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CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING A STUDENT-CENTERED APPROACH IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Abstract. Significant changes have occurred in educational theory and practice, notably the shift in pedagogical procedures for English as a Second Language (ESL)

instruction from teacher-centered to student-centered methodologies. There is a critical analysis of the ideas behind student-centered learning, an evaluation of how it helps people learn languages, and a discussion of how to effectively use these ideas in English as a Second Language (ESL) settings. Student-centered pedagogy offers an effective framework for developing linguistic proficiency and communicative competence in English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. This approach prioritizes learner autonomy, engagement, and cooperative learning. This transition signifies a departure from conventional teacher-centered instruction to a more dynamic, participatory model that prioritizes the active engagement of learners. In the realm of English as a Second Language (ESL) education, where students originate from diverse backgrounds, it is crucial to employ a teaching approach that is flexible and responsive.

The article aims to elucidate the theoretical foundations of student-centered pedagogy, examine its benefits for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, and propose The student-centered approach has garnered significant attention in education as the focus increasingly shifts from the teacher-centered model. This article analyzes a lot of studies and incorporates a thematic examination of their content to comprehensively delineate the approaches for implementing a student-centered approach. This article explores the principles and practices of student-centered learning (SCL), an educational approach that prioritizes the needs, preferences, and interests of students in the learning process. By shifting the focus from traditional teacher-led instruction to a more dynamic, interactive model, SCL fosters greater engagement, critical thinking, and self-directed learning.

Moreover, the article examines the principles underpinning student-centered learning, evaluates its impact on language acquisition, and discusses strategies for its effective implementation in ESL contexts. By foregrounding learner agency, engagement, and collaborative learning, student-centered pedagogy offers a

compelling framework for fostering linguistic proficiency and communicative competence among ESL learners. This review synthesizes empirical evidence and pedagogical theory, contributing to a deeper understanding of the potential benefits and inherent challenges of this approach.

Keywords: Student-centered learning, English as a Second Language (ESL), Learner autonomy, Active engagement, Collaborative learning, Personalized instruction, Cultural inclusivity, 21st-century skills, Critical thinking in language learning, Self-Directed Learning.

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СТУДЕНТ-ОРІЄТОВНИЙ ПІДХІД – ВИКЛИКИ ТА МЕТОДИ ВПРОВАДЖЕННЯ НА ЗАНЯТТЯХ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ДРУГОЇ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ

Анотація. Студент-центричне навчання (СЦН) є педагогічною парадигмою, що ставить студента в центр навчального процесу. Основна мета СЦН полягає в стимулюванні активної участі студентів у навчанні, розвитку їх критичного мислення, самостійності та відповідальності за власне навчання. Стаття має на меті прояснити теоретичні основи педагогіки, орієнтованої на студента, дослідити її переваги для учнів, які вивчають англійську як другу мову (ESL). У статті розглядається студент-орієнтований підхід до викладання англійської мови як другої іноземної, зосереджуючи увагу на викликах та ефективних методах його впровадження в навчальний процес. Проаналізовано ключові принципи студент-орієнтованого навчання, такі як розвиток автономії учнів, стимулювання активної участі, індивідуалізація освітнього процесу та інтеграція культурної інклюзивності. Виявлено основні труднощі, зокрема адаптацію навчальних програм, необхідність перепідготовки педагогів та оптимізацію освітніх ресурсів.

У цьому підході викладачі виступають не лише як джерела знань, а й як наставники та фасилітатори, які створюють умови для ефективного навчання. Студенти заохочуються до співпраці, обговорення та вирішення проблем у групах, що сприяє розвитку комунікативних навичок і соціальної взаємодії. Студент-центричне навчання також передбачає використання різноманітних методів навчання, таких як проєктна діяльність, проблемне навчання, кейс-методи та інші інтерактивні техніки, які дозволяють адаптувати навчальний процес до індивідуальних потреб та інтересів студентів.

Більше того, стаття розглядає принципи, що лежать в основі навчання, орієнтованого на учня, оцінює його вплив на засвоєння мови та обговорює стратегії для його ефективного реалізації в контекстах навчання англійської як

другої мови. Висвітлюючи активність учнів, їхню залученість та командне навчання, педагогіка, орієнтована на учнів, пропонує переконливу основу для сприяння мовній компетенції та комунікативній здатності серед учнів, які вивчають англійську як другу мову.

Загалом, студент-центричне навчання сприяє формуванню активних, самостійних і критично мислячих особистостей, готових до викликів сучасного світу.

Ключові слова: Навчання, орієнтоване на студента, англійська як друга мова(ESL),автономія учня, активне залучення, персоналізоване навчання, культурна інклюзивність, навички XXI століття, критичне мислення у вивченні мови, самостійне навчання

Introduction. The student-centered approach in teaching and learning, or student-centered instruction, has become a prevalent word in the education industry, indicating a significant transition from teacher-centered methodologies. A traditional teacher-centered education primarily focuses on the dissemination of knowledge and the providing of information to meet syllabus requirements, with the substance of instruction frequently dictated by the syllabus. The dissemination of information is typically unidirectional, with limited efforts to foster meaningful relationships with pupils. Teachers compare pupils to passive recipients of information, constantly instructing them on what they need to learn and execute [2]. Teachers possess knowledge, while pupils have limited involvement in its acquisition. This strategy frequently impairs students' capacity to direct their own learning and participate in autonomous education [3]. Unlike teacher-centered learning, student-centered learning transfers the burden of knowledge acquisition from teachers to students, positioning students as the primary agents in understanding information, while teachers serve as facilitators. In an optimal scenario, students assume responsibility for their own education, curate their learning materials, and delineate their educational trajectories within a student-centered framework [6].

In practice, teacher-centered and student-centered approaches are not inherently contradictory. They represent two extremes of a spectrum, with a continuum of activity situated between them. Before student-centered learning can be fully actualized, teachers must provide incremental facilitation, and efforts are required to alter students' perceptions of learning [7]. This is particularly accurate in numerous locations globally where reticence remains common as a sign of respect for educators. Between these two extremes, there are many ways to teach knowledge, from going beyond syllabi to giving students more coherent material that helps them learn, use, and put together what they've learned [8]. For instance, a teacher-centered approach establishes the content through the curriculum. But as we move more toward a student-centered approach, content changes from material set by the curriculum to material that gives teachers more control over student learning,

and finally content that the students create themselves. Similarly, knowledge shifts from academic control to social construction [7].

Although promoted as a superior method of instruction and education, the student-centered approach has its limitations. Teaching in a student-centered classroom means that teachers need to know exactly what they need to do to keep things under control. This is because giving students complete freedom to learn on their own can make things worse [9]. In the absence of intervention and oversight to guarantee that discussions and self-directed learning activities remain focused, the classroom may devolve into chaos and disorder [10]. Furthermore, a student-centered classroom may function variably for students of differing proficiency levels. The implementation of a student-centered approach in elementary schools may provide challenges, as students frequently necessitate explicit teaching and direction for learning activities, and they may lack the requisite maturity to direct their own learning. However, secondary and higher education students' increased maturity allows for a relatively simple application of a student-centered approach. Collaboration and teamwork are essential components of student-centered learning, necessitating that students engage in group activities to share ideas, delineate duties, and accomplish objectives [10].

Relevance and Background of the Study on Student-Centered Learning

The literature concerning student-centered learning underscores its potential to transform educational experiences by focusing on student needs, interests, and active engagement. Supported by various theoretical frameworks and empirical studies, student-centered learning not only fosters academic performance but also prepares students for lifelong learning. Future research should address the challenges of implementing these methods in diverse educational environments and explore innovative ways to support educators in developing student-centered pedagogical strategies. Many foundational documents on student-centered learning draw from constructivist theories of learning proposed by scholars such as Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. Constructivism posits that learners construct knowledge through experience and social interaction. Malcolm Knowles' principles of adult learning (andragogy) also inform student-centered practices, emphasizing the importance of self-directed learning. John Hattie's meta-analyses of educational practices highlight that student-centered learning strategies, such as cooperative learning and formative assessment, have a significant impact on student achievement. John Dewey advocated for experiential learning and educational practices that relate to students' interests and experiences. His belief in education as a means of fostering democracy and social justice laid the groundwork for student-centered pedagogy. Gloria Ladson-Billings advocates for teaching methods that validate and reflect the cultural backgrounds of students, which is essential in a student-centered learning environment. Research indicates that culturally relevant pedagogy can improve academic outcomes for students.

As the educational landscape evolves to meet the demands of the 21st century, there is a growing need for teaching methods that foster critical thinking, collaboration, and adaptability. Student-centered learning is increasingly seen as essential for preparing learners to navigate a rapidly changing world and work effectively in diverse environments. The relevance of student-centered learning is further heightened in increasingly diverse classrooms. SCL promotes inclusivity by allowing educators to adapt their teaching strategies to meet the varied backgrounds, cultures, and learning styles of students. This responsiveness is necessary for fostering equity in education and addressing achievement gaps. The skills fostered by student-centered learning—such as self-regulation, critical thinking, and problem-solving—are integral to cultivating lifelong learners. In today's world, where continual learning and adaptability are vital, SCL helps students develop these. The study of student-centered learning is relevant in the context of current educational reforms, the shift towards inclusive practices, and the need for skills that support learners in their academic and future professional lives.

The aim of the article to explore the implementation of the student-centered approach while addressing potential challenges that may arise as well as to examine the importance of student-centered approach in English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction. The study aims to assess the impact of this methodology on students' language competence, engagement, and autonomy, while also investigating optimal practices for their effective incorporation into the classroom. The study also analyzes how these approaches promote a dynamic and inclusive learning environment that corresponds with contemporary educational objectives.

Outlining the Key Research Findings. Outlining the Key Research Findings Students in a student-centered classroom do not consistently depend on their instructor for instructions, validation, critique, guidance, or commendation. They invest time in observing and conversing with each other instead of disregarding one another. They appreciate each individual's efforts, collaborate, learn from each other, and offer mutual help. In challenging situations or when uncertain, they reach out to the teacher for support or advice, but only after attempting to resolve the issue independently. The focus is on collaboration when working in pairs, groups, and as a whole class. Their teacher aids them in developing their linguistic skills. The teacher's role is more accurately characterized as that of a facilitator rather than an instructor; the students are individuals who engage actively in the learning process. The teacher, in conjunction with the textbook, significantly aids in directing the students, managing their activities, and facilitating their learning. To be a teacher is to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge in others. A student-centered classroom views the instructor as a participant in the learning process. [8].

The key characteristics of student-centered learning include:

1. **Active Engagement:** Learners participate actively in the educational process through debates, problem-solving tasks, and collaborative projects that require critical thinking and the application of knowledge [1].

2. Collaboration: Emphasizing cooperative learning, student-centered classrooms enhance peer interactions, thereby boosting social skills and reinforcing language acquisition through peer modeling and support.

3. Differentiated Instruction Educational approaches are tailored to meet the diverse needs, backgrounds, and interests of learners; hence, promoting inclusion and personalized learning paths [8].

4. Self-Regulated Learning Learners own responsibility for their education by setting objectives, assessing their progress, and reflecting on their experiences, so promoting autonomy and accountability in the learning process.

Benefits of student-centered classrooms for ESL learners The primary advantage of LCT is its enhancement of student participation. Student-centered learning harnesses a learner's curiosity and cultivates it into a profound interest in a subject. Little supervision empowers students to take initiative, explore topics more thoroughly, and participate in discussions and debates, leading to heightened engagement. Students acquire knowledge more efficiently when actively engaged in studying, as LCT fosters excitement. Secondly, LCT facilitates enhanced memorization. The strategy shifts the emphasis from the conventional method of rote memorization to demonstrating real-world applications of the curriculum to students. In LCT, practical work predominates over theory, which engages students and compels them to pursue further information. LCT provides students with problem-solving competencies. A traditional student-centered classroom offers various discussion topics, role-playing activities, and other challenges that enable learners to enhance their abilities and creativity. Involving students with real-world challenges fosters critical thinking, an essential ability for their professional future. Students acquire the ability to improvise and devise intelligent answers to quotidian challenges. Moreover, LCT enhances students' capacity for collaboration and teamwork. The strategy requires students to complete numerous projects and assignments in groups, thereby enhancing their collaborative skills. As a result, the system creates a curriculum based on the learners' abilities, preferences, and needs. Educators can customize reading materials, evaluation techniques, and assignments to accommodate the requirements of specific students. The integration of student-centered methodology into ESL training offers various empirical and theoretical advantages despite those mentioned above:

1. Improved Engagement and Motivation Learner liberty in selecting topics and activities significantly enhances engagement, resulting in increased motivation levels. Engaged students are more likely to actively utilize language, thereby improving their fluency and confidence. The active involvement and individualized support offered by upperclassmen can enhance the academic performance of underclassmen. They may feel more motivated to inquire, seek clarifications, and cultivate a deeper comprehension of the subject topic.

2. Enhanced Language Proficiency Participation in collaborative activities, such as role-playing or group discussions, fosters authentic language utilization,

hence improving competencies in speaking, listening, reading, and writing [10]. These activities offer contextually enriched scenarios that promote language development.

3. Improvement of Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills Engagement in collaborative activities enhances critical thinking and collective problem-solving, skills vital for effective language application and interaction [5].

4. Cultural Acceptance Using a student-centered approach lets teachers use culturally appropriate materials and methods, creating a welcoming classroom that values differences and helps students learn languages in linguistically rich settings [3]. Instruction and mentorship roles foster empathy, patience, and a sense of responsibility among upper-class pupils. They cultivate the ability to modify their pedagogical approach to accommodate the requirements of their junior counterparts, thus augmenting their social and emotional intelligence. This strategy can be tremendously beneficial; nevertheless, sufficient direction and supervision from instructors are necessary to ensure accurate and successful learning. The teacher's duty is to offer assistance, direction, and assessment to sustain a balance between student-led learning and conventional instruction.

Practical Strategies for implementing student-centered classrooms in ESL

To effectively implement student-centered learning in ESL contexts, educators may employ the following evidence-based methodologies:

1. Project-Based Learning (PBL) PBL engages students in complex, real-world problems that require collaboration and inquiry-based answers. This approach allows students to employ language skills in an authentic situation, thereby enhancing comprehension and practical use [9].

2. Technology Integration using digital tools like language learning apps, interactive platforms, and online collaborative resources lets students practice their language skills outside of school, which increases their independence and makes resources easier to find [10].

3. Flexible Classroom Arrangements structuring seating and group dynamics to promote interaction and collaboration can facilitate peer-to-peer learning and boost engagement. The utilization of strategies like jigsaw groups or discussion circles enhances student engagement [8]. Implementing a student-centered approach necessitates a shift in classroom dynamics that may challenge traditional notions of power. Efficient classroom management strategies are crucial for maintaining concentration and promoting respectful cooperation [2]. Cultivate a classroom atmosphere that encourages collaboration, active learning, and student empowerment. Promote transparent communication, appreciation for varied viewpoints, and collective accountability for education.

4. Encouraging self-assessment and reflective journaling in students facilitates the articulation of their learning goals and the monitoring of their progress. Providing students with options for assignments and assessments promotes

personalized learning paths, according to distinct preferences and learning styles [8]. This method promotes student involvement and dedication to the educational process. These techniques improve metacognitive awareness and promote deeper engagement with the content. Old-fashioned ways of evaluating may not show the language skills and educational benefits connected to student-centered initiatives as clearly as they should. Educators should investigate alternative assessment systems, such as performance assessments and portfolios, to effectively capture the range of learning experiences [3]. The student self-assessment is distinguished by the fact that the questions for the paper are proposed by the students themselves, with each student providing two or three questions. A teacher thereafter formulates the examination paper utilizing the questions proposed by students, administers the test, and publishes the results. Initially, it promotes student participation and ownership of their learning by actively including them in the process of formulating questions. Students engage actively in the formulation of assessments, augmenting their motivation and sense of accountability.

5. Incorporating Authentic Materials utilizing real texts and media in educational settings allows pupils to acknowledge the importance of language acquisition in their lives. Resources such as news articles, podcasts, and videos provide contextually rich opportunities for language application.

6. ESL courses may consist of students with varying levels of linguistic proficiency. Educators need to come up with ways to support everyone fairly while also encouraging individual freedom [3]. This could mean using a variety of scaffolding methods. Students in the same class teach each other; this model applies to students over 6th grade. It promotes peer-to-peer learning inside the same classroom. Students may collaborate in pairs or small groups to elucidate concepts, engage in discussions, and assist one another in comprehending challenging subjects. Students from higher grades instruct those in lower grades. It entails students from higher grade levels assuming the role of educators and conveying their knowledge to pupils in lower grade levels. This not only enhances the comprehension of higher-grade pupils but also offers lower-grade kids the chance to learn from their peers.

7. Professional Development training and support systems for educators are crucial to facilitate this pedagogical transformation. Continuous professional development equips educators with the necessary skills and confidence to use student-centered methodologies effectively [10]. Offer professional development opportunities for educators to become acquainted with the ideas and practices of student-centered learning. Provide them with ways to enable peer instruction, direct self-assessment, and enhance student involvement.

Conclusion. Implementing student-centered approach in English as a Second Language (ESL) lessons can greatly improve language learning and create a more stimulating and welcoming school environment. In this concept, students are active participants in the learning process rather than mere passive consumers of

knowledge. We encourage them to actively participate in instructing and assisting their peers. Students instruct one another within the same or other classrooms, exchanging their information, experiences, and viewpoints. Through instructing others, students enhance their comprehension of the subject and cultivate proficient communication and presentation abilities. They augment their persuasive abilities and intellectual acumen as they articulate and elucidate concepts to their colleagues. A crucial element of this methodology is self-evaluation. We encourage students to assess their own progress and understanding.

Through the assessment of their skills, weaknesses, and areas for enhancement, students cultivate self-awareness and foster a sense of accountability for their educational development. Self-assessment cultivates a growth mindset and encourages a lifetime passion for learning. This methodology not only improves students' academic performance but also cultivates essential skills such as teamwork, critical thinking, communication, and self-reflection. It cultivates a friendly and inclusive educational atmosphere in which students actively interact with their peers, forging robust relationships and gaining insights from varied views. A student-centered class unlocks numerous benefits for language learners. Students speak more, share their ideas, learn from one another, actively engage in the learning process, and gain a sense of security and reduced anxiety.

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