Student-centered Learning (Part 1/5: New Paradigm in Language Teaching and 21st Century Skills)

Made Hery Santosa
mhsantosa@undiksha.ac.id
Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha

Picture 1. Less Us, More Them

In the 21st century era where rapid developments take place in many sectors, including English education, meaningful engagement to recent changes in the language teaching paradigm and participation in the global roles are strongly encouraged. The purpose of education is to prepare the younger generation to be able to face and overcome challenges, and take role in the global world. Various efforts have been made to reform the education system so that it is more focused on active involvement of students in building knowledge, attitudes and behavior where teachers are shifted more into facilitators in the learning process (Santosa, 2019). This learning is no longer focused on teachers (teacher-centered learning) but becomes student-centered learning (student-centered learning).

Student-centered learning is not a new approach in the educational field in the world, but it relatively new in the Indonesian educational system. It is coined with the implementation of the 2013 curriculum earlier that attempts to provide students more opportunities and

facilities to build their own knowledge so that they will gain a deep understanding which in turn can improve the quality of students. Through the application of student-centered learning, students are expected to participate actively, always be challenged to have critical power, be able to analyze and be able to solve their own problems (Zarouk et al., 2018).

Huba and Freed (2000) characterized teacher-centered paradigm and learner-centered paradigm as follows.

Table 1. Teacher-centered paradigm and learner-centered paradigm

Comparison of Teacher-centered and Learner-centered paradigms	
Teacher-centered paradigm	Learner-centered paradigm
Knowledge is transmitted from professor to students	Students construct knowledge through gathering and synthesizing information and integrating it with the general skills of inquiry, communication, critical thinking, problem solving and so on
Students passively receive information	Students are actively involved
Emphasis is on acquisition of knowledge outside the context in which it will be used	Emphasis is on using and communicating knowledge effectively to address enduring and emerging issues and problems in real-life contexts
Teacher's role is to be primary information giver and primary evaluator.	Teacher's role is to coach and facilitate Professor and students evaluate learning together
Teaching and assessing are separated	Teaching and assessing are intertwined
Assessment is used to monitor learning	Assessment is used to promote and diagnose learning
Emphasis is on right answers	Emphasis is on generating better questions and learning from errors.
Desired learning is assessed indirectly through the use of objectively scored tests	Desired learning is assessed directly through papers, projects, performances, portfolios, and the like
Focus is on a single discipline	Approach is compatible with interdisciplinary investigation
Culture is competitive and individualistic	Culture is cooperative, collaborative, and supportive
Only students are viewed as learners	Teacher and students learn together

To assist you in understanding the concept deeper, please watch the video on Student-centered Learning below.

Picture 2. Education in the 21st Century – Student-centered Learning:

<https://youtu.be/g1InechEQ-4>

Student-centered learning also takes place beyond the classroom wall. Online learning has become a trend today as technologies and crisis develop. According to (Stewart et al., 2012; Zucker & Fisch, 2019), online educators believe that three kinds of interactions must be fulfilled in the online learning environment, namely:

1. Student-content interaction, where teachers provide meaningful and active learning activities for students. This normally consists of active learning experiences and reflections. In the online learning context, this interaction type provides learning experiences for students to show their mastery of the topic knowledge in virtual modes.
2. Student-student interaction, where teachers structure the learning community as peers and collaborators. Students learn and support from each other when they interact. In the online learning environment, students are encouraged to experience online learning collaborative works in the live learning platforms.
3. Student-instructor interaction, where teachers create a framework for they will interact with students during the learning activities. In the online learning process, teacher and students may interact in an e-learning platform for the teaching and learning process, like discussion, confirmations, and assessment.

These three forms of interaction do not happen spontaneously. They require planning, intention, and instructional design. Furthermore, these three types of interaction are not prescriptive, that is they do not require the use of a particular type of learning activity or

assessment. Through these interactions, learning is directed to reach for broad goals that can be achieved in many different ways. To conduct student-centered learning in the online learning context today does not actually need specific and expensive educational technological aids. Teachers can use tools they already have which are mostly free or low cost. The emphasis is more put into how to use the tools to shift the learning to learner-centered fashion.

It is therefore encouraged in the teaching and learning practice to focus more on providing more learning opportunities to students to enable them to explore and grow their skills and abilities in the learning of the subject matter. A teacher must shift into a coach and facilitator and at the same time, collaborate in learning and give students empowerment to be more ready to take role in the global world.

Additional Materials

To enrich your understanding on the topic, please read the following materials.

1. Hynes, M. (2018). Students-as-producers: Developing valuable student-centered research and learning opportunities. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education*, 7(4), 1–13.
2. Rayens, W., & Ellis, A. (2018). Creating a student-centered learning environment online. *Journal of Statistics Education*, 26(2), 92–102.
3. Student-centered Learning: Building Agency and Engagement: <https://youtu.be/bXS5FnaWyDk>.

References

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- Santosa, M. H. (2019). Introduction to Core Skills and its best practices in the Indonesian classrooms. In M. H. Santosa (Ed.), *Penerapan Core Skills di kelas-kelas di Indonesia* (1st ed., Vol. 1, pp. 07–23). Azizah Publishing.
- Stewart, A. C., Houghton, S. M., & Rogers, P. R. (2012). Instructional design, active learning, and student performance: Using a trading room to teach strategy. *Journal of Management Education*, 36(6), 753–776. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1052562912456295>.
- Zarouk, M. Y., Restivo, F., & Khaldi, M. (2018). Student-centered learning environment for self-regulated project-based learning in higher education: A qualification/selection study. *Learning through Inquiry in Higher Education: Current Research and Future Challenges (INHERE 2018)*, 2–15.
- Zucker, L., & Fisch, A. (2019). Play and learning with KAHOOT!: Enhancing collaboration and engagement in Grades 9-16 through digital games. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 15(1).

Note: This section is Part 1 of 5 of New Paradigm in Language Teaching and 21st Century Skills writing series.

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