

Thematic Approach for effective communication in ECCE

Varun. A^[1]

Abstract: *If process is perfect, then product will be best. Enough opportunities will bring the best in all the aspects of the child. This paper brings about an exclusive strategies to bring the effective communication skill among the pre and primary school education. Thematic Approach is a way of teaching and learning, whereby many areas of the curriculum are connected together and integrated within a theme. When all subjects are integrated there will be lot of occasions to communicate with peers, teachers, parents, and strong community interaction. The first part of the papers states about formation of Thematic Approach-cum how it become transactional mode for communication skill. This papers conveys the strategies that ropes to develop the communication skill. The main focus on the verbal's aspects of school going children at the age of 4 to 8yrs*

Keywords: *Communication skill, Thematic Approach*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is very important for an individual's success in life. Education provides pupils teaching skills that prepare them physically, mentally and socially for the world of work in later life. Education is generally seen as the foundation of society which brings economic wealth, social prosperity and political stability. Primary education is the foundation on which the development of every citizen and the nation as a whole built on. In recent past, India has made a huge progress in terms of increasing primary education enrolment, retention, regular attendance rate and expanding literacy to approximately two thirds of the population. India's improved education system is often cited as one of the main contributors to the economic development of India. At the same time, the quality of elementary education in India has also been a major concern. Thematic approach is a way of teaching and learning, whereby many areas of the curriculum are connected together and integrated within a theme. The thematic approach is also directly associated with constructivist ideas since it provides an environment where knowledge can be individually and socially constructed (Freeman & Sokoloff, 1995; Seely, 1995).

Thematic approach teaching and learning

Brain research challenges the belief that learning, and therefore teaching, can be separated into traditional domains, such as cognitive (thinking), affective (feeling), and psychomotor (movement). While separating learning into domains is necessary for discussion purposes, learning cannot actually be separated anatomically or perceptually. The notion of teaching to the "whole brain" is gaining popularity and is particularly significant to language arts educators because language production is a whole brain activity (Wesley, 1992). Thematic Approach is a way of teaching and learning, whereby many areas of the curriculum are connected together and integrated within a theme. It allows learning to be more natural and less fragmented than the way where a school day is time divided into different subject areas whereby children practice exercises frequently related to nothing other than what the teacher thinks up, as he or she writes them on the chalk board. It allows literacy to

grow progressively, with vocabulary linked and with spelling and sentence writing being frequently, yet smoothly, reinforced. It guides connected ideas to follow on easily. Gardner's (1983/93) theory of multiple intelligences states that in addition to the traditional verbal/linguistic and logical/mathematical intelligences, five other types of intelligence exist. These include musical, visual/spatial, body/kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. In order to facilitate learning, teachers should provide a variety of learning activities which encompass all of the intelligences, rather than focusing solely on traditional language and math activities. (See "Developing Multiple Intelligences in Young Learners" in the September/ October 1996 issue of Early childhood NEWS.)

Research by Piaget (1969), Vygotsky (1962), and Bruner (1960) also supports an integrated approach to teaching and learning. This research concludes that learning is a highly integrated process which cannot be easily separated into domains or traditional academic disciplines, such as math, science, and language. Children learn by active engagement with their environment and through social engagement with other human beings. "Multiple complex and concrete experiences are essential for meaningful learning and teaching" (Caine & Caine, 1991, p. 5). A number of terms and definitions are used interchangeably in the educational literature to describe a thematic approach to curriculum design and delivery, including the 'cross-curricular', 'integrated' and 'interdisciplinary' curriculum. While there may be subtle differences in these approaches, significant common ground can be found in criticisms of subject-based curriculum delivery as fragmented and over departmentalized (e.g. Boyle and Bragg 2006, 2008) and the belief in the benefits of the development and application of skills and knowledge across more than one area of study (e.g. Humphreys, Post, and Ellis 1981).

Creating a Thematic Unit:

Integrated learning units usually center on a theme or topic, such as safety, belonging, animals, or food. Often a piece of children's literature is used as the core of a unit.

^[1] Ph.D Scholar, Department of Education, Regional Institute of Education Mysore (NCERT), Mysore

The following three steps are useful in creating an effective thematic unit

- What do I hope the children will learn as a result of participating in this unit?
- Is this a theme/topic about which children are naturally curious?
- Do the children have some understanding and background knowledge about this theme?

Create Specific Activities:

The second step involves brainstorming ideas for specific activities within the theme. It is often helpful for two or more teachers to brainstorm together. Consider questions such as:

- What activities lend themselves to this unit?
- Are all of the activities developmentally appropriate?

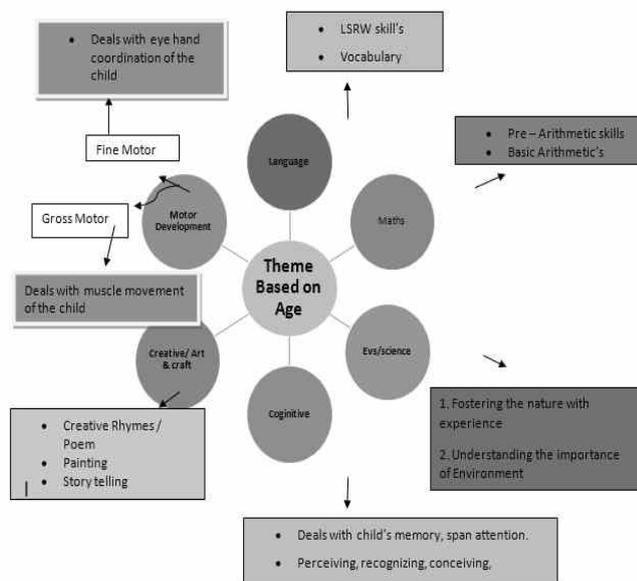
Are all of the activities meaningful and worthwhile? (The fact that an activity is “cute” is not a good enough reason to include it.)

Implement the Theme:

Finally, you are ready to implement the unit. Questions to ask yourself include

- What will be an intriguing way to begin the unit?
- Does the room need to be rearranged?
- What resources (e.g., books, math and science manipulative, guest speakers) do I need?
- How will we end it?
- How will I evaluate the unit’s success?
- How will I assess children’s development?

Careful thought and planning are important. Reflection during and after the unit will help you learn from and refine the unit for future use.



Thematic Approach For communication Skills

Language, like other skills, is not learned alone, but rather with other knowledge (Chomsky, 1972). Young children have an overwhelming need to find meaning and make sense of what is being read or spoken. Language is not learned sequentially and hierarchically, nor is it learned apart from

the culture and environment in which the child lives. Infants do not practice one sound to perfection before attempting to make another sound. They do not then put together those sounds to make words one-by-one until they can utter coherent, complete sentences, and then speak in paragraphs.

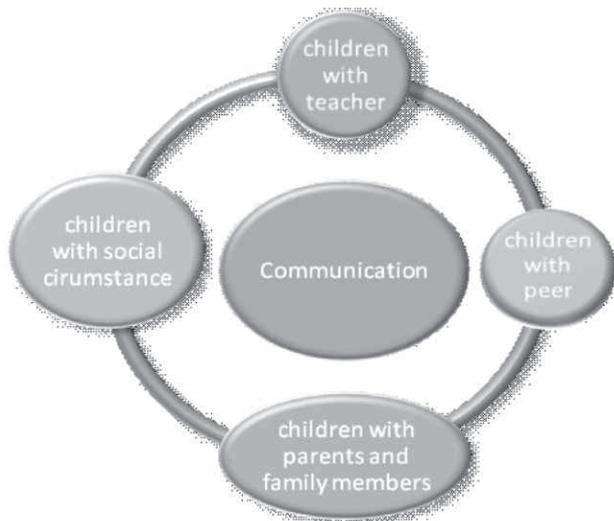
Anyone who has observed infants and toddlers knows children babble and “play with language” in a way that perhaps could be termed practice. Observers also realize that language is used to convey meaning. Babies cry when they need attention; they coo in response to others. Toddlers clearly show they have learned some of the powers of language. There is little doubt of their meaning when they say, “No!” or “Mine!” Early childhood is a critical period for the development of communication abilities for both uses of language—communicating with others and communicating with ourselves.

Language appears to be the key to effective learning in human beings. Lev Vygotsky, a Soviet psychologist whose writings have had great influence in U.S. education over the past 25 years, wrote that the primary function of language is social. That is, language is used to communicate meaning from one person to another. The secondary function of language is to serve as a mental tool for constructing meanings for ourselves (Vygotsky, 1984). Thus language and thought are closely related. We use language to help us remember; to find and construct knowledge; to organize our ideas; to make what we know more precise by reorganizing, transforming, and interpreting facts; and to apply what we know to new situations (Fisher & Terry, 1990). All children in the early years need some help in their journey to becoming a successful communicator. Thematic Approach aim to provide every child with accessible, enjoyable activities that provide opportunities for occasional help or intensive support through the core play and communication. Communication is fundamental to children’s development; children need to be able to understand and be understood. Communication is the foundation of relationships and is essential for learning, play and social interaction. Communicating with babies is the foundation of attachment. If a parent or care giver is responsive to a baby’s signals and ‘takes turns’ in communicating with them from birth onwards, babies develop a secure attachment to the care giver. This attachment underpins learning and development – it helps children thrive.

The thematic approach, on the other hand, encourages holistic study of a subject. With the school immersed in a theme, the connections between classes are recognized and cultivated. The students learn the basic subjects through activities that are based on the theme. According to Vygotsky, “What the child can do in cooperation today he can do alone tomorrow. Therefore the only good kind of instruction is that which marches ahead of development and leads it; it must be aimed not so much at the ripe as at the ripening functions” (p. 104). By actually applying the skills that they learn in these subjects, they come to see how and why the skills are meaningful. Not many adults sit down and do math for 60 minutes and then spend an hour focusing on grammar. Real events require people to integrate different areas of knowledge. A thematic approach also reflects the most recent research on how the brain comes to know.

CTTA (Communication through Thematic Approach)

Here the child learn the concept through thematic approach. While learning a theme, the child will develop to integrate the other aspects of the subjects. It's not necessary the child may correct always. The major objective of the paper is the child should able to communicate effectively during in the process of Thematic Approach



Through Thematic Approach the child know many information from a single theme. Initially the child know the information from the teacher (receptive communication). The child will expressto their peers about the theme. Which helps to them to know extra vocabulary for better expressive communication. Then the child will express the theme (sharing the information based on child's cognitive level) to their parents and family members. Which helps the child recognize and narrate the concept. (Narration and cognitive). The child will able to have active listening. Active listening is a technique that helps the young learners be more effective in the communication process (Reynolds, 2008).Get down on the child's level and speak quietly and directly as you make eye contact. Place the action part of your guidance statement at the beginning ("Hold tight, or you might fall out of the swing"). Give directions at the time and place you want behavior to occur. Give logical and accurate reasons for your request.

II. CONCLUSION

Designing and implementing integrated thematic units for young children is a developmentally appropriate practice which is supported by both brain research and the psychology of learning. Thematic units greatly enhance learning because they integrate different intelligences and topics into a single lesson which mirrors how young children actually learn. Finally, integrated thematic units make learning and teaching a lot of fun for teachers and children. Thematic Approach gives the wide opportunity to the child to express themselves more according to age on set. Thematic Approach helps the child to build/ learn a foreign or second language easily.

III. REFERENCE

1. Bruner, J. (1960). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
2. Gardner, H. (1983/93). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. Tenth Anniversary Edition containing new introduction. Basic Books: A division of Harper Collins, NY.
3. Piaget, J. (1969). *The theory of stages in cognitive structure*. New York: McGraw Hill.
4. Vygotsky, L. S. (1962). *Thought and language* (E. Hanfmann and G. Vakar, eds. and trans.). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
5. Vygotsky, L.S. (1984). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, and E. Souberman, eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
6. Wesley, D.K. (1992). Educational implications of brain research applied to teaching language arts for creative and critical thinking in writing. ED345240.
7. <http://www.education.com/reference/article/guiding-young-children-verbal-communication/> retrieved on 9/2/2014
8. http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=112 retrieved on 9/2/2014
9. www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/goodpractice retrieved on 9/2/2014