



## Curricular Engagement with Reference to Vygotski's Thoughts

Nagina S. Mali<sup>a</sup>,

Smt. Saraswati A. Kamble<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Shivaji University, Kolhapur, India

<sup>b</sup>Shivaji University, Kolhapur, India

[naginamali2012@gmail.com](mailto:naginamali2012@gmail.com), [kamblesaraswati74@gmail.com](mailto:kamblesaraswati74@gmail.com)

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**Abstract.** Education helps to learner's personal, social and academic development. Society is the community that provides positive environment to school where learner learns. It is universal expectation from learner that they should become active and make interaction with society. Nowadays, students are becoming active, creative and collaborative. But how learner learns is a valuable dimension of learner's social development. Where learner is unable to learn individually, in that case there is need of peers, adults and assisted media that can promote and help in learning joyfully. Vygotski's thoughts are related to learner's social development. His ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) is a valuable contribution in education. He considers learner's language, culture, intellectual level, peers, media and adult affects on learner's development. Curricular Engagement is one of the Teaching-Learning approach that involves in learner's social development. It is interactions between school, learner, society, teacher and media. Interaction builds knowledge, creates healthy relationship, leads to win-win approach and provides cultural environment. The similarities of Vygotski's theory and Curricular Engagement both are emphasizes on interaction with peer, teacher, media and adult. In this conceptual paper researchers have explained how Vygotskian thoughts support to curricular engagement with multicultural, multilingual context.

**Keywords:** development, interaction, intellectual level

\*Corresponding Author Name

: Dr. Nagina S. Mali

Institution and Address

: Department of Education, Shivaji University, Kolhapur. India

Phone Number of Corresponding Author

: + 918975295297

## INTRODUCTION

Vygotski was influenced by Marks and Lenin's thoughts during the period of Russian Revolution which led to a socialistic view. His reaction was a reflection of socialistic concepts more than the concept of learning. His opinion about learning was 'learning always happens in social context'. It cannot be separate from social culture. In Vygotski's theory of social cognition, emphasis is given on the student's social cognitive aspect of learning with interactions. Interaction plays a vital role in human being where a person cannot live alone. Every person depends on another for fulfillment of their basic needs. Cognitive, affective and psychomotor developments are the main purposes of an educational system. Cognitive development is affected by social, cultural approach. That is the way; learning with interaction is emphasized on interactive learning. Interactive learning supports learner-learner, learner-teacher, learner-society, learner-community, learner-expert's social interaction. ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) is a valuable contribution of Vygotski's social development theory of learning. This theory is influenced by language, culture, peers, adults where it combines social, private and internal speech aspects. Vygotski's contribution in education leads to social commitment, social awareness, social security, social responsibility. Teacher's role is to maintain an advanced environment which directs learning through social interaction.

### The Central Thoughts of Vygotskian Theory

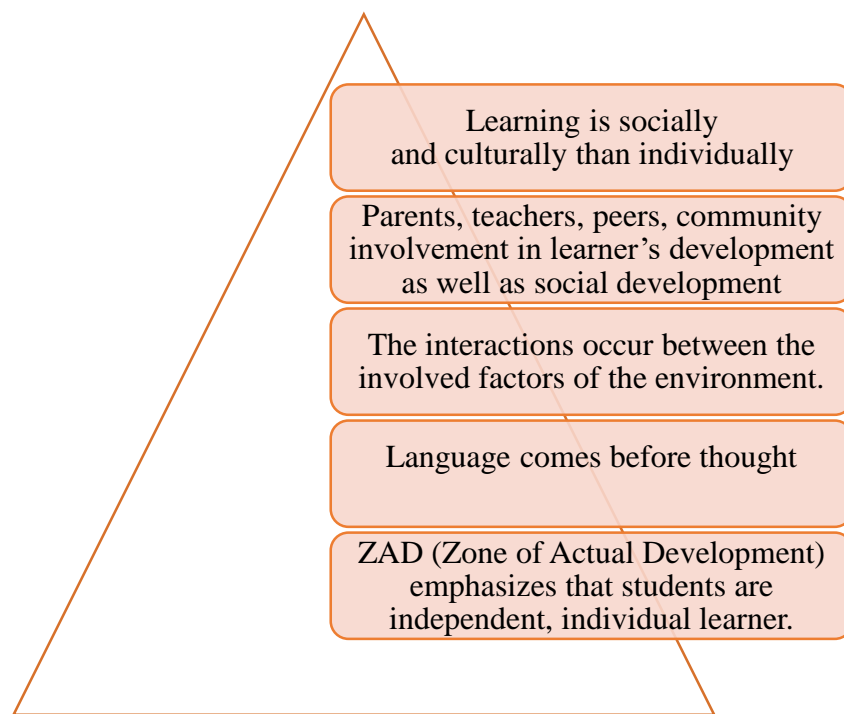


Figure 1. The central thoughts of Vygotskian theory

Above figure 1 shows the central thoughts of Vygotskian theory. For understanding learning process it helps to teacher, parents and learner also.

### ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development)

ZPD (Zone of Proximal development) carries in three dimensions-

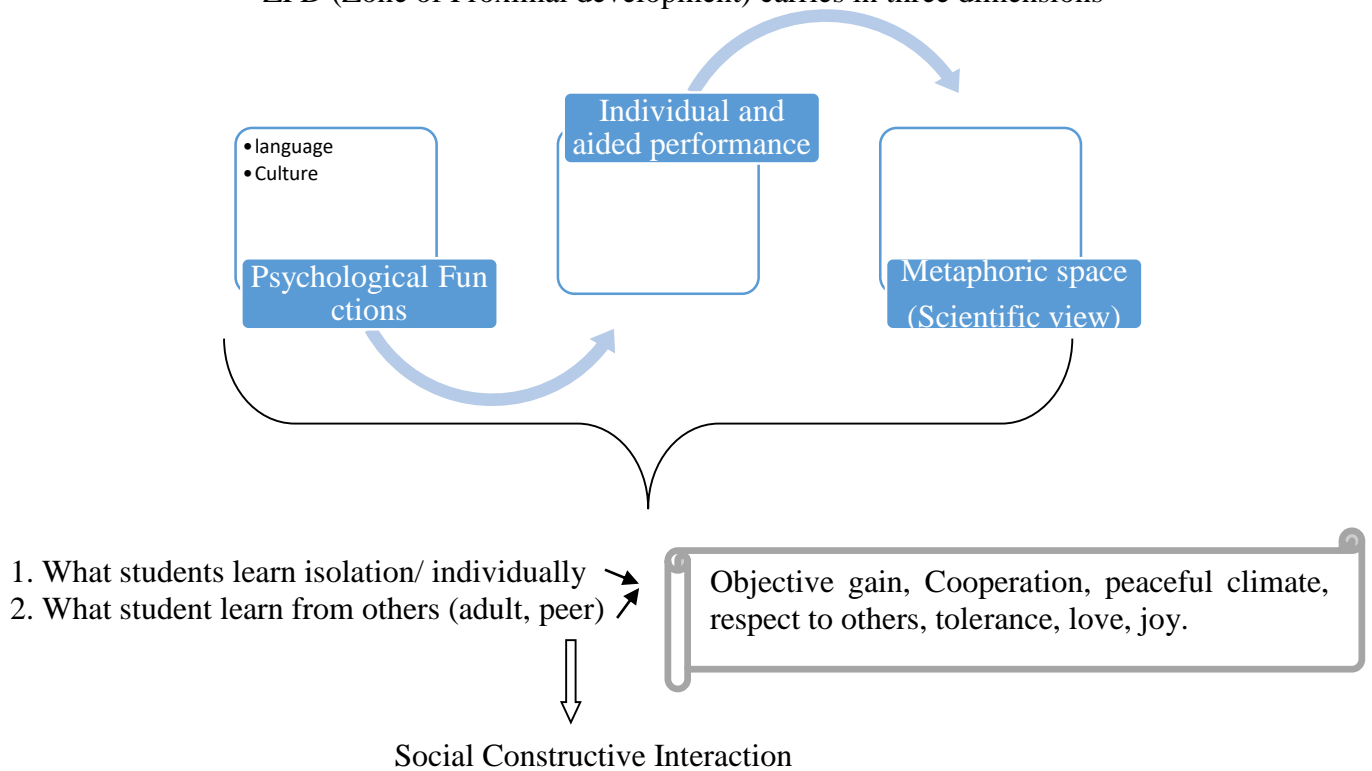
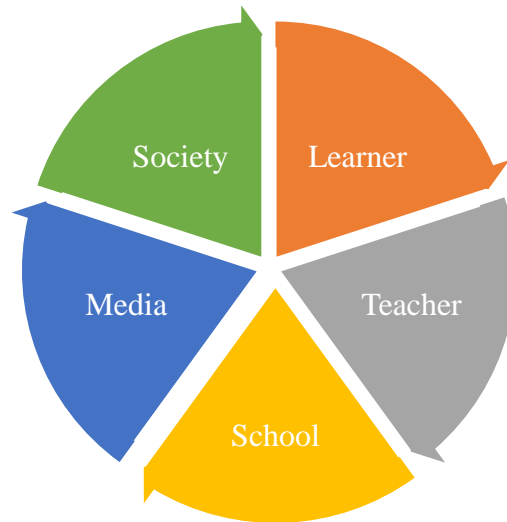


Figure 2. ZPD for student's social development

Above figure 2 shows benefits of ZPD for student's social development. Under teaching-learning process two questions to be asked by the teachers that are what students learn in isolation/ individually and What student learn from others (adult, peer). Media can help here when learner is unable to learn individually. If learner is succeeds to learner individually, they can go to further learning stage.

### Curricular Engagement (CE)

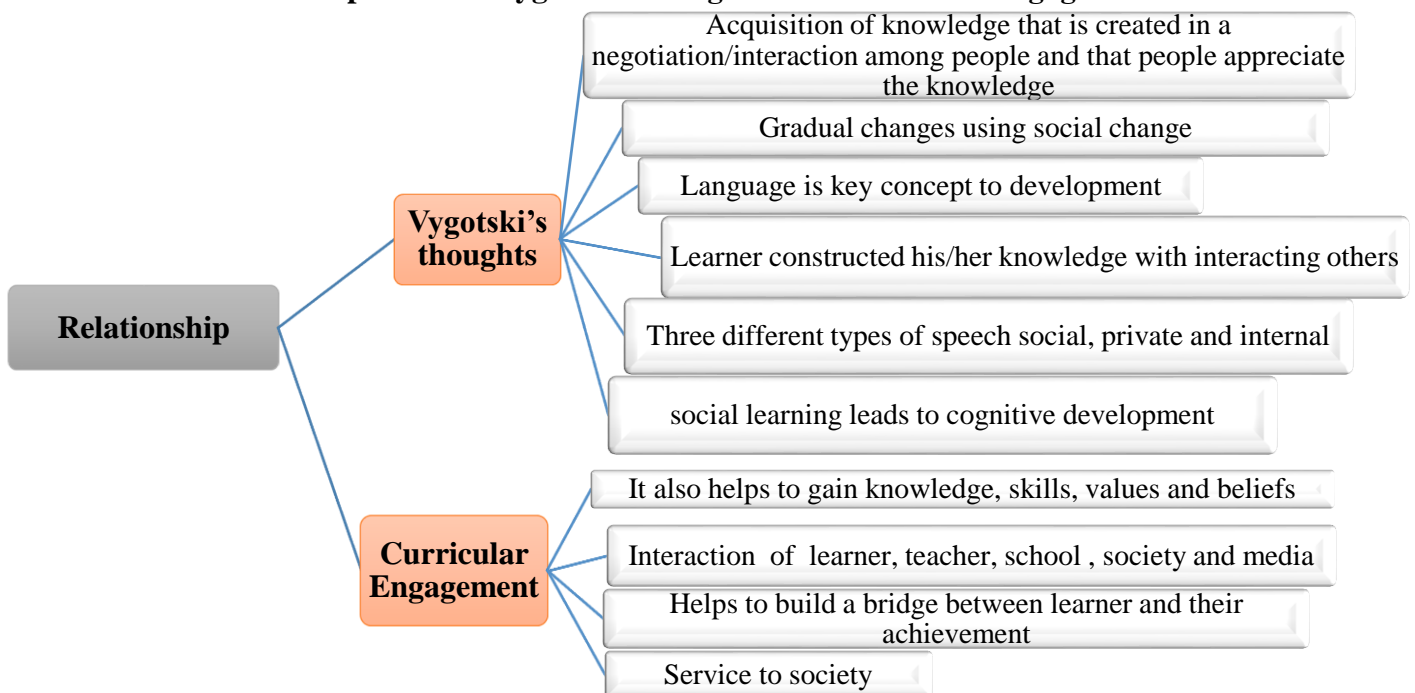
Curricular Engagement describes the teaching, learning and scholarship that engage faculty, students, and community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. Their interactions address community identified needs, deepen students civic and academic learning, enhance community well-being and enrich the scholarship of the institution. (Carnegie foundation. [www.elon.edu](http://www.elon.edu)). Curricular Engagement to be most fundamentally a relational process focused on capacity-building and grounded in the principles of servant leadership: all participants are engaged in relationships not only in which all contribute and all benefit but also of mutual learning, growth and change. (Whitney, B.C., McClure, J.D., Respet, A.J., Clayton, P.H. (2007) [www.curricularengagement.com](http://www.curricularengagement.com)) Following stakeholders stand in curricular engagement-



**Figure 3. Stakeholders in curricular engagement**

Education plays important role in the development of learner. It also helps to gain knowledge, skills, values and beliefs. Curricular engagement is educational and social activity that serves to learner, teacher, school and society. Curricular engagement is engagement of students that helps to build a bridge between learner and their achievement. Research Making Change (RMC) Corporation, K-12 Service-Learning Project Planning Toolkit (2009 Updated Edition) (Created By RMC Research Corporation 6 for Learn and Serve America’s National Service-Learning Clearinghouse) have given standards for service-learning those support to Curricular Engagement, 1. Duration and Intensity, 2. Link to curriculum, 3. Meaningful Service, 4. Youth Voice, 5. Diversity, 6. Partnerships, 7. Reflection. 8. Progress Monitoring. (These standards and indicators were vetted through a series of "reactor panels" convened nationwide by the National Youth Leadership Council and RMC Research Corporation) (Duke University, United States.) [www.nylc.org/standards](http://www.nylc.org/standards))

**Relationship between Vygotski’s thoughts and Curricular Engagement**



**Figure 4. Relationship between Vygotski’s thoughts and Curricular Engagement**

### **Common factors of Vygotski's thoughts and Curricular Engagement to be used to education:**

**1. Diversity:** Today, technology has influenced to the society and converted in to multicultural, multilingual and multi-religious society. Then it is our responsibility 'without any biases should accept other's values, culture and other social factors.' Vygotski's opinion towards social interaction was 'it is helpful for social development. Learner learns with their peer and adult and it assists to the learner.' With reference to this opinion it is most essential to accept diversity in the society and interact accordingly. Curricular Engagement also supports diversity because under Curricular Engagement every learner is different from others learner with respect to their language, living style, life style, aims of life, understanding level and culture etc. If we see the similarities between Curricular Engagement and Vygotski's thoughts, surely we can find diversity in the classroom, culture acceptance, nature of learning etc. Hence, Vygotski's thoughts strongly supports to Curricular Engagement. For giving essential practices to every learner with interactions, teacher has to select many methods and activities that can involve to whole classroom.

**2. Environment:** It is essential to make sensitive and responsive classroom environment because it affects to social interaction. Learner should realize interdependency between human being and environment. In this context learner is not isolated from other. The main dimension of Vygotski's thoughts is Zone of Proximal Development that shows how student learn individually and how learns taking help with others. Curricular engagement support to positive environment in the classroom because learners are going to participate in society. If this principle used in to the classroom and guided to the students, definitely every learner will be communicating confidently. It enables them to develop healthy interpersonal relationships. That is why classroom environment should be free, respectful, collaborative and purposing.

**3. Social interactions:** Vygotski's thoughts are depends upon social interaction and social development of the learner. Various school practices take the partnership between home-school-community. Curricular Engagement stands for making partnerships between learner, school, society, community and media. Social interactions lead to healthy relations. School is a small image of society. Vygotski's thought helps to social interactions and interdependency approach. Learners are becoming creative citizens of the society. For this purpose schools are responsible to make learners interactive, helpful, co-operative etc.

Studies have shown that community involvement enhance students learning. Also have shown that involvement of community and parents creates more positive attitude, social responsibility, positive behavior, social awareness and culture transition.

Under ZPD learner can learn from adults and peers. This framework makes healthy relationships among classroom. Curricular Engagement makes the partnership between home-school-family-community. It carries many changes as well as interactions in the school and community. Curricular engagement wants social and constructive association of learner with society.

**4. Language:** Vygotski's emphasis on language comes before thought. We think in our Mother tongue / Mother language. Language is a way to think properly and act individually. Language shapes learning. In Curricular Engagement learner's diversity in language is appreciable because language comes first before implementing whole curriculum. How learner learns in their mother tongue is relatively most valuable thought in Vygotski's theory. As the same, curricular engagement focuses on learner's language that can make them enable to comprehend.

### **Multicultural Education: Today's Need**

Vygotski considered that every human being is unique and affected by the cultural context. Multicultural Education as a form of resistance to oppressive social relationship (Pooja Bhatra pp.2). In the context of multicultural education Vygotski's thoughts are preferable to understand the learner's diversity, social structure, social needs, life style, social interactions, social identity etc. which will be reforming to incoming society. His thoughts supports to multicultural education because every learner is different from other learner. Accepting their culture and social context is initial stage of multicultural education system. Multicultural approach offers a visionary model for constructive changes. Today, if teaching-learning process happens with reference to social constructivist approach it will develop collaborative attitude, win-win approach, social and civic responsibility through sharing ideas.

### **Multilingual Education: Today's Need**

Social constructivist theory emphasizes on learner's language that essential in learner's social development. We think in our mother tongue impressively. For doing any interaction language fluency is preferred as a key of communication. Hence, today's need is to teach in mother language that learner can understand easily. In today's multicultural classroom learners are familiar with various types of languages. That's why teacher as a facilitator have to support to all types of learners.

### **Social Development**

Interaction requires a great deal of openness. A teacher requires pedagogical skills and skill of to make integration of learner. Knowledge can be creating when we think creatively, logically and scientifically. Knowledge is created from the society and implemented in to society. Development of society depends on how society is generating knowledge and how it is implementing. We have to give good opportunities to our learners that will help them to become a part of knowledge based society. In curricular engagement, we can create opportunities to take a participation in the society for becoming creative citizen. So that, both approaches of learning leads to social development of students.

### **Social Cognition: A whole Approach**

Learning through social interaction is a beneficial way to social cognition. Society provides learners to the school and school provides the creative human resources to the society. We are a social animal. Our expression, talking and discussion help to verify the knowledge. Curricular Engagement is a whole that includes learner, teacher, school, peer, parent, adult, media and society. All these participants are interrelated to each other. We can say that curricular engagement is a partnership between learner, teacher, school, peer, parent, adult, media and society. Social development happens by doing interactions and curricular engagement is a way to reach near to that. Hence, school atmosphere should be surcharged with positive values to internalize. So that Both approaches can helpful to social cognition.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

For this conceptual paper literature review has been taken from different sources of knowledge of online and offline research papers.

### **Data Source**

For the purpose of the study published research papers and offline articles were used to verify and guiding the activities.

### **Data collecting techniques**

For the fulfillment of the objectives observation technique was used to collect the data. Researchers red the selected online research papers (review of literature) and red the offline articles.

**Data Analysis**

ZPD fills the gap by organizing various activities in the classroom. Following activities and planning process guide to increase social interaction. Also, it helps creation of social constructive development.

**Table 1. Inclusion Classroom activities**

Number	Planning of activity	Suggested activities (as per the subject)
1	1. Pre-planning (Teacher role)	Co-operative learning
2	2. Motivation/promoting (Teacher role)	Collaborative learning
3	3. Actual implementing	Group discussion
4	(Teacher and students role)	Group project
5	4. Evaluation (Teacher and student role)	Brain storming
6	5. Feedback (Teacher role and student role)	Role playing
7		Problem solving
8		Panel discussion
9		Language games
10		Field work planning
11		Group computation
12		Group singing
13		Poster presentation

Above table 1. Classroom activities show how to plan the activities during teaching-learning process in the classroom. As per the content and infrastructure availability teacher can apply it successfully.

**Activities for social interactions in the Classroom**

**Table 2. Social Cognitive Guideline for Geography subject  
 Subject-Geography**

Content	What to be developed?	How to be developed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earth</li> <li>• Rivers</li> <li>• Plant life</li> <li>• Environmental conservation</li> <li>• Culture diversity</li> <li>• Human life style</li> <li>• Animal kingdom</li> <li>• Energy circulation and preserving</li> <li>• Bio-diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Interdependency</li> <li>-Interrelation</li> <li>-Unity in diversity</li> <li>-Global unity</li> <li>-Responsibility towards environment</li> <li>-Preserving natural habitats</li> <li>-Respect and love with animal</li> <li>-Sympathy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Discovery games</li> <li>-Map drawing</li> <li>-Environmental games</li> <li>-Quiz</li> <li>-Role play</li> <li>-Brain storming</li> <li>-Project method</li> <li>-Field work</li> <li>-Field visit</li> <li>-Group discussion</li> <li>-Trips</li> <li>-Community survey</li> <li>-Problem solving method</li> <li>-Exhibitions</li> <li>-Debates</li> <li>-Drama</li> <li>-Story telling</li> <li>-Pair share</li> </ul>

Above table 2. Social Cognitive Guideline for Geography subject helps to use social constructivist approach of learning in teaching-learning process. For making engagement of learners in organizing the classroom activities it is requires a reflective teacher and pre-planning of teaching-learning. Teachers need to make annual, unit and daily learning plans.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the review of literature researchers reached to the following results-



Figure 5. Role of teacher in Curricular Engagement with reference to Vygotski theory

Above roles are necessary in teaching-learning process. For implementing both approaches teacher as facilitator have to provide help to the learner's social development. Social cognitive approach and curricular engagement approach help to develop the learner not only in school context but also in social context.

## CONCLUSSION

Vygotski thoughts give strong base to education. Such types of theories are playing crucial role in educational implication. Social cognition of the child is mostly related to child's interaction. ZPD is indicative thought under social development of child. In Curricular Engagement learner, teacher, school, parents, society and media are engaged in creation of knowledge and implementing the same. The teacher plays roles as a facilitator, model and friend of the child. Social constructivist approach and curricular engagement give emphasis on child's social cognitive development with the help of planned activities, culture accepting, diversity accepting, understanding learner's language, interaction and environment setting etc. Hence, Curricular Engagement and Vygotski thoughts are becoming a part of student's social cognitive development.



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