

Thesis Statement

Teacher- and instructor- centered learning is an inefficient solution for education as compared to more active learning styles, in particular when applied throughout an organization or on a nation-wide scale as the leading pedagogical approach.

Abstract

The following assignment outlines key arguments on the disadvantages of teacher-centered learning in the context of larger organizations and public education. It is outlined why under the influence of globalization education requires new pedagogical approaches if organizations want to stay competitive and public institutions don't want to lose their competence in managing national and international challenges.

1. The Argument of Exhaustive Learning Outcomes

Teacher-centered learning limits itself to a specified content as proposed by the teacher or instructor. The learning process therefore stops upon its expected delivery. The learner acknowledges the authority of the teacher or instructor on any content to be justified a priori. The main critique of this approach is for the learner to merely master limited sets of knowledge, e.g., by memorizing content or applying rehearsed formulae, without addressing actual process-skills as needed in professional practice (Schön, 1983).

2. Teacher and Instructor Dependency

Teacher-centered learning fosters a culture whereby the learner does not outgrow his dependency on the supervising instructors and teachers. One of the main goals of modern pedagogy by contrast is to create strong self-directed learners. A teacher-centered learning environment does by definition neither facilitate nor empower a learner's autonomous study-skills and subsequently lifelong learning skills (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

3. Non-facilitation of Higher Cognitive- and Meta-Cognitive Skills

Higher cognitive skills include abilities like analysis, synthesis, evaluation (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2000), critical thinking, interpretation and self-regulation (Schraw & Robinson, 2011). Meta-cognitive skills such as facilitated in Problem-Based Learning include the questioning about the justification and validity of arguments, not just the given reasons themselves (Barrows H., 1992). Teacher-centered learning most often doesn't address the importance of open inquiry which can occur at any stage of the learning process.

4. Monopolized and Limited Assessment

Since the learner is only being assessed by the teacher or instructor, critical assessment of oneself and others is not an intrinsic part of teacher-centered learning. Standardized grading and monopolized assessment encompass a traditional top-down approach. Assessments are in many cases only carried out as summative and not formative evaluations and they rarely address qualitative issues of the learner's progress. In contrast to a traditional grading system, multi-perspective assessment (Barrows & Wee Keng Neo, 2007) focuses on the learner's performance as a problem-solver, researcher and team-player.

5. Global Workforce Competencies

As the key competencies of a global workforce many researchers quote cross-cultural communicative competencies, problem-solving skills, soft-skills to motivate and facilitate workgroups to be innovative and high context adaptability (Farrell & Fenwick, 2007). To latter criterion higher cognitive and meta-cognitive skills pose a prerequisite. Almost all of such competencies are hardly mediated in traditional curricula, in particular learning environments which are still based on passively receptive classes and not interactive small groups.

Conclusion

Traditional teacher-centered learning runs into a variety of bottlenecks when faced with the challenges of our modern life-world and an emerging globalized work-environment. Advanced communicative and cross-cultural skills, problem-solving and meta-cognitive skills as well as lifelong learning skills are abilities that can only be acquired through the learner's personal performance and interaction with others, ideally a smaller and comprehensive study group.

The traditional role of the teacher or instructor is therefore being substituted by the concept of a tutor or facilitator of the student's learning process. On an international level passive learning methods therefore need to be replaced by an active learning pedagogy to prepare learners for their new role as global citizens.

References

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