PROBLEMATIC SIDES IN IMPLEMENTING LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION PARADIGM IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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INTRODUCTION

Learner-Centered Instruction (LCI) paradigm is one of the popular issues for several decades. It has been argued since the learners should have a great responsibility in deciding their styles in studying. It is supported by Wohlfarth (2008: 67) who explains that Learner-Centered Instruction paradigm focuses more on students rather than teacher and on learning more than teaching. In other words, this paradigm points up how the learners learn rather than how the teacher teaches. It is based on the premise that the learners would better understand, acquire, and retain knowledge when they are given opportunities to manipulate and to build on their own experiences. Because of that, it can be assumed that in teaching and learning process, the students should be given a wide control on their own learning in order to improve their ability in acquiring English as a foreign language. It is expected that offering a wide portion of students’ control in teaching learning process can give a better result for their achievement.

The ideas of LCI have been proposed by many experts. Kilic (2010: 80) states that LCI concerns about “involving learners actively to participate in decision making process about what to learn, how to learn, what kind of help is required, and how to decide how much is learned.” In other words, this paradigm can improve students’ intrinsic motivation to learn and to emphasize students’ ability to develop their critical thinking (Schiller, 2011: 369 and Peyton et al, 2010: 2).

The implementation of this paradigm involves not only the teachers, but also the students. Both of them have their own roles. As
explained by Kojima and Kojima (2005: 67-69), the teachers have the roles as an information gatherer, a decision maker, a motivator, a facilitator of group dynamics, a provider of opportunities for communicative and authentic language used, a counselor, a provider of multicultural perspective, and a reflective practitioner and researcher. Moreover, the students also take the roles as negotiator, an interactor, a responsible person for their learning success, and a self-corrector (Benneth: 2010, 6-8).

Since this paradigm introduced in 1990s, many language educators have tried to implement it and showed many kinds of washback. In fact, English teachers in MAN kota Solok have started to implement this paradigm. It was proved by preliminary observation in which it showed that English teachers in this school have tried to give more chance for the students to participate actively in teaching and learning process while the teachers performed as a facilitator. The teachers have also promoted the students to take a greater control in the classroom. However, the result of its implementation did not give a significance impact on students’ achievement. The data from students’ score showed that there were only ± 30% students who got satisfied score when the teachers implemented LCI paradigm. It indicated that there were some problems during the implementation of this paradigm.

The data from the questionnaires and observation showed that 60% the English teachers tended to fail for encouraging the students to be more active on a discussion. It was proved by the students’ statement on the questionnaires. In addition, 65% students in every class rarely participated in a discussion, whether it was a group discussion or class discussion. Besides, the teacher also found a problem related to encourage the students in searching out any other materials that can support their learning materials. In this case, most of the students tended to be less initiative to find out any sources that can help them to understand the materials to get a deep understanding. This situation became worse since most of the students rarely asked any question when they faced any problem in learning the materials although the teacher offered a chance for them to do so.

Those evidences described a phenomenon that had to be investigated in relation to the problems in implementing Learner-Centered Instruction paradigm at MAN Kota Solok. There was a need to investigate how this paradigm was carried out in the classes. It involved how the teachers implemented it and how the learners performed their roles in class activity. Based on their performance in the classroom, the problems and the causes of this phenomenon could be analyzed. Because of that, this research aimed to investigate the real problems that caused the unsuccessful implementation of Learner-Centered Instruction paradigm in MAN Kota Solok.

**METHOD**

The type of this research was a qualitative research on a design of phenomenology study. This research was aimed to explore the factors that caused unsuccessful implementation
of Learner-Centered Instruction paradigm in MAN Kota Solok. The data were collected through observation and in-depth interview towards the teachers and the students. The data was analyzed by interpreting participants’ activities and statements and then describing the deeper meaning behind those interpretations Patton (1990).

DISCUSSION
The Way the English Teachers Run Their Roles in Implementing LCI Paradigm

An English teacher has 8 main roles in implementing LCI paradigm (Kojima and Kojima: 2005, 67-69). The way the teachers implemented those roles influenced the successful of this paradigm and also the degree of students’ achievement on their learning process.

As an information gatherer, the English teachers in MAN Kota Solok had such problems related to collecting information of students’ needs and students’ interest. The fact was they did not collect information about it. As a result, the teaching materials did not always fulfill students’ need and students’ interest.

There were several causes of this problem. One of them was the material for teaching and learning process without any adaptation to students’ need and students’ real life. Besides, the decision making about the materials was only based on the curriculum. However, any information about students’ need and students’ interest were very crucial to the decision making of the materials (Kilic: 2010, 80). The aim is to develop such materials that are appropriate to fulfill students’ need for achieving the goal of teaching and learning. In other words, teachers’ role as an information gatherer impacted to their role as a decision maker.

Since there is a relationship between teachers’ role as an information gatherer and a decision maker, there is also a cause and effect relationship on how the teachers performed as the information gatherer to their performance as the decision maker. Theoretically, the teachers have to decide the teaching goals, materials, teaching activity, and evaluation system. However, the fact from the field proved that the English teachers did not maximally consider the teaching activity and the evaluation system. There were 60% teachers who did not vary their teaching activity. The data proved that the reason behind this phenomenon was teacher’s motivation to find out any other classroom activities. In fact, teachers’ motivation would give a significant impact to their teaching competence and performance (Kubanyiova, 2006: 9-11). In other words, the teachers cannot perform optimally when their motivation is low. In addition, the other cause was lack of reflective teaching culture. When the teacher did not get any reflection and evaluation of their performance in the classroom, they would not realize the weaknesses of their performance. In other words, they cannot develop their professionalism, such as knowledge and practice of variation of teaching activities, if they did not do any reflection and evaluation of their teaching technique.

Besides, as a decision maker, the teachers are responsible to decide the evaluation system. However, the fact proved that most of the teachers
did not have any clear evaluation system for evaluating students’ performance, such as scoring rubric, for evaluating students’ work. It affected the reliability of students’ score. When the teacher did not have any evaluation system, there would be a bias score in measuring students’ performance. As explained by Kojima and Kojima (2005: 67-69) and Meece (2009: 114), the teachers should be able to decide any evaluation system. It is important since it is used to reflect students’ achievement by avoiding any bias.

The other teachers’ role in implementing LCI was as a motivator. As many experts argue, being a motivator is one of the key roles in implementing LCI. As explained by Karavas and Ducas in Hedge (2000: 26-36) and Kojima and Kojima (2005: 67-69), the teacher should be able to be a creator of classroom atmosphere, such as being an entertainer, a motivator, and a source of inspiration for stimulating students’ intrinsic motivation.

Generally, the English teachers in MAN kota Solok were unsuccessful in performing this role. It was proved by any problems related to the difficulties faced by the teachers in presenting the task properly, developing a good relationship with the learners, increase learner’s linguistics self-confidence, and so on. This fact was caused of several factors. One of basic causes was the teachers who did not know any strategies to encourage students’ motivation. As stated by Bahous (2011: 34), students’ motivation in learning EFL could be easier encouraged through involving environmental factors, cognitive factors, featured personality, and social dimensions. He adds that it would be better if the teachers also promote greater cross-cultural understanding as an effort to attract the learners to be more motivated. The data gotten from the observation proved that the teachers never involved such cross-cultural understanding, featured personality and social dimensions during teaching and learning process. It was the reason to state that lack of strategy used by the teachers affected their ability to perform as a good motivator.

Moreover, the teachers also performed as a facilitator of group dynamics. The fact was most of the teachers faced such difficulties in playing this role. They were not able to build positive interdependence among students, to promote individual accountability, and to promote face to face interaction. It automatically influenced the effectiveness of students work on their groups during the process of group work or peer work. Based on the data collected, it could be assumed that teachers’ failure in running their roles as a facilitator of group dynamic was caused by teachers’ lack of awareness on how important this role in helping students to achieve the learning goals. In fact, the teacher did not realize that their performance in facilitating students during teaching and learning process give a big influence on students’ achievement. As stated by Karavas and Ducas in Hedge (2000: 26-36) in which they state that a teacher should be a facilitator and a controller that leads him/her to control students activity in the classroom by giving an egalitarian atmosphere for the students. It is aimed to lead the students to work effectively on their
group so that the goal of the teaching and learning process can be achieved (Kojima and Kojima, 2005: 67-69).

The other role of the teachers was as a provider of opportunities for communicative and authentic language used. It deals to teachers’ technique to provide any authentic materials and to bring the real world into the classroom. The fact showed that most of the teachers could be categorized fail in doing this role. The materials that were used by the teachers were not the authentic one, but it was usually taken from text book and work-sheet. This situation affected students’ achievement in acquiring English as a foreign language. The students did not know how the language is usually used in the real life of communication. It was the reason why the materials should be authentic and reflect the real use of language in real life. It is explained by Kojima and Kojima (2005: 67-69) in which they propose that the teachers are suggested to use an authentic material in order to help the students to use the language in a communicative context and a real use of a language.

The next teachers’ role was as a counselor. The English teachers in MAN kota Solok were specified as a good counselor. They always provided an emotional support when the students required. Some of the teachers showed a high degree of support by giving freedom for the learners to ask any questions when they did not understand the materials or an instruction of the task. It included monitoring students’ learning progress regularly. It is in line with the idea of Karavas and Ducas in Hedge (2000: 26 -36) and Harmer (2001: 57-66) in which he argues that a teacher has a role as a prompter who gives any help for the students in order to build students’ creativity in learning procedure. In other word, the teacher should be a good counselor to optimize the implementation of LCI.

In addition, the teachers also have a role as a promoter of a multicultural perspective. It includes the way the teacher provides any cultural knowledge for the students. It can be done by encouraging students to understand that they have to tolerant any cultural conflict, respect diverse culture and avoid stereotype others (Kojima and Kojima, 2005: 67-69). The fact was none of the teachers related the materials to the cultural perspective. In fact, they did not consider which materials that contained a cultural value and knowledge that could be transferred to the students. However, the teacher should remember that the learners should be encouraged to understand a new culture while maintaining their own culture (Hesar, et al, 2012: 46).

The last role for the teachers in implementing LCI was as a reflective practitioner and researcher. The fact was the teachers did not evaluate their teaching process or even did such kind of research. In other words, they did not develop their teaching competence and performance. It might affect teachers’ ability in teaching. It is explained by Farrell (2008: 3) in which he says “teachers who engage in reflective practice can develop a deeper understanding of their teaching, assess their professional growth, develop informed decision-making skills, and become proactive and confident in their teaching.” Because of that, the teachers were
really demanded to play their role as a reflective practitioner.

Based on the discussion above, it could be assumed that how the teachers run their roles really influences the successful implementation of LCI paradigm. It could also be concluded that the teachers still needed to do more improvement for their performance in carrying out their roles. Although they have been categorized to be good in such roles, such as an information gatherer and counselor, they still needed to do more evaluation for what they have done so far. Two main points that should be more concerned by the teachers were their role as a motivator and facilitator of group dynamic.

The Way the Students Perform Their Roles through LCI Paradigm

The implementation of LCI paradigm did not only involve the teachers as the facilitator for students’ successful, but it also involved students’ performance. There are 4 main roles for the students.

As a negotiator, the students in MAN Kota Solok did not play this role. It was proved by the fact that the students accepted any teacher’s decision related to the activities and the topic being discussed. As a result, the students were not able to develop their learning autonomy. As explained by Kojima and Kojima (2005: 61), the students were responsible to be a negotiator for their learning process since they were involved in developing learning autonomy. Besides, it also affected to decision making of teaching and learning process. Since the students did not perform their role as a negotiator, they did not also involve participating actively in decision making process about what to learn, how to learn, and other possible decisions (Kilic, 2010: 80). This fact was caused of students’ cultural background and teachers’ performance. They argue that the teacher is the only source of knowledge. Besides, it was also affected by teacher’s performance in guiding and helping the learners to discover and to use effective learning strategies (Louis: 2003, Lee: 2011). Because of that, it influenced the way the students developed their learning autonomy.

The second role for the students was as an interactor. The findings showed most of the students have succeeded to be an active participant. The students were eager to ask question or even to answer the question given by the teachers or their peers. Besides, the students also got a communicative practice through discussion and/ or showing their aspiration in front of the class. The students who could active participated in the classroom were the impact of teacher’s performance that always gave chances for the students to be more active and took a greater control of their learning process. In other words, teacher’s performance in controlling and guiding the learners gave a significant influence to students’ performance (Hedge, 2000: 34). Because of that, there should be a good cooperation between the teacher and the students in order to help the students to be more active and more independent on the process of achieving their goals. It is supported by Bergen in Kojima and Kojima (2005: 63) who states that the students should entail a
willingness to act independently and in co-operation with their peers and also the teacher. Generally, the students have tried to be a good interactor/active participant in the classroom procedure although they did not get full opportunities to evaluate the text, the class, and the teacher.

Furthermore, being a responsible person of students’ learning success was also the other role for the students. In fact, the students did not perform optimally to be responsible for their success. They did not contribute to the course design or activity applied in the classroom. It was not only because of the students who did not know what they had to do, but also because of the teachers who gave less encouragement for the students to actively participate in designing the language activity. As a result, the students did not participate or even express their ideas in relation to classroom activity. The students did not realize the fact that their activities in the classroom were the reflection of their responsibility of their learning success. If the teacher did not facilitate the students to be more responsible on their learning process, they would never been able to do it. It is supported by Benneth’s statement (2010: 6) who claims that the students should be given a chance to participate actively in the classroom while the teacher facilitates and monitors students’ learning progress. The students should be encouraged to talk without a constant teacher monitor. It is the basic theory for the teachers and the students to be more creative and innovative in attempting students to be more engaging on their own success.

The last role for the students in implementing LCI was as a self-corrector. It referred to students’ role in developing their ability to be more critical and analytical in evaluating what they have done (Benneth: 2010, 8). However, the students were almost never engaged on correcting their self and/or their peer’s works. The teachers rarely gave a chance for them to evaluate what they have done by themselves. It showed that, theoretically, the students still should be motivated and given a chance to develop their critical and analytical ability for evaluating their tasks.

Based on all the roles aimed to be done by the students, they did not perform optimally for all the roles. They were specified as successful students in terms of a good interactor. However, they did not show the same performance as being a negotiator, self-corrector, and the one who responsible for their learning success. It becomes a task for the teachers to help all the students to improve their performance in carrying out all their roles. These weaknesses should be solved not only by the students, but also by involving the teachers as the ones who have a responsibility to help, to guide, and to facilitate the learners in playing their roles in implementing LCI paradigm.

The Difficulties in Implementing LCI Paradigm

The implementation of LCI required the contribution and cooperation among the teachers as the facilitator and the students as the active participants in the classroom. Because of that, the problems that occurred during the implementation were also faced by the teachers or the students. The problems occurred
during its implementation, specifically, in MAN kota Solok were specified into several points.

The first problem dealt with the availability of time. The teachers argued that LCI demanded lots of time since the students were demanded to actively communicate in the classroom. The time was usually spent for conducting group work or peer-work because this paradigm demands a cooperative activity as many as possible during teaching and learning process. It is linear to the theory stated by Peyton, et al (2010, 2-3) and Meece (2009: 112) in which they says that LCI should be done through some activities that can engage the students to be more active in their own learning. It automatically needs lots of time if the class was categorized as a big class.

The second problem was dealt with teachers’ creativity on teaching technique. As explained by Peyton, et al (2010: 2-3) and Attard, et al (2010: 11-13), the teachers are demanded to maximize students-to-students interaction by using a variety of skills and teaching techniques. It aims to develop students’ motivation, to activate students’ background knowledge, and to enhance their critical thinking. However, those theories were not implemented by the English teachers during the implementation of LCI in MAN kota Solok. The main cause was because of lack of teaching techniques known by the teachers. As a result, they were not able to develop an innovative teaching technique in order for attracting the students to be more motivated in the classroom.

The next problem was related to materials resources. This lack of material resources was caused by limited textbooks from the library. This problem automatically damaged the implementation of LCI since materials resources is one of the key elements in LCI (O’Neill and McMahon: 2005, 33 and Thanh :2010, 26-28). The teacher possibly got a difficulty to encourage students to be more active since they were not provided with any resources for learning. It automatically affected students’ performance and their achievement. The students were not able to study optimally when they did not have enough material resources to support their learning process.

The other problem in implementing LCI was class size. The average total numbers of students at grade X which were ±35 students influenced the effectiveness of LCI. It was in line with the available of time had by the teachers. The bigger the class is, the more time is needed by the teacher to facilitate them. This situation is supported with the research done by Thanh (2010: 26-28). He found that the bigger the class size is, the more difficult the teachers to control and to monitor the students’ progress. In another word, the class should be formed in an ideal numbers of students.

In addition, teacher’s knowledge related to the materials that they had to teach also contributed as one of the problems in implementing LCI. The fact showed that some teachers did not fully understand about such materials that they were going to teach. It is in line to the result of a research conducted by Nonkuthetkhong, et al (2006: 6). They found that the implementation of LCI would not be successful...
whenever the teachers did not understand what they had to do. It included teacher’s knowledge of LCI, teachers’ preparation of class activity and materials, and the technique to integrate this paradigm into their EFL classes. All those knowledge influence the successful of LCI. It is the basic concept why teacher who had lack of knowledge about the lesson/ materials faced such problems whenever they did LCI in the classroom.

The next problem was about students’ responsibility in learning. They did not take their own right to be more responsible for what they had to do in the classroom. Theoretically, the students are demanded to be more responsible for their learning progress because the teachers only perform as facilitator of their learning process. As stated by Hedge (2000: 34), the students are encouraged to take a greater degree of responsibility for their own successful learning. However, the fact found in MAN kota Solok did not reflect this theory. The students still viewed that their learning success were teachers’ responsibility instead of theirs.

The last problem in implementing LCI was related to the lack of opportunities that were gotten by the students to promote such interesting learning procedure, activity, and topics/ theme they like. Indeed, the students should be given a chance to have an egalitarian atmosphere in teaching and learning procedure (Brown: 1994, 80). In this case, they have almost never given any options of any learning activities that they liked. It included the option of learning activity, theme of a text, or even learning procedures.

Based on the discussion of all problems and difficulties in implementing LCI in MAN kota Solok, it could be concluded that the difficulties and problems could be faced by the teachers and also the students. The problems included the availability of time for teaching, the lack of teacher’s creativity and innovation, materials resources, class size, teachers’ knowledge of the materials transferred, students’ responsibility, and students’ participation dealing with their choice in the classroom. Moreover, the fact was the implementation of LCI paradigm in this school still needs more improvement, whether it is related to the teachers or the students.

**The Causes of Any Difficulties in Implementing LCI Paradigm**

The problems of implementing LCI were caused of several factors. It involved teachers, students, or even school’s decision making as the causes for the problems in implementing LCI.

The first factor was another responsibility given by the headmaster to the teacher to teach and run the additional responsibility. Thus, the teachers did not maximally prepare and perform themselves for classroom activity. It is relevant to the theory stated by Pashler (1993:48) in which he explains that people could not take two tasks at the same time if both of the tasks involve a hard effort to accomplish. In education context, a teacher would be disturbed whenever they have to do more than just teaching. In other words, they would not only focus on teaching, but also to the other task, such as task of headmaster’s vice. As a result, it affected their teaching.
performance and automatically also influenced students’ achievement.

The other cause of problems in implementing LCI was teachers who did not have enough training about LCI. The teachers were not sufficiently prepared to implement this paradigm. They did not get enough technique or even strategy for encouraging and motivating students to be more active. The one that they did in order to optimize their performance was reading books that provided information about the implementation of LCI. Besides, they also did such discussion and sharing to discuss the implementation of this paradigm. However, training about the implementation of this paradigm was really crucial for the teachers. It is linear to the finding from a research done by Nonkukhetkhong (2006: 6). He found that one of the causes of any unsuccessful implementation of LCI was less training gotten by the teachers. He explains that the implementation would never be successful as far as the teachers did not know how to involve their students to actively participate in the classroom activity. In other words, the teachers were demanded to follow some training about Learner-Centered Instruction paradigm.

The next cause of problem in implementing LCI was teachers’ lack ability in developing their own materials. There was a tendency of the teachers to use the materials that were provided on text book and work sheet only. Those materials could not give an authentic and real life situation in every topic provided. In fact, theoretically, Rahimi (2006: 3-4) explains “teachers construct their own knowledge on the basis of experience highlight the roles of school in teacher education program and opens the door to organizing teacher education according to the principle of learning through participation, in real, meaningful practices.” It refers to teachers’ task to develop the materials by considering such factors. In a more detail explanation, she states that the factors could be the level of language course, language skills, motivation, proficiency, teachers, tests, and cultural differences.

School decision and total number of classroom at school was also the causes of the problem in implementing LCI. It was related to the decision making that involved such considerations in deciding the ideal numbers of students that were going to be accepted for every academic year. The total numbers of new students in every academic year should be in a balance portion to the availability of classroom. However, the total numbers of students in MAN kota Solok were bigger than the availability of the classroom that can be used for teaching and learning activity. Because of that, the teachers got difficulty in controlling students’ activity and students’ progress since the classes that were bigger than the ideal class. As stated by Thanh (2010: 26-28), the ideal class should be built on if the teachers want to develop an effective LCI. It was the reason why the decision making that related to this problem should be decided with a wiser consideration.

The other cause was related to teachers’ ability in accessing the internet for searching any additional materials from the internet. The teachers were demanded to be able to access the internet because it could give more varied options of materials. They would be provided
with options to adopt, adapt or even develop the materials that were provided on the internet. It aims to make the materials more communicative, more interactive and also to increase students’ motivation and participation (Tomlinson, 2012: 151). There were many websites on the internet that were accessible for English teachers as a reference for new teaching technique, materials, and so on. However, some of the teachers were not able to access the internet. As an effect, they only provided the materials for the learners that were gotten from textbook and worksheet only. It means that the teacher should be more able in accessing the materials from many sources; one of them is through internet.

The last cause was related to students’ perception in which the teacher was the central figure in teaching and learning process. This perception has been grown on for a long time. The students have been treated to have a concept that the teacher knew much better rather than the students. As explained by Thanh (2010: 26-28) in his research, a culture or worldview also dominates as a cause of the unsuccessful implementation of LCI. When the student believe that the one who should take a greater control in teaching and learning class is the teacher, they would never tried to be brief and take a control for their own learning. The effort to change this perception and culture would not be easy. It was the reason why the culture of students’ perception gave a big influence to the successful of the implementation of LCI.

Generally, there were some causes of difficulties in implementing LCI that almost similar with many other research conducted by different researchers in different areas. It includes the lack training of LCI gotten by the teachers, school’s decision making about total number of students for one class, and also the culture or students’ perception about teaching and learning process. However, there were also some new causes of problems in implementing LCI that were found in MAN Kota Solok. They were such negative impact for the teachers when they got extra tasks or responsibility, teachers’ lack ability in developing their own materials, and teacher’s lack ability in accessing additional materials from other sources, such as internet.

Based on the discussion of 4 major points in this research, a general conclusion could be formulated. The successful implementation of LCI was determined by how the teachers and the students performed their roles. There was a direct relationship between teachers’ performance and students’ performance that affected students’ achievement and the successful implementation of LCI paradigm. Based on the facts that have been gathered, there were many problems and difficulties in implementing LCI paradigm. The causes of those problems were caused by teachers, students, and also school’s decision making. In other words, in order to achieve more successful implementation of LCI, the teachers, students and also school officer should work together for solving the problems appeared.

CONCLUSION

Learner-Centered Instruction (LCI) paradigm proposes a new concept in teaching and learning
process in which the students are an important component since they have to take a greater control for achieving their learning success. In other words, the teachers perform as a facilitator. Based on the data of this research, it is found that the teachers and the students have their own role that are interrelated each other. Both of them influenced the successful implementation of LCI paradigm.

Besides, it was also found that the problems during the implementation of this paradigm are availability of time for teaching, the lack of teacher’s creativity and innovation, materials resources, class size, teachers’ knowledge of the materials transferred, students’ responsibility, and students’ participation dealing with their choice in the classroom. Moreover, the causes of those problems involve extra tasks or responsibility for the teachers, teachers’ lack ability in developing their own materials, and in accessing additional materials from other sources, lack of LCI training for the teachers, school’s decision making about class size, and also the culture or students’ perception about teaching and learning process.

SUGGESTION
Based on the research finding gotten, the other researchers are suggested to continue this research in order to find out any solution for the problems appeared during the implementation of LCI.

Note:
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