Online Course Design for Student Centered Learning

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ONLINE COURSE DESIGN FOR STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING

US - SRI LANKA FULBRIGHT COMMISSION

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Citation:

AGENDA

1. Why do we need a paradigm Shift to Student Centered Learning?
2. What is student centered learning (SCL)?
3. What’s the theoretical basis for SCL?
4. What are the design features of SCL?
5. An example of SCL from the University of Kelaniya
6. A framework for designing SCL
PART 1: WHY DO WE NEED A PARADIGM SHIFT?
PARADIGM SHIFT FROM LECTURES AND OTHER ONE-WAY DELIVERY SYSTEMS TO:
Networked Student - Centered Online Learning System

- Providing Institution Learner Support
- Regional/Local Centers Resources and Support
- Online Libraries Databases/Networks
- Course Designers (SMEs) • Design Learning
- Teachers/Tutors • Facilitate learning • Mentor, Counsel
- Peers • Collaborate in Learning
- Guest Experts in Community • Provide Expertise
- Students

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Who are the students?
Where are they located?
What do they need to learn?
What is the best type of learning environment?
Do they have access to technology?
How will you facilitate learning?
- Strategies & Methods
- Teacher’s role
- Learner’s role
- Support for learning
Knowledge is constructed by students & instructor is a facilitator of learning, rather than a presenter of information.

- reliance on active rather than passive learning
- an emphasis on deep learning and understanding
- increased responsibility and accountability on the part of the student
- an increased sense of autonomy for the learner
- an interdependence and mutual respect between teacher and learner, and other learners
- a reflective approach to the teaching and learning process
HOW WE LEARN: RANGE OF LEARNING THEORIES THAT SUPPORT SCL

- Sociocultural Theory & Social Constructivism - ((Vygotsky, 1978))
  - Knowledge co-created by negotiation of meaning
- Distributed Cognition - (Hutchins, 1995)
  - Knowledge is distributed in minds and tools used
- Situated Learning - (Lave and Wenger, 1991)
  - authentic contexts and learning in practice (Communities of Practice)
- Transformative Learning – (Mezirow, 2000)
  - Changes in perspectives
The Old Skillset

Know.
The New Skillset

Acquiring knowledge is no longer a sufficient learning outcome.
THE NEW ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- Negotiating meaning within teams and groups
- Creating new, context-sensitive understandings
- Producing novel solutions to real-world problems
DESIGNING SCL ENVIRONMENTS TO FACILITATE THE NEW ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- Focus on problems, cases or questions, where learners must construct knowledge
- Assign tasks similar to real-world problems
- Provide access to resources used by professionals in the field
- Cultivate navigational, search & retrieval skills
- Generate multiple perspectives – intercultural global activities
- Create opportunities for wide-area data collection & research, e.g.: elephant human conflict
- Engage in worldwide mentoring
### Example: SCL Design in Sri Lanka

#### NODES (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Started by</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Replies</th>
<th>Last post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street children in the city of Colombo</td>
<td>Marlie Cardiff</td>
<td>Group2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Leni Gunawardena Wed, 4 Jul 2007, 05:52 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solving the traffic problem in Colombo</td>
<td>Richard Miller</td>
<td>Group2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Leni Gunawardena Wed, 27 Jun 2007, 04:01 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage disposal in the city of Colombo</td>
<td>marie perera</td>
<td>Group2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Leni Gunawardena Wed, 27 Jun 2007, 03:53 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Wiki for Report writing for interactive learning format

Topic: Case based reasoning activity to find a solution for street children in the city of Colombo

Background: Street children, the offspring of today's complex urban realities worldwide, represent one of our global family's most serious, urgent and rapidly growing socioeducational challenges. No country and virtually no city can escape the presence of these so-called street children. In some parts of the world, they have been a familiar phenomenon for many years. (Le Roux, 1996). Population: estimated 1.6 million (1999). Cycles of violence linked to ethnic, political and economic factors experienced particularly over the last 15 years. Street children NGOs estimate 2,000 street-living and streetworking children in Colombo city (with 5,000 children at risk) and 2,500 outside Colombo (with 5,000 at risk). Some estimates place the at-risk figures in the region of hundreds of thousands. Accurate statistical data about numbers and dispersion of street children is limited, but there is acknowledgement that the number is substantial and on the increase.

(Ref: www.streetchildren.org.uk/reports/Sri%20Lanka%20Child.doc)

Why are they on streets:

There are numerous reasons for children being on streets. Some of these are: poverty, family breakdown, natural disasters, rebellion against their parents, insufficient income, violence including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, political instability, urbanization. Also, psychological imbalances and mental disorders may cause the same.

Age & Places

Statistics reveal that only a handful of street children are attending schools and a majority of them are in need of a permanent shelter and a stable income to continue their education. According to a recent research conducted by the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA), a majority of street children living in Colombo are under the age group of 13 years, without a fixed abode and stable family income for their parents to nurture them. It is also revealed that most of these children lived on pavements, bus-stands or under the shade of huge trees.

Hierarchical Regression: 54% ($R^2 = 0.544$) of Learner Satisfaction was explained by the 4 independent variables ($F(4, 49) = 14.317$, $p = .001$)
Results of a Structural Equation Model with diverse online students in 28 online courses indicated:

- Five key constructs of student-centered learning in online courses—
  - learner relevance
  - active learning
  - authentic learning
  - learner autonomy, and
  - computer technology competence

Predicted students’ perceived satisfaction with online courses and web-based distance education at a statistically significant level.
CHALLENGES TO STUDENT CENTERED ONLINE LEARNING

- Access to technology devices and WiFi
- Learner expectations
- Large course enrollments
- Learning in a second language – advocate translanguaging, or use of full linguistic repertoire
- Adequate time to design SCL
PART 2: EXAMPLE OF TEACHING GERMAN ONLINE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA
REDEFINING TEACHING GERMAN FOR ONLINE LEARNING

- Hitherto conducted as blended learning with 50% web-based, 50% face-to-face
- After COVID-19, 100% online, using:
  1. Kelaniya University’s cost-free data CAL (Computer Assisted Learning) platform, and
  2. Zoom for discussions
- For 3 groups of different competency levels, 3 hour sessions per week on Zoom, for 30 weeks
- Course units on:
  - Interpretation of non-literary texts
  - Oral & written communication skills
  - Discourse analysis

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THE COLOR MODULE

What do colours symbolize?

Read 3 authentic texts from Internet resources on:

1. The meaning of colours in different cultures
2. The power of colours
3. The use of colours in advertising
### Skills vs. Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking, logical reasoning</td>
<td>1. What do colors symbolize?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Reflection, decision making, critical thinking, emotional reaction, oral & written communication | 2. What do colors mean to you personally?  
3. What is your relationship with colors as an adult today? |
| Reflection on different stages in life, logical reasoning, critical thinking | 4. How did you feel about colors in the past as a child and adolescent? Were the colors important to you back then? |
| Reflection logical reasoning,, critical thinking, appreciation         | 5. Which colors do you choose? E.g. flowers, clothing, houses                                 |
| Reflection, intercultural competence                                  | 6. Colors have different meanings in different cultures. What do different colors symbolize in Sri Lanka? Explain with examples |
| Intercultural competence, learner autonomy through independent research | 7. Search for the meaning of colors in Asian and European countries on the Internet and present the results |
POSITIVE ASPECTS OF ONLINE LEARNING

- Motivation of students – Various ways they accessed the sessions
- Self reflection – cultural aspect
- Increased self esteem
- Enhanced language competence
- Critical thinking and logical reasoning
- Awareness and appreciation of one’s surroundings
- Additional skills acquired – IT skills, presentation skills, team work & sharing
- Testimonies from staff and students
- Closer connection with students (bridging the emotional distance)
- Student testimonies - online is a conducive learning environment & better

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Appreciation of One’s Surroundings
REFLECTING ON THE ENVIRONMENT

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Appreciating an Abundant Harvest
PART 3:
HOW CAN WE DESIGN STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING?

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From: Gunawardena, Frechette, & Layne (2019)

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Social Presence (SP)

Degree to which a person is perceived as a “real person” in mediated communication

Intimacy
(SP of Medium, differs in different media)
TV vs. Audio
Non-verbal cues

Immediacy
(psychological distance of Communicator, differs in same medium)

Non-verbally:
• formality of dress
• Verbally: aloofness

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**Figure 15.9. Directions for the Group Inquiry Process** (Gunawardena, Frechette & Layne, 2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIC Process</th>
<th>Directions for Writing a Grant Proposal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Challenge</strong></td>
<td>Read the RFP (Request for Proposals) and collaboratively determine the focus and goals of your grant proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial Exploration</strong></td>
<td>Share your initial thoughts and experiences. Develop a list of learning issues to be researched, develop a table of challenges and culturally appropriate solutions, and decide on the roles you will undertake: Context &amp; culture expert; subject matter expert; communicator, budget expert, designer, technology expert, technical writer, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>Explore necessary resources and contact persons, read the resource provided, and help each other with finding necessary resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflections</strong></td>
<td>Share your resources, contribute from several perspectives, reflect, restructure, and innovate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negotiation</strong></td>
<td>Negotiate perspectives, develop consensus on the innovative solution, and write the grant proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preservation</strong></td>
<td>Post grant proposal in Knowledge Artifacts Forum. Reflect on your own group’s inquiry cycle and share your process in a concept map. Provide feedback on grant proposals developed by your peer groups. Discuss implementation of solutions and future research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning is a process that happens both individually, via self-initiated exploration, and collectively, via sharing, questioning, and providing feedback.

The teacher (or facilitator) becomes both guide and moderator and, at times, co-learner.
We see wisdom as a synthesis of perspective, insight, flexibility, and humility (Gunawardena et al., 2004), and we stipulate that wisdom can be observed both in individuals and in group dynamics.
REFERENCES