the construction of computational models that learn aspects of language or that simulate the type of linguistic output produced by children.

An older empiricist theory, *The Behaviorist Theory* proposed by B. F. Skinner suggests that language is learned through operant

conditioning by imitation of stimuli and by reinforcement of correct responses. This perspective has not been widely accepted at any time, but in some cases, it has been revived (Ramscar & Yarlett, 2007).

Other researchers embrace an *Interactionist Perspective*, consisting of *Social-interactionist Theories* of language development. In such approaches, children learn language in the interactive and communicative context, learning language forms for meaningful moves of communication.

Other relevant theories about language development include *Piaget's Theory* of cognitive development, which considers the development of language as a continuation of general cognitive development and *Vygotsky's Social Theories* that attribute the development of language to an individual's social interactions and growth which will be explained later.

Learning

The ability to learn is one of the most outstanding human characteristics. Learning occurs continuously throughout a person's lifetime. Learning can be defined as a change in behavior as a result of experience. This can be physical and overt, or it may involve complex intellectual or attitudinal changes which affect behavior.

Psychologists and educators describe the learning theory as a body of principles to explain how people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Various branches of learning theory are used in formal training programs to improve the learning process.

Learning is also a goal-directed act. Learning is acquiring new, or modifying and reinforcing, existing knowledge, behaviors, skills, values, or preferences and may involve synthesizing different types of information. The ability to learn is possessed by humans, animals and some machines. Learning is not compulsory; it is contextual. It does not happen all at once, but builds upon and is shaped by what we already know. Learning is a process, rather than a collection of factual and procedural knowledge. Learning produces changes in the organism and the changes produced are relatively permanent (Definitions, 2015).

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Human learning may occur as part of education, personal development, schooling, or training. It is goal-oriented and aided by motivation. The study of how learning occurs is part of neuropsychology, educational psychology, learning theory, and pedagogy. Learning may occur as a result of habituation or classical conditioning seen in animal species or as a result of more complex activities such as play in relatively intelligent animals. Learning may occur consciously or without conscious awareness.

According to Ambrose et al. (2010, p. 3), there are three components to the definition of Learning in classrooms:

1. *“Learning is a process, not a product.”* Exam scores and term papers are measures of learning, but they are not the process of learning itself.
2. *“Learning is a change in knowledge, beliefs, behaviors or attitudes.”* This change requires time, particularly when one is dealing with changes to core beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes. Consider that such a change will take time – perhaps a few weeks, perhaps until the end of the term, or even longer.
3. *“Learning is not something done to students, but something that students themselves do.”* If you have ever carefully planned a lesson, only to find that your students just didn’t “get it,” consider that your lesson should be designed not just to impart knowledge but also to lead students through the process of their own learning.

Learning Process

Learning happens through the time and patience. It is a process like a journey. A self-directed learning process is arguably the most powerful model for facilitating and inspiring individual, group and organizational learning and development.

As Human Resources at Princeton University (2014) asserts the learning process helps people to go through the journey in order to achieve development. This process is built upon three major principles:

1. Identification of gaps between one’s IDEAL self and REAL self. These gaps represent a primary motivator to learn and improve.

2. Creation and implementation of a challenging and realistic action plan for development that follows the 70/20/10 formula:
 - **70%** from real life and on-the-job experiences, tasks and problem solving. This is the most important aspect of any learning and development plan.
 - **20%** from feedback and from observing and working with role models.
 - **10%** from formal training.
3. Ongoing development dialogue between learners and supervisors. Both have a responsibility to ensure that the entire learning process happens.

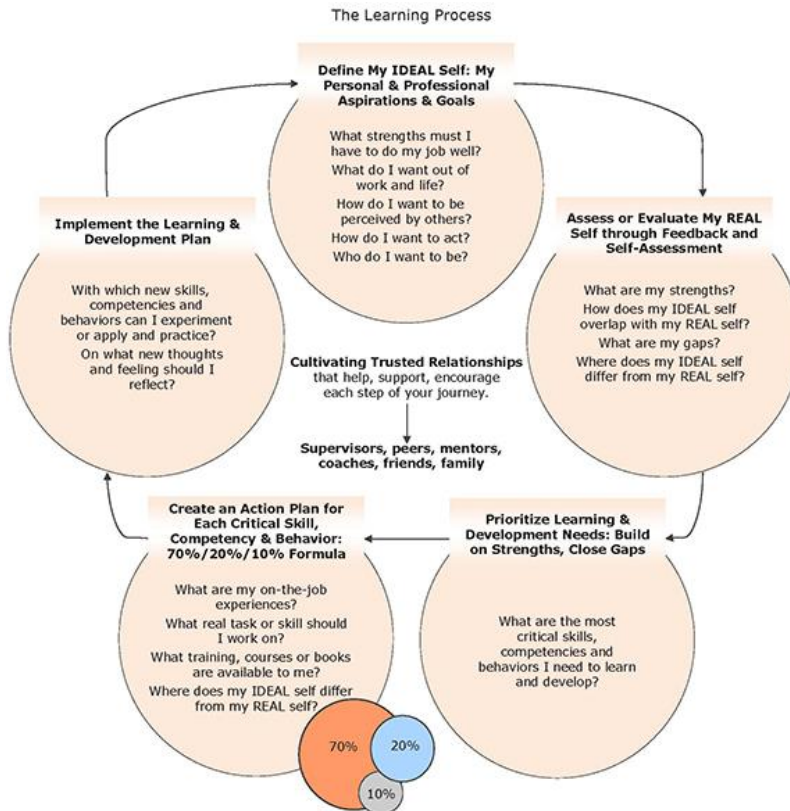


Figure 1.1. The Learning Process

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Learning is acquiring knowledge or skill. Learning also involves a change in attitude or behavior. Children learn to identify objects at an early age; teenagers may learn to improve study habits; and adults can learn to solve complex problems.

It is clear each person has different viewpoints of learning. Individuals have specific experiences which affect their learning and understanding of how they are involved. Learning is done by experience and in different forms and degrees so that students can make meaningful learning if they understand them well and apply them correctly to appropriate situations. When any experience challenges them, they are involved with feelings, attitudes, memory of previous experiences, emotional and physical activities that are more effective along with other kinds of learning experiences to be kept on memory.

Students do not get knowledge as the teacher gives them, and a teacher never assumes that students cannot forget something because they are in the classroom when he presents the new material. To learn, students need to react and respond, perhaps both emotionally and intellectually. Learning is an active process of changing behavior. In our lives, we encounter learning in different situations. We learn as we grow. The changes in behavior occur very quickly and these changes, which are different from child to the adult, are due to learning.

An individual lives with others in the same society and during his interaction with others he influences them and vice versa. This is the nature of interaction that causes the changes in behavior. As Skinner (1984) puts learning is a process of progressive behavior adaptations; and McConnell (2011) similarly affirms learning is the modification of behavior through experience. Changes in behavior bring changes in knowledge, skills, habits, interests, and attitudes, which in turn are the causes of learning, thinking, feeling and doing in life. Learning is vital in the process of life. The aim of any kind of learning is to change one's behavior due to a new situation, i.e., the behavior may be changed and new behavior may be formed.

Over and above, learning is defined as the process of effecting changes in behavior and causes the improvement of our relations with the environment. An important point that should be taken into account is how the information about the brain is translated into useful guidelines for learning. To begin with, it should be called upon that learning in fact refers to a multitude of processes; and it is made still more complex by the use of learning to describe various types of activities. Moreover, each person brings a specific pattern of skills to the learning process. Important in this is individuals' dominant sense mode (visual, auditory, or kinesthetic) or Myers-Briggs (1980) categorizations of personality orientation (sensory, feeling, intellectual, and intuitive) that determine 'the learning styles'.

Domains of Learning

The listing of the hierarchy of objectives is often called taxonomy. Taxonomy of educational objectives is a systematic classification scheme for sorting learning outcomes into the three broad categories (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor) and ranking the desired outcomes in a developmental hierarchy from least complex to most complex.

Bloom's Taxonomy was created in 1956 under the leadership of educational psychologist Dr. Benjamin Bloom in order to promote higher forms of thinking in education, such as analyzing and evaluating concepts, processes, procedures, and principles, rather than just remembering facts. It is most often used when designing instruction or learning.

Bloom's taxonomy refers to a classification of the different objectives that educators set for students (learning objectives). It divides educational objectives into three "domains": **Cognitive** (mental skills/knowledge), **Affective** (growth in feelings or emotional areas/attitudes, beliefs, and values), and **Psychomotor** (manual or physical skills). Within the domains, learning at the higher levels is dependent on having attained prerequisite knowledge and skills at lower levels (Orlich, et al., 2004). A goal of Bloom's taxonomy is to

motivate educators to focus on all three domains, creating a more holistic form of education (Bloom, et al., 1956).

Cognitive Domain

The cognitive domain is the best-known and most educationally applicable of Bloom's domains and deals with the ways that internal knowledge may be revealed by external behavior. It involves knowledge and the development of intellectual skills (Bloom, et al., 1956). This includes the recall or recognition of specific facts, procedural patterns, and concepts that serve in the development of intellectual abilities and skills. There are six major categories of cognitive processes – including: *knowledge*, *comprehension*, *application*, *analysis*, *synthesis*, and *evaluation* – that can be thought of as degrees of difficulties, since they start from the simplest to the most complex, i.e., the first ones must normally be mastered before the next one can take place.

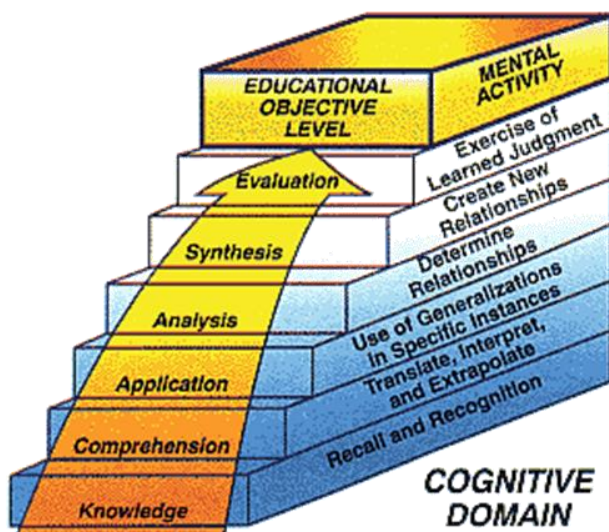


Figure 1.2. Cognitive Domain (Retrieved from <http://www.talentlearningcenter.com/cognitive-learning/learning-knowledge-and-skills-development/>)

Affective Domain

The affective domain may be the least understood, and in many ways, the most important of the learning domains. The affective domain (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964) includes the manner in which we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes. It is useful in categorizing values and levels of professionalism. Behaviors progress from simple attentiveness up to an integration of values and their transfer to other appropriate situations. The five major categories are listed from the simplest behavior to the most complex including *receiving*, *responding*, *valuing*, *organizing*, and *characterizing*.

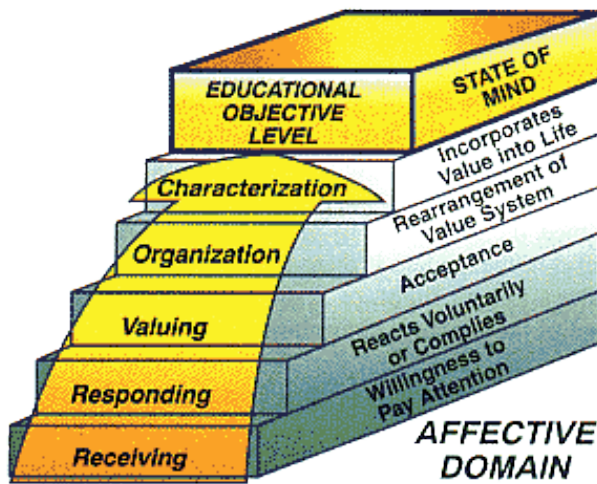


Figure 1.3. Affective Domain (Retrieved from <http://www.talentlearningcenter.com/cognitive-learning/learning-knowledge-and-skills-development/>)

Psychomotor Domain

The simplest and most obviously behavioral domain is the psychomotor domain. It includes physical movement, coordination, and use of the motor-skill areas. It is useful in indicating levels of skilled performance. Development of these skills requires practice and is measured in terms of speed, precision, distance, procedures, or

techniques in execution. Behaviors move from the ability to give an overview of a task up to mastery of a skill through practice, integration and automatization. Bloom and his colleagues never created subcategories for skills in the psychomotor domain, but since then other educators have created their own psychomotor taxonomies (Clark, 1999). Simpson (1966) proposed the following levels: The seven major categories are listed from the simplest behavior to the most complex including *perception*, *set*, *guided response*, *mechanism*, *complex overt response*, *adaptation*, and *origination*.

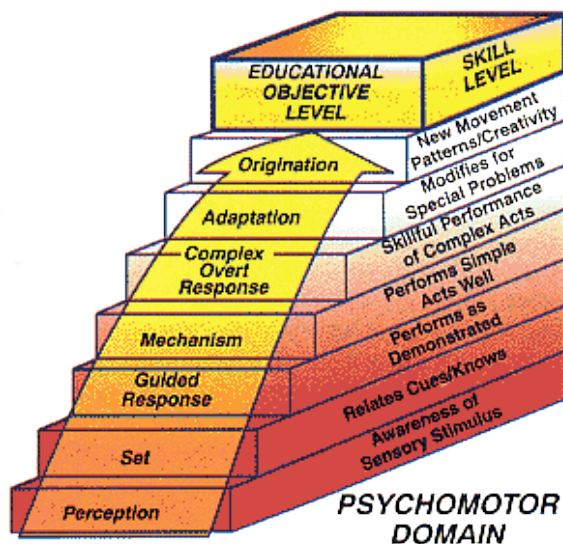


Figure 1.4. Psychomotor Domain (Retrieved from <http://www.talentlearningcenter.com/cognitive-learning/learning-knowledge-and-skills-development/>)

Learner Characteristics

Most language teachers believe that individual learner characteristics cause students to follow very different paths to success in learning a second language. Horwitz, Tallon, & Luo (2009) identify *Motivation*, *Anxiety*, and *Beliefs* about language learning to be consequential for learning.

Motivation

The reasons that learners have for learning a language and the intensity of their feelings comprise *motivation*. Some learners study the language because of a language requirement, while others expect to use the language in their future career. People who hope to use the language for career purposes probably have a stronger motivation than those people who simply hope to pass a language requirement (Horwitz, Tallon & Luo (2009).

Gardner, Tremblay, and Masgoret (1997) asserts that motivation is associated with second language achievement since language learning requires a long-term time commitment, and motivated individuals are more likely to devote the time required to language learning. It is also true that having a specific goal in language learning helps students focus their efforts and maintain their motivation.

Anxiety

Anxiety includes uncomfortable feelings when learning or using the new language. Horwitz, Tallon, and Luo (2009) claim that approximately 1/3 of American foreign language learners experience anxiety in response to language learning. Most anxious language learners feel uncomfortable when speaking or listening to the new language, but some language learners also find writing or even reading to be anxiety-provoking.

Learner Beliefs

Beliefs about language learning are important because they influence how students approach language learning and the language learning strategies that they choose to use. Many language learners, for example, think that they are too old to learn a foreign language well. Furthermore, as Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) (2012) states there is a considerable amount of research (Skehan, 1989; Dornyei, 2006; Ellis, 2008) on individual differences among second language learners that may affect their success in second language acquisition. Factors that may or may not make a difference include: