

**Innovative Practices in Higher Education □ The Lecture Method vs. The  
Activity Based Teaching in ELT Classroom**

Dhirendrasinh Pravinsinh Rana  
M.Phil Scholar  
H.M Patel institute of English Training and Research  
Vallabh vidyanagar, Anand  
&  
Dr. Nishant Joshi Assistant Professor  
H.M Patel Institute of English Training and Research  
Vallabh Vidyanagar ,Anand

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**Abstract:**

Indian education system has kept changing since the days of 'Ashram Education' and it has the same value as it had in the past in our country. The Ashram education is varied from teachers to teachers. As the time passes on some innovative ideas put into practice by the experts in order to check its impact on the learners. Second Language Acquisition (L2) requires a great amount of hard work and dedication. The paper presenters feel that the old method of teaching will not help in system. It has to be replaced by activity oriented education. The present study tries to reflect upon the methods of teaching English as a second language in higher education the traditional Lecture method and newly emerged Activity Based Teaching and their implementations in the classroom. It reflects how Activity Based Teaching is more beneficial than traditional Lecture method in ELT classroom. This paper focuses on merits and demerits of Lecture method and Activity Based Teaching and how activities can facilitate effective teaching. The paper also shares the first hand experience of activity based teaching in one of the prestigious educational intuitions of Gujarat. The paper also highlights how with ape of internet the learners can be made more and more self reliant and teacher perform role of facilitator and mentor.

**Key words:** innovation, disadvantage of lecture method, need for change, internet and virtual classroom.

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Dhirendrasinh Pravinsinh Rana  
M.Phil Scholar

H.M Patel institute of English Training and Research  
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H.M Patel Institute of English Training and Research  
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**Introduction:**

The field of education has witnessed several changes over the years. Likewise the methodologies have also been changed. These are all due to the researchers carried out in the field of educational pedagogy, psychology and other discipline. In the modern times intuitions and teachers both are experiencing a great challenge as to how to make appropriate choices to teach different subjects at different levels. However in India the most popular method of teaching has been The Lecture Method. It assumes that the listeners can understand and interpreted whatever is being told to them. However it is not clear to what extent the learner's benefits from the method. The man who lectures assumes that the audience has certain levels and whatever he says would be understood and appreciated but he is not sure about the percentage of learners who would didn't fit as large extent.

As the Higher Education always presents the learning inputs that are applicable to real life to the learners, Language Teaching is considered as one of the most significant aspects in the periphery of Higher Education. In advanced level cultural programmers like Bachelors & Masters, It always emphasizes on the application of the language or in simple words the use of the language. Here, the present study reflects on the two contemporary and in trend ways of language teaching and they are the lecture method and the Activity Based Teaching.

- **The Lecture Method**

Teaching through spoken sessions or delivering a lecture is one of the most traditional ways in language teaching and learning. The history shows that the lecture method is there in existence since 1840s. The word 'Lecture' is basically derived from the word "Lect" or "Legere" which means to read a chosen text. (Oxford dictionary) The method pertains to a consistent and continuous delivery of speech given by a teacher. Lectures are often used to teach organized bodies of knowledge which is an important part of the school curriculum at all levels, and they have continued as a primary form of instruction in colleges and universities even at different school stages (Cupan 1984) In a way, there is nothing wrong in saying that lecture is nothing but a long speech given by a teacher in the classroom.

**Advantages:**

There are some advantages of lecture method like the teacher always has a maximum control over the class in during the sessions. As the teachers speak aloud about a topic, the learners who are willing to take down the notes will automatically pay attention to the teacher. Including it, a teacher only knows what has been taught and what is supposed to be taught so the teacher is always a centre in the classroom. One of the good advantages of a lecture method is that it can accommodate a good number of learners in the class as it doesn't require anything extra except chalk and blackboard. So in this way lecture method is less cost effective.

**Disadvantages:**

However keeping in mind the fact that there are always two sides of a coin, it is very important to have a look on the disadvantages of the lecture method like it generally tries to cover too much material in the limited period of time. The strategies which Lecturers apply on the sessions are often outdated in terms of its effectiveness that's why in present era it is considered fit in today's classroom. "...Lecture method makes [s] the students too passive and listless. One perhaps the greatest decretive of all, it can make them voiceless and unable to think critically for themselves." (McCorthy 2002, P=31)

So from the above explanation, it can be said that when it comes to the implementation of the input of the material, the lecture method doesn't seem to be proved up to the mark. This issue has been observed in most of the adult and bachelor level second language learners. They seem to be very much nervous when it comes to express their idea in target language, though they know the sentence pattern very well. And this is the main reason for the grand level change in not only approaches of language teaching but also the methods.

- **Activity Based Teaching**

Activity based teaching or learning is one of the methods of communicative approach in language teaching. This innovative and interactive method of learning focuses on the active participation of the learners. The learners get sufficient space to use their own cognitive ability to create the language. Supporting to this argument Hunt et al (2003) states that positive learning outcomes from team learning as compared to the traditional lecture method. The term 'Activity' belongs to the dynamic state of body and mind when the learners are both

mentally and physically active, the chances of language learning are higher than passive learning of lecture method. E.g. techniques of **group discussion, pair work, roll play** and **mime** makes all the learners active in the language classroom and each learner gets a fair chance to express their ideas and views in the classroom. Even the passive learners can easily participate in language learning process by observing their peers.

In our B.ed programme at our H M Patel Institute of English Training Research, our teacher conducted a group work activity. In Pre stage of this activity he gave us a handout which contained all the points of discussion than he divided the whole class in to three groups and assigned us three three points to discuss among our group members. In the main stage of the activity we discussed on our given points in groups one by one and developed paragraph on each points. In the post stage of the activity one of our group members represented the write up that included all the discussed points of the group. At the end of the whole class successfully prepared a short note on given topic by our teacher. So in this way, we not only explore the new things and concepts but also prepared our own reading notes. Through this experience we got space of interaction and opportunities to produce target language in the classroom.

**Disadvantages:**

So, on the basis of this experience we can say that the Activity Based Teaching is useful method in terms of language teaching and learning, whereas there are some limitations of it. Among them, the very first is it requires a lot of planning work on teacher sides and the educational authority follow the semester system. Activity Based Teaching is also hindered by the slow learners as they may

participate late in the activity. It almost can't be taken place in the large classroom because there are chances that the large strength of the learners may create a hurdle in the process of activity.

### **Conclusion:**

To sum up we can say that in lecture method the teacher generally dominates the classroom wherein the learners have very little scope to develop their language proficiency and confidence of English language learning in ELT classroom. On the contrary in activity based teaching, the teacher is mostly that of a facilitator than of an authority in knowledge and sharing information in the classroom. He engages the learners in to tasks and makes abstract ideas into concrete ones. It is learning by doing rather than learning by listening. As a result the learner are getting chance to develop proficiency and confidence in using English language in ELT classroom.

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