

**BRIDGING ECO PEDAGOGY, ELT AND SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION:****A STUDY ON NATURE WALK AND LEARNERS ATTITUDE**

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**Abstract**

In trending time, The English Language Teaching (ELT) emerged as a global call for the interdisciplinary study in the view to upgrade the society and also a learner centric approach. The one of such fast-growing field is Eco-Pedagogy, which incorporates both the educational practice and environment awareness. Eco-pedagogy resides as an untraversed area with English language teaching, but the sustainable development is being widely discussed. Towards the English language acquisition, this quantitative investigated study has experimentally investigated how nature walk uses the tool of eco-pedagogy. The Seminal research was conducted in an urban English medium school in Tamil Nadu which integrates the concept of structured nature walk to that of the language activities for 2 months. This camp mainly focusses on the age cadre between 11-13 for 30 students who were actively participated. There were various methods that are used in this teaching such as semi-structured interviews, inquiry-based learning, observations, and classroom discussions. In this nature-based learning environment, the primary intention is to traverse cognitive, emotional and linguistic espousal.

Detecting this kind of natural walks plays a significant role in magnifying learners' creativity, vocabulary engagement, and motivation, emotional and passionate relationship in both environment and literature. When the students are occupied with sensory experience and authentic such as discerning water bodies, trees, animals, birds, insects and other natural resources, students showed their interest towards describing, writing, speaking in the language of English. Comprising the themes of ecology not only made us enthusiastic but also

it boosts a sense of environmental conservancy. Teachers also noticed that the active participation of students in classroom observation and reduces anxiety among the reserved students.

This article brings out the powerful study in transforming the perspective of eco-pedagogy in English language teaching, prescribing the valuable complement in learning the traditional classroom setup outdoor. This concept is also emerged with the sustainable development goals (SDG) particularly the two goals of quality education (SDG-4) and climate action (SDG-13) in bringing out eco-pedagogy approaches.

**Keywords:** Nature Walks, Eco pedagogy, Experiential learning, Outdoor learning,

Environmental awareness

## **Introduction**

The role of education has enlarged after the transferal of knowledge in this twenty-first century that includes the environmental oversight, critical consciousness and global citizenship. Nowadays, the English Language Teaching (ELT) no longer focusses on the grammar, vocabulary and the textbook related rules in the progressive educational topography. So, it tends to concentrate highly on the interdisciplinary solicitude in various aspects such as green consciousness, sustainability and hands-on learning. The principle of Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy embedded the term Eco-pedagogy amid the magnifier of environmental education, that sketched and delivered in the way of acquiring transmission for holler. There it correspondingly assists a relationship between learners and the globe which not just only highlights knowledge fulfillers but also moral obligation and ecological consciousness. It provides a firm approach to language learning in eco-pedagogy by integrating through English Language Teaching (ELT) – one that is not only utilitarian but also contemplating, context-cognizant and emotionally capitative.

Nature Walk is one among the practical and creative application of Eco-pedagogy in English Language Teaching (ELT). This open-air recreation attracts learners in current world setting, activating their feelings and motivating them to describe, narrate, observe and reflect – language accession in all pivotal skills. The

English learning has become a natural process through Nature Walk. It ingrains in instantaneous, palpable contexts rather than theoretical textbook scenarios. The learners were stimulated by the globe around them to be an active creator rather than being passive receivers by language.

This study traverses how these kinds of eco-pedagogical interpose influence learners towards the English learning attitudes. In their language curriculum these organic-based activities play a major role. That focusses on the students' cognitive, emotional and linguistic occupancy. Through this embracement of quantitative approach, this article opens up the sound of learners which potentially reflects the pedagogical build up global experiences in English Language Teaching (ELT). As a result of this, the article blends the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and India's National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 prioritizing such educational terms in addressing, learner-centric, comprehensive and sustainable education.

### **Origin and Principle**

As Paulo Freire signified, Eco-pedagogy is originated in the philosophy of critical pedagogy which serves as an educational tool for societal transformation and upliftment. In 1970 Paulo Freire emphasises that the learners should be an active participant in transforming the globe rather being a passive recipient of knowledge. In addition to that in 2010, Richard Kahn brought eco-pedagogy as an outline which connects education with social justice, democratic involvement and green sustainability. The concept of place-based education was the further development in eco-pedagogy introduced by Gregory Smith and Dilafruz William in 1999, emphasises the significant of public environments as stronger and powerful contexts for learning.

As a major concept, Eco-pedagogy provokes the anthropocentric model, that is human-centred education, where the progress of people is looked separately from that to of nature. Other than that, it marks the environment as dual subject as well as content of education which results to brings up critical reflection, sustainable lifestyle and ecological literacy.

### **Eco-pedagogy in General Education**

In the field of geography, Environmental Science and social studies, the eco-pedagogical approaches have been mostly applied. As said by sterling in 2012, the addition and integration of environmental themes in research into the curricula enhances the knowledge in subject and also boosts the stewardship and responsibility. Beames, Higgins and Nicol in 2011 through their work provoked the concept that the field trip, community-based learning and outdoor learning have been introduced to enhance teamwork, problem solving skills and emotional well-beings.

The National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 point outs the importance of comprehensive learning and experiential learning, which is integrated in all subjects specifically calling for environmental consciousness. The integration of eco-pedagogy into language education provides fertile ground in this policy shift over and also emerging in practical systems altogether.

### **Eco-pedagogy and ELT**

Eco-pedagogy remains rudimentary in the plot of English Language Teaching. Mostly the teaching material in eco-pedagogy dwelling with the issues of environment specifically, such as through reading passages or comprehensive activities. Coyle, Hood and Marsh in 2010 in their study on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) have integrated both the subject matter with language learning which improves retention and engagement. It is not just content, above that eco-pedagogy

Deals by implanting ecological consciousness into pedagogy itself. For example, the researchers of various field have looked at eco-critical approaches to language education recommending that the English classes can plough both environmental awareness and communicative competence. In nature based experiential English Language Teaching, it remains a lack if experiment in research, where the learners directly interact with the natural environment using English.

### **Experiential Learning and Outdoor Learning**

The conceptual foundation in English Language Teaching can be set up in experiential learning theory for eco-pedagogy in the work of David Kolb in 1984. The learning starts through a revolve of empirical experi-

ences which was emphasized by Kolb and also the abstract conceptualization, interactive testing, reflective observation also observed. As the learners largely engages with the real-life contexts, reflect on them, outdoor education is suitable for this content to apply insights in new different ways.

The reasonable functions, attention spans, emotional regulation and social cooperation are improved and updated though these outdoors learning demonstrated by the researchers in environmental and science education by Richison and others of 2004. The concept of “nature-deficit disorder” by Louv’s in 2005 furthermore explains the danger of separateness of education from natural environments, and also noted the restorative and motivational benefits of outdoor learning technique.

### **Language Learning in Natural Contexts**

Momentarily, few studies have examined the interconnectedness of the outdoor education and language learning. For a circumstance, value of project-based learning technique in real-world context is highlighted by authors of Legutko and Thomas in 1991 by displaying the improvements in effective communication and motivation. According to Lightbown and Spada in 2013, the researcher’s similarity immersion the programmes which indicates the contextualization language input ideas that leads to more traditional or authentic use of expressions and vocabulary. The environment itself serves as a text in eco-pedagogy which extends these insights in a frame and few things to be read, described, discussed and reflected upon the nature. Learners as a result not only gain language but also integrate the linguistic with environmental literacies to sort out ecological awareness.

### **Learners Attitudes and Responses**

As an addendum of the language venture, the learners between the age cadre of 11 to 13 were established to structured nature walks at present studies which were conducted in an urban English medium school in Tamil Nadu. These results are overwhelmingly positive in responses. The curiosity of the students stimulated in the natural surroundings says the report and motivated them to use English Language in describing their experiences. For example, when students are observing animals, natural sceneries, birds or water bodies, they

continuously being began to use and form sentences describing the particular objects, sharing narratives and asking questions. The principle of traditional learning embedded while the real-life contexts interact with the learners rather than decontextualizing memorized vocabulary parts. Teachers have noticed that these occurrences not only stimulate the learner's language accession but also made an emotional connectivity towards the environment, which in returns reduces the classroom apprehension and emphasises inclusiveness for reserved students and participants.

### **Eco pedagogy and SDG's**

The interconnectedness between Eco pedagogy and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is both intense and practical. The SDG-4 (Quality Education) accentuate the inclusive and equitable learning, while SDG-13 (Climate Action) impulse educational societies to adopt sustainable practices. By integrating these goals, English Language Teaching (ELT) with Eco pedagogy ensures that language acquisition is not a separate academic pursuit, but rather an environmentally responsible practice and also socially relevant. Nature Walks in this concept serves as a medium through which students simultaneously cultivates or aware of the ecological awareness and also gains linguistic competence. This holistic role of education envisioned in India's National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 by strengthening its purposes which marks core objectivity towards global citizenship and experiential learning.

### **Conclusion**

In English Language Teaching (ELT), when it is integrated with Eco-pedagogy through Nature Walk, it demonstrates the immense potential of connecting environmental consciousness with linguistic acquisition. This research has explicated when learners are exposed to the authentic, nature-based contexts, their consciousness, emotional and linguistic occupancies play a vital role in improvement. By implementing this concept with natural environments, the learners are not only developing themselves in his vocabulary and language skills, but also activated creativity, motivation and a deeper connection with ecological ethics. These

approaches withstand with the language competence is furthermore efficient when it transcends the limitations of classroom and becomes an experiential procedure.

This inclusive structured nature walk is highlighted in these findings, especially among passive and reserved students, by decreasing their anxiety and encouraging in their active participation in less restrictive environment. Teachers also observing that these outdoor learning sessions promotes integrated learning, critical thinking an also a sense of consciousness towards both the linguistic and environmental aspects. Thus, eco pedagogy not only supplements the authentic methods, but also rather redefines these concepts by integrating environmental awareness into the fabric of language learning.

Embedding with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (SDG-4 Quality Education and SDG-13 Climate Action) and India's National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020, eco pedagogy in English Language Teaching (ELT) incorporates the essence of learner-centred, sustainable education and comprehensive. It batters the role of education as not only a tool for academic growth but also for its societal transformation, fostering ecological responsibility, management and global citizenship. By embedding environmental awareness into English learning, this method ensures that the learners are a reflective individual who can communicate fluently while sustaining in the planets remaining conscious through their role.

Eventually eco pedagogy provocative the anthropocentrism model od education and conventional instead promoting a collaborative relationship between the environment and learners. The Eco pedagogy method in language teaching explorance made a huge success of study that highlights the need to further improvement, paving the way for innovative, experiential and sustainable practice in education. Eco pedagogy study as a transformation study as a education in 21<sup>st</sup> century which bridges ecological responsibilities and language competence-made learners not just with skills of speaking or communicating, but also with the ethical values of life.

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