WHEN A TEACHER ATTRACTS STUDENTS' ATTENTION BY USING STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING (SCL): A NARRATIVE RESEARCH

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Abstract:

This study aims to narrate a Student-Centered Learning (SCL) approach employed by a teacher in capturing students' attention during the teaching and learning process. The focus is on understanding the teacher's background when she employs SCL and her story about her students' engagement. This narrative research employed interviews to gather data. The subject of the study is an English teacher at a Vocational High School in Pemalang, Central Java, Indonesia. Focusing on the teacher's verbal and nonverbal communication skills in implementing the SCL approach, the current study revealed that the successful implementation of Student-Centered Learning (SCL) affected students' attention during the learning process. The teacher's use of verbal and nonverbal communication played a crucial role in engaging students. This study has practical implications for educators, especially those in language teaching. The findings can be applied in various educational settings to establish student engagement that may affect learning outcomes, emphasizing the significance of adopting student-centered approaches. By identifying the importance of both verbal and nonverbal communication, the study contributes valuable insights to the existing knowledge on appropriate teaching methodologies. This provides a foundation for advancing instructional strategies that prioritize student engagement in diverse learning environments.
Keywords: SCL approach, student-centered learning, verbal–nonverbal communication skills, engagement

INTRODUCTION

In the world of education, approaches are very important, because applying approaches is the main key that can help the relationship between teachers and students to be more active in the classroom. There are many approaches in the world of education, one of which is a student-focused approach or what we usually call the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) approach. The SCL learning approach is a learning paradigm that places students as active subjects in the teaching and learning process (Onurkan Aliusta & Özer, 2016; Tangney, 2013). It is one approach that has received a lot of attention as SCL offers powerful learning environments rather than for the transition from teacher-centered towards student-centered learning environments. In this approach, the focus is on students as active subjects in taking central roles in the learning process. The teacher acts as a facilitator who supports, encourages, and directs students to actively participate, collaborate, and develop their creativity in understanding learning material (Elen, 2007; Tangney, 2013). In using the SCL approach, students are directed to understand their own learning styles, interests, and strengths (Kornelius, et. all. 2022). This means that they can recognize themselves, their learning methods, so that students can identify and choose appropriate learning strategies for themselves. By making students active subjects who take a central role in the learning process, so that students can explore material from any source, not necessarily from the teacher, it is hoped that students will feel more prepared and able to face challenges in the world of education.

The need for teachers to communicate verbally and non-verbally has been reported by Fuertes et al (2022) that teachers' act and verbalization may promote students' participation, self-esteem, and self- agency. Further, Trad[a1] et al (2014) reported how a teacher's non-verbal communication brings positive impact for students' learning outcome, thus it is more preferred if in the teaching process there is teacher's capability to communicate verbal and non-verbally. The two kinds of communication are considered to have potential meaning in communication (Green, 2009). Verbal communication is that in which information is exchanged by speaking. Non-verbal communication is that in which information is exchanged without speaking but by writing or using skills such as by some sound, touch (handshake, hug), body language, eye contact, physical appearance, etc. It is quite interesting that two or more persons interact among each other without speaking (Agnihotri, 2023).

The Student Centered Learning (SCL) approach in education is a student-focused approach that places students as active subjects in the learning process. The teacher acts as a facilitator, encouraging and directing students to participate, collaborate and develop their creativity. Learning activities are carefully chosen to align with intended learning

outcomes, course curriculum, and assessment to allow for learning to be constructed by the students themselves under guidance by the teacher, much in accord with the theory of constructive alignment. Thus, the teacher acts as a facilitator for learning, much similar to that of a personal trainer or a coach (Bye, 2017).

A narrative research study examining how a teacher captures students' attention through Student-Centered Learning (SCL) offers a nuanced exploration of the educational dynamics within a classroom. Through qualitative analysis, this approach delves into the intricacies of teacher-student interactions, providing a holistic understanding of how SCL influences communication, engagement, and the overall learning atmosphere. The research's distinctive contribution lies in uncovering contextual factors that contribute to the success of SCL, acknowledging the diverse educational environments. Additionally, by collecting and analyzing stories and experiences, the study identifies effective strategies employed by teachers, offering practical guidance for educators seeking to enhance their teaching methods. Furthermore, it illuminates the development of positive teacher-student relationships within the SCL context, capturing the human dynamics essential for effective teaching. Addressing challenges faced by both teachers and students, the narrative framework provides a comprehensive view of the complexities in transitioning to student-centered approaches. Ultimately, the research holds the potential to inform educational policy by offering evidence-based insights into the effectiveness of SCL, contributing meaningfully to discussions on innovative teaching and learning methodologies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses narrative analysis through the use of interviews and documentation as research methods. This study employs a narrative research method to dig information of teacher's experiences who employs Student-Centered Learning (SCL) in her classroom. This is based on Clandinin (2006) that narrative inquiry is the study of experience interpreted by and through stories of practice. Thus, the study aimed to capture a teacher's experience in the context of senior high school grade, to construct a comprehensive narrative that captures the teacher's story regarding the utilization of SCL and the underlying reasons for adopting this instructional approach.

The narrative research method involved interviews and reflective conversations with the participating teacher. These qualitative data collection techniques allow the researchers to gather rich, detailed accounts of the teacher's experiences with SCL, exploring the various strategies employed, challenges faced, and the perceived impact on student engagement and

learning outcomes. Through the narrative analysis, the study aimed to provide insights into the teacher's perspective, uncovering the motivations and beliefs that drive the adoption of SCL. The research method prioritizes the teacher's voice and lived experiences, aiming to contribute to a deeper understanding of how SCL is implemented in educational settings and its potential implications for teaching and learning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Through participant's reflection narrated that she did not adhere to the ideology of teacher centered learning (TCL), which means she did not want to be the dominant party in the teaching and learning process, while students act as recipients of information who must follow the teacher's instructions (Elen, 2007; Tangney, 2013). Regarding the reason of teacher's motivation in employing SCL, she informed that the use of SCL is very appropriate in her view because basically in the current era a teacher is a facilitator, not a person in full control of the learning process (dictator), by prioritizing learning that is collaborative, creative and student-based. The role of teachers is changing in smart and active learning methodologies. Now the teacher is a facilitator in learning. Teaching and learning are being modified due to innovations in education (Jagtap, 2016). The main principles of the student-centered approach (Kosimova, 2023) include:

1. Active involvement of students in the educational process
2. Problematic presentation of material
3. Taking into account the interests of students when choosing topics for discussion
4. Taking into account the preferences of students in the choice of forms of educational activities
5. Positive attitude and creating a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom
6. Responsibility for the implementation of the educational process to students

Analyzed linguistically, the teacher's utterance reflects a perspective aligned with the theory of Student-Centered Learning (SCL). In the context of role of the teacher, the participant is described as a "facilitator." Rooted from a constructivism approach, the root is that constructivism affirms the epistemological assumption that knowledge is not discovered but is rather constructed by the human mind (Richardson 2003; Krahenbuhl, 2016). The term facilitator indicates a departure from a traditional authoritative role, such as a person in full control towards a more supportive and guiding position. In the learning process, the expression

of not a person in full control of the learning process signifies a shift from a teacher-centric to a more learner-centric approach (Schreurs & Dumbraveanu, 2014)). The use of "prioritizing learning" emphasizes a deliberate focus on the learning experience and outcomes. The term "collaborative" learning suggests a focus on students working together, aligning with student-centered approaches that encourage peer interaction and group activities. The inclusion of "creative" learning acknowledges the importance of fostering creativity in students, consistent with Student-Centered Learning (SCL) principles that recognize creativity's role in the learning process. The term "student-based" implies that in learning, there is a reinforcement of the idea that the learning experience is tailored to the needs and interests of individual students, aligning with the personalized nature of SCL. In SCL there is a shift from teacher oriented to student oriented (Cheng & Chen, 2022). Hence, it comes to the conclusion that in the context of Student-Centered Learning, the language choices uttered by the teacher as participant of the study in the statement convey the teacher's dedication to establish an educational environment where students actively participate in their learning, collaborate with peers, and have opportunities for creative expression and have autonomy in their learning (Fatmawati & Wirza, 2022). The teacher's role is portrayed as a facilitator, guiding and supporting students in their learning journey rather than controlling every aspect of it. This perspective aligns with the core principles of Student-Centered Learning, emphasizing the learner's active involvement, autonomy, and knowledge construction through meaningful experiences. In line with motivation, there must be a note that these should be in line with the fact that a student-centered form of learning can be more beneficial for students' motivation if granted autonomy is embedded in a supportive environment (Smit et al, 2013).

Before we focus into the Table of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication, it is worthwhile to explore a few practical examples of how teachers adeptly utilize both verbal and nonverbal cues within the classroom. This can be found in Table 1 below.

No.	Data Location	Finding
1.	Picture 1.1	A teacher conducts verbal and non-verbal communication during teaching. Verbal (the sentences written in the whiteboard) and non-verbal communication (hand gestures, facial expression, direct eye contact to the students) indicate teacher's support in explaining material.
2.	Picture 1.2 Picture 1.3	The teacher uses her hand as a pointer when explaining the material, so she is applying non-verbal communication.(**NVC**) The teacher uses verbal communication (explaining to the students) and using additional written sentences in the whiteboard indicated by the way of communication to the students.

Table 1. Verbal and nonverbal communication employed by the teacher

No.	Data Location	Finding	STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING (SCL) approach
1.	Picture 2.1	A teacher provides additional explanations related to the material presented by the student presenting in class.	**The Student Centered Learning (SCL)** approach used by a teacher can attract students' attention in class, the teacher's role as a facilitator, motivator not a full control holder in the learning process (**dictator**), students integrate more cognitive, psychomotor abilities and students become more creative.
	Picture 2. 2 Picture 2.3	By providing additional explanations related to the material presented by a student, so that it will not only students who present who can understand the material, other students can learn the same thing as well. In this case the role of the teacher as a facilitator is carried out, because students seek material or knowledge from various sources, not only from the teacher. Then when the teacher feels that the results of the material presented by a student during the presentation are incomplete, the teacher can add some new knowledge related to the material that has not been conveyed by someone who makes a presentation.	

Table 2. Student Centered Learning (SCL) approach. Teacher's strategy toward students' presentation

Analyzing Tables 1 and 2 helps the readers in understanding the visual representation of teacher who uses the SCL approach and verbal and nonverbal communication in supporting classroom learning. These images were taken live during class. In table 1, we focused the analysis to the teacher's verbal nonverbal communication when she explained learning material in front of her students. In figure 1.1 the teacher uses the hand as a pointer when explaining the material, in this case the teacher uses non-verbal communication (NVC) and figure 1.2. She uses verbal communication in explaining the material to students. Table 1 shows pictures of communication skills that teachers must have (non-verbal and verbal communication). The way teachers make eye contact with students is crucial. Howe (2002); Kožić et al (2013) in their study reported that if a teacher's behavior implies a lack of interest and disengagement from students, this will lead to a sense of inactivity among them during the lesson. Students are observers and will notice every nuance in the teacher's actions and gestures. To prevent instances where students assume control of the lesson, it is crucial for teachers to be mindful of the non-verbal signals employed in the classroom and the messages conveyed to students while speaking. Further, when a teacher interacts with a student, it is important to note that they are not addressing the entire class but rather concentrating on an individual pupil, establishing visual contact with only one at a given moment.

While Table 2 shows pictures of teacher uses the Student Centered Learning (SCL) approach in the classroom. These are relevant to the teacher's information of the reasons why she conducted the verbal non-verbal aids. Cavinato et al (2021) in their study revealed that in fostering an inclusive and participatory environment, teachers often encourage students to express their thoughts verbally during group discussions, promoting open dialogue. What the teachers enacted as facial expression, and other nonverbal sign have shown how she treats her students. Through the study of Indrawan et al, 2017 we are informed that nonverbal communication becomes a powerful tool as teachers employ facial expressions and gestures to convey approval or provide constructive feedback, contributing to a positive learning atmosphere. However, not all teachers consider the impact of these gestures or other non-verbal communication strategies, although the impact to students in the classroom is massive (Pan, 2014). Another study of Ljungblad (2022) revealed that the way teachers relate to their students when they teach can contribute to a deeper and more coherent relational understanding of teaching as an interpersonal profession. Thus, during classroom activities, teachers may strategically employ nonverbal cues like attentive eye contact and affirming nods while circulating around the classroom, reinforcing engagement and support. These examples

underscore the intricate synergy between verbal and nonverbal communication in shaping a dynamic learning environment.

In the analysis process, it was found that the use of nonverbal and verbal communication was quite clearly visible in figures 1.1 and 1.2. Researchers also found that in the learning process in class, he used non-verbal communication (NVC) and verbal methods which could help communication between teachers and students, and students could more easily understand clear material. Communication skills are one of the important human traits to be able to express and communicate their feelings using. On the other hand, he/she can communicate his/her feelings or swap the meaning of words, willingly or unwillingly, in an environment with stillness and no spoken (Yadav, 2022). Based on the findings from Fatemeh & Nasrin's (2017) study, it was found that the more teachers use verbal and non-verbal communication, the more effective their education and students' academic progress. Under non-verbal communication, some other patterns are used. For example, communication that is emotive, teamwork, supportive, imaginative, purposive, and balanced using speech, body, and images are all impactful to students' learning and academic success.

Series of pictures above also illustrate that the teacher plays a role as a facilitator and not as a dictator. From the way the teacher behaved, it can be tracked that the teacher's role is not only as being in full control of the learning process but also as a facilitator as well as motivator for students. Mamidted & Maulana (2023) reported that teachers' teaching performance can represent how they manifest the teaching-learning process and how they give feedback and motivations to students. This is in line to Idris (2016) that SCL could make the difference in English language teaching if it is adopted by motivated teachers, appropriate curriculum and willing students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that a teacher who employs the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) model approach will influence student learning outcomes. This learning approach model can make students more active and involved in making decisions, participate in discussions and other activities in the class, as well as have autonomy in managing their own learning. This SCL approach must be accompanied by the teacher's ability to communicate, both verbal communication and non-verbal communication, as witnessed by the evidence that in the teaching methods of one of the English teachers who taught at a vocational school in Pemalang, the teacher not only focused on SCL, but she always

used her communication skills both non-verbally and verbally which could help communication between teachers and students, so that students could more easily understand the material explained in the learning process.

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