



The Teaching Method of Buddha's Lecturing

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ABSTRACT

A person who has deeply grasped a concept presents its clear explanation to one individual or many listeners through the lecturing method. The method of lecturing (lecturing method) has become known as such. Naturally, the Buddha presented his Dhamma education to the public using various approaches based on both present circumstances and temporal considerations. Until books and other teaching aids became available, the Buddha employed lecturing as his main teaching method because audiences were large. The Buddha primarily used lecturing as his primary teaching approach to instruct Dhamma education because he favored this method for addressing public audiences but applied student-centered approaches when educating individuals. (Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, 1995)

Keywords: *Dhamma*, lecturing, teaching, method, education.

Western philosopher Socrates, along with Plato, adopted the lecturing method while utilizing the didactic approach to distribute their academic information. The didactic method originated during ancient times, as it existed throughout the Eastern and Western traditions. Contemporary educators view teaching through the didactic method as resulting in uselessness for students together with teachers. The traditional teaching method of lecturing still exists in the large lecture halls at Harvard University despite other suggestions to the contrary. The education level of primary students responds poorly to lecturing methods, yet university students benefit largely from this teaching approach. (Thanissaro Bhikkhu, 2001)

The Foundation of Lecturing

The Buddha implemented several defining features throughout his didactic teaching. Through this lecturing approach, the Buddha educated broad audiences about Dhamma teachings nationwide. When delivering his lectures, the Buddha used four different methods of instruction.

1. The teaching approach *Attajjhāsayā* (self-motivated teaching) means delivering lessons without any outside requests because it stems from personal initiative. The Buddha delivers a teaching about the five mental thorns and five mental bonds as he does in *Cetokhila Sutta* of *Majjhima Nikāya* without anyone initiating the discourse. (Bodhi, Bhikkhu, 2005)
2. The teaching approach of *Parajjhāsayā* enables instructors to accept invitations to teach from students or others in the community. The *Alagaddūpama Sutta* in the *Majjhima Nikāya* presents the Buddha resolving the deviant views of monk Aritṭha through his instructive narrative on capturing dangerous snakes after other monks informed him. (Gethin Rupert, 1998)
3. Within this approach, educators provide lessons after others pose questions to them. The *Sutta Nipāta* contains two suttas named the *Mahāmaṅgala Sutta* and the *Parābhava Sutta* in which the Buddha engages in discourse after receiving inquiries. (Walshe, Maurice, 1995)
4. Within *Atthupattika* (Situation-based Teaching), the path of enlightenment takes form through educational instruction derived from real-life occurrences both inside and outside of the monastic collective, which includes monks alongside nuns and both laymen and laywomen. The Buddha warned monk Moliyaphagguna about his intimate relationship with nuns during his teaching in the *Kakacūpama Sutta* (Malalasekera, G. P., 1964).

The Beginning and Conclusion of a Lecture

Before teaching a lesson, the Buddha established suitable preparations for his students. At the beginning of his teachings, the Buddha declared he would demonstrate how mind-body states emerge through the process that he wanted them to hear: "Listen attentively" (*Saṅkhārupatti Sutta*) (Anlayo Bhikkhu, 2010). Before moving to the essential point, the Buddha always described what he had to say to his listeners. A traditional response of "*Evam, bhante*" initiated the students to listen with maximum attention to the Ven. Sir's discourse. Students received attention from the initial remark, which attracted their interest.

As a concluding step during his lectures, the Buddha delivered four essential statements:

1. The approach of *Sandasseṭṭhi* (Explaining Clearly) serves to clarify concepts by using either mental composition or structured outlines for visibility purposes.
2. The teacher practices *Samādapeti* involves facilitating mental acceptance through encouraging students to both practice and remember the teachings.
3. With energetic urging, *Samuṭṭejeti* directs students to explore deeper subject matters as well as increases their enthusiasm.
4. Through *Sampahetheti* (Encouraging Confidence), the teacher aimed to provide clear lectures, which students accepted, which created their fulfillment (Cousins, L. S., 2013).

Every discourse delivered by the Buddha had a clear format spanning the starting segment through the essential content and finishing with a strong conclusion.

The Internal Structure of a Lecture

The Buddha taught two principal methods while lecturing, according to *Bhaddekaratta Sutta* in the *Majjhima Nikāya*, which incorporated *Uddesa* (summary) and *Vibhaṅga* (detailed analysis). (Schmithausen, Lambert, 1981)

The Buddha taught through seven specific elements in his lectures:

1. Middle-stage *Ācikkhanā* (Instructional Teaching) has the teacher show moral principles ahead of concentration training.
2. *Desanā* (Expository Teaching): Detailed explanation.
3. Through *Paiṇṇāpanā* (definition or clarification), the teacher renounces confusing aspects of knowledge (such as impermanence, suffering, etc.) by defining them.
4. *Paṭṭhapanā* teaches fundamental ideas to help students memorize them successfully.
5. *Vivaraṇā* (Unfolding/Elucidation): Explaining difficult concepts with reasoning and analysis.
6. The teaching method *Vibhajanā* provides students with divided explanations of difficult subjects to improve knowledge retention.
7. Educational teaching strategies based on *Uttānikamma* (illustrative teaching) employ stories, analogies, and visuals to explain specialized topics more easily (Warder, A. K., 2000).

The Outcomes and Progressive Benefits of a Lecture

A properly organized lecture generates five benefits for listeners based on the teachings in *Dhammassavana Sutta*:

1. Hearing something new.
2. Recollecting what was previously heard.
3. Clarifying doubts.
4. Correcting misunderstandings.
5. Gaining mental satisfaction.

The five standard responses from students emerge after lectures with these characteristics:

1. Expressing gratitude.
2. Students praise the excellent clarity with which the lecture was delivered.
3. Requesting lifelong discipleship.
4. Some students extend invitations to their family homes for their teacher to receive alms.

Students express appreciation to the Buddha through their various responses, which confirm his teaching success. The teaching approach of the Buddha proved entirely successful through its ability to deliver clear knowledge and motivational value to his students.

Conclusion

Through his lecturing style, the Buddha developed an organized educational approach that both maintained focus and retained student understanding. The Buddha used self-motivated instruction together with situational learning and systematic organization in his teachings. Students gain knowledge

through this approach combined with advances in understanding along with their motivational development. The enduring quality of education in teaching appears in student reactions when instructors use this educational approach.

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