# USING STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING METHOD IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' GRAMMAR ABILITY

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## Abstract

*This research aimed to find out whether using the SCL method is effective in improving students' grammar ability or not. The researcher used a one-shot case study as the research design with treatment and post-test which consisted of 30 multiple-choice grammar tests. This research was conducted at SMA Negeri 19 Gowa in the eleventh grade with a total population of 214 students. The sample was Class XI IIS 2 with a total of 34 students selected using random sampling technique. The research data was analyzed quantitatively using a paired sample t-test. The mean score of the pre-test was 68.80 and the post-test was 84.80. The data showed the increased score after the sample received treatment and based on the sig. value (2-tailed) was 0.00 < 0.05. It can be concluded that using student-centered learning was effective in improving students' grammar ability.*

***Keywords —*** *SCL Method, Basic English, Grammar.*

## INTRODUCTION

Every language has its sentence structure. In English, the structure of the sentence is called grammar. By using correct grammar, the sentence will be perfect. Grammar is the role of word structure to make a correct and perfect sentence. However, the use of correct grammar is sometimes ignored.

Using correct grammar is still being debated. Some say that grammar does not matter anymore as nowadays in a society where using slang is popular. Also, many native people are ignoring the correct grammar. Some even say that speaking using correct grammar is too rigid. These statements lead people to ignore the use of correct grammar. Dinsdale (2022) states that bad grammar can make even a simple sentence difficult to understand. It means, using correct grammar makes sentences clearer and easier to understand.

In reality, so many students are having problems using correct grammar whether it is in spoken or written language. The researcher also found the same thing at SMA Negeri 19 Gowa

when interviewing the English teacher namely Rabiati, S.Pd., M.Pd., on Monday, October 10th, 2022. She said that students in CLASS XI are bad at writing, especially for the use of correct grammar. The students' average score was in the minimum completeness criteria (KKM) 75.

The thing that must be considered when teaching is the learning method that will be used. This research will be focused on using student-centered learning methods to improve students' grammar ability. The advantages of this method besides being able to increase the activeness of students in learning activities, student-centered learning method is also believed to be effective in improving the quality of the learning process as well.

In accordance with Curriculum 2013, the principle of the learning process is: (a) from learners being told, to the learners being encouraged to find out; (b) from the teacher as the only source of learning, into use a variety of learning-based resources; (c) from the textual approach toward the scientific approach; and (d) the learning process that focuses on the students' interest. These are related to the student-centered learning method principles, Brown (2008) states that in a students-centered class, the way the teachers make lesson plans, apply teaching methods, and assess, must be by the needs and the abilities of students. Simply, students are involved in the decision-making of learning strategies that teachers can use.

There were some previous research findings that related to this research, the first one was from Susanti (2019) in her research about improving mastering basic English grammar through board games. The findings of the research showed that there was an improvement in students' mastery of basic English grammar by using the board games method. The difference between Susanti's research and the current research was the method used. Susanti's research used a board games method, while current research used a student-centered learning method.

The second previous research was from Agustini (2018). She has conducted research about improving students' grammar skills through student-centered learning methods. The research data was analyzed quantitatively and shows that the student-centered learning method was effective in improving students' grammar ability. What distinguishes Agustini's research from this research is the sample selection. Agustini used students at university as the sample, while the researcher of the current research used students at high school.

Another previous research using a student-centered learning method came from Marpaung (2020). Her research was to increase students' achievement on the topic of acid-based solutions. The findings of the research showed that the student-centered learning method in the teaching acid-based solution was effective in improving students' achievement.

The similarity of Marpaung's research with current research was the method used, which was the student-centered learning method. What made the difference was the dependent variable. Marpaung's dependent variable in her research was the students' achievement on the topic of the acid-based solution, while the dependent variable of the current research was the student's grammar ability.

Established on the explanation above and the literature review that the researcher described in chapter two, the study on the use of student-centered learning methods to improve students' grammar ability is still lacking. There has been no research found using this method at the high school level. Therefore, the researcher decides to do this research.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

1.  Concept of Grammar

According to Hirai (2010), Grammar is a way to arrange the sentence and produce a favorable language. It means that to create a good sentence, people must have good grammar ability. Therefore, the researcher wants to introduce using English whether it is written or spoken with correct grammar through the Student-Centered Learning method. Furthermore, success in communication depends on people's speaking and grammar skills.

To be added, Thornbury (1999) elaborated on grammar as a way to arrange sentences and produce favorable language. It means that to create a good sentence, people must have good grammar ability. Therefore, the researcher wants to introduce using English whether it is written or spoken with correct grammar through the Student-Centered Learning method. Furthermore, success in communication depends on people's speaking and grammar skills.

Furthermore, Gerot and Wignel (1994) said that the process of producing language is a theory of grammar. It implies that before producing a sentence, people organize the way in which words can be put together in order to make a good sentence. The more a person masters the use of correct grammar, the more complex the discussion used in the sentence. However, before producing complex sentences, people should practice the components of grammar first.

2.  Concept of Student-Centered Learning Method

According to Brown (2008), the student-centered learning method is also known as learning by doing, with the main goal being the students' output Brown stated that student-centered instruction is an active learning method that involves students in their own learning.

When students have the opportunity to be involved, they are more likely to be engaged and excited about learning. The teacher does not control the classroom at all. Students can explore, develop, and discover on their own. Because the teacher is not allowed to give an answer right away, students explore ideas with their friends. Students are included in the decision-making process in the classroom.

Westwood (2008) added that the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) method is a learning method that empowers students to be the center of attention during the learning process, Westwood also emphasized teachers are not required to give answers right away. Instead, this method encourages students to come on their own. If their responses are not the desired answer, let their peers help them.

Furthermore, Darsih (2018) stated that student-centered learning requires students to take an active part in what they are learning. The control that students have over the learning process is made very clear. In this way, teaching involves less telling and more learning for the students. With this methodology, students gain more knowledge through practice than through observation. In a teaching approach called student-centered learning, the teacher serves only as a facilitator who supports students' growth and not as the only source of information.

## METHODS

1. Research Design

The researcher applied a pre-experimental as the research design. This research design only used a one-group as the experimental class who received pre-test, treatment, and post-test. This strategy was implemented by the researcher in order to identify the students' grammar ability before and after receiving treatment. Furthermore, the research data analyzed was quantitatively by using the following formula:

| $O_1$ | X | $O_2$ |
|---|---|---|

Where:

O1: Pre-test

X: Treatment (SCL Method)

O2: Post-test

2.    Population and Sample

The students in CLASS XI at SMA Negeri 19 Gowa over a six-class academic year made up the population of this study. 214 students accounted for the entire population.

Random was applied in this study. Random sampling was used with the aim of obtaining a representative sample by looking at the population of CLASS XI. The researcher took one class which was CLASS XI IIS 2 from the population target to be the samples. The total number of the samples was 30 students.

3.    Instrument of the Research

To get data as complete and valid as possible, the researcher used a grammar test to help her. The pre-test and post-test both included the grammar test, which consisted of 30 multiple-choice questions. The pre-test and post-test were given to the students before and after the treatment.

4.    Technique of Collecting Data

In order to collect the research data, the researcher used the following steps:

a.    Pretest, was given to the students to find out their grammar ability before they got treatment.

b.    Treatment, the students were given the treatment of grammar materials by using the SCL method. The treatment was conducted for 7 meetings with 90 minutes for each meeting. The given materials were singular-plural nouns, degree of comparison, preposition of time and place, and commonly used tenses.

c.    Posttest, was given to the students after they got the treatment. The result of the post-test was analyzed to find out whether the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) method is effective to improve students' grammar ability or not.

## RESULTS

The findings were collected to answer the research question: Does the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) method effectively improve the students' grammar ability of CLASS XI IIS 2 of SMA Negeri 19 Gowa? This research question was answered after the researcher conducted pre-test first, then 5 meetings of treatment, and post-test in the last meeting to measure the

students' improvement of grammar ability. The description of the students' score is in the following lines.

1. Classification of The Students' Score

Based on the students' grammar pre-test and post-test score on the table 2 below, we can see that from the 30 students as the sample there were 25 (83.3%) students in the classroom who got poor, 5 (16.7%) students got fair, and no students got good and very good scores. Furthermore, in the post-test after conducting 5 meetings of treatment, compared with the pretest score, there were 3 (10%) students who got very good, 12 (40%) students got good, 13 (43.3%) got fair, and 2 (6.67) got poor scores.

Table 1. Students' Score

| No. | Classification | Score | Pre-Test | | Post-Test | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | F | P | F | P |
| 1 | Very Good | 93-100 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 10 |
| 2 | Good | 84-92 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 40 |
| 3 | Fair | 75-83 | 5 | 16.7 | 13 | 43.3 |
| 4 | Poor | <75 | 25 | 83.3 | 2 | 6.67 |
| Total | | | 30 | 100 | 30 | 100 |

Table 2. PRE-TEST Score

**PRE-TEST**

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | 57 | 1 | 3.3 |
| | 60 | 1 | 3.3 |
| | 63 | 6 | 20.0 |
| | 67 | 10 | 33.3 |
| | 70 | 3 | 10.0 |
| | 73 | 4 | 13.3 |
| | 77 | 3 | 10.0 |
| | 80 | 2 | 6.7 |
| | Total | 30 | 100.0 |

Table 3. POST-TEST Score

**POST-TEST**

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | 73 | 2 | 6.7 |
| | 77 | 1 | 3.3 |
| | 80 | 4 | 13.3 |
| | 83 | 8 | 26.7 |
| | 87 | 10 | 33.3 |
| | 90 | 2 | 6.7 |
| | 93 | 1 | 3.3 |
| | 97 | 2 | 6.7 |
| | Total | 30 | 100.0 |

Based on the students' grammar pre-test and post-test score on the table above, we can see that from the 30 students as the sample there were 25 (83.3%) students in the classroom who got poor, 5 (16.7%) students got fair, and no students got good and very good scores. Furthermore, in the post-test after conducting 5 meetings of treatment, compared with the pretest score, there were 3 (10%) students who got very good, 12 (40%) students got good, 13 (43.3%) got fair, and 2 (6.67) got poor scores.

2.  The Data Description

The data below were analyzed using paired sample t-test analysis. In the pre-test, the minimum score was 57 and the maximum was 80. In the post-test, the minimum score was 73 and the maximum was 97. Additionally, the pretest mean score was 68.60, while the post-test mean score was 84.80. The data indicated that after receiving treatment, student scores improved.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PRE-TEST | 30 | 57 | 80 | 68.60 | 5.805 |
| POST-TEST | 30 | 73 | 97 | 84.80 | 5.647 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 30 | | | | |

Table 5. Paired Samples Statistics

**Paired Samples Statistics**

| | | Mean | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pair 1 | PRE-TEST | 68.60 | 30 | 5.805 | 1.060 |
| | POST-TEST | 84.80 | 30 | 5.647 | 1.031 |

The further paired sample test, the paired samples are from the same subject, displayed the mean score comparison of two samples. Making decisions is most important when there is a significant difference, which is indicated by a significance value (2-tailed) less than 0.05; however, a significance value larger than 0.05 shows that there is no meaningful difference. Considering the sig. value (2-tailed) was 0.00 in the test result below, there is a significant difference since the sig. value (2-tailed) 0.05.

3. Hypothesis Testing

Based on the students' mean score in the pre-test and post-test which were analyzed using the paired sample test, the pre-test to the post-test mean score was 68.60 to 84.80 and the sig. value (2-tailed) was 0.00. Decision making occurs especially if the sig. value (2-tailed) < 0.05, there is a significant difference, otherwise, there is no significant difference.

Referring to the data analysis's findings, this research's significant value is 0.00 0.05. As a result, Ha is approved whereas H0 is rejected. The research question of this research, Does the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) method effectively improve the students' grammar ability of CLASS XI IIS 2 of SMA Negeri 19 Gowa? It can be concluded that using a student-centered learning method to improve the students' grammar ability is effective.

## DISCUSSIONS

As many as 30 students took a pre-test in the first meeting and the mean score was categorized as poor. After tracing the causes, the researcher found that some students admitted that they had forgotten the material and several other students claimed they did not know the answer at all. Therefore, the students' poor pre-test score became the basis for the researcher to carry out treatments. The treatment was carried out for 5 meetings. The material was about English basic grammar including singular-plural nouns, degree of comparison, preposition of time & place, and some commonly used tenses, by using student-centered learning method during the learning process.

Students were divided into 6 groups before the researcher delivered the materials. The division of groups was determined by the researcher as a teacher. The students with good scores on the pretest were put together in a group with students with poor scores. This strategy is based on Brown's theory that in small groups, students have a sense of responsibility for the

success of their members, which is why students who tend to be smarter will encourage their group mates to develop ideas.

On the first meeting of treatment, the researcher started the class with giving material related to singular-plural nouns. After that, each group started working on a crossword puzzle worksheet. The students in group 1 still have difficulty in changing singular to plural nouns, especially for irregular nouns. Instead of telling the right answer, the researcher gave the other groups to share their answer and the reason. This strategy is based on the theory of Westwood (2008), instead of giving answers right away, encouraging students to develop ideas in the learning process is the main principle of the SCL method.

On the second day of treatment, the researcher evaluated students about the lesson they had discussed in the previous meeting before going on to the next material. This evaluation method was implemented during the treatment. The second treatment material was a degree of comparison. To build enthusiasm and interest in student learning, the teacher gave examples that compared students' height. Giving simple and closer examples to students, making it easier for them to understand the material. Furthermore, students were given the opportunity to make simple comparison examples by comparing objects in the class before they work in a group.

On the third day of treatment, the material was about prepositions of time and place. Same as the previous meetings, the researcher gave a very simple example close to the students' environment. For example, the researcher taught them how to write the date of the Indonesia Independence Day and their school location. On the students' worksheet as shown below, the researcher assigned students to change sentences from Bahasa into English. The students' worksheet from group 3 was done very well although they took a lot of time to complete it.

Commonly used tenses material which are simple present, simple past, present continuous, and simple future were given on the fourth and fifth day of treatment. On the fourth day of treatment, the students were focused on making simple present and simple past tense. Before writing a sentence, the researcher was delivering material about when a sentence is said as a correct sentence based on grammar. At first, it was confusing the students. To make them easy to understand, the researcher asked them to write sentences of activities that they often do repeatedly at this time and activities they did in the past. However, it was easier for the students to write English sentences after they had written them in Indonesian first.

On the fifth day, which was the last day of treatment, the material was about present continuous and simple future tense. The class was so fun because the researcher and the students were playing a game. Learning about the present continuous, each group representative came to the front of the class to demonstrate a scene and the other groups guessed what he or she was doing. This strategy based on the theory of Darsih (2018), as the center of the class, students do more discovering by learning by doing. Furthermore, in figure 5, how the students wrote sentences in English was very impressive. Although they made mistakes in the last number, overall, they did very well.

After conducting 5 meetings of treatment and seeing the improvement of the students working in a group, the researcher decided to carry out a post-test. The result of the current research is in line with several previous research using the student-centered learning method in learning process. In line with a research conducted by Marpaung (2020) using student-centered learning method to improve students' achievement on topic acid-based solutions, this method also effectively improves students' grammar ability.

Another previous research implementing student-centered learning method in learning process was conducted by Agustini (2018). She proved that this method succeeded in improving the grammar skills of students at university. Furthermore, the result of the current research proved that this method also succeeded to improve the grammar skills of students at high school.

There was also a previous research that succeeded in improving students' grammar ability using board games method conducted by Susanti (2019). After conducting the current research, the researcher proved that students' grammar ability also improved by using the student-centered learning method.

Based on the result of this research, the implications are in the treatment section using the student-centered method. It took a long time for them to solve the problem, because the teacher was not allowed to give them the answer right away for every students' questions but let their peers do. The more they discuss with their friends, the easier it is to understand the materials.

Furthermore, another implication is regarding the students' improvement according to their post-test score. This indirectly implies that the student-centered learning method can be one of the effective methods to be used in grammar class.

## CONCLUSION

The student-centered learning method was effective in improving students' grammar ability. It can be concluded after conducting research using a student-centered learning method to improve the students' grammar ability and based on the findings, the students' mean score in the pre-test to the post-test was 64.60 to 84.80 categorized as good. The students' score increased by 16.2%. Furthermore, as proved by the hypothesis testing result, sig. the value (2-tailed) is 0.00 < 0.05, which means H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted.

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