



# Evaluating the efficacy of activity-based learning in English language education: A case study in selected districts of Karnataka

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**Abstract:** Introduction: Higher education serves as a hub for diverse intellectual endeavors, where every student aims to demonstrate the distinctive qualities of an educated individual. Aim of the study: The primary objective of this research is to assess the efficacy of using activity-based learning strategies in ESL classrooms: A Case Study in Selected Districts of Karnataka Material and method: This study used a quasi-experimental research strategy to conduct quantitative research. Conclusion: The findings have been derived from the outcomes of hypothesis testing and subsequent debate. The use Using an activity-based learning (ABL) strategy significantly affects how much control students have over their own education.

**Keywords:** Higher, Education, Activity based Learning, Autonomy

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## INTRODUCTION

Higher education serves as a hub for diverse intellectual endeavours, where every student aims to demonstrate the distinctive qualities of an educated individual. Students must engage in both creative and critical thinking to effectively handle the societal challenges that arise. These objectives require students to assume the role of innovative and self-directed learners. Nevertheless, the building sectors express their dismay. The Civil Engineering graduates' poor competences were attributed to reasons such as a deficiency in character traits, abilities to communicate, solve problems, lead, make decisions, work together, and other related areas. The substandard quality of higher education graduates may be attributed, in part, to the inadequate level of instruction. The existing educational approach serves only as a vehicle for imparting theoretical information. Kotler and Fox identified six factors that affect the quality aspect of a university: the quality of education, the resources available to students, the involvement of staff, the services offered to help students find jobs, and the extracurricular activities offered. The quality of education is the most important of the six factors. The quality of the lesson might be low, all areas will be adversely affected. Autonomy in learning is a crucial determinant in attaining academic achievement. It is a condition in which pupils acquire knowledge independently, without depending on others. Autonomous students possess a strong sense of resolve and assume accountability for surmounting their learning challenges. Self-directedness is achieved when students possess the ability to carefully regulate and assess their learning activities, strategize for enhancements, and actively engage in the learning process. Self-directed learning refers to students engaging in learning activities with a strong sense of self-awareness in order to attain desired learning results. Meyer (2010) emphasized that in order to foster self-directedness in students,

instructors should actively facilitate the development of their autonomous learning abilities. The degree of self-directedness in learning is contingent upon the positive interaction that takes place between students and instructors. Francom (2010) identified many elements that contribute to self-directed learning, including student-teacher communication, goal creation, learning implementation plan, self-evaluation, and the application of metacognition, motivation, and domain knowledge. Williamson (2007) and Ricard (2007) state that having a close relationship between teachers and students, having access to relevant resources, and the methods of instruction all have a role in influencing students to choose the self-directed learning approach.

## **ACTIVITY BASED LANGUAGE LEARNING**

It has long been a perplexing issue for both higher educational institutions and companies as to why students, who have studied English for 15 years, struggle to speak English clearly and without grammatical errors. The explanation may be attributed to the fact that English is only taught as an academic subject in schools, with little opportunities for oral communication. The classrooms are constrained by a typical one-way teaching approach, which diminishes the enthusiasm for acquiring English as a language. While most individuals are capable of achieving scores over 80% at academic institutions, they often struggle when required to deliver an impromptu three-minute speech on a certain subject. This might be attributed to a multitude of factors, including a deficiency in incorporating such exercises throughout one's educational years. Activity-based learning is a teaching method that incorporates various types of activities into regular instructional materials and methods. These activities are carefully chosen to be appropriate and relevant to specific subjects. The goal is to actively involve students in the teaching and learning process, resulting in meaningful engagement. Activity-based learning, as defined, is the frequent performance of subject-relevant tasks by students to foster participatory learning. Conventional education and training programs often prioritize the importance of the subject matter. The focus was always on covering the curriculum, which included areas of knowledge that were beneficial to know rather than essential to know. Each instructor will under significantly pressure to cover the designated curriculum efficiently, regardless of whether the pupils have comprehended the material, except via examinations. Prior to the pupils assimilating the knowledge they have received; they will be inundated with further fresh information.

### **Further English language curricula research needed**

Due to the diverse array of languages spoken by pupils in U.S. schools, successful classroom education often necessitates teaching in English. In order to effectively teach kids English, schools need instructors to have access to scientifically validated, user-friendly teaching tools or curriculum. Regrettably, there is a lack of comprehensive evaluation of English language development (ELD) curricula in controlled settings with sufficient sample numbers to endorse their use in U.S. schools. There are not many methods that have been considered beneficial for middle school English language (EL) pupils. Additionally, there is minimal information about the best way to plan and provide English language training that is both effective and efficient.

Several studies have examined treatments aimed at improving comprehension and vocabulary among English Learner (EL) students. However, the programs being investigated mostly emphasized the instruction of reading and comprehension abilities. Their focus did not explicitly center on the enhancement

of English spoken language proficiency. The What Works Clearinghouse found a limited number of programs that satisfied the WWC evidence requirements, indicating potential favorable or positive outcomes for English Learner children in grades 6 through 8. The research conducted by Borman, Park, and Min (2015) on Achieve3000, an online program specifically developed to enhance reading and writing skills, satisfied the requirements set by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) with reservations. This is because the study used a quasi-experimental design that was implemented inside a single school district. Another product that adhered to the guidelines set by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) was Fast ForWord Language, developed by Scientific Learning Corporation in 2004. This software is an interactive computer-based teaching tool. Peer Tutoring and Response Groups is a technique that allows instructors to strengthen previously taught material by having students collaborate in pairs or groups to complete a task. None of the programs assessed were all-encompassing, instructor-led, English Language Development (ELD) educational curricula.

Vaughn et al. (2017) examined the efficacy of by means of a randomized controlled trial. a content-acquisition and reading-comprehension intervention that used team-based learning in social studies education. The research adhered to WWC criteria with some concerns and found that 8th grade EL students' demonstrated improvement in their topic understanding and content reading comprehension, but not in general reading comprehension. Two further studies found in the WWC included vocabulary treatments. During the full academic year, the intervention was administered for a duration of 15 minutes each day, as seen in particular research. In the alternative investigation, a 45-minute intervention was administered daily for half of the academic year. The presence of design flaws, such as unpaired comparisons and the lack of adjustments for multiple testing, has significantly restricted the generalizability of the study, particularly in relation to researcher-developed measures. Our literature study indicates a lack of language curricula based on research for students learning English as a second language, which is an important area of teaching for a rising population of pupils.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

**Samaddar, Ritu & Sikdar, Deb Prasad (2023)** The pedagogical techniques used by educators significantly influence the quality of instruction. In recent times, many activity-based learning strategies have recently been used in educational institutions. This study conducts a comparative analysis of two methods to higher education, namely activity-based learning and conventional learning, with a focus on the student, instructor, learning environment, and education. The two techniques were analysed and compared using qualitative research, namely the qualitative descriptive method. The evaluation included a literature study, examination of virtual lesson plans, and other relevant materials. Comparative tables are used to present the results. According to the results of the investigation, activity-based learning proved to be more efficacious than conventional learning in terms of both instruction and acquisition.

**Rajitha & .C, Alamelu (2023)** For those learning a second language, speaking in English is consistently a formidable endeavour. Anxiety is well acknowledged as a prominent cause of speech impairment. A growing field of study and current developments in English language education emphasize the issue of speaking anxiety, as well as the many tactics, strategies, and procedures that may be used to reduce this worry. Implementing activity-based teaching is a very successful and engaging approach that may be used

to improve the speaking abilities of students. The current investigation employs a four-pronged integrated strategy—inspiring, clarifying rubrics, skill integration, and grouping—to examine the impact of group activities. The intervention was centred on activities administered to a group of 105 students who are currently enrolled in various engineering programs in Chennai, India. Prior to and during the intervention, data was gathered to ascertain the presence as well as to investigate the variation in anxiety levels. Results show that group activities based on the Four-dimensional integrated approach are effective in reducing public speaking anxiety.

**Lonkar, Chandrakant (2022)** Oral communication is a fundamental aspect of English language proficiency. It is a talent that yields positive results. The effectiveness of communication relies on one's proficiency in speaking the target language. Proficiency in oral communication is a crucial attribute for achieving academic and professional accomplishments. Verbal communication is also a multifaceted ability. It is used for verbal communication with others. Engaging in activity-based learning is beneficial for improving English speaking proficiency. We have the capability to design and execute a wide range of operations. We may also evaluate the improvement of the speaking sub abilities.

**Solhi, Mehdi & Mert, Yaren & ÇELEN, Zeliha (2021)** This study aimed to assess the efficacy of the English language textbooks offered by Turkey's Ministry of Turkish National Education to pupils in grades 9 through 12 over the long run. The fifteen universal coursebook assessment criteria proposed by Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013) were used to perform the study. The assessors began by looking at the coursebooks individually using the criteria, and then reached an agreement on the average ratings. The criteria and the success of the activities in Unit 2 and Unit 7 were thoroughly addressed. The findings suggest that the coursebooks might achieve great success by offering students options for communication, using idiomatic expressions, integrating technology, giving self-assessment possibilities, and using illustrative examples. On the other hand, the coursebooks often lack the adaptability to effectively promote the use of English as a global language, fail to provide students chances to keep studying the language even after the course has ended, adaptation to local contexts, and do not adequately address the students' needs. Overall, the coursebooks have little effectiveness in promoting the long-term learning of English.

**Albadi, Ahmed & David, Solomon Arulraj (2019)** There has been a continuous discussion in recent years on the effects of implementing activity-based learning strategies, as compared to more conventional classroom approaches, and how well they may improve students' motivation and achievement. The objective of this research is to ascertain the impact of activity-based learning on students' academic performance in contrast to passive learning, as well as to gauge students' perspectives on activities. In order to achieve this objective, a mixed research methodology was used, whereby data was collected from a public school located in Oman. The study used a study design that is close to an experiment in that it employs a pre- and post-test approach. For this study, we surveyed 24 male students in their last year of high school. A control group and an experimental group were each given a set of volunteers. The second group received lessons based on an activity-based learning model, whereas the first group received more traditional methods of education. The next step in gathering qualitative data was to interview 8 people from the experimental group in a focus group setting. An independent sample t-test was used to examine the numerical data, while a content analysis technique was used to assess the qualitative data. Results

showed that students' academic performance was positively affected by activity-based learning. According to students, activity-based learning improves understanding, increases responsibility, creates an interesting classroom environment, and raises test scores. Students' academic performance is significantly impacted by activity-based learning, according to the study.

## METHODOLOGY

This study used a quasi-experimental research strategy to conduct quantitative research. The study sample included 122 undergraduate students enrolled in the 2017–2018 school year, every single student enrolled in the Construction Management course was pursuing a degree in Civil Engineering. The research participants consisted of students from two randomly selected Construction Management courses out of a total of four. In order to establish equivalent levels of self-directedness across both groups, a questionnaire on self-directedness in learning was given. There was no discernible change, according to the results. All things considered, the control and experimental groups were on par. In each group, there were twenty-eight students. Data on self-directed learning is collected using the non-test technique, in particular by administering a questionnaire with closed-ended questions. Based on 10 indicators that were enlarged into 60 questions, the questionnaire was constructed with self-directedness in learning as its variable. Using factor and item analysis, we checked whether the survey was valid. This reliability evaluation used Cronbach's Alpha as its assessment tool. A total of 25 out of 30 items were found to be valid based on the validity test. The outcomes were derived from a battery of 55 items that served as markers of self-directed learning. Since an  $\alpha$  value more than 0.70 is deemed trustworthy, the high Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.75 suggests that the questionnaire is very reliable. First, a survey and inquiry; second, the creation of ABL-based instructional materials; and third, experimental testing to determine the method's effectiveness in fostering independent study.

## RESULTS

**Table 1. Activity Classification**

Interval Value	Category
85% - 100%	Very Active
65% - 84%	Active
55% - 64%	Relatively Active
35% - 54%	Less Active
0% - 34%	Inactive

According to Table 4.2, the experimental group had a higher level of self-directedness at 70.8571, whereas the control group had a lower level of 69.6429, according to the preliminary evaluation. Both groups' pre-test results are in the "good" category. There was an improvement in the mean post-test scores; more precisely, the control group averaged 72.8214 points and the experimental group 81.2143, for a gain score

of 10.3572 and 3.1785, respectively.

**Table 2. Gain Score as a Mean of Pre- and Post-Test Results**

Class	Pre - test	Post - test	Gai n Scor e
E	70.8571	81.2143	10.3572
Control	69.6429	72.8214	3.1785

Subsequently, to find out whether there was a noticeable difference between the pre- and post-test, a hypothesis test was run. According to the null hypothesis, there was no discernible difference in the degree to which students' ability to self-direct their learning was improved by using the conventional model or the ABL model. You can see the t-test results in Table 3.

**Table 3. T-Test Results**

		F	Sig	T
X1	Equal variances assumed	6.349	.015	9.608
	Equal variances not assumed			9.608

**Table 4. The Standard Deviation of the Classes in English**

	Group Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Result of pretest in the English language	Experimental group	55	41.13	6.195
	Control group	55	40.91	6.261
Result of posttest in the English language	Experimental group	55	58.55	6.989
	Control group	55	41.07	6.200

Table 4.4 displays the average and variability of the experimental and control groups. The average student performance on the English language pretest is shown by the numbers 41.13 and 40.91. The outcome revealed no disparity in the average of the two groups. The mean scores of 58.55 and 41.07 show the academic achievement of students in the post test, indicating a notable disparity when it came to the team's output.

**Table 5. A t-test comparing the groups' English proficiency levels independently**



			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	Test for Equality of Means			
			F	Sig.	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
<b>Result of pretest in English</b>	Equal variances assumed		.003	.956	108	.855	.218
	Equal variances not assumed				107.988	.855	.218
<b>Result of posttest in English</b>	Equal variances assumed		5.839	.017	108	.000	17.473
	Equal variances not assumed				106.486	.000	17.473

Table 2 shows the results of a t-test research that looked at how activity-based learning affected students' English language arts grades. The results imply that the experimental and control groups did not significantly differ in their pretest performance. The experimental group did better than the control group on the post-test with a significance level of 0.01.

## DISCUSSION

The average score for the ABL model was 70.8571, which was higher for students' self-directedness compared to the traditional model, which had a score of 69.6429. The self-directedness of students in the experimental group improved by an average of 10.3572, but students in the control group only saw a rise of 3.1785. The t-test indicated that the assumed at the 0.000 level of probability, the value of the equal variances was 9.608. In order to improve students' capacity for self-directed learning, a significant difference was found between the conventional method and the ABL model. According to the results, using ABL was more effective than using other strategies in encouraging students to take an active role in their own learning traditional approach. This occurred due to the active engagement of students in diverse activities provided in blended learning settings both on and off campus. Experiential learning is a variable that contributes to the effectiveness of ABL in enhancing self-directedness. Mardana (2006) states that the phases of the experiential learning model prioritize scientific events that are relevant to everyday life. This concept proposes implementation in diverse contexts both on and off campus, in conjunction with activity-based learning. Integrating experiential learning into ABL will enhance fruitful interactions between educators and learners. According to Meyer (2010), productive interactions between students and teachers improve the ability of students to take charge of their own learning. Blended learning plays a significant part in the implementation of ABL. Blended learning is beneficial for students as it enhances their cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor domains in the learning process. Engaging in The development of self-directed learning may be favourably influenced by organized cognitive, affective, and psychomotor tasks.

## CONCLUSION

The findings have been derived from the outcomes of hypothesis testing and subsequent debate. The use students' agency in their own education is significantly influenced by the activity-based learning (ABL) strategy. The 0.00 level of statistical significance confirmed this. There was a clear difference between the ABL model's execution and the conventional model's, according to the significance level analysis results. Applying the ABL method via hands-on experience in a mixed setting may stimulate students' cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor domains, fostering active and holistic learning.

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