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Activity-based Learning is the method of education followed in the Corporation schools of Chennai, from 2003, when M.P. Vijay Kumar became the Commissioner of the Chennai Corporation. But story starts earlier.

“活动教学法”是议员 Vijay Kumar 在 2003 年担任了吉莱社团的专员之后在泰米尔邦吉莱的社团学校所实施的教学方法。但这一教学法实际上此前就有了。

The “Joyful Learning” experiment of the mid-nineties had started as an effort to provide special schools for children who had been freed from being bonded labour. Methods and materials, which were devised to help the children catch up on the lost years of childhood, seemed both appropriate and attractive to **all** children. Added value to pedagogy came from the visits of teachers and trainers to innovative educational schemes in India, like *Ekalavya* in Madhya Pradesh. From Tamil Nadu, faculty members from the DIETs and personnel of the BRCs and teachers were sent to the **Rishi Valley Rural Education Centre** to study the methods and materials developed for their rural schools. They had a residential training for about three months.

“快乐学习”实验始于 1990 年代中期，目的是为那些从抵押劳动制解放出来的儿童提供特殊的学校。教学方法和教材都是为了帮助这些儿童弥补他们在童年没有学到的东西，因此似乎适合于所有的儿童，对他们有吸引力。一些教师 and 培训者来这里实施创新教育方案，从而使教学更具效果。如中央邦的 **Ekalavya** 项目就从中受益。泰米尔邦 **DIET** 项目的教员和 **BRC** 项目人员和其他教师被派往哲人谷农村教育中心，去学习专门为农村学校设计的教学方法和教材。他们在那里接受了大约三个月的培训。

The Tamil Nadu team’s visit to Rishi Valley was a **turning point**. Not only had REC given a lot of attention to the curriculum in Mathematics, Telugu and Environmental Science, but the textual material had been broken up into small units, which could be mastered one at a time. The entire material was put into small incremental units, to be completed serially. This organization of the material into ladders was a veritable stroke of genius. The **Learning Ladders** provided structure to the curriculum and allowed every child to proceed at a self-selected pace.

泰米尔邦小组在哲人谷教育中心的培训成为一个**转折点**。该中心不但注重数学、泰卢固语和环境科学等科目的课程设置，而且把教材内容划分为小单元，从而使学生能够在一段时间里掌握一个单元。整个教材被编排成渐进式小单元，分系列完成。将教材组织成梯级形式的确是一个天才性创举。这些**学习梯级**为课程设置提供了一个构架，使每个儿童可以用自我选择的速度进行学习。

In the ABL kit in Tamil Nadu, the subjects covered are five plus one. **Tamil** Language is the first area, where the lesson begins with illustrated cards and short words that are easy to write, rather than with the alphabet sequence. A similar method is used for teaching **English**. **Mathematics** is learnt through using the attractive Montessori materials, designed systematically, for the fundamental principles of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. **Science** and **Social Science** cards are largely based on the textbook, with a variety of activities attached to every chapter. The sixth area is that of **puppetry, story telling**, reading of story books, paper craft, drawing, collage and many kinds of group games played outdoors.

在泰米尔邦的 ABL（“活动教学法”，下同）教学体系中，所教授的科目为五加一。首先是**泰米尔语**，第一课用的是一些图片卡和简短的、容易书写的词，而不是字母表。教**英语**也用的是类似的方法。教**数学**用的是系统设计的、吸引人的蒙台梭利式教材，教授基本的加、减、乘、除规则。**科学**和**社会科学**卡片主要根据教材编制，每一章都配有各种各样的活动。第六个科目是**木偶表演和讲故事**、读故事书、剪纸、图画、拼贴画，以及各种形式的户外小组游戏。

In the ABL, there are **significant departures** from and improvements on the Rishi Valley materials. Firstly, **English** has been added to the curriculum in the ABL. The children learn both Tamil and English. The second difference in the Tamil Nadu adaptation is the inclusion of both **Science** and **Social Science**, while the REC had included only Environmental Science. The third innovation is the introduction, into the Primary curriculum,, of **three-dimensional materials in Mathematics**. The Montessori system has proved to be a tremendous enrichment to ABL. The materials now available in ABL are colourful, easy to handle, hardy and meticulously developed and enable children to understand place value (units, tens, hundreds) and the basic mathematical processes.

“活动学习法”教学体系在有些方面与哲人谷的教材有很大的不同，同时也是对后者所作的重大改进。首先是增加了**英语**。儿童们同时学泰米尔语和英语。第二个差别是该体系包括了**科学**和**社会科学**，而哲人谷教育中心的课程只包括环境科学。第三个创新是在小学课程中引入了**三维数学内容**。蒙台梭利体系极大地丰富了“活动学习法”教学体系。现在所用的教材都是彩色的，容易操作，经过精心设计，能使学生理解位值（单位、十、百等）和基本的数学运算。

By bringing the **blackboard** from the teacher's eye level to the child's, and by increasing the blackboard space, two more learning aids have been created: a specific space for each child to write and a large space to read each others' exercises. Every child can proudly own a part of that blackboard.

把黑板从老师的眼睛高度降到学生的眼睛高度、增加黑板的空间，又能创造出两种学习辅助手段：每个学生有一个自己的书写空间，同时在大空间里读大家做的练习。每个孩子自豪地拥有黑板的一部分。

The learning materials are not only systematically stacked on the shelves, but they are colour-coded, for each class level. Also logos of animal and insect forms are used for different aspects of the curriculum. When the child completes one set, there is a card for **Self Evaluation**. This can be administered by oneself or with the assistance of another child.

学习材料不但分门别类放在书架上，而且都用彩色分年级、班级编号。同时用不同的动物和昆虫形象代表课程的不同方面。每个小孩完成了一套练习后，有一个**自我评价卡**。学生可自己评价自己，也可在另一个人的辅助下评价。

In building in the opportunity of recall of learnt material at each stage, evaluation has become part of the process. For the children, there is no failure and therefore, there is no fear of failure. In the conventional school system, so many children drop out of school because they fail! The need for an **examination** at the end of the school year is made redundant in this system. So easily, has the *asura (demon)* called "Annual Exam" been vanquished!

为了巩固每个阶段所学的东西，评价已成为学习过程的一部分。对学生而言，没有什么失败可言，因此就不用担心失败。在传统的学校体制下，许多学生因为学不好而辍学。在现在的体系下，学年末不再需要进行**考试**了。如此的话，“年度考试”这一妖魔就被祛除了！

If we pause for a second, to think of how children are generally given ranks for their performance in school subjects and how ranking becomes a subtle way of indicating the "value" of a child, we have a sense of **liberation from ranking** here. No child is "better than" or "worse than" another. The teacher keeps an eye on the levels attained by every child and sometimes helps by pairing an advanced learner with a slower one, for specific exercises. This kind of **peer teaching** works well.

我们要是再想一想通常的那种做法，即根据学生每个科目的成绩给他们排次序，而排次序无形中成为决定一个学生“价值”的方式，那么，我们现在就会感觉到**从排序中解放出来了**！现在，没有哪个小孩“比别人好”或“比别人

差”。老师关注每个小孩所取得的成绩，有时让一个学习速度快的学生和一个较慢的学生一起做某些练习。这种“同龄教学”方式的效果很好。

It must be noted that the entire system allows for diversity and differential rates of progress. The **Achievement Chart** clearly shows the positions of the children in each area. Thus the teacher is enabled to track every learner's progress. Monitoring of progress by the teacher is subtly combined with the child's freedom to select the pace of learning.

必须指出的是，这个体系允许多样化，允许学生有不同的进步速度。**成绩图**清楚地展示了学生在每个学习方面的所处的位置。因此，老师就可以了解每个学生的进步。老师对学生进步进行监测，学生可自由选择学习的速度，两者在无形中结合起来了。

The ruthlessness of ranking and peer competition is further reduced by mixing the age groups and classes. In a room of 40 children, there could be ten each from Classes 1, 2, 3, and 4. This **vertical grouping has several advantages**. It recreates a family model, where the older child automatically becomes a guide and helper for the younger one. It encourages cooperation between children, rather than competition among them. We are told that a multi-grade classroom is a problem which many rural schools confront. ABL is a simple solution to that complicated issue. The system absorbs different age groups and different ability levels within the same age group.

由于不同年龄群和不同班级混合在一起，残酷的排序做法和同龄竞争进一步减少。每个教室有 40 个学生，1，2，3，4 班各有 10 人。这种**垂直分组**有几个优点。它创造出一种家庭模式，年龄大的儿童自然成为年龄较小的引导者和帮助者。它鼓励儿童之间的合作，而不是相互竞争。人们说，复式课堂是许多农村学校面临的一个问题。而“活动学习法”体系用简单的方式解决了这一复杂问题。该体系将不同的年龄群和不同的能力水平吸收到同一年龄群。

Taking the daily **attendance** is a ritual in most schools, with the teacher calling out the names and the pupils responding. In the ABL method, this process is made child-friendly. There is an **Attendance Card** for each child, to be filled up everyday **by the child**. Children love the sense of trust that this procedure implies. When they assemble in the morning, one student from each class level in the room distributes the Attendance cards and collects the filled up ones. The entire process is orderly. It puts the responsibility for marking attendance on the child and not on the teacher.

每天查出**勤率**是大多是学校不可缺少的一项内容，即老师叫学生的名字，学生要应答。在“活动学习法”体系中，这一过程则让孩子感觉舒服，即每个孩子有一个出勤卡，由**孩子自己**填写。孩子们喜欢这种做法所隐含的信任感。他们

在早上集合时，由教室里同级别的一个学生给大家发出勤卡，然后将填写好的卡收上来。整个过程井然有序。这样就把查出勤的责任下放给学生，而不需要老师这样做了。

We have all heard about teachers losing their voices because of their shouting and screaming, to keep the children quiet. In the schools with ABL, there are **no apparent discipline problems**. The structured learning materials have their own logic, which supports the children's involvement in reading, writing and calculating. Children find that they can learn at any speed, without being taunted by classmates or scolded by the teacher. Also, there is no scrambling for adult attention. **Discipline is intrinsic to the material and internalized by the children.**

我们都听说过，有的老师因为上课大声喊叫、让学生安静下来而失声。在使用“活动学习法”教学法的学校里，**不存在明显的纪律问题**。所组织的教材有自己的逻辑，有助于儿童参与到读、写、算中。儿童们发现觉得可以按自己的速度学习，不会受到同学的嘲笑或老师的责备。而且，孩子们也不会竞相吸引大人的注意。教材本身就包含了**纪律**，而纪律也被学生内在化了。

The **text book** is not the only source of knowledge, just as the teacher is not the sole authority. The text book is integrated into the materials. For instance, one of the steps of the ladder contains an instruction to read a specified page of the text book. Clearly, when a child goes step by step on the ladder, his steady progress gives him the skills to read the connected page in the text book. Of course, if he needs help, he could ask the teacher when he is in the teacher-assisted group, or just go across to where she is sitting. Students appear to have no fear of being reprimanded by the teacher. The conventional distance has been bridged here.

教科书不是唯一的知识来源，就像老师不是唯一的权威一样。教科书融入到学习材料中了。比如，学习梯级中的一个步骤教学生如何阅读教科书中的某一页。显然，当一个孩子一步一步在梯级上走，他就会取得稳定的进步，就有能力阅读教科书中的下一页。当然，如果他需要帮助，而同时又在老师所帮助的那一组里，就可以直接问老师，或者可以穿过教室走到老师坐的地方问她。学生们看上去都不怕受到老师的责备，因此，传统教学中的师生距离就被缩小了。

Generally, one of the constant problems of schooling is **absenteeism**. For example, if a child is sick for a week, he cannot follow the lesson when he gets back. He has the feeling of running a race he can never win. However, ABL has a simple strategy to take care of missed classes. The mastering of a skill is not a collective exercise. The child's work is

individual. Therefore, he goes to the points on the ladders, where he left off and starts learning from there.

通常而言，学校面临的一个经常性问题就是缺勤问题。比如，要是一个小孩因病缺课一周，回来后就跟不上课了。但是，“活动学习法”教学法用一个简单的策略来解决缺课问题。技能的掌握不是一项集体性活动，而是个人性的。因此，学生来到梯级的那个点上，从自己停止的地方开始学习。

In rural areas, harvest time is when children are needed on the farm. Their **short-term absence** from school is no longer a problem. Time away from school can be made up. Fairs and festivals can be enjoyed without their seriously disrupting a child's learning activities.

在农村地区，农场在收获时节需要孩子帮忙。这种**短期不在校**也不再是什么问题了。不在校的时间可以弥补。孩子们也可以尽情地去赶集、过节，而不会严重干扰学习活动。

Repetition of a lesson acts as reinforcement. That is accepted **pedagogy**. But instead of sing-song chanting of tables or whatever, the child in ABL writes on the blackboard first, his notebook next and finally in the workbook. Since he writes the same material three times, the pattern (be it spelling or grammar), gets well established. Whatever the lesson (names of animals, masculine and feminine nouns or singular and plural words), the strengthening of the connections by repetition, is certainly achieved.

重复课文有助于巩固所学的东西，这已是大家所接受的**教学法**。但在“活动学习法”教学法中，孩子们不再单调地念诵乘法表之类的东西，而是先在黑板上写，再写到笔记本上，最后写到作业本上。因为相同的内容写了三遍，所学的模式（不论是拼写还是语法）就会固定下来。不论本课的内容是什么（动物名称、名词的阴阳性或单复数形式），通过这种重复就可以加强所学内容的相互联系，也就达到了学习目的。

With so many materials directly accessed by the pupils, one would worry about the displacement of the learning cards. However, the pupils have understood that any disorder in the stacking of material is a problem. Each time the materials are returned to the shelf, they are checked out by the child who used it, sometimes helped by another child. It is like the practice of putting their school bags and their footwear neatly on the verandah, which has become second nature to the children. **Order and structure in the materials seem to result in systematic habits in the children.**

因为学生直接接触的学习材料众多，因此有人会担心学生会把学习卡放错地方。然而，学生都明白放错学习材料会造成问题，因此使用材料的学生每次把材料放回架子上时，都会检查一下，有时另一个孩子也帮着检查。这就像把书

包和鞋子整齐地放在走廊上一样，时间长了孩子也就养成习惯了。教学材料中所包含的秩序和结构似乎在孩子身上养成有序的习惯。

Gender equality seems to have been achieved rather effortlessly. Girls and boys sit at the low desks or on reed mats together and share their work, without any awkwardness. This is particularly important in a culture, where the girl child needs to struggle for equal rights in home and school. **性别平等**似乎在不费劲的情况下就实现了。男孩和女孩一起坐在低矮的书桌边或草垫上，共同学习，一点都不觉得别扭。鉴于这里的文化状况，这一点尤其重要，因为这里的女孩往往需要奋斗，才能在家里和学校获得平等权利。

Inclusion is the word that defines an equitable education system, where all children are together in the same school. Children, with disability are admitted into the school and can be seen wearing calipers and participating in the activities. They are fully part of the class and their peers accept them as friends.

可以用“包容”一词来形容这种平等的教育体制，即所有的孩子都可以在同一个学校学习。有残疾的孩子也可以入学，可以看到他们戴着金属护腿在参加各种活动。他们完全融入到班级里，同学们也都把他们当朋友看。

Once the ABL system has been mastered by the teacher and the pupils, the **burden on the teacher is reduced**. Even though the teacher needs a period of un-learning and re-learning, when moving from the conventional system to the ABL, the end result is very satisfying. She is justifiably proud of her mastering the administration of the new system and of the children's achievements.

老师和学生一旦掌握了“活动学习法”教学体系，**老师的负担就减轻了**。即使老师需要时不时更新教学方法，但只要摆脱传统做法，使用“活动学习法”，最终结果都非常令人满意。老师为自己掌握了新的教学体系、为学生所取得的成绩而感到骄傲。

Furthermore, up to Class IV, there is **no homework**. This reduces the teacher's work considerably and frees the young children to continue learning a variety of things from the family and community and from Nature. Knowledge can be garnered from many sources.

而且，直到四年级都**没有作业**。这就在很大程度上减少老师的工作量，也使孩子有时间从家庭、社区和自然界学到各种各样的东西。知识是可以从许多方面获取的。

In this system, the **time table** is in units of half days. If Mathematics is on the curriculum, the children will be involved with the materials from the beginning of the school day until lunch time. This is done so that the

children can concentrate on one subject without the intrusive bell breaking up their lesson. In the conventional school, this would have been tedious for the child, but in the ABL, there is a lot of movement and activity, exchange of ideas and group work. There is **no question of boredom.**

在这种体系下，**课表**是按半天排的。如果在上数学课，孩子们从早晨到校一直到午饭时间都在做数学练习。这样的话，孩子们可以专注于一个课目，不会受到下课铃声的干扰。在传统的学校里，这样做会让孩子感到枯燥，但在“活动学习法”体系中，大家可以走来走去，做各种活动，交流思想，分组练习。因此**不会感到枯燥。**

In the beginning, many **parents were skeptical** about classes where children of all ages were mixed. It did not look like a school to them. Could the pupils learn well, when they seemed to be enjoying it so much? The parents were invited to come and sit in the classroom. Gradually, as they watched their **child's reading skills** and general knowledge develop, most parents were convinced that the system worked. The tangible achievements impressed the parents.

一开始，许多家长**都怀疑**各种年龄的孩子混合在一起能行吗？他们觉得这不像个学校。孩子们似乎整天在玩耍，能学好吗？后来就邀请家长来坐在教室观看。渐渐地，当他们看到自己**孩子的阅读能力**和一般知识都得到发展，大多数家长都承认这种体系是有效的。孩子所取得的明显成绩让他们大为放心。

Many **PTA meetings** were also held to explain the new methods to the parents. There was Open House on Saturdays, when parents could find out how the system worked. They were willing to suspend their disbelief then, but it was the child's obvious self confidence and self esteem, as well as demonstrable abilities in the formal skills that won the case. Parents soon became allies of the teaching staff.

家长教师协会也经常开会，向家长解释新的教学方法。星期六进行开放教学，家长们就可以了解这种体系到底怎么样。家长们开始时半信半疑，但孩子们的明显自信和自尊，以及所展现出来的各种技能让家长们信服了。因此，家长很快就成为老师的盟友。

The key element in the story of the Silent Revolution is the **competence of teachers and supervisors** in Tamil Nadu, who were exposed to the new system. Some of them, who were trained at Rishi Valley, became the core group. Others were trained by the core group. It was the translation and adaptation of the learning materials that consumed their energy and invigorated them, at the same time. For nearly six months, when a hundred teachers worked on developing materials, working after school hours, from 4.00 pm to 8.00 pm every evening. Their involvement in the

process of material development was total. ((Not surprisingly, their sense of ownership of the method enabled them to work for long hours and strengthened their allegiance to it.

泰米尔邦的这种“无声革命”过程中的一个关键因素是**教师和督学人员**在接受了新体系后表现出的称职。他们有些人在哲人谷受过培训，后来都成为核心群体。其他人由这一核心群体培训。教学材料的转变和改编既耗费了他们大量的精力，也使他们受到激励。一百个老师在将近六个月的时间内开发教学材料，他们每天学生放学后从下午四点一直干到晚上八点。他们全身心地投入到教材的编写过程中（显然，因为他们感觉自己掌握了这种方法，所以愿意加班加点，并且进一步投身于这种教学法。

The ABL system has some senior teachers who are experts in handling teacher education and are treated like wise elders. But there are also young trainers, selected to do the training for their enthusiasm and communication skills. A teacher handling Class I or II could have demonstrated a tremendous grasp of the principles and procedures of the new system and be asked)) to conduct the entire training for a rural school. One of the by-products is a breaking down of hierarchy and a **dynamic interchange** of personnel, materials and methods.

“活动教学法”体系中有几位资深教师，他们是教师培训方面的专家，被大家视为有智慧的长者。但同时也有一些年轻人因为其热情和交流技能而被选为培训人员。负责一、二年级的教师可能已经熟练地掌握了新体系的原理和程序，因此会被邀请主持一个农村学校的整个培训工作。这一做法的一个副产品就是，打破了等级观念，使人员、材料和方法等方面出现**动态交流**。

The ladder is not a mechanical structure with equidistant steps. For each specific academic achievement, different ways of learning are built in. There are several ways of reinforcing learning, while making it enjoyable: song, game, reading, writing and finally evaluating. For the children the most exciting aspect is that they can learn actively and have a sense of fulfillment. The teacher knows the exact level of the child's achievement and can take **remedial measures** for a child who has slowed down.

学习梯级并非一个机械的、每个阶梯距离相等的结构。每个具体的学习成就中都包含了许多不同的学习方式。为加强学习效果而采纳了好几种方式，而同时又使学习过程充满乐趣：如唱歌、玩游戏、阅读、写作、评价等。对孩子们而言，最让人兴奋的是他们可以积极学习，有成就感。老师准确了解学生的进步程度，如果哪个孩子有些落后，就可以采取相应的**补救措施**。

There are a few blank steps in every ladder. These are intended for any new area the teacher may wish to include. There is **scope for the teachers to be creative**. They keep adding songs that the children sing

together and stories for the shadow puppet shows. They use familiar material from their own environment.

每一串学习梯级中都有几个空档，目的是让老师填充进去一些新的内容。因此，老师有发挥创造性的空间。他们在教学过程中加进去一些大家一起唱的歌曲，还有皮影戏故事。采用的都是自己生活环境里的熟悉题材。

Apart from all the Corporation schools in the city of Chennai, there are ten schools in **every rural block in Tamil Nadu**, functioning on this method. They serve as demonstration schools for the entire block. It is expected that the ABL's obvious success in making children competent is the best tool for advocacy.

除了吉莱的社团学校，泰米尔邦的每个农村片区各有十个学校，都采用这种教学方法。社团学校是整个片区的示范学校。可以预计，因为“活动教学法”能明显培养学生的学习能力，所以大有推广的必要。

There is a commonly held idea that children **need** to be motivated by the teacher or parent, to study. This is **not always** the case. Children are naturally **highly motivated** to know and to learn. Most school procedures dampen the enthusiasm of children and suppress their intrinsic motivation. When school methods and materials are devised to be attractive and easy to use, as in the ABL, the inherent motivation of the children is sustained. Learning to learn comes from wanting to learn.

人们往往认为，需要由老师或家长激励孩子学习。事实不一定是这样的。孩子们有天然的动力去求知、学习。大多数学校的做法会挫伤孩子的热情，压抑他们的内在动力。而如果像“活动学习法”那样能把学习方法与材料设计得吸引人、容易操作的话，就能保持孩子们的内在动力。只有想学习才能学会如何学习！

The learning achievements of the children are resoundingly convincing. Indeed, they provide a strong case for the ABL method to be extended to all State-run schools in Tamil Nadu.

这些孩子们的学习成就非常令人信服。的确，这些成就充分证明，“活动学习法”应该被推广到泰米尔邦的所有国立学校中。