

DOI: JFTP-1908-1007

# Content Analysis of Primary Stage English Language Course in the Light of the Principles of Learner-Centered Instruction



إشراف

Enas El Sayed El Synosy Nagy

Dr. Mahmoud M. Mohasseb  
Ass. Prof. of Curriculum and English  
Language Instruction, Faculty of Education  
Port Said University. □

Dr. Sara M. Naguib  
Lecturer of Curriculum and English  
Language Instruction, Faculty of Education,  
Port Said University. □

٢٥/٧/٢٠١٩م

تاريخ استلام البحث :

٩١/١٢/٢٠١٩م

تاريخ قبول البحث :

## المخلص

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى تقويم محتوى اللغة الإنجليزية للصف الرابع الابتدائي Time For English في ضوء مبادئ التعليم المتمركز حول المتعلم . كما هدفت إلى إعداد تصور مقترح للمساهمة في تطوير أنشطة ذلك المقرر. اعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج الوصفي القائم على تحليل المحتوى. توصلت الدراسة إلى النتائج الآتية: محدودية الأنشطة المتمركزة حول المتعلم و اللزامة لطالبات الصف الرابع لتشجيعهن علي المشاركة الفعالة . وجود تباين كبير بين كتاب الطالب و كتاب الأنشطة من حيث توزيع الأنواع المختلفة للأنشطة بين الدروس، الأمر الذي قد يشير إلى عدم وجود تنسيق بين مصممي تلك الكتب.

## الكلمات الدالة :

تحليل المحتوى، ، مقرر اللغة الإنجليزية ، التعليم المتمركز حول المتعلم.

## ABSTRACT

The present study was intended to evaluate "Time For English" of primary grade 4 – with its two parts: the Pupil's Book and the Workbook – in the light of learner centered instruction principles. The study proposed guidelines for course improvement. The study adopted the content analysis technique of the descriptive methodology to analyze that course (via a sample unit). The results obtained that the course suffers from an insufficiency of teaching learning activities which encourage the learner's positive, involving and interactive participation. Besides, the two books of the course seem inconsistent and do not match each other. The study proposed some guidelines for course improvement with some activities that can involve the learners in the content effectively .

**KEY WORDS:** Content Analysis, Time For English, Learner-Centered Instruction.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

English language holds an eminent place all over the world being the lingua franca of international communications. This results in a favorable attitude towards the language and consequently a strong drive to learn it. The course activities play an essential part in motivating students and facilitating the acquisition of a foreign language. So, they should be centered on the learner more than the teacher. They should support the learner with an interactive environment.

Learner-centered instruction (LCI) is derived from the constructivist view of learning. Liu (2006) asserts that, through learner-centered classroom, the learner should be more interactive and have the chance for individual achievements. Teaching should focus on the individual efforts rather than the amount of information. Conversely, TCI belongs to the behaviorist tradition. Through teacher-centered instruction, learners have negative roles and the teacher becomes the center of the learning environment. Besides, the learner just reacts to the surrounding environment.

According to Kain (2003), learner-centered instruction (LCI) is an approach of instruction in which the learners share the knowledge with each other and they involve into the various activities in order to achieve the collaborative learning. In other words, the learning process has to be successful in order to make an engagement between the students and the language.

### **BACKGROUND PROBLEM:**

The researcher investigated a sample unit of the current English language course allocated for grade 4 of primary stage. It was observed that both student`s and work book don`t provide enough practice as activities that can involve the learners in the content effectively. Each lesson consists of a conversation followed by some exercises without enough instructions for the learner to proceed. In other words, they rarely present activities depending on learner-centered. Besides, the work book activities are without clear instruction.

This means that the current course material does not serve the students diversity or their specific needs. This implies a serious need for "Time For English" series to be reformed. The present study is intended to investigate the existing course activities in the light of the learner-centered principles with regards availability, relevance to course objectives and clarity of procedures.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

LCI arose as a part of the constructive theory. According to Applebee (1993) (LCI) is a way of treating the subject matter that has the skills, knowledge and strategies which are designed by the learner and matching

the learner's experience and interactions with a social educational environment. (Hartly, 1987) states that through LCI, the learners are more active by participating in learning. That means the learner can make decisions about what he learns, how he learns and what kind of help is required, and how much he can learn.

Hinchliffe (2001), Weimer (2002), the purpose of learner-centered learning is to make the learner depend on himself through getting knowledge without the teacher. Liu, Rong. Qiao, Xiaomei. (2006) stated that learner-centered practices are evaluated in terms of the following main elements: learner's experience, their needs, educational climate, learner's participation in learning, learner-centered activities. Wohlfarth, Sheras, Bennett, Simon, Pimentel and Gabel (2008) indicated that learner-centered learning focuses on the learner's emotions, improving their self-directions and promoting their critical thinking.

Flores (2010) asserted that students work and learn collaboratively, with tolerance, respect and responsibility. The Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (2014) explained the study of practicing learner-centered learning for four California urban high schools. The study of four schools focuses particularly on the students of color and low-income students. The results show that the learners of the study perform perfectly than the learners of the conventional schools. The outperformance of learners appears in their respective communities that served similar societies with regard to college preparatory course completion data, student achievement, college persistence, and graduation rates.

The Nellie Mae Education Foundation and UMass Donahue Institute (2015) performed the approaches of learner-centered learning in 12 public high schools in New England. The results refer that the most of performing schools were more active through leaning and made a sufficient educational environment. In addition, the results also show that the performing schools faced all the difficulties of time or place to achieve the positive personalized learning.

The RAND Corporation (2017) published the study of applying learner-centered approach. The results show that the learners participating in students-centered learning schools get high scores in reading and math comparing with the other partners in the other schools. In addition, the study asserts a fact that the schools applying the learner-centered learning practices achieve more positive effects on their students' achievements rather than the other schools that do not apply.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

The present study was intended to answer the following questions:

1. What are the learner-centered instruction-based activities appropriate for primary stage English language learners?

**2. To what extent do fourth grade primary stage course activities meet the principles of learner-centered instruction?**

**The answer for the above question is discussed in the following part:**

- a. To what extent are the learner-centered activities available in Time For English for 4th primary graders?
- b. To what extent are the learner-centered activities relevant to student participation?
- c. To what extent are the learner-centered activities clear to be used for student participation?

**METHOD:**

The researcher adopted the content analysis technique of the descriptive methodology to evaluate the set English language course which is currently taught to the 4th primary schoolers of the Egyptian public education system, entitled Time For English.

**RESEARCH MATERIALS:**

Research materials consist of 12 units of the English language course (Time For English) dedicated for the fourth grade pupils of primary stage. These are in addition to 4 review units included in the student`s book. Also, 12 units of the work book as well as 4 general revision units underwent the content analysis.

The research sample that consisted of (220) rubrics i.e. (instructional information describing activity type or task to be achieved) underwent the content analysis is analyzed by the researcher and re-analysis by another English language expert. Higher inter-rater reliability (of 0.93) was obtained after being calculated through using the following formula (cited by Toem 1987) :

$$C.R. = \frac{2M}{N1+N2}$$

- Where;
- C.R. : the correlation coefficient reliability
  - M : the items agreed upon by the two analysts
  - N1 : the number of items analyzed by the first analyst
  - N2 : the number of items analyzed by the second analyst

**Table (1), Research material specificatic table :**

Grades	Rubric source				
	Student`s book		Work book		
	First term	Second term	First term	Second term	Total No. of rubrics
Grade 4	45	43	64	68	220

## RESULTS:

Using a checklist that was developed based on the related literature; English language experts approved the following list that is arranged according to priority with regard primary stage students' activity:

- 1-Performing a role
- 2-Writing a summary
- 3-Listening and doing (e.g. act, write, draw)
- 4-Matching words
- 5-Matching pictures
- 6-Matching sentences
- 7-Ordering events(text-picture guided)
- 8-Playing games and puzzles
- 9-Reading and doing (e.g. act, write, draw)
- 10-Rephrasing written text
- 11-Listening and paraphrasing
- 12-Solving problem
- 13-Taking notes
- 14-Reporting experience (orally/ written)
- 15-Reading for comprehension
- 16-Building a model
- 17-Filling in gaps
- 18-Working in groups
- 19-Looking and doing(describe-write, circle ,act)
- 20-Searching information (traditional and e-sources)

Table (2): Total Results of analyzed sample: including both student and work books

<i>Types of learner-Centered Activity</i>	<i>availability</i>		<i>relevance</i>		<i>Clarity of procedures</i>	
	<i>N.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N.</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>1-Reading and doing (e.g. act, write, draw)</i>	64	29%	62	96.9%	0	0%
<i>2-Looking and doing (describe, write, circle )</i>	58	26.4%	48	82.8%	0	0%
<i>3-Listening and doing (e.g. act, write, draw)</i>	40	18.2%	24	60%	0	0%
<i>4-Performing a role</i>	16	7.3%	16	100%	0	0%

5-Matching words	10	4.6%	4	40%	0	0%
6-Ordering events (text-picture guided)	10	4.6%	10	100%	0	0%
7- Filling in gaps	8	3.6%	8	100%	0	0%
8-Playing games and puzzles	8	3.6%	8	100%	0	0%
9- Matching sentences	4	1.8%	4	100%	0	0%
10- Matching pictures	2	.9%	2	100%	0	0%

Table (2) presents the overall content analysis results of the student`s and work books (Time for English) grade (4). Total number of (220) rubrics were analyzed. The above table (2) shows that only (10) activities that can reflect learner-centered instruction principles all through student and work books. "Reading and doing" was found to be the most frequent. It occurred (64) times out of (220), the highest percentage (29%). The same activity recorded the highest relevance (96.9%). However, the same activity suffers from serious lack of clarity of procedures (0%). In other words, the instructions for successful implementation of this activity do not exist are insufficient. The activity as "looking and doing" remains the second most frequent used in the course with (26.4%), with a relevance rate of (82.8%). However, the clarity of its procedures recorded (0%). Again, it does not provide any or enough guidance for the learner.

The activity "matching sentences" was found to be the lowest frequent with percentage (1.8%). It occurred only (4) times out of (220). The same activity recorded a relevance rate of (100%). However, the same activity has serious lack of the clarity of procedures (0%). Also, "matching picture" was the lowest frequent of the course. It occurred only (2) times out of (220). It recorded (.9%), with a relevance rate of (100%). However, the clarity of its procedure recorded (0%). Again, it does not provide enough guidance for the learner.

### **FINDINGS:**

- 1- Only (10) out of (220) activities were found that reflect learner-centered instruction principles all through student and work books.
- 2- Only (6) out of (10) activities were found relevant to the goals of the lessons completely.
- 3- Non of the available learner-centered activities were found to have clear sufficient procedures to guide the learner independent partner.

---

---

## **CONCLUSION:**

1-Generally, the Student's Book & Workbook suffer from lack of LCI activities.

2-Even, the existing LCT activities are either irrelevant or insufficient.

3-The relevant LCI activities do not have sufficient information for the learners to proceed accordingly the following example Appendix (1).

## **PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS:**

i. The syllabus:

On structuring a course instructor can:

- Involve the student into the course. For example, the teacher allows students to choose the subjects that they want to learn.
- Check the level of the student individually, in pairs, and in groups. It is important to do not mark the test.
- Allow students to make a short draft to write their opinions about why they are studying the course and what they want to learn. Then, they can exchange this draft in small groups and choose the best topics that will be studied.

ii. The content:

- Through learner-centered, the learner choose what he learn and how. Students can select the topics that they learn. For example, the teacher can choose the suitable topics from the list of student's choices.
- Learner-centered objectives should answer about these questions as how much content is enough? what about students at different skills levels?

iii. Learner-centered activities:

- The various learner-centered activities support the effective learning. These activities encourage the learners to work in groups and become more interactive in learning. The personalized activities motivate the learner to make decisions, have responsibility and think critically.
- there are some qualifications that should be found in the learner-centered activities as the activities should focus on the learner's skills, needs and knowledge. They relate to the learner's experience and create a collaborative climate. Besides, they should encourage the learner to participate effectively in learning process.

iv. Management of learner-centered classroom:

The teacher can manage the class perfectly by putting the rules at beginning that students should commit. Teacher can:

- Talk about general idea then let students participate with their opinions.
- Let students share the ideas in order to exchange their experience.

- Allow students write short notes about the topic to match the experience with the interaction through the social context of classroom.
  - Write a list of the interests and skills of the students and try to develop them through learning.
  - Let students how to summarize by writing short summaries.
  - Allow time for students to debrief their experience.
- v. Learner-centered evaluation :
- Allow students to choose the topics of revision and specifies the questions.
  - Take the students` opinions to improve the plan of revision.
  - Ask the opening direct questions to let the students give their opinions and interact with their partners.
  - Debrief the exam in ways that promote learning.
  - Have students self-assess their level of participation in the classroom.
  - Sequence educational activities in an order that facilitates growth.
  - Pick your instructional peer collaborators carefully.

### Appendix (1)

-Compare figure (1), (2):

Figure(1):

A.  Listen and repeat.



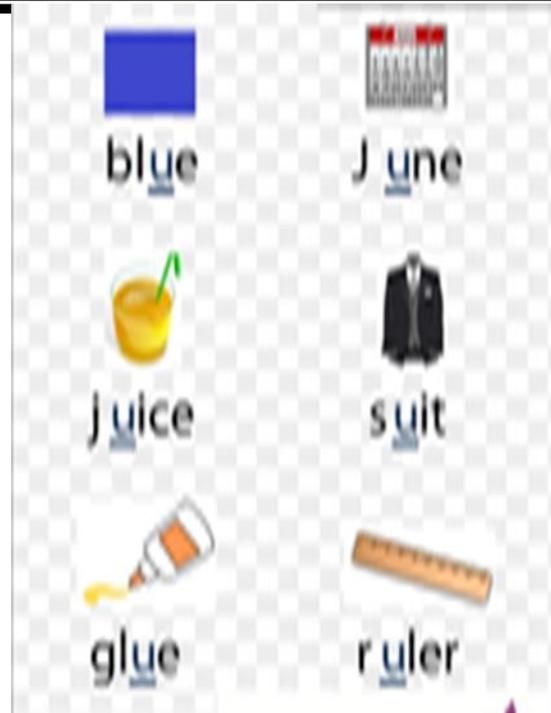
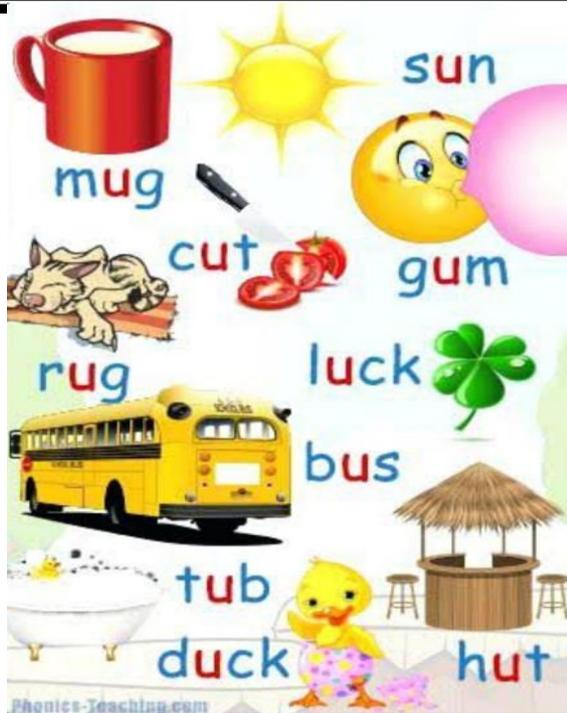
B.  Do they both have the same u sound? Listen and put ✓ or X.



Figure (2):

A. Look, read and say.





**B. Listen, match and say.**



Comparing between the above figures, figure (1) shows two activities of the student's book that the first does not involve to the learner-centered activities. The second already involves to the learner-centered activities but it does not relevant to the goals of the lesson. However, the same activities suffer from serious lack of the clarity of procedures. It means that the learners can't understand the activity easily without the teacher's instructions. Besides, these activities don't involve the learner inside the educational environment. Figure (2) shows the proposed model for figure (1). It presents learner-centered activities that are relevant to the goals of the lesson. Besides, the activities have direct and clear procedures to involve the learner into the learning climate. The learner can work without the teacher's instructions.

## REFERENCES

- Applebee, A.N. (1993). *Literature in the secondary school: Studies of curriculum and instruction in the United States*. Urbana, Il: National Council of Teacher of English.
- Flores, A. (2010). *Learning Mathematics, Doing Mathematics: A Learner-Centered Teaching Model*. Educ. Matem. Pesq., São Paulo, Vol. 12, No. 1.
- Hartly, D. (1987). *The Convergence of Learner-Centered Pedagogy in Primary and Further Education in Scotland 1965-1985*. British Journal of Education Studies, XXXV (2) 115-128.
- Hinchliffe, G. (2001). *Education or pedagogy?* Journal of Philosophy of Education, 35(1), 133-148.
- Kain, Donna J.(2003). *Teacher-Centered versus Student-Centered: Balancing Constraint and Theory in the Composition Classroom*. Duke University Press. Pedagogy, 3, 104-142.
- Krista, K. (2018). *Evidence for Student-Centered Learning*, available at <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED581111.pdf> .
- Liu, Rong. Qiao, Xiaomei. & Liu, Yingliang. (2006). *A Paradigm Shift of Learner-Centered Teaching Style: Reality or Illusion?* . Arizona Working Papers in SLAT, vol. 13, ( p. 77-91).
- Toema, R. (1987). *Content Analysis: Definitions- Principles- Applications (In Arabic)*. Cairo, Egypt: Dar El-Fikir Al-Arabi.
- Weimer, M. (2002). *Learner-centered teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Wohlfarth, Dede et al. (2008). *Student Perceptions of Learner-Centered Teaching*. A Journal of Scholarly Teaching, 3, 67-74