

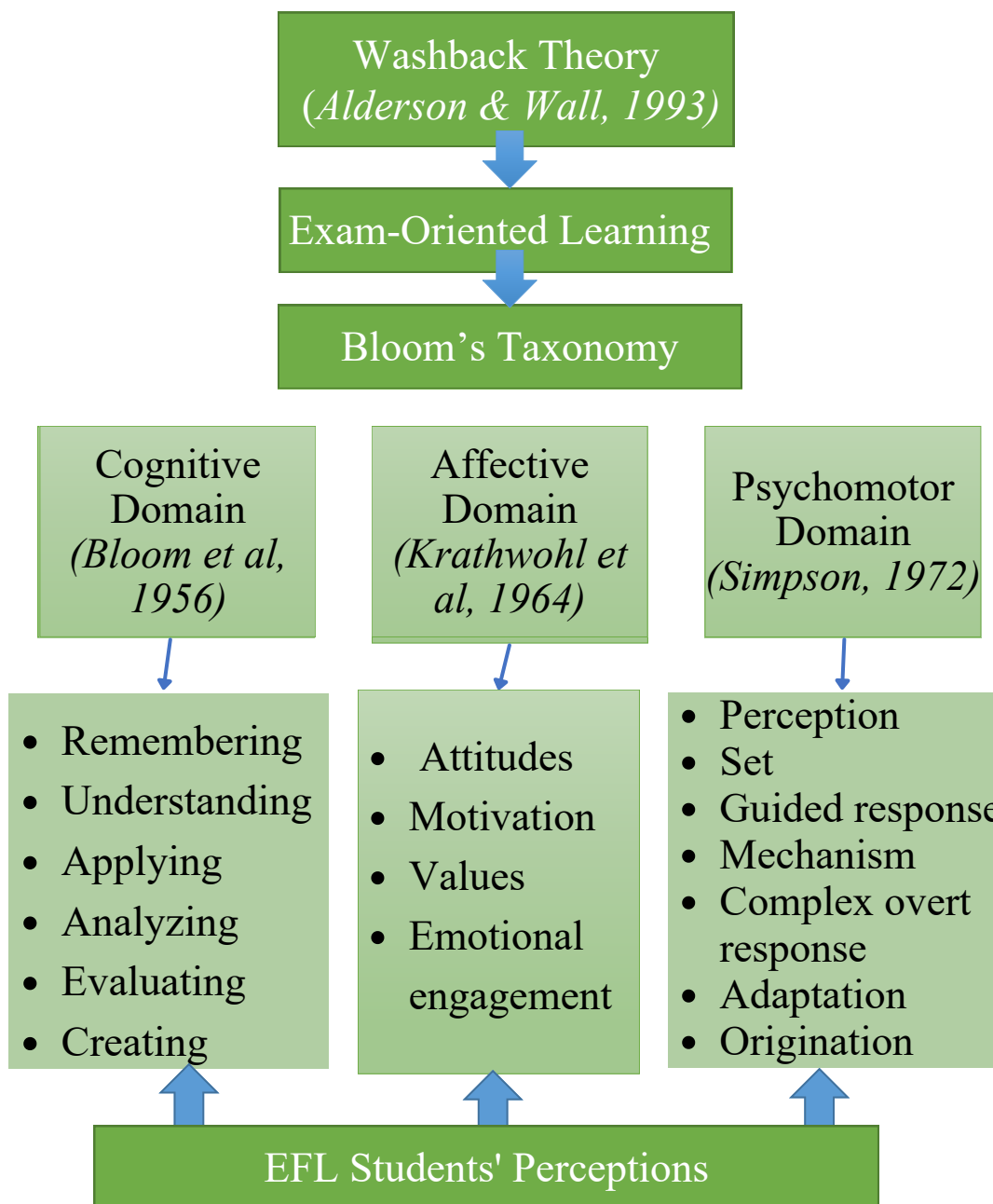
EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF EXAM-ORIENTED LEARNING ACROSS THE COGNITIVE, AFFECTIVE, AND PSYCHOMOTOR DOMAINS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores EFL students' perceptions of exam-oriented learning at Bac Lieu University, using Bloom's Taxonomy encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains as a framework. Employing a mixed-methods approach, quantitative data were collected from 150 non-English majors enrolled in modules of General English via a structured questionnaire, while qualitative insights were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 15 selected participants. The findings indicate that exam-oriented learning supports lower-order cognitive development, particularly grammar knowledge and vocabulary retention; however, it also encourages reliance on rote memorization rather than critical thinking. In the affective domain, participants reported high levels of pressure and anxiety, though exams served as a motivator for serious study. Regarding the psychomotor domain, exam-focused practices offer limited opportunities for communicative tasks, thereby reducing students' confidence in real-life interaction. The study concludes that while exam-oriented learning aids academic performance, it fails to foster holistic language development. Consequently, more balanced and communicative assessment approaches are recommended.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH'S AIM: To investigate EFL students' perceptions across the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains

RESEARCH DESIGN: Mixed-methods approach: Quantitative and Qualitative

PARTICIPANTS: 150 non-English major students enrolled in General English modules at Bac Lieu University

INSTRUMENTS:

- A 30-item structured questionnaire (10 items for each domain: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor).
- A semi-structured interview consisting of five open-ended questions to gain deeper insights into students' perceptions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

No	Cognitive Domain	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Exam-oriented learning helps me remember English vocabulary more effectively.	4.21	0.91
2	Exam-oriented learning helps me remember English grammar rules more easily.	4.08	0.84
3	Preparing for examinations helps me understand what I learn in English classes.	3.89	0.97
4	Exam-oriented learning helps me understand how to use English grammar and vocabulary correctly.	3.96	0.88
5	Exam-oriented learning helps me use English in classroom activities.	3.52	1.04
6	Exam-oriented learning helps me apply what I have learned to complete English exercises.	3.68	0.93
7	Exam-oriented learning helps me recognize my mistakes when using English.	3.59	0.99
8	Exam-oriented learning helps me choose appropriate English words or expressions in familiar situations.	3.71	0.9
9	Because of examinations, I usually memorize answers instead of understanding the lesson.	4.13	1.01
10	Overall, exam-oriented learning helps improve my English learning.	3.86	0.95

Students agree that exams help them remember vocabulary and grammar, but they tend to rely on memorization rather than deep understanding.

No	Affective Domain	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Exam-oriented learning motivates me to improve my English proficiency.	3.21	0.89
2	Preparing for examinations encourages me to put more effort into learning English.	4.02	0.86
3	Exam-oriented learning increases my interest in learning English.	3.38	1.08
4	I actively participate in English learning activities because of examinations.	3.39	0.96
5	Preparing for examinations helps me realize the importance of learning English.	3.50	0.79
6	Preparing for examinations has helped me develop a regular English learning habit.	3.56	0.94
7	Good examination results increase my confidence in learning English.	3.54	1.0
8	I believe I can succeed in learning English because of my examination experiences.	3.32	0.97
9	I often feel anxious before English examinations.	4.17	0.92
10	Examination pressure reduces my enthusiasm for learning English.	3.84	1.03

Exams motivate students to study seriously but also create considerable pressure and anxiety, which lowers confidence..

No	Psychomotor Domain	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Exam-oriented learning helps me recognize and imitate correct English pronunciation and intonation.	3.27	1.01
2	I feel mentally and physically prepared to participate in English speaking activities during class.	3.11	1.05
3	I can accurately repeat and practice English expressions after listening to my teacher or audio materials.	3.21	0.98
4	Exam-oriented learning helps me use English with confidence and accuracy.	2.95	1.08
5	I can communicate effectively in familiar English-speaking situations because of exam preparation.	2.87	1.1
6	I can respond naturally during English conversations.	2.74	1.03
7	I can adjust my English to suit different communication situations.	2.68	1.12
8	I can use English appropriately when communicating with different people.	2.79	1.01
9	I can create my own English expressions without relying on memorized responses	2.59	1.02
10	Overall, I can effectively use English in real-life communication.	2.82	1.07

Exam-oriented learning offers limited opportunities for communication, resulting in weak confidence in real-life interaction.

INTERVIEW:

- *I think studying for exams helps me remember grammar rules and vocabulary because I spend a lot of time reviewing them before each test. My scores have improved, but I don't think I can use English naturally outside the classroom.*
- *Most exam questions test grammar and vocabulary, so I don't have many chances to practice speaking or interacting with other people.*
- *When I want to say something in English, I become nervous because I worry about making grammar mistakes. I usually know what I want to say, but I cannot express my ideas fluently.*
- *think exams are necessary, but they should not be the only way to evaluate students. Classroom participation and speaking activities should also count.*

CONCLUSION

The findings have indicated that exam-oriented learning plays an important role in helping students acquire vocabulary and grammar knowledge and encourages them to study regularly. However, its strong emphasis on examination performance also increases learning pressure and encourages memorization rather than meaningful language use. As a result, students have fewer opportunities to practice authentic communication, which limits the development of their confidence and practical English-speaking skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, English courses should adopt a more balanced approach by combining traditional examinations with communicative and formative assessment. Teachers are encouraged to provide more opportunities for students to participate in speaking activities, group discussions, presentations, and other authentic communication tasks. Such practices can help strengthen students' language knowledge while reducing learning anxiety and enhancing their confidence and practical English communication skills.