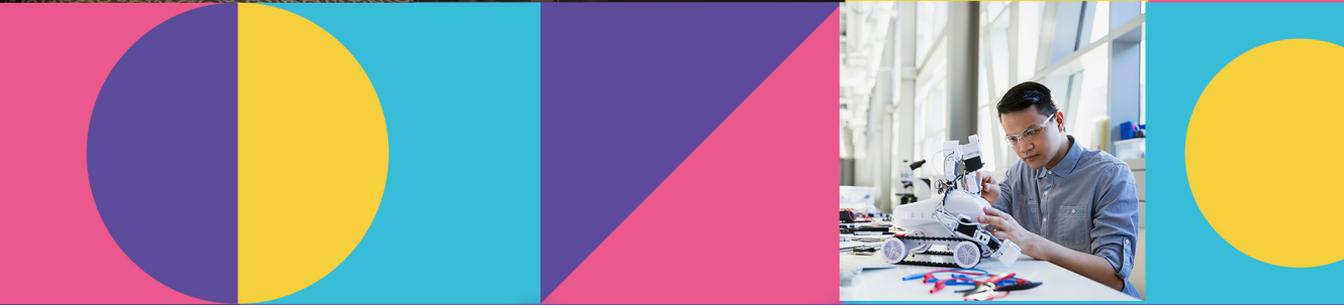


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REFLECTIVE WRITING AS A TOOL TO ASSESS AFFECTIVE DOMAIN: A CASE STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIP IN A LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY COURSE

by Yvonne Michelle Campbell and Remmy Gedat

ABSTRACT

The three domains of learning - cognitive, affective and psychomotor, are equally important for the development of students. While the cognitive domain focuses on the mental skills and knowledge acquisition, and the psychomotor domain centres on the development of motor skills, coordination and physical movement, the affective domain, on the other hand, focuses on the feelings, values, attitudes, motivation and interest of a learner. However, due to the difficulty in measuring the elements in the affective domain of learning, most instructional and assessment scheme mainly focused on the cognitive and psychomotor domains. The purpose of this study was to measure the affective learning domain based on students' reflection writings, before and after a planned educational field trip in a Linguistic Anthropology course. 41 reflective writings were analysed using a content analysis approach. The analysis of the reflective writings revealed that learning occurred at all levels of the affective domains. However, while the majority of students achieved the two levels of receiving and responding to phenomena, not all students were able to achieve the three higher levels of the affective domain which are valuing, organization and internalizing values (characterisation).

Background Information

In the field of education, the three domains of learning, which are cognitive, affective and psychomotor are equally important for the development of students. Most courses emphasised on the cognitive domain which focuses on the mental skills and knowledge acquisition, especially at the undergraduate level. The psychomotor motor domain, on the other hand, focuses on the development of motor skills, coordination and physical movement. One of the least measured domains is the affective domain which focuses on the

feelings, values, attitudes, motivation and interest of a learner due to the difficulty in measuring the elements in the affective domain. In linguistics, most studies have examined the connection between instructional design and student performance within the cognitive domain. Oakland (1997) stated that more attention has been devoted to cognitive qualities than to affective qualities in the academic and research world. Due to today's large classrooms and multiple-choice exams, affective domain learning can be difficult to assess.

While the Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) of cognitive objectives is generally well-known, the affective objectives are somewhat less familiar. These include (1) receiving, (2) responding, (3) valuing, (4) organizing and (5) characterisation (Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964) which are Affective domain generally refers to emotions and feelings aspects of learning which includes temperament, personality, attitudes, values and motivations.



Figure 1: The affective domain (Krathwohl, Bloom, Masia, 1973) (Source: http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/Bloom/affective_domain.html)

According to Oakland (1997), in order to assess the affective domain, some of the most common ways used assess affective domain is