



# REVIEW OF RESEARCH

ISSN: 2249-894X

IMPACT FACTOR : 5.2331(UIF)

VOLUME - 7 | ISSUE - 6 | MARCH - 2018



---

## A STUDY ON THE CONSTRUCTIVE BASED TEACHING STRATEGIES IN RELATION TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH

Firdose

Research scholar Annamalai University.

### ABSTRACT

*This paper outlines of an experimental study on students' learning in Constructivist environment and its subsequent effect on achievement in English at secondary High school level . In this study, the Investigator applies constructivist approach combined with critical pedagogy for making meaningful learning.*

**KEY WORDS:** *constructivist approach Critical Pedagogy , critical thinking, reading comprehension.*



### 1 .INTRODUCTION

Pedagogy is seen as a deliberate attempt by the teachers and practitioners of education in choosing how knowledge is produced, how identities are dealt with within a classroom. For instance, if the classroom focuses only on experiences of middle class urban children, and does not take into account the actual lives of children living in slums or in poverty, or in rural areas, then it is choosing to produce only certain identities. A critical pedagogue would question what knowledge is being represented.

NCF-2005 calls for more collaborative methods of learning and respecting the identity of each individual child in schooling. It also calls for giving space to children's ideas, their notions and their own background knowledge. Children are clearly seen as persons in their own right and constructors of knowledge rather than receivers. The NCF positions the teacher as a critical pedagogue and classrooms and schools as transformatory spaces..

**1.1Existing system:** The current practices in schools indicate that the entire teaching learning process has become a routine activity, where students mug up things and remember till they complete their examinations..

It was generally expected that school teachers would be implementing several teaching approaches relating to critical pedagogy prescribed in NCF-2005 but these pedagogies were found only partially implemented by them .

The whole system needs a fresh look. The teachers have to be trained to work towards all-round development of the personality of learners. Therefore, it has serious implications for teacher preparation programme . Research shows that children learn most effectively by constructing knowledge through the world around them.

---

## 1.2 The State of Karnataka has adopted various approaches as a part of the reforms in the National Curriculum Framework 2005

- (a) Child-Centred Pedagogy
- (b) Activity Based Pedagogy.
- (c) Joyful Learning Pedagogy
- (d) Teaching for Construction of Knowledge
- (e) Critical Pedagogy:
- (f) Culture specific Pedagogy
- (h) Shikshanadalli Rangakale: (Dramatization in Education)

### 1.3 Constructivist approach and Critical pedagogy

Constructivism helps to promote discovery learning, experiential learning, collaborative learning, co-operative learning, learning through problem solving. Critical pedagogy helps to enhance critical thinking, critical questioning and helps the learners to act as social change agents. Many of the characteristic tenets of critical pedagogy are consistent with a constructivist approach to education. One of the key objectives of critical pedagogy is to allow students to gain the necessary social skills to actively participate in a transformed & inclusive democratic community.

Constructivist approach is an approach which provides an insight into how the pedagogical world operates.

#### 1.3.1 Teaching for Construction of Knowledge

In the constructivist perspective, learning is a process of the construction of knowledge. Learners actively construct their own knowledge by connecting new ideas to existing ideas on the basis of materials/activities presented to them (experience). For example, using a text or a set of pictures/visuals on a transport system coupled with discussions will allow young learners to be facilitated to construct the idea of a transport system. Initial construction (mental representation) may be based on the idea of the road transport system, and a child from a remote rural setting may form the idea centred around the bullock cart. Learners construct mental representations (images) of external reality (transport system) through a given set of activities (experiences). The structuring and restructuring of ideas are essential features as the learners progress in learning. For instance, the initial idea of a transport system built around road transport will be reconstructed to accommodate other types of transport

#### 1.3.2 Critical pedagogy

In the post-method era in ELT, pioneers such as Freire, Pennycook, Canagarajah, and Kumaravadivelu have introduced concepts such as power, identity, voice and agency to language teaching.

The above-mentioned thinkers in politics, culture, sociology and psychology entered ELT arena where students were recipient of ideas and findings of theory makers and policy setters.

**Critical pedagogy** is an educational approach that was developed by Paulo Freire. Freire's teaching methods promoted citizens to think about the social injustices of their world. His students were taught to question authority and expect fair treatment. Proponents of critical pedagogy see it as a movement and an ongoing struggle in bringing change to society, social institutions and processes. This emphasizes individuals' ability to think critically about society and education.

#### Freirean concepts

Some key Freirean concepts of critical pedagogy include problem posing, dialogue, praxis, and codes. In critical pedagogy problems are posed by the learners, which forms the main content of the lesson; this is called problem posing. Freire's problem-posing educational method includes three stages, "listening, dialogue, and action" (Wallerstein, 1987, p. 35).

---

Wallerstein (1983) nicely outlines some basic steps for critical pedagogy. First the instructor listens to the learners and identifies their problems. Then the instructor provides codes based on the problems identified by the students to elicit further critical thinking and dialogue. Within this process students should “name the problem, understand how it applies to them, determine the causes of the problem, generalize to others, and finally, suggest alternatives or solutions to the problem” (Wallerstein, 1983, p. 17).

### 1.3.3 Features of Critical Pedagogy

- Reflect on issues in terms of their political, social, economic and moral aspects. Commitment to democratic forms of interaction
- See social issues from different perspectives
- respecting multiple views
- collective decision making through open discussion
- stereotypes Vs need based, context based decisions
- a curriculum that is sensitive to the needs of children
- Conflict as a pedagogic strategy - constructively questioning
- Comment compare and think about their own environment
- A pedagogy that is sensitive to gender, class, caste and global inequalities
- Speaking up in class/learning to listen to others with empathy and without judgement
- Providing a safe space for children to express themselves - atmosphere of trust

### 1.4 Classroom Implications:

The critical pedagogy requires teachers to be sensitive to the multiplicity of views in the classroom and make use of social situations that encourages learners to think and express their views. The idea is not to look for dominant perspective but to allow each student to discuss and debate on the situation provided. In the process children learn to recognize the alternate perspectives and be open to review their own responses. The situation could be provided by the teacher as well as brought by the children themselves.

### Example

The Nation’s government decides to displace the villager living in the vicinity of a river as it decides to construct a dam over the rivers. The villagers are opposing the construction of dam. Would you support them? Why/ Why not? How should such decisions be taken?

### 1.5 Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking

Since the time of Socrates, educators have advocated the use of provocative questions accompanied by pupil thinking and discovery. The process of thinking is emphasized in Discovery Learning.

Education in the critical faculty is the only education of which it can be truly said that it makes good citizen”. (William Graham Sumner ,1906)

Critical thinking was first introduced to ELT by Dewey and called for critique of education and embarked on its calling to bring identity, voice, and power to teachers and students’ awareness (Fisher, 2001) In order to become effective, teachers and students need to develop critical thinking skills and prepare students for social, political, and economic transformation, then they should offer knowledge, debate, and dialogue to students (Giroux and Giroux, 2006)

### 1.6 Integratation Of Critical Thinking In English Class

Critical Thinking has been an important issue in education and it has found its way to second language pedagogy. **Reading comprehension** involves interaction between the reader and the text. i.e. infer implicit ideas which are latent in the text, and go one step forward to evaluate those ideas critically. This is a higher-order cognitive undertaking which needs to be instilled in students through education. The complex

---

task of reading comprehension is the reader needs to call up his mental resources to relate what he sees on the print page to what he knows in advance thereby come to better grasp and analyze the concepts suggested in the text. At this point explicit critical thinking instruction can be of great help for learners to analyze the texts critically in order to get at clear understanding.

Metacognition, or thinking about one's thinking, is key to facilitating lasting learning experiences and developing lifelong learners. Linda Darling-Hammond and her colleagues (2003) identify two types of metacognition: reflection, or "thinking about what we know," and self-regulation, or "managing how we go about learning."

According to Ira Shor (1992) a student can be critically conscious by: Thinking, reading, writing, and speaking while going beneath the surface meaning students must understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context and personal consequences of: any action, event, object, process, organization, experience, text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse.

The critical reader reconstructs (and so translates) the logic of the writer into the logic of the reader's thinking and experience. This entails disciplined intellectual work. The end result is a new creation; the writer's thinking for the first time now exists within the reader's mind.

**Table 1.8**  
**Using Precise Terminology to Encourage Thinking**

• Instead of Saying:	• Say:
'Let's look at these two pictures.'	'Let's compare the two pictures'
'What do you think will happen when ...'	'What do you predict will happen when ...'
'What do you think of this story?'	'What conclusions can you draw about this story?'
'How can you explain ...?'	'What evidence do you have to support ...?'
'Let's work this problem.'	'Let's analyze this problem.'

**Table 1.9**  
**Encouraging Learners to Think About Thinking**

When Learners Say	Teacher's say
'The verdict is, guilty as charged.'	'Describe the steps you took to arrive at that answer.'
'I am ready to begin.'	'Describe your plan of action.'

### 1.10 Critical thinking incorporated into language classes

Bloom's Taxonomy was developed in 1956 by Benjamin Bloom and modified during the 1990's by a new group of cognitive psychologists, led by Lorin Anderson (a former student of Bloom's) to make it relevant to the 21st century.

- Bloom's original cognitive taxonomy was a one-dimensional form. With the addition of products, the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy takes the form of a two-dimensional table.

1. Knowledge Dimension (the kind of knowledge to be learned)

- Factual, Conceptual, Procedural, Meta-Cognitive

2. Cognitive Process Dimension (the process used to learn)

- Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating, Creating

Higher-order questions in the analyzing creating and evaluation domains elicit deeper and critical thinking; therefore, teachers are encouraged to ask questions in these domain

Table 1.11

	<i>The Cognitive Process Dimension</i>					
<b>Knowledge Dimension</b>	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual <b>Knowledge</b>	List	Summarise	classify	Order	Rank	Combine
Conceptual <b>Knowledge</b>	Describe	Interpret	Experiment	Expain	Assess	Plan
<b>Procedural Knowledge</b>	Tabulate	Predict	Calculate	Differentiate	Conclude	Compass
<b>Meta- Cognitive Knowledge</b>	Use	Execute	Construct	Achieve	Action	Actualize

### 1.12 Name of the lesson: **THE BOY WHO ASKED FOR MORE**

**Class: VIII**

**Subject :English**

Objectives which incorporate critical thinking,

- Given the introductory part of the story for reading students in groups **evaluate** the main CHARACTER's attitude
- Given one of the two following parts of the story for skimming and scanning students will **interpret and explain**
- Given the whole text reading **justify** their choice in the following discussion

✓ **Remembering:**

- Describe the character's LOOK and PERSONALITY and their role in *Oliver Twist*

✓ **Understanding:**

- What is the underlying themes of *Oliver Twist*, including good/evil, justice, and class. Reflect the young orphan boy's life of poverty in England in the 1830's .

**Applying**

- Explain the connections between this chapter and other books, movies, or personal life events you have experienced.

**Analyzing**

How did Dickens' vivid description give you a mental picture of each character?

**Evaluating**

How does the adjective "Dickensian" is used in different contexts .suggest your point of view Oliver is extremely "good" even if he has had a terrible childhood. Do you think this is realistic? Why or why not?

**Creating**

What would you do if you were Oliver Twist? Why is Charles Dickens famous and elaborate in his own words?Do you think that characters in books for young children should always set a good example by being well-behaved? Or is there Some value in contrary, mischievous characters?

What was the current attitudes about poverty. Do we view the poor in our country in the same way we view the poor in less developed countries? Why or why not?

narrate your street life observations —the characters you encounter, the businesses and buildings you see, and the social conditions around you

### 1.13 Objectives of the Study

- To study the difference in achievements of two groups of grade VIII of posttest scores of Experimental and Control Group based on the Bloom's Revised Objectives for different dimension of English Achievement Test (EAT)

### 1.14 Hypothesis

There is significance difference in skill dimension between the experimental group and control group .

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Sample

One group of 30 students was called control group and no treatment was given to control group. Another group of 30 students was known as experimental group where teaching through constructivist approach was done.

### 2.2 Tools for data collection

Keeping in view the nature and need of the present study **Self Developed Tool Achievement Test** was used for data-collection. The following steps were followed for developing the test:-

#### a. Planning

Planning of the test taken in to account the purpose of the test, identification and defining the intended learning outcomes, preparing the test specifications and constructing relevant test items.

#### b. Objectives

Since the major concern here was to test the academic achievement, accordingly, it was decided to test the six major areas of cognitive domain, i.e. knowledge, understanding ,analysing, evaluating, creating and application

#### c. Preparation

50 questions with wide range of difficulty were constructed in conformity with blue print. First draft was given to experts and items having 80% unanimity were selected. Finally 40 items constituted the final form of Achievement test along with the scoring key.

### 2.3 Experimental Procedure

**(i) Pre Test-** The first stage involved the formation of two groups experimental and control group and administration of achievement test in English.

**(ii) Treatment-** At second stage, the experimental group was taught through Constructivist Approach. Control group was taught the same topics through traditional teaching strategy. The teaching-learning process was carried out for a period of two months.

**(iii) Post-Test-** The third stage i.e. after the experimental treatment involve the administration of post-test i.e. achievement test.

### 2.4 Statistical Treatment

The data collected was statistically analyzed using the following techniques:-

1. Descriptive statistics such as means and SDs were worked out on the score of Achievement test.

2. Inferential Statistical techniques such as t-test was employed for testing significance of the difference between the experimental and control the group on the basis of pre-test, post-test and gain scores.

### 3. Analysis and Result

#### 3.1 Pre-Test comparison of the Experimental and Control Group

- The difference between a control and experimental groups on means scores in post-test was not found to be significant in remembering skill
- The difference between a control and experimental groups on means scores in post-test was not to be significant in understanding, applying ,analyzing,evaluating and creating skill dimension

**Table-:1.13 Post-test mean, SD and t-value for different dimension of English Achievement Test (EAT) for two groups**

Test	Different Dimension of EAT	Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
English Achievement Test (EAT)	Remembering	Experimental	2.97	.183	1.79	Not Significant At 0.05 level
		Control	2.87	.346		
	understanding	Experimental	3.37	.669	5.18	Significant At 0.05 level
		Control	2.73	.868		
	Applying	Experimental	11.17	4.153	30.38	Significant At 0.05 level
		Control	7.40	4.090		
	Analyzing	Experimental	10.87	4.006	19.89	Significant At 0.05 level
		Control	6.70	3.229		
	Evaluating	Experimental	2.80	.805	4.34	Significant At 0.05 level
		Control	2.30	.651		
	Creating	Experimental	14.30	5.344	10,57	Significant At 0.05 level
		Control	<b>9.40</b>	<b>2.966</b>		

### Conclusion

**Table-4** result reveals that, there is significance difference found in all Skill Dimension except in Remembering between the experimental group and control group . It appears that the students learning in constructivist approach has substantially enhanced the understanding ,applying,analyzing,evaluating and creating abilities of students in English as compared to control group.

### REFERENCES

- Nickerson, R. 1987. *Critical Thinking*.** <http://lclane2.net/criticalthinking.html/>.
- Paul, R. and Elder, L. 2009. *The miniature guide to critical thinking. Concepts and tools*. The Foundation for Critical Thinking.
- Schafersman, S. 1991. *An introduction to Critical Thinking*. Retrieved February 8, 2008 from <http://www.freeinquiry.com/critical-thinking.html/>.
- Pennycook, A. (1990). Critical Pedagogy and Second Language Education. *System*, 18/3, 303 – 314.
- Fisher, A. (2001). *Critical thinking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (Chapter 1).
- Akbari, R. (2008). Transforming lives: Introducing critical pedagogy into ELT classrooms. *ELT journal*, 62(3), 30 –39.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (2005). Critical pedagogy in L2 learning and teaching. In E. Hinkel. (2005). *Handbook of research in second language teaching and research*. (pp. 342-359). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- 
- Prapasite, L. & Hardison, D. (2009). Implementing education reform: EFL teachers' perspective. *ELT Journal*, 63(2), 154 – 162.
- Freire, P. & Macedo, D. (1987). *Literacy: Reading the world and the word*. New York: South Hadley, (chapter 2).
- McLaren, P. (1988). Culture or canon? Critical pedagogy and the politics of literacy. *Harvard Education Review*. 58, 213 – 234.
- Dooly, M. & Masats, D. (2011). Closing the loop between theory and praxis. *ELT Journal*, 65(1), 70 – 78.
- Kostogriz, A. (2002). Rethinking ESL literacy education in multicultural conditions. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of New England, New South Wales, Australia, Chapter 2)
- Byram, M. (2009). Politics, policies and political action in foreign language education. *Contemporary applied linguistics language teaching and learning*. New York: Continuum, 1, 191 – 214.
- Giroux, H. A. and Giroux, S. S. (2006). *Challenging Neoliberalism's New Word Order: The Promise of Critical*