

## **DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF PRIMARY STUDENTS THROUGH ACTIVITY BASED LEARNING**

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**Abstract:** At primary level students learn through meaningful activities. Being a teacher of grade four and five from a researcher's prospective it became clear that while teaching in Grammar translation method (GTM) most of the students were not able to understand the lesson and what perceived was a lacking context and being boring. On the contrary, the Activity Based learning (ABL) is very helpful in raising the interest of the students and to make them learn in friendly environment. The aim of present research is to highlight the fact that ABL has proved to be more effective in teaching students by inventing or creating, and ABL equips teachers with many activation arms in order to manage the students according to their mental and physical context. The tool of data collection was based on interviewing from the teachers to know that to what extent they consider ABL as an effective learning method to magnify the creative effect regarding the student perception.

**Keywords:** Activity based learning (ABL), Grammar translation method (GTM), Lecture based teaching, learning, primary level.

In Uzbekistan it is stated that English is second language and practical analysis shows different images as in departmental offices like health, education, judiciary, foreign affairs, and army and in private sector as well as all official documentation is being done in English. In private educational setups at the basic levels English is being stresses at spoken level as well. The kids at play group and K.G level are being taught the basic phonemes so that they can take English as their primary language from spoken perspective. The schools or a teaching institution is considered to be the best place of

learning and polishing a child. The learning which is developed in a class room lasts forever. A child is taught not only a text based curriculum but also a hidden curriculum which consists of co-curricular activities and ethics. The vantage of an effective teaching method has been a serious talk among teachers and educationists as most of teachers are still under the influence of old teaching methodologies. Our syllabus and methods both require innovations, as our syllabus includes such contents in which activities are less and cramming is necessary to get good marks. By cramming students' creativity gets minimized. The method is a comprehensive frame work meant for a proper and appropriate presenting outline of lingual material whose no word or content is in contrast or conflict, and whole context is built by a distinct methodology. It should be noted that methodology is axiomatic in nature and method itself has procedural nature. We can attach numerous methods with a single approach. (Anthony 1963, p. 63-7-p Richards and Rodgers, 1999, p. 15). The grammar translation method is being used widely specially in private schools. It has been defined as that the GTM is an old or classical method which was implemented in Europe from 1840s to 1940s. It is method which is not based on any learning theory and has no language theory as well, the entire focus is on two skills only-reading and writing, as minor attention is given to speaking and listening. The GTM emphasis is on learning and memorizing rules of language rather than its practice, it is a deductive approach as the rules are told and the practice comes later and focus is on accuracy (Brown, 1997); Richards and Rodgers, 2000). So educationists felt the need of some innovations in exiting methods and started including some activities in classroom. These activities were the apart of ABL because the method was same but teachers invented or introduced some more activities according to their need. And when they realized the weaknesses of students and their different thinking ways they started finding out solutions and one way or the other started using activity based method (Hopkins & Harris, 2000). The process of activity based learning depends upon learning by creating or doing. The students learn through experiencing things by their own hands and creating by their own minds. The true education comes by stimulating the child to put himself in

activities and discover things and these activities can be individual or in groups (Dewey, 1929). The activity based learning which is now widely used as a method in many of private schools was basically implemented by John Dewey in 1896. John Dewey, a great educationist presented this theory of teaching students in creative and natural environment during his tenure with the University of Chicago. Here he laid the foundation of a university laboratory school which later turned into the “Dewey School”. In this school many experiments were made to reform the ways of teaching in schools and to introduce innovations in teaching methods. In this school of Dewey students were the active participants who learn by practical implementation. Dewey wanted to make a place which can change the old techniques and methods into new teaching principles which include mental activity and the enhancement of creative skills (Chambliss, J.J (Ed.), p. 146). In 1906 Dewey worked with Columbia University where he continued to develop his philosophy of learning by doing by publishing several works which include *Democracy and Education* (1916), and *Experience and Education* (1938). Dewey’s philosophy behind building the Dewey school was to replace the old educational ideas and philosophy with some revolutionary new things. Dewey stressed over the fact that educational process should be constructed over a strong and experienced theory. He is of the view that both traditional education and progressive education should not be supported but human perception and human exposures to life should be preferred while planning the new effective educational plan (Dewey, 1938). Actually, it is a very beneficial activity for enhancing the creative skills and vocabulary of the students. In my point of view teacher can create a class room activity by dividing the students in four or five equal groups. Teacher may write topic on the board and she can ask the groups to describe the main parts of the story e.g. one group will create the introduction of the story, second groups duty is to describe the problem or the buildup portion of the story, third group will describe the solution and the fourth and final group will convey the ending of the story with a moral lesson. This activity can be oral or written depending on the choice of the teacher but it is very helpful in enhancing not only the vocabulary but also the inner

creative skills of the students. As in groups students will share their ideas with one another and different minds together can create or invent something new or extraordinary. In conclusion, teaching and learning both are interrelated. It is to note that learning is born through teaching and a proper supporting role in conveying part of the teacher magnifies the grasping effect upon the students. So this research approves that ABL is helpful for teachers and students as it develops the understanding of the students. As this is a very crucial responsibility of teachers to develop the learning and creative skills of the students, so ABL provides them guidelines to improve their teaching by including different activities. The main task of the instructor has been defined as that he maintains a proper context of the learning subject with the day to day routine. It is necessary that the teacher should have the ability to convey the knowledge in a comprehensive and easy manner to the students by maintaining a comfortable environment in the classroom. A perfect and comprehensive lesson and activity planning must be made by keeping in view the environment of the class and perception threshold of the students. Suggestions were made about creating opportunities for the teachers for the enhancement of learning techniques in order to sharpen the abilities of the students and to give a new shape to the learning model.

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