



## IMPORTANCE OF CONSTRUCTIVIST INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN TO IMPROVING READING ABILITY AMONG UPPER PRIMARY STUDENTS

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**ABSTRACT** The present article emphasizes the importance of constructivist instructional design and improving reading ability among the upper primary students. Moreover, it reveals how the constructivist instructional design serves as a platform for the upper primary children improving their reading ability through practices. A good reading habit is necessary for a healthy intellectual growth and plays a very crucial role in enabling a person to achieve practical efficiency. Furthermore, an individual's interests are determined to a considerable extent by the amount he will read and the intensity with which he will pursue his reading activity. By reading books, one gets confirmation or rejection of one's own ideas, which makes one think more critically about right and wrong in the society. Reading provides people with a sense of values, which enable them gradually to develop the greatest of all virtues, that is the ability to understand rather than condemn. Books can also be very comforting, especially at times when one doubts one's self and one's beliefs. Pleasure reading furthers the development of reading as a life-long habit which strengthens both language skills and fluency noted that children improve their reading skill when they read for pleasure.

**KEYWORDS** : Constructivist instructional design, Reading ability, upper primary students.

### INTRODUCTION

Reading occupies a pivotal role in the life of a man. Reading opens the doors of the treasures of knowledge. It is an important means of introducing the child to the world that surrounds him. It is the very foundation on which the edifice of the child is to be built. Reading is one of the most important components of our language and it is an essential tool for lifelong learning for all learners. In order to face the 21st century, education has to prepare these learners to adapt to social and technological changes that are taking place at an unprecedented rate. Reading habits are the intellectual activities for giving more information, knowledge and learning to various types of things and their activities. Reading Habits means behavior which expresses the lightness of reading of an individual, which occur regularly of leisure reading approach, type of reading tastes of reading & use of library services. Reading habit is an active skill based process of constructing meaning and gaining knowledge from oral, visual and written text. Constructivism promotes social and communication skills by creating a classroom environment that emphasizes collaboration and exchange of ideas. Students must learn how to articulate their ideas clearly as well as to collaborate on tasks effectively by sharing in group projects. Students must therefore exchange ideas and so must learn to "negotiate" with others and to evaluate their contributions in a socially acceptable manner. This is essential to success in the real world, since they will always be exposed to a variety of experiences in which they will have to co-operate and navigate among the ideas of others.

### Constructivist Learning

Constructivist learning has emerged as a prominent approach to teaching during this past decade. The work of Dewey, Montessori, Piaget, Bruner, and Vygotsky provide historical precedents for constructivist learning theory among others. Constructivism represents a paradigm shift from education based on behaviorism to education based on cognitive theory. Fosnot (1996) has provided a recent summary of these theories and describes constructivist teaching practice. Behaviorist epistemology focuses on intelligence, domains of objectives, levels of knowledge, and reinforcement. Constructivist epistemology assumes that learners construct their own knowledge on the basis of interaction with their environment. Four epistemological assumptions are at the heart of what refer to as "constructivist learning." They are; knowledge is physically constructed by learners who are involved in active learning, knowledge is symbolically constructed by learners who are making their own representations of action, knowledge is socially constructed by learners who convey their meaning making to others, knowledge is theoretically constructed by learners who try to explain things they don't completely understand

### Constructivism And Learner Centred Approaches

Classroom processes, particularly teaching-learning strategies have been considered important for improving the quality of education in our schools. There has been an increasing shift from 'teacher centered'

to 'learner centered' approaches of teaching. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF-2005) developed by NCERT emphasizes the use of learner centered approaches at the secondary stage. Learner centered approaches take into account learner's capabilities, capacities, teaching styles, context and culture. They are supported by philosophical assumptions and have a strong psychological basis. These are based on constructivist philosophy that views knowledge of subjective and contextual. Constructivists believe that learners construct new knowledge using their prior knowledge in the particular context in which the cognizing individual is operating. Learners are active participants in the construction of knowledge.

Learning is thus not a passive receptive process and knowledge cannot be transmitted to passive learners. Learning is an active meaning-making process where learners reformulate the new information, restructure their existing knowledge and reorganize their prior conceptual schemes. Learner centered approaches stress the importance of inquiry, observation, action, investigation, formulating hypotheses and evaluating new ideas and theories. The methods that can be used in a learner centered classroom include experiential learning, problem solving, investigative projects, concept mapping, field survey and research, creative writing, etc. Learner centered classes have scope for divergent learning styles. In order to effectively use these approaches, teachers must understand the learners, their prior experiences, learning disposition, context and culture. Learner centered methods cannot be grafted on traditional methods and require a change in the classroom culture.

### Principles Of Constructivism

There are ten basic guiding principles of constructivist thinking that educators must keep in mind. It takes time to learn, learning is an active process, people learn to learn as they learn, the crucial action of constructing meaning is mental, learning involves language, learning is a social activity, learning is contextual, one needs knowledge to learn, learning is not the passive acceptance of knowledge which exists "out there" motivation is a key component in learning.

### Instructional Strategies Based On Constructivism

Instructional design needs a richer language, a deeper conceptual framework for classifying instructional strategies. While this is not the place for such an effort Schulman (1987) have sketched out a number of instructional strategies that seem to facilitate more active construction of meaning (also Wilson & Cole 1991). They are learning by design simulations, strategy and role playing games, toolkits and phenomena, multimedia learning environments, intentional learning environments, storytelling structures, case studies, Socratic dialogues, coaching and scaffolding, learn by teaching, group cooperative collaborative and learning and holistic psycho technologies.

### Effect Of Reading Habits On Students' Performance

As indicated by Tracy and Akande (2008) reading forms part of entertainment that plays a crucial role in human development and life skills. Students with poor reading habits get terrible scores in their examinations, get effortlessly distracted and eventually drop out from school. Rubin (2002) is of the view that students with poor reading habits have a higher opportunity of taking part in hostile social practices, such as delinquency, truancy, school violence, tormenting, hacking of computers and examination malpractices. While poor reading habits can be instrumental in the destruction of any individual who is tormented with it, good reading habit grows consistently and brings together a valuable personality. The acquisition of reading abilities does not just affect or enhance confidence in language expressions, but in different subjects such as: social studies, science, arithmetic etc. A student who lacks reading ability does not do well in class activities and this deficiency is extended throughout his/her academic lifetime (Fosudo, 2010). "Reading plays an invaluable role in promoting ideas and ideals, which enhance both individual development and the socio-economic development of the nation (Ike, 2000)". Reading is a lifelong habit, the real wellspring of access to the information. It is taken as an understood practice that backs a person to accomplish unique power and builds up one's critical thinking capability. Reading habit, along these lines, is considered as a fundamental means for the advancement of individual characteristics, mental capacities, getting learning, information, and comprehension of a person (Clark & Rumbold, 2006).

### CONCLUSION

The present article concludes that constructivist instructional design places a major role for improving the reading ability among the upper primary children, it also provides different learning exposures for primary students to improve their learning performance. The efficiency and the ability to read play an important role in the life of a student. So, a considerable amount of the students' time is to be utilized to cultivate in them the habit of reading, which will enable them to make personal and social adjustments. The efficiency and the ability to read play an important role in the life of a student. So, considerable amount of the students' time is to be utilized to cultivate in them the habit of reading, which will enable them to personal and social adjustments

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