

# Challenges of Implementing Student-centered Strategies in Classrooms

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## Abstract

*This paper focuses on the major challenges teachers and students face in implementing student-centered method in English classes. Classroom management is an essential component to the classroom learning environment. This paper has focused on a variety of classroom management approaches; specifically teacher-centered versus student centered classroom management techniques. This paper also evaluates how can teachers effectively manage a classroom with a wide range of learning abilities and styles, in a student-centered way, was proposed. To answer this question, a study involving a variety of teachers in Agazi preparatory school in Adigrat Ethiopia was conducted. Each teacher participated in an anonymous survey to collect data about the teacher's classroom management approach and how it affects student behavior. This research showed that most of the students were not interested to learn through student-centered method due to different factors, such as sense of fear, lack of interest and confidence and mother tongue influence. To minimize the problems, teachers should create different techniques to make students participants and encourage the learners to use English in teaching and learning process.*

**Key words:** *Student centered, classroom management, management approach*

## Introduction

Education enables individuals and societies to become all round thinkers by providing knowledge, ability, skill and attitude, thereby it strengthen their problem solving ability; so as to achieve this, learners should be taught in a way that enables them to really engage themselves in the process.

Teaching and learning process is the most important activity for students and teachers in the school. It helps the learners to have mental development and behavioral change. Teaching and learning activities are carried out by teachers and students. In this teachers play a great role in accomplishing process or fast of making student active learners (Ronald and David, 2001)

There are two broad methods of instruction which are used as a frame work of instruction in various educational levels (i.e. elementary, secondary and tertiary level. These are teacher-centered method and student-centered method.

In teacher-centered method, student put all their focus on the teacher. In this method, during activities in classroom, the only participants are teachers. In teacher-centered method, the primary sources of knowledge are teachers.

Student-centered method on the other hand, enables students to put all their focus on their knowledge. Student-centered method also known as learner-centered is a method of teaching in which the focus of instruction is shifted from the teacher to the students. In original usage, student-centered learning aims to develop learner autonomy and independence by putting

responsibility for the learning path in the hands of students.

Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just by sitting in class listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves

### **What is Education?**

The National Education Law no.20 (2003) express that education is a conscious effort to create an atmosphere of learning and the learning process to that learners are actively developing the potential for him to develop religious spiritual, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skill needed themselves and society.

“Education is a process of renewal of the meaning of experience that will probably one occur in the ordinary association or association of young people, may also occur in deliberate and institutionalized to generate social sustainability. This process involves the oversight and development of minors and group in which he lived.”

### **Teaching methods**

Instructional methods, teaching methods and teaching strategies, for all practical purposes, means the same thing. Regardless of what we call such processes, they are primarily descriptions of the learning objective-oriented activities and flow of information between teachers and students. Although some may argue otherwise, to split hairs over whether such methods are meaningfully different adds nothing to the process of learning to be a teacher. Direct and indirect instruction are two main categories that many educators find useful for classifying teaching methods, but it is, as you will see, a bit more complicated than placing all instruction into two categories. Any instructional method a teacher uses has advantages, disadvantages, and requires some preliminary preparation.

Davis (1997) suggests that the design and selection of teaching methods must take into account not only the nature of the subject matter but also how students learn.

### **Student-centered learning**

Student-centered involves providing opportunities for students to meaningfully talk and listen, write, read, and reflect on the content, ideas, issues, and concerns of an academic subject.

The student-centered learning approach is diametrically opposed, in its ethos, to the philosophy underlying the conventional method of learning. By its very nature, student-centered learning allows students to shape their own learning paths and places upon them the responsibility to actively participate in making their educational process a meaningful one. By definition, the student-centered learning experience is not a passive one, as it is based on the premise that “student passivity does not support or enhance..... Learning’ and that it is precisely “active learning” which helps students to learn in dependently. Within

student-centered learning, students are given options in shaping their courses and in choosing particular units within their study program. Some proponents of student-centered learning assert that rather than devoting so much effort to teaching students what to think, student-centered learning is based on the idea of teach them how to think' (Tsui, 2002,p,740)

According to Weimer (2002) there are five practices that need to change to achieve learning teaching

- . The functions of content
- . The role of the teacher
- . The responsibility for learning
- . The processes and purposes of evaluation
- . The balance of power

### **Characteristics of student-centered teaching**

According to Weimer and Maryellen there are five characteristics of student-centered teaching.

1. student-centered teaching engages students in the hard, messy work of learning.
2. student-centered teaching includes explicit skill instruction.
3. student-centered teaching encourages students to reflect on what they are learning and how they are learning it.
4. student-centered teaching motivates students by giving them some control over learning processes.
5. student-centered teaching encourages collaboration

In this paper, an effort has been made to mention the challenges to the implementation of student-centered in English class students of Agazi preparatory school in relation to the required standard they are expected to achieve. Based on the analysis of students and teachers response to questionnaire it was found that they face different problems while implementing student-centered method. The challenges were lack of interest and confidence, lack of teachers and students interest, class size, students feel discomfort when they work with others. In addition to this, from the analysis of teachers' interview, it was found that the students lack the skill of expressing their idea in English and students show a disciplinary problem when they are engaged in various techniques of student centered method. With the recent changes in educational laws and new classroom management opportunities, students are becoming more actively engaged in instruction. Unfortunately, Kohn (2008) states that student-centered classroom management is rare because it requires, "a willingness to give up some control and let students take some ownership, which requires guts as well as talent". Teachers have a tremendous impact on a child's life and their success starts in a student centered classroom.

School administrators need to support student-centered management and provide training and skills to their teachers because teachers and their students will have higher outcomes and success. Because classrooms are diverse and have students of all learning styles and learning needs, teachers need to implement individualized student-centered classroom management

techniques to ensure all students will be successful. Teacher-centered classroom management, such as using classroom wide behavior management systems, or following scripted lessons are not effective ways to meet the needs of individual students.

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## Biography



I am an Assistant Professor in Linguistics working at Ministry of Education in Ethiopia. Accomplished educator with demonstrated ability to teach, motivate, and direct students while maintaining high interest and achievement. Articulate communicator able to effectively interact with diverse populations of students at a variety of academic levels.